



Letter to the Editor

Letter to the Editor: Editorial: The Graying of the (Funded) Musculoskeletal Scientist

Roy D. Bloebaum PhD

To the Editor,

I have read your editorial with great interest and share your concerns for the future generation of musculoskeletal scientists. For 20 of my 30 years as a musculoskeletal scientist, I lived on soft money. Despite receiving a Research Career Award during the past 10 years with the VA Research Program, the award must be renewed every 5 years based on productivity. I believe this is fair.

I now teach my graduate students and postdoctoral fellows that the Latin word for PhD is Inc. You must

consider yourself an entrepreneur. This means that your vendors are the NIH, NSF, DOD (numerous acronyms, BAA, PRMRP, CDMRP, etc ...), foundations, donors, industry, and departmental support. Frankly, patents rarely pay off and if they do, usually only after legal fees and the university and departmental shares. The trickle down allows one to make a quick trip to Wendy's for lunch.

Despite preparing my graduate students for the future struggles in academia, only 17% are in the musculoskeletal science research field. The

remainder are doing well in musculoskeletal science-related industries.

Another factor in core survival and success in musculoskeletal science research—as far as PhD, orthopaedic surgeons, and potential clinical scientists are concerned—is to make every effort for the PhD and clinical scientist to hitch their stars to one another. This assures the research is translationally directed to the improvement in patient care.

Congratulations for raising an important issue for the advancement of patient care through science.

(RE: Leopold SS, Dobbs MB, Rimnac CM. Editorial: The Graying of the (Funded) Musculoskeletal Scientist. *Clin Orthop Relat Res.* 2016;474:1745-1748).

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