Dear Friends, Colleagues and UroGator Alumni,

It is with great pride that I provide you with the following update as the newly appointed chairman of urology. As many of you know, the UF College of Medicine recently completed a national search for a new chairman of urology that attracted over 28 applicants from outstanding academic institutions around the US. With tremendous support from faculty, residents, administration and staff I feel extremely fortunate and humbled to have been chosen to lead this group of outstanding individuals into a new direction. I would like to first highlight Dr. Tom Stringer’s outstanding leadership as our interim chair this past year. Tom has single handedly elevated our department’s status within the College of Medicine as well as nationally with his charm, wisdom, kindness and leadership. As an example of his loyalty and commitment to our department, in January 2016, Tom and his wife Leah made a $350,000 gift in support of UroGator alumni activities as well as the annual David M. Drylie Visiting Professorship. As a result of his outstanding contributions and service to our department, I have named him the Associate Chairman to help me lead our department in our future endeavors. Other changes in leadership roles include the appointment of Dr. Lou Voy as our new residency program director, Dr. Vincent Bird as our new chief of Minimally Invasive Surgery and Michele Van Leer as our Interim Business Administrator.

There is a lot to celebrate with exciting growth at both the hospital as well as department level. The Harrell Medical Education building opened its doors in July 2015, offering a 95,000 square foot, four-story facility that includes a state-of-the-art simulation and experiential learning theater as well as other facilities for medical student education and activities. UF Health’s Children’s Hospital completed its renovations providing over 200 beds and a new 68-bed neonatal intensive care unit. The UF Health Heart and Vascular and Neuromedicine Hospital is near completion, representing a $415 million project that will consolidate cardiac and neurologic care adjacent and mirror image to the current cancer hospital. UF Health as a health care institution has again made the national honor roll as one of America’s Best Employers ranked No. 16 among all health care facilities.

From a department standpoint, we have seen a 20% growth in clinic visits and 30% growth in operative cases over the past year as a result of tremendous dedication and hard work by our faculty, residents and staff. As such, we plan to increase our faculty complement in urologic oncology, endourology and pediatric urology in the next 2-3 years with two positions already filled. We have expanded our practice to Haile Plantation and the Institute of Aging, both outreach clinics within Gainesville. Our operative activities ranks the highest in overall utilization of any surgical subspecialty within the College of Medicine. We are expanding our surgical practice to the Florida Surgical Center to improve our outpatient minor cases. With the College of Medicine’s commitment funding we are infusing new digital ureteroscopes, endoscopic equipment, lasers as well as the UroNav MRI-US fusion technology for image-guided prostate biopsies.

It is my honor to work along such an outstanding group of highly skilled, motivated and compassionate individuals who are passionate about academic urology.

It is a great time to be a UroGator!

Dr. Tom Stringer and Dr. Mike Dennis are co-medical directors of the clinic and are working to improve the clinic experience for our patients and staff. General urology services have now expanded to include seeing patients at the UF Health Haile facility. In addition, men’s health services and urologic oncology specialists are making themselves available several days a month for the convenience of our patients. Block time in the OR for general urology has allowed for expansion of general cases including genital-scrotal and inguinal cases as well as uncomplicated stone surgery.

The UroGators Alumni Society was established in 2008 and represents all former UF Urology faculty, fellows and residents. Our stated mission is to enhance fellowship and communication among its members, to support and promote education for residents and members and to advise and support the Department of Urology.

Part of our heritage and evolving tradition was the creation of a permanent Visiting Professorship in the name of David M. Drylie three years ago. This October 7-8 2016 will represent the 4th annual Visiting Professorship and features Dr. Peter Schlegel, renowned infertility specialist and Professor and Chairman of Urology at Weill Cornell Medicine/New York Presbyterian.

The North Florida/South Georgia Veterans Health System continues to be the busiest VAMC’s in the country by total patient encounters and total enrolled patients, and the Malcolm Randall VA Medical Center/Gainesville Urology Clinic is by far the busiest of all the surgical services. During 2013, we had 16,323 attending encounters (staffed by 4 board certified urologists) and 9,641 mid-level encounters (2 PA’s, 4 ARNP’s) with almost 900 surgical procedures performed in the operating room. We again ranked as one of the highest rated VAMC’s in the country for patient safety and satisfaction and are proud to have two rotating urology residents each year (PGY-3, PGY-2) from the UF Urology Residency Program.
The division has continued to be highly productive in clinical care and research. The inaugural year of our endourology/minimally invasive surgery fellowship has been greatly successful.

