Department of Family Medicine
Keck School of Medicine of USC

Department Newsletter

Summer 2017
Issue No. 7, July 2017

Inside This Issue:
- Department welcomes new faculty to lead Human Rights Project
- Preceptors recognized for their mentorship to future family medicine physicians

Former department faculty becomes first family medicine physician to be appointed as President of National Board of Medical Examiners

The Executive Board of the National Board of Medical Examiners has selected Peter J. Katsufrakis, MD, MBA, as its next president. The NBME, which creates and administers a wide range of health professions assessments and assessment tools, is best known as the creator and co-sponsor of the United States Medical Licensing Examination®, which all medical doctors must pass to be licensed to practice in the U.S.

Dr. Katsufrakis is the first doctor of family medicine to serve as president in NBME’s 101-year history.

“Family medicine appealed to me because it embodied the best of various specialties. It made me a well-rounded generalist ready to address a wide range of issues, but also taught me how to seek and involve specialty expertise as needed – a good model for my new role with the NBME!” Dr. Katsufrakis explained.

Dr. Katsufrakis previously served as senior vice president of Assessment Programs at the NBME and is recognized nationally in the medical education and assessment community, both for his work at the NBME and in past roles advancing professionalism, HIV education, clinical training and medical education administration. Prior to joining the NBME, Dr. Katsufrakis’ positions included... KATSUFRAKIS continued on page 3

Message from the Chair:

The Department of Family Medicine continues to grow and thrive.

This quarter we welcome new programs such as the Human Rights Project led by our new faculty member, Cynthia Willard, MD. This program will open opportunities for medical students interested in learning about the nexus of medicine and social justice issues.

We are also happy to announce the arrival of Mark Benor, MD, who will be seeing patients at the newly named Willametta Keck Day Healthcare Center. He has a special expertise in primary care for individuals with disabilities.

Finally, we are excited to share that we are starting a new division of college health in the department. Stay tuned for more information in the next newsletter.

Thank you for your continued support.

Laura Mosqueda, MD
Preceptor Appreciation Dinner hosts volunteer faculty and family medicine students

This April, the Family Medicine Clerkship invited preceptors, students and faculty to celebrate another great year of educating a future generation of family physicians. Held at the San Antonio Winery, the gathering honored preceptors who dedicate their time in practice to educating Keck School of Medicine of USC medical students. This year the group honored Sunil A. Roy, MD, as preceptor of the year.

Other physicians were honored for dedicating up to 20 years to teaching future family medicine doctors. Tim Ferguson, MD, is retiring this year after teaching students for 19 years in his clinic.

“Ask your parents the names of their physicians that they had as kids,” Dr. Ferguson said. “They will almost all remember their family doctor.”

Students who had recently matched in family medicine told stories about their journey to deciding on the specialty.

“I think what really solidified my pursuit of family medicine was the opportunity to take care of the whole patient and to do interdisciplinary care, which I think family medicine is really leading the way for,” Erin Higginbotham explained. “Also, community work and patient advocacy, so that we can go out into the communities and address even some of the non-medical needs that our patients have that are just as important to their health.”

Daniel Kelley grew up with a father who is a family medicine doctor and didn't originally think he would pursue the same specialty.

“Getting to work with patients, in the end I can’t think of a more interesting way to spend my day,” Kelley shared “You work with the entire human body. You work with all age groups. You work with such a variety of people to make an impact.”

This year 15 medical students matched in family medicine.
New faculty leads the Keck School of Medicine Human Rights Project

Cynthia L. Willard, MD, MPH is working with medical students to develop a program in asylum medicine at the Keck School of Medicine of USC. This program will provide forensic documentation of human rights abuses for asylum seekers in the Los Angeles area.

Dr. Willard completed her undergraduate degree at Wesleyan University and then attended Stanford University for her medical degree. She completed her family medicine residency at UC San Francisco at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center, where she was inspired by its mission-driven faculty.

After completing her master’s degree in public health at the University of California, Berkeley, Dr. Willard relocated to Salt Lake City, Utah. There she founded the Utah Health & Human Rights Project with the support of the Echoing Green Foundation.

Since returning to Los Angeles, Dr. Willard worked in community health and is the current medical director of the Program for Torture Victims in Los Angeles. She has published research on the health consequences of torture and worked overseas in Albania, Kosovo, Liberia and Kenya.

Now that she has joined the department, she is dedicating her time to the creation of the Keck School Human Rights Project in the Department of Family Medicine.
Family Medicine Interest Group receives 2017 Program of Excellence Award

The Family Medicine Interest Group (FMIG) at the Keck School of Medicine of USC received a Program of Excellence Award based on their commitment to engaging students interested in pursuing family medicine. One of 10 recipients based on overall excellence, the program will be featured at the American Academy of Family Physicians National Conference in July.

Jo Marie Reilly, MD, is the faculty adviser for the FMIG and has been integral to seeing the program grow.

“It is critical we continue to garner interest and attract students to the specialty of family medicine,” said Clif Knight, MD, senior vice president for education at the AAFP. “The physician shortage in primary care continues, and programs such as FMIGs are key to exposing students to real-world experiences that will help them dig deeper into — and ultimately choose — family medicine.”

Students who participate in the FMIG at the Keck School are involved in numerous activities that allow them to participate in diverse health care experiences with patients of all ages. The FMIG includes activities such as the Cuddle Club, community health fairs, a geriatrics program and a fitness initiative called Ready, Set, Fit.

Leaders from the Family Medicine Interest Group pose in the quad. [Photo credit: Oriane Longerstaey, MS3]

Front Row (from left to right): Brian Choi, Sarah Saliman, Chethana Eswarappa, Serena Liu, Melanie Wathugala Back row (from left to right): Julia Wang, Molly Wilkerson, Phillip Grisdela, Taisha Husband

*Katsufrakis story attributed to NBME*