2023-2024 Golden Stethoscope Nomination

Nominated for: Outstanding DOCS Preceptor

Name of Nominee Dr. Samuel Porter

When I first met Dr. Porter, I was eager to begin interviewing patients, complete physical exams and start navigating the clinical space outside of the classroom as a new first-year medical student. Before starting this, however, he sat me down in a small corner of the hospital and we discussed an excerpt from a novel he recommended. The excerpt talked about illness and how patients often incorporate it as part of their identity. I learned that one of the major roles of physicians is to separate a patient's sense of self from their illness by recognizing their individuality and humanity.

As we sat and talked, I was fascinated by who my preceptor was. It was obvious that Dr. Porter not only cared deeply about treating patients as more than their disease but also found this to be foundational to my learning and professional development.

Through Dr. Porter's teaching and during my interviews with patients, I slowly began to learn when to ask certain questions, how to redirect conversations and most importantly, to be compassionate. During our debriefs after the interviews, Dr. Porter created a safe environment for me to ask questions and fostered curiosity by showing me how he might think through the case.

This type of learning not only helped me to begin thinking like a physician but also allowed me to get to know the patients I was interacting with. I met teachers, scientists, restaurant managers and painters, who all shared parts of their life stories that gave each of them greater dimension. Before rounds, Dr. Porter would read a poem with his team to remind us of the humanity in each patient encounter, and for each case, he encouraged me to consider how the patient's life outside of the hospital affected their health and the care they received, something I will utilize throughout my career.

I highly recommend Dr. Porter for the Outstanding DOCS Preceptorship Award. I am immensely grateful for the time and energy that he spent teaching me. I will not only utilize the skills I learned through our time together but will constantly be reminded of the deep humanity intertwined throughout medicine and every patient interaction. I will one day be a better physician because of him.

Written by: Theodore Yoder

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