

# news THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER AT DALLAS

Southwestern medical school ■ graduate school of biomedical sciences ■ school of allied health sciences

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\*\*\*\*\*Hope and Art Garcia came to medical school by different paths.

DALLAS-- Around The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas people call them--or should call them--"the recruiting Garcias."

Second-year medical student Art Garcia has traveled Texas recruiting chicano students' applications. He said he tells them it's their responsibility to come to medical school in Dallas and help take care of the Mexican-American population. He said many times "it really hurts" when a Spanish-speaking patient comes to the Parkland Memorial Hospital emergency room. Usually there's no doctor who can talk with them.

Dr. Hope Garcia, a Dallas anesthesiologist in private practice and Art's sister, was a little late to the interview scheduled after the medical students' Cinco de Mayo luncheon. She apologized.

"I just ran into a woman who's interested in going into anesthesiology. And anesthesiology is a neat field for women," she said. The Southwestern graduate said she pushes anesthesiology for women because anesthesiologists can be independent and because "you're not so much recognized as being a woman as you are for the work that you do."

The Garcias, Arturo and Catalina Esperanza, natives of El Paso and first generation Americans, are not militant about celebrating Cinco de Mayo (May 5), one of Mexico's two independence days.

"It's fun, and I get excited about it like the Irish get excited about St. Patrick's Day," Hope said.

Art said the two independence days are convenient times for students to celebrate-- May 5, the anniversary of independence from France, is near the end of the school year and September 16, commemorating independence from Spain, is a good time for a get-acquainted party at the beginning of the school year.

The Garcias came to Southwestern by different routes. Hope said she had known she would be a doctor ever since her mother gave her a doctor bag when she was five years old. She didn't have any doubts that a woman could be a doctor because the doctor they went to at a Methodist-supported clinic was a woman.

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"She was the first doctor I knew," said Hope.

"I interviewed at Galveston, too, but it scared me. I had always lived in El Paso, and the green and black stuff growing on the houses in Galveston was scary," she said. So Galveston's mildewed houses caused her to choose Dallas.

After graduating here, she interned at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas where she worked with Dr. Bryan Williams. She said Dr. Williams was very supportive of her as an intern.

"I became very aware that I was really a doctor. I stopped chewing my nails, because what patient would want to have a doctor that chewed her nails," she said.

After her internship she did her anesthesiology residency at Parkland under Dr. Ed Johnson. Coincidentally, Hope visited with both Williams and Johnson, who attended the Cheon as associate dean and assistant dean of student affairs for Southwestern. Art also praised Dr. Williams, "our patron saint."

Art was a later convert to medicine as a career, partly he said because he lived with Hope when she was in medical school, and he never saw her other than "with her nose in a book." So he became a high school biology teacher.

While he was at North Dallas High School, his brother-in-law in the Dallas Fire Department asked him to help with minority recruitment. In the process of helping with recruitment, Art decided to take the test himself just to see how he would do on it, and somehow he became a fireman.

Just after rookie school he entered the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) program, where he trained to work in an ambulance.

"I guess I opted for the EMT program for two reasons--I felt like I could do a better job working on an ambulance, and maybe the biggest reason was I was just scared silly of being burned," Art said.

The turning point came one Labor Day when Art delivered a set of twins. He said he felt ten feet tall, and that's when he decided to become a doctor.

He took the exams and applied here and in Guadalajara, where he was accepted. Then he took the medical college admissions test again and went to Guadalajara with the idea of coming back to a U.S. medical school.

"I just shot-gunned the United States as far as applications went--any place that was asking for minority students, Texas in particular," he said. He had interviews here, in San Antonio and in Denver and "went back to Guadalajara to just sit and wait."

While he was studying for his last final, an embryology final, his brother-in-law called from Dallas to say that Art had received a letter of acceptance from Southwestern. After throwing his embryology book across the room, he woke up his roommates for a party. He went to the final the next day and turned in his name on a sheet of paper, telling the astonished professor that he was returning to Dallas that day.

He worked the rest of that year in the cardiopulmonary lab at Methodist Hospital, waiting to begin his freshman year at Southwestern.

Asked how their family feels about having two doctors in the family, Hope said their parents are proud of them but would be proud of them no matter what their occupations were.

As children, Hope and Art's parents, Catalina and Arturo Garcia, moved from Mexico El Paso with their families. Retired now, they supported and educated six children, Mrs. Garcia as a cashier with the water utility company and Mr. Garcia as a mechanic. Mr. Garcia still lives in El Paso and Mrs. Garcia is a resident of San Antonio.

Art said his sister both encouraged and discouraged him as far as attending medical school.

"I knew he could do it. I just didn't know whether he would want to work that hard," Hope said.

"I've never told Hope this before, but she's my ideal medical student. And I hope what the other docs think of me comes close to what they think of her," Art said.