

# Podcast Ep 9\_FINAL

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## SPEAKERS

Kasey Stevens, Larry Crum, Dr. Razan Khan, Ron Area, Rebecca Stephens

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### Kasey Stevens 00:02

Hello and welcome to the One of the Herd podcast, the official podcast of the Marshall University Alumni Association. Today, we're chatting with Dr. Razan Khan, a 2019 Marshall School pharmacy graduate who has a passion for storytelling and education. We recorded this interview during the height of the COVID 19 pandemic. And as always, before we get to the interview, let's check in with our alumni staff for an update of what's new on campus. Hello, and welcome back to the One of the Herd podcast. We're here for the staff chat. We're joined by myself, Larry, Rebecca, and Ron. Today, we're going to chat about a lot of different topics of what's new on campus. But most prevalent, I think, in our minds is the search for our provost, we've had a lot of strong candidates, what have you guys seen from those candidates?

### Larry Crum 00:56

You know, it's really been a fascinating past 14 months, when you really think about it. And you know, we've had we introduced coach Huff in January of 2021. President Smith, in January of this year, at Christian Spears in February, it's really a neat time to be a part of Marshall, you know, getting ready to name a new provost, there's so much change so much opportunity. Looking ahead. You know, Ron, you had a chance to listen to a few of these individuals.

### Ron Area 01:25

Well, each of the candidates and they were five, they all come come to us with different backgrounds and experiences. But the common question that we asked him is, why did they why are they interested in Marshall, and what they're interested in Marshall, the aspect of the brand, Marshall brand all the way across the country, as well as wanting to be connected to our president, Brad Smith, and his background and experiences as a corporate giant. And for them to be able to learn from that and to be associated with that just has been a, a central theme from from all five candidates. And we've got a good strong pool, I've been impressed with how the whole process was involved in, and it's going to be an exciting time.

L Larry Crum 02:25

It's pretty neat. I mean, when you really think about it, with Brad coming in with President Smith coming in, it's bringing in a lot of attention. There's a lot of people paying attention to Marshall University right now. And that's reflected in the the caliber of individuals that want to be, you know, a part of this university and, and really just, you know, align themselves with what we're doing. And the great thing, the great work we're doing.

R Ron Area 02:47

Well, with the excitement associated with his last 100 days, and all the listening sessions, and the central themes that are coming out of those listening sessions are going to be very, very strong, and they're going to set our strategic priorities for the University. And I'm excited, because because of President Smith's background and his connections across this country and across countries, we're going to be able to attract very hopeful some significant support that we haven't had before. So it's, this is a new game, new game in town, and we got a new quarterback. And it's just hold on, it's coming fast.

K Kasey Stevens 03:34

Absolutely. And coming up again, fast. The earliest probably Spring Commencement we've had is on Saturday, April 30, which always gets me thinking of my own commencement. Do you guys remember what your college commencement was like?

R Rebecca Stephens 03:54

A little bit. You know, I just remember being very excited for the day.

R Ron Area 04:02

You know, it was a really special occasion to be able to sit among all of my friends and just have that time together. You know, before we walked across that stage and became college graduates, my commencement they have the three major degrees, the only one I went through was my doctorate my bachelor's and master's. My job required me what I was doing, I couldn't I couldn't attend it. And but it was rewarding for the my doctor at Oklahoma State for my family, my parents drove over to Oklahoma from New York at that time, and it was a very special time.

L Larry Crum 04:44

Yeah, I'm not gonna lie. I took my degree and I ran. I did not stick around for commencement. I started working immediately. And, you know, I'm a little sad that I didn't want you know, now looking back I wish I had had stuck around and done my commencement. But at the time, I was just I was ready. I was excited to graduate. I was excited to get my degree and I was excited to start working. And yeah, it was. It was neat, but it's hard to believe it's that time of year

already. It's, you know, it's really one of my favorite events each year, because, you know, we get to celebrate the achievements of all these incredible students, you know, and welcome them to the alumni family. But, you know, I was thinking back when we were, you know, talking about the topics we were going to be talking about today. And I really thought about this class, like last year's class, you know, they really need to be celebrated for accomplishing what they did, in the midst of everything we've been dealing with. I mean, when you think about this class, lockdowns, mask mandates, virtual and in person learning, and here they are going to be walking across the stage earning a degree in the in the middle of all that that's that's impressive,

R

Ron Area 05:51

Very impressive. And these students are, are to be commended to be able to get through all this with this whole pandemic and everything. And we haven't been able to celebrate pretty much for the last two years. And the awards banquet, tremendous success, and it's going to be it's going to continue to be that way.

