

## Dr. Lee Introduces New Program for Future Orthopaedic Clinician Scientists



“Only six percent of first year medical students think curing disease is the most important purpose of medicine,” stated an opening slide at the “Clinician Scientist Development Program” held October 17-19 in Rosemont, IL, chaired by **Francis Y. Lee, MD, PhD** of Columbia Orthopaedics. Dr. Lee said, “This statistic [from the Association of American Medical Colleges] underscores the concern that future research may be threatened due to the lack of physicians pursuing a dual career as scientists.” Dr. Lee, a translational researcher and noted oncological orthopaedic surgeon, is among a unique group of physicians who gather each year as the faculty for this conference devoted to mentoring young orthopaedic surgeons. To help encourage young physicians to choose a career path that could have so much impact, participants were introduced to the definition of a successful clinician scientist: 1) The physician must maintain an active surgical practice that includes

unsolved clinical problems, 2) The physician must desire to advance knowledge in a focused area of scholarly research, and 3) The physician must be engaged in securing funding for scholarships or research.

In addition to volunteering his time on a national level to advance research, Dr. Lee is the Director of the Center for Orthopaedic Research at Columbia University Medical Center and has recently introduced a program to serve as an incubator for the development of future orthopaedic clinician-scholars. The **Translational Research in Orthopaedics (TRIO) Postdoctoral Research Scholar Program** offers a six-year research residency track with one year dedicated to research. Upon successful completion of the research program, the successful candidate will enter the five-year Columbia Orthopaedics residency training program.

Dr. Lee is one of the few orthopaedic clinician scientists in the country to receive two grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and funding from the Department of Defense (DOD), enabling him to lead a team of researchers focused on advancing translational studies that bridge basic science and clinical practice. Biomolecular and biomechanical engineering principles, 3D computer modeling, molecular imaging, in vivo and in vitro studies, and surgical expertise coalesce to foster improved patient outcomes. Dr. Lee’s research is focused on finding the cause of bone cancer at the molecular level.

As Chairman of the Clinician Scientist Development Program, Dr. Lee introduced topics that included “Beginning a Career,” “Establishing Pathways in Academic Institutions,” “Writing and Getting Grant

Funding,” and “How to Balance Career and Personal Goals.” Dr. Lee presented on “Getting the First Grant: Translational Research.”

The Conference was funded by the Orthopaedic Research Society and the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons — which also offers free webinars for physicians interested in pursuing a dual career in science. For more information about the Center for Orthopaedic Research at Columbia University, visit <http://www.cumc.columbia.edu/dept/ortho/cor>