

Jared Huston, MD '01

2010 Outstanding Recent Graduate

According to advice from well-meaning friends, it couldn't be done. But Dr. Jared Huston proved the naysayers wrong: Not only has he simultaneously launched a successful surgical career while raising a family, he has also racked up some impressive accomplishments as a medical researcher along the way.

Just nine years after graduating from Stony Brook University School of Medicine, Jared is currently an Assistant Professor of Surgery in Stony Brook's Division of Trauma, General Surgery, Surgical Critical Care and Burns. He was tapped to launch a new immunology research laboratory in the Department of Surgery to continue his investigations into how the nervous and immune systems coordinate the body's response to shock, sepsis, and traumatic injury. His work has helped elucidate how the brain regulates inflammation and bacterial infections through the vagus nerve and the spleen. This novel pathway was first described by Jared's research mentor, Dr. Kevin Tracey. Their findings provide the foundation for the ongoing development of new treatments for sepsis, which currently affects nearly one million Americans each year and causes more deaths per year than prostate cancer, breast cancer, and HIV/AIDS combined.

Jared attributes his success to an outstanding medical school education at Stony Brook, superb surgical training, invaluable mentorship, and his wife Tara, another graduate of Stony Brook's School of Medicine. After completing her residency in general surgery, Tara is currently in the final year of her plastic

and reconstructive surgery fellowship at New York Presbyterian Hospital-Weill Cornell Medical Center in Manhattan.

Both Tara and Jared agree that starting a family while completing surgical training presents some unique challenges, but in the end, it makes the whole experience even more gratifying and rewarding. "There is nothing better than having your family there to enjoy your professional successes," says Jared.

Jared is quick to credit his student experience at Stony Brook's School of Medicine for his early career success, including the memorable influences of Drs. Ricotta, Sorrento, Merriam, and Brathwaite, who he is now proud to call his colleagues.

Stony Brook's Dr. Roberta Seidman also made a big impression as, "someone who really cared." Jared and Tara can both remember neuroanatomy class with Dr. Seidman, who evidently memorizes the names of every one of her 100 plus students. Dr. Jack Stern also managed to make a lasting impression. "His enthusiasm for teaching is inspiring," says Jared.

Jared's professors offered inspiring lectures and practical advice for the aspiring surgeon, but it was Stony Brook's Dr. Joseph Sorrento and his wife Dr. Lisa Sclafani, also a surgeon, who were bucking the conventional wisdom and making a successful go of work and family life. "They were the ones who really showed us that it was possible."

During their general surgery training at New York Presbyterian Hospital-Weill Cornell Medical Center, the Huston family welcomed daughter Emma (now almost 7 years old) and son



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Zach (5 years old) into their busy lives. If that's not impressive enough, the Drs. Huston are now expecting their third child in January. How do they manage? As Tara explains it, "We are very organized, efficient, and understanding." Their relationship is forged in mutual goals and respect.

Jared and Tara met during the first year of medical school and have been together ever since. They matched together in general surgery at Cornell, and were the first Stony Brook medical students to be accepted into the surgery residency there. "I'm very proud of our career accomplishments...but I am most proud of our family," says Tara.

It has been a long and successful journey and, admittedly, not one that Jared could have done alone. A number of people provided a lot of support, advice, and encouragement. But the individual who is most responsible for Jared's ability to juggle career and family is the one who must do the same; namely, his wife. "Tara and I worked very hard, but we were fortunate to have some really great people cheering us on. Hopefully we can help others do the same," says Jared. ■