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Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Steven Landau

Dept. of Anesthesiology

I grew up in Southern California. I attended K-12 schools in Glendale, California, then went to UCLA for my undergrad degree, and finally to UCI (Irvine, California) for medical school.

My father, Robert, was a general practitioner, and I suppose my earliest influence towards a medical career was him. We would occasionally go on hospital rounds together when I was a kid (that meant I ate ice cream in the doctor's lounge while he saw patients). I thought that being a doctor's son was prestigious in a way.

I majored in psychobiology at UCLA without any clear direction for the future. I was very interested in psychology, but the friends I made during college all were determined to become doctors. I followed their lead (thanks, Seth!) and found myself applying to medical school.

I enjoyed most of my medical school rotations thoroughly and was undecided as to my specialty of choice. I chose a traditional rotating internship at a county hospital in San Bernardino, California, while I figured things out. An attending surgeon helped me make the decision to pursue anesthesiology.

I was accepted by the University of Michigan outside of the match for my anesthesiology residency and then subsequently for a cardiac anesthesia fellowship. I had a "gap year" before starting the residency and spent that time working in the UM Department of Anesthesia's cardiac anesthesia lab. The attendings I worked with in that lab were instrumental in my subsequent success as a resident, fellow, and anesthesiologist. One in particular (thanks, Charlie!) was a role model for my interpersonal and teaching approach.

I was in private practice for 29 years before coming to St. Joseph Mercy Oakland and becoming involved in Wayne State resident teaching in 2019. My teaching approach is to be friendly and supportive. I prefer to draw out what the learner already knows about the subject and help them discover what they don't yet know. Meaningful learning often needs to be interactive, experiential, and incremental.

COVID-19 has produced challenges with interactive learning approaches. Zoom meetings have distanced the learner from the teacher, which is unfortunate. I feel that small group discussions in person are still the best, whether in the OR, bedside, or the conference room.

I would recommend Harvard's excellent teaching seminar, [Principles of Medical Education: Maximizing Your Teaching Skills](#). I attended this course in 2019.

I am so grateful for the people along the way who have shown interest in me, created opportunities and inspiration. It is hard to know in what little way you may affect people who you meet in the teaching environment. I try to remain hopeful and enthusiastic!