



Edward D. Buckingham, M.D. honored as 2018 Schoenrock Award Recipient

As Mark Twain once said, “The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why.” Dr. Edward D. Buckingham took quite a few days to determine that medicine was his life’s calling.

“I grew up in Rapid City, South Dakota, in a large family with farming roots,” relates Dr. Buckingham. “For over two generations, my family had been entrepreneurs with businesses from trucking to homebuilding with all of the associated ups and downs. I didn’t know if going into the family business was what I wanted to do with my life, so I decided that Texas was the place where I’d find a fine education and beautiful southern ladies while I sorted out what career I wanted to pursue. I settled on a career in accounting while attending Southern Methodist University. I buckled down and graduated with a degree in Accounting with an Economics minor. While I was at SMU, I also met and fell in love with one of those southern ladies, my future wife, Dawn. Dawn was attending the University of Texas in Austin, so I moved to Austin after I graduated and took an auditing job with Cooper’s and Lybrand so I could be close to her,” Buckingham confides.

“Well, it didn’t take me long to realize that auditing wasn’t very stimulating. I considered maybe moving back home to work in the family business, but the thought of sitting on my bum at a desk all day was not very appealing. Since I am an avid golfer, I thought about returning to the work I had done during my summers in high school—installing irrigation systems, planting trees, and landscaping. I even entertained the notion of getting a degree in horticulture or landscape architecture so I could design and construct golf courses, but I realized that even if I were successful doing that, I’d still wind up sitting on my bum behind a desk.”

“It never occurred to me to consider medicine. No one in my family was associated with medicine in any way, and my life lacked mentors in that field. But Dawn was incredibly supportive and knew what was in my head better than I did, at the time. She encouraged me to think about medicine because I had always enjoyed science and reveled in the challenges that it presented. I’m glad I paid attention to her because medicine is exactly what I was meant to do with my life,” relates Buckingham.

The Buckinghams went on to attend the University of Texas Medical Branch, UTMB, together. “Dawn pursued her medical training in oculoplastic and reconstructive surgery. I had originally thought that plastic surgery could be a good fit for me—I even had a plastic surgery residency spot all arranged, but then I became involved with head and neck anatomy and my calling kicked in. Once I was in my ENT residency, the intricacies of facial plastic surgery spoke to me due to the influence of Dr. Brad Patt, of Houston, and Dr. Karen Calhoun, who was the Vice-Chairman of the Otolaryngology Department at UTMB.”

“I went on to my 12-month AAFPRS fellowship in Albany, New York, and couldn’t have asked for a better fellowship director than Dr. Edwin Williams. He was the perfect fit for me and he shaped my surgical skills as well as my business acumen. Dr. Williams kept encouraging me to get involved and he continues to be an invaluable mentor. Being the runner-up for the 2003 Anderson Award triggered my involvement with the ABFPRS. First, I was asked to be a proctor for the examination and to participate in preparing board questions. After I completed the requirements for ABFPRS certification, I served as a standby examiner for several years and then I started serving as an examiner. As is true with most things in life, after that, I just showed up whenever the ABFPRS needed me,” Buckingham observes.

“Ed Buckingham always steps up whenever we ask him to undertake a project or support a cause to protect the ABFPRS,” relates Robert M. Kellman, M.D., ABFPRS President. “Ed is Chairman of the Graduate Medical Education Committee, he participated on the RLS Fundraising Committee, he’s working on the MOC discussions, he’s donated funds to the IBCFPRS, he received the 2nd highest score on the MOC in FPRS® exam in 2014, and he was a member of the Resource Development Committee for 9 years writing questions for the ABFPRS examination. He led the charge to protect the ABFPRS credential in the Texas state legislature, he’s served on the ABFPRS Board of Directors, and is currently a trusted ABFPRS Senior Adviser. Ed is one of the most “Can Do” people our Board has ever had—he’s a tremendous asset and I can’t think of a more deserving person to be honored with the Larry Schoenrock Award,” states Kellman.

“I had the pleasure of listening to the likes of Bobby Simon, Billy Silver, Peter Adamson, Wayne Larrabee, Tom Rhodes, and many others as to the history and importance of the ABFPRS,” states Buckingham. “It has been my pleasure to do what I can to live up to the achievements of my predecessors and continue to advance the ABFPRS in whatever way I can.”

Drs. Edward and Dawn Buckingham each have thriving medical practices in their chosen fields in Austin, Texas. On top of two busy careers and two children who have frenetic schedules of their own, Ed Buckingham wants everyone to know that he isn’t the only one in his family who has been recognized for service and commitment. “My wife is a rock star. On top of all the support she provides to her

patients, her family, and me, Dawn Buckingham serves as a Texas State Senator who fights for physicians and the practice of medicine in the Texas state legislature,” he concludes. “Makes it easy to discuss medical politics over dinner with my state representative, don’t you think?”



Nominations for the 2019 Schoenrock Award should be addressed to the ABFPRS Executive Committee in care of ABFPRS, 115-C South Saint Asaph Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, or e-mail SchoenrockAward@abfprs.org.