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## Keep Your Eyes Open and Seize Opportunities

Serendipitous opportunities mark Eric's career from taking an unfilled residency slot to creating the pharmacist's role on the transplant service that, at the time, was not "pharmacy friendly." These opportunities started with finding a purpose in clinical practice into now leading 35 clinical pharmacists; being recognized as a Fellow of the American College of Clinical Pharmacy and American Society of Transplantation; and serving as a contributing editor of *AJHP*.

Eric M. Tichy is currently Manager, Clinical Services, and Director, postgraduate year (PGY) 2 transplantation residency, Yale-New Haven Hospital. Previously, he was Senior Clinical Specialist, Solid Organ Transplant. Eric received his PharmD from the University of Connecticut and completed a pharmacy practice residency at Yale-New Haven Hospital.

Eric's advice is: ***Open opportunities for members of your pharmacy team and for mentees. By remaining positive, you can help them find valuable opportunities when they least expect it.***

 ***Dear Young Pharmacist,***

Growing up, my father often advised me to "keep your eyes open, because you might find something valuable when you least expect it." At the time, I thought he was referring to the possibility of finding loose change on the ground. However, as I have matured into a professional, that lesson has translated into the trick of recognizing a good thing when I see it no matter how odd or worthless it might initially appear, even if someone else just walked by and left it behind. Several times in my career, tremendous opportunities have serendipitously presented themselves. Executing them has resulted in a rewarding career. Those rewards include recogni-

tion as a Fellow of the American Society of Transplantation and the American College of Clinical Pharmacy; appointment as contributing editor of the *American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy*; and recognition as a Service Excellence Hero at Yale-New Haven Hospital.

The first of these key opportunities occurred during my last year of pharmacy school at the University of Connecticut. When I entered my P4 year, I lacked clear direction for my future career. However, I started my clerkship rotations with my eyes wide open. Although I had worked in both the community pharmacy setting and at a small hospital throughout pharmacy school, I had not done my homework on residency training. This lack of appreciation for the value of residency left me in a position where I did not attend the ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting nor did I participate in the residency match. I did, however, apply for an entry-level pharmacist job at Yale-New Haven Hospital; when they were left with an unmatched residency spot, I was at least astute enough to accept the residency position instead of the staff position. The key factor to getting that residency spot was my demonstration of excellence in my clerkship while at Yale-New Haven, and that body of work made all the difference in creating the conditions for the next opportunity.

After completing my residency, I worked in the clinical float pool at Yale-New Haven. This gave me the opportunity to practice throughout the organization in multiple specialties including critical care, medicine, surgery, and even pediatrics. Three years later, Yale-New Haven made significant investments in the organ transplant service line, and the new Program Director—a surgeon—made hiring a dedicated transplant clinical pharmacist a high priority. Prior to this time, the transplant service was not considered “pharmacy friendly,” and I was stunned to hear one of the transplant surgeons express on rounds in the surgical intensive care unit that he “did not see why a clinical pharmacist was needed.”

Needless to say, there was little to no interest from the rest of our clinical pharmacy team in this position. In fact, I did not apply for the position when it first opened. Fortunately, at the time there were few transplant pharmacy residency programs; therefore, the leadership at Yale-New Haven was not successful in recruiting a candidate from outside the organization. Two of my mentors, Lori Lee, the Clinical Manager, and Lisa Stump, the Director of Pharmacy, helped me see the golden opportunity of the transplant pharmacist role. They committed to supporting my attendance at national conferences and site visits to other transplant programs; they saw that my purpose was to make Yale-New Haven a nationally recognized practice of excellence in transplant pharmacy. I now manage the transplant pharmacy clinical team that includes two abdominal organ transplant pharmacists, a heart transplant and advanced heart failure pharmacist, and a PGY2 resident.