K

Kasey Stevens 06:15

Fantastic. We are so excited to welcome in that new class of Herd alums. Speaking of celebrating success, one of our own faculty here on campus recently received the prestigious Fulbright scholarship. What do you all know about Dr. McFall and receiving that award?

L

Larry Crum 06:32

Well, this is really a neat opportunity. These individuals have an opportunity to teach conduct research abroad. I had an opportunity a couple years ago to speak with one of the previous recipients, Mary Anna Ball. She was an accomplished dancer, and alumnus won the award to study dance in the US or in the UK, sorry. And she kind of explained to me the process whenever I talked with her and what went into it and earning the award and what it meant to her. And that really stuck out with me. So you know, when I saw, you know, Kimberly, and what she's accomplished in what she's going to be doing traveling to Poland for this project, looking at the integration of technology in the classroom, and you know, where technology fits in, you know, in the COVID era. It's really a relevant topic, and it really a neat thing to study.

K

Kasey Stevens 07:19

Fantastic. And so Dr. McFall will be moving to Poland. And speaking of moving, we have some great sunshiny news about the Athletic Conference that Marshall is in, we are officially headed to the Sunbelt Conference just in time for summertime.

R

Ron Area 07:36

It is this is a great time for our entire athletic program to be moving in that conference. And it also helps us in terms of our alumni outreach is that we're going to be pulling together individuals from each of these areas and possibly starting up new alumni chapters, and

individuals from each of those areas and possibly starting up new alumni chapters, and engaging alumni. As well as providing an opportunity for all of our alums to attend games because it's bringing Sunbelt most of their most of those teams are within a day's drive or days connection. So it's it's just a win win all the way around.

**L** Larry Crum 08:19

Yeah, this conference really presents some unique matchups, some unique opportunities for us. Looking at the East Division, you know, Old Dominion's coming with us from Conference USA. We have yeah, exactly. We have new regional rival, James Madison, you know, he's going to be close by, like you mentioned, I'm really excited about the potential rivalries with Appalachian State, Coastal Carolina. You know, Marshall loves Myrtle Beach, West Virginia loves Myrtle Beach. So the opportunity to go down there and we have so many alums in the area, and people like to visit there. And of course, the Georgia teams make for a really fun division. It's kind of it's sad to see our relationship in with Conference USA, but the opportunities with the Sunbelt, you know, this is a conference that for forever was known as a conference that would take the teams that didn't really have a home anywhere else. And now, they're considered the cool conference. You know, everybody wants to be a part of it. And I'm excited that we are.

**R** Ron Area 09:13

Well, it's a big has been a big demand to get into the conference. And for us to be invited in, says a lot for Marshall and the brand name that we have

**L** Larry Crum 09:23

And you know, speaking of a Sun Belt Conference, October 29 homecoming against Coastal Carolina,

**R** Ron Area 09:29

That's great. Yeah, that's gonna be a fun fun time as we continue to gear up and, and we want all our alum engaged in some way or fashion. So it's, it's definitely going to be something for us to plan for. And for us to have that date as early as we have had. It's going to be the planning is definitely there.

**K** Kasey Stevens 09:52

Absolutely. And recently, we just were able to honor and celebrate so many alumni at our annual awards banquet. Now I know this was very exciting because we had postponed it due to the pandemic year after a year. And finally getting to have the event in person just meant so much to those folks.

