



Dr. Vish Kalapatapu, his wife Mika Rao, and their daughter Asha and son Jaisal.

# PRACTICE

BY MELISSA LANDRUM > PHOTOGRAPHY BY COUNTRY PARK PORTRAITS

# Made Perfect

Twenty years after graduating from Taylor High School, Dr. Vish Kalapatapu finds himself back home, practicing internal medicine in the place where he grew up.

# Dr.

Kalapatapu's daughter becomes the second generation to attend Katy ISD schools

this fall, and he and his family couldn't be happier to be back in Katy. "Growing up in Katy, I was always outside playing with the kids in the neighborhood," he says. "Like most boys, I played Katy Youth Soccer and was a Boy Scout. We loved our schools, had good times with our neighbors, and always felt safe."

When a recruiter first mentioned the possibility of working for a practice in Katy, the idea caught the doctor by surprise. "It had never occurred to me that I might one day return — not just to Houston, but to Katy," he says. "When I came to interview, I realized how much Katy had changed." Although many things about Katy were different, the things that Dr. Kalapatapu loved about growing up here still remained: "Katy's safe neighborhoods, excellent public schools, friendly and down-to-earth citizens ... clean air! I couldn't think of a better place for my family."

"For our kids, the best part about living in Katy is spending time with their grandparents," adds Dr. Kalapatapu. "They get a kick out of visiting my parents in the same house I grew up in and driving past Taylor High School where I used to play soccer." Dr. Kalapatapu attended West Memorial Elementary and Memorial Parkway Junior High before graduating from Taylor High School in 1988. He attended Rensselaer

Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, where he earned a bachelor's of science in chemical engineering.

Initially, he considered a career in chemical engineering,

but it soon became clear that a career in medicine was his true calling. "My maternal grandfather was a highly respected doctor in my parent's hometown in India, and from him I learned that medicine is an art as well as a science," says Dr. Kalapatapu. "He practiced medicine with compassion and gentleness and always maintained the dignity of his patients."

Upon receiving his medical degree from the American University of the Caribbean Medical School, Dr. Kalapatapu moved to Savannah, Georgia, where he completed his residency in internal medicine at Memorial Health Medical University Medical Center. Five years later, he had built a thriving internal medicine practice in Savannah when he and his wife began exploring the idea of moving closer to family after their children were born. "My parents, siblings, and in-laws all lived in the Houston area," he says. "We realized it would be nice for our children to grow up among their grandparents and other family, and a city like Houston offered many cultural and educational opportunities."

The newest member of Katy Internal Medicine Associates (KIMA), Dr. Kalapatapu enjoys serving the citizens of Katy and west Houston and relishes the opportunity it provides to care for a former teacher, neighbor, or the parent of a former classmate. "One of the true pearls of being back in Katy is when I walk into a patient's room and see a face from the past," says Dr. Kalapatapu. "I recently had a former teacher as a patient. He is still with the school district, in another capacity, and said he was very proud to see that I'd become a physician. Of course, that made my day!"

Both Dr. Kalapatapu and his wife, Mika Rao, have careers in healthcare in Katy. Rao serves as the senior marketing director for Katy Rehabilitation Hospital. "Since our move to Katy, it's been fun to have another topic in common to discuss over dinner," says the doctor. "From a professional perspective, Katy is an ideal place to practice medicine with outstanding medical facilities, access to leading technology, and a diverse patient population to serve."

Dr. Kalapatapu remembers Katy as a quiet, peaceful place to grow up. "Katy's still a great place to live but has grown a great deal," he says. "The neighborhood my wife and I now live in was just wide open space when I lived here as a kid."

Although his wife grew up on the east coast, she also feels right at home in Katy. "Despite all the changes in Katy, people have still retained those small-town values of faith, family, and community," says Dr. Kalapatapu. "It's the kind of place you'd want to live — even if you weren't from here."

