

Lester S. Duplechan, MD

Tell members a little bit about yourself.

Your Practice

I have recently joined Mayo Clinic Arizona as an Associate Professor of PM&R and Senior Associate Consultant—having wrapped up 10 years as Chair of Physical Medicine Rehabilitation at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. I'm a native Californian, and completed my MD at UCLA/Drew School of Medicine, followed by PM&R residency at Emory University. My clinical interests are broad: including MSK, spine, spasticity management, electrodiagnosis, and international medicine—with subspecialty certifications in EMG, Pain, Musculoskeletal Sonography, and Neuromuscular Ultrasound. I am most proud of service as a mentor to undergraduates, medical students, residents, fellows, and faculty.

Your Life Outside of Work

I love spending time with my wife and 3 children, 2 dogs, and following sports (life-long Laker and Dodger fan).

What accomplishments/honors are you particularly proud of that you would like to share with members?

Professional awards and certifications aside, serving as a mentor and sponsor has always been the most gratifying part of my career. I have served as Sunday School teacher for greater than 18 years and I am so proud to still be held in high regard by my former students; most of them are now in their mid 30s with families of their own. Professionally I have continued to serve as a mentor to learners at many levels from high school through postgraduate education. These connections, both within the specialty as well as the community is what gives me the most gratification.

What have you advanced in your local community outside of or in conjunction with your medical practice?

Locally, I have served as a senior mentor for Black Men in Medicine Cincinnati-- a group founded at UCCOM by Dr. Alvin Crawford to address the shrinking numbers of black men entering medicine (at levels well -below when I entered decades ago). Internationally, I have been involved with bringing PM&R skills to underserved countries. Over the last 2 years I have been on medical exchange trips to both Ghana and Tanzania (with FOCOS Orthopedic Hospital in Accra and Village Life Outreach Project respectively). I plan to continue to participate, visit, and assist with the training of local physicians to bring PM&R skills to underserved areas.

What special skills or unique attributes do you bring to the Board of Governors?

Growth mindset. I found that my early career experience in private practice (including 8 years as a solo practitioner) provided valuable insight into the personal and business sides of medicine which served me well as an academic leader in the years that followed. My career has had many different chapters--- each allowing me to develop further clinical, educational, and administrative skills. I have also been active in national committees with multiple medical organizations. I feel very fortunate that I love my career as a physiatrist as much now as I did while in training.

What is a current or future challenge to the Academy or the specialty that you look forward to addressing as a Board Member?

Growth, in particular, assisting our specialty in providing much needed access in training opportunities-- for post-graduate trainees and well-seasoned providers. The field is rapidly expanding not only in need and reputation, but also in scope-- and the challenge is not only keeping up with an ever-changing knowledge base, but also remaining connected for mentorship, professional growth opportunities, and self-improvement.

What have we not asked you that you think members should know about you?

Music is soundtrack of my life and I tend to pace myself daily with music playing in the background. Those who know me well will testify that I love popular music and trivia, with my sweet spot being music from the 60s through the 90s. Often the music may serve as an icebreaker with nervous patients-- allowing them to relax. I've been told that co-workers can time my arrival based on the proximity of my whistling as I walk the hallways and stairwells (I'm unaware that I'm doing it most of the time). Most of my coworkers have been subjected to my broad and eclectic playlists; and while they may not enjoy every selection, they often remark that they have expanded their appreciation of music through working in proximity to my workstation or procedure room.

