

Leaving a Legacy

In this issue of *Glaucoma Today*, an international group of exceptional physicians share perspectives regarding glaucoma care in their respective countries. Their insights are astute and provocative, and I am grateful to them for their significant contributions to global glaucoma diagnosis and management. This collection of articles in this issue made me reflect on why we practice medicine the way we do in our particular areas of the world. In a society all too often dominated by egocentric thinking, we physicians sometimes lose perspective as to the actual realities of the world's economy. The positive impact and legacies that these doctors will leave for their patients and countries are quite profound.

This cover series inspired me to ask what is required to maximize our opportunity to leave an enduring positive legacy for those around us. My guess is that some of the most influential people are those who largely remain unknown and have never sought the acclaim of the world. They are simply capable individuals who observe the needs of others and seek to make a difference in their arena of expertise. They are men and women of character who invest in the lives of those around them.

Recently, I was asked to ponder the following questions:

1. Name the five wealthiest people in the world.
2. Name the last five Heisman Trophy winners.
3. Name the 10 people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer Prize.
4. Name the last half dozen Academy Award winners for best actor and actress.
5. Name the last decade's World Series winners.



It is fascinating to realize how quickly we forget the headliners of yesterday, despite the magnificent achievements they proclaim. Yet the applause dies. Awards tarnish. Achievements are forgotten. Accolades and certificates are buried with their owners.

Try another quiz and see how you do on this one:

1. Name a few teachers who aided your journey through school.
2. Name three friends who helped you through a difficult time.
3. Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile.
4. Name a few people who have made you feel appreciated and special.
5. Name five people with whom you enjoy spending time.

The lesson: The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money, or the most awards. They simply are the ones who care the most. ■

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