From the Chairman’s Corner

What a difference a year makes

Last year as Duke Orthopaedics successfully navigated a difficult first year as a new department, little did any of us know how good our second year would be. In late July, Duke Orthopaedics finally moved into our new orthopaedic institute located within Research Triangle Park. As many of you know, Duke Orthopaedics has been planning for a new musculoskeletal institute for many, many years. In past years, we had numerous meetings with the Duke University architects and planners about the location and size of our building and there were multiple renditions of what sight might be most appropriate and most convenient for our new practice facility. We looked at space immediately adjacent to our ambulatory surgery center on the main Duke medical campus. We looked at a site close to the Center for Living on campus off Erwin Road, which is the undergraduate campus.

We also looked at a site off of Interstate 40 at Page Road within Research Triangle where Duke Medicine purchased 15 acres of land for an eventual new hospital and multispecialty clinic. None of these sites proved ideal.

While site selection was occurring, many members of the Duke faculty met with our university architect Greg Warwick to design for what size and style structure would be required to accommodate our practice, including a complete musculoskeletal radiology unit, physical and occupational therapy, and patient education facilities, along with clinic and office space.

Eventually we came to the conclusion that space located off the main Duke campus would be preferable for a number of reasons. The most important reason being that a location off campus could be better patient centric. After an exhaustive search, we found something that seemed to fit our needs. There was an office building in Research Triangle located off of Page Road at 4709 Creekstone Drive that had recently been vacated by Quintiles Transnational. We were looking for approximately 100,000 square feet for our new musculoskeletal institute and this building was a completely vacated structure that had 65,000 square feet. In fact, the day I looked at this potential building, there was nothing but a building with three concrete floors and one elevator in the center. There were no interior walls or other barriers. In other words, we could design from the ground up. We felt this building and location would be ideal and so working began with the PDC along with David Attarian, Kim Denty, Mike Gagnon and others to design a building to accommodate our needs within this existing framework. I’m happy to say the construction proceeded exactly as planned and we were able move into the institute during the summer of 2011.

The building as it’s currently configured has space on the first floor for advanced radiology and later this year, MRI and CT will be placed into the ground floor. The second floor is our orthopaedic academic and administrative offices as well as our own physical therapy. On the third floor we have our clinic space and our own digital radiology, which is now part of the Duke Orthopaedics and not Duke Radiology. We have a hand therapy unit and several patient education rooms. On the 2nd floor, we have a large 50-seat conference room that is equipped for telemedicine with bidirectional capability so that we can hold conferences in a very nice setting and still communicate with those back at the main Duke campus or other locations.

To date, we have located nearly all of our orthopaedic specialty practices at this new facility except for those that by nature must stay on the main campus, trauma and pediatrics. The feedback from our patients has been just remarkable. They love the fact that this structure is convenient, right off of the interstate, the parking is free, and the distance to walk to enter the building is very short. They love the free computers in the waiting areas and the free wireless internet service throughout the building. The exam rooms are beautifully designed. We’ve initiated a five-star Service program and have trained our employees to provide this specialized type of care.
Not only do the patients love this facility but so do the Duke orthopaedic surgeons. The location is such that it is surrounded by trees and grass with a creek flowing through the lot and literally it is difficult to see another building from anywhere inside, giving it a rural feel. Nevertheless, this is at the exact geographic center of Research Triangle and is located only 12 miles from Duke South campus.

We believe that this office building and musculoskeletal institute will eventually house portions of the Krzyzewski K-Lab as well as a full imaging suite. This should provide for enough expansion and space for the next ten years of our orthopaedic practice. This has been a dream come true for Duke Orthopaedics.

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