**L** Larry Crum 10:10

Yeah, I mean, it was disappointing not to not to be able to have this event for two years. It was it's one of the highlights of the year, it's an opportunity to recognize alumni, students, faculty, supporters of the university. And, you know, it was disappointing the the pandemic kind of, you know, put this event on hold. But we were finally able to recognize some of our awardees from a couple years ago when they were selected. You know, President Smith, who wasn't President Smith whenever he was initially selected for the Distinguished Alumnus Award, but has since gone on to do even greater things as our as our 38th. President, and that so many awardees, we had almost two dozen, between our scholarship recipients, the college awardees, and how about our chapter recipients Kasey talk a little bit about, you know, the Eastern Panhandle and the southern coalfields in the work they've been doing.

K

Kasey Stevens 11:01

What's really interesting is the Eastern Panhandle Alumni Chapter kind of developed during COVID. So they really weren't even on the radar in 2019, when we were thinking about the 2020 awards banquet. So they have gotten the unique opportunity to build this leadership team. They've done all their meetings virtually. And they were able to have a in person meeting finally, just recently, so we're really excited to honor them as our merging Chapter of the Year in Southern Coalfields. This is the first time receiving this award, and they continue to just knock it out of the park. They have five counties based around Beckley, West Virginia, where they honor a scholarship recipient, from each of those counties. They even do an event in each of those counties every year, they have a strong leadership team. And we're just really excited that we were able to honor them and recognize the hard work that they do.

L

Larry Crum 12:00

And, you know, not just having the event, but having the event here at home and Brad D. Smith Foundation Hall. You know, you couldn't ask for a better a better place to host this, Ron what you know, what does it mean to you to get to recognize these alumni and supporters of the university and really, you know, showcase the things they've done for Marshall.

R

Ron Area 12:18

Well, anytime we can highlight alumni and the success that they had, it makes all the difference. And then for these two chapters, the emerging chapter in the panhandle, and then the Coalfield chapter, here, here you've got the the entire spectrum of the state, and how important it is, for us to recruit students from those two areas. And to have them involved and having the leader is engaged in working with students and identifying students and, and they're going to be doing more, we're going to be talking to him a lot about for maybe providing work opportunities for students up in those areas. And as well as recruiting students, because that is going to be our lifeblood, and the more our chapters are engaged in student recruitment, we're going to be able to swing those enrollment numbers in a much more positive direction.

K

Kasey Stevens 13:14

Absolutely. And thinking about campus continuing to improve our alumni succeeding, we want to focus a little bit about a small campaign that happened here, Marshall Rises, and I say small jokingly, because it really has been so successful. So much has been raised in such a short amount of time. And that was largely due in part two, Ron's leadership here, as well as a lot of hard working folks within the foundation.

R

Ron Area 13:41

Well, the Marshall Rises again, being our first comprehensive campaign, and we had it scheduled for seven years, a seven year campaign. And we were able to go over our goal of 150 million in four and a half years. And right now, as of today, we're, we're almost at the 175 million mark 174 point 6 million. So it just shows to you the level of support that we have all the way across this country. And, you know, we have, we've taken a lot of pride, and it's a definitely a team effort we're all involved in this is creating a culture of philanthropy, and that is that that's the idea that will how carries on in the future. And, you know, somebody was saying to me before, what's the basis of this culture of philanthropy, it's developing relationships. And the key thing that I that I work with our development staff and others about it is is a three step process is that our donor prospects have to get to know us. They have to like us, and they have to trust us. And if we can complete that three step process, the opportunity for them to give back happens. And that's what we've seen. And that's what's so exciting about it. And I can go on and on and talk about all the the major things that we've been able to accomplish. But it's, I give you a quick story, quick story as with a couple here in town, and I don't want to embarrass them with a name. I was asked to go up and visit with him and I had not met them. They live up near around the museum and went in. And his wife was so gracious, and she was making some more d'oeuvres and knew I was coming and everything else. And, and finally, they immediately wanted to talk about establishing a scholarship. And I basically I said to him, I won't say what his name is, but I said to him, you know, I appreciate your willingness to want to make a gift right now. But I think it's more important that we dance slowly, we get to know each other a little bit better. And, and they appreciated that more than anything else, that it was more important that we had a relationship, that was the gift. Sure. And that's the culture that we have established, here at Marshall, and we'll continue to build upon it.

