



# Reflections of a Grady Doctor

teaching + learning + caring = growing

THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2012

## ➔ Soul Survivor.



*small group alpha*

*"Do it for the story."*

*- Antoinette Nguyen, Candidate for MD and MPH 2012*

## Welcome to Atlanta.



*"Becoming is better than being." - Carol Dweck*



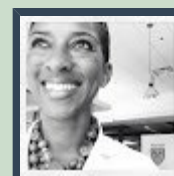
Click the pic to find out more and to join the team!



So what happens around commencement time when your *whooooo*le small group has graduated and *you* remain as the sole -- or rather soul - survivor for the following year?



Who me? I'm just glad to be here.



[@gradydoctor](#)  
Atlanta, Georgia,  
United States

Honestly? I write this blog to share the human aspects of medicine + teaching + work/life balance with others and myself -- and to honor the public hospital and her patients--but never at the expense of patient privacy or





*Everyone* has gone off to do their internships but *you* stayed behind to do a Masters of Public Health which makes *your* graduation celebration as a member of the small group rather anticlimactic. Because no matter how you spin it, it's just you. Yep. Just you.

dignity. Thanks for stopping by! :)

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What's the point?

"One writes out of one thing only--one's own experience. Everything depends of how relentlessly one forces from this experience the last drop, sweet or bitter, it can possibly give."

~ James Baldwin (1924 - 1987)





Sure, you'll get text messages and well wishes from them all because they're your family. And you'll *always* be family. You know that. Of course you do.

**"Do it for the story." ~ Antoinette Nguyen, MD, MPH**

Details, names, time frames, etc. are always changed to protect anonymity. This may or may not be an amalgamation of *true*, *quasi-true*, or *completely fictional* events. But the lessons? They are *always* real and *never, ever* fictional. Got that?

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But *still*. They all graduated in 2011. And here you are all the way in 2012 all by your lonesome--yeah, yeah with an additional degree that yeah, yeah, you really wanted and that will really be important to your career in the longrun--but *still*. The fact remains: As far as your small group med student peers go, it's just you, yourself, and you. . . .yep. . . .

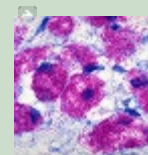


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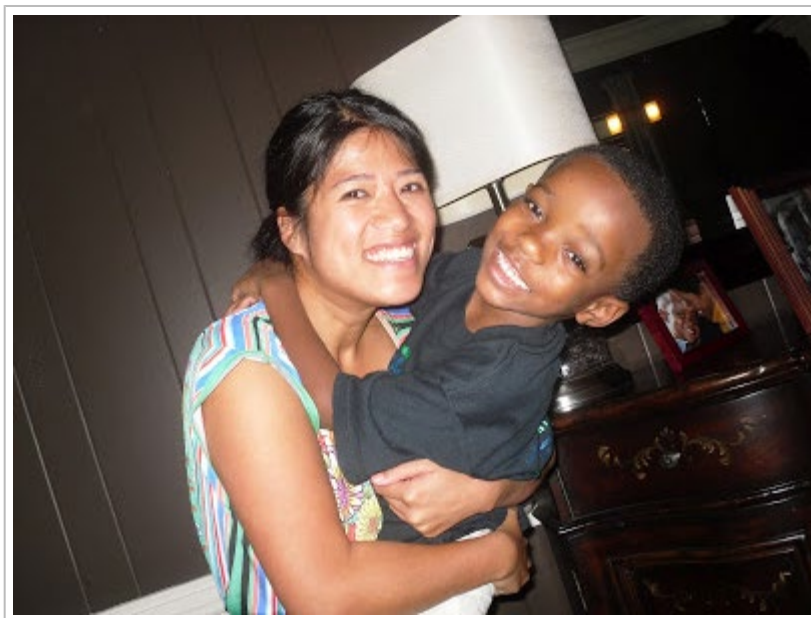
I got stuck in a Grady s...



