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Dear Heed Ophthalmic Foundation Residents Retreat Selection Committee,

It is my great pleasure to give my highest recommendation to Dr. Adetayo Oladele-Ajose to the Heed Ophthalmic Foundation Residents Retreat. Adetayo is currently a PGY-3 resident in the University of Iowa Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, anticipating graduation in June 2027. This fall, **she will be applying to Vitreoretinal Fellowships, with an intention of a career in academics.** In her time as a resident with us, Adetayo has excelled and connected with our faculty and residents. She is a **hardworking, capable, resilient, warm, and personable** young woman, whose curiosity for medicine and enthusiasm for learning will serve her well in her academic career and will benefit her peers and patients alike.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Dr. Oladele-Ajose even before she started residency. We met at the American Academy of Ophthalmology Annual Meeting in 2021, where her **friendly and open demeanor** allowed her to meet students, residents, and faculty, sharing her business card and beginning to build a strong network in ophthalmologists. Shortly after the conference, she reached out to me, and we have since had a strong and rewarding mentoring connection.

Over her time with us, I have gotten a chance to work with Adetayo in the clinic, in the operating room, and as a mentor. We worked together in the pediatric ophthalmology and strabismus clinic, where Adetayo took patient histories, and worked on her exam skills. In addition to her **excellent fund of knowledge and surgical skills**, she was **truly able to connect with our young patients and their families**, and multiple families commented about her ability to truly hear their concerns. It is not surprising that she is an **inductee to the Gold Humanism Honor Society**. In the operating room, she is capable, efficient and curious. She already has the **foundations of an excellent surgeon**.

In our mentoring relationship, I have seen Adetayo grow over the past years. She is **open to feedback and evaluation and is ready to tap into her growth mindset**. She has overcome all challenges with her **trademark positive attitude, smile** and inquiry into how you are doing today with genuine interest in others' welfare. Although her path traveled is significant already, it has not dissuaded her from her goals. **Her application is strong and her list of achievements is quite impressive.**

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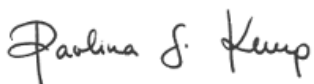
Outside of the clinical realm, Adetayo is active in research and is planning on an academic career. She is focusing her **research on diabetic retinopathy screening using autonomous AI**. Through studying referral patterns from primary care, her work aims to increase acceptance of these tools. She has won multiple honors, including the American College of Surgeons HOPE Clinical Congress Resident Scholarship, the Research Honors Convocation Award and has won Best Poster at her medical schools Genetics, Genomics & Bioinformatics Research Day.

Dr. Oladele-Ajose's parallel passion is advocacy and elevating those around her through her leadership. She has been elected to the **Iowa Medical Society's Board of Directors** as the resident representative two years in a row – a great honor for a resident. Adetayo is particularly interested in understanding policy and driving changes that align with her work on advancing access to specialty contact lenses for keratoconus, a blinding disorder that can largely be treated with contact lenses, although these are not covered by medical insurance. Progress in insurance coverage for contact lenses could be ground-breaking for patients with keratoconus, as well as children with infantile and childhood cataracts. Adetayo shares valuable insights with our department and plays a key role in formally teaching our trainees how to navigate the complexities of the healthcare system and advocate for impactful reforms. **She is the complete package and is already a strong leader in residency and will have a great impact through her academic career.**

I remain very impressed by Dr. Oladele-Ajose's research, clinical, OR, interpersonal, and leadership skills. Her energy is exactly what we need more of in academic medicine. I give my highest recommendation to Adetayo for Heed Ophthalmic Foundation Residents Retreat. I am glad she is our resident, and **I am thrilled to see all she will accomplish.**

Should we be so lucky to have both our nominees selected, we would be happy to fund a second resident to attend. Please do not hesitate to call, text, or email me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



*Pavlina S. Kemp, MD
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