


[HOME](#)
[BLOG](#)
[Log in](#)
[Free Trial](#)
[Leaders In Medical Education](#)
[Leaders In Nursing Education](#)
[Osmosis Updates](#)

Leaders in Medical Education: Dr. Brett Coldiron, President of the American Academy of Dermatology



We are excited to feature Dr. Brett Coldiron, FACP, in our Leader's in Medical Education Series. He is a distinguished MOHS Surgeon and has treated over 40,000 skin cancer individuals throughout his career and currently runs the Skin Cancer Center in Cincinnati, OH. He has also previously served as president of the American College of MOHS Surgery. He is currently president of the American Academy of Dermatology.

How did you decide on a career in medicine?

I read several inspirational books, including "the intern", and "the making of a surgeon" when I was sick with scarlet fever, when I was 10 years old. I knew I wanted to be a doctor, and have worked at that

since then.

What made you pick dermatology as your specialty?

I loved Internal medicine but not many people got well. I rotated on Dermatology and a lot of people got well, and almost all got better, and they were happy. The happiness is palpable in Dermatology. It is important to me.

It seems that more medical students are pursuing interdisciplinary careers and degrees (MD/MPH, MD/MBA, etc). Can you describe how you managed to combine your career in medicine with your

interest in publishing?

I did 7 years of residency after medical school. My papers have become more focused as my career has progressed and informational needs have become more apparent. I think it is good that medical students have additional degrees; they will be better prepared for a changing world. Opportunity presents itself to the prepared mind.

Every few weeks there appears to be a new report discussing burnout rates of physicians and the fact that many would decide not to pursue medicine if given the chance. In this somewhat disheartening environment, do you have any advice for current medical students about avoiding burnout? Or more general advice?

I would pick my specialty carefully based on my personality traits. If you are rough and tough, general surgery and the ER are for you. If you hate conflict, consider anesthesia or radiology. If you really like to share lives with your patients, family medicine and internal medicine can't be beat.

I would avoid debt as much as possible. I would postpone marriage until after internship, it isn't fair to a relationship.

I would avoid chasing income as a holy grail. The more money you make the more you spend, on relatively useless things. Consider your dying day, looking back down the road, and how you will feel about your career, life and most importantly forget family.

What are the top two or three things you would change about the way we train our physicians?

I think the tuition medical schools charge is outrageous. I think medical students have become profit centers. How can Caribbean medical schools charge less than the US schools, and make a profit? How much does a lecture hall cost to rent?

The debt students carry into residency is a curse and ruins lives, eliminates choices, and careers. I think any "debt" to society is paid back being a scutmonkey the third and fourth year of medical school and the payment of near minimum wage during an abusive 3-5 years of residency in a charity hospital.