2020-2021 Golden Stethoscope Nomination

Nominated for: Demonstrating Leadership

Name of Nominee Dr. Kathleen Strunk

Working with Dr. Strunk for the past two years has been one of my favorite parts of medical school. While preclinical study is incredibly important having the opportunity to work directly with physicians and patients has fortified my success as a medical student. Every day working with Dr. Strunk brought a new experience and a new patient case that I had not encountered before. Each interaction became a learning point for me. Dr. Strunk tested my abilities to deduce possible diagnoses and interpret lab results, all the while building my confidence in communicating with patients at the clinic.

The most difficult, but perhaps the most rewarding thing that Dr. Strunk let me do, was see almost every patient in the clinic before we went in together. This way, I was able to hone my skills in taking a history and physical, and even my presentations, as time progressed. She greatly increased my ability and my confidence in my skills of speaking to patients on my own, as well as be able to succinctly and thoroughly present to her.

One of the most memorable days with Dr. Strunk was in February of 2020. She was called to assist on the other side of the building to help with two patients. One, a woman who was experiencing chest pain, and needed to be evaluated for cardiac abnormalities, and another, an elderly woman who needed her arm cast to be re-set after it was set too tight following a fracture. I was in awe and just tried to help as I could as I watched Dr. Strunk attend to these two delicate patients, at the same time, all the while she had a broken arm herself! The amount of delegation and quick thinking that went into these short moments were more than what I had experienced before in real time.

I view Dr. Strunk as a leader in her clinic. Her patients love her and appreciate all the time and care she puts into each encounter, in-person or virtual. I hope that as a physician, I will have the same positive relationship with my coworkers and staff, as well as a patient base that seeks my guidance. I know it comes with a lot of responsibility, but I see how effortlessly Dr. Strunk is able to do it, so I will try to do the same. While I might consider myself a leader in my class already, in the world of patient care, there is always room for improvement.

I hope that I will be able to give a future medical student a similar preceptorship experience that I have had these past 2 years. She has shown me a myriad of clinical presentations, procedures, and physical exam maneuvers that will give me a solid background for what to expect as I enter clinical realm in my 3rd year. I hope to emulate her skills in communication and problem solving as I progress all the way to graduation, and in the future.

Written by: Alec Mansour - Phase 2