

STANFORD REUNION 2016

ON MY FIRST DAY OF RESIDENCY, I was waiting outside the conference room and Rick Siegel came up. Are you a new resident? Yes. Come sit with me. In a minute you are going to see a stocky man with a large nose come in. He's Doctor Chase, and when this conference is over, you will say to yourself, If I'm ever sick, I want him to be my doctor. He was right.

Then one day Doug Ousterhout said, I see you're on the schedule to operate with RAC. It's a great day for you. He pushes along with his dental probe, you cut where he points and at the end of the day you will think you are the best resident who ever lived, then tomorrow when you are alone, you will say, what happened to me? I was so good yesterday. He was right too.

Lynette said, Dr. Chase wants to see you in his office so I was excited to see him. He said, Roland, I hear you are going to study in Paris. Yes. How are you going to pay for it? I don't know but we'll find a way. How much do you think it will cost? My wife says we can do it for \$3000 (it was 1974 and the Paris apartment was \$200/mo). Dr. Chase reached into his coat, pulled out his check book and gave me a check for \$3000. I had never had that much money in my hand in my life. He smiled and said, Have a great trip Roland. Pay me back when you can.

ON MY LAST DAY OF RESIDENCY, I asked some of my chiefs to tell me the single most important thing I should know as I leave Stanford.

Bob Mills said, Keep the overhead low. The higher the overhead, the more chances you will take to pay the bills. That ended my grandiose vision of Japanese screens and koi pond in my waiting room. He was right. But I still took some chances when I was young.

Lars Vistnes said, slowly and carefully, Just remember one thing. Your house is not your house, it is your wife's house. You are her guest. I said, That's it? He said, That's it, and he walked away. He was right.

Don Laub said, Be good to poor people. That resonated because June and I were both "poor people" – spent first three years of our lives imprisoned in internment camps for people of Japanese ancestry during WWII, including months in a horse stall at the Santa Anita race track. Our fathers were gardeners. After the war, my family lived in half a garage with no plumbing, water faucet was outside, Mom cooked on a double hot plate. So we started a donor directed fund with voluntary donations from doctors and their families, nurses, etc. on advice for Henry Kawamoto and Richard Dakin. Used funds mainly to give scholarships to poor students.

One evening after round we were sitting around in R213 when Don walked in. He said I'm worried about the high divorce rate in our residency, so tonight, bring your wives to my house at 6:00 PM and we are taking you to Marriage Encounter. We looked at each other. Is he crazy? Well, I went home and told June we decided that if the busiest man we knew was willing to spend a whole night with us, we better go, so we showed up at 6:00 PM but nobody else came. Don and Judy took us to their church where we did the Marriage encounter and we stayed

married 50 years until June died last year. We were always grateful that Don was interested in our welfare beyond medicine.

I am grateful to my teachers, Chase, Laub, Kaplan, Mills, Vistnes, Gorney, Falces, Jobe, Hentz, Pardoe, Kaufman, Gradinger, and many more. I am grateful to my chief residents, Ousterhout, Iverson, Henjyoji, Commons, Holderness; my juniors who were really co-chiefs, Wu, Coleman, who made my life easy; my fellow chief residents, Morain, Reichel and Rosenberg, a cheerful, supportive, collegial group of friends. Thanks also to the many wonderful others – Ott, Pearl, Bachelor, Brown, Stenger, Knapp, who I did my first breast reduction with when we were both first year residents, and countless others.

I am grateful that at Stanford, this center of academic excellence, some of the best lessons were from people trying to teach me how to be a better human being. I am grateful to be part of this legacy.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roland Minami". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping tail.

Roland Minami