John Herling, MD

John Herling, MD (right) and son Patrick

Growing up in Plainview, Long Island, John Herling, MD remembers working the counter of the coffee shop at the small community hospital where his mom worked.“I would go to the hospital and see my mom there when I was a young kid. I just got intrigued by it all.”

That intrigue turned into action when John began pursuing a medical degree.As an undergraduate at the University of Colorado at Boulder, he did cancer research and taught in the microbiology lab.Herling then went on to medical school at Ross University.

The new doctor began his residency at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne.“I started out as a family practice resident, but was attracted to the Emergency Department (ED).You could always find me there,” says Dr.Herling.“At the time, the surrounding hospitals needed coverage for their ED, and I started moonlighting.Within six months, I was moonlighting at two hospitals. I got some of my colleagues from the residency program to start covering some shifts, and we started staffing many of the small hospitals in northern Indiana.At that point, I realized my passion was Emergency Medicine.

”Following his residency, Dr.Herling worked at a regional burn center in Indiana, and then moved to California to take a job in Redding.“I worked in Redding for 13 years,” says Herling.“I was the medical director for the flight program there. That work gave me a lot of joy.” It is also where he met Kim, a clerk in the ED.“I was about to take a job in Maui, and we started dating, and…c’est la vie,” chuckles Dr.Herling.

In 2002, the Herlings learned of a job opening at Eisenhower Medical Center. “Kim and I flew down to check it out,” Dr.Herling explains.“The facility at Eisenhower was beautiful, and the demographic was intriguing.We decided it would be a good move.” Seven years later, the Herlings are settled in the desert and enjoying their Palm Springs lifestyle. While Dr.Herling serves as Eisenhower’s Family Medicine Chair and works in the ED, Kim heads up the Cancer Registry at Eisenhower Lucy Curci Cancer Center.

Kim’s children from her first marriage are grown and out of the house; however, their son Patrick, 17, still pals around with Dad.“I’m an avid golfer,” shares Herling.“On my days off, that is what I usually do. I taught Patrick how to play, and he’s actually a lot better golfer than I ever was.” Patrick just graduated from high school and is headed to Gonzaga University in Spokane.“He’s going pre-med and wants to be a physician,” beams Dr.Herling.

After 25 years in the trauma trenches, John Herling has seen the gamut of human tragedy and experience.“You never know what’s going to come in the door,” says Dr.Herling.“That is what has always intrigued me about emergency medicine — to be able to evaluate and treat a wide variety of patients quickly and properly. It’s extremely challenging and gratifying.”

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