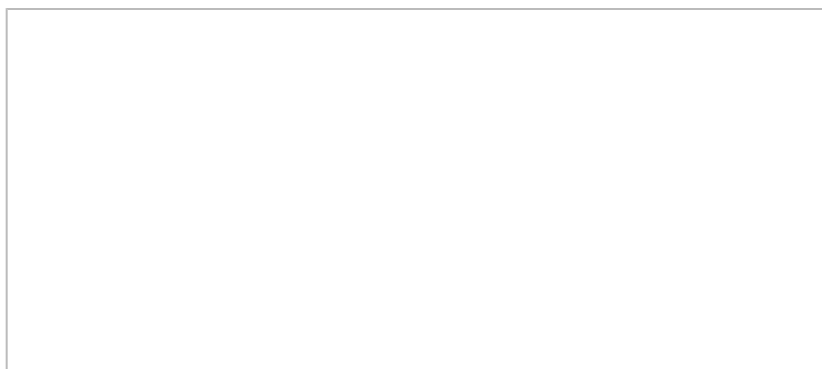
[Do stuff.](#)  
\*details changed to



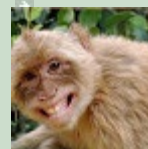
. . .as the soul survivor of your small group. So now what?



Who's gonna celebrate *you* now that the *whole* group has scattered all around the country? Well? Who's gonna?

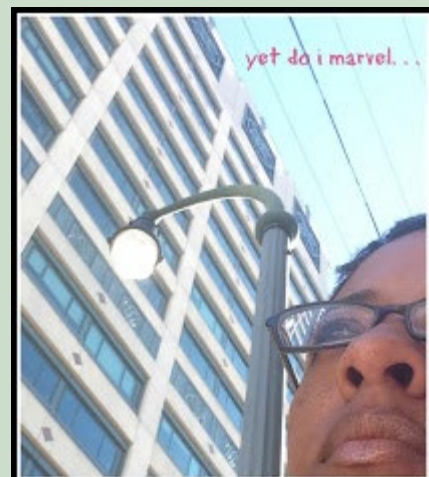


protect anonymity (as always) Live while you got all your rhythm in your hips still, okay?" ~ Mrs. Sand...



[Don't look now there's a monkey on your back.](#)

Why can't you do it? Why can't you set your monkey free? Always giving into it Do you love the monkey or do you love me? ...



Keeping it human. . . .

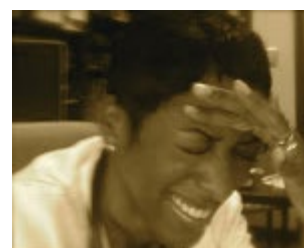




(consider this a hint)

## Me, that's who!

This afternoon marked Antoinette's final day of class for medical school. When she walked out of the School of Medicine, her goofy advisor was waiting for her like a chauffeur at the airport (except with a green homemade sign on construction paper.)



### Required Reading

- [The Main Grady Doctor Page \(Home\)](#)
- [HIPAA and SUCH](#)
- [Top 40 Technical Terms on THIS HERE blog](#)
- [Who is Grady Doctor Anyway?](#)
- [Errr...how do I leave a comment?](#)

### It's all Grady. . . .



### Raindrops on Roses: A Few of My Favorite Posts

- [Teenage Mutant Target Checkout Chick](#)
- [The Green Lantern](#)
- [Glitter-Sparklies](#)
- [Panic! At the NICU](#)
- [For the love of Grady: A love letter.](#)



Off we went for The *Epic* Final Small Group Session for the Soul Survivor of Small Group Alpha!



Okay. . . how much fun did we have? SO much fun. I was determined to let Ant know that her graduation was just as special . . . we had SUCH a blast!

First up? Mani-pedis! Wooo hoo!

- [Loose Interpretations](#)
- [Who's your daddy?](#)
- [S.O.S.](#)
- [The God question: Oh no, I said too much.](#)
- [A Long Time Coming](#)
- [A Love Thing](#)
- [The Princess and the Peep-Toe](#)
- [Jeremiah the Butterfly: "Born this way."](#)
- [The Funniest Day Ever: The Day The Patient Asked Me to Beatbox](#)
- [Unfair Speculations](#)
- [Quasi-Celebrity Status: The Grady JumboTron](#)
- [This Bitter Earth: How I Really Feel About Crack Cocaine](#)
- [Residency Chronicles: The Laziest Resident of All Time](#)
- [Uploads, Downloads, and Hard Drive Reboots](#)
- [The Hairy Eyeball](#)
- [Young, Gifted, and Black](#)
- [When Kimberly Met Harry: You Had Me at Ohio](#)
- [The MD IN/OUT Parking Space Dilemma](#)





Let me tell you. . . .best thing EVER: Going to a nail salon where everyone is speaking Vietnamese. . . .with your comrade who is FLUENT in the language--yet DOESN'T really look Vietnamese? Shut the front door!

