

dear residents

Reflections and Ponderings

Nov. 14, 2021

Dear Residents,

Recruiting season is already quite far along. Thank you for connecting with the candidates and speaking freely and openly about our program. On each interview day, we attempt to convey the salient features of our program. Given that our program is somewhat different with each passing year, it has been instructive to look back at both the immediate and recent past and relive the history of the program. Having seen this information, and our propensity for change, candidates often inquire about the next big (or small) change planned, making this a chance to deliberately imagine and communicate the possibility of a different future. Applicants also ask what I am most proud of – which is easy to answer – the residents.

Over the last several weeks I've endeavored to convey the **essential character** of our program to prospective residents. There are some aspects of our program that are **foundational** – the three-hospital system, the care of the underprivileged, the modernness of our facilities, the lack of a quality gradient between the private and the public setting, the superb faculty, the brilliance of our residents and the ease of living in Dallas. I have also focused attention to our **resident-centric culture** and explain how we have created an atmosphere of listening and solving. In addition to placing an ear on the ground, we have raised a national antenna of sorts lest we drift away from norms of training or fail to incorporate new ideas.

In their presentation, the chief residents go over the **milestones** of our program – 4+1, CUH, Global Health, New Parkland, the Well-Being Fuel Gauge, Hybrid Rotations, Tracks, Research Pathways. Often a question asked is “what’s next?” What may be next is 4+4 in July 2023 - if we can pull it off. New fellowships in Health Equity and in Health Informatics and the new School of Public Health will each exert important gravitational forces on the residency. From a resident-benefits perspective, I hope that universal UT Southwestern employment is also next and that we develop better partnerships with our training facilities to provide nutritious meals and better parking. Clements Hospital has now completed all planned construction. It is ripe for innovation in research and education – that may be next.

You may ask – how does one even decide to make a change; how does one prepare for it and what does it take to execute it. **Change** is spurred by the detection of a gap between our values and the reality. It's not as if we haven't been following our values – our values may just reveal themselves with more clarity in new situations and may need to be reinterpreted when conditions become vastly different. Our environment changes quickly and the need to align our core values with new situational elements requires agility. The first step in making a change is to examine one's own decision making – and to be mindful that we are fully capable of (erroneously) responding to internal biases and emotions. It is best to outsource what one is not fully confident about – I outsource to people who I know will challenge my assumptions and counter my biases. I also outsource to process, thereby creating structure to the decision. Who will it effect? What have I not thought of? Once a decision is made,

executing it requires communication, buy-in and careful planning. And there are always going to be unexpected consequences. There needs to be room for adjustments, compromises and occasionally, abandonment.

When one is on display, one makes the best effort to appear at one's very best. In doing so, it is natural to reflect on one's path and missteps and to ponder the next deliberate deviation from the track. We have another highly talented and desirable cohort looking at our program. Like you did, I hope some of them choose to come here. Thank you again for your willingness and enthusiasm in helping recruit your future colleagues.

Fall greetings,

Dino Kazi