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## Balancing Change

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# Balancing Change

*Ramsey Saba, Jordan Whatley, Amin Esfahani & Michael Rahimi*

*Photography by Jin Packard*

It is difficult to explain to those beginning their journey towards becoming a physician just how demanding it truly will be. For most, it is an ongoing process to integrate our innate drives for academic excellence, desires to serve our communities, and our obligations to our families, friends, and loved ones. We hope to find our own ways to balance our multifaceted experiences and still remain complete and competent physicians. In this photo essay, we wish to shed light on our colleagues who have gone above and beyond in the classroom, clinic, and community and have inspired us to better balance the challenges of being a medical student.



*Amin*

**Amin Esfahani** (Co-Editor in Chief - "I am on a life-long mission to find the perfect balance between harmony with my surroundings and evolving into the outstanding.")

**Mike Rahimi** (Co-Editor in Chief - "I believe that we all possess a creative spark, and that the art of medicine is as much an art form as visual, musical, or literary arts")

**Ramsey Saba** (Senior Art Editor - "Medicine can often be perceived as technical, mechanical, and even at times dry. There is an aspect of medicine, however, that not many see, the art of medicine. Finding art in the hospital, in the literature, and even in patients enriches my life giving me the perfect balance.")



*Jordan*

**Jordan Whatley** (Senior Graphic Designer and Managing Editor - "Creative pursuits not only provide catharsis in a career that is taxing by nature, but they also provide a remarkable opportunity to connect with patients on another level entirely")



