

Katie Johnson: Good morning and welcome to Apple a Day, Lake Region Healthcare's Health and Wellness show where we feature news and information you can use to live a healthier life. I'm Katie Johnson, your host, and my guest today is Dr. Sheilaine Mabanta. She is the newest member of the medical staff at Lake Region Healthcare's Cancer Care and Research Center, and we're excited to introduce her to you this morning. Good morning, Dr. Mabanta.

Dr. Mabanta: Good morning.

Katie Johnson: I am so pleased that you could join us this morning and let us welcome you to Lake Region Healthcare, to the Cancer Center and to the Fergus Falls community. I would like to just let you start out by giving us a little bit of information about you and your background. Where are you from and what does your medical career look like up until joining Lake Region Healthcare?

Dr. Mabanta: I was originally born in the Philippines. However, I came over at the age of four or five years old and was raised in the great state of Mississippi.

Katie Johnson: Oh.

Dr. Mabanta: I then went to undergrad at Notre Dame for four years, and then eventually went to Tulane, University of Tulane Medical School and did my residency in radiation oncology at the University of Florida, Shands Hospital. Following that, I joined a private practice group in central Florida for about 13 years, and then another opportunity led me to Texas near the Dallas area in a small community in Decatur, Texas. After six years, now I'm coming into the Fergus Falls area and joining Lake Regional.

Katie Johnson: What inspired you to pursue medicine and oncology, in particular, when you were making your career choices?

Dr. Mabanta: Well, my family background, my parents are both in the medical field. My father was a family practice physician and my mom was a nurse. So I was surrounded by folks in medicine. When I went into college, I really enjoyed the sciences and that helped propel me into focusing on pre-med, et cetera. Oncology in general, I initially thought I was going to be an OB/Gyn physician-

Katie Johnson: Oh, interesting.

Dr. Mabanta: ... until I did my rotations my third year and did a rotation in the radiation oncology department in the basement of Charity Hospital which is no longer there in New Orleans, and really enjoyed my month with the radiation oncologists. And finally on a personal note, my father unfortunately passed away with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma that somehow has kind of influenced me to go into oncology.

Katie Johnson: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative). For sure. And what about choosing Lake Region? Particularly hearing that you haven't been this far north before. How did you end up here and what was it about Lake Region that was especially appealing to you for joining the practice?

Dr. Mabanta: Well, in my search, I really particularly am not attracted to big cities. I've enjoyed small towns where it's a smaller setting where I feel like I can help the community, and I was encouraged to come here. And I came with my husband, John, last October, and was pleasantly surprised to see the backing of the city with a cancer center and how excellent the cancer center is well run. We have the physicians and Dr. Barnes has built such a great radiation oncology division in association with Dr. Tate and Dr. Swenson that I felt very encouraged that really I didn't have to build anything, I would just hopefully help promote the growth of the excellent care that they were already providing to the community.

Katie Johnson: I think you're right on there. And for our listeners who might not know, Dr. Barnes is retiring, so Dr. Mabanta is fortunate to be able to follow after such a fantastic radiation oncologist we've been fortunate to have in Dr. Barnes. As I'm sure you can tell, and you mentioned, our cancer center is a pretty special place, now coming up on being 10 years old. The fundraising to build that cancer center was a remarkable story. There, the staff is even more remarkable. Have you had a chance to get to know the team and how are you feeling about joining the crew up there?

Dr. Mabanta: Absolutely. Dr. Barnes has done a wonderful introducing me to both divisions. The staff on the radiation oncology side is very well experienced, and the therapists, along with the dosimetrists. I feel like I'm going to have wonderful support and, of course, Dr. Tate and Dr. Swenson on the medical oncology side have been here for a number of years, and they will only give me support through these few months of transition.

Katie Johnson: Mm-hmm (affirmative). It is a fantastic team. Tell us a little bit more about your philosophy of care and what it is that's important to you in providing really high quality care, particularly to cancer patients and to their families.

Dr. Mabanta: My philosophy of care has developed over the many years of seeing patients of different demographics, different ages, different comorbidities, and different medical backgrounds, and in the end, the best of care as a radiation oncologist is doing no harm in providing them services in radiation oncology that can only help. Whether it's curative or the palliative setting.

Katie Johnson: Mm-hmm (affirmative). What is it that you like most about being an oncologist?

Dr. Mabanta: In the end, it's helping patients. Whether it's to help in their goal of curing against a very difficult disease, but in also to provide palliative treatment for those who are suffering from the results of cancer. It's also a very challenging field. There's always new technology. There's always new modalities that are

coming through, as well as different cases and results, et cetera. In addition, you have to also be in communication with your medical oncologists because of the new advancements that they have presented and how it impacts your care. It's not a practice that you can be sedentary. You always have to be challenged and have to be motivated to make sure that you're on top of your field.

Katie Johnson: Sure. What about when you're not working? What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

Dr. Mabanta: I do like to walk. I love to read. I love to cook. But most of all, love watching my children in gymnastics. They're both high-level gymnasts, and we've fortunately had the ability to travel throughout the country, even the world. We've been to Belgium and they competed there. But I'm very lucky to be able to travel with them and see different places and I'm very proud of them. They're both verbally committed to the University of Denver for Division One gymnastics.

Katie Johnson: Wow!

Dr. Mabanta: And my oldest is going to start next year.

Katie Johnson: Fantastic.

Dr. Mabanta: For right now, it's all about them, but on a personal basis, I still like to do other things, cooking, reading, et cetera.

Katie Johnson: Oh, fantastic. Well, Dr. Sheilaine Mabanta, it's such a pleasure to welcome you to Lake Region Healthcare and to our cancer center, to the team here, and to the community. I can tell that you are going to fit in perfectly, and we are just so happy to have you and your family joining us, and thanks for taking time to introduce yourself to our listeners this morning. I'm sure we'll have you back, and we'll continue to get to know you better through the years.

Dr. Mabanta: Thank you very much, Katie.

Katie Johnson: Dr. Sheilaine Mabanta, radiation oncologist, new to the team at Lake Region Healthcare and our Cancer Care and Research Center, my guest today on Apple a Day. Dr. Mabanta and Katie Johnson reminding you there is so much to do here. Stay healthy for it. Have a great day.