

## John Breda

Professional Musician

Performing Artist

Physician

Class of 1972



John Breda attended Needham High School in the early 70s, a time when the high school reflected a culture of change. Today, John appreciates that when he was a student, the high school afforded the advantages of an alternative education. He commends the alternative program as a program that encouraged students to teach themselves. Given the opportunity to explore subjects that interested him, John developed a love of learning that has inspired him to accept exciting challenges academically and professionally.

John singles out the Music Department as an active and strong department. He also cites an excellent APP biology course taught by Dr. Eastman, the department chair at that time. Doctor Eastman, John notes, offered computer programming at a time when this type of course was not available to students in most high schools. He describes the music and science departments as innovative and challenging and credits these departments for stimulating his own intense interest in music and science.

John comments, "There is no greater contribution to society than to be influential in the development of a child." Both his academic and professional careers reflect the influence that the Needham schools had on him during his formative years. After his graduation from high school, John attended the New England Conservatory of Music, where he received degrees in music education (B.M., 1975) and performance (B.M., 1976, and M.M., 1978). For over fifteen years, he pursued a career in music as an educator and as a performer. John was a music instructor at Marylhurst College in Oregon and at Dana Hall School in Wellesley, Massachusetts. As a performer, he enjoyed a distinguished career as a clarinetist, playing for a number of orchestras, including the Boston Symphony/Boston Pops, the Santa Fe Opera (NM), the San Francisco Opera, the Springfield Symphony (MA), the Oregon Symphony Orchestra, and the Portland Symphony (ME). He has also worked as a clarinet builder and private teacher to members of the Boston

Symphony/Boston Pops Orchestras, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Montreal Symphony, the San Francisco Symphony, the National Symphony, and the Curtis Institute of Music. In 1977, he received a Phi Kappa Lambda Scholarship, a scholarship awarded after a competitive recital at Jordan Hall in Boston; in 1982, he was granted a Tanglewood Fellowship with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Berkshire Music Center; and in 1986, he performed as the soloist in Debussy's *Rhapsody* with the Oregon Symphony.

During the late 80s, John began planning a career change from music to medicine. "I dreamed of coming back to Needham and serving this community which assisted me in my youth," he explains. In 1990, John was accepted to Harvard University, School of Dental Medicine. Two years later, he was granted a \$3,000 fellowship, the Betty Lea Stone American Cancer Society Research Fellowship, which enabled him to research the pharmacology of DNA damage and repair and its relationship to anti-cancer medication. The following year he was awarded the Massachusetts Medical Society (Charles River District) Scholarship. In 1996, John received his M.D. from the University of Massachusetts Medical School. He completed his residency at the Miriam and Rhode Island Hospitals in the Brown University Program. As a resident in 1996, he was able to combine his expertise in music with his scientific background: he was granted a research fellowship for \$10,000 with the Symphony Orchestra Institute-Occupational Medicine/Psychiatry. John researched the effects of job stress and the presence of psychological distress in symphonic musicians and published the results of his research in *Stress and Job Satisfaction among Symphony Musicians*.

Now finalizing his plans for a new career, John is joining a private medical practice serving Needham, Newton, and surrounding communities. He sums up his career plans as follows: "I am committed personally and professionally to being of service to Needham. My personal and professional experiences range from my upbringing in an immigrant household to working for and with international figures. Perhaps, I can share those experiences in a way that will foster the dreams and plans of Needham's students."

John's career path is proof of his creative energies, discipline, and willingness to take risks to realize his vision of what he would like his life to be. He is even an instrument rated private pilot. It is not surprising that John is listed in Marquis' *Who's Who in the World*.