



Alpha Docs: The Making of a Cardiologist

Daniel Muñoz, James M. Dale

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In the tradition of Scott Turow's *One L* and Atul Gawande's *Better* comes a real-time, real-life chronicle from an impassioned young doctor on the front lines of high-stakes cardiology.

It takes drive, persistence, and plenty of stamina to practice cardiology at the highest level. The competition for training fellowship spots is intense. Hundreds of applicants from all over the world compete to be accepted into the Cardiovascular Disease Training Fellowship at Johns Hopkins. Only nine are chosen each year. This is the story of one of those fellows.

In *Alpha Docs*, Daniel Muñoz, M.D., recounts his transformation from wide-eyed young medical student to caring, empathetic professional—providing a rare inside look into the day-to-day operations of one of the world's most prestigious medical institutions. The training is arduous and often unforgiving, as Muñoz and his colleagues are schooled by a staff of brilliant and demanding physicians. How they learn the art and science of untangling cardiac mysteries, how they live up to the standards of an iconic institution, how they survive the pressures and relentlessly push themselves to reach the top ranks of American medicine, supplies the beating heart of this gripping narrative.

Readers accompany Muñoz as he interacts with his mentors, diagnoses and treats patients, counsels worried family members, and struggles to stay awake for days and nights on end. Lives are saved—and sometimes lost. But the rewards are immediate and the incentives powerful. As Muñoz confides after helping to rescue one man from the throes of a heart attack: “I knew where I wanted to be: not watching but doing, on the side of the glass where I can help shape a patient's fate. I would be a cardiologist.”

A unique yet universal story about striving to be the best in a high-risk, high-impact field, *Alpha Docs* provides fresh perspective on the state of America's healthcare system as it captures all the fulfillment and frustrations of life as a doctor in the twenty-first century.

Praise for *Alpha Docs*

“From the book's beginning, Dr. Daniel Muñoz captivates readers with [the] life-changing story that decided his future. . . . Thoroughly allows readers to understand how cardiologists are made. Highly recommended.”—**Medical Library Association**

“In simple, compelling prose, *Alpha Docs* captures the reader's attention with gripping case histories, the astonishing breadth and complexity of top-notch medical training, and often wry, sometimes pointed character sketches of the attending physicians.”—**Hopkins Medicine magazine**

“An insider's view of the high-stakes world of cardiology, *Alpha Docs* offers a vivid and fast-paced exploration of the cauldron that creates doctors in the twenty-first century.”—**Danielle Ofri, M.D., Ph.D., author of *What Doctors Feel***

“[A] heartfelt medical-education memoir . . . a successful portrayal of just how hard it is, intellectually, emotionally, and physically, to train as a physician specialist.”—**Booklist**

“This engaging book will interest those considering a career in medicine as well as readers who want to learn more about cardiology.”—*Library Journal*

“Muñoz begins to find his niche in the medical world, and his journey will inspire doctors in training and patients alike.”—*Publishers Weekly*

“[A] satisfying immersion into what medical specialization requires . . . There is polish to the patient vignettes, giving them deeply human appeal.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

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Leslie Marcellus:

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Shane Ward:

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