

Medical Dermatology Mentorship Program Summary

Mentor- David Fiorentino, MD, PhD, Stanford University

Mentee- Anna Haemel, MD, University of Wisconsin

To the Medical Dermatology Society:

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to both the MDS and to Dr. Fiorentino for an exceptional mentorship experience. The highlights of my recent trip to Stanford included thoughtful career counseling, exposure to a diverse group of patients with connective tissue disease, opportunities to connect with others who share my interests, and participation in Stanford dermatology resident didactics.

Dr. Fiorentino took time to review my career development to date and to provide me with sound, frank advice on my next steps; he was receptive to my learning needs and reserved several meetings specifically for advising during my time at Stanford. These meetings challenged me to update both short term and long term goals and to look at the big picture for my career. I was privileged to have the opportunity to get one-on-one career counseling from someone so successful in the field of connective tissue disease.

The patients in Dr. Fiorentino's dermatology-rheumatology and medical dermatology clinics provided me unique opportunities to hone my clinical skills and my interest in connective tissue disease. Many of these patients had complex diseases including systemic sclerosis and dermatomyositis, involving multiple organ systems and requiring an interdisciplinary approach for optimal management. Seeing a high volume of these patients in a short period of time helped me recognize patterns of presentation for these disorders as well as subtle variations in disease manifestations.

In addition to the above, the wider Stanford community made me feel welcome and engaged. Because he was aware of my interest in rheumatology, Dr. Fiorentino helped arrange a schedule that allowed me to work in both the dermatology subspecialty clinics (cutaneous lymphoma, melanoma) and in several medical rheumatology clinics. I met Dr. Lori Chung who provided additional mentorship for my career goals in systemic sclerosis, and I sincerely enjoyed working with the other Stanford rheumatologists and rheumatology fellows, as well. These mentoring relationships are very meaningful to me, and I hope to continue them as I move forward.

Finally, the dermatology residents at Stanford were very inclusive by allowing me to participate in both didactics and resident social events (dinners!). Both the resident didactics and grand rounds were of high quality and informative and specifically enhanced my knowledge of dermatopathology, in addition to other topics. Many of the faculty are recognized experts in the topics they presented, and it was an enormous privilege to hear them speak.

I would highly recommend this experience to others interested in autoimmune connective tissue disease with cutaneous manifestations. Thank you again to both the MDS and Dr. Fiorentino for making all of this possible.

Sincerely,

Anna Haemel, MD

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