Alumni – Baker Urology

Audio	Video
[Silence]	Dark blue background with animated blocks. L S U Health Shreveport Foundation logo is at the bottom center of the screen. White text in center of screen: Urology
[Dr. Baker] Hey, I'm Ashley Baker. I'm a Urologist. I graduated from school here in 2009. And practice in town in a large private practice with nine other urologists and practice urology.	Woman a fair complexion and shoulder length, straight, dark hair tinged with gray wearing a blue, gold and black print blouse in front of a dark blue washed background Text: Ashley Baker, M D Urology Regional Urology
[Silence]	Dark blue background with animated blocks. L S U Health Shreveport Foundation logo is at the bottom center of the screen. White text above it reads: Why did you choose Urology?
[Dr. Baker] I knew early on that I wanted to do something surgical, so kind of identified surgical versus medicine based specialties and then started exploring surgical things. And honestly, it really wasn't until the very end of my third year. We at that time weren't allowed to do urology rotations. And so I had - you could do an elective, I guess it wasn't a scheduled rotation. So I did an elective rotation and liked what they did. But honestly, I just really liked urologists. They were friendly. They were smart. They did a little bit of medical management, but also had a lot of surgical management and it was just a great fit.	Dr. Baker on camera
[Silence]	Dark blue background with animated blocks. L S U Health Shreveport Foundation logo is at the bottom center of the screen. White text above it reads: Where did you do your training?

Audio	Video
[Dr. Baker] So I trained in Jackson, Mississippi, at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, and at the time there weren't a lot of students from here that were going there. I guess it was close in proximity. Urology is a five year program. At that time, we did one year of general surgery and then four years of urology. It was a really wonderful experience. I honestly, I loved Jackson and thought long and hard about staying there to practice and to raise our family. The especially great thing about it is that they really have all sorts of professional programs for multiple, multiple things in health care. And so it wasn't just a medical school and medical resident, but there were dentists there and P A's and pharmacists and nurse practitioners and and more, really. So it was a really good experience for us.	Dr. Baker on camera
[Silence]	Dark blue background with animated blocks. L S U Health Shreveport Foundation logo is at the bottom center of the screen. White text above it reads: What drew you back to Shreveport?
[Dr. Baker] Well, I'm from here. And so honestly, we had a child, our - I had her at the very end of my fourth year of residency. I'm married to a classmate of ours who practices emergency medicine, and her life was chaos. And I have family here. I had a sister here and parents here. We obviously knew that we liked Shreveport, we liked the medical community here. And so we worked to get back this direction.	Dr. Baker on camera
[Silence]	Dark blue background with animated blocks. L S U Health Shreveport Foundation logo is at the bottom center of the screen. White text above it reads: What do you enjoy most about Urology?

Audio	Video
[Dr. Baker] I would honestly say when I started out, which I haven't been out in practice very long, just a little over six years, but when I started out, it was patient relationships and the surgical side of things. I really enjoyed being in the operating room and I do, I love that still. But the relationship that I've built with patients over the years is so rewarding and so fun. And my partners are awesome. I mean, we we we have a great time. It is day in and day out of fun. I mean, we really have fun doing what we do and very collaborative and almost a team sport, if you will.	Dr. Baker on camera
[Silence]	Dark blue background with animated blocks. L S U Health Shreveport Foundation logo is at the bottom center of the screen. White text above it reads: What is the hardest thing about Urology?
[Dr. Baker] For the most part, we take care of quality of life issues and I'm A-OK with that. I enjoy that. But we also take care of some cancer and we take care of bladder cancer, kidney cancer, prostate cancer. I have over the past few years lost some near and dear patients to aggressive cancers of the genitourinary system. And it's hard. It's not fun.	Dr. Baker on camera
[Silence]	Dark blue background with animated blocks. L S U Health Shreveport Foundation logo is at the bottom center of the screen. White text above it reads: Are there certain personality traits that fit your specialty?

Audio	Video
[Dr. Baker] I said earlier that I chose urology because of urologists and I've trained in Mississippi. We've traveled, I serve on a national board for a political action committee, and I've met a ton of urologists. And not to say that I love them all, but I really like most of them. I think urologists in general are kind of people, people. You have to be okay being in an operating room. You have to be okay being in a clinic. There's a lot of technical things in our line of work in terms of just wires and balloons and scopes. And so you have to be a little bit innovative and quick on your feet when things aren't working right. But I think anybody could develop or could prove or show those characteristics. I mean, I don't think there's anything specific that that urologists have that you couldn't be a urologist if you didn't possess certain qualities. I think the other thing that I've learned when I started and when I matched in urology, the year that I matched, our match class was only about 15% female, I was the first woman to match in the program in Mississippi in 35 years. Along with another woman who matched at the same time as I did. And that's very different now. I mean, when I travel to conferences and when I talk to young women who are applying and students who are applying, there is a large representation of genders, races and I like that. I think that's a great thing for our field.	Dr. Baker on camera
[Silence]	Dark blue background with animated blocks. L S U Health Shreveport Foundation logo is at the bottom center of the screen. White text above it reads: How is your work-life balance?

