Writing your Memoirs

The Pediatric History Center encourages pediatricians to compose their memoirs in order to provide a record of their activities for the future. These personal accounts are a valuable resource for the understanding of the profession of pediatrics that provide researches with important resources about the experience of practicing pediatrics and presents a unique perspective to the history of child health care.

To encourage individuals to document their own experiences in the practice of pediatrics, the Pediatric History Center has prepared the following suggestions for composing a memoir.

- **Background:** Describe your family background, ancestry, ethnic or religious background, etc.

- **Experience:** Discuss your life experiences, childhood, early education, and what led you to decide to become a physician.

- **Education:** Describe your medical education, including your internship and residency. Where did you go to school? What were your experiences? When and why did you choose pediatrics as your area of specialization? Did you encounter any difficulties because of race, gender, or origin?

- **Practice:** Describe your experiences in the practice of pediatrics? Did you practice alone or with other pediatricians? What sort of challenges did you face (e.g., epidemics, common injuries, substance abuse, violence, etc.). Do include the funnier incidents as well as the grimmer ones.

- **Experience outside of the practice:** Did you serve in the military? Did you teach or conduct research? Describe these experiences.

- **Serving the Medical Profession:** When did you join the Academy? Describe your experiences within the Academy as well as with other medical organizations.

- **Reflections:** Reflect on your career as a whole. What aspect of your career has been most rewarding? Most challenging? Most disheartening?

- **Evolution of the Child Health Care:** Describe how the practice of pediatrics has changed. Do you think that children today are better off than they were 50 years ago? What do you predict for the future?

For assistance in writing your memoirs consider asking a younger family member to assist you in this project. Students in relatable fields, such as graduate students in English or history, may also be good candidates for support especially those with a writing, editing, teaching, or library background.

Remember the PHC when you have completed your work or during and please contact us for assistance, or to donate, by either of the following:

- call: 847/434-7093
- email: history@aap.org

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