



Letter from the Program Director

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Individually and collectively as a department, we are driven to make a demonstrable difference in the education of orthopaedic residents at the University of Pennsylvania. The education of residents and fellows has been, and continues to be, one of the greatest strengths of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery. It is with continued pride and gratitude that I continue to serve as Program Director of one of

the finest orthopaedic programs in the country. It is only with the exemplary efforts of our Chairman, Dr. L. Scott Levin, M.D., Co-Program Directors, Samir Mehta, M.D., and Jaimo Ahn, M.D., Ph.D., and the outstanding faculty that our program continues to flourish. As a testament to our national position, we receive over 800 applicants annually for our eight, highly coveted and competitive, positions. The commitment to resident education continues to be emphasized at the highest levels from our Chairman, Vice-Chairs, Division Chiefs and faculty. It is truly a team effort and has led to the continued academic success of the department.

This last year has been a year of transition within our department with the change of Program Coordinator after Barbara Weinberg's retirement. Shanna Kurek has filled the role quite successfully and has made significant improvements in all aspects of the residency program. Her enthusiasm, knowledge and commitment has helped transform the residency to a well-run and disciplined program. We can only hope that Shanna has the same longevity as Barbara, as I am sure her legacy will be as outstanding.

Currently, there are 42 residents within the department. There are eight new residents which matriculate each year, of which two residents spend an entire year doing full-time research between their post-graduate two and three years. The residents continue to rotate at the University of Pennsylvania Health System locations which include Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Penn-Presbyterian Medical Center, and Pennsylvania Hospital. Additionally, strong rotations at our V.A. Hospital, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and Bay Health Community rotation continues to be very successful. In addition, several of our residents continue to participate and are encouraged to pursue global outreach health programs.

While our affiliations are large and diverse, our department continues to strive for a balanced and well-structured core curriculum. The curriculum is run on a two-year cycle and covers all areas of our specialty. Grand Rounds are required and take place every Thursday morning with four continuous hours of protected educational time. Additionally, each

subspecialty delivers at least one academic didactic session each week. These morning conferences are comprised of faculty within the division, fellows, residents and students, both from the University of Pennsylvania and visiting from other medical schools throughout the country. These lectures are reviewed, critiqued and discussed with each division chief in order to maintain updated goals and objectives for each session.

In addition to our core academic mission in educational activities, this robust program is further enhanced by numerous additional opportunity. The Visiting Professor lecture series occurs each month and are sponsored and named lectureships. The lectureships are comprised of the most reknowned national and international faculty. In addition to visiting faculty, our residents are encouraged and supported to attend numerous off-site courses to enhance their learning each year. While the faculty are talented and motivated individuals and help steward our residency, it is really the residents who help continue to make daily changes and suggestions. I believe we have one of the best graduate medical education committees in an orthopaedic program. This highly functioning and motivated group consists of the Chairman, Program Directors, faculty as well as two members of each resident class who are elected by their peers. The program can, therefore, constantly review current situations and respond with ease to any needed changes. Many of our new programs have been initiated by resident suggestions during these meetings.

One of the suggestions which have come to fruition is the beginning of a standardized intern skills month. Under the leadership of Drs. Nicholas Pulos, as well as Nicole Zelenski, this month-long skill session indoctrinates our interns into the practice of surgery and orthopaedic surgery. Many faculty and upper level residents participate in activities ranging from knot tying to fluoroscopic guidance of instrumentation. Lectures include every subspecialty of the orthopaedic department and, as a testament to continued faculty and resident involvement, there has been no difficulty finding volunteers to give up their academic and clinical practices to spend a day with our new valuable interns.

As in all things in life, change is constant. Under the ACGME rules, strict guidelines which document mentorship must be implemented. We have created a Clinical Competency Committee at the University which semiannually reviews all orthopaedic residents. In addition to their milestone achievements, we review their academic record, research activities, and citizenship metrics. We are thus able to monitor and submit in a timely fashion to the accreditation facilities and, thus, have continued to be granted full accreditation in orthopaedics.

While our residency continues to be clinically robust, it is another testament to the depth and enthusiasm of our department that numerous grants have been awarded. These include institutional, national and industrial support grants. This allows us to support our visiting professor programs and helps in the training of our current orthopaedic residents. Our residents continue to present at local, state, national and even international meetings. Numerous publications are produced each year from all of our residents and culminate with our Research Day in June of each year. This is an outstanding program which gets better every year under the guidance of Dr. Louis Soslowky and Dr. Jaimo Ahn.

While there are many metrics used with respect to the quality of an orthopaedic program, perhaps one of the greatest is the success of the graduating residents into fellowship programs. This year is no exception with all eight of our residents receiving their top choices for fellowships at very competitive programs. Please congratulate our graduating chief residents, Dr. Stephen Liu, who will be doing a Hand

Fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh, Dr. Andrew Milby, who will be doing a Spine Fellowship at Emory University, Dr. Michael McGraw, who will be doing his Sports Fellowship at Hospital for Special Surgery, Drs. Christopher Melnic and Paul (Max) Courtney, who will both be doing Joint Fellowship at Rush University, Dr. Sarah Yannascoli, who will be doing her Hand Fellowship at Washington University, Dr. Nicholas Pulos, Hand Fellowship at the Mayo Clinic, and Dr. Jonathan Slaughter at the Mary S. Stern Hand Fellowship in Cincinnati. All of these individuals have our deep gratitude, and we expect outstanding careers as they have demonstrated their great potential where here at our program.

Finally, I can assure you that the success of our mission will continue as we have eight outstanding newly matriculated orthopaedic interns who have already demonstrated outstanding knowledge and skills during their internship year. I look forward to communicating with you next year as our future continues to grow and brighten with every year.