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Letter written by Herbert E. Kaufman to Deckle Taylor, November 6, 1969

Herbert E. Kaufman

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COLLEGE OF MEDICINE • UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA • GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32601

November 6, 1969

Deckle Taylor, M.D.
Doctors Building
Jacksonville, Florida

Dear Deckle,

As we discussed, I am writing to you in your capacity as head of the Duval County Development Committee, to outline my hopes for medical teaching and training in ophthalmology at the Duval Medical Center over the next several years. In terms of general philosophy, I look at the association between the University Medical Center and the Duval Medical Center as a unique opportunity in which the community can benefit from superb and abundant medical care, and in which we can work together to make Duval Medical Center a major clinical arm of the University of Florida College of Medicine, with a large part of the clinical teaching done in Jacksonville.

I think that few people who are not really familiar with the area of ophthalmology realize the desperate need for eye care in the average population, and the even greater need in indigent groups. You may be aware that in "Project Concern," a project organized by the medical students to screen indigent people in Alachua county, by far the most common type of disease needing care was eye disease and I believe this is typical. In the Duval Medical Center alone, the Eye Clinic cares for as many people who are handicapped as almost any clinic in the hospital, handling between 8,000 and 10,000 patient visits a year. This figure is limited only by the fact that the medical manpower is not available to care for more, because the needs of the community are enormous and are not being met under the present circumstances. In terms of surgery too, the number of patients who are blind with eye disease that requires surgery in Duval County is enormous. The need to provide better service at the County Hospital, as well as to train additional people who can serve the city of Jacksonville, is certainly great. In addition, as this training occurs at the Duval Medical Center, it brings residents and others in training into contact with the extremely devoted and very able

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group in practice in ophthalmology in Jacksonville, permitting the stimulation that goes with teaching, and giving our residents the benefit of their enormous clinical experience. This teaching by the Jacksonville physicians is a very valuable part of our program, and one which we would never wish to abandon.

In order for the ophthalmology service to develop properly at the Duval Medical Center, and to do its job, we envision several changes over those presently in existence. At present, we have one resident at the Duval Medical Center full time. We hope shortly to have two residents at the Duval Medical Center and perhaps soon to increase this to a third. This should both provide better service to Jacksonville and permit our trainees to benefit by the excellent teaching potential in Jacksonville. In addition, we are beginning a training program for ophthalmic assistants who can greatly expand the ability of the present ophthalmologists in the state to provide care. In 1964 the Committee of Ophthalmic Assistants of the American Association of Ophthalmology conducted a survey of the need for ophthalmic assistants. The result of this survey shows that increases in the number of ancillary personnel could greatly increase the effectiveness of the profession of ophthalmology and increase the availability of medical eye care to the general public. On the basis of this study the committee postulates the need for 19,000 additional assistants in the near future with an immediate need for 5,200 additional assistants. We hope to work both with the College of Health Related Services and with the Junior College in Jacksonville to provide such training if clinical facilities are adequate at the DMC. In order to provide some degree of constant supervision for our people in training in Jacksonville to teach students and others in the fields of medicine, as well as to represent ophthalmology training in a political way at the hospital, I feel that it is essential that a full time ophthalmologist be employed at the Duval Medical Center. He would easily pay for himself from the Medicare fees collected, and would certainly cost the hospital nothing, but would permit us to go ahead with what I feel can be an excellent teaching service for the community of Jacksonville

This is a sketchy outline of how I envision our future partnership, and I hope that I may be permitted to speak personally with your committee about it some time in the future.

Sincerely,

Redacted

Herbert E. Kaufman, M.D.
Professor and Chairman

HEK:lw