

St. Joseph Mercy: Young, but Accomplished Program

The St. Joseph Mercy Dermatology Residency in Ann Arbor, Mich., may be young, but it has accomplished a lot in the nearly three years since its inception.

Started in 2006, the residency program will graduate its first two residents this June. Currently, the program has a total of nine residents.

A dedicated faculty is what Program Director Daniel Stewart, D.O., FAOCD, believes is the program's most unique, and best, asset. "Our faculty comprises more than a century of caring for dermatological patients," he says. "The faculty consists of 14 dermatologists that cover the span of the specialty from Mohs surgery, dermatopathology and cosmetic dermatology to immunodermatology. They regularly attend all of the didactic sessions and lead the weekly clinical reviews," adds Dr. Stewart.

Clinics

In addition to being exposed to a wide range of faculty members, St. Joseph residents are exposed to various patient populations of multiple ethnicities through a variety of unique clinics.

Specifically, the residency program has its own in-house clinic. The facility, which opened in the fall of 2008, is a large clinic that offers general dermatology, Mohs micrographic surgery, and cosmetic dermatology based at St. Joseph Hospital, he says. Previously, the residency program was sharing a clinic with the Department of Medicine. However, the dermatology side of the clinic became so active that the institution built the dermatology residents their own clinic.

The best part of the clinic is that the patients are "the residents' patients," stresses Dr. Stewart. "The residents make the first decision and expectantly the last. We are their advisors, but the residents have total independence within that clinic setting."

Academics

When not in clinic, the St. Joseph Mercy residents keep up a busy academic pace. Monday mornings consist of book and core curriculum reviews. One Tuesday a month the residents attend the "Krach Course" which is a multifaceted surgical and medical dermatology course taught by Kent Krach, M.D. Wednesdays consist of the residents' continuity clinic as well as a dermatopathology review taught by one of three dermatopathologists, two of which have written chapters in Lever's *Histopathology of the Skin* and the *Textbook of Dermatology* by Raymond Barnhill, M.D. Residents attend a clinical slide review session on Thursdays and round out the week with board review on Fridays. Additionally, residents attend a monthly Journal Club, which is well attended by members of the faculty.

In October 2008, the program initiated grand rounds with the presentation and discussion of six to eight patients. Active dialogue related to diagnosis, mechanism of disease, and suggestions for investigation and treatment of the patients is emphasized. Also in 2008, the residents started an annual Skin Cancer Screening Day at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Ann Arbor. The screening day coincides with the American Academy of Dermatology's (AAD) Skin Cancer Screening Awareness campaign in May.

The residents not only join forces on the learning field, but also the playing field. They formed a kickball team this past fall, and even made it in the playoffs.

Rotations, Rounds

Rotations range in length from one to three months. Second and third-year

residents are able to pursue electives outside the program. The Scripps Surgical and Anatomy Course along with the Chicago Board Review are attended in the summer along with elective rotations through Johns Hopkins University for pediatric dermatology, as well as the University of California, Los Angeles and Scripps Course for cosmetic surgery.

Other Opportunities

In 2009, for the first time, third-year residents had an opportunity to visit a third world country to learn about, and see first-hand, tropical and infectious diseases.

The St. Joseph residency program has a clinical research facility at which residents have conducted research on multifaceted diseases from psoriasis to eczema.

Presentations are common ground in this residency, with the residents presenting at the required AOCD meetings as well as meetings hosted by the AAD and the Michigan Dermatology Society.

Dr. Stewart believes so strongly in the combination of hospital-based and office-based residency program that he is writing a paper on the subject with his colleague, Bruce Deighton, Ph.D., the program's educational director.

"When I look back at what we've accomplished in the two-and-one-half years," says Dr. Stewart. "I'm more than proud because not only is the faculty very dedicated to the success of this program, but the residents have been most helpful to make sure that it is a progressive program."