So check it. We plotted for Antoinette to tell me EV-ER-Y single thing they were saying. If and only if it was funny or insulting! Ha!

The first funny thing--every time I go to this nail salon, they try very hard to get me to get a manicure. And every single time, I say no.



Folks who publicly admit to reading this blog- 'preciate ya!



#### All the Chapters

- ▶ 2009 (37)
- ▶ 2010 (167)
- ▶ 2011 (291)
- ▼ 2012 (322)

Confession: I like to read a magazine or a book while I get a pedicure so I don't like my hands to be occupied.

0\_0

I know.

So since this was Ant's special day, we walk in and I ask Hanna (one of the awesome ladies at Angel Nails) for us both to have a SPA mani-pedi. And, of course, Hanna was like, "You want manicure?" And I nodded like this was not an unheard of thing for me to get a manicure with my pedicure.

Well! Y'all! According to Ant, they had plenty to say about me FINALLY getting a manicure. Ha ha ha!



*Bwwwahh ha haaaa!!*

Surprisingly, there wasn't that much dirt getting flung around outside of me being too cheap for a manicure. Although there was a wee bit that shall remain unrepeatable. Ant said that she was convinced that if she just kept listening there would be something good so we quieted down and waited.

That's when it happened.

Ant was getting her manicure and Hanna grabbed a tiny hangnail that hurt a bit. Ant winced and blew our cover when she accidentally said something to Hanna.

IN VIETNAMESE.

- ▶ January (17)
- ▶ February (21)
- ▶ March (26)
- ▼ April (28)
  - [Love, Lake Erie, and Lessons Learned.](#)
  - [Another Match Day Moment.](#)
  - [Clotheslines and vulnerability.](#)
  - [\(Spring\) Break Out.](#)
  - [And the winner is. . . .](#)
  - [I now pronounce you.](#)
  - [Kayaks and Cousins and Sunsets, Oh My!](#)
  - [Love, Eggs, and Latin Phrases.](#)
  - [The Internship and Residency Chronicles: One thing...](#)
  - [The Beach Boys.](#)
  - [To the moon.](#)
  - [DSW: DON'T SHOP WITH \(little kids.\)](#)
  - [There is good in this world.](#)
  - [Joy to spare.](#)
  - [Sometimes we get it right.](#)
  - [Top Ten: Monday Night Randomness.](#)
  - [Some soles to keep.](#)
  - [I break the rules.](#)
  - [Complexities.](#)
  - [Three times is the charm.](#)
  - [The Singing Guy.](#)
  - [See one. Teach one.](#)
  - [Enough already.](#)
  - [Soul Survivor.](#)
  - [We're not young.](#)
  - [What you see.](#)
  - [Top Ten: The Good Parts.](#)
  - [Makes me wanna holler.](#)
- ▶ May (28)
- ▶ June (33)
- ▶ July (27)
- ▶ August (30)
- ▶ September (29)
- ▶ October (25)





Dooooohhhh!!!

I wish you could have seen their reaction!! All the nail technicians froze up in that piece like, "WHAAAAATTT??" Then they started whispering like Ant couldn't hear them or understand what they were saying:

*"She speaks Vietnamese! She speaks Vietnamese! That girl right there speaks Vietnamese!"*

(The only reason I know that is because they were saying that in Vietnamese and Ant told me.) Anywho. Our jig was up. UP, I tell you! Antoinette started talking to everyone in Vietnamese and they were all laughing and jovial. I asked them if they could tell she was Vietnamese when they saw her and they all said no! One woman said she looked Filipino and another thought she looked Cambodian.

Best. Time. Ever. You tell me how jealous are you of me for being privy to some full on Vietnamese interpretation in the nail salon? It was like a real live Seinfeld episode, for real. Oh and have I told you about how paranoid I am about my scary-rough heels and tarsal pads? I was just SURE they'd be ripping on them the WHOLE time, but who knew? Me being super-cheap (not really--just wanting my hands free!) about manicures was a far hotter topic.

*Mmmm hmmm.*

Hanna and the crew at Angel Nails were gracious and wonderful as always. They took good care of us and congratulated Antoinette in English and Vietnamese on her upcoming medical school graduation. (Admittedly one person did look slightly annoyed that we had been there nearly an hour before the big bilingual reveal. But that's a whole 'nother story for a whole 'nother time.)





The good news is that we walked out of there each with ten perfect nails and ten perfect toes. So, so fun!