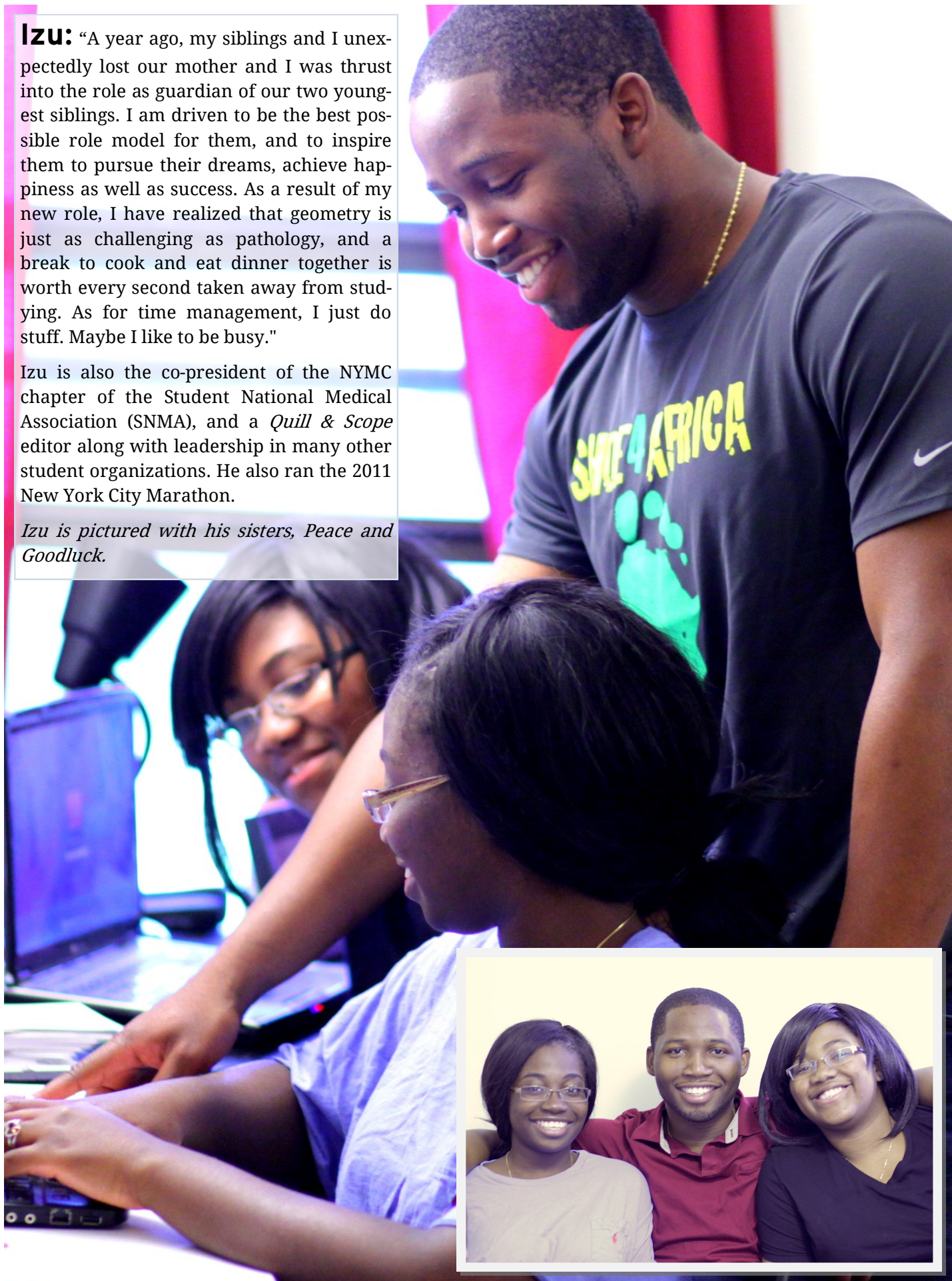
*Mike & Ramsey*



**Izu:** "A year ago, my siblings and I unexpectedly lost our mother and I was thrust into the role as guardian of our two youngest siblings. I am driven to be the best possible role model for them, and to inspire them to pursue their dreams, achieve happiness as well as success. As a result of my new role, I have realized that geometry is just as challenging as pathology, and a break to cook and eat dinner together is worth every second taken away from studying. As for time management, I just do stuff. Maybe I like to be busy."

Izu is also the co-president of the NYMC chapter of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA), and a *Quill & Scope* editor along with leadership in many other student organizations. He also ran the 2011 New York City Marathon.

*Izu is pictured with his sisters, Peace and Goodluck.*







**Mohamed:** "Medical school presented new challenges, not only for myself but for my family as well. I couldn't do it without their support. Balancing my schedule and prioritizing my responsibilities are constant challenges."

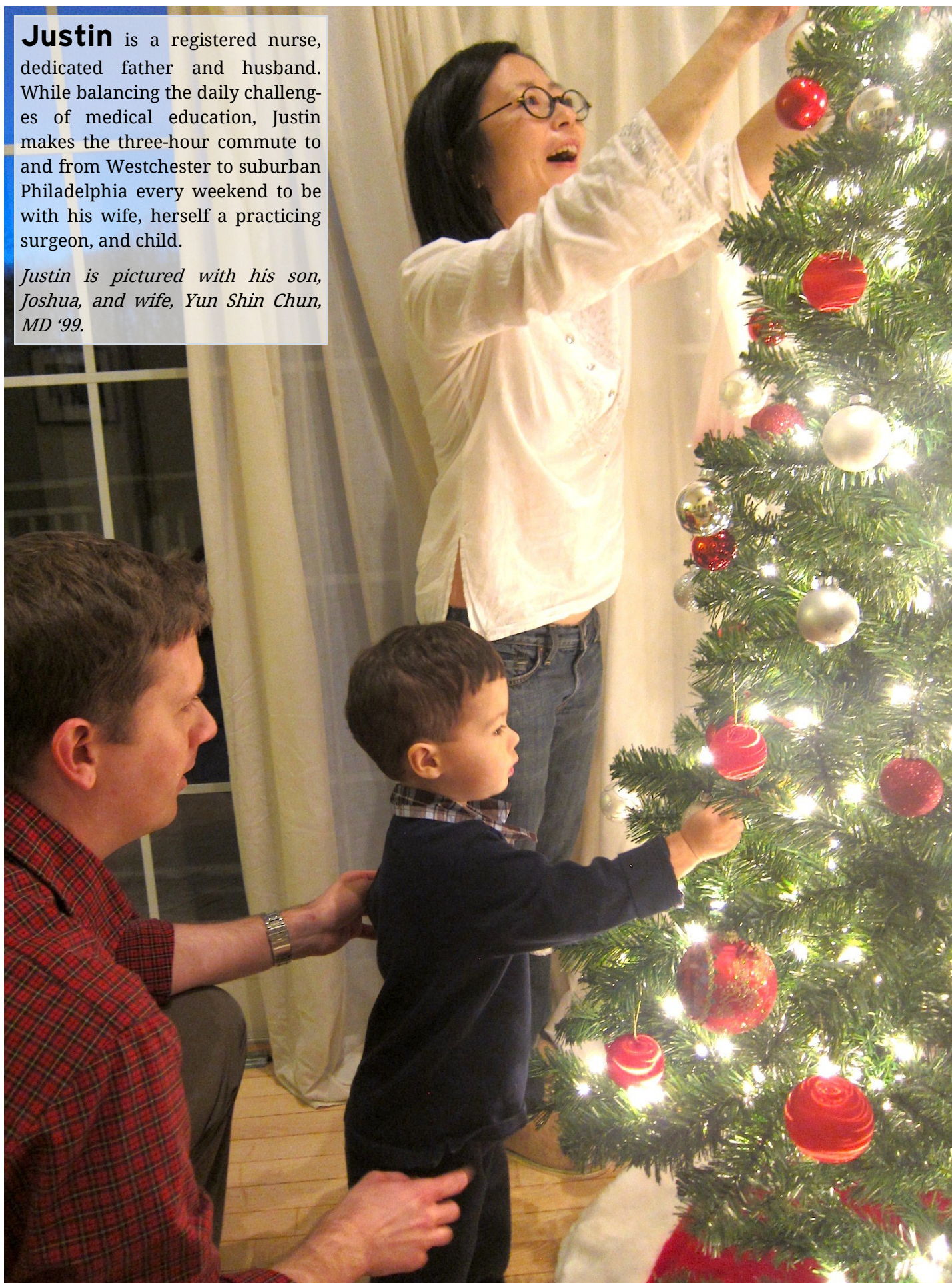
**Leila:** "We both had to be more creative with everything, from my work schedule to our family time."

