

UI Hematology/Oncology

# Connections

Winter 2017

## Weyburn Charts Future in Palliative Care, Health Administration



The answers may be good, they may be bad, but often just *knowing* is half the battle. It was the search for answers that nudged **Thomas Weyburn, DO**, into his medical career; and it's the desire to have honest, helpful rapport about what will be that keeps driving him forward.

Weyburn was born in Lombard, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago. "At a young age, I experienced the deaths of a couple friends and family members from cancer," he said. "I wondered why it happened. It piqued my interest to get greater understanding."

After graduating from the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine, completing his residency in family practice at LaGrange Memorial Hospital, and finishing an internship and residency in Internal Medicine at Lutheran General Hospital, Weyburn began his fellowship in the Hematology/Oncology Fellowship Training Program at University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics.

"I got an incredibly in-depth, well-rounded education at the UI," he said. "It was top-notch teaching and mentoring. The faculty—there are too many names for me to even mention—was completely vested in helping me succeed, whether I stayed on the academic side or went into private practice. It was a great time in my life."

Weyburn used that educational springboard to launch into practice as a hematologist/oncologist at North Shore Oncology, a private practice in suburban Chicago. His major interests include hospice and palliative care.

"I want to help patients at the end of life," Weyburn said. "I'm interested in developing relationships with patients and their family members. Helping them understand the state of their illness, and having open, honest talks about their care. I want to help them live out their illness in a dignified manner."

In the future, Weyburn sees the possibility of venturing into hospital administration. "With health care changing in regards to quality measures, fiscal responsibility, etc.—I want to help chart the future of health care delivery, especially in oncology."

For now, though, Weyburn is content to build his practice, and humbly appreciative of what got him there. "I'm forever grateful to all the staff and faculty at Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center," he said. "They helped prepare me for my calling—to take care of patients with cancer."



## Almost a Bus Driver, Alva Venur Takes a Different Route



It was a choice between driving a bus and becoming a doctor. And luckily for us, doctor won.

In Kudremukh, India, bus drivers are well respected because they're the primary connection for people living in smaller towns to get to the larger cities. For that reason, growing up, **Vyshak Alva Venur, MD**, strongly considered that career path—but becoming a physician was always his first choice.

"My inspiration was my grandfather. He lived in a village in rural India and was the only physician for several neighboring villages, covering a population of about 50,000" Alva Venur recalled. "He was a primary care physician, surgeon, ENT physician, ophthalmologist, and even obstetrician. He was diligent and skillful. I was wonderstruck by him."

After completing his medical degree at Armed Forces Medical College in Pune, India, and his residency at Fairview Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio, Alva Venur came to the UI Hematology/Oncology Fellowship Program based on the recommendation of a colleague. "So far it has been a wonderful experience," Alva Venur said. "The faculty here is appreciative, friendly and always approachable. The program has provided great opportunities for all-around development."

As part of that development, Alva Venur recently attended the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) FDA workshop. Select fellows from across the U.S. met with officials of the Oncology and Hematology Products (OHOP) division of the FDA and discussed the regulatory process in drug development.

"This workshop was a great opportunity to meet a who's who of the FDA and network with other fellows," Alva Venur said. "The workshop was so popular that the registration was full within 24 hours. It was only due to the timely application by my program director, Dr. Berg, and program coordinator, Jana Ringle, that I was able to go to such a great workshop."

Alva Venur met his wife, Rashi, in medical school and they have been married for four years. She is a hospitalist in internal medicine and hematology/oncology at the UI. In his spare time, Alva Venur plays the Indian flute, takes swimming classes, and does *not* drive a Cambus. He's a physician, and it suits him perfectly.

## Parting Shots

We'll leave you with a couple pictures from our first tailgate at the Iowa/Iowa State game...



...and shots of the 2016 ASCO Annual Meeting in Chicago.



Save the Date!  
6/3/2017



Join us at this year's ASCO Annual Meeting! You and a guest are invited to the **Iowa Night** reception hosted by the UI Division of Hematology, Oncology, and Blood & Marrow Transplantation. Complimentary hors d'oeuvres and beverages will be served.

**WHEN:** 6 to 8 p.m. Saturday, June 3

**WHERE:** Joliet Room, Hilton Chicago, 720 South Michigan Avenue