KAMILLA JEWELL BUDDEMEIER MD, FACC, FSCAI

by Dan and Kamie Buddemeier

I was born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1954. My early life was shaped by moving every couple of years to different places in the Midwest. I believe these regular moves contributed to my flexibility in life in general and gave me a type of fortitude to be able to embrace change. My parents were extremely supportive and I was embedded with the belief I could become anything I wanted. Being a girl child was never brought up as an issue or problem. I came of age during second wave feminism and felt I was equal to men and up to any task I may want to take on. Somewhere from the culture I also picked up the idea that I needed to be able to support myself and not rely on a man.

My first degree was a BS in Medical Technology in 1976, a profession that allowed easy access to good jobs and financial independence. After 7 years of working in this field, I needed more challenge and wanted to make a bigger difference in the world. I decided to change careers and went to Medical School in 1983 and earned my MD 1987 at Indiana University in Indianapolis. I married the love of my life in 1987 and we moved to Wisconsin. I did an Internal Medicine Residency at UW Madison 1987-1990. We then moved to Chicago where I did a general Cardiology fellowship 1990-1993 and then an Interventional Cardiology fellowship 1993-1994. Both fellowships were at Rush Presbyterian St. Luke's in Chicago. I was the first female Interventional Cardiology fellow at Rush Pres St. Lukes. There were only 2 highly coveted and competitive Interventional Cardiology spots per year and I got one of them. As far as discrimination, I do remember a few offhand comments that a non-invasive cardiology career may allow an easier schedule for raising kids. That was true but I had to go with my passion, not what was easiest.

I had both of my children during my medical training, one during residency and one during fellowship. I felt very little discrimination and was very respected in the medical field. I believe this was because I believed in myself and I credit my parents for allowing that to be possible. I began my Interventional Cardiology career at the Marshfield Clinic in 1994. I was the first, and so far the only, female Interventional Cardiologist at the clinic. I never felt discrimination at my job because of being female. As far as my impact on women, I led more by example than overt activism. In this way I was able to influence and be a model for female medical students and residents. Patients were sometimes surprised to find they were seeing a 'lady' cardiologist. I don't know of any patients put off by me being female and I believe they were encouraged by my confidence, expertise and compassionate approach to care.



Kamie Buddemeier

It has been the honor of a lifetime to impact so many lives. It has also been a thrill to crash the glass ceiling of Interventional Cardiology as less than 5% of Interventional Cardiologists nationally are female. In addition to saving lives, my crowning achievement during my 25 years at the Marshfield Clinic was to develop the first heart attack transfer program in central/northern Wisconsin. This program, called Rescue1, allows rapid lifesaving coordination of services to get a heart attack patient to our medical center and in our cardiac catheterization lab where the blocked artery can be swiftly opened and stented.

In addition to my career, I am very happily married to Dan Crump and have 2 wonderful children, Michael and Naomi. I am also a Zen practitioner and became an ordained Zen monk in 2008. I love to travel, hike, volunteer at the pet shelter and dabble in the mosaic arts. My life's path has been blessed by so many mentors and teachers. I've received instruction ranging from the very conventional to the very esoteric, from the masculine/patriarchal disciplines to indigenous wisdom and the divine archetypal feminine. Curiosity and an open mind have been my inner guides. It is my true belief that we can all access our inherent wholeness and basic human goodness.

Although I am now retired from the clinic, I feel my life's next series of adventures and endeavors are just beginning. I am wide open to the surprises of the future as well as the simple glory and beauty of everyday life.