- ▶ November (27)
- ▶ December (31)

- ▶ 2013 (254)
- ▶ 2014 (184)
- ▶ 2015 (93)
- ▶ 2016 (59)
- ▶ 2017 (18)
- ▶ 2018 (45)



### Whiskers on Kittens: A few of my Favorite Blogs

- ▶  **smacksy**  
Yes, It's Another Post About the Dogs But You Guys  
16 hours ago
- ▶  **a moon, worn as if it had been a shell**  
Riding with Min After Baez Sang Dylan  
17 hours ago
- ▶  **Bless Our Hearts**  
Oh, Children! Get Yourselves Together!  
20 hours ago
- ▶  **EverythingHealth**  
Nutty Thanksgiving ICD-10 Codes

While we were in the nail shop, Antoinette was saying that she wanted a pair of nude/taupe shoes for an upcoming wedding. That clearly led us to the one and only:



Loehmann's!! Woot woot!

As you already know, 80% of my wardrobe comes from Target. The other 20% comes from either Loehmann's or consignment shops. No. Not. Kidding.

Turns out that it was LADIE'S NIGHT from 6 - 9 PM at Loehmann's! *Uhh maaah gaahh*. Shut the front *and the back* door!




Nude/taupe heels? Check!

1 day ago


→  **37 Paddington**  
Gold  
1 week ago

→  **Stumbling Towards Perfect**  
When the Day is Hard  
1 week ago

→  **Van Gheem Family**  
Kennedy!!!  
1 year ago

→ **ACP Hospitalist**  
Suicide, psychiatric care and inadequate resources  
1 year ago

→  **Just eat it (Michelle's blog)**  
bridging the divide, one tiny bubble at a time  
1 year ago

→  **On Call RN...**  
Enough.  
2 years ago

→  **Nerd Girl**  
The Prayers of the Righteous  
2 years ago

→ **#whatshouldwecallmedschool**  
5 stages of grief while waiting for the Match ...  
3 years ago

→  **Nancy: Amazing Mama, Amazing Grace**  
Mebel Jati Jepera di Tangan Seorang Desain Interior  
3 years ago

→  **Live(ish) with Jameil**  
Hello???  
4 years ago

→ **Pserendipity**  
Forgiveable  
4 years ago

→  **Everyday Adventures**  
Some Favorites  
4 years ago

→  **Views From The Sidewalk | Concrete Reflections**  
Brave  
4 years ago

→  **Our Simple Lives...**  
In-Home Visitation Rights  
5 years ago

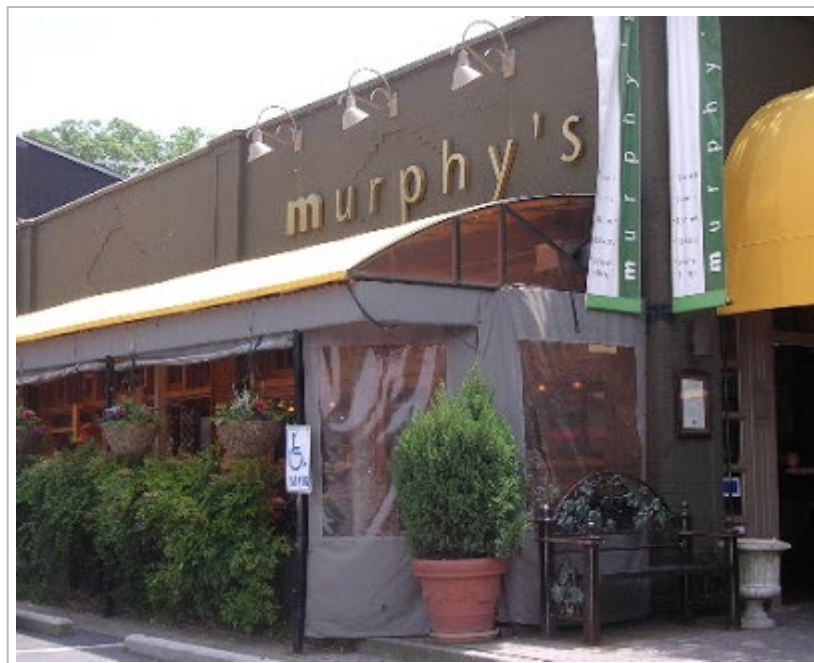




Super cute beige shift for me . . . with two holes in it which translated to an *additional 15% off* . . . on top of the 30% I already was getting off because of LADIE'S NIGHT and a clearance rack?

