

Award: Philip J. Wolfson Outstanding Teacher

Basic Information

Name

Grace Kim MD

Your title:

Associate Professor, Vice Chair of Education, Department of Surgery

Your Institution:

University of Michigan

Email

gracejk@med.umich.edu

Name of nominee:

Seth Waits

Nominee's institution:

University of Michigan

Nominee's title:

Assistant Professor

Nominee's email address:

waitss@med.umich.edu

Short Essays

Please describe the nominee's innovative approach to teaching (the nominee's personal philosophy of teaching).

Dr. Waits takes an individualized, relational approach to each learner and is constantly looking for ways to improve how we teach through innovation. Dr. Waits believes that feedback is the single most important gift that we can give our learners. Rather than taking the easy route by telling learners they "did an awesome job," he seeks to provide timely, thoughtful, and specific feedback in a conducive setting, outside of the operating room or clinic. Dr. Waits also deeply believes that innovation is the key to progress in surgical education. He has embraced technology in several education-related projects including use of 3D printed models of transplant operations and video-based coaching. Finally, Dr. Waits values the importance of kindness in teaching. Taking time to listen to and answer medical students unhurriedly and giving residents time to take a break while he gets the next case going are small, welcome gestures of kindness that strengthen his effective learner-centered approach.

What educational scholarship is the nominee most proud of and why?

Dr. Waits' education scholarship has built upon the needs and opportunities that he identified when he was a learner. The three projects that best illustrate his educational scholarship are: Kidney Transplant Trainer, Video Based Coaching, and TREE (Transplant Research Education and Engagement).

- 3D Kidney Trainer: This project was born out of a desire to build confidence for residents before their first kidney transplant. It started as a cardboard box but eventually resulted in a full replica 3D model that has been printed at transplant programs across the world. Through Twitter, Dr. Waits also promoted short videos (Microlearning) which demonstrate the techniques that were detailed on YouTube.
 - o Claffin J, Waits SA. How I Do It: Three-Dimensionally Printed Interactive Training Model for Kidney Transplantation. *J Surg Ed* 2020 Sep-Oct;77(5): 1013-1017.
- Video-Based Coaching: Dr. Waits started this innovative project during fellowship after he was frustrated by the inability to objectively review surgical cases. He acquired a Go-Pro webcam and started taping the most fast-paced and intense case performed in transplant surgery, a rapid donor after cardiac death (DCD). After watching the videos with his mentors, Dr. Waits presented his worst mistakes at the national transplant meeting within the context of video-based coaching. To this day, he still has trainees approach him to talk about that video which he still presents annually at his national society. Fellows after him still record their videos which they collectively view for coaching. This work has also resulted in two manuscripts on the topic of teaching medical students.
 - o Alameddine MB, Englesbe MJ, Waits SA. A Video-Based Coaching Intervention to Improve Surgical Skill in Fourth-Year Medical Students. *J Surg Ed*. 2018 Apr 23.
 - o Bishop R, McCallister R, Bahroloomi S, Rietberg C, Kelley J, Wakam G, Waits SA. How I Do It: Pilot Study of Video-Based Feedback as an Educational Tool for Medical Students' Presentations on Morning Rounds. *J Surg Ed*. (In Press)
- TREE: During the fall of 2019 Dr. Waits started his favorite education and mentoring endeavor, the Transplant Research Education and Engagement Group. He brought together undergraduate, medical students, residents, fellows, and faculty to work on projects related to the core missions outlined in the group name. His group pioneered the use of short-form videos called "Microlearning" and work from the group resulted in numerous national presentations. Select publications include:
 - o Highet A, Waits SA. Fostering passion and skills in surgical education research across the medical education continuum: The Transplant Research Education and Engagement Group. *J Surg Educ*. 2021 Jan-Feb;78(1):356-360.
 - o Palmon I, Brown CS, Highet A, Kulick AA, Barrett ME, Cassidy DE, Herman AE, Gomez-Rexrode, O'Reggio R, Sonnenday CJ,

Waits SA, Wakam GK. Microlearning and Social Media: A Novel Approach to Video-Based Learning and Surgical Education. J Grad Med Educ. 2021 Jun;13(3):323-326.

o Wakam GK, Montgomery JR, Biesterveld BE, Brown CS. Not Dying Alone – Modern Compassionate Care in the Covid-19 Pandemic. N Engl J Med. 2020 Jun 11;382(24

Please identify the nominee's educational productivity accomplishments including: teaching activities, curricular development, evaluation and assessment innovations, etc.

