

An RBMA Minute with Steve Schreiber, RBMA Western Director

BY DAPHNE BROWN

Steve Schreiber



► **Where do you currently work?**

Western Radiology Associates in Seattle, Washington. We are rebranding the practice and our new name will be "Via Radiology."

► **What is your title and duties?**

I am the Chief Operating Officer. In that position I am responsible for all non-medical business operations and for growing the practice. Right now my energy is almost exclusively focused on opening our first multi-modality imaging center. This position was created because the radiologists were interested in growing the business from a professional component-only practice to a provider of professional and technical services. There was already a great team in place when I arrived, so my efforts have been directed towards restructuring the organization and the network in order to provide a foundation for business expansion.

► **How long have you held the position?**

I've been with the company for 10 months.

► **Why did you pick this field?**

My first career was as a nursing home administrator. It is a very challenging field. As a manager you are responsible for 24/7 care of infirm people in an environment where no one wants to be, and you have very few financial resources. I wanted to transition from long-term care to acute care management. I was particularly interested in radiology since I worked as a photographer throughout my college years plus I enjoy computers and technology. It all seemed to fit.

► **What do you like best about your current position?**

I wanted the opportunity to open a new imaging center. I am working with a wonderful group of people who are dedicated and work well together. We have a vision, and the opportunity, to create a first class service operation using all new state-of-

the-art technology. We also have a great relationship with our hospital partner. This is not always true for hospital-based practices. The strength of our relationship will hopefully allow for even greater business expansion in the future.

► **If you're ever having a difficult time working through a problem at your job, who do you turn to for advice?**

I am extremely fortunate to work with Kathy Szeto (a fellow RBMA member). She is our Business Office Manager. She has been with the practice for many years and has tremendous insight and historic knowledge. She is a very positive person and we think very much alike. We are both interested in providing the best service to our physicians, staff, and patients.

► **Where were you born and where did you grow up?**

I was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. My father was a salesman and my mother worked as a cashier in a dress shop. They struggled financially but always made sure that their sons had what they needed. I only wish they could see me now.

► **What do you like about your life today?**

I really enjoyed working for my last group. They are a great group of radiologists. However, I was not ready to work in a rural retirement community. I grew up in the city and enjoy the benefits of what city life has to offer. I was thrilled when offered the opportunity to return to Seattle to do what I am now doing in a city of my choosing. The group that I now work with has high expectations for their new imaging center(s). I am thoroughly enjoying working with the leadership of this group to set new standards, work through all the details of opening an imaging center, hiring staff, developing a marketing plan, recruiting new radiologists, and more. Unlike Donald Trump, I would much rather say, "You're hired" than "You're fired."

► **If you could re-experience one thing in your life, what would it be?**

This is an interesting question. You are not asking about changing something, only reliving it. If I could relive something it would be the birth of our sons.

► **What academic degrees do you have and where did you earn them?**

I have both a Bachelors and a Masters degree from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh.

► **Who or what were your major influences?**

My college professor Bruce B. Black, PhD, was a major influence in my life. He gave me a tremendous opportunity to grow by working for him as a teaching assistant. As his assistant I led small group discussions and facilitated student volunteer work. Another major influence in my life was Len Zajac, the wedding photographer I worked for during summer vacations while I was in college. He taught me about customer service, value, and quality as well as print and film processing quality assurance. Bruce Porter, MD, and Darrell McNabb, PhD, of First Hill Diagnostic Imaging are two people who have also dramatically changed my life. Among other things, I learned the radiology business from them. Bruce is someone who I will always consider my brother.

► **What rule would you say you live your life by?**

I have learned to listen to people. Many times it is the front line staff of a practice who knows both the problem and its possible resolution. Mostly, I have learned to listen to my wife.

► **What is your current involvement with RBMA?**

I truly value my membership in the RBMA. I have been an active participant on the Practice Management Forum. I also attend both the spring and fall education conferences. One thing I found interesting was a comment I heard from a former radiologist who thought the meetings were all about partying. I showed him the schedule of the all-day education sessions I actually attended. My comment to him was that I wanted to learn, network, and give him good value since he paid for my time away from the office.

► **When and why did you choose to get involved with RBMA?**

I chose to join the Association to stay abreast of changes in our industry. I learn a lot from the organization and its members. It seems only right that I share what I know whenever possible.

► **What do you value as an RBMA member?**

I value my RBMA membership because the role of the practice manager is sometimes lonely. We have no peer in our organizations. We are not one of the doctors and must make "Solomon-like" decisions when the staff disagrees. More often than not our peers are our competitors. The doctors look to us to advise them on all matters of business. The RBMA lets me network with my peers, learn what others are doing, and work to bring the best practices to my group.

► **What is your vision for RBMA?**

Keep focusing on education and networking because that is what RBMA membership is all about.

► **What do you do with your free time?**

Given the nature of my position, and the opening of the new imaging center, I do not have much free time these days. What free time I have I spend almost exclusively with my wife and sons. We are in the process of building our second custom home. As this is published, hopefully, our sons will have completed their Boy Scout Eagle Project. This has taken all of us tremendous time as it required that we return to our former home where the troop is located. When my life slows down a little, I hope to travel a bit more and work on the landscaping.

► **Tell us a little about your family.**

My loving wife, Karen, is a teacher. She and I just celebrated our 25th wedding anniversary. We have two outstanding 17-year-old twin sons, Adam and Mark. I have to share how proud I am of them. Their grades, leadership, work, popularity, and love make us truly blessed. More importantly, they are just good kids with upstanding moral character.

► **What is your motto?**

Tenacity and hard work coupled with a bit of compassion.

► **If you could be anywhere in the world, where would you be?**

I am where I want to be. That said, I would not mind vacationing in my favorite city, Las Vegas, to catch a few rays of sun.

► **Anything else you'd like to share?**

I hope that this article has been worthwhile reading. Please let me know when you see me at the Fall Education Conference in Phoenix.

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