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Are You Going Places or Being Taken?

Jenny is a pharmacist who is definitely going places. In her letter, Jenny describes the compelling path to her current role as Director of Practice Development, Washington State Pharmacy Association.

Jenny received her BS in Microbiology at the University of Washington and her PharmD degree (2006) also at the University of Washington, School of Pharmacy. Jenny completed an ASHP-accredited pharmacy residency at Swedish Medical Center, Seattle, Washington.

Jenny's advice is: I hope you are going places and not being taken. Find your passion and live it. Walk down your path with the confidence and grace that you have worked so hard to achieve.

Dear Colleague,



Are you going places or being taken? This statement was on a daily inspiration desk calendar that I read at just the right time in my life. I felt like I was waiting to be taken, and I was fed up by it. That simple quote led me to find the profession of pharmacy, my wonderful husband, and an internal strength and drive guiding me to this day. *How could one quote do all those things?* At that time, I wanted to climb and be surrounded by rocks and mountains in the Pacific Northwest, so I decided to take a climbing class. During a climb up Guye

Peak, Lynda Tanagi, a pharmacist at the University of Washington Medical Center, told me about her profession, and I have never looked back. One of my good friends took the climbing class with me, and he is now my husband. That climbing class helped me reach many summits in my life!

During pharmacy school I intended to be an inpatient pharmacist, most likely in the intensive care unit (ICU). I enjoyed working with the ICU's health-care team and solving unique pharmacologic challenges in acutely ill patients. I had a wonderful internship in a small hospital with strong mentors who are now friends. I completed a residency at a larger health system, but in the spring during my residency year, I was spun around completely on my axis. In the ICU I saw the same patients return with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and chronic heart failure exacerbation who wouldn't be there if they had access to the right medications and education. This was before reducing readmission or transitions of care efforts. I realized that I needed to leave the inpatient setting so I could work to keep people *out* of the hospital. I transitioned to a unique role in an independent community pharmacy. There, I could use my clinical knowledge to help patients in their homes understand and take their medications—and I know I kept them out of the hospital. I was also able to establish new collaborative practice protocols, expand our vaccine recommendations, and more.

Moving to the community was scary for me. Although I had many amazing community pharmacist mentors, I had never pictured myself as one. I soon realized and respected the breadth of knowledge a community pharmacist has; they must know almost all the medications! No longer did I have the luxury of having a tremendous depth of knowledge about relatively few medications and guidelines. I had to know medications differently, thinking about patient counseling points and long-term side effects. However, the system I had developed during my residency to learn and use resources prepared me for this change. My experience in the inpatient setting was essential for helping patients transition after hospitalization and troubleshoot medication discrepancies. I was able to leverage partnerships with medical practitioners I met on the inpatient side into initiatives for the community setting.

Another unplanned opportunity presented itself a few years later. I was asked to apply for the Director of Practice Development position at the Washington State Pharmacy Association (WSPA). I had been an active member in the association since I was a student. Working for the WSPA would allow me to help Washington state pharmacists innovate and create new clinical roles. I was highly motivated to explore how pharmacists could bill for patient care, such as the care I had provided through the community pharmacy, and I was excited by