



Administrative Chief Residents' Perspective

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"What did you learn today?" - Dr. Ernest Gentchos

That is the question we should be asking ourselves before we close our eyes every night. Did we make the most of our time? Did we get everything out of the day that we possibly could?

The days can be long, but the years go by fast. It's an old adage that never really quite hits home until you are on the other end, looking back at where it all started. For the three of us and the rest of our graduating class, the last five years of residency have absolutely flown by and seem to be gaining speed with each passing week.

As chief residents we have had a unique perspective on the program as it has developed and grown over the last year. There have been quite a few changes since we arrived in June of 2010. We came to Penn Orthopaedics just as Dr. Levin was getting his feet underneath him as the new Chairman, and to say he has hit the ground running is an understatement. His vision combined with the input and leadership of our triumvirate of Program Directors has witnessed significant faculty expansion, the creation of a new Musculoskeletal Center, and the recent transition of an entire Level I Trauma Center. Through all of these changes, we have continued to develop a residency program that offers a strong foundation in the vocation that we have chosen for ourselves.

As chief residents, we feel that one of the biggest contributions we have made this year is in our commitment to the residents and their education. The institution of weekly Thursday morning academic core curriculum sessions has given the residents protected academic time without having to worry about the daily grind of clinical duties. It has not been smooth sailing by any stretch, but we feel it has been an overall success. In addition to the involvement of our own

faculty and residents, we have managed to have world-class visiting professors from all over the globe. The Human Tissue Lab has been seamlessly integrated into these visits with visiting professor prosections, dedicated regional anatomy sessions, and frequent sawbones exercises.

As Penn Orthopaedics continues to expand with the new trauma center, a surgicenter, a growing presence at Pennsylvania Hospital, CHOP, the VAMC, and Bayhealth, it is tough to meet the demands of much needed man power. To the residents—your cooperation and willingness to help out this year did not go unnoticed. We thank you for being so compliant with changing schedules, assuming new roles during this transition, and stepping up to fill in vacancies when needed. As you all continue through this journey in residency, understand that some days will be more challenging than others. But always remember—to touch so many lives, to help so many people, and to spend the rest of your lives doing something you're all so passionate about is an absolute privilege. Our advice is to live by the words of Dr. Gentchos and all the mentors that helped shaped us during our short time here. Help each other out. Take pride in your work. Treat patients like family. Never stop learning.

This dedication simply would not be complete without also thanking our significant others for their immense patience. They have tolerated our fatigue, listened to our complaints, and have soothed our concerns. Their lives have been impacted by what we do day to day just as much as our own. Adriana, Alexandra, and Mary Kate: we apologize for all the texts/emails/calls during dinner, the late nights hammering out emails on our laptops, the cancelled plans, and the inevitable conversation about all things Penn Orthopaedics when we get together. We will never be able to thank you enough for your understanding and being by our side through it all.

Looking back at the sacrifices we have made and the hardships we have endured, it is bittersweet to realize that it is all coming to an end. It is certainly sad to be leaving the friends, mentors, and colleagues we have worked so closely with over the last five years. At the same time, it is exhilarating to move on to the next part of our lives armed with the phenomenal training we have received here at Penn. As we near the end we have come to realize that all that we have done was well worth it. And in the words of one of our great mentors and one of the most humble and empathetic human beings anyone might have the pleasure of meeting, Dr. John Esterhai:

"I'm at peace with that."

