

RESIDENT  
VOICELead time: Resident roles in  
shaping the future

Kaleigh Doke, MD

Cancer care is constantly evolving, and we as future leaders in radiation oncology must take ownership and responsibility for the direction in which to guide our field. In residency training, while we should primarily focus on becoming excellent clinicians, we should also challenge ourselves to think about the future of our specialty. As the next generation of radiation oncologists, we must learn from those ahead of us to continue an unbroken chain of leadership. We have to make a collective effort to develop innovative ways to use radiation therapy, integrate our treatment with new immunotherapies and targeted agents, collaborate with others in multidisciplinary care, and become more involved in health policy, all with the end goal of advancing patient care. Leadership organizations such as the national Association of Residents in Radiation Oncology (ARRO) benefit radiation oncology and support this ongoing chain of leadership. The professional society provides resources for career development, and exposes residents early on to critical discussions about the future of our field. It also acts as an avenue for those in national leadership positions to mentor the next wave of radiation oncologists.

ARRO is made up of three committees. The Education Committee creates monthly cases and image challenges, and is launching new educational resources, including the Landmark Trials project and Meet Me in Treatment Planning videos. The Global Health Committee partners with physicians and cancer centers around the world, connecting residents with international rotations. They support three residents each year to complete radiation oncology projects through the Global Health Scholars program. The Communications Committee connects residents and disseminates educational material including late-breaking journal articles through various platforms, including ARRO.org, Facebook and Twitter (@ARRO\_org). Additionally, ARRO plans a seminar as well as other programs and events at the annual ASTRO meeting. Executive members of the board also give residents a voice by serving on ASTRO committees and representing trainees in other national organizations. Members act as advisors to several journals, and advocate for our patients and physicians at Advocacy Day in Washington, DC, every year.

With the future of our discipline at a crossroads, we are excited to work through organizations such as ARRO to continue to elevate the field and public perception of our specialty. As the next generation of aspiring radiation oncologists, we aim to stay involved in cancer care as a primary member of the decision-making team to advocate for the best care of our patients.

*Dr. Doke is chair of the Association of Residents in Radiation Oncology (ARRO) and a PGY-4 resident at the University of Kansas Cancer Center, Kansas City, KS.*

*ARRO board members are excited to become more involved with Applied Radiation Oncology. Look for more editorials, cases and review articles from residents, including spotlights on projects from the Global Health Scholars.*