*Mohamed is pictured with his wife, Leila, and his daughter, Anela.*



**Justin** is a registered nurse, dedicated father and husband. While balancing the daily challenges of medical education, Justin makes the three-hour commute to and from Westchester to suburban Philadelphia every weekend to be with his wife, herself a practicing surgeon, and child.

*Justin is pictured with his son, Joshua, and wife, Yun Shin Chun, MD '99.*







**Charles:** "The garden is a way for my wife and I to get away from our busy lives of mostly cerebral efforts. There's something primal that comes from putting in physical work and coming out with something you have created that speaks to our most basic, human drives. We love spending time out here building, planting, or putting in the long hours weeding to take us away from the worries about learning as much as we can. As a bonus, the food is delicious."

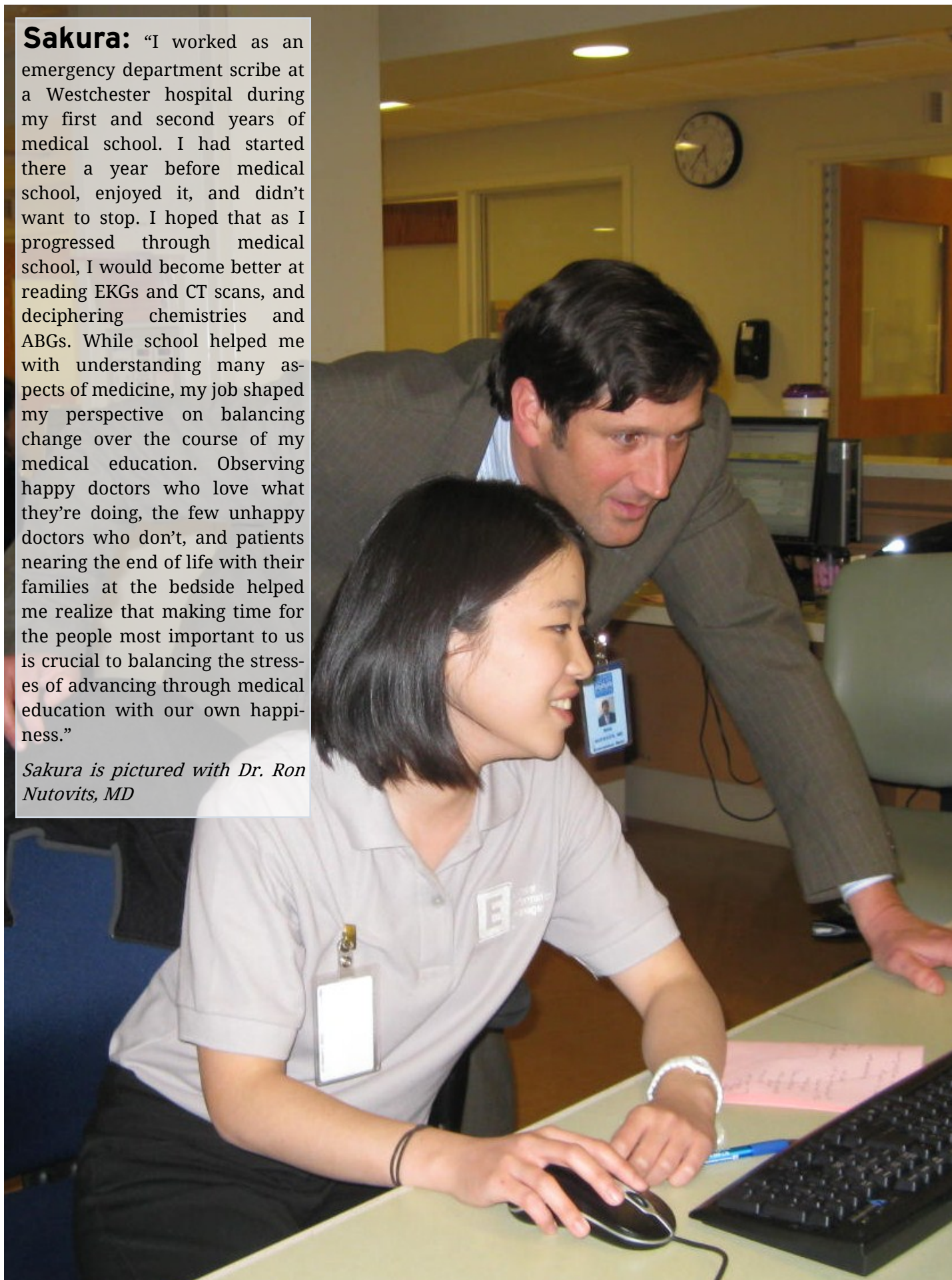
Charles runs the NYMC Community Garden and is a participant in the Navy branch of the Health Professions Scholarship program.

