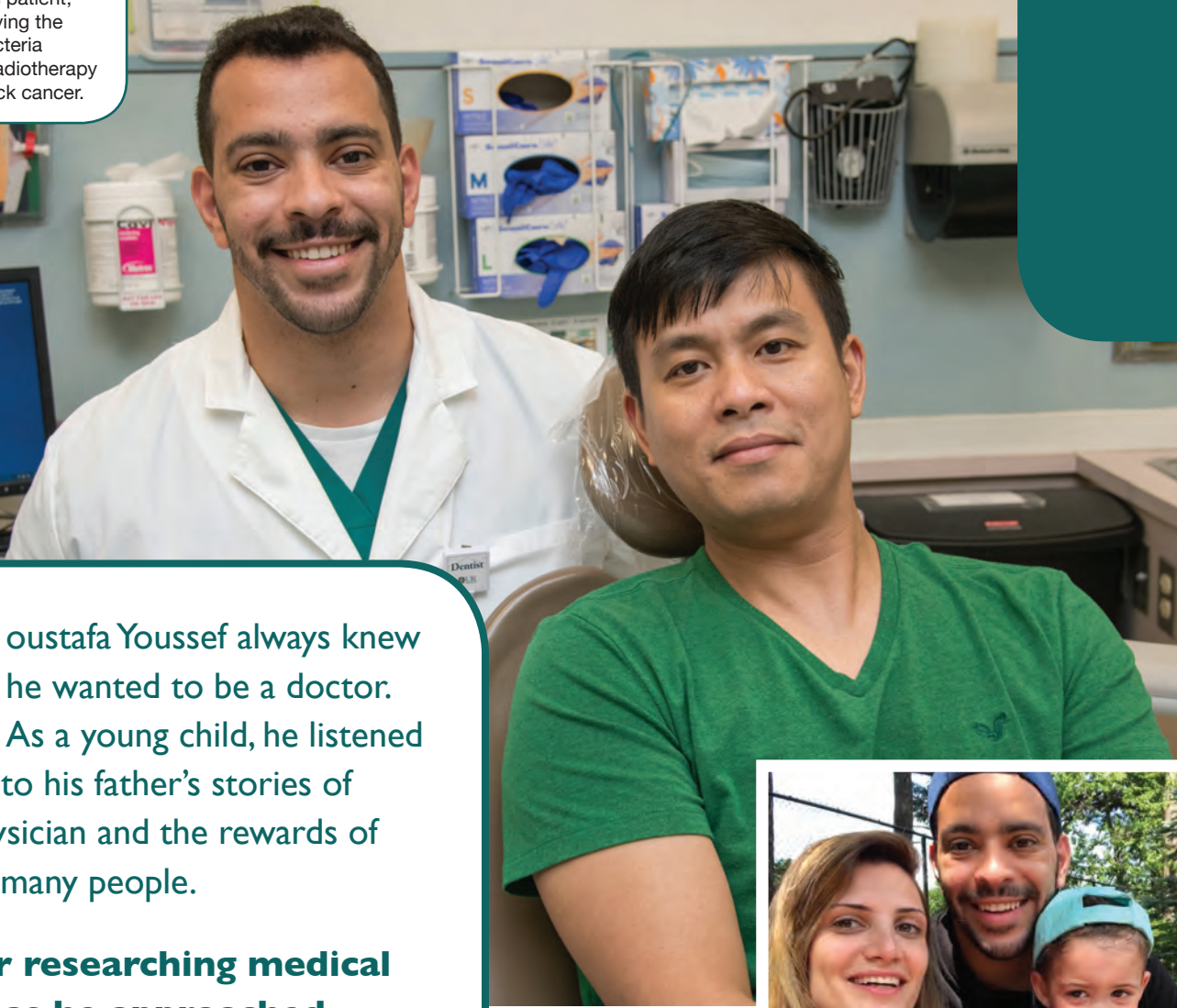


Moustafa, with his patient, Quichi Yu, is studying the change of oral bacteria catabolism after radiotherapy from head and neck cancer.



