

The University of Michigan Department of Urology

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What's New December 30, 2016

Urology Chief Residents

Urology Department Faculty and Staff

4 Items, 25 Minutes

Hello everyone! Today, we conclude this year of What's New with the annual reflections from our Chief Residents, Drs. Ryan Swearingen, Ian McLaren, Duncan Morhardt and Katy Konkle. As usual, the sentiments shared by our Chiefs are insightful but also bittersweet; all our Chiefs are grateful for the world class training they've received, they're sorry to say goodbye to the University of Michigan Residency Program and they're thankful to everyone who helped them navigate the last four-plus years, especially their fellow Chiefs.

To emphasize that last point, a number of them unknowingly copied each other by including the same group photo in their What's New contribution (to avoid redundancy, I've removed the photo drink from each of the individual contributions and posted it below).



Our Chiefs enjoying a post in-service drink

Before we get into this week's edition, I'd like to thank everyone for reading and contributing to What's New over the past year. Everyone's willingness to share their thoughts, experiences and personal lives makes our Departmental newsletter stand out in the crowd. It is a joy to organize every week, and I sincerely appreciate everyone who's contributed and given feedback in 2016.

Thank you all, I hope you enjoy today's edition of What's New and I hope everyone has a happy New Year!

-Eric Anderson

Dr. Ryan Swearingen

Before writing this, I looked over what some of the chiefs had written last year, and I have to echo many of the same sentiments- while the days seemed to go on forever and it seemed intern year was never going to end, somehow 4 and a half years has passed in the blink of an eye. I honestly can't believe it is already 6 months into our chief year. Certain things stick out- particularly bad calls, good and bad chief residents from years past, and of course my stellar co-chiefs- without them, I'm sure I would have crashed and burned early during the tumultuous HO-2 year. I wouldn't have done it any other way- residency here was a tremendous experience, and one that has made me a better physician and stronger person.

I started out in the suburbs of Chicago, completing undergrad at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, and subsequently University of Chicago for medical school. An away rotation in Urology at Michigan during September of my 4th year of med school was all it took to cement in my head that this was definitely the place to do residency. Things worked out in the match, and suddenly the next 5 years was about to start. I still remember meeting Ian, Katy and Duncan for the first time at Ashley's downtown for a beer before we started. I was (and still am) at least 5 years younger than the rest of them, and remember feeling that I was in way over my head. Nearly 5 years later, that's still the case, but thanks to them I've gotten through it.

Outside of just surgical training, a lot has changed for me in the last 5 years. The Cubs finally won the World Series, and Michigan football has gotten exciting. I lost a fair amount of hair, which I'm blaming on this job. I'm also engaged now to a nurse I met while working on the floor during my intern year- Gina, who most of you know. We have a 90-pound golden retriever named Maggie, and the previous silence that met me at the door has been replaced by a very excitable and happy child-sized dog. It's been amazing.

I've also had the chance to explore Michigan, which has been amazing. Between Traverse City, the Upper Peninsula, Mackinac Island, Detroit, Frankenmuth, and so on- there was far more to see and do here than I had anticipated. I had the chance to go to Ghana last year with Dr. Park and Dr. Atiemo, which was a great experience that wouldn't have been

possible without the support of people here. I like to think that I started to uncover a lot of what Ann Arbor and Michigan had to offer during my time here, but there will be plenty left to come back for on return visits.

As for what's next, I'm heading back closer to home. I took a job in northwest Indiana in a town called Munster- home of 3 Floyd's Brewing Co. in case anyone is interested in visiting! Gina and I are planning to live in Chicago for a few years, which we are both very excited about. My younger brother also just got accepted into a cardiology fellowship at Rush University in Chicago, and it will be great to be living in the same city with him again for the first time since medical school. I'm both anxious and excited to start practice, and I think I'm as prepared as I can be coming out my training at Michigan. I want to thank everyone who helped me along the way as we head into the next phase of our lives. It's been a great 5 years here, and I'm excited for what comes next.



Gina and I on Mackinac Island.



Maggie and I downtown.



Gina and I out at the Cubs game for my 30th birthday (unfortunately, not the playoffs, but still exciting!).

Dr. Ian McLaren

I'm a native Michigander, born at Marquette General Hospital up on the shores of Lake Superior back when Jimmy Carter was President. We moved around quite a bit, a few years in Ann Arbor then Rochester, MN then Neenah, WI (home of Huggies diapers and Neenah Foundry manhole covers) then Brentwood, TN and then back to Neenah. I call Wisconsin home; it's where I graduated high school and where I met my wonderful wife Mandy.