L

Larry Crum 16:22

You know, the neat thing about the campaign, the numbers are, are great, they're, they're fascinating to hear what we've been able to accomplish in such a short amount of time. But when you look at the impact, and what it means to the students to the alumni, the the number of students that are impacted by scholarship support, the number of new scholarships, the the amount of the scholarships, it's, it's really changing lives when you really think about it. And when you consider the new programs, the new facilities that are going to be popping up all over the all over campus here in the coming years. It's really an impressive, impressive time.

R

Ron Area 16:59

It's an impressive time. And, you know, and, and Brad is, you know, he comes in as we were going to sell have a big celebration on this probably later this summer. And, you know, his comments to me is, hey, Ron, this has been great. You did a good job, great team effort all the

way across the board. What's next? Okay, and he said, and as we look at one next, he says Think big. I'm a big thinker, and we need to, we need to think big, and then go out and do it. So this is, again, it all ties together where we are in this exciting chapter.

**L** Larry Crum 17:38

Yeah, you touched on that campaign celebration. I think anybody that's been on around campus, the past couple months, has seen the Marshall Rises banners, all the way around the perimeter and on campus, and it kind of just screams Hey, look at what we've done. This is this is really neat. And then to have that opportunity, you know, later this summer to be able to celebrate what we've accomplished. And, you know, close the door a little bit, and then open a new door for what we can do next.

**R** Ron Area 18:06

We're gonna celebrate in August. And now let me throw out to anybody that wants to participate in this campaign, and have their name recorded in this campaign. It's not too late. Go to the website, write a check, throw it in an envelope, whatever. But I want everybody to have an opportunity. Every one of our alums and friends and, you know, the mailman next door, who knows, but anybody that would like to participate have their name associated. We welcome

**K** Kasey Stevens 18:37

Ron, Larry, Rebecca, thank you so much for joining us this morning to chat about what's new on campus. Stay tuned for our interview with Dr. Razan Khan, graduate of the Marshall School of Pharmacy, he's a Toronto based pharmacist with a passion for education and telling stories. I read on your website, your work as a content strategist, subject matter expert health, pharmacy, and health and medical consultant and that a lot. But tell us a little bit about what you do.

**D** Dr. Razan Khan 19:15

My official title is is a senior healthcare copywriter. That's also commonly known as a medical writer. So a lot of what I do is create educational content for physicians, pharmacists, nurses and patients to help them understand certain disease states and treatments that are available for them.

**K** Kasey Stevens 19:35

That's fantastic and super interesting. The way you're using your pharmacy degree for that, what really got you interested in the more of the writing aspect of this?

**D** Dr. Razan Khan 19:45



Dr. Razan Khan 19:43

So I've always really been interested in writing presentations, projects, that kind of work. But throughout school, I was really interested in science so all those types of creative things didn't really lend itself to science. So I thought they were separate, I didn't realize you could combine the two. So when I realized there was this whole other industry where you could combine your, you know, strong interest in science with your need for creativity, this sort of was like I have to do this,



Kasey Stevens 20:15

that's awesome that you've been able to blend those two things that you've been super interested in. What does a typical day look like for you?



Dr. Razan Khan 20:23

So for me, a typical day actually changes a lot. But on average, we, me and my team usually have a morning meeting, we sort of look at all the stuff we have to get done, and we delegate tasks, or we pair up. So typically, a medical writer will pair up with a designer, just because you can write something really nice, but it has to look beautiful, too, in this industry. And a lot of times, we'll just try to get work done for that day, or for a client presentation the next day. And we basically have to meet deliverables and deadlines a lot in my field work. This sort of gets sped up when we have pitch work for new business or new clients. And that's usually a really exciting part of what I do.



Kasey Stevens 21:08

What has your role been during the COVID 19 pandemic? Or has there been any specific projects that you've worked on relating to the pandemic?



Dr. Razan Khan 21:16

Yes, so during the COVID, 19 pandemic, I have shifted to a work from home position, which has been interesting for me, because I've always been used to working in a community pharmacy, which is, you know, every day you're with the public. So working from home has been interesting. I can't really say at my core job, there has been a COVID-19 related project. But a lot of the stuff we're working on now has been affected by COVID-19. And so we're really focusing more on digital media, direct to consumer education and marketing, rather than your typical print media, brochures, even magazines, we're focusing more on the digital side of things, which is really interesting. And outside of work, I'm a contributor to the Canadian Men's Health Foundation. So recently, we've developed a COVID-19 portal, where I've created a host of materials and information regarding the vaccines, myths and misconceptions. So that's been pretty cool to



Kasey Stevens 22:18

Great that role that you get in helping educate the public on those types of things. I think that's



great that role that you get in helping educate the public on those types of things. I think that's super helpful. What is has been your favorite project that you've gotten to work on so far?