Audio	Video
[Dr. Baker] Oh man, that's tough. Yeah, it's not great right now. It's just not great. And that's completely honest. But I work five days a week. I take weekend call, I take evening call. I am in a group with nine people and so I spread that a little bit and share that with them. Coronavirus- owning a private practice and managing the business side of a practice and not having a hospital support or a hospital pocket to dip into has proven to be really difficult. And so a lot of our long hours lately have been more business than clinical, which is hard for doctors because I don't think we typically have good training in that. And it's been something that we've had to develop over the years. That being said, it is rare that I am working late at night compared to my residency where we worked like crazy. My life is 150% better now compared to my emergency room husband who works 13 8 hour shifts a month. I would say that my balance is more towards work than his is, but the stress and the high acuity when he is at work is very different than what I do day in and day out. Most of my work time is fun.	Dr. Baker on camera
[Silence]	Dark blue background with animated blocks. L S U Health Shreveport Foundation logo is at the bottom center of the screen. White text above it reads: How do you handle work stress?
[Dr. Baker] I exercise, I spend time with family. We have a running joke I listed on our website that I like to work in the yard and my husband's insistent that in 13 years of marriage he's never seen me work in the yard. So I think I want to work in the yard, but I don't. I basically exercise, chase kids, spend time with friends, church. I try to have self-care in there and do for the most part, every day.	Dr. Baker on camera
[Silence]	Dark blue background with animated blocks. L S U Health Shreveport Foundation logo is at the bottom center of the screen. White text above it reads: What advice do you have for medical students choosing a specialty?

Audio	Video
[Dr. Baker] It is not a life or death decision. And I think at the time when I was trying to go into urology, it was obviously competitive. I put a lot of pressure on myself. I had an internal dialog that said that urology was it, and then if I didn't do urology, I hadn't achieved what I was looking for. A few years out and not that far out, in hindsight, I realized after spending a lot of time with colleagues, working in multidisciplinary tasks, taking care of patients, there are a ton of fields that I could be happy in, and that the privilege of practicing medicine is not specific to one specialty. And so try to take a step back, take a deep breath and realize that you'll end up where you need to be and you'll end up being happy, good at what you do, probably no matter what specialty you end up in.	Dr. Baker on camera
[Silence]	Dark blue background with animated blocks. L S U Health Shreveport Foundation logo is at the bottom center of the screen. White text above it reads: What do you wish you had known before choosing your specialty?
[Dr. Baker] Women come to me all the time and they say, and these are typically women that are pre-med, and they said, “Would you do it all again?” And it's sort of like parenting. You know, the days are long, but the years are short. And your gut inclination is to say, absolutely would do it over and over and over again. And I do think that's true. But I also would be lying if I didn't say that when I start to think back to the day to day moments and the years in residency and the times where we were working Christmas and all of our family was together, etc., there's a lot of hard times. There's a lot of obstacles that you have to overcome when you're in medicine. So I don't know. I mean, I think it's just to be realistic about what you're getting into, to lean on your family and your friends, to realize that not everybody will understand what you're doing and why you're doing it. But ultimately, ultimately, it's so worth it. So worth it.	Dr. Baker on camera

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[Silence]	Dark blue background with animated blocks. L S U Health Shreveport Foundation logo is at the bottom center of the screen. White text above it reads: Did you do special training for female urology?
[Dr. Baker] So actually, I was applying for pediatric urology, which, I'm so thankful I don't do that now. Now that I have children, I just. Man No, thanks. So they're adorable. They're great, but I don't want to operate on them or mess with that. So I was applying for pediatric urology. I got pregnant. I was. I was due to deliver the week-ish month-ish of interviews for Peds. And so I withdrew my application, panicked, called the group here in town, interviewed here at the school, just trying to get back home, to be close to family and kind of recenter and see what I wanted to do. When I first started out in practice in Mississippi, our program was very heavy in cancer and oncology. And so when I first started, I did a bunch of robotics, I did a bunch of open cystectomy and all sorts of cancer stuff, and I was fighting women who wanted to see me. I mean, I was trying to maintain an oncology practice when the truth is the people that were beating down the doors, wanting me to take care of them were women who wanted a woman to take care of them. And so, about a year or two into practice, a couple of people joined behind me who were very skilled at cancer stuff, very skilled at robotics. And so I sort of leaned in to the flow and it ends up, I would say that probably 75, 80% of my practice is female urology and women's health. And then the rest of it I do, I'm the only person in our group who does what's called a P C N L. It's basically a surgery percutaneously through the flank for really large kidney stones. Obviously, that's men and women, but the bulk of it are women. The men in my practice tend to be spouses, sons, fathers of the women that I took care of initially. So, no, it was not a fellowship training in and of itself, but it sort of has evolved into that.	Dr. Baker on camera

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[Silence]	Dark blue background with animated blocks. L S U Health Shreveport Foundation logo is at the bottom center of the screen. White text above it reads: Does working in private practice offer the ability to collaborate with an academic institution like L S U Health Shreveport?
[Dr. Baker] You know, I wish that we did that more. We we've been really busy. So when I first joined our practice, there were 20 partners over there and we had more time to do collaborative stuff and to teach and do some of the standardized patient stuff. We actually have a research department at our facility and employ three research coordinators, and all of us actively participate in research at our own facility, some of which has been collaborative with the LSU system and other academic centers in our region. But that is something that when we we meet once a year for a weekend retreat that we call our summit and that is something that is one of our goals for the future, is to have better relationships and exposures to students, to research, so that everybody can understand that they're, you know, what what all is out there, what your options are as you finish your training.	Dr. Baker on camera
[Silence]	Dark blue background with animated blocks. L S U Health Shreveport Foundation logo is at the top center of the screen. Text in gold and white font reads: Special thanks to Doctor Ashley Baker, Urology, L S U Health Shreveport Class of 2009. Regional Urology, 2 5 5 Bert Kouns Industrial Loop, Shreveport, Louisiana 7 1 1 0 6