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It's Not Easy, But a Gal Can Have It All—Family and Successful Career

Kathy traces her career and personal life evolution, offering specifics that can benefit others, while sharing how she jointly raises children with her husband. She explains that intertwining career and family are just part of normal day-to-day living. There are times when work requires more attention and other times when family requires more—the key is to know when one requires more attention over the other.

Kathleen (Kathy) S. Pawlicki is currently Vice President and Chief Pharmacist at Beaumont Health with responsibility for pharmacy at one of the largest health systems in Michigan. Previously she was Administrative Director, Professional Services at Beaumont Hospital, with responsibilities for pharmacy and also several non-pharmacy departments. Kathy has served on the ASHP Board of Directors and as Chair of the ASHP Section of Pharmacy Practice Managers. She received her undergraduate degree in Pharmacy from Ferris State and her MS from Wayne State College of Pharmacy. Kathy completed a pharmacy residency at Providence Hospital, Southfield, Michigan.

Kathy's advice: ***Take the first step and get involved in your career beyond your "day job," and do something every year to recommit to that involvement.***



Dear Young Pharmacist,

When I graduated from high school, I had no expectations for what life would have in store for me. My only hopes were to graduate from college, get a good job, have a family, and contribute to the world in a meaningful way. Growing up in a small, rural farming town in the middle of Michigan, I would never have imagined the career opportunities and possibilities I have had the privilege to experience. Working hard, taking advantage of opportunities, and committing to family

and community were fundamental to my parents' belief system in their actions and words. Little did I know that these foundational principles would provide the tools and beliefs necessary to be successful in pursuing a career in pharmacy. Of course, it was up to *me* to put those qualities into action.

I always knew I would go to college, but I didn't have a clear career path. Only after I stumbled into a pharmacy one day to buy a medication did I consider pharmacy as a career. I met my husband (also a pharmacy student) while in pharmacy school, and we were married 2 weeks after graduation. When I entered the workforce in the early 1980s, I quickly began chiseling a career for myself as I learned about residencies and hospital pharmacy management tracks. I wondered how I could juggle a career and have a family at the same time. In my first years of practice, I asked several women for the key to successfully accomplishing this. I quickly learned that no one had the answer.

One would think that 30 years later, somewhere along the way, the question would be answered. However, I still see young men and women struggling with the same question and finding no perfect solution. What I have found as key ingredients are the same values my parents instilled in me: hard work, leverage opportunities, and commitment.

My husband and I have raised three children who are all successful in their own careers (a lawyer, an engineer, and a college sophomore—hopeful accountant). Managing both home and work life required hard work and a lot of organization, but it was all worth it in the end. For me, that meant late nights after the kids were in bed answering emails and working on projects, sharing the responsibilities at home with my spouse, and going the extra mile with my children. I was bound and determined that a two-income household would not prohibit my children from getting involved in activities. For us, this meant organizing our schedules to accommodate family. My husband took morning duty of breakfast and seeing them off to school; I took evenings, filled with pick-ups from daycare or driving them to activities.

I fulfilled my desire to become involved in professional organizations in those early years by sticking to local associations that required limited travel. I also felt it was important for my kids to have an understanding of where I went every day, rather than leave it to their imagination of why mom disappeared early in the mornings and was up late doing work. To satisfy my mind (and I hope my kids' curiosity), I made sure they visited my work occasionally and especially when I changed jobs. And finally, I made a personal commitment to myself that my children would have a home-cooked meal every night. So, we created a routine of shopping and cooking the following week's meals every Sunday. (I must confess we might have relied a little too heavily on crockpot meals, based on the looks I get from them now when I mention a good crockpot recipe!)