

dear residents

The Tiger, The Reindeer, and The Turtle

Jan. 4, 2026

Dear Residents,

Happy New Year! The second half of the academic year awaits us - let's work together to get an energetic start and keep the momentum going.

When I was in elementary school in Karachi in the 1960s, there was a [now iconic advertising campaign](#) with the slogan "Put a tiger in your tank." The tiger, majestic, powerful, and fast, was everywhere. Petrol stations handed out small souvenirs, and the most coveted was a playful tiger tail that hung from the gas cap of your car, a whimsical promise of extra energy and momentum. My parents were amused with my newfound interest in filling petrol (gas) in the car. It was as seductive as the toys children get these days with their Happy Meals at McDonalds.

PUT A TIGER IN YOUR TANK!

FEED THE STAY
WITH THE TAIL.

NEW POWER-FORMULA ESSO EXTRA GASOLINE BOOSTS POWER THREE WAYS:

- 1 Cleansing Power!** Let this big new 100 octane fuel clean out your engine in a few months of normal operation—keeping hard starting and rough idling. Your very first tankful of New Esso Extra will start to clear away these deposits—in new engines or old—in improve power and mileage.
- 2 Firing Power!** Spark plug and cylinder deposits cut power, misfire, jerkiness and hot spots. New Esso Extra neutralizes these harmful deposits—so help your engine fire smoothly, to help preserve the power of new cars and assure fuel power for many older cars.
- 3 Octane Power!** New Esso Extra has the high octane that puts cars over and over for full smooth performance without knocking. You'll get all these extra mile with New Power-Formula Esso Extra gasoline—it puts a tiger in your tank! *Happy Motoring!*

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I was reminded of that memory recently while driving around Dallas in December, seeing cars adorned with reindeer antlers. Different city, different era, but the same instinct. Reindeer, after all, help Santa fly. They signal lift, movement, and a little magic added to an otherwise ordinary vehicle.



At UT Southwestern, we often say, “the future of medicine, today,” and I’ve sometimes borrowed that spirit to describe our residency as “the future of training, today.” It’s aspirational, but increasingly, it’s also becoming real. Our shift to night float, our intentionally designed core curriculum, and new training pathways are all ways we’ve tried to put a tiger in our tank to add energy, purpose, and forward motion to your training.

But innovation isn’t only about what we add. Sometimes progress is slowed by something else entirely. Alongside the tiger, there may also be a turtle in the tank: the administrative drag created by redundant trainings, repeated recertifications, or access hurdles that consume time and energy without adding value. These aren’t villains; most were created with good intentions. But over time, layers accumulate, and momentum suffers.



This is where your Fuel Gauge matters. When administrative friction rises, it shows up as depletion: less time, less bandwidth, more frustration. That's why we monitor the Fuel Gauge closely, and why it includes space for confidential feedback. It helps us see not just how you're doing, but where the system itself may need adjustment.

For 2025 - here are the Fuel Gauge stats:

- 4275 entries
- Average Fuel Level 4.02 (~80%)
- 25 instances of empty fuel tanks - 1/5
- 106 instances of low fuel tanks - 2/5
- 398 comments
- The main themes were:
 - Fatigue, Nights, and Circadian Disruption
 - Educational Value vs Service Burden
 - Clinic (PCIM / PRIME) as a Burnout Driver
 - Systems Friction, Bureaucracy, and Inefficiency
 - Patient Safety, Supervision, and Overnight Support
 - Scheduling, Workload Distribution, and Fairness
 - Autonomy, Growth, and Clinical Ownership
 - Community, Gratitude, and Team Camaraderie
 - Physical Environment, Food, and Small Morale Factors
 - Equity, Inclusion, and Professional Respect

If reindeer help us lift and tigers help us run, then removing turtles helps us move higher and faster. If you notice places where administrative drag is slowing learning or care, please continue to tell us either through the Fuel Gauge or directly. Innovation isn't just about imagination; it's about making room for energy, momentum, and joy to do the work.

Warm Wishes for 2026,

Dino Kazi