



Recognizing Halton's Physicians

In Halton, we are fortunate to have first-rate medical care available to us, thanks in large part to the skilled and dedicated physicians who have chosen to make this community home to their practices. At Halton Region, we believe it is important to recognize these physicians for their contribution to the health and well-being of our community.

For this reason, we have designated May 1 to 5 as Halton Physician Appreciation Week – a time when we recognize the valuable resource and role that our medical community plays in supporting a healthy Halton and we say ‘thank

you’ to our physicians for the excellent care they provide to all residents. The profiles listed below feature four of Milton’s physicians, providing some insight into why they enjoy serving our community and describing their lives both in and outside of medicine.

If you would like to find out more about Halton Physician Appreciation Week or Halton Region’s Physician Recruitment Program, contact Angela Sugden-Praysner, Physician Recruitment Coordinator, at 905-825-6000, toll free at 1-866-4HALTON, or go to www.halton.ca



Halton Healthcare

– Milton District Hospital



Dr. Maryam Rostami

Though the dark memories of the Khomeini Regime still haunted her, Maryam Rostami’s lifelong mission to help people kept her moving bravely ahead...toward an old forgotten dream.

Born to deaf parents in a predominately deaf community in Iran, Maryam Rostami learned to sign as a very young child. Recognized for her outstanding ability to connect with her community she quickly rose to celebrity status in her homeland – starring on a national Iranian television program

for the deaf. This status provided her with a scholarship to Western Maryland College in the United States, where she completed a Bachelor of Psychology. In 1979, just as she was about to start her Masters Degree, Maryam was summoned back home by the Khomeini Regime.

Working again on her TV program, Maryam soon found herself forced out by the “new” management. She returned to school at the University of Tehran where she met her husband, David. In 1982 as things heated up politically, Maryam and David made a dramatic escape out of Iran with their 18 month old daughter, Saba. “We were smuggled across the border over to Turkey after hiding out in the mountains of Northern Iran. I will never forget the many devastated people who shared their camps with us. I wished then that I was a doctor so I could help them.”

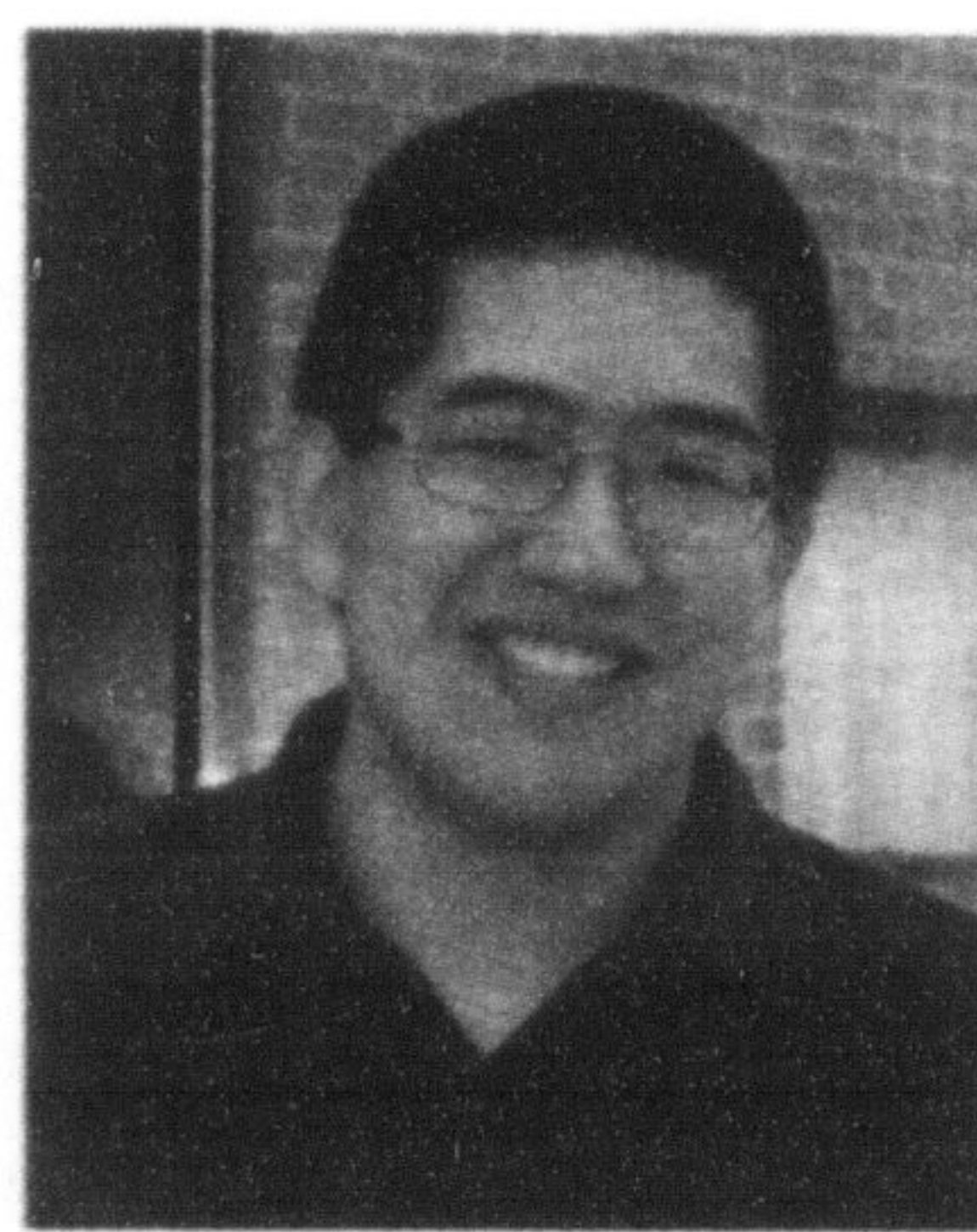
After a brief stay in Turkey, they settled in Besancon, France where Maryam completed her Masters Degree, and then immigrated to Canada in 1987.

