

# WDS YOUNG PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT

## Sabrina Fabi, MD



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@Sabrina.Fabi

**“Success without fulfillment is failure.”**

<i>Focus</i>	Double Board-Certified Dermatologist, Dermatologic Cosmetic Surgeon	
<i>Location</i>	San Diego, California	
<i>Education</i>	Fellow	Goldman Butterwick Fitzpatrick and Groff, Cosmetic Laser Dermatology
	Dermatology Residency	University of Illinois College of Medicine
	Internship	St. Francis Hospital
	MD	University of Illinois College of Medicine
	BA – Spanish, Biology	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Sabrina Fabi, MD is a double board-certified Dermatologist and Cosmetic Surgeon, who is an assistant clinical professor at the University of California, San Diego. She is an ASDS Cosmetic Procedural associate fellowship director, and serves as a mentor and preceptor for dermatology residents through the ASDS, WDS and ASLMS. She is an associate and associate research director at Goldman Butterwick, Groff, Fabi, Wu & Boen Cosmetic Laser Dermatology, and is actively involved in multiple injectable, laser, and sclerotherapy clinical trials.

Dr. Fabi has authored over 100 medical articles, in addition to co-authoring 20 book chapters. She has also lectured nationally and internationally, in over 30 countries in both English and Spanish. She is a regular medical correspondent on Fox5 News San Diego. She has also been featured on the Latin-American television networks Univision and Televisa, the Sydney talk show, Studio 10, as well as the CBS show “The Doctors.”

She has been interviewed by numerous media outlets including Vogue, Elle, Redbook Magazine, Teen Vogue, People, Dr. Oz Magazine, and New You Magazine. She is a repeat recipient of the Patient’s Choice Award, as well as the Compassionate Doctor’s Award, Doctor’s Choice Award, Realself 100 award and has been selected as a Top Doctor by Castle Connolly and received the inaugural Exceptional Women in Medicine award.

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

I became involved with the WDS because many of the women that I admire and perceive as leaders of our field were actively involved with the WDS like Drs. Suzan Weinkle, Tina Alster, Mary Lupo, Deirdre Hooper and many others. I always admired, specifically in dermatology, how there is comradery among women.

It is a space where women really support each without seeing the cattiness among women in the work place, it just doesn’t exist. It has a lot to do with the female leaders in our space, all of which are WDS members. So I think professionally, it helped me have great role models as examples of how female leaders should be and how they pass it forward and do the same for future generations.

### **Advice to young physicians and residents in leadership?**

What helped me a lot is the Future Leader network through the ASDS. There were different modules and lessons that we went through to become better leaders. This is not something that we get trained to do but something that is necessary. As doctors, we are leading, we can't do it by ourselves. We have medical assistants, front desk staff, office managers, accountants, and book keepers we are dealing with. You have to remain the sound strong leading force. If you have a bad day, then everyone else have a bad day. We have to learn the tools to utilize in order to be able to remain positive, keep the vision, and steer everyone forward even when others get distracted.

In addition, we are in a position where we can empower others. It is important to remain aware of other people around us who rely on us to set an example. It is important to learn how to empower and encourage a team as well as other people who are learning from us so that they become the best expression of themselves.

### **Advice for budding dermatologists in choosing a career path?**

Follow as many people as you can, do as many preceptorship as you can and get a feel of where you get the happiest and what would you do if you didn't get paid. Money is not going to be enough to make you happy at the end of the day. It is going to be what you love, where you can get lost doing it over and over again because you would even do it for free. That is what the career choice would be.

### **How did your career path evolve?**

I didn't even know that I wanted to do cosmetic until about my second year of residency. I loved complex medical dermatology cases, I did a strong autoimmune connective tissue disease residency and I was great at it. But, I realized that I like the immediate gratification of doing a laser procedure and addressing my patients concerns without having to wait for a drug to kick in three months later, it was something that I was open to.

I did a preceptorship with Dr. Mitch Goldman and I realized that it is something I loved; it was not something that I got exposed to during residency, so what I thought that I really wanted might not be necessarily best for me and then I did a fellowship and the fellowship opened me up to things that I never thought I really like, like research and writing papers. If you like what you write about, you might be a great writer and if you like what you are investigating, you might be a great investigator. So, all of those things opened up for me because I found what I loved.

### **What leadership roles did you take during and after training? How did you become involved in those roles?**

For me, the first step was being a mentee through the Future Leader Network which primed me to become a leader in dermatologic surgery. Then doors opened through different committees in ASDS and WDS. I was put on social media and fundraising committees in WDS. The ones I really loved, I was promoted to the chair of those committees then I was invited to be a mentor through the Future Leader Network. That was one of the prominent leadership position that I took on in mentoring.

Also, being co-director of the ASDS cosmetic procedural fellowship is another leadership position I took on. I get to teach and touch the lives of many different residents and having an impact there which is, I think, one of the most meaningful leadership roles that I have.

### **What future goals do you have?**

My goal is to continue to educate and empower not only residents and fellows but also my patients. We have an ethical responsibility to educate our patients about the meaning of the cosmetic procedures we perform and the impact they have. At the same, we have the responsibility to make patients aware of biases they develop unknowingly especially with the widespread use of different social media platforms and filters.

**What is a piece of advice you would like to share with our audience?**

Success without fulfillment is failure. If you are not fulfilled with what you do and do it for the wrong reasons, you fail regardless of the accolades or titles you have.

**What motivates you?**

To be the best impression of myself and to inspire and empower other to do the same.

**What do you enjoy during your free time?**

I love to travel. I have been to 66 countries and my goal is to go to a 100 soon, to be with my friends and family, being surrounded by those that love me and those that I love. I don't necessarily have to do anything with them, but just their presence is enough.