Dr. Waits serves as the fellowship director of the abdominal transplant fellowship at the University of Michigan. Over the past two years, he has modernized the fellowship through creation and enforcement of time-off policies, implementation of innovative teaching, and diversification of the recruitment processes. Additionally, Dr. Waits has overseen the resident experience on transplant surgery. In that role, Dr. Waits initiated a program called the VIP experience where the interns on the transplant service have a chance to experience high-level transplant surgery without getting bogged down with the floor minutiae in the care of these complex patients through more faculty engagement, operating room participation, and focused education as well as receive a small gift (Team Transplant t-shirt). Dr. Waits is the faculty director of SCRUBS, the University of Michigan surgery interest group which is comprised of medical students, surgical residents, and faculty. More than half of the first year class of medical students choose to participate in this extra-curricular club. Each year, different teams compete against each other in surgical skills and research presentations. The competition culminates in a highly anticipated and coveted departmental medal ceremony. However, of these various roles, Dr. Waits considers his most impactful role to be that of founder and director of the TREE program which he hopes to continue in the years to come.

Additional Information

Please list any educational professional development programs that the nominee has attended (workshops, courses, fellowships, certificate/degree programs, etc)

Dr. Waits participated in a two-year fellowship in the Center for Health Outcomes and Policy at the University of Michigan. He is currently a member of the American Society of Transplant Surgeons, the American Hepatopancreatobiliary Association, and a fellow of the American College of Surgeons. Dr. Waits leads the annual hands-on workshop on Donor After Cardiac Death at the American Society of Transplant Surgeons. He also gave a plenary talk on Team Action Projects in Surgery at the 2013 AAMC Integrating Quality: Improving Value and Educating Quality Meeting.

Please list any education/teaching awards or honors that the nominee has received.

Arnold G. Coran Top Surgery Faculty Teaching Award 2022

William W. Coon Award 2022

University of Michigan Academy of Surgical Educators 2022

Learning Environment Task Force, Exemplar Award for Learning Environment 2020

Finalist - Surgical Clerkship Arnold G. Coran Faculty Teaching Award 2021

Robert Bartlett Chief Resident Teaching Award 2016

Please list the names of the mentees of the nominee and the nature of their relationship with them (how long did the nominee mentor the person, what was the focus of the mentorship provided).

Resident Mentorship:

JR Montgomery - Academic Development Mentor, 7/2018 – 6/2020

Glenn Wakam - Academic Development Mentor, Launch Team, 7/2019 – 6/2021

Valeria Valbuena - Academic Development Mentor, Launch Team, 7/2020 – 6/2022

Ryan Eton - Academic Development Mentor, 7/2020 – 6/2022

Andy Millis - Academic Development Mentor, 7/2021 – 6/2023

Medical Student Mentorship:

Keli Parker - Procedural Arm, Branches Advisor 7/2019 – 6-2021

NIH Short Term Research Mentorship - Morphometric Age

Michael Kirsch - Longitudinal Apprenticeship 7/2019 – 5/2020

Hepatobiliary Surgery

Jake Clafin - CAPSTONE Advisor 7/2018 – 6/2020

3-D printing for surgical models

Mitch Alameddine - Summer Research Advisor 7/2017 – 6/2018

Video Review of Surgical Skill

Itai Palmon - Pre-M1 Summer Grant 6/2020

Capstone Project Advisor 7/2021

3D Printed Model of Liver Transplant

Clare Jacobson - NIH Short Term Research Mentorship 5/2021

Timothy Gilbert - Procedure Based Care 8-2021 – 9-2021

Research Fellowship Faculty Mentor

Amalia Rexrod-Gomez Procedural Branches Advisor 7-2021 – 6-2022

Ahmad Hider – Procedural Branches Advisor 7-2021 – 6/2022

File Uploads

Please upload the nominee's CV

- [Waits-CV.pdf](#)

Please upload a letter of nomination by a faculty, education administrator, or anyone else with knowledge of the nominee's enthusiasm for exemplary teaching and involvement in surgical education.

- [Seth-waits-nomination-October-2022.pdf](#)

Please upload no more than 2 letter(s) of support from individuals with direct knowledge of the nominee's surgical education involvement and outstanding teaching. Commentary on role modeling of professional characteristics and accessibility would be appreciated.

- [seth-waits-lors-combined.pdf](#)

Please upload documentation of teaching excellence in the form of an aggregate evaluation report (from MedHub, New Innovations, etc) from learners over the past 6 - 12 months. (file upload)

- [seth-waits-evals-combined.pdf](#)