Friday, July 15, 2011

UCLA Office of the Vice Chancellor and Dean

Dear Colleagues:

With great pleasure, I write to announce the appointment of Professor Mark S. Litwin as chair of the Department of Urology, beginning August 2, 2011. Dr. Litwin, a distinguished urologist and health services researcher, was selected after an intensive national search.

In his role as chair, Dr. Litwin will oversee all aspects of the Department of Urology in the David Geffen School of Medicine and the UCLA Health System. He will provide leadership for advancing innovative academic and clinical initiatives, while building on the Department’s nationally recognized programs in kidney transplantation, urologic oncology, female and reconstructive urology, pediatric urology, endourology, and minimally invasive urology. He will focus on fostering creative and meaningful ways to provide the highest quality patient-centered care, pursue pioneering research, train the next generation of world-class physicians, and enhance our engagement with the community.

Dr. Litwin is a highly accomplished investigator, a passionate educator and mentor, and an outstanding surgeon. He is world renowned for his research characterizing indicators of quality of care for prostate cancer, having conducted seminal studies on quality-of-life, practice patterns, resource use, and disparities in access. He is the principal investigator of Urologic Diseases in America, the NIH’s largest effort to quantify the human and financial burden that urologic diseases impose on the American people. Dr. Litwin has for many years served as advisor to UCLA medical students applying for a residency in urology and has trained nearly two dozen post-doctoral research fellows and residents in urology, many of whom have taken academic positions in the finest institutions in the country. He remains an active surgeon, focusing his clinical practice on urologic oncology.

In addition to his academic and clinical pursuits at UCLA, Dr. Litwin has for the past decade led IMPACT, an $89 million program he spearheaded with the State of California to provide healthcare for low-income, uninsured men with prostate cancer. He is also an essayist, with his most recent work appearing as a column on the rituals of birth in The New York Times and reprinted in the Summer 2011 edition of UCLA Medicine.

Dr. Litwin came to UCLA in 1991, after earning his undergraduate degree from Duke University and M.D. from Emory University, and serving as a resident in urology at the Harvard-affiliated Brigham and Women’s Hospital. He spent two years as a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar at RAND and UCLA, where he earned his M.P.H. degree. He has received many awards, including the American Urological Association’s 2001 Gold Cystoscope for his foundational work in establishing the discipline of urological health services research, and the AUA’s 2011 Distinguished Service Award for his continuing work in the field.

I want to thank Dr. Jean deKernion, again, for his extraordinary leadership and dedication in establishing one of the world’s premier departments of urology. During his 15 year tenure as the inaugural Chair (he also served 12 years as Chief of the Division of Urology), the Department has consistently ranked in the top five in the nation, according to U.S. News & World Report, with the most recent Report ranking the Department number four. I also extend my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. deKernion for continuing to serve as Chair after stepping down from this post a year ago.

I wish to thank Professor Neil Martin, chair of the search committee, and all the committee members* for the time and effort they devoted to completing this important search.

Throughout his career Dr. Litwin has demonstrated the institutional vision and organizational
discipline that will be required to help UCLA successfully navigate the exciting years ahead in medicine, science, education, and health. I am confident that he will continue to excel as he leads the department in shaping the future of urology.

I ask that you join me in congratulating Dr. Litwin on his new position and that you offer him your support as he makes the transition to Chair, Department of Urology.

Sincerely,

Vice Chancellor, UCLA Health Sciences
Dean, David Geffen School of Medicine
Gerald S. Levey, M.D., Endowed Chair

*Search Committee consisted of Neil Martin (Chair), Carol Bennett, Judith Gasson, Jonathan Hiatt, Tom Rosenthal, Isidro Salusky, Michael Steinberg, Christopher Tarnay, and Jan Tillisch.