**Dr. Brandon Otto**, the division fellow, has been very active in both clinical and research aspects of our department activities. He has also made substantial contributions to the division research efforts which will be presented at this year’s AUA. As part of his ongoing research he has been working with **Dr. Vincent Bird**, and will present our findings related to “The Effect of Continued Aspirin Therapy in Patients Undergoing PCNL.” We hope to retain him as a faculty member to support our endourology and MIS activities.

**Lou Moy, MD: Residency Program**

We are pleased to announce results of the UF Department of Urology's 2015-2016 residency match. The national match for urologic residency training is very competitive, with over 400 medical students applying for just under 300 positions. The UF Department of Urology interviewed over 40 extremely qualified applicants for 3 positions. It is with great enthusiasm that we introduce the three newest urology residents in our UF urology family.

**Jeremy Bergamo**, from Bradenton, FL, is a UF College of Medicine student. He completed his undergraduate studies at University of South Florida in psychology.

**Jennifer Kuo**, from Tampa, FL, is also a UF College of Medicine student. She completed her undergraduate studies at University of Florida and majored in finance.

**Andrew Rahley**, from Irmo, SC, is a medical student at the Medical University of South Carolina. He attended Clemson University where he majored in packaging science.

The UF Department of Urology is extremely proud of our graduating chief residents. **Dr. J.B. Mason**, will be completing a reconstructive fellowship at the University of Iowa. **Dr. Rishi Modh** will be joining a practice in St. Petersburg, FL. **Dr. Akira Yamamoto** will be joining a practice in Bucks County, PA outside of Philadelphia. As the practice of urology is ever changing, we have moved forward with a community-based urology rotation for our residents. Here they will be exposed to how other urologic practices run, including working in ambulatory surgical centers and community hospitals. The residency program is continually evolving so that our graduates are prepared to be leaders in both academic centers and the community.

**We would like to extend our gratitude and thanks to Dr. Vincent Bird for his leadership of the residency program over the past two years.**

**Romano DeMarco, MD: Pediatric Urology**

Over the past year there has been continued expansion of the Pediatric Urology practice at UF Health which has mirrored the impressive growth of UF Health Shands Children's Hospital. Clinical volume has increased to an extent that there are plans to hire an additional provider in the near future. Our collaboration with Dr. Michael Erhard, Dr. Mark Barraza and Dr. Erica Mercer at Nemours Children's Specialty Clinic in Jacksonville continues to provide our residents with an excellent educational experience. A recent publication in the Dialogues of Pediatric Urology by our residents, Drs. Mohit Gupta and Anja Zann, highlight the excellent clinical research work done by our residents.

**Benjamin Canales, MD: Research**

The clinical and basic science research efforts at UF continue to thrive. Over the 2015 academic year, UF Urology faculty and residents published over 30 peer-reviewed manuscripts, maintaining active NIH R01, R03, and K08 funding. Additionally, the 2015 annual AUA meeting was highlighted by presentations from a number of UF Urology researchers, including 8 posters, 5 podiums, and a plenary session. Dr. Paul Dominguez Gutierrez, our program’s first T32 graduate in October of 2015, was awarded the 2016-2018 Urology Care Foundation Research Scholar Grant to study the role of immune response in calcium stone formers. Our department’s other NIH T32 fellows continue their basic science inquiries in stone disease.

**Dr. Ryan Chastain-Gross** has developed an animal model to study the effects of intestinal microbiota on the transport of certain kidney stone metabolites from the gut to the kidney. Dr. Allison O’Kell, who joined our program in February 2016, is a board-certified small animal veterinarian who completed a combined residency/Master’s program at Virginia Tech. She has clinical experience in both academic and private practice veterinary settings and will be investigating the relevance of dogs and cats with nephrolithiasis as naturally-occurring models of human kidney stone disease. Please join us in welcoming her to our Department of Urology family!