2020-2021 Golden Stethoscope Nomination

Nominated for: Best Role Model

Name of Nominee Heather Lewis, MD

I appreciated Dr. Lewis from the first day we met to talk about my rotation with her. Without even knowing me yet, she sat me down to talk about my goals and offered her support in my journey in medicine regardless of the field I chose. However, it only took a time or two of actually working with her in the clinical setting for me to realize not only did I appreciate her, but I wanted to BE her.

Dr. Lewis deserves the best role model award because she is consistently setting the tone for how to be an excellent physician. She is fantastic with her patients, and not just "for being a surgeon." She is all around one of the best communicators I have worked with when it comes to developing professional rapport with patients. She helps them understand their (often scary) diagnoses and her planned treatment by taking time to explain things, using diagrams and even drawing pictures. She is patient, understanding and always willing to stay the extra minute to make sure the patient feels comfortable.

Beyond her communication, Dr. Lewis is excellent at surgery. I know this not only because I have worked across the OR table from her, but also because any time I would tell other physicians that I work with Dr. Lewis, they would all respond the same way with a comment along the lines of, "Oh what a great person to learn from," or "Isn't she outstanding?" Dr. Lewis is somewhat new to the Fort Collins medical community but is already renowned as a surgeon who will do high quality and reliable work for her patients. Additionally, Dr. Lewis is a team player. She is never too proud to ask for a second opinion in the operating room, and never too busy to lend a hand to another surgeon. She always engages in discussion during morning rounds and is happy to learn from as well as teach her peers so that she is consistently making herself and her surgery group better.

Finally, Dr. Lewis is an incredible teacher and mentor. Her enthusiasm for medicine is contagious. You wouldn't believe someone could be so passionate about fiber until you hear her talk about it in regards to colon health. Dr. Lewis brings this excitement to her teaching. She regularly took time between cases to draw diagrams or explain physiology to me. She gave real-time feedback on my presentations and notes. She even took time outside of the hospital to meet with me and discuss my career goals and offered to help me with preparation for residency if I ended up going into surgery.

Dr. Lewis is great at surgery, but beyond her responsibility as a doctor to take cancer out of her patients, she is the kind of physician with whom her patients can be vulnerable. She is confident but calm, focused but enthusiastic. Every medical student should get to work with a preceptor like Dr. Lewis. My time with her has made me hopeful for my own future in medicine. She has shown me what a difference an intelligent, hard-working, driven, and compassionate woman can make on her patients, coworkers, and students.

Written by: Emily Wolverton

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