

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

Actor Matt Czuchry's starring role on *The Resident* is set to launch him into the stratosphere

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Matt Czuchry is not a lawyer, but he plays one on TV. Well, he used to, anyway, though you can still catch him in reruns of *The Good Wife*, in which he stars as attorney, Cary Agos. The thing is Czuchry might have been an attorney instead of an actor, had he received a higher score on the LSAT back in his college days in Charleston, South Carolina. One of his brothers is a psychology professor and researcher, and Czuchry tanked. But not really.



Landing the role of wealthy but troubled Logan Huntzberger on *Gilmore Girls*, then transitioning to the acclaimed series, *The Good Wife* could hardly be considered a failure. And here's the other thing about Czuchry—he's not a doctor, but he plays one on TV., on FOX's hit series, *The Resident*.

"Health interconnects us all, that was one of the main things that connects me to the show," he tells us about a role he prepared for by interviewing doctors and nurses, as well as plowing through reams of research. "All of us go through struggles, and Conrad is someone who goes through those same struggles. One of the things that drew me to this character is his willingness to fight for his patients. If it comes to breaking rules, he's kind of Machiavellian that way. He's going to break those rules in order to do the best thing for the most amount of people. If he has to go against the system to do that, then he's going to do that."

A more understated connection is a personal one for Czuchry, one that drew him to the pilot where Dr. Randolph Bell, played by Bruce Greenwood, loses a patient due to medical error, which happened to the mother of one of Czuchry's friends. "I thought if I had a personal connection, how many other people have this kind of connection," he recalls about reading the script. "It shows us that none of us are immune to making mistakes. And it shows these human qualities and what healthcare professionals go through on a daily basis in terms of what they have coming through the door and how they compartmentalize these aspects to move forward."

Moving anywhere for Czuchry is becoming a greater challenge as more and more fans stop him in public. Because they watch him in their living room every week, many feel they know him intimately, sometimes getting a bit too close. "They will come up and hug you and talk to you about how you impacted them, and then they'll give you a hug and come back in for another hug," he laughs, adding with characteristic understatement, "The interaction with someone I don't know but they feel they know me makes an interesting dynamic." And then there was the time a fan asked him to sign her boob. "You just politely decline on that one," he grins.

Having grown up in Johnson City, Tennessee, Czuchry studied history and poli-sci at College of Charleston, which he attended on a tennis scholarship. Captain of the team during his last two years of college, he nonetheless left the game behind the moment he graduated. As good as he was, he never aimed to go pro. His goal was to be the first from his area of Tennessee to win the state high school championship.

"That is one thing I point to as one of the greatest moments in my life," he sighs, looking back. "For me, once I knew I could never reach the same level again, I kind of put that in the drawer. That explains a little bit of my personality. I dedicated myself completely to that, did the best I could, achieved my major goal. Let's put that to the side, and now it's onto the next thing."

The next thing, of course, was acting. At the ripe old age of 22, he was already busy landing bit parts on *Freaks and Geeks* and *Opposite Sex* before getting cast as Sean McGrail, baseball playing boyfriend of Bella Banks (Kate Bosworth), on The WB's *Young Americans*. Work, including some films and TV. guest roles, was fairly steady over the next few years, and then he was cast as former conman Jamie Farrell on *Hack*. *Gilmore Girls* followed and there was no looking back.

About a year after tanking the LSAT (despite taking a Kaplan prep course), and right before moving to L.A. to become an actor, Czuchry bumped into his Kaplan LSAT teacher. "He asked me how everything was going. I said, 'Well, I did terrible on the LSAT.' And he said, 'Sorry my instruction didn't help you out.' And then I told him about my plans to go to L.A. to pursue acting. And he said each of these things happen for a reason. That path opened you up to a new path. It's him reaffirming that sometimes the obstacles are actually opportunities. It's a pretty cool moment considering I was about to embark on a new journey."