

Dear Prospective Residents,

Anyone. Anywhere. Anytime.

This is what the program we have built is preparing you for