In this section, we highlight the human side of clinical academic medicine, putting a few questions to a physician at DMS-DHMC.

**Torunn Rhodes, M.D.**

**Associate Professor of Pediatrics**

Rhodes specializes in neonatology and neonatal pulmonology and is medical director of DHMC’s home oxygen and ventilator program for infants. She has been on the Dartmouth faculty since 1987.

**How did you get interested in neonatology?**

I had no exposure to newborns in medical school—they were off limits for clumsy medical students—but as soon as I set my foot in Dartmouth’s Intensive Care Nursery (ICN) as a pediatric intern in 1982, I knew that was what I wanted to do with my professional life. I believe strongly in family-centered care and strive to get the infants home as soon as possible where they can be better co-managed with the family.

**What do you like most about your job?**

That’s a very difficult question to answer. My job is a tapestry of intense experiences, all interwoven and important: the complex medical management in the ICN, the emotional rollercoaster we are privileged to go on with parents, the close working relationships with the staff. If I must pick, I would say the constant daily challenge. It is never a dull moment and there are always opportunities for learning. I love to go to work every day.

**What advice would you offer to someone new in your field?**

Listen to parents. Don’t be afraid to love your patients. Practice evidence-based medicine.

**What’s the hardest lesson you ever had to learn?**

The lesson I am still learning—to accept the things in my life that I cannot change.

**Where did you grow up?**

In Norway, in a small, idyllic coastal town. I explored the fjords and islands all summer, and skied in the nearby mountains and played in the snow all winter.

**When you were young what did you want to be?**

A telegraph operator on a Norwegian ocean liner that would take me all over the world (remember, this was 1950!)

**What is your most memorable accomplishment?**

Probably the Canadian Ski Marathon, which I did with my daughter in 1996. It is North America’s longest and oldest Nordic ski tour. We ended up with blisters and frostbite, but triumphant.

**What about you would surprise most people?**

I am an open book, no surprises.

**What’s the last movie you saw?**

The Hurt Locker. It brought the war in Iraq close to home—it was heartbreaking.

**What’s your favorite nonwork activity?**

Spending time with my two granddaughters.

**If you invented a time machine, where would you go?**

Forward five generations to 2160, so I could look at the world as I want it to be—one country, with peace and justice for all. I could get to know my great-great-grandchildren.

**What was your first paying job?**

I have worked all my life. My very first job was at age 8, picking up daily groceries for an elderly neighbor for about $1 a week. She would also give me a Christmas present wrapped in colorful cellophane paper from America. It was the most elegant package under our tree.

**If you could trade places with anyone, real or imaginary, who would it be?**

I would not trade with anybody.