

ORTHOPAEDIC RESIDENCY RESEARCH PROGRAM UPDATE

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Resident research is a cornerstone of the Iowa orthopaedic training program. The current program has evolved over the years with the input of many devoted faculty. Dr. Richard A. Brand administered the program for many years with excellent productivity. For the last few years, I have been able to help with the program and now realize the enormous effort from the faculty, residents and support staff that goes into each project.

The goals of the program are several, and include: 1) to make meaningful contributions to the field of orthopaedic surgery, 2) to stimulate independent scientific thinking, 3) to help residents recognize the intrinsic value of performing laboratory or clinical research, and 4) to familiarize residents with research methodologies.

The Iowa Orthopaedic Resident Research Program involves all five years of residency. In the first two years, the resident identifies a project and a faculty mentor, and defines the project with the help of his “committee.” This is then presented to the entire department. After modifications are made, the project is scheduled for execution. In the third or fourth year, each resident completes their project. In general, these are presented

during the fifth year at national meetings. More than half have been published in our top journals.

All projects cost money. The current resident group has been incredibly successful in obtaining external funding—especially from the Orthopaedic Research and Education Foundation. Although this helps, it does not cover all the costs. With personal money, the faculty has established a new fund to specifically finance resident research projects. We hope to grow this fund to be able to cover the essential costs inherent in all projects in the future.

We believe that resident research is as important an educational experience as any in orthopaedic training. This is equally true for either academic or private-practice-bound surgeons. The accompanying “long-term follow-up” reports of our distinguished alumni are testimony to the critical importance of a vibrant resident research experience. With the generous financial support of our grateful patients, alumni and faculty to the Iowa Orthopaedic Resident Research Fund, I hope that this great tradition will continue as a cornerstone of our training program.