As many of you know, I worked in management/IT consulting in Chicago after college for several years prior to switching to medicine. (While I majored in economics, I don't know anything about finance, the markets, or investing so don't hope for any hot tips here). I quit in 2005 and moved back up to the UP to Northern Michigan University. There I worked as a janitor for \$5.25/hour (minimum wage back then) at the ice rink and finished my post-bacc work. After a year in Minneapolis, Mandy and I moved to Madison, WI for medical school and then on to Ann Arbor for residency. We were married just prior to moving to Ann Arbor. Our son Henry (3 years old) was born at the end of my intern year.



The fam at the Arb this fall



Henry, gearing up for a wedding this weekend

We chose Michigan because it was the best. Not just the best fit or the best place to live, but simply the best training program in the country. I believed that 5 years ago and I still believe that today. Through my five years we've had stable leadership, consistent growth and a program director (Dr. Hafez) who has put his heart and soul into making this the premier place to learn urology. My class was fortunate to train with Drs. Wolf, Faerber, and Lee before their departure. Unfortunately, we were the first class to miss Drs. Montie and McGuire as they retired during our intern year. We weathered the change from CareWeb/Carelink to MiChart both in the outpatient clinics and eventually the hospital. We have a new resident room thanks to the hard work of many people.

Ryan, Katy, and Duncan have been great co-residents. We never fight, rarely argue, and always have each other's backs when needed. We are four very different personalities

that have managed to co-exist through the stress and strain of residency without much friction. This is a reflection, I believe, of the department in general.

Like many, I have always aspired to be the "everyday urologist," (disclosure: I borrowed that term from a throw-away journal) capable and comfortable addressing most any urologic problem that come through my clinic. It's a bit like powerlifting, a sport that requires you to be good at individual events (bench press, squat, and deadlift) but where the sum "total" is what matters in the end. When I started to look for jobs after residency, I wanted a place where I could be that type of urologist. I can say with confidence that Michigan has trained me to be just that.

Speaking of next steps, next year my family and I will be heading out to Wenatchee, Washington approximately 2,199 miles to the west. I'll be joining an excellent group of 4 other urologists in a regional health system/multi-specialty group (Confluence Health) that provides urologic care for much of north central Washington. Wenatchee is the self-proclaimed "Apple Capital of the World" and is in the eastern foothills of the Cascade Mountains on the Columbia River. It's a beautiful place and exactly the place my wife and I wanted to live when we "grew up." (Todd Morgan was instrumental in helping me connect with this opportunity.)



(Source: Google maps)

Before I close, I am forever grateful to Mandy for helping me get through residency with my sanity and to my in-laws (Rod and Jane Spitz) who sold their house in Wisconsin and moved to Ann Arbor to help take care of my son. They traded their golden years of retirement for dirty diapers, story time at the library and swimming lessons at Goldfish. I must also extend thanks to the Department of Urology and my co-residents who've made this a truly unforgettable experience.

Dr. Duncan Morhardt

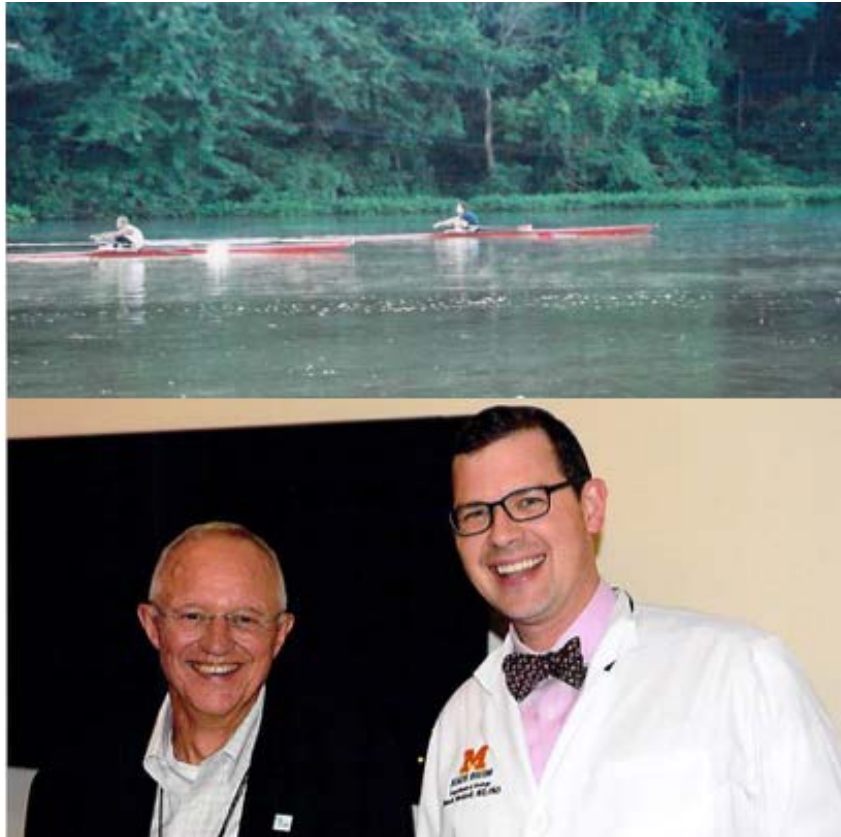
It has been 4 and 1/2 quick years in Ann Arbor! I remember reading the first batch of the "What's New" written by my chiefs: George, Gareth, Jon, and Ray. I have learned a lot, and continue to learn from this incredible group of people at the once UMHS, now Michigan Medicine (Surgery?). Like many of these-it is a synopsis of my life, goals, and people I love.

