Dennis Frisman, MD

Twist Of fate

“I’m looking forward to the AIDS/Lifecycle this June, a 545-mile ride from San Francisco to Los Angeles, and I’ve recently completed the 180-mile Baby Dragon Ride between Los Angeles and Santa Barbara,” says Dr. Frisman

Dr.Dennis Frisman was pursuing his medical degree at the University of California, San Diego, when life intervened.“I got infectious mononucleosis and was examined by an oncologist who had a research lab. I was doing diagnostic pathology related research and heading toward a career in research, and my interest was piqued…. I was really open to what direction to take, and essentially, that is how I got into pathology research. It’s rather ironic that I had to get sick to discover the research field I now love,” jokes Frisman.

After completing his medical degree and pathology residency,Dr. Frisman gained valuable expertise in diagnostic immunohistochemistry through pre-and postdoctoral fellowships with the National Institutes of Health.He went on to serve as Chief of the Immunopathology Division of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology in Washington,D.C.“We use the technique of immunohistochemistry to aid in tumor diagnosis, and I needed to keep on top of the latest literature. The problem was that in the available textbooks, the data was already, at minimum, a year old since publication….As a self-taught database developer, I programmed a system that enabled me to update an immunohistochemistry database in real time and the user to do an up-to-date meta-analysis [statistical technique that combines results from multiple studies] of the literature applying immunohistochemistry in their day-to-day diagnostic practice. It provided the pathologist results necessary in identifying tumors based on the immunohistochemistry profile,” says Dr. Frisman.

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Through his database Immunoquery.com, Dr. Frisman achieved official recognition by the College of American Pathologists. In 2003, he was presented the President’s Award for outstanding service and dedication to the field of pathology. In 2008,Dr. Frisman took the next step and sold Immunoquery.com, but he remains very much involved.“By the time I sold the database, I had over 30,000 users worldwide, performing immunohistochemistry meta-analysis of 500,000 immunohistochemistry stain results from over 3,000 reference sources.”

Dr. Frisman, who is currently Chair of the Department of Pathology at Eisenhower Medical Center, is also involved in the upgrade of Eisenhower’s anatomic information system.“We will be scanning pathology slides into the information system with Eisenhower becoming one of the first non-academic centers to offer such a system,” says Dr. Frisman.“We can use telepathology to transmit images to other pathologists anywhere in the world, to our clinicians in their offices, or even surgeons in the operating suite for immediate consultation. I am confident this will enhance our relationship and communication with surgeons and internists as well,” says Dr. Frisman.

“Today, the new direction of pathology is molecular genetics,” explains Dr. Frisman.“Now, all of the techniques we have used in the past are coalescing and enabling us to help guide clinicians in selecting very specific drugs to treat patients.As a pathologist, it is very exciting to be at the forefront of this technology.”

When not busy with research or working with PathIQ® ImmunoQuery®, Dr. Frisman can be found running or cycling long distances.He has participated in a variety of half marathons and century rides.“I’m looking forward to the AIDS/Lifecycle this June, a 545-mile ride from San Francisco to Los Angeles, and I’ve recently completed the 180-mile Baby Dragon Ride between Los Angeles and Santa Barbara,” says Frisman. Dr. Frisman’s goal for 2010 is to complete his first half-triathlon in Cancun this September

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