CHICKY-CHECK!

(Mom, don't act surprised when I show up with my dress at your house this weekend!)



Next up? Dinner at Murphy's! But of course!

[▶ e A Work In Progress...](#)  
15 Years...  
5 years ago

[▶ e RottenMom](#)  
Ring of Fire  
6 years ago

[▶ e Shug's Soliloquies \(Mommy's Blog!\)](#)  
The Thinker  
6 years ago

[▶ e Anonymous Jo, The Neophyte Blogtress](#)  
Leighton Meester Hairstyles 03  
6 years ago

[▶ e The Will Power Chronicles](#)

[▶ \[grid icon\] ann's rants](#)

[▶ e Be Still and Know](#)

Soul Food served here.





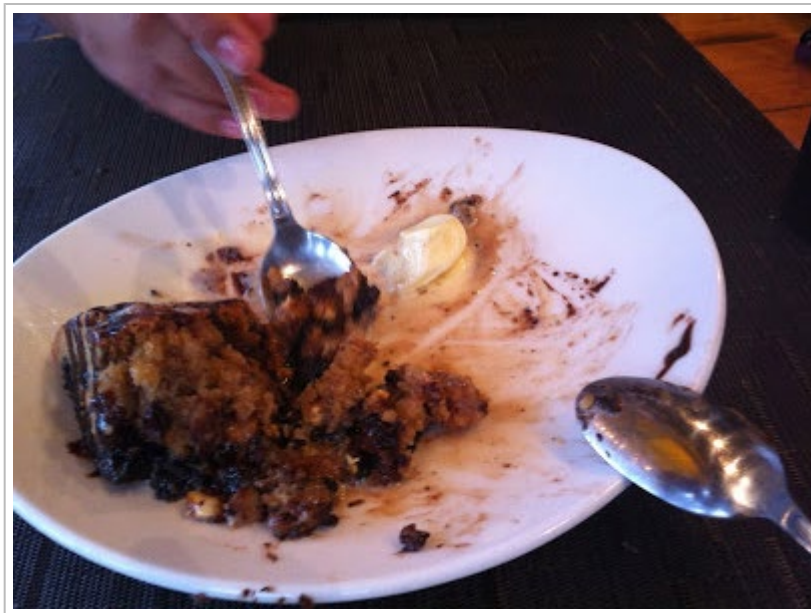
Antoinette had never been to Murphy's for dinner--only brunch. What? What! Blasphemy, I say! Clearly I had to rectify this horrid situation and introduce her to my good friend *The Murphy's Burger*. Hello?







And would you BELIEVE that Antoinette hadn't had the ridiculously delicious and decadent Toll House pie? As any caring mentor would, I had to right that wrong, too.



And just maybe make sure that it wasn't poisonous.





She hated it.



And for the record, it wasn't poisonous.

*Ah hem.*

Antoinette gave me a thoughtful gift--a bottle of white--just in time for my anniversary with the BHE next week! Yaaay!







It was an EPIC final small group adventure built for two.

If you are thinking that this seems unusually personal. . . you're right. Nothing about our small group curriculum or the longitudinal teaching and mentoring relationships we develop with our students at Emory is "usual." These sorts of things happen around here because in addition to learning together and building clinical knowledge, we build *relationships*.

Yes we do.

So these photos? They're just evidence of what we do here. And yes. It is as special as it seems, as personal as it seems, and as wonderful as it seems.

One of Antoinette's favorite sayings is "Do it for the story." That is exactly what we did. Yes. This was the perfect punctuation on five unforgettable years as her mentor and advisor.



And let me tell you. . . . the pleasure was *all mine*.

Congratulations, sweet girl. It's not good bye, just see you later. You got that?

\*\*\*

Happy Thursday.

*And now playing on my mental iPod. . . my soundtrack for Small Group Alpha.*

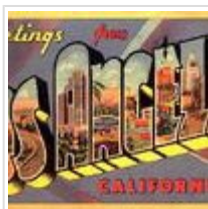
**You might also like:**



Alpha, Beta,



Small Group Family



Top Ten: Good



Gamma, Delta . . . .  
and more.

Evolution.

Times.

