



Talking Wellness with New Program Director Dr. Peoples

We recently sat down with Dr. Peoples to talk about wellness, burnout, and reaching out before your tank hits "E."

What's one of the biggest challenges to resident wellness today?

For residents, it's often the barrier of finding a time to make an appointment to seek help. Our institution has been thoughtful about the House Officer Mental Health Program with an emergency line and appointments available for our trainees — that doesn't exist at all institutions. But it can still be difficult to reach out. Residents are really busy and it can seem like the right time to take that next step never comes, and we might hope that it'll get better if we have a weekend off or take a vacation. But sometimes that's just not the reality.



Something unique to what residents are going through now is, of course, the prolonged nature of the pandemic and the impact that that has had. Our residents have lost out on a lot of opportunities for connection and community-building — our CA-1s especially had a difficult transition because the internship was significantly impacted by shutdowns, virtual learning and restrictions on in-person gatherings. So I think we're still trying to recover in a lot of ways and think about how to help our residents maintain hope within the current environment.

What can you do as program director to promote a culture of wellness?

I can continue to talk about it and help implement new initiatives. I'm a peer supporter — I have that tag in my email signature [peersupport@med.umich.edu] and I try to promote that to make it easily accessible. I also try to make myself available and make it easy for residents to be able to reach out, starting with giving out my cell number during intern orientation.

This year we'll begin participating in an opt-out check-in program with the Office of Counseling and Workplace Resilience, which will schedule residents for a wellbeing check-in where they can discuss any concerns that they may have and get a personal introduction to the resources available here. We'll start this as a pilot program with our interns and then evaluate for greater use.

Resident Spotlight: Our 2021-2022 Chiefs



Ruth Bickett-Hickok, M.D.

Where did you grow up and go to school? I was born and raised in Portland, OR (Portlandia is shockingly accurate). I studied journalism at University of Oregon, completed my post bacc at Portland State, and went to medical school at Oregon Health & Science University.

What are your hobbies or interests? I'm a fan of anything outdoors, especially skiing, although I'm happy to curl up with a good book and an Oregon wine. I love traveling, with my two favorite trips being hiking across southern Italy and sea kayaking in Fuji. My husband, Ryan, and I are dog parents to two fur children, Niko and Nala, both of whom are rescues. Ryan is a huge football fan and has been known to take me directly to Michigan football games after I've worked a call shift.

What made you decide to pursue anesthesia? I started out thinking I wanted to do surgery, but I quickly realized that the anesthesia residents and attendings were the happiest in the hospital. I loved the brief but intense patient interactions, as well as the fast pace, high acuity, and variety that the field offered. My decision was solidified when I went on a medical mission trip to Lambayeque, Peru with the anesthesia department doing pediatric head and neck surgeries; I'm still friends with the residents and attendings I worked with on that trip.

Where do you see yourself in five years? Ideally back in Bend, OR, surrounded by mountains and pets with a good cup of coffee in hand.

Tell us one last thing that is special, unique, and wonderful that we just must know about you! I've played more than a dozen instruments.



Amy Friedman, M.D.

Where did you grow up and go to school? I grew up in West Bloomfield, Michigan, and have been in Southeast Michigan my entire life. I went to University of Michigan for undergrad, where I majored in neuroscience with a minor in music, Wayne State University SOM in Detroit, Michigan, for medical school, and I couldn't wait to come right back for residency.

What are your hobbies or interests? What do you like to do in your spare time? Hiking, traveling, biking, spending time on Michigan's lakes, and matching scrub caps serendipitously.

What made you decide to pursue anesthesia? Like most of us, I love the pace, acuity, knowledge base and skillset that we develop in our specialty. I'm pursuing Critical Care Medicine, and I look forward to applying my skills both in and out of the OR.

Where do you see yourself in five years? The only thing certain about my life in five years is that I hope my spunky cat, Bunny, will be by my side.

Tell us one last thing that is special, unique, and wonderful that we just must know about you! My cat is a model, as evidenced by the photo reel on my phone. She's not famous...yet.



Travis J. Stropp, M.D./M.P.H.

Where did you grow up and go to school? I grew up in South Florida, more specifically Juno Beach, FL. I went to undergrad in Orlando at University of Central Florida. Then I moved to Boston for graduate school at BU. I met a beautiful girl at BU who is from Michigan, and we got engaged and were both able to attend medical school here in the Mitten. I completed medical school at OUWB prior to residency at U-M.

What are your hobbies or interests? Plane spotting, architectural photography, road trips, international travel, cooking (sometimes weird things — I loved "Chopped"), swimming, surfing and learning how to be a father!

What made you decide to pursue anesthesia? My father was an anesthesiologist and pain specialist. He was my foremost influence to pursue medicine in the first place. While on rotations in med school, I realized that I wanted to pursue a procedural specialty but my personality did not quite fit with being a surgeon. When I did my 4th year anesthesia rotation I was blown away by how cool and dynamic anesthesia practice is and how laid back anesthesiologists are. I felt like I found my people. I'm so glad that I chose correctly!

Where do you see yourself in five years? In our dream house (preferably on the water in Florida) with an almost 6-year-old son and 7-year-old shih poo! Hopefully with a successful and diverse academic pain medicine practice. #nocallnoweekends

Tell us one last thing that is special, unique, and wonderful that we just must know about you!

I am one of seven siblings — so naturally I tell people that I grew up in a zoo!



Geneva White, M.D.

Geneva White, M.D.

Where did you grow up and go to school? I was born and raised in Austin, Texas. I went to a tiny liberal arts college in Pennsylvania called Juniata College, then Baylor for medical school.

