



Toby Clark

What Are You Going to Do for the Rest of Your Life?

In addition to being a servant and skilled formal Big L leader, Toby continues to be committed to educating and training young people and as such is a consummate mentor as his letter outlines. He is an example of being extremely influential as a little “L” leader in professional organizations having worked to assist informatics practitioners to achieve their own American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) Section. What is less obvious as you get to know him is he is an avid sailor who has sailed his boats up and down the East Coast for decades. Toby brings to his mentoring over 45 years of leadership and pharmacy teaching experience in both community and academic medical centers.

Toby received his bachelor of science in pharmacy degree from Ohio Northern University and his master of science degree from Wayne State University. He completed a residency at Bronson Methodist Hospital. He is currently an ASHP Residency Program Lead Surveyor and Practice Management Consultant.

In his letter he gives the following great advice: *One of the things that I learned is that an outward projection with a smile on one’s face as well as a happy hello works well in all human relations.*



Dear Young Pharmacist,

Your graduation event was very well attended, and you were very privileged to hear an inspiring speaker. Although I have known you for the past three years, it was fascinating to speak

with your parents after the graduation ceremony. They are as proud of all your accomplishments as am I. As one of your mentors, it has been my privilege to see you grow and expand your capabilities as you become a caregiver to patients. You asked me to summarize some of our discussions of the past years and project into the future a little.

Here is the question I pose for you. *What are you going to do for the rest of your life?* That question is coupled with another real thinker: *When will you retire?* The answers to those questions form the real basis of my personal thinking and reflections. Through our discussions, you have also learned to ask yourself, *What are my goals and how can I plan on reaching them?* As you know, only you can answer these questions. I have posed them in different ways to make you think about your answers as you complete your pharmacy education. Your life and your career are your responsibility. You cannot ask anyone else to live your life or pursue your career. We have talked about the value of post-graduate training until you did not wish to hear, read, or listen to me any more. But you are a smart person and you, by choosing to live a frugal life while in pharmacy school, kept your debt level low. That choice has now given you more options than many of your classmates who may drive newer cars, have taken vacations, wear more expensive clothes, but now have high debts to pay off. The wisdom of your no-credit-card debt philosophy will now pay dividends.

You have chosen to further develop your skills by completing a post-graduate year one residency. That decision will pay off greatly in your becoming a more competent pharmacist as you enter the work place. The added year of skill building and training will be very beneficial to you. We discussed at length the fact that you are giving up about \$60,000 of salary to get this added training. But this year of training prepares you to have options that many of your peers will not have. You can decide to get another year of training in a post-graduate year two program and become an expert or you can go on to a career-objective position knowing that you have training that others lack. Because you are a goal-oriented person you may even seek graduate training in management or in some other clinical aspect.

You will be better prepared to serve because of your investment in yourself. You already know that being satisfied and confident in your career is more valuable than the dollars you missed when in training. You cannot place a monetary value or a return on investment on career satisfaction. There is no greater satisfaction than waking up each