Moustafa Youssef always knew he wanted to be a doctor. As a young child, he listened wide eyed to his father’s stories of being a physician and the rewards of helping so many people.

But after researching medical sciences as he approached college, Youssef realized it wasn’t for him.

Moustafa, his wife Sara and their son Selim enjoy exploring the Rochester area.



“I started researching another branch of healthcare,” he recalled. “From the first book I read about dentistry, I felt that I was created to be a dentist.”

Impressed by the U.S. education system and high quality treatment after a brief observership in the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Department at the University of Maryland, he decided when he graduated from dental school in Egypt, he would pursue a post-doctoral specialty in the States. But a couple roadblocks-- failing the second part of the National Board

Dental Examination and participating in required military service—kept him in Egypt for the next year and prevented him from achieving his dream of studying in the U.S. at that time.

“I was not going to give up,” said Youssef, a husband and father of a young son. “So I decided to study for the second part during my 14 months of military service.”

When Youssef passed the second part of the NBDE, he began to apply for U.S. post-doctoral programs. But when

nothing was panned out, he decided to study endodontics in Egypt, hoping it would strengthen his skill set and consequently his application. He continued to apply while working as an endodontist in Saudi Arabia, gaining more experience toward achieving his goal and realizing his dream.

“Some of my colleagues who were doing an AEGD residency program at Eastman Institute for Oral Health in Rochester, NY were encouraging me to come and apply for this coveted program,” he said. Youssef

Paving the Way with a Preceptorship

was encouraged when he was invited to interview in the Fall for the highly competitive program.

That's when he decided to apply to one of Eastman's 12 Preceptorship programs, designed to provide dentists with opportunities to obtain practical experiences in postdoctoral dental education, basic and translational sciences and to increase the knowledge base in advanced and specialty dentistry, dental public health treatment of diverse patient populations.

"Dr. Yunker's enthusiastic words gave me a positive energy to apply and keep pursuing my dream, which was also shared by my family."

With his family's support, Youssef left behind his wife and son, friends and job to begin the four month preceptorship program at Eastman in January, 2017. "All I needed to do was to prove to everyone that I have the capability of being a good dentist.

"From the first day that I stepped my foot in the Eastman Institute, it felt like home, especially after meeting with the chair, Dr. Hans Malmström, who was very humble and very supportive," he said.

After settling in and getting to know the faculty, residents and staff in the General Dentistry Department where the AEGD residency program is housed, he began to shadow Dr. Malmström as he assisted and helped the residents with various treatment procedures.

"I was surprised at the level of teamwork and the preceptee experience fueled my desire to get into the program even more," he explained. "I promised myself I would not lose this opportunity to be one of his students."

Youssef credits many residents who gave him the chance to present with them in their literature reviews.

"Everyone was so helpful, friendly and respectful," he added. "Helping them present gave me an opportunity to show my skills and be more engaged with the team."

But Youssef's persistence, positive attitude and determination would not prevail. In the middle of his preceptorship, he received his rejection letter.

"I was so disappointed, but I decided to look at the positive side and be

grateful for the opportunity to see this amazing place, where the quality of the education and treatment is phenomenal," he said. "It made me even more eager to achieve my dream."

During the last week of his preceptorship, he was packing his bags to head back to Egypt.

"He performed very well in the preceptorship this Spring so we decided that we wanted to make a spot available for him," said Dr. Malmström. "He especially demonstrated his skills and interest in research, so we allowed him the opportunity to join the three year program, which entails one year of research followed by the two year AEGD program."

"I was so shocked!" Youssef said. "It was one of my happiest moments in my life. He made my dream come true. It's such an honor to be part of a well renowned institute."

Today, Youssef is involved in many research projects under the supervision of Drs. Malmström, Xiao and Ren. "It's an amazing opportunity, and a really good experience to be among their teams," he said. ♦

It's such an honor to be part of a well renowned institute.

~ Moustafa Youssef