What are your hobbies or interests? Reading, playing fetch with my twin cats, and I am just getting into the Peleton!

What made you decide to pursue anesthesia? I like using my brains and my hands, titrating blood pressure minute-to-minute, always having a plan Z, Poiseuille's equation and the way leur tapers fit together. So it was an obvious choice.

Where do you see yourself in five years? Next year I will be a critical care fellow here at Michigan! After that I'd like to explore either a global health fellowship or work abroad in the francophone world or East Africa. I was a Peace Corps volunteer in Tanzania after college and developed a real love for the region. At the end of this year, I'm going to work abroad for a month with SEA-HVO and am hoping to work in the site in Rwanda.

Tell us one last thing that is special, unique, and wonderful that we just must know about you! My cats are somehow EVEN more beautiful than Amy's. I know it's incredibly difficult to believe, but it's true. I also speak Swahili, which is a very cool language with very interesting grammar that I am pretty much always dying to talk about. But I also promise to stop talking about it if you say you've heard enough.

Dr. Peoples Q&A (continued)

What advice can you give to residents who may be feeling burned out or overwhelmed?

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Reach out. It can be hard; we have a large department and there are so many people around you all the time, but sometimes you can feel really isolated and overwhelmed. We are all here to help provide support and guidance. And on the flip side, we need to check in on people when we're in place to do that — if we're concerned or if we just know that it's a particularly stressful time in the residency program — to maintain those supportive connections.

I can't encourage everyone enough to reach out and begin a conversation. There are going to be life events that happen and stressors that come up unrelated to your residency training that impacts your life in the hospital — everybody's going to have something that comes up during their training. For me, one particularly challenging time was my first flare and a new diagnosis of rheumatoid arthritis during my CA-2 year after my daughter was born. I was in denial about my symptoms throughout my maternity leave and went back to work before seeking any evaluation because I felt like there was no time to be sick. Even though I knew something was wrong, it took the kind prodding of an observant attending for me to schedule an appointment. That was an overwhelming time in my training — adjusting to motherhood and the new diagnosis of a chronic disease that could potentially leave me unable to pursue a full clinical career in anesthesiology. Looking back it seems absurd now that I let myself limp around the ORs and suffer through swollen hands without getting help right away. I just wanted to keep going forward, but in reality I was putting my future health and dexterity in jeopardy. Thankfully my disease is well controlled and I don't have any significant permanent damage from that time. It was hard to see things in perspective at the time and I'm thankful for that attending who made me slow down and have a conversation that gave me pause to reflect.

Any other advice before we go?

If you're looking to make a change targeting wellness, remember that any little step you can take is a win. Sometimes, if we try to make a big change, it's just too much and we can't sustain it and then we feel bad about ourselves because we feel like we failed. So look for incremental changes in a certain area — going to bed 15 minutes earlier or exercising for 10 minutes. Over time, these can become habits and be the beginning of something more.

Summer in the City: Townies & Golf Outing



Mark Your Calendars

We are so excited to offer a full fall agenda for you and your families! Mark your calendars now and be on the lookout for more information soon for these upcoming wellness events:

- October 16** Cider Mill
- October 23** University of Michigan Football Tailgate
- November 13** 5K Charity Fun Run
- November 25** Friendsgiving Potluck



Education Room Coming Soon

Have you heard? Dr. Tremper's former office in the UH Anesthesiology suite will soon become an additional resident space. The department is currently working to transition the office into our new Education Room. Once open, this room will be exclusively for anesthesiology residents — use the space to work, do simulation, or just take a break and relax. More details coming soon.



Food Returns to Tutorial and Morning Conference

As the pandemic continues to alter the way we operate professionally and personally, we were thrilled to bring back a bit of normalcy this summer and fall with the return of food to tutorial and morning conference! Many thanks to Dr. Naughton and our chiefs, who were fierce advocates for the change.

The Gratitude Project



Last year the Resident Wellness Committee launched The Gratitude Project, an initiative to build a culture of gratitude and to recognize the many meaningful ways that you contribute to our team.

We received more than 200 submissions in our first year! Our thanks to all who submitted notes and to Vu Willey, who led the initiative.

We'll be bringing back the Gratitude Project — and more candy! — later this fall. Look for more information soon from Vu.

Mental Health Resources

- **U-M/Michigan Medicine resources for urgent help**
 - U-M Psychiatric Emergency Services: 734-936-5900 (available 24/7)
 - House Officer Mental Health Program: 734-763-9853
 - Office of Counseling and Workplace Resilience: 734-763-5409
- **National resources for urgent help**
 - National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255 (available 24/7)
 - Text UMICH to 741741 to connect with the Crisis Text Line
- **U-M/Michigan Medicine resources for non-emergencies**
 - Peer Support: If you or someone you know would like to speak to a peer please email peersupport@med.umich.edu to be matched up with a supporter (faculty, resident, or staff).
 - HOA Non-Emergency Mental Health Services: 734-763-9853
 - Office of Counseling and Workplace Resilience: 734-763-5409
 - Spiritual Care: 734-936-4041
- **Community resources accepting UM Premier Care**
 - Huron Valley Consultation Center (evening and weekend hours available): 734-662-6300 www.huronvalleyconsult.org
 - Heron Ridge Associates: 734-913-1093 www.heronridgeassocs.com
 - Grove Emotional Health Collaborative: 734-224-3822 www.groveemotionalhealth.com
 - Lotus Consulting: 734-478-7358 www.lotusconsultingpllc.com