

LIMITED

I AM riding on a limited express, one of the crack trains of the nation.
Hurling across the prairie into blue haze and dark air
go fifteen all-steel coaches holding a thousand people. (All the coaches shall be scrap and rust and all the men and women laughing in the diners and sleepers shall pass to ashes.)
I ask a man in the smoker where he is going and he answers:
"Omaha."

Carl Sandburg

Emergency Medicine is certainly one of the crack trains of medicine. About a thousand students that matched in emergency medicine this year will soon be hurtling toward their new residency program. Despite the ultimate futility of most everything we do, I think the "Omaha" in the poem figuratively represents the hopes and dreams we have in our lives. (Others, with typical Midwest self-deprecating humor have a different view of the meaning of Omaha in the poem). For six students about to start their training in emergency medicine, "Omaha" will have a very literal meaning too.

To be honest, when the residency program was approved in September, I was a little concerned about whether students interested in emergency medicine would even have a chance to hear about our program, let alone apply. I was overwhelmed with the response. We received more applications than we could interview, and the quality of the applicants was outstanding. They seemed to have believed in the mission described in my first welcome letter, and to have sensed the strength of the program put together by Dr. Wadman. Like everyone else, we were looking for smart, hardworking students, but also students with the integrity, enthusiasm and leadership skills necessary to start a new program. The results exceeded our expectations. I would like to thank all who applied, and wish them the best of luck in the future. We had more qualified applicants than we had positions.

I was gratified that a few of the Nebraska students that could have gotten into just about any other program, elected to stay. I think it would be hard to attract students from other medical schools if we couldn't attract students that have known and worked with us over the past three or four years. I am also excited about the other students that matched with us. There is no doubt in my mind that they will be leaders, not only in starting a new residency, but also in the field of emergency medicine for years to come. The enthusiasm of the faculty and the new residents reminds me of the 'early days' of emergency medicine when there were a lot of new programs.

Beyond preparing for the residency, we have had a very busy year. We hired two new faculty members. Pat McMahon will arrive in July after completing his EM residency at the Mayo Clinic program. He is in the second class from that program, and I think that his experience in training at a relatively new program will be very helpful to us. Also, Wes Zeger will join us in October, after finishing his Army commitment as a faculty member at the Madigan-University of Washington EM residency program for the past four years. His experience as a faculty member at another residency program will be valuable to us.

Other activities the past year included working on the graduate medical education redistribution provision in the Medicare Reform Act, hosting Glenn Hamilton for a faculty development consultation, continuing work on the construction of the new ED, hosting of the first annual CME course in the country that focused on emergency skills for the rural provider, adding the director of the Nebraska Poison Center to our section, initiating the ED ultrasound program, publication of several articles, and faculty presentations at national and international meetings. Finally, I recently found out I will be the AMA representative to the Emergency Medicine Residency Review Committee. I look forward to working on a national level with others committed to graduate medical education in order to keep emergency medicine one of the "crack trains" of medicine.

Since we started with Carl Sandburg, I would like to close with a quote from him. "Nothing happens unless first we dream". If you are a student considering a career in emergency medicine, consider pursuing your dream with us.

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