

To Be a Learner Again

JUDITH YATES, M.D., HAS PRACTICED

internal medicine for 23 years. She recently completed a year-long fellowship in women's health at the U-M Medical School, spending three weeks each month doing clinical work in psychiatry, endocrinology, obstetrics/gynecology and other specialties, and the last week back in Traverse City, Michigan, seeing her patients.

INTERVIEW BY WHITLEY HILL

PHOTOGRAPH BY J. ADRIAN WYLIE

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MY YOUNGEST SON FINISHED HIGH school last year and I was feeling restless with my work. I wanted to do something academic. Gearing up, I was anxious. I just didn't know what I was getting into, how people were going to receive me. In some cases, I was old enough to be the faculty member's mom, but instead I was the student! It seemed to go over well with the patients. A lot of them said, 'Good for you!'

“When I was in medical school at Stanford, there was a kind of feeling that local doctors weren't academic and don't keep up-to-date. But the people I worked with at Michigan were very respectful of the knowledge base I came with from my work on the front lines of keeping people healthy and taking care of patients with chronic illnesses.

“It's been such a great thing for me, at the age of 52, to go back to school, to fall asleep reading a medical school textbook again. ”

— JUDITH YATES



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