

June 15, 2008

Dear Students,

Two years ago, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation awarded an \$8 million grant to the University of Chicago and National Opinion Research Center to become the National Program Office for a major initiative called *Finding Answers: Disparities Research for Change*. Led by Marshall Chin, MD, MPH, Associate Professor of Medicine, more than 25 faculty and staff across the University are the vanguard for this national effort housed on our campus in the Center for Health and the Social Sciences (CHeSS). The goals of *Finding Answers* are to discover and evaluate interventions to reduce racial and ethnic health care disparities, disseminate the findings nationally, and translate them into real-world practice. The program will examine innovative efforts to reduce racial and ethnic gaps in the treatment of cardiovascular disease, depression, and diabetes.

As a major component of this important initiative, students will participate in *Health Care Disparities in America*, an intensive experience in its third year at Pritzker. The Gross Anatomy course and this initiative will be the only classes offered in the first two months of your medical education at Pritzker. *Health Care Disparities in America* draws upon the skills and strengths of instructors from a variety of different educational backgrounds, levels of training, and perspectives, including senior medical students, residents, fellows, and faculty. The experience utilizes an innovative and dynamic approach to help students attain a solid knowledge base in this field, including historical perspectives and current conditions. Most importantly, the initiative will offer experiences beyond the confines of the academic medical center, including numerous interactions with the people, programs, and facilities located in the surrounding neighborhoods of the South Side of Chicago. The goal is to arm you with the knowledge and skills that will help frame your medical education within the context of greater societal issues and, ultimately, support the development of you and your classmates into the future leaders who will effect real-world change.

I look forward to working with you upon your arrival at Pritzker.

Sincerely,

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