Dear Faculty Members,

We are pleased to introduce RISE (Research Intensive Scholarly Emphasis), a new program supporting an extra year of research for MD students who are aspiring physician-scientists. Given your successful research program and mentoring experience, we hope you will consider joining the program as a RISE mentor.

**Overview:** The purpose of RISE is to address the needs of aspiring physician-scientists who are not in the traditional MD-PhD track but who desire an intensive mentored research experience as a springboard to careers as physician-scientists. This program is an outgrowth of the current Area of Scholarly Concentration (AOSC) program through which all MD students complete focused research projects; RISE is larger and more intensive in scope. Applications for RISE are accepted for students in M1, M2, and M3 years, with the plan for the extra year to generally be taken between M2/M3 or M3/M4 years. The student application is brief and requires a prospective mentor’s letter of support.

**Funding:** Once accepted into RISE, students will receive intensive 1:1 assistance in preparing plans for their research year, including assistance with applying for extramural funding in conjunction with the mentor, the manager of student research, and NU’s Office of Fellowships. A key stipulation of RISE is that once accepted, students will have their research year funded at the student stipend level. For students not obtaining extramural funding, we will use an FSM and PI cost-share model to cover the student’s stipend. Generally speaking, this will entail a 50/50 split at the University-designated stipend level ($33,000-$35,000), meaning FSM would support half of this (~$17,000) and the research mentor/PI would support half of this (~$17,000). For this reason, and because the program is set up to be an intensive research year, mentor eligibility is limited to extramurally funded investigators with an active research program.

At this point, we are simply asking whether you are willing to be listed as a potential RISE mentor so that we or aspiring RISE scholars could contact you to discuss possible projects. We (Iasha and/or Matt) will first meet individually with any prospective RISE scholars before suggesting faculty mentors who we believe would be a good fit. Mentors, of course, reserve the right whether or not to support a prospective mentee’s application for RISE.

Please let us know if you are interested in being a RISE mentor and we look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,
Matthew J. Feinstein MD MSc
Director of Student Research, FSM; Co-Director of RISE
[matthewifeinstein@northwestern.edu](mailto:matthewifeinstein@northwestern.edu)

Jacob (Iasha) Sznajder MD
Co-Director of RISE
[j-sznajder@northwestern.edu](mailto:j-sznajder@northwestern.edu)

Liza Rivnay
Manager of Student Research, FSM
[Liza.rivnay@northwestern.edu](mailto:Liza.rivnay@northwestern.edu)