2020-2021 Golden Stethoscope Nomination

Nominated for: Best Role Model

Name of Nominee Dr. Teresa Harper

Dr. Teresa Harper is exceptionally accomplished and deftly balances many roles. She is a mother, an excellent clinician, heavily involved with research, and the Division Chief for Maternal-Fetal Medicine. During my residency interviews, the topic of mentorship was consistently brought up. This topic, and the range of questions associated with it, was one I looked forward to as it gave me the opportunity to talk about my mentor, Dr. Harper, and how I hope to emulate her compassion, curiosity, empathy and leadership throughout residency and my career as a physician.

My mentorship with Dr. Harper began through a research project intended to explore and improve preconception counseling through the Maternal-Fetal Medicine department. She dedicated countless hours to supporting me through each component of the research while patiently imparting valuable knowledge about research processes. Through her deep wealth of knowledge regarding research and Maternal-Fetal Medicine, Dr. Harper guided me through the minutia of data to identify key findings while encouraging me to take on increasing responsibility to maximize my contribution and understanding of the project's purpose. Though I was often challenged by various aspects of our research, I received unwavering leadership from Dr. Harper and am tremendously grateful for the opportunity to be so heavily involved in such an important project, from start to paper submission.

In addition to research, Dr. Harper also mentors me clinically. The compassion she expresses for each patient is inspiring and immediately builds trust to allow for open and effective communication. Dr. Harper sits with each patient and does not leave the room until every question has been addressed and a mutually agreed upon plan of action is established. Despite the distractions common to such a busy clinic, Dr. Harper is fully present with her patients and guides them toward the best decision based on individual patient values and goals. She expertly balances conveying empathy and careful optimism with straightforward and direct advice, while navigating difficult conversations. After seeing each patient, Dr. Harper also dedicates time to teaching me and reviewing the medical aspects of each patient visit and methods of effectively communicating with patients and families. Whether patients received wonderful or devastating news, they leave the clinic empowered and equipped for next steps, with the relief of knowing Dr. Harper is caring for them. As a devoted patient advocate, she is a true role model, working tirelessly to expand crucial care to patients with significant social determinants of health.

Dr. Harper is also a remarkable leader and educator. As the research team leader, she ensures all team members feel valued and supported throughout the research process. As the clinic leader, she creates an environment where every person in the clinic feels like a necessary component of patient care. One of my favorite sentiments Dr. Harper expresses is how she has the best job in the world because every day she learns something new. This fosters a productive and ideal learning space for all team members.

I am so grateful for Dr. Harper's mentorship and the immense impact she has had on my medical training and professional and personal development. She has been an invaluable role model to me throughout medical school and I am honored to have had the opportunity to learn so much from her through our research project and time spent in clinic.

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