Linkwithin

Posted by [gradydoctor](#) at [11:26 PM](#)

Reactions:  LOLing ()  > or = one tear ()  feeling it ()

 [This is interesting](#)

Labels: [all I wanna do is have some fun](#), [antoINETte](#), [small group](#),  
[small group alpha](#)

## 16 comments:

**Anonymous** [April 27, 2012 at 2:22 AM](#)

You are amazing. I love the rich way you live your life. Do you even know that you make the world a better place each and every day with all you give the way you do? Thank you for sharing this very special occasion with us. Joanne

[Reply](#)



**atn19** [April 27, 2012 at 3:46 AM](#)

Thursday was my last day of medical school. Friday I submit my MPH thesis. Saturday I head out to Haiti for 2 weeks to run my own research project. Can I just highlight that my heart is bursting with fullness and appreciation and gratefulness and wonderment? It's been five years since I made Atlanta my home - even though I had thought I'd never again live south of the Mason-Dixon - and somewhere, somehow, this city managed to steal my heart. I have a feeling it had a lot to do with Grady and Emory and all the wonderful and strange and beautiful folks who fill it up.

Always,  
Ant

[Reply](#)

**Anonymous** [April 27, 2012 at 6:03 AM](#)

The two of you are truly lucky to have each OTHER. What a lovely day ! Oh...and approximately 89 percent of my wardrobe comes from Loehmann's as well... It is a total sickness on my part.

Maria, fellow Meharrian

[Reply](#)

**Jameil** [April 27, 2012 at 6:15 AM](#)



For real??? You are so awesome for this!!

[Reply](#)



[Shugsie](#) [April 27, 2012 at 7:07 AM](#)

Congratulations, Ant! Here's wishing you the BEST!  
XXXOOO

[Reply](#)



[Solitary Diner](#) [April 27, 2012 at 8:30 AM](#)

You are seriously the best mentor ever. If you're ever looking to move to Canada, I will find you a job at my school.

[Reply](#)



[Ms. Moon](#) [April 27, 2012 at 8:47 AM](#)

Oh. Just, precious. PRECIOUS!  
Congratulations to that darling girl/woman/DOCTOR!

[Reply](#)



[Lauren](#) [April 27, 2012 at 9:32 AM](#)

What a special relationship you have with your students! As a student myself, just down the block, in fact, I appreciate the time that professors and mentors invest in me. You are a true gem, Dr. Manning!

[Reply](#)

[pserendipity](#) [April 27, 2012 at 11:01 AM](#)

You took another Chick to our spot?! Well, she must be really special. :)

Congratulations, Ant, on your TWO degreets (woot woot!!) and I know you're gonna rock the rest of your career!!

BTDubs, if you get tired of the medical thing, there's totally a market for nail shop translation. IJS.

[Reply](#)



[djdjd04](#) [April 27, 2012 at 11:16 AM](#)

Well, seeing as Ant has basically become like family, I feel extra super proud! Congrats, Ant!!! I'm so glad you two were able to share a special day together.



Love,  
JoLai

PS- Miz, I'm gonna need to try a Murphy burger when I'm in town next month... but no Tollhouse pie for me, thanks! :)

[Reply](#)



[Lisa Page Rosenberg](#) [April 27, 2012 at 1:29 PM](#)

Spectacular!

[Reply](#)



[Apop201X](#) [April 27, 2012 at 5:44 PM](#)

The. Best. Post. EVER!!!!

[Reply](#)



[Ann Imig](#) [April 27, 2012 at 8:30 PM](#)

You're an incredible friend.

[Reply](#)



[Jucie](#) [April 28, 2012 at 10:03 AM](#)

I can't even imagine how much you pay forward every single day. You rock!

[Reply](#)



[N2](#) [April 29, 2012 at 3:52 PM](#)

You are just the best mentor/teacher/friend. EVER. Reading this made me want to go back to school. In Atlanta. To become a doctor. None of which is, was or will be on my agenda. But there is, was and will forever be it seems a deep longing for a mentor. I guess I'll just have to soak it up vicariously. Ant is one lucky young woman. Wishing her all the best. You, too, of course. x0 N2

[Reply](#)



[Briana](#) [May 8, 2012 at 2:06 AM](#)

I love your blog! This is Briana (Elaine's daughter. SMLAC) I hope to be a fly young caring doc like you!! My blog is [theyearofthe25.blogspot.com](http://theyearofthe25.blogspot.com) (I wish I was in small group alpha!!)

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*"Tell me something good. . . tell me that you like it, yeah." ~ Chaka Khan*

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