D

Dr. Razan Khan 22:29

What's what's tough about picking a favorite project is, they're also different. And I can't really say can pick one. But for me, the most exciting part about what I do would definitely have to be like I said, the pitch work and proposals and trying to get new clients because you're really working long hours for that short period amount of time with your your fellow co workers and your team members. And you're trying to basically you're trying to win. So you get this adrenaline you're trying to come up with the coolest ideas. And I think that's probably the best part of what I do.

K

Kasey Stevens 23:06

What brought you to the Marshall School of Pharmacy originally?

D

Dr. Razan Khan 23:09

So it was very interesting. When I started looking into pharmacy schools, I didn't initially find Marshall off the bat. But I, I think someone had reached out to me, so either summer from student affairs or recruitment. And they sort of explained to me where Marshall was. And I thought, Okay, I'm a big city kid. I've never been to a small town. I don't know anything about that kind of life. But then I thought, well, that's not really a good reason not. So maybe it'll be a new life experience that I can build off of. And I think for me, that was the main reason I really wanted to put myself out there, see what would happen or what could happen. And in retrospect, is actually a really good idea, because now I apply everything that I've learned living in Huntington and going to Marshall in my career now, too.

K

Kasey Stevens 23:59

Did you have a pleasant Marshall experience? Did you enjoy it while you're here?

D

Dr. Razan Khan 24:03

I did. At first, it took a little bit of an adjustment to get used to, you know, the small town vibe and things not being as accessible as they aren't in a bigger metropolitan sort of place. But it was fine. I just did really quickly. And I think what one of the things that helped me just really quickly were the people I met through the pharmacy program and we you know, creating really strong friendships, makes up for anything else.

K

Kasey Stevens 24:32

Yeah, we get a lot of Marshall's community is worth everything. Something we hear often. What was it like for you to be able to be the commencement speaker at your own commencement?

D Dr. Razan Khan 24:44

Well, that was pretty cool. It was a very humbling but exciting and sort of a mixture of emotions like I really can't pick one but it was definitely humbling to know that your class and the staff and faculty thought of you that way too. be able to give you this honor. And it really was an honor. But it also felt like I was given an opportunity and a platform to speak. And I needed to use it wisely. And I think I did. So that really meant a lot to me.

K Kasey Stevens 25:14

What advice would you give to someone coming to Marshall as a freshman?

D Dr. Razan Khan 25:18

Well, as a freshman, I definitely would tell someone don't have preconceived ideas of what college life is like. Or maybe what you've seen in movies, or what you know, your older friends have told you. It's really up to you to make the Marshall experience what you want it to be for yourself. So really trust yourself and use the resources available to make that experience what you want it to be

K Kasey Stevens 25:42

Perfect. And then a little transition to a fun question here. What is your favorite hobby?

D Dr. Razan Khan 25:48

For me, my favorite hobby hands down would have to be cooking and experimenting with food. That's something that I enjoy a lot.

K Kasey Stevens 25:57

And then we'll do 10 fun quick questions to get to know our guests we do with everyone we have on the podcast, what is your favorite color?

D Dr. Razan Khan 26:05

So my favorite color is red. But apart from Marshall green, it wouldn't be red.

K Kasey Stevens 26:09

Did you have a favorite class in the School of Pharmacy?

Did you have a favorite class in the School of Pharmacy?

D

Dr. Razan Khan 26:13

I would have to say, probably wouldn't be one of my lectures. But I was really interested in my practical so any of the labs I had probably particularly the compounding lab where we got to create medications, package them, learn how to make IVs, that kind of stuff. I enjoyed that the most.

K

Kasey Stevens 26:32

Did you have a favorite professor or staff member at the School of Pharmacy?

