



An Update from: **Larry R. Kaiser, MD, FACS**  
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### LKSOM Helps HERO During “Season of Giving”

A tradition of giving has been long established amongst LKSOM students and it certainly is enhanced during the “Season of Giving.” This year, many may have noticed at the entry of MERB, an overflowing box with the name “HERO” written across the top. HERO, a nonprofit organization, stands for “Helping to Energize and Rebuild Ourselves, and has been involved with Temple University and LKSOM for almost a decade. The director, community activist Doris Phillips, works tirelessly and with pride for the neighborhood hub of activity with the eye-catching mural at the corner of Tioga and 17<sup>th</sup> Streets.



According to its Facebook page, HERO provides a well-balanced home environment for underserved families, helps to reduce crimes and teen pregnancies, and provides children with opportunities to excel academically and socially. LKSOM students have participated in the many programs at HERO, through the student group simply called “HERO”, as well as with the summer community health internship, Bridging the Gaps. Students have organized after-school tutoring and enrichment activities and bigger events such as computer renovating, pumpkin carving, and a canned food drive.

LKSOM students have noted that, once involved with the children and families at HERO, they are “smitten.” One student commented, “Ms. Doris makes everyone feel so welcomed that you just want to be part of the energy.” Students also have participated in fundraising efforts, from helping to write grants to organizing bake sales. They want to do as much as they can to support, encourage, and contribute to the small organization with a big heart.

For more information, please visit: [www.facebook.com/helpingenergizeandrebuiltourselves](http://www.facebook.com/helpingenergizeandrebuiltourselves).

**\*\*\* Season's Greetings \*\*\***

We hope the upcoming break will serve as a time to share with family and friends, but also for relaxation and regeneration. We in the Dean's Office wish you all the joys of the season and much happiness and success throughout the coming year.

## New Medical Education Grading Policy

For better or worse, grades are a vital part of education. “Summative” grades—those reported at the end of a course—provide an objective assessment of whether a student has met the learning objectives and is ready to progress. For centuries, educators (and students) have taken for granted that students are fundamentally motivated by rank-ordered grades—A, B, C, F; Honors, Pass, Fail; or some variation on this theme.

Not surprisingly, medical students are not typical learners. A growing body of evidence suggests that grades do not motivate students in the pre-clerkship years, and may actually be counterproductive to educational goals. The bar for passing medical school courses is already extremely high, and gradations within the passing range may not identify the students who perform the best in the clinical years and beyond. Grades may encourage competition between students, rather than facilitate the collaborative, team-based learning that is critical to professional success. Perhaps most importantly, most chairs and residency program directors at even the most competitive residency programs do not consider students’ grades in individual pre-clerkship courses when deciding which candidates they will interview and rank.

With these factors in mind, the majority of U.S. medical schools have moved away from grades in the pre-clerkship years. Multiple studies have shown no change in test scores, USMLE Step 1 board scores, or residency match results after changing to a pass-fail system in years 1 and 2 of medical school. What does change dramatically are measures of student well-being. Several schools have reported significant improvement in stress, anxiety, depression, satisfaction with school, and personal happiness in the pre-clerkship years after switching to pass-fail grading.

The Deans of Medical Education and Student Affairs at LKSOM recently presented this information at a student lunch. The consensus from the meeting, as well as results from a class survey, is that the vast majority of 1<sup>st</sup>- and 2<sup>nd</sup>- year students favor converting to a Pass-Fail system in the pre-clerkship years. LKSOM leadership sought comment from students and faculty and received approval from the Curriculum Committee and Dean Kaiser to move to a Pass-Fail grading system for pre-clerkship courses, beginning August 2017. In this new system, final course percentages will still be calculated, made available to the students, and retained by the Deans’ office. These scores will continue to be used in determining class rank, which is used in academic awards and the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) that is provided to residency programs. The official transcript will reflect only “Pass” or “Fail.”

### Career Counseling Corner

Upcoming meetings (Philadelphia Campus):

#### Class of 2018

Class Meeting: January 3, 2017, 8 a.m.-10 a.m.

Residency Day: January 3, 2017, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Session with 4<sup>th</sup> year students from 1 p.m.-2 p.m.

#### Class of 2017

Class Meeting: January 3, 2017, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Session with Class of 2018, 1 p.m.-2 p.m. (please consider participating)

## The Student Academic Support Program (SASP)

If you Google “medical school studying,” the number of references that appear are overwhelming! Through the abundance of opinions and recommendations, two consistent messages emerge.

The first one is: KNOW YOURSELF! Self-assessment, recognizing what is and isn’t working, is key to success in medical school. The second one acknowledges that talking through the material is the best way to ensure a solid knowledge base. Recommendations for study group involvement are plentiful. Though most students acknowledge a study group could be helpful, it is not common in practice.

Throughout the 2016-17 fall term, LKSOM administration, faculty, and students have developed more comprehensive study resources and opportunities to talk about the material in order to help the learning process. Upper-year students, Peer Learning Facilitators (PLFs) involved with “The Student Academic Support Program” (SASP) are committed to building a useful and sustainable study assistance program. Peer Learning Facilitators (PLFs) offer both individual and group study sessions for any student interested in seeking help, regardless of academic performance; inquiries are confidential.

Additionally, the faculty and administration are committed to ensuring that students have access to resources. Students with any kind of academic question are encouraged to contact faculty, their doctoring advisors, or staff in the offices for Student Affairs; Health Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; and Medical Education. Academic success is important to everyone.

In addition to the resources of the Dean’s Office, for assistance with studying, first-year students can contact Luke Musser at: [tuf74118@temple.edu](mailto:tuf74118@temple.edu). Second-year students can contact: [Templetutors2@gmail.com](mailto:Templetutors2@gmail.com).

## Welcome to a New Member of the Team



**Jerome Wright** has joined our team as the Doctoring Program Coordinator. He is a Philadelphia native, growing up merely 10 minutes north of LKSOM. Jerome is an alum of the University of Pennsylvania, where he earned an undergraduate degree in Economics with a dual minor in American Public Policy and Africana Studies. He has worked in education administration since his graduation, first in elementary and secondary education in Chester, PA and then with nursing students in Trenton, NJ.

Jerome approaches education administration with the mindset of making student lives’ easier. He wants to do whatever he can to help our students reach their goals. Jerome is here to help and he’s a really nice guy. If you see him in the halls, say hi and welcome him to LKSOM. We are certainly happy that Jerome is here and are certain you will be as well. As many of you know, we have been coordinating Doctoring since the summer through a team effort. We appreciate your patience and understanding during this transition.