After working briefly as a Social Worker for the Canadian Hearing Society in Hamilton, Maryam took a job with the Ministry of Community and Social Affairs in 1989 as a Vocational Rehab Counsellor. “My job involved assisting disabled people acquire training to be employable. As I was helping a student apply for Medical School at McMaster, I realized just how much I still wanted to be a doctor,” recalls Dr. Rostami. “My student convinced me to apply.”

After graduating from McMaster University in 2000 with her medical degree, Dr. Rostami finished her residency at the University of Western Ontario and opened a practice in Milton in 2002 at 311 Commercial Street. “I picked Milton because it has the school for the deaf and I wanted to reach out to its deaf community,” explains Dr. Rostami.

“I believe that everyone has the power to heal themselves by changing their attitudes and lifestyle – but they have to find the strength within themselves,” explains Dr. Rostami. “Education is a big component in prevention. I spend a lot of time talking things through with my patients.”

Dr. Rostami sits on the Milton Physician Recruitment Committee and does a lot of work mentoring both medical students in their last year at the University of Western Ontario and medical residents from McMaster University. In fact, she was the recent recipient of the 2005 Undergraduate Family Medicine Preceptor of the Year Award from the McMaster Rural Ontario Medicine Program.



Dr. Brian Watada

Dr. Brian Watada is one of the friendliest Milton family doctors you will ever have the pleasure to meet. With his keen sense of humour and genuine compassion, he has a real knack for connecting with people.

Dr. Watada grew up in Scarborough, completing his medical degree at the University of Toronto. “I had very little exposure to life west of Yonge Street and east of Pickering,” explains Dr. Brian Watada. “Learning that the 401 extended beyond

Mississauga came as a culture shock. Needless to say, doing my residency training at McMaster University from 1996-1998 was an opportunity for personal growth. I realized that Tim Hortons existed outside of the GTA.”

“I was raised at the end of the era when being a physician was a revered position. My family valued education – it represented hard work and the ability to provide for your family. I have a number of professional engineers, Ph.D. recipients and teachers in my family – very noble examples,” continues Dr. Watada.

“My goal as a family physician is to provide a human face. Doctors are intimidating – sometimes we have to do uncomfortable things or tell sad and unfortunate news,” explains Dr. Watada. “I strive to be approachable – not someone who makes children cry with his very appearance or adults shy away from saying something at the fear of reproach. I just want to help.”

Dr. Watada came to Milton in 1998. “As the legend goes, Dr. Hunter was recruiting for a doctor to take over his family practice (because he was returning to school), just as I was finishing up my residency in Hamilton. I had seen Dr. Hunter’s ads but took little interest because I didn’t know where Milton was,” recalls Dr. Watada. “Then while playing hockey with some doctors in Burlington, Dr. Hunter talked about his predicament. I said I might be interested – but only if he’d stop making me look so bad on the ice. The rest is history.”

“What I love most about my job is the people,” notes Dr. Watada. “I have formed some great relationships with some of my patients and treasure each of the Christmas cards that I receive every year.”

Currently, Dr. Watada is the Co-Chief of the Department of Family Medicine at MDH and an active physician on staff at the hospital. In addition, he is the Assistant Clinical Professor in the department of Family Medicine at McMaster University regularly taking on and mentoring medical students and residents in the McMaster University Rural Ontario Medical Program.

“I really enjoy Milton’s small town flavour. Watching it grow has been very exciting,” notes Dr. Watada. “MDH has strong nursing leadership and a very close cohesive unit of doctors, specialists and other healthcare professionals. We work very well together to provide quality care. I am proud to be on this team.”

Dr. Watada and wife Cynthia have two children, six-year-old Kimberly and eight-year-old Brandon.