Deb Doubek, M.D., is named 2013 KAFP Family Physician of the Year

21 years after her father, Deb Doubek accepts the honor making them the first ever parent-child winners

Deb Doubek, M.D., and her father, Herb Doubek, M.D., have much more in common than the abbreviations that follow their last names.

Deb recently was named the Kansas Family Physician of the Year by the Kansas Academy of Family Physicians (KAFP). She accepted the award 21 years after her father was honored with the accolade, making them the first parent-child duo to each hold the title.

The two also have the same natural ability to make you feel like the most important person in the room and shift the focus from themselves to anything else, even when the topic is specifically about them. And each are humble and passionate, not only about their careers, but about life in general.

“I am very, very proud of her, she deserved it,” Herb says of his daughter. “She is a dedicated and committed physician.”

Deb demonstrates that passion in all aspects of her practice, to her patients and even at the additional position she holds at the local hospital on her day off each week.

**Choosing her path, serving with a passion**

“She is 10 times smarter than I am and much more dedicated, and she does a better job than I did,” Herb says. “Outside of that, we’re about the same.”

Though it seemed like an obvious career choice, Deb didn’t immediately decide to become a doctor. She wanted to be sure of her footing before following in her father’s steps.

“I knew I always wanted to do something within the field of medicine,” she says. “I have a caretaker personality. I looked into other things – medical tech, physical therapy. It took me a couple years after college (before I knew). I had a degree in biology and worked for a few years, then I matured and figured out that it was what I wanted to do.”

Deb currently practices at Stonecreek Family Physicians in Manhattan, which she helped start in 1999.

With an additional board certification in Obesity Medicine, Deb is able to practice further in the area she is naturally drawn to.
“It’s nice in family practice,” she says. “You get to do a little bit of everything, but have an area of interest that you can get board certified in.”

On her day off each week, Deb works at Manhattan’s Mercy Regional Health Center Weight Loss Clinic as a contracted employee that uses a team approach with a dietician, personal trainer and psychologist. She helped create the program Mercy LIGHT (Lose Inches to Gain Healthier Tomorrows) in 2006.

She also serves on multiple boards and in organizations that she is passionate about, including Student Mobilization, a nonprofit student organization on campus at Kansas State University and the Flint Hills Community Clinic, Manhattan’s free clinic serving the uninsured. She also helped found the clinic, which has provided more than 7,000 free appointments in the last five years.

**A family of medicine, night of celebration**

At the KAFP Annual Meeting, Deb officially accepted 2013 Family Physician of the Year honor in front of colleagues, friends and 30 family members – 21 years after she watched her father receive the same award.

“Twenty-one years ago, I never dreamed I would be here.” Deb says. “It was just a wonderful evening.”

The award hasn’t changed her day-to-day outlook or how she serves her patients, she says, but the recognition is huge.

“It’s just an honor and it means that people appreciate what I do and there’s respect that’s involved. That’s priceless,” she says. “I’ve been involved with KAFP for years and you look at over all the years at the people that receive this award, you never dream that you’re going to be up there some day. It’s fantastic and humbling.”

Manhattan, a community of about 50,000, is a small, close-knit city, Deb says. News of the honor spread quickly and many patients have sent her cards and comments of their support. For Deb, though, the most important support comes from her husband of 28 years, Rep. Tom Phillips, a Kansas state legislator, and their two sons, Nathan, 24, and Neil, 21. Both Nathan and Neil are following in their mother’s medical footsteps. Nathan is pursuing his Masters in Health Care Administration, while Neil, majoring in genetics, took the MCAT this summer.