I grew up in Alexandria Virginia, just outside Washington, D.C with my brother, Connor. I was always kind of a sciency nerdish type but that seemed to change when I got to middle school. I started rowing. As it turned out rowing would define me for the next 15 years and pretty much everything I did revolved around how I would train, coach, and compete. I attended T.C. Williams, of *Remember the Titans* fame. Suffice it to say, Herman Boone no longer looked like Denzel Washington. He taught us gym and driver's ed, though, and had fascinating claims like "I'm the third fastest man in the world". Here he is with another local coach:



High school rowing went very well and probably played a big role as to why I chose UC Berkeley. They just hired a new coach, Steve Gladstone, and it was indeed an exciting time to be there. During the summers I would train and worked as an intern for a marketing agency. One summer was my first venture to the Midwest, in Chicago, and the next summer even more west, Denver. In Denver, I was the intern for a tech company that managed call centers for Ford and its subsidiaries. This was the summer of the Firestone recall and I

was put in charge of 2 call centers, applied Michaelis-Menton kinetics to their efficiency model, and landed in Dearborn after I graduated with a molecular biology degree. I was still a rower, so I joined the Ann Arbor Boat Club. I met Dr. Montie and several excellent people who made me wish I lived here:



Alas, the car industry could not hold me. I longed to continue biologic research and left Ann Arbor for Washington DC on Sept 11, 2001. On that day, it was a beautiful blue sky in Ann Arbor as it was in Washington and New York. I left in the morning, and about 2 hours into the trip home I heard the news. Shortly after, the roads to DC were closed so I drove back to Ann Arbor.

After that interlude, I did research at USCF, the FDA and was accepted for an MD/PhD program in Richmond VA at MCV.

And now the good part-I was interviewing medical school applicants and into the room walks applicant Tina Lung (soon to be Morhardt...get it-more heart and lung). We stayed in touch after that interview and started dating 2 years later. She applied to pediatrics and we both matched at Michigan. Shortly after that, we were married and started our paths into residency.

Here she is at the Taroko gorge in Taiwan.

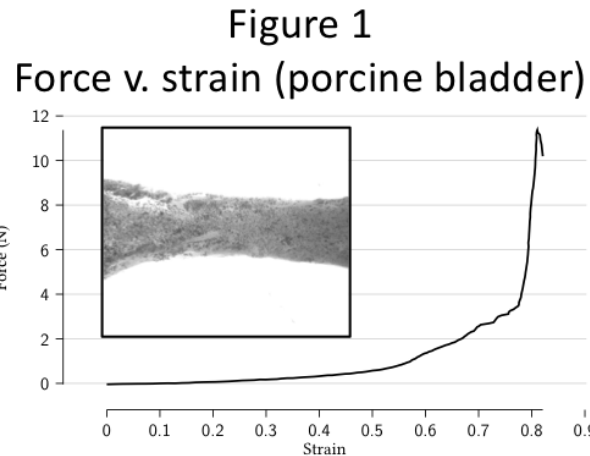


Residency has been incredible, and rough. And I don't mean the snow. The first two years were pretty busy and getting to know the other residents, faculty, flow of the world, and long calls to family punctuated long stretches of drudgery. Tina and I didn't see much of each other. As the second year came to a close, Tina's belly grew with a lil' baby. As unexpected things go, Becca covered for me at the VA and we welcomed Penelope Rose Meilin Morhardt. It's been 2 and 1/2 years since then. With Tina, watching Penny grow up has been the best thing in our lives. Tina, through all of her own residency and fellowship training, has been an incredible mother to Penny, and manager of me. Watching Tina develop in work and motherhood, with strength and good humor, regularly elicits my joy. She has remained just as loving, funny, and beautiful as when we I first met her. And every time I acknowledge that, my heart opens wide with gratitude and adoration for her. And just as we were getting used to the "three of us", a 4th is on the way!



