

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 do a survey with her for the WDS where I contacted members and asked them about their benefit from the WDS. That experience got me excited about the organization. Dr. Kimberly Butterwick also introduced me to the WDS forums at conferences. The WDS helped me meet other women in dermatology at WDS meetings and events where we talked about life work balance among other issues.

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

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, 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. All things that are rewarding are hard. 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. I 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, Dr. Tsoukas, who was my residency program director, introduced me to cosmetics. A previous fellow of Cosmetic Laser Dermatology (CLD), Dr. Monique Wilson, was a great mentor who got me

interested in cosmetics and helped me in the process of fellowship application. 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 do like research and I would like to become more involved in research, to become a principal investigator on studies. I also like teaching and giving back. I am half Asian and half Polish, I would like to help medical students from more diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and different ethnicities to get into our field.

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

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

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 helped me get into research and dermatology and inspired me. Dr. Butterwick is another inspiration here at CLD who does those giant liposuction procedures and she is tiny; I always thought liposuction procedures are for men; men do those but no, she is a lipo queen. Dr. Goldman gives me life advice not only dermatology advice.

Any advice on work/ life balance?

It 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 in Chicago for few months a year. I am so happy in San Diego where I enjoy hiking and being outdoors. I also like to travel. I like food and thus I have to exercise; I do cross fit training.