

WDS YOUNG PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT

Monica Boen, MD



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“It is all about who we meet and people who inspire us.”

Focus Board-Certified Dermatologist, Cosmetic Dermatology, Medical Dermatology

Location San Diego, California

<i>Education</i>	Dermatology Residency	University of Illinois at Chicago
	MD	Northwestern University
	BA – Biology, International Studies	Northwestern University

Dr. Boen grew up in Chicago, Illinois, and attended Northwestern University, where she graduated with a double degree in Biology and International Studies. She completed her medical degree at Northwestern University’s Feinberg School of Medicine. During medical school, Dr. Boen pursued her interest in global health and did medical rotations in South Africa and France. For dermatology training, Dr. Boen attended the University of Illinois at Chicago, where she served as chief resident. Further cosmetic surgery training included completion of a fellowship through the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery.

How did you become involved in the WDS and how did the WDS benefited you professionally and personally?

I got involved in the WDS early on with Dr. Amy Paller at Northwestern where I went to medical school. I actually helped to do a survey with her for the WDS. I contacted members and asked them about their experience, which got me excited about the organization. Dr. Kimberly Butterwick also introduced me to the WDS forums and events at conferences. The WDS helped me meet other women in dermatology where we talked about work-life balance, among other issues.

What are some challenges and lessons learned from post fellowship practice?

All things that are rewarding are hard. No one tells you how tough it is when you first start out; it is a roller coaster. You just got off your feet from residency and you learned all this knowledge in fellowship, but now you have to develop your own style of practice and help people get the best result. My first year out of fellowship was hard but very rewarding.

Advice for young physicians in choosing a career path?

It is hard to predict the future and what you want to do. I liked medical dermatology and had no idea that I would be on this path in cosmetic dermatology. My advice to young physicians is to have an open mind.

How did choose your career path evolve?

One of my mentors and residency program director, Dr. Tsoukas, introduced me to cosmetics. In addition, a previous fellow of Cosmetic Laser Dermatology (CLD), Dr. Monique Wilson, was a great mentor who got me

interested in cosmetics and helped me during fellowship applications. I always knew I wanted to do research but I didn't know that I will be doing cosmetic dermatology research, so it is all about who we meet and people who inspire us. That is how I got on this path and I am really thankful.

What future goals do you have?

One of my goals is to live a good life. I enjoy research and would like to be more involved by becoming a principal investigator on studies. Teaching and giving back are also goals of mine. Being half Asian and half Polish, I would like to help medical students from more diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and different ethnicities get into our field.

What is the best piece of advice you have received and from whom?

I received good advice from Dr. Goldman. His passion is to inspire happiness and he told me that it is not just about your career - you need to pick a place where you are happy.

Who are some of your mentors and how did they impact you?

I have a lot of mentors in my career who inspired me to give back to my field. Dr. Amy Paller was an inspiration and helped me get into research and dermatology. Dr. Butterwick is another inspiration here at CLD. She does those giant liposuction procedures even though she is tiny. I always thought liposuction procedures were for men but no, she is a lipo queen. Dr. Goldman gives me not only dermatology advice, but life advice as well.

Any advice on work/ life balance?

Work-life balance is not an easy thing. You have to do your best with what you have. I delegate a lot.

What do you enjoy in your free time?

I came from Chicago, which I love, but you can only be outside for few months each year. That is why I am so happy to be in San Diego. I can enjoy my hobbies all year round such as hiking, being outdoors, and cross fit training. I also enjoy food and love to travel.