

Letter from the Program Director

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While it may seem difficult to author a Program Director annual update year after year for the UPOJ, in actuality, it is not. The reason is that while under the continuing leadership of Dr. L. Scott Levin, M.D., our program continues to expand at a rapid pace. Every year there continues to be development in all aspects of our program and divisions.

Beginning with intern year, the change has been significant and bold. New rotations have been added to enhance the education of our newest department members. The intern skill year has continued to be refined and has been exceptional. The credit goes primarily to Dr. Nicole Zelenski who has managed to organize and recruit senior residents and faculty for these modules. As a result, the interns are more prepared than ever to ascend to their core resident years.

This year's intern class was as talented and diverse as ever. Our new class includes Dr. Gerald Andah (Penn Medical School), Matthew Counihan (Drexel Medical School), Chelsea Hendow (New York Medical College), Liane Miller (USCF), Christina Nypaver (Loyola University), Christopher Scanlon (Drexel Medical School), Kimberly Stevenson (Georgetown University) and Matthew Webb (Yale). The expectation and observation thus far is that this class will continue the academic and clinical excellence which is expected of our residents.

On the other end of the spectrum are our graduating seniors. A metric of the strength of any program is obviously where the graduates matriculate. Our seniors have once again secured positions at the most premiere fellowship programs in the country. Dr. Jason Anari will be doing a pediatric fellowship at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Dr. Joshua Gordon will be doing a hand fellowship at the University of Washington Seattle Harborview. Dr. Philip Saville will be doing a spine fellowship at the Hospital for Special Surgery. Dr. Russell Stitzlein will be doing an oncology fellowship at M.D. Anderson. Dr. Vishal Saxena will be doing a sports medicine fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital. Dr. Michael Talerico will be doing a trauma fellowship at the University of Washington Seattle Harborview. Dr. Nathan Wigner will be doing a spine fellowship at the University of Washington Seattle Harborview. Dr. Chase Woodward will be doing a spine fellowship at Washington University in St. Louis. We congratulate our seniors who have once again demonstrated that hard work and intellectual curiosity pays off and we have no doubt that they will be leaders in their respective fields.

Once again, I would be remiss not to bestow much of the credit to another outstanding year to our outgoing academic chiefs. Drs. Joshua Gordon, Jason Anari and Michael Talerico

have once again provided the stewardship to have one of the most solid and well rounded programs. From one of the most robust visiting professorships to the AM core curriculum conferences, they have contributed outstanding leadership and have positioned our residency once again to be stronger than ever in the upcoming academic year.

Another significant development has been the appointment of Neil Sheth, M.D. as assistant program director and will be joining doctors Ahn and myself. Dr. Sheth brings energy and a specific skill set that will give additional talent to our leadership pool. Of course, we will miss Samir Mehta's, M.D. directorship as he has been promoted to be division leader of clinical research. While not officially an associate program director, I know that no one will doubt the continued effort and value of Dr. Mehta and that he will continue to provide to the residency mission on a daily if not minute by minute basis. Last but not least, is Shana Kurek who keeps the whole program running. Shanna tirelessly handles almost all of the day to day activities and requirements with exceptional skill.

Currently, there are 42 residents within the department. There are 8 new residents who matriculate each year, of which 2 residents spend an entire year doing full time research between post graduate 2 and 3 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 VA 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 programs.

While our affiliations are large and diverse, our department continues to strive for balance and well structured core curriculum. The curriculum is run on a 2-year cycle and covers all areas of our specialty. Grand rounds are required and take place every Thursday morning with 4 continuous hours of protected educational time. Additionally, each subspecialty delivers at least one academic didactic conference 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 clinical relevance while updating goals and objectives for each session.

The bottom line is that our highly committed leadership, faculty and staff, our program has continued to not just flourish, but has significant positive growth. More attendings, more courses, more papers, presentations, and awards is the result of what I think has resulted in one of the best programs in the country. It is also one in which I am proud and honored to be associated.