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UCSF Fresno Associate Dean Joan L. Voris announces retirement
Chief of Medicine Michael Peterson appointed interim associate dean

FRESNO - Associate Dean Joan L. Voris, MD, announced recently that she is stepping down and retiring from the UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program on Jan. 5, 2015, after 12 years as associate dean and 24 years as a faculty member.

“It’s a pleasure and an honor to have been a part of this tremendous program over the past several years,” said Voris. “I am incredibly proud of the great strides made by everyone at UCSF Fresno, including opening the UCSF Fresno Center for Medical Education and Research in 2005, which consolidated staff under one roof for the first time in the program’s history, establishing the UCSF Fresno Clinical Research Center in 2013 and significantly raising the number of physicians trained at UCSF Fresno on an annual basis as well as increasing the number of physician training programs. UCSF Fresno will celebrate its 40th anniversary next year. The time is right for me to step back, enjoy more time with my family and watch with interest as UCSF Fresno enters its next phase.”

Dr. Voris has been a faculty member at UCSF Fresno since 1990. She was appointed associate dean in 2002. In this role, she provides leadership and oversight to residency programs in eight specialties, 17 sub-specialties, undergraduate medical education, the Latino Center for Medical Education and Research, Area Health Education Center, the Alzheimer’s & Memory Center and various pipeline programs within the community. Since Dr. Voris’ appointment as associate dean, the number of core faculty at UCSF Fresno has increased from 77 to 229. The number of residents and fellows trained on an annual basis rose from 172 to 293, representing a 70 percent increase in physicians trained at UCSF Fresno. All but one of the fellowship programs was established under her leadership.

Dr. Voris has worked as a pediatrician in Fresno for 36 years. She has also served on a medical team for many summers in Mexico, helping to bring health care to communities that have no other medical services. In 2010, the Marjaree Mason center selected Voris as one of the Top 10 Professional Women. In 2012, she was honored by the Fresno-Madera Medical Society with the “Physician Community Service Lifetime Achievement Award.”

Voris received her bachelor’s and medical degrees from Stanford University. She completed residency training in pediatrics at UCSF Fresno. Throughout her career, she has been sought out for her expertise in child abuse issues and childhood obesity.

“I know I speak for many, and particularly our educators, when I say that we are deeply grateful to Joan for her years of devoted service and dedicated leadership. She has been the guiding light of our... (More)
UCSF Fresno education programs,” said Bruce Wintroub, interim dean of the UCSF School of Medicine. “A search for a new associate dean will be initiated very soon. In the meantime, Michael Peterson, MD, chief of medicine at UCSF Fresno for the past 12 years, has agreed to serve as interim associate dean. Dr. Peterson, who also serves as vice chair of Medicine at UCSF, is a trusted leader, and I know he will safeguard our mission of recruiting and training physicians and conduct research addressing health issues affecting the community.”

Dr. Peterson was recruited to UCSF Fresno in 2002 as the Valley Medical Foundation Professor of Medicine, UCSF Fresno Chief of Medicine and UCSF Vice-Chair of Medicine.

“It has been a privilege to work alongside Dr. Voris for the past 12 years,” said Peterson. “She has worked tirelessly to improve health care in the San Joaquin Valley by increasing awareness of UCSF Fresno and growing medical education programs to train physicians, especially those who will stay to provide care in the San Joaquin Valley. Dr. Voris has led the program through an unprecedented time of growth and change including the move to the Community Regional Medical Center campus. I am honored to serve as interim associate dean and look forward to continuing the mission of recruiting and training the best and brightest physicians as well as conducting research aimed at addressing health issues that impact Valley residents.”

Peterson received both his undergraduate and medical degrees from the University of Minnesota. He completed his residency in internal medicine at the University of Wisconsin, where he also served one year as a Chief Resident in Medicine. Following the completion of his residency, Dr. Peterson completed a fellowship in Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine at the University of Iowa where he joined the faculty in 1986. He served as Fellowship Program Director in Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine at the University of Iowa and the Curriculum Director for the Foundations of Clinical Practice IV, the fourth year curriculum for University of Iowa medical students.

During his tenure in Fresno, Dr. Peterson has overseen the growth of the Medicine residency from 45 trainees to its current 68 trainees and the development of 6 subspecialty fellowships with 30 current fellows in training.

Dr. Peterson sits on a number of boards and was elected to the UCSF Academy of Medical Educators, has received the UCSF Kaiser Teaching Award, the UCSF Fresno Department of Medicine Faculty Teaching Award, and the UCSF Fresno Faculty Research Award. He has published 88 papers in peer reviewed journals, attracted several million dollars in research grants and contracts, and led the fund-raising effort to build out the UCSF Fresno Clinical Research Center.

Established in 1975 and approaching its 40th anniversary, UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program plays a substantial role in providing healthcare services to residents of California’s San Joaquin Valley and training medical professionals in the region. A clinical branch of UCSF, the medical education program has trained approximately one-third of Central San Joaquin Valley physicians. Annually, UCSF Fresno currently trains approximately 250 medical residents in eight specialties, approximately 50 fellows in 17 subspecialties and about 250 medical students on a rotating basis.

Faculty and medical residents at UCSF Fresno engage in a broad spectrum of research addressing health issues pertinent to the Valley. Faculty and residents also care for the overwhelming majority of the region’s underserved populations.
In addition, UCSF Fresno provides academic preparation programs for middle- and high school students interested in the health professions through the Junior Doctors Academy and the Doctors Academy. UCSF Fresno academically prepares students at Fresno State to become competitive applicants to health professional schools and ultimately aims to prepare them for careers in health and medicine. UCSF Fresno also is a key partner in the UC Merced San Joaquin Valley Program in Medical Education. Please visit www.fresno.ucsf.edu

UCSF is the nation's leading university exclusively focused on health. Now celebrating the 150th anniversary of its founding as a medical college, UCSF is dedicated to transforming health worldwide through advanced biomedical research, graduate-level education in the life sciences and health professions, and excellence in patient care. It includes top-ranked graduate schools of dentistry, medicine, nursing and pharmacy; a graduate division with world-renowned programs in the biological sciences, a preeminent biomedical research enterprise and top-tier hospitals, UCSF Medical Center and UCSF Benioff Children's Hospitals. Please visit www.ucsf.edu.

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