

2019 Teaching Scholars Program Retreat  
Educators Speak: An Interview

Descartes Li, MD, TSP Class of 2017 answers the question: What has been the most surprising change in you as a result of TSP?

Interviewer is Catherine Lomen-Hoerth, MD, PhD, TSP Class of 2019

Catherine Lomen-Hoerth, MD, PhD: Okay, Descartes. So can you tell me what the most surprising change in you has been as a result of TSP?

Descartes Li, MD: Okay, I'll start with my name. My name is Descartes Li, and I'm a professor of psychiatry here at USCF. And the most surprising change in me, can I say I've gotten a lot more humble because now I realize all the stuff that I didn't know before? Not maybe. I don't know if I was arrogant before or not. But now, when I walk around. The other surprising thing is when I walk around; I do bump into people that I know a lot more than I used to. And of course, when I see them all, I'm like, "Oh, that person's like an expert in X, Y, and Z that I know very little about." So that's another. That's made me more humble as well. And as I mentioned to you before, you were an example of that. Like, wow, you know, everything about advising, and you're so wise and siege. So this made me think getting in touch with all these people in the faculty at TSP has been really great too.

Catherine Lomen-Hoerth, MD, PhD: And then how long ago did you do TSP, and what was your project that you did?

Descartes Li, MD: Oh, so I was surprised I was able to do this project as well. So I did TSP a couple of years ago now. And having had very little experience or no experience doing qualitative research, myself, Monica Harbel, and Karen Hauer along with colleagues Edgar Pierluissi Christy Boscardin, We embarked on a qualitative study where we did semi-structured interviews on about half the coaches and did coding and learning how to come up with themes and then writing it up in a paper, which we sent back and revised a couple of times and which has gotten accepted. So I have to say that's been a very rewarding experience, and something that I never thought I would've been able to do, I would never have been able to do without the TSP experience and the mentorship that that program provided for me.

Catherine Lomen-Hoerth, MD, PhD: Tell me one other aspect. Maybe that surprised you. Maybe thinking back to when you were in the course itself and taking it, what were some of them?

Descartes Li, MD: I think about the most, you go each day to this thing and you have this topic on like small group teaching and you realize, wow, there is a lot of like stuff to learn, that goes into that and

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we talked earlier about educational theory and that being something that underlies all these different things that we do that I knew nothing about really. Although I realize I must've had some theory of education or learning in my mind going into it, so that was surprising as well.

Catherine Lomen-Hoerth, MD, PhD:

Neat. Anything else you'd like to add? Maybe someone who's on the fence about joining TSP, anything you'd want to tell them that they might benefit from, that might change them?

Descartes Li, MD:

I think you learn a lot of interesting topics, but the other thing is the networking involved too. Your little cohort of people that you meet will be people who you often will work with later on, and you'll see around and you'll have collaborations with them. So it makes a lot of fun too, just a much richer experience in education once you get to do that. Thank you.