



already a veteran

When Dr. Raj Butani received the Army scholarship in 1992 to pay for medical school, he had no idea how different the world would be when it came time to pay it back. In 2004, he was deployed to Ramadi, Iraq, where he served a one-year combat tour as a medical officer in the U.S. Army.

“Regardless of any personal or political beliefs regarding the war, I am proud to have served my country to the best of my ability under very trying circumstances, both professionally and personally,” he said. “I will always be extremely proud and grateful to have had such a unique experience and I’m especially thankful to have come home safely, which as you know, is unfortunately not always the case. Never in my life did I imagine I would receive a combat medical badge and Bronze Star medal, and I’ll definitely have lots of stories for the grandkids someday,” he said.

Butani was drawn to the medical profession at an early age, inspired by his aunt and his uncle who both were physicians. He began volunteering at a hospital in New Jersey when he was in seventh grade. “I thought the concept of applying concepts that you learn to try and help and treat actual people was incomparable.”

Butani uses humor to help make the long days easier. He’s originally from the Northeast, but now considers himself a bit more “Western” in his thinking and attitude. “And that’s not a bad thing,” he jokes. He moved to Bellevue a year ago and was previously stationed in a hospital in Honolulu.

“I am fortunate to have found a practice setting and hospital that offers great collegiality and a supportive work environment, and I’m surrounded by high-quality co-workers and a caring support staff that goes out of their way to be helpful,” he said.

When he’s not working, he’s spending time with his wife and two babies, hanging out with friends, traveling and jamming to ’80s music.

He feels at home in Bellevue. “I find the Eastside to be unique in that it contains the best mix of the urban and suburban lifestyles, ethnic diversity, excellent schools, and lots of recreational and cultural opportunities, and perhaps most importantly it’s a great place to raise a family,” he said. “What more could you ask for?”

Raj Butani, gastroenterologist, Overlake Internal Medicine Associates, Bellevue. He’s also affiliated with Overlake Hospital Medical Center in Bellevue and Snoqualmie Valley Hospital in Snoqualmie.