



Perspective/Opinion

A Mentor and Mentee In Wausau

By Michele Montgomery, MD and Melanie Hellrood, MD

Dr. Montgomery, an experienced family physician on the MCW-CW faculty, and Dr. Hellrood, an MCW-CW alumna, share how their relationship, forged during Dr. Hellrood's clinical rotations, led to a career choice ...

Dr. Montgomery writes:

As a family medicine physician, I've had the opportunity to work with the MCW-Central Wisconsin students in both the clinic since the inception of the school and as a coach since I retired. I had a busy family medicine practice, including OB, with lots of children for patients, and hence it was a great teaching environment. Working with the medical students on an individual basis at the clinic was a capstone on my career. The students added so much to my day as well as to the patients' visits. Patients were eager to be seen by students and provided excellent feedback to them as well. The students loved being able to apply their newly gained knowledge to the actual practice of medicine.

One student, Melanie Hellrood, particularly comes to mind as she did her long-term clinical rotation with me in Family Medicine. She was a great student; a self-directed learner and a positive influence at the clinic where she was always keen to see patients and to provide them with a reassuring presence. I was thrilled to be asked by her to be her medical school graduation ceremony where I "hooded" her, a true honor.

She has since gone on to be a resident in Family Medicine Program at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. She plans to return to the Wausau community as a family physician and my hope is that she will work in the same clinic that I practiced in for over twenty-five years. She will be a continuation of the tradition of the clinic where quality is always a goal and where a physician can practice to the full extent of their talents. She will add to the community with her many interests and energized, outgoing personality.

Now that I am an Adjunct Assistant Professor at MCW, I have been able to see the inner workings of the campus, both as a coach and as an instructor of several bench-to-bedside sessions. The level of enthusiasm that both faculty and students contribute towards their medical education is very exciting. I'm impressed by the students' accomplishments and the fact that they match very well with the residency positions of their choice.

I think that MCW-Central Wisconsin demonstrates that medical education can take a different form and still be meaningful and have positive outcomes. It is a laboratory of ideas and will help shape medical education in the future.

Dr. Hellrood writes:

Working with Dr. Montgomery as part of my longitudinal Family Medicine rotation helped reinforce my desire that Family Medicine was the right fit for me and returning to Wausau was my goal after my training was complete. Her practice style, the nurturing environment of the clinic, and her patient panel were a perfect match for me and will set the standard for my own practice. The concept of MCW- Central Wisconsin is to inspire local students to eventually practice in the Wausau community has become a reality for me, in large part due to my experiences with Aspirus and with Dr. Montgomery.

Michele Montgomery, MD, practiced family medicine with OB for twenty-five years in Wausau, Wisconsin and is now an Adjunct Assistant Professor at MCW Central Wisconsin Campus.

Melanie Hellrood, MD, graduates this Spring from the Family Medicine Program at the University of Wisconsin and will start her practice at Aspirus.

