

DOP Updates, Vol 2 (4) January 19, 2017

Teammates and colleagues,

Welcome to another edition of DOP Updates, an email sent to members and supporters of our Department of Pathology (DOP) to spark conversations about things that might otherwise escape our attention and investment. Please send me an email, give me a call (647-6409) or page (15499) me if you have a thought or inspiration that you'd like to share your teammates and perhaps I'll include it next time.

Building for a future that we cannot imagine

I find myself spending much of my time thinking about the future, discontent with our current state and constantly anxious about our ability to navigate a path to a destination that seems to me uncertain (. . . and this is almost certainly why I may seem disagreeable too much of the time!). Was pondering the future, wondering whether I should spend the morning writing this email, when I stumbled across an

How to think like a futurist

Jan 3, 2017 / Ari Wallach



Want to reframe your view of what lies ahead? Innovation consultant Ari Wallach shares three transformative ways of thinking that could help us tackle our toughest problems.

article at TED.com entitled [How to Think Like a Futurist](#) by [Ari Wallach](#), founder and CEO of Synthesis Corp, strategy and innovation consultant, and adjunct associate professor at Columbia University. In this short article he suggests that, "If we want to move forward into a different future, we must adopt what I call the 'longpath.' We need to shift over to using three ways of thinking to approach the major problems we're tackling." His suggestions resonated with me as I reflected on how much of what we do today is predicated on a vision of the future that will almost certainly depart from the reality when we finally arrive. His three ways of thinking were summarized as, 1) *transgenerational thinking* (planning for a future that extends well beyond our

life time), 2) *futures thinking* (considering all kinds of scenarios and solutions rather than focusing on singular technology-driven utopian views), 3) *telos thinking* (imagining what's possible – think **Martin Luther King, Jr's** [I Have a Dream](#) speech).

Perhaps we would do well to consider the extent to which Ari Wallach's advice might inform how we plan for our future. Today, for example, we are well along the path of designing for a new and different future that will relocate a sizeable chunk of our clinical enterprise to a campus just over 3 miles from our current home while renovating what will remain on our hospital campus. Ari might ask,

Have we designed for a future that extends well beyond what we might expect for ourselves?

Have we been too focused on technology without sufficient attention to other scenarios and solutions that might instead identify our destination?

Have we invested in a dream, or instead planned for a future that mirrors a present in which we too often settle for that which is familiar even if wholly insufficient?

Throughout this remarkable project we've asked you to imagine a future that no one can predict with certainty – but we've done that while also limiting our horizon to 2026. We've asked you to design for

the present with the flexibility to adjust to a future in which the analogue instruments that have served us for decades are reduced to anachronisms of historical interest only, but what if our view of our digital techno-utopia is wrong? We've asked you to consider what it means to bridge the geographically hardened, subspecialty-based subcultures that evolved over decades of separation, and instead invest in a dream in which working with one another without regard to our differences leverages our diversity to grow our creative and innovative capacity. And we've asked you to also believe in the dream that extended to its fullest capacity, our collective ability to solve hard problems will enable us to do better tomorrow what we already do well today, offering more effective, efficient, safe, and compassionate care to the patients, families and providers who look to us for help despite the distances between us.

While designing for an uncertain future that will emerge pixel-by-pixel from a murky horizon, we are also recruiting those who will safeguard our brand and respond to the futures that we've not yet considered. Just as we are designing space for something we cannot yet see, we sometimes find ourselves recruiting without clarity regarding the attributes most essential for the future successes of the staff, students, trainees and faculty who will be the face of Michigan Medicine long after we – or at least many of us – are gone. The good news is that there are things likely to be timeless in predicting the success of an academic enterprise like ours. These include our common commitment to adding to our team only the best and the brightest who,

- share our core values,
- embrace the rewards realized from working together in an environment and culture that celebrates cooperation, collaboration and diversity measured across multiple dimensions,
- are passionately committed to continuous improvement in all of its iterations to ensure the quality and safety of those who come to us today while balancing that over and against
- the importance of educating those who will follow us
- and integrating our clinical care and education with platforms of discovery and innovation resourced in a way that allows us to create what others can only predict.

Yesterday the search committee tasked with identifying our next Director of Clinical Pathology met for the very first time. After working tirelessly to support the needs of this division for 5 years, [Dave Keren](#) would like to devote his seemingly endless energy to other projects including the Genetic Testing Resource and Quality Consortium and the next edition of one of several textbooks that bear his name. Over his 5 year tenure David has done a remarkable job of integrating our molecular testing laboratories into a collaborative Division of Molecular Pathology under the leadership of **Tom Giordano**, navigating the sorts of regulatory and accrediting challenges now common in our discipline, recruiting multiple faculty including new leadership for our HLA and hematology laboratories, continuously improving our efficiency and effectiveness while responding to the changing needs of patients and providers, and maintaining a culture that keeps patients and families at the center of what we do while nurturing the careers of staff, trainees and faculty alike. We owe a debt of gratitude to **Dave Keren** and his predecessor, [Jeff Warren](#), for building the strong foundation from which the future of laboratory medicine will emerge.



The search committee's charge is,

To work collaboratively with the Chair of the Department of Pathology to identify and recruit a Director for the Division of Clinical Pathology. The successful candidate should have a strong track record of academic achievement in an area that is institutionally and systemically impactful. The successful candidate should have experience in administering a clinical laboratory and will be expected to serve as the CLIA director while providing oversight of the clinical laboratories. She/he should have leadership experience in an academic medical center with demonstrated strengths in communication, creativity, and collaboration.

Our committee members include,

- Kathy Cho
- Laura Cooling
- Don Giacherio
- Hema Ketha
- Tim Laing (Department of Medicine and Chair, Formulary Committee)
- Bill LeBar
- Kristina Martin
- Beth Minors (administrative support)
- Jeff Myers (chair)
- Duane Newton
- John Sherbeck
- Lauren Smith
- Jeff Warren
- Lisa Wilson

In our inaugural meeting we painted a picture of what we imagine clinical pathology might be in the year 2027, and linked that vision to attributes likely to be important in identifying candidates – *givers* rather than *takers* (see DOP Updates, Vol 2 (3)) – who can work with others in achieving our dreams. We talked about the importance of diversity in growing our collective strength and the creative capacity essential for our journey. Committee members committed to acquiring the training and skills essential to maintaining a fair and unbiased process, that we might represent your interests in a way that resonates with who we say we are, including our commitment to a world made better when we attend to issues of equity and inclusiveness. And we agreed to explore and implement new tools that will expand the diversity of our candidate pool, while remaining focused and disciplined in solving the problem as we understand it by identifying the candidate(s) most likely to position us for success.

As chair of this committee I am ultimately accountable to you for not only the candidate(s) that we deliver but also the process by which we get there. Should you have any questions, comments, suggestions or concerns along the way please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Thanks for checking in. Send me an email if you have something that you would like to explore in future editions of Updates. In the meantime, [let's be careful out there . . .](#)

Jeff