

2023-2024 Golden Stethoscope Nomination

Nominated for: Outstanding Role Model

Name of Nominee Dr. Gary Manko, MD

Dr. Gary Manko, MD is deserving of recognition as an outstanding role model because he practices what he preaches. In every patient encounter, Dr. Manko emphasizes that his prescriptions are all things that he himself would do. Whether it is prescribing olmesartan to control blood pressure (a medicine he takes himself), rolling up his pant leg to show patients the comfortable and fashionable "Wellows" compression socks he uses for venous insufficiency, or showing them his own calorie tracker, Dr. Manko truly practices what he preaches. From working with Dr. Manko, I have learned that there is no stronger way to establish a patient-provider relationship than providing recommendations that providers themselves will follow. Through his practice, Dr. Manko sets an exemplary model of how physicians can best take care of patients.

To me, Dr. Manko exemplifies a physician role model because he cares about the "why" that is behind a patient's presentation. Dr. Manko pushed me to look beyond a patient's numerical HbA1c value and think about why a patient had developed diabetes. He emphasized that the "why" is important in the treatment. He would emphasize that throwing medication at a patient blindly to solve a problem never works and that the art of medicine is working with the patient to figure out an individualized treatment plan that best addresses the goals of the patient. I was very fortunate to learn from Dr. Manko how to practice the art of medicine by observing how he navigating explaining to a patient diabetes and then working with that same patient to design an individualized treatment plan that prioritized their goals.

Finally, Dr. Manko is deserving of this recognition because he continuously reminds me that "the pyramids were not built in a day". On one hand, this mantra applies to work-life balance as a student doctor. He always asked me what I was looking forward to outside of school and encouraged me to find social circles and activities where I could completely unplug from medicine and unwind. He emphasized that this was crucial to not burning out. On the other hand, this mantra is crucial for understanding the longitudinal relationship he builds with his patients. He acknowledges that his appointments are time-limited and he cannot address every single patient concern in one visit. However, the beauty of his practice is his determination to build a longitudinal relationship with his patients and work towards their goals over successive appointments.

I hope to one day emulate Dr. Manko by practicing what I preach; thoughtfully listening to patients, colleagues, and students; thinking about why patients present to care; and remembering that patient care is a marathon not a sprint. I am so grateful for the opportunity to work with Dr. Manko and cannot recommend him highly enough for the "Outstanding Role Model" award. Please contact me at joseph.3.cleveland@cuanschutz.edu if you need any further information or have any further questions. Thank you for the opportunity to nominate Dr. Manko for this award.

Written by: Joey Cleveland