

Saul Halpern Orthopaedic Educator of the Year Award  
June 2021

June 23, 2021

Dear Dr. Frick,

Congratulations on your selection for the Orthopaedic Educator Award. What a well-deserved tribute, as you can appreciate from the comments of the chief residents.

A true educator at heart, who also goes above and beyond for his patients and the program. As a surgeon who always says residents need “gas in the tank”, he’s the kind of person that would fill your tank up for free even with California gas prices.

We are so lucky that Dr. Frick joined us at Stanford as Vice Chair for education and chief of the pediatric orthopaedics service. He started here around the same time that we started as residents, so our class is particularly close with him. He has been an absolute tour-de-force with regard to resident education, and has implemented so many outstanding changes to our program. From pediatric ED logistics to decreasing the burden of outpatient calls to “finding” funding for loupes for all residents, he has worked tirelessly to optimize so many facets of our residency experience. Despite all of that, his most notable quality is his ability to provide personalized attention and feedback to every resident in the program, from tirelessly, constructively marking up our ED and clinic notes to late-night phone calls when nothing seems to be going right in the hospital. He is always available, and always puts resident needs ahead of his own. Operating with him is an absolute privilege, and there are so many things I will do in my own career that are directly attributable to his OR wisdom – steps to a supracondylar humerus fracture, handling of soft tissues, pace of surgery, camaraderie with OR staff, the list goes on. He has had one of the greatest influences on my education, and is the ideal role model and mentor. Congrats to Dr. Frick!

Dr. Frick goes above and beyond the call of duty to teach residents and his dedication to education is phenomenal and should be commended. It does not matter if it is in the middle of a busy workday or if it is an overnight case, Dr. Frick is an excellent educator 100% percent of the time. For example, one of my first supracondylar humerus fractures as a junior was an overnight case with Dr. Frick. Though it was midnight Dr. Frick patiently explained his approach to supracondylar treatment. Thanks to his devotion to education I left with an outstanding appreciation of supracondylar treatment. I still read the notes I took that night before treating a supracondylar.

Dr. Frick embodies the idea that teaching has to be actively sought and that golden opportunities can pass by if passive learning is the default. One example is how Dr. Frick implements the “Tell Me The Story Backwards” technique which is a learning technique that was published in CORR 2003 that stimulates higher cognitive level discussion between teacher and student, and is an ideal way to teach more in fast paced clinics. In a similar fashion, Dr.

Frick has not only optimized learning in clinic, he also has optimized learning in the operating room, and in teaching conferences.

Additionally, Dr. Frick motivates the residents to be better. He motivates the residents by having very high, but realistic expectations. He is empathetic and genuinely cares how the residents are doing and values resident input. He has an indescribable smooth energy that is contagious and his passion for educating is widely apparent. The residents aim to match Dr. Frick's intensity to teach with our intensity to be prepared to learn.

Dr. Frick is the epitome of surgeon educator. He loves what he does and that is very evident in his day-to-day work and makes his teaching that much more impactful. When it comes to educators Stanford Orthopaedics has a lot of amazing teachers. Dr. Frick stands out as one of the best and is extremely deserving of the Halpern Teaching Award.

I look forward to meeting you in the future when travel and meeting become safe.

Sincerely,

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