

"I just don't have to worry about shootings and crime like I did in Omaha," she said. "It's more relaxed here."

Jill's father, Dr. John C. Sternquist, was a surgeon and retired about two years ago. When Jill decided to pursue a medical career, he offered his daughter this advice.

"He always said medicine is a good field. He found it rewarding, challenging and interesting," Jill said. "He said he saw new things he'd never seen before throughout his career."

Jill says her favorite part of her field is delivering babies.

"It never gets old, it's always fun because it's so exciting for the parents," she said.

Jill said she is surprised by the amount of her classmates who are returning to raise families in Yankton.

"I have a few friends who have moved back, a lot of young professional people have started to move back," she said. "After high school, a lot of people thought they needed to get somewhere big. But once they have kids, they realize they don't want their kids to go to school there."

Dr. Clarissa Barnes began working in internal medicine at Yankton Medical Clinic Sept. 1. She said it's been quite a change from her residency at Johns Hopkins.

"It's a different pace, a different patient profile compared to inner city Baltimore," Clarissa said. "Everyone at the clinic is super nice and helpful. I'm still figuring out where things are."

During residency, Clarissa said she spent two-six weeks doing one thing.

"It's a completely different level of medicine between urban vs. rural medicine," she said. "Traditional internal medicine as practiced here with a doctor who does clinic and hospital care is not really that common. It's pretty unique to have a set-up like we do here with all types of care and specialties in one building."

Clarissa said she thought about becoming a surgeon, but she found she liked to have her patients awake and able to talk to her.

"There are doctors who pick one organ or one area of the body, and they become the expert on that specific thing. I chose internal medicine because I wanted to do that for my patients. I want to learn their entire history and be the expert on that particular person. It's the job of the internist to know how things work together and affect the patient," she said.

Clarissa said she always wanted to be a doctor, but her goals changed with time.

"About 50 percent of my Halloween costumes as a kid were doctors," she said. "I just didn't always want to be a doctor in the same way or for the same reasons."

Her father, Dr. David Barnes, is a family practice physician at the medical clinic. Clarissa said she thought her dad never believed she would actually become a practitioner.

"I was very interested in preventative medicine and public health initiatives I think he thought I would always work in government," she said. "At some point, I decided I wanted to take care of people, too."

Clarissa said she's eager to be closer to her relatives this holiday season.

"I love to cook, and I want to do Thanksgiving and everyone can come it will be nice," she said.

Clarissa and her husband, Chris Dabney, are getting settled into the role of homeowner and are working on setting up their music room.



Dr. Jill Sternquist

"Chris and I met in orchestra at USD," she said. "I play cello and he plays viola. We also have a harpsichord we are moving in. We're pretty excited to get back into playing music together, we've really missed it."

■ by Tera Schmidt

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