

# eEducate

A newsletter for the faculty of  
Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine

Geisinger  
Commonwealth  
School of Medicine  
SPRING 2017

## 2017 Match Success

"For the past five years, the third Friday in March has become my proudest and most favorite day of the year! I truly believe each member of our Geisinger Commonwealth community plays an imperative role in the success of our students and their Match," reports Julia Kolcharno, MA, director of student affairs. So how can you help our MD Class of 2018 attain residency success?



According to the NRMP®, this year was the largest residency match in its history. "More than 35,969 U.S. and international medical school students and graduates vied for 31,757 positions, the most ever offered in the Match. The number of available first-year (PGY-1) positions rose to 28,849, 989 more than last year.

According to the results of the AAMC 2016 Program Director Survey, program directors reported that the most important goal for the selection process is to "identify candidates who will fit their program's culture, make good colleagues, and pass the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) certification exams on the first attempt."

Geisinger Commonwealth matched 98 percent of our students this past year. One of the significant keys to residency success for our students comes from effective letters of recommendation. So how can you help our MD Class of 2018 attain residency success?

### TIPS FOR CRAFTING AN EFFECTIVE LETTER

1. Effectively communicate the student's achievement of our core competencies. Letters can be based on the same specific evidence you have gathered for assessment, feedback and narratives.
2. Provide enough detail to demonstrate you know the student well. Include an example/snapshot/scenario in which the student demonstrated a unique attribute that makes him or her a compelling applicant. Describe the students' understanding of/commitment to/suitability for the discipline.
3. Think of the student from the perspective of residency faculty or fellow residents.
4. Residency directors value professionalism, integrity, interpersonal and communication skills and reliability and dependability.
5. Be clear with the student if you cannot in good conscience write a strong letter.
6. Be sure to address the letter "Dear Residency Director." Put the letter on letterhead with your signature.
7. Your student will provide you with a letter request form that includes a unique identifier for the student and instructions for uploading the letter to Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS).

Sample letters are at: <http://tcmedc.libguides.com/facultydev>

### Important Dates:

**September 1:**  
All letters of recommendation should be uploaded to the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS).  
[www.aamc.org/eras/lorp](http://www.aamc.org/eras/lorp)

**September 6:**  
Students officially start applying to residency programs within ERAS.

**October 1:**  
Residency programs have access to the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) within ERAS.

**December:**  
Military Match Results

**January:**  
Ophthalmology Match results  
Urology Match results

**March 16:**  
Main Residency Match results

### Questions?

Please contact:

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# Sample Letter

Applicant: XXXXX AAMC ID#: XXXXX

Date:

Dear Program Director:

XXXX has indicated that this letter be confidential and therefore waives his right to see it under the “Family Rights and Privacy Act.”

It is a great pleasure for me to write this letter of strong support for XXXX. I have known him since his XX year of medical school. He is a thoughtful, dedicated, and hardworking student.

I have worked with XXXX in his transition from a pre-clinical medical student to a third-year clinical clerk, and most recently I have worked with him on his medicine subinternship.

On the Medicine Subinternship, XXXX participated in the care of a man who presented to the hospital with drowsiness, lethargy, and a change in mental status. He clearly made the diagnosis of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease and recommended that constipation from the patient’s fentanyl patch was making his encephalopathy worse and recommended an alternate plan of care. He also had a close relationship with the patient and his wife which was evident on rounds. XXXX was able to make this connection even though the patient and his wife spoke Spanish. During chief rounds, XXXX always offered a recent article pertaining to the care of one of his patients. He did this, however, in a non-assuming and non-threatening manner and facilitated the learning of both students and house-staff.

During a conversation with a member of the faculty, XXXX’s third-year internal medicine preceptor commented that XXXX had an enormous fund of medical knowledge and was the most intelligent medical students with whom he had worked over the last 25 years. He quickly followed this with the statement that XXXX has an excellent rapport with patients and staff and works to truly understand the patient’s experience of illness. During half of their third year, Geisinger Commonwealth students are in the outpatient Longitudinal Integrated Curriculum (LIC), working in all six core disciplines simultaneously, in addition to ER experiences. In the other half of the year, students complete block rotations, primarily in hospitals. As a result, I have had extensive interactions with XXXX and my recommendation is based on six months of observation, and is high praise. XXXX received Honors for his third-year internal medicine core clerkship. As mentioned above, I have worked with XXXX during his inpatient subinternship in medicine, and I agree with this evaluation completely.

As you look through XXXX’s application, you will note that he has many interests and talents. He is fluent in XXXX. In addition, his service to our community is evident in his work with the Leahy Clinic at the University of Scranton. The Leahy Clinic is a free clinic that serves the people of the City of Scranton. XXXX has been involved with both clinical and bench research.

Even more impressive is his dedication to learning. During our “Masterclass” series in internal medicine, XXXX would routinely quote the medical literature appropriate to the patient case we were discussing, and routinely took on the role of teaching his fellow students. I remain impressed with his fund of knowledge and his ability to share this with his colleagues. It has been a pleasure to work with XXXX.

I give XXXX my highest recommendation. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine Title

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