Dear incoming students,

I am writing to say how pleased we are that you will be joining us as students at the Pritzker School of Medicine. We are really looking forward to meeting you on campus at the beginning of August. I am sure you have a range of emotions including excitement, anxiety and even disbelief that the beginning of the road to becoming a doctor is just around the corner. It is understandable if you are a little nervous about learning anatomy, finding an apartment in Hyde Park, or meeting new people. However, I want to assure you that extensive support systems are available to ensure that your transition to medical school will be a smooth one and that your time at Pritzker will be productive and enjoyable.

You may have heard by now, that Dr. Holly Humphrey is stepping down as Dean for Medical Education on July 1 to become president of the Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation. This is an important position with broad national impact and speaks to the national respect accorded to Dr. Humphrey and to the Pritzker School of Medicine. We are very proud that Dr. Humphrey has been recognized in this manner.

While the dean's position at Pritzker will be changing, the school itself is not. We remain as committed as ever to the core values that have driven the Pritzker School of Medicine since it’s inception. Our success as a Medical School has depended greatly on the strength of our faculty, staff, and students. Dr. Humphrey has built an outstanding team over many years and they will remain here and are ready to assume additional responsibility after her departure to ensure that there is continuity and that we maintain the highest standards of education for our students.

Halina Brukner, MD, Associate Dean for Medical Education, will be appointed Interim Dean for Medical Education effective July 1. Dr. Brukner is uniquely well-suited to lead the school during its transition period due to her extensive experience in the education of physicians throughout the continuum of medical education. Dr. Brukner served as the medicine Co-Clerkship Director from 1986-1999 and as Director of the University Health Service/Primary Care Group from 1995-1999, after which she became Vice-Chair of the Department of Medicine through 2004. That year, she was appointed Associate Dean for Medical School Education, and in the past 14 years has overseen the curriculum and academics at Pritzker and led the Pritzker Initiative planning and implementation. Since 2005, Dr. Brukner has been the Director of the Academy of Distinguished Medical Educators, which supports and promotes research, innovation, and scholarship in medical education at the University of Chicago.
The other Deans at Pritzker lead the school by engaging in deep conversations with our faculty colleagues, by working on projects and initiatives with our staff, and by listening to our student voices. These same faculty and staff at Pritzker will remain here to guide you throughout your education, and the students in higher classes will be available for mentorship and advice.

I wish you the best of luck on your journey through medical education. Everyone at Pritzker is here to support you.

With warmest wishes,

Kenneth S. Polonsky, MD