

WDS YOUNG PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT:

A. Shadi Kourosh, MD, MPH



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@AskDermMD

“Try to learn something from everyone around you.”

<i>Focus</i>	Board-Certified Dermatologist, Patient Advocacy, Public Health	
<i>Location</i>	Boston, Massachusetts	
<i>Education</i>	MPH	Harvard School of Public Health
	Dermatology Residency	UT Southwestern Medical Center
	Internal Medicine Internship	Tulane Medical Center
	MD	UT Southwestern Medical School
	BA	University of Virginia

Dr. Kourosh is a board certified dermatologist and Assistant Professor of Dermatology at Harvard Medical School. She graduated from the University of Virginia with numerous honors and the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, receiving the institution's Excellence Award in Dermatology. She completed her internship in Internal Medicine at Tulane Medical Center, and dermatology residency at UT Southwestern Medical Center, where she received awards for Leadership in the specialty of Dermatology and for Outstanding Professionalism and Humanism as a physician.

Dr. Kourosh is committed to patient advocacy and solving public health problems for patients with skin disease. She developed the Skin Advocate iPhone App, a free iPhone application that connects patients with patient advocacy organizations for their skin conditions. She has published and been recognized in many publications, including the Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology (JAAD), JAMA Dermatology, Dermatologic Clinics, and Dermatology World Magazine. She serves as Editor-in-Chief of Dialogues in Dermatology, an AAD sponsored international educational series for physicians.

Dr. Kourosh serves as the Dermatology Department's Director of Community Health and staff dermatologist at MGH and the MGH Health Centers in Chelsea and Revere, increasing access to dermatologic care for underserved communities in the Boston area. She also advocates for patients at the national level as the State Advocacy Leader for Massachusetts in the AAD's delegation to Congress to protect medical research and affordable care for patients with skin disease.

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

I was encouraged by Lisa Garner and Marry Lupo who are past presidents of the WDS to become involved at the beginning of 1st year of my residency with the society. They recommended me to Diane Berson, the president of the WDS at the time. I served on multiple committees including the networking and international committees, in addition to organizing several local WDS events.

Advice to young physicians and residents in leadership?

The best advice I can offer for each young physician is to find areas in which they are passionate about and they feel they have a skill set to serve and to get involved in service in a way that feels authentic to them. When you

give back in a way authentic to you, wonderful things happen along the way and this benefits patients and the dermatology community. You can make amazing friends with same goals and passions as you do. This would be a path of service where you give back in a way that fits you.

Advice for young physicians in choosing a career path?

I think a key point in choosing a career path is to find the intersection of your passion and your skill set in an area which serves a need in the dermatology community. There is a book in the business literature “*Good to Great*” which discusses the Hedgehog concept, to find the intersection between passion, strength and skill set, and the need within the community.

How did you decide to become involved in academics? What are the challenges that you faced in academics?

For me, academia is a way of life. I was a high school chemistry teacher before medical school. Now, I teach dermatology instead of high school chemistry. I am at my best when teaching the next generation of dermatologists. Work in academia requires a balance of a lot of things including patient care, administrative responsibilities, teaching, grant applications and research projects. The challenge is to carry off the different responsibilities and to do the job well; it is a delicate balance.

What future goals do you have?

My future goals are to continue serving the AAD and WDS in areas aligning with my skill set in public health and public policy. I served as the state advocacy leader for the state of Massachusetts. In doing so I took patients to advocate for legislative issues in dermatology and was the representative to congress. I am also the editor in chief for *Dialogues in Dermatology*, combining a passion and skill set as a writer and the interest in medical journalism to serve the academy. It was exciting and rewarding to work with residents and young physicians who showcased their talents and contributions such as Alyx Rosen who served as a commentator for *Dialogues in Dermatology*. Finally, my current role as Chair of the Communication council for WDS allows me to use my skill set as an educator and my experience in media as a podcast editor for *Dialogues in Dermatology*. I plan to use my experience with education and media to serve the WDS.

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

That is a tough one, I learned so much from so many people. One thing that one of my attending’s taught me that every resident should hear is - try to learn something from everyone around you. It is easy to learn from people who make it easy to look up to them and respect them but you also learn from those who challenge us. It is important to put ego and obstacles aside and open eyes and ears to learn something from every person around you.

Who are your mentor(s) and how did they impact you?

Because of the WDS, I have so many amazing and inspiring mentors, this includes the leaders of WDS. My mentors are Dianne Berson, Lisa Garner, Mary Lupo, Susan Taylor, Alexa Kimbell, Janet Jackman, Wilma Bergfeld, Lynn Drake, Elise Olsen, Rhoda Alani, Erin Boh, Paul Bergstresser, Valerie Callender, and Amit Pandya.

What motivates you?

I think that the most important moments in my career as a physician have been some of the following; when a patient says “you saved me”, catching a diagnosis through sitting down with patients and helping them in a way that they understand how they can manage their disease, and sharing how to get coverage they need for medications. Knowing that you helped someone to live successfully and unafraid and made a difference in their life provides the greatest meaning to us as physicians. What is even adding more powerful meaning is teaching medical students and residents to be the next generation of physicians and patients’ advocates.

What do you enjoy in your free time?

I am a faculty advisor to the Harvard's literary society faculty advisor. I enjoy mentoring students and being a part of literary society. I also enjoy belonging to Harvard Archery Club. What I love the most is traveling and exploring the world and learning about different cultures.