2020-2021 Golden Stethoscope Nomination

Nominated for: Best Phase 1 Preceptor

Name of Nominee Dr. Tyler Miller

I do not know how to properly express how wonderful Dr. Miller has been as a preceptor. I doubt any letter that I write to nominate him will do justice to the time and dedication he has shown me as a preceptor. He has gone far beyond the expectations I had, in every way imaginable. He made sure to sit down with me at the beginning of preceptorship so we could share goals and expectations over a cup of tea. Since that day Dr. Miller has been supportive and encouraging, making sure to give constructive feedback at every opportunity. Dr. Miller, more than anything else, is a wonderful teacher. He genuinely enjoys teaching, and you can tell! He encourages questions, explains the pertinent knowledge with the patients we see, and makes a concerted effort to integrate my clinical experiences and classroom learning. On top of all of that, he is wonderful role model, showing compassion and understanding to patients, colleagues and students alike. I have spent quite a bit of time in the past few months reflecting on how lucky I am to have him as a teacher. It is my hope that I can in this letter explain why I consider Dr. Miller to be the best Phase 1 preceptor.

From the start, Dr. Miller made clear his desire to teach and help me grow as a student. I was pleasantly surprised when, as we sat down to go over expectations for preceptorship, he started by asking what my expectations were, of both him and the preceptorship experience. I shared my desire to work on H&P notes and oral presentations and that I felt I lacked a lot of experience with doing physical exams. Dr. Miller was supportive and encouraging. He laid out his goals for me, which included learning how to “ think like a doctor ” and shared ways that he thought he could help me work on my own. My next preceptor session Dr. Miller encouraged me to take the lead on a patient interview and physical exam. After the encounter he sent me home with homework, to write an H&P for the encounter and send it to him to look over.

When I came back to the hospital the next week, Dr. Miller took the time to sit down with me in a conference room and go over the H&P with me, section by section. Printed out note, already filled with commentary and constructive criticism, dry erase marker in hand as he cleared up the distinction between physical exam and review of systems with scribbled instructions and diagrams on a whiteboard. By the time we got to the end of my H&P, I felt like I had solid ways to improve. And I have had ample opportunity to put his feedback into practice. Nearly every preceptor session Dr. Miller sends me into a patient room to take history, I then look at their labs and medical record, and give an oral presentation on the patient. When I go home, I write up an H&P and send it to him for feedback. The value of, as a first-year medical student, having the opportunity to write several H&P notes, and get thorough feedback on how to improve, is invaluable. I appreciate immensely that fact that Dr. Miller goes above and beyond and is generous with his time both in and out of clinic. Despite the busy schedule of an attending, he never rushes through providing feedback, or explaining a concept and he always makes time to teach.

I often find my preceptor sessions to be great learning opportunities, and not just on how to write a note or give an oral presentation. Dr. Miller always asks about what I am learning in school when I come in for preceptorship. And, then he makes a concerted effort to help reinforce classroom learning with clinical experiences. When I was in Disease and Defense, I had the opportunity to present on a patient with osteomyelitis and rationalize an empiric antibiotic regiment. CVPR started this week, and I have already had the opportunity to listen to a patient with a third heart sound and look at an ECG of a patient admitted for hypokalemia. From going over how to read a chest Xray (A,B,C,D,E) to explaining how to write out a differential diagnosis that properly includes my thought process, I have begun the long process of learning how to "think like a doctor. ”

As a final note, more than any anecdote I can share about Dr. Miller as preceptor, the aspect of his teaching I appreciate the most is pretty simple. I look forward to every preceptor session, it is often the highlight of my week. I leave every session having learned some new aspect of medicine and all the more confident that this is the career for me. Dr. Miller enjoys teaching, and because of him, I enjoy learning. I hope someday to be half the doctor, and teacher, that Dr. Miller is.

Written by: Sydney Tyler (Phase 1)

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