 Linda Brodsky Memorial Journal

**Seeing and Becoming: My Journey Toward Gender Equity in Urology**

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The night before each new rotation, I find sleep elusive. Like a child on the eve of a longawaited holiday, I am energized by the possibilities and unknowns that lie ahead. On one such morning, as I waited in the office of a small rural clinic in Texas for my attending to arrive, I struck up a conversation with the office staff. They informed me that I was the first female medical student to ever rotate through their clinic. In that moment, it dawned on me that I had never met a female urologist, yet I harbored an inner desire to become one.

That evening, compelled by this realization, I delved into an online search for female urologists. I stumbled upon the Society of Women in Urology (SWIU), which was seeking student chairs for its newly formed student section, SWIUdents. Seizing the opportunity, I submitted my application. Through a fortunate blend of preparation and timing, I was appointed to the student board.

In this role, we established the first international mentorship program for female medical students interested in urology. Collaborating with passionate peers and mentors, I finally saw reflections of the future I aspired to achieve and had the opportunity to share this vision with other students seeking the same inspiration. I was no longer isolated in my ambitions; I was part of a community striving toward the same goal. This experience was transformative—I was both seeing and becoming.

One pivotal moment in my journey was attending a presentation by Dr. Karen Doersch, who was then a chief resident, on how to bring research projects to fruition. At the time, I felt lost and uncertain about how to navigate the world of research, but her words struck a chord with me. She made the process seem not only possible but exciting, and for the first time, I felt like I could see a path forward. By an incredible stroke of luck, she later became a fellow at the same institution where I was starting a yearlong research fellowship. Working with her every day has been nothing short of life-changing. Dr. Doersch has not only taught me the technical skills I needed but has also shown me what it means to empower and uplift other women in medicine. Her belief in me has strengthened my confidence, sharpened my abilities, and deepened my commitment to advocating for gender equity. She has become the kind of mentor I hope to be for others.

That opportunity came sooner than I ever imagined. The importance of mentorship became even clearer when I received an email one evening from a first-year medical student. She expressed feelings of isolation and a desire to connect with another female medical student— someone who understood what she was experiencing. We met over ramen and shared our goals, dreams, and challenges. That conversation reminded me of my own journey and reinforced the significance of creating spaces where women can uplift one another. It was a simple act, yet it carried profound meaning for both of us.

To me, gender equity in medicine goes beyond representation—it’s about creating an environment where individuals feel seen, supported, and empowered to thrive. It means dismantling barriers, challenging biases, and ensuring equitable access to resources and opportunities for success. Through my roles in student leadership and mentorship, I have strived to foster this kind of environment for others, just as mentors like Dr. Doersch have done for me. Those around me were seeing and becoming, and I now had the privilege of sharing and giving back.

Reflecting on Dr. Linda Brodsky’s legacy, I am reminded of the power of advocacy and the importance of lifting as we climb. Dr. Brodsky’s tireless fight for fair treatment and equity created a ripple effect that has touched the lives of countless women physicians, enabling them to achieve what once seemed out of reach. Her work didn’t just open doors; it inspired others to hold them open for those who followed. By continuing this work, I hope to expand that ripple, contributing to a more equitable future in medicine—one where the next generation of female physicians feels empowered to pursue their passions without an ounce of hesitation or doubt.