A pediatric ophthalmologist whose practice includes the medical and surgical management of glaucoma, Kraus knew she wanted to work with children before she knew which specialty to pursue. She chose ophthalmology because “a child’s sight is something that is so critical to their interaction with the world, with their education, with what they go on to be, and I want to maximize whatever potential they have.”

While children are her favorite part of her chosen field, they are also a “unique challenge. Unlike adults, where coming in to check eye pressure can be a very simple thing to do, with children, this can be the absolute hardest aspect of the appointment.”

There is a “true art” to figuring out a way to check a child’s eye pressure so the process doesn’t result in screaming or crying and provides accurate information, says Kraus. For this, Kraus has a secret weapon. “For better or for worse, I have a personality and a mindset that help me jump into a child’s brain,” she says. “Shiny, sparkly things appeal to me too. I can often come up with another thing within my arm’s reach that will distract a child for a split second longer and allow me to get that critical piece of information that is going to enable me to better treat them.”

Kraus also takes her skills and passion for working with children on the road. For the third year in a row, she spent a week in Belize working with an organization called the World Pediatric Project, which coordinates volunteer surgical missions to South and Central America in a range of specialties, including ophthalmology.

“You’re often operating long into the night and working with a group of people sharing this common, single-minded vision to take care of this large group of children,” says Kraus. “There’s a lot to love about it.”

This passion extends to the entire field of ophthalmology. “I love that I can focus on this one little thing, the eye,” says Kraus, “but because so much of our general health is reflected in that one little thing, I’m also caring for a whole person.”