PROFILE Dr. Ferenc P. Nagy

As a child of Hungarian immigrants, Ferenc Nagy decided to become an MD because no one in his family had been a doctor—or had even gone past high school.

“When you’re a teen-ager, being a doctor seems kind of cool,” the vascular surgeon said. “I started to think it would be a neat job—to sleuth things out. You’re not sure what the problem is, and you have to hunt around to find the answer.”

Dr. Nagy attended medical school at Wayne State University in Detroit, completed a general surgery residency at St. John Hospital and Medical Center in Detroit, and a fellowship in vascular surgery at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. He is board-certified in both general and vascular surgery, and is registered in vascular interpretation.

In his day, the only way to become a vascular surgeon was to get general surgery training first. Nowadays that isn’t the case.

Vascular surgery appealed to the Michigan native because of “the intricacy of the operations and the broad-based ways of fixing people,” Dr. Nagy said. “There were open operations versus stents. It was the best of both worlds.”

What the physician treasures is “being able to talk with people about their problem—and then being able to fix their problem,” he said. “You can do an operation on an aneurysm and fix it. Then you get to watch the relieved faces of the patients and their families when you tell them their problem is gone.”

A cure is not always possible, the doctor said. But when “a potentially life-altering problem has been fixed—when you can give them some help and some relief—that’s a satisfying thing.”

When it comes to those who are ill, “I’m very patient-centric, so much of my time is devoted to them,” the surgeon said. “I will spend as much time as needed explaining things. I make sure that everybody understands and is comfortable with what we’re doing.”

The physician avoids medical jargon, he said.

“I speak in plain language. My family members were immigrants. That’s what they would have needed.”
In a doctor’s office, what is of value is that “we do everything we can to make patients feel comfortable,” Dr. Nagy said. “We try to make every patient feel important—which they are.”

The physician and his wife have three children: a 6-year-old, a 3-year-old, and a 10-month-old. Basketball and tennis are his hobbies, but “I spend my extra time with my family.”