



Letter from Dr. Mary Ann Keenan



Dear Penn Orthopaedic Family,



It is with both pride and humility that I thank you for the honor of dedicating this 22nd edition of *The University of Pennsylvania Orthopaedic Journal* to me. There are many other members of our department worthy of this honor. They are all dedicated educators. They have given many years and considerable

effort to your career development. They have shared their knowledge, skills, insights, and wisdom with you. They have given you both personal and professional guidance. They have been, and will continue to be, not only your mentors, but more importantly your advocates, sponsors and friends. That is the essence and joy of being a teacher.

It was very difficult for me to leave my busy clinical practice, research and teaching activities. This was especially true because of the suddenness and unplanned nature of my career change. I miss working more closely with each of you. You have made my life much richer. I have learned much from my residents and fellow faculty members. I enjoyed (almost) every moment of it.

When I returned home to Philadelphia from Los Angeles in 1990 to become the Chair of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the Albert Einstein Medical Center, I had the opportunity to work with senior faculty and leaders in Philadelphia Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation. I held faculty appointments at both Temple University and Thomas Jefferson University. These were excellent experiences and opportunities. In 2002, when Penn reached out and invited me to join the orthopaedic faculty, I was very excited to accept this new position. I had not been actively involved with the university since my undergraduate days at Penn. Now I was coming home.

What a wonderful home Penn Orthopaedics is. Penn has an enormously rich history. It is the oldest and best medical school, the first Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, and the first teaching hospital in the United States. Who would not want to join the faculty of this prestigious university and become the first woman full Professor of Orthopaedics?

Penn provided me a more unique opportunity than expected. Penn Orthopaedics enthusiastically welcomed my Neuro-Orthopaedics Program, helped facilitate its growth and expansion, and provided me with leadership opportunities across the university. Having the full support of a large

academic institution allows more robust collaboration and research opportunities. I had known Dr. Richard Lackman and most of the Penn and CHOP faculty professionally for many years. Coming to Penn allowed me to become better acquainted with the prestigious senior faculty on a professional and personal level. I am proud to call them my colleagues and friends.

It has been an exciting time participating in the growth of the department and residency program. When I arrived, Dr. Lackman had put many things in place making residency education a priority. We can all be proud to have built the most comprehensive residency training program in the country. Through time and the efforts of many, we have developed a department with unsurpassed diversity, which adds to our strength and depth. The energy, insights and enthusiasm of the residents and young faculty has been invigorating. They have engaged with the more senior faculty in the dynamic process of constantly improving the department and keeping us on the leading edge. It is imperative to continue allowing our young colleagues to have a voice and a role. We can be proud to have participated in the training of so many present and future leaders.

There are countless wonderful things about being in the Penn Orthopaedic Family. I thank you for treating my patients with compassion and respect in addition to providing outstanding medical care. I understand that these patients provide some unique challenges. You have always responded to those challenges with skill, kindness and good will. Your individual talents have made tremendous contributions to their function and quality of life. It delights me to know that you are actively continuing with their care and with the future growth of the Neuro-Orthopaedics Program. I hope to continue to assist you with that growth.

A career in academics and education is bittersweet. We are always saying hello and good-bye. Teaching at the University of Pennsylvania provides a rare opportunity to work with the brightest and most highly motivated young professionals. It is exciting to watch you mature into fine surgeons, teachers and researchers. Contributing to the development of each resident is invigorating. It is also sad to watch you move on and leave the Penn home. We watch with pride knowing that you are fully prepared and capable of continuing the fine tradition which began in 1765. We have each given much of ourselves but have left with much more. I am proud to be a member of the Penn Family. We are proud to have you as members of the Penn Orthopaedic Family.

—Mary Ann Keenan