What comes next? Research and pediatric urology. The resources here at Michigan are incredible and over the last year, with help from MANY people (Drs. Park, Bloom, Palapattu, Hafez, Roberts, Morgan, Day, Arruda, Hollister, Liebert, and the whole

department really) I will take next year to explore human bladder biomechanics (below). In short, we will stretch human bladders to see what they can handle:



Why does this matter? If we are going to engineer an artificial bladder, we should know how nature engineered it in the first place. This year will also allow our family the opportunity to stay together as Tina completes her fellowship. Once she's done, it's my turn. I'm currently applying for pediatric urology fellowships.

Was that too much? Be well and Happy Holidays everyone!

Dr. Katy Konkle

I'm not exactly a girl of mystery--my life reads like an open book--so to sit down and write about it seems rather redundant. I think you already know what you wish to about me (grew up in Michigan, squeaked into med school, squeaked into Urology, divorced, now with funny artist boyfriend, Marty. I love AA but I'm determined to leave after 19 years of being here!). Honestly, I think the most extraordinary thing about me is the family I come from.

My father is Chinese from Hong Kong. His parents had been farmers in China until they were run out by Mao during the cultural revolution. He grew up in a posh British boarding school on the backside of Hong Kong Island. A trouble-maker and poor student, he somehow managed to graduate and persuade his father to send him to the States for college (the first in his family). He literally is off the boat.

My mother is German/English from New Jersey, who partially grew up in post-war Frankfurt because of her Air Force father. She comes from a long line of chemists. They met in college in Colorado and married the week after graduation. A decade later they decided to have an adventure, so naturally they moved to Hong Kong and started a pig farm in the out-lying area near mainland China. The farm and buildings they built themselves out of corrugated steel. My mother, a microbiologist with a master's degree in nuclear physics, taught herself Chinese and managed my twin sisters, Christine and Kelly, who were born in

metro Hong Kong in 1976. I unexpectedly joined their party in 1980, just before the end of their 3 year farm experiment in Hong Kong.

My father found a job in Grand Rapids, MI (they had to look it up on a map) and there the Siu-family headquarters have remained. My mother was our Girl Scout leader and shuttled us to and from gymnastics, dance, soccer, volleyball, and any other activity we wanted to explore. As adults, my sisters and I realize how incredibly fortunate we were in having so much of her support, time and attention. Eventually she earned her teaching degree and went on to apply her science background by torturing chemistry students as a faculty member at Grand Valley State University. She plans to retire this summer.

When I was 3 years old my mother wanted to take figure skating lessons but had no baby sitter, so she took me along. It was a sport and an interest we have continued to share to this day. We skated together for decades. There was no inclusive figure skating club in Grand Rapids so my mother created one: Lake Effect Figure Skating Club. It was a great environment to grow up in--I took and taught private lessons. I coached our adult synchronized figure skating team and I had the opportunity to compete with the internationally renowned Ann Arbor Hockettes Synchronized Skating Team. In college here at UofM, I ice danced with Charles Butler, former Ice Dance Junior World Champion. When I was 18 I had to have foot surgery to correct the damage done by growing up in figure skates. My mother's identical food surgery was one month after mine.

I no longer skate (my feet just can't take it) but I've found inspiration by watching my sisters who are 3 years older. Christine has always been a highly successful, highly adventurous person of intensity. Somewhere between taking a 2 month trek through SARS-panicked Asia with my father, and organizing the Harvard Business School expedition to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, Christine finished her first Olympic distance triathlon. If you have never watched a triathlon in person, I will warn you that it is one of the most powerful, most intoxicating and inspirational experiences around. I, who have always loathed running, decided it was a goal I needed and I ran with it, literally. (I highly recommend the beginner book, "Slow, Fat Triathlete", for those of you with interest!) I finished my first Olympic distance triathlon in Philadelphia during med school in Detroit. I later learned to love running and managed to finish a Sprint distance triathlon, Olympic distance triathlon, Half-Ironman and marathon all in the month before residency started!! (Yea, I'll never be in that shape again! :/) Now my 74-year old father, sisters, brother-in-laws and I all do triathlons together whenever we can! It's pretty amazing!!

And now I've been offered a General Urology job in Pueblo, Colorado which I am likely to accept. My other sister, Kelly, lives in Boulder with her husband and son, and so I am excited to be moving closer to them. Kelly actually sets the family standard for boundless energy, innovation and judgement-free goodwill. She and her husband are architects who

specialize in helicopter-enabled telemark skiing when they're not rock climbing! I think I will just stick to the groomed resort runs. :)

In short, I come from a truly amazing family which I think explains much of my own spirit of adventure and celebration. My 7 years within the UM Urology family have taken that foundation and shaped me professionally, as well as personally. Words cannot describe the magnitude of my gratitude towards this department, so I won't even try to estimate it. It's a ridiculous understatement to say that I have been INCREDIBLY fortunate in my life so far, and I whole-heartedly look forward to the future ahead.

THANK YOU ALL!