D

Dr. Razan Khan 26:36

Yeah, I would say my favorite professor would be Professor Nord. She's great. She was also our faculty advisor for one of our student organizations. So I got to know her really well. And in terms of staff people, there's, I forget what exact department it would be called. But there's Megan Russell. So she I think she's part of Student Affairs. So she she and I spoke a lot. We did a lot of stuff for open houses. So that's how we got connected.

K

Kasey Stevens 27:08

Do you have a favorite place to vacation?

D

Dr. Razan Khan 27:11

Like I said, I'm a big city person. So even on vacation, I choose to go to cities. One of my favorite places to go I've only been there once or twice is London, England. But I feel like if I could, I would go there a lot more. It's really, it's a really nice place to go.

K

Kasey Stevens 27:32

What is your favorite thing about your career?

D

Dr. Razan Khan 27:34

So for me, what I like about my career is getting the degree that I did, didn't stop me from pursuing all my different interests. So my let's call it the nine to five, I get to work in an environment where it's a team based setting, I get to do projects, presentations, and creative writing, with my science background, and then on the weekends, I get to help out at a local community pharmacy. So I don't feel like I'm tied down in any way I get to do everything I want to do. And that's what I enjoy about my career.

K Kasey Stevens 28:06

That's awesome to have that freedom and availability to do that at your age. Do you have a favorite musical artist?

D Dr. Razan Khan 28:15

Ooh, this one? It's a good question. I listen to a variety of music. I think probably Avicii is probably up there. You know, the music's pretty, pretty upbeat, it helps me get through those long nights of work if I ever have them.

K Kasey Stevens 28:32

Same on the music track. Do you have a favorite song?

D Dr. Razan Khan 28:35

Recently? There's a song called forget I have to just what is it called? Oh, it's called it's called Fight Back by Neff X. I don't really not familiar with the artists that much, but I just know the song and it's really good. Like, it'll get you pumped up.

K Kasey Stevens 28:50

Do you have a favorite movie?

D Dr. Razan Khan 28:52

Actually, my favorite movie would probably be the Jason Bourne series. I like all three of them. One's not better than the other. It's just the whole thing.

K Kasey Stevens 29:01

You have a favorite book, favorite book?

D Dr. Razan Khan 29:05

I wouldn't say I have a favorite book, per se. There's just so many again, there's so many different books out there. But I would I would definitely recommend for people to check out. I think self help books get a bad rap. But there are so many new and really good ones out there. There's one by I think Oprah's friend Her name is like Gayle. I don't know her last, Gayle King. She has a really good book where she speaks to a variety of different people from different

industries, like you know, racecar drivers and actors and politicians. And it's lessons to like themselves to their younger self. So I wish I could remember the name of that book but that looks pretty good.

K

Kasey Stevens 29:51

And then do you have a favorite animal?

D

Dr. Razan Khan 29:53

Well, okay, so for for pets, I would say my favorite animal would be a cat or a cat. That's I have two cats. And then if it was like a bigger animal, I guess it would probably be horses. I'm always really liked horses.

K

Kasey Stevens 30:08

So anything else that we didn't talk about during the interview that you want folks to know,

D

Dr. Razan Khan 30:12

I think what people probably should know is regardless of what degree you get, or what program you choose to pick, just realize, you can't predict everything. You might switch majors, you might switch passions based on an extra curricular you have. So allow yourself to have that freedom and don't feel sort of pigeon holed. You know, like, I picked this major, this is what I'm going to do. This is what it's going to be. You never know like, things might change and your interests might change. And don't ever feel like there isn't a career out there for you. There is something you just have to find it.

K

Kasey Stevens 30:51

Thank you so much for taking the time to join us this afternoon. Really appreciate it hearing your insight and your experience hearing about what you do now. I really appreciate your time.

D

Dr. Razan Khan 31:00

Yeah, well, thanks for having me.

K

Kasey Stevens 31:02

Thanks so much for tuning in to today's episode of One of the Herd. We hope you enjoyed this episode. And if so, leave us a review on Apple podcasts. If you have an idea for an episode, let us know by emailing us at [alumni@marshall.edu](mailto:alumni@marshall.edu). Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and

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