*Charles is pictured with his wife, Katrina.*



**Sakura:** “I worked as an emergency department scribe at a Westchester hospital during my first and second years of medical school. I had started there a year before medical school, enjoyed it, and didn’t want to stop. I hoped that as I progressed through medical school, I would become better at reading EKGs and CT scans, and deciphering chemistries and ABGs. While school helped me with understanding many aspects of medicine, my job shaped my perspective on balancing change over the course of my medical education. Observing happy doctors who love what they’re doing, the few unhappy doctors who don’t, and patients nearing the end of life with their families at the bedside helped me realize that making time for the people most important to us is crucial to balancing the stresses of advancing through medical education with our own happiness.”

*Sakura is pictured with Dr. Ron Nutovits, MD*







**Kenny:** "It is difficult to explain why I enjoy volunteer firefighting so much, but I can definitely say that it has helped me get through my second year of medical school. Volunteering with Valhalla FD allows me to get an escape from the everyday routine medical students find themselves in, and the excitement of a call helps to break up the monotony of studying. It has also given me an opportunity to get involved with the community outside of the hospital or clinic setting. I now know some great people that I otherwise would not have had the chance to meet."

As the co-director of the Overnight Host Program for interviewees, Kenny was a major contributor to improving the experience of prospective students.





**Max:** “Practicing my viola individually and collectively in ensembles for twelve years was ingrained as part of my identity so much so that I felt an emotional void after two months of not rehearsing once I began medical school. An older colleague serendipitously overheard my lamenting about not playing in an orchestra anymore, and he proceeded to tell me about Dr. Moshman’s community orchestra, the Albert Einstein Symphony Orchestra. I quickly contacted Dr. Moshman about joining, and since then I have become one of the regular faces in the orchestra—ready to perform in every concert for the past two years. Being a part of a music ensemble provides me with a sense of inner tranquility, and I have relied on this to manage stress and maintain mindfulness throughout my medical studies.” Max is also an elected student representative.

*He is pictured with his girlfriend, Kelley (below).*







**Kelley:** “After the first half of MSI, I began teaching ballet and jazz at Dance Expression of Westchester, the studio I taught at for three years prior to medical school. Although I love medicine, I found that keeping dance out of my life made it impossible for me to maintain my happiness and succeed academically. After adding five dance classes to my schedule I saw my grades consistently rise. My time at the dance studio gave me respite and the ability to give my all to my studies during the rest of the week. No matter how difficult classes were I was always able to look forward to seeing "my girls" each week. After my teaching was finished for the week I was ready with a balanced mind to take a seat and get serious studying done.” Kelley was a professional dancer before attending medical school.

*She is pictured with her boyfriend, Max (above).*







**Nathaniel** was born and raised in New Rochelle, NY and left to earn a Sc.B. in neuroscience and a M.P.H. from Brown University and is currently pursuing an M.D. at New York Medical College. His master's thesis reported the results of a randomized, waitlist-controlled study of an original school-based mental health intervention. After completing his MPH, Nathaniel was awarded a National Quality Scholarship by the American College of Medical Quality for his research on quality and performance improvement in physician practices. Alongside his academic work, Nathaniel has honed skills in coalition building, policy analysis and strategic communication. Between 2003 and 2008, he supported several successful legislative and constitutional changes in the Rhode Island General Assembly. He is currently a member of the Ethics, Professionalism, and Human Rights Committee and the Council of Student Members at the American College of Physicians. Nathaniel is principally interested in cultivating leadership to re-design the practice of medicine around the triple aim of better healthcare, better health, and lower costs. During his cherished leisure time, he can be found outdoors; hiking in the woods, camping in the desert, and learning new water sports.

*Nathaniel is pictured with his wife, Stephanie.*

