2023-2024 Golden Stethoscope Nomination

Nominated for: Outstanding DOCS Preceptor

Name of Nominee Dr. Erin Vipler

When we were assigned our first-year clinical preceptors in fall 2023, I was initially nervous to have been matched with a preceptor in palliative care - I was unsure that I would be prepared enough as a medical student to work with a specialist in such an important and intuitive field.

Before my first shift with Dr. Vipler, she took an hour out of her day to get to know me and listen to my thoughts and concerns about the next year of medical school and working with her. As I came to learn, she treated me the same way she treats her patients: she showed interest, listened without interruption, communicated her expectations for the both of us, responded to my concerns, and clearly outlined a plan.

Over the course of the past year, I have been more or less awestruck by Dr. Vipler's skills as a communicator, physician, and mentor. Her ability to read a person, a hospital room, and the many interpersonal dynamics involved in medicine and palliative care is truly special. I feel extraordinarily lucky every time I get to work with her and observe the ways she interacts with patients. After every shift, I am grateful that I am able to pursue a career in medicine and to have a standard to strive towards in Dr. Vipler. Long hours studying in the library sometimes make it easy to overlook the privilege of working to become a physician, but I am much more cognizant of the motivations and passions that led me to medicine by working with her.

To say that I have learned a lot this past year would be an understatement: I learn something new, appreciate a different perspective, and strengthen my skills and confidence exponentially as a student-doctor every time I work with Dr. Vipler. She encourages me at every turn, somehow answers every question, and provides constructive, compassionate feedback. My clinical skills have improved markedly this year, due in large part to my experience in preceptorship.

Dr. Vipler is as deserving of this award as possible. I will always look back on my experience with her with gratitude, and this experience will certainly help inform my career as a physician in the future. Her next student is very fortunate!

Written by: Ian D Kretzmann (MS1)

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