The 2016-17 year at Houston Healthcare began by welcoming our fifth class of interns from various Osteopathic medical colleges across the country to include the Georgia Campus of Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, William Carey College of Osteopathic Medicine, New York Institute of Technology College of Osteopathic Medicine, Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine and Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Towards the end of our last academic year we said farewell to Dr. Gretta Gross who served as the program director from 2013-2016. She returned to her home state of Pennsylvania and Dr. La Toya Jackson who serving as the Associate Program Director began to lead the program as the Interim Program Director. We did unfortunately lose two first year residents at the end of last academic year and Dr. Jason Hatcher rendered his resignation and ultimately left his position as faculty in December. As the year continued Houston Healthcare worked closely with the program to recruit faculty and residents, ultimately gaining two new second year residents Drs. William Courson and Pranam Kokilakumar both graduates from the Georgia Campus of Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. As the first half of the year continued we had another second year resident resign due to personal issues which left our resident complement at 6-5-6. Despite the challenges of resident and faculty losses we continued on our pursuit of ACGME accreditation and re-submitted our institution and program application in July after our previous attempt left us in pre-accredited status. We also continue to work closely with our volunteer faculty who graciously provide a number of rotation experiences for our residents. As the year came to a close other positives include a great performance by our residents on the in training exam and my role as Interim Program Director was advanced to Program Director, DIO and DME.

The New Year brought progress for the program to include a new faculty member, Dr. Stewart Grizzard, our first allopathic physician to join the residency program. HHCFMRP also received ACGME institution and program initial accreditation in January 2017. Despite the challenges of the first half of the year our residents continued to excel and all of our interns successfully passed COMLEX level 3, and our third year residents presented their research projects at ACOFP annual convention in March. Our faculty has also expanded their roles at Houston Healthcare with Dr. Juan Velazquez assuming role as chair of Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee and continuing to serve on the Credentialing Committee. He also served on the planning committee for the ACOFP national convention. Dr. Adams became chair of the Ethics Committee at Houston Healthcare and both physicians serve on the board for our accountable care organization TC2. Dr. La Toya Jackson completed the National Institute for Program Director Development Fellowship in March and presented at the Society for Teachers of Family Medicine in May 2016 during a collaborative round table discussion and poster presentation with family medicine faculty physicians from other residency programs across the country. As the residency match came and went we
were able to fill our 2017-18 intern class with 6 interns from various medical schools including 3 MD’s. Given our ability to now participate in both the NMS and NRMP our goal is to successfully match all of our positions next year. Plans have begun which include changes to our interview and recruitment process to ultimately improve our ability to fill our residency positions not only for match success, but also to attain and retain residents who will be able to successfully matriculate through our family medicine residency program.

As the year came to a close we had one last resident departure from our program which came from our intern class. This year was definitely challenging but it has taught us resiliency. Our resident graduation as always is the highlight of the year. We celebrated six third year residents who graduated on June 30, 2017. Dr. Tameka Byrd will be practicing in Peach County at Navicent Health, Dr. Scott Cameron will be returning to Colorado to determine his practice plans, Dr. Abraham Jeon joined an outpatient practice in Washington State, Dr. My Tien Nguyen will be joining Navicent Health in Macon, Ga. as a hospitalist, Dr. Alex Stahura will be joining an outpatient practice in Elkador, Iowa, and Dr. Andrew Wang will be joining an outpatient practice in Perry, Ga. The graduating class chose Dr. Deep Adhikari as inpatient preceptor of the year and Dr. Ravi Shekarappa as the outpatient preceptor of the year. The resident of the year award was given to Dr. Tameka Byrd and Uraina Payton, LPN was honored with the Stethy award for outstanding clinical service as a way to honor our clinical staff that helps us improve patient care.

We completed our third Annual Program Evaluation survey in June. In general, the responses demonstrated needed improvement in resident/faculty relations as well as educational resources as we have continued to seek assistance from Ga-PCOM for a medical library. Given these concerns changes we have implemented with the support of our new chief medical officer, Dr. Larry Stewart. New changes for the 2017-18 academic year include joining the CEME Opti to address our need for a medical library, specific didactic sessions addressing team work and physician wellness, an annual retreat for our residents and faculty, and encouraging and providing opportunities for residents to take on greater leadership roles to help strengthen their program and have their voices heard.

As our new academic year has begun we welcome new interns from various medical schools to include Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine-Carolinatas campus, and for the first time three allopathic residents from Ross University, St. George’s University School of Medicine, and American University of Antigua College of Medicine.

As we continue to grow and are proud of our expansion into the ACGME system, we will maintain our AOA accreditation; prepare to apply for Osteopathic recognition, as well as our next ACGME program inspection in July 2018, followed by our CLER visit later next year. We anticipate a great academic year as well as a successful match season.

Respectfully submitted,
La Toya D. Jackson, MS, DO, FAAFP
Director of Medical Education/Direct Institutional Officer
Program Director