

Chapter Member Spotlight



Name: Tamar Nazerian Chorbajian, DO, MPH, FAAP

Practice location: Kaiser Permanente Baldwin Park

Number of years in practice: 7

I was born and raised in Los Angeles, California and completed my undergraduate degree at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in Physiological Sciences with a minor in Public Policy and Social Welfare. I then went on to get my Masters in Public Health with a focus on Maternal Child Health and Nutrition from the University of Southern California, Keck School of Medicine. Driven by my passion for medicine and helping children, I attended Western U-COMP, graduating with a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.) degree.

I completed an intern year at the University of New Mexico and then did my pediatric residency at UCI-CHOC. Afterward, I pursued a fellowship in Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics at Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

Currently, I practice as a Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrician at Kaiser Permanente in Baldwin Park. I am also the Director of the High-Risk Infant Follow-Up Clinic, as well as, the CME Champion for the Pediatrics Department. I am deeply committed to improving the health and quality of life for my patients.

In addition to my medical practice, I enjoy traveling, spending time with my family, and exploring new experiences. I am also fluent in Armenian and currently working on multiple Global Health Projects, including improving Child Developmental Screening and ACEs Awareness in the country of Armenia.

What do you do before work that sets the tone for your day?

Being a mother, wife, and doctor keeps me fairly busy, having to multitask all day long. However, I try and make sure every morning to just take 5 minutes to myself to just do nothing and I usually end it with either a positive affirmation or a short prayer.

What are some challenges or struggles that you face at work?

The biggest frustration, I am sure that affects many of us, is all the misinformation that many patients wholeheartedly commit to and it becomes a barrier to care. In Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics, there is so much variation in patient presentations, clinician interpretations, and limited resources, that having patients and families understand that

not every child behavior is a pathology that needs to be treated becomes very difficult, especially when social media is telling them otherwise.

How do you work through or overcome your challenges or struggles?

I strive to be a good steward to ethical and equitable care. I do my best to take time to explain everything to each family and help them understand what is part of typical child behavior and when it becomes pathology or not. I also make sure that they understand that not all developmental delay is an Autism Spectrum Disorder and all differential diagnoses. Even if the family still does not agree, I know that I have done my best to make sure they have all the information they need to move forward and that I have referred the right patients to the right resources.

After work, what do you do for your own wellness?

After work, I make sure that I spend as much time as I can with my children. I do my best to put my own electronics away and focus on them. This is many times easier said than done. Sometimes, when I feel too overwhelmed, I will start with hugs and kisses and then ask them to join me in an outdoor activity, even if briefly, to just take a break from everything else.

From what/whom does your inspiration or motivation stem?

I decided I wanted to be a physician at 3 years old when I walked up to my grandfather with a stethoscope and said “I am going to make you feel better when I become a doctor.” This passion further flourished throughout my early years as I was inspired by my own pediatrician who I can best describe as a “stern Santa Claus”. Nowadays, my inspiration comes from my own children. My daughter often says that she wants to be a “doctor like my mama”. I want them to see how hard work and dedication pays off, and to always put family first.

Wellness Tip: What is the one thing you would recommend to our readership to do each day to take care of oneself?

A key wellness tip I would recommend to my fellow AAP members to do each day is to remember why you went into pediatrics. Centering ourselves each day with thoughts of our true passion should help us manage our stress with that happy reminder. If that doesn’t work, try hugging a loved one. On my worst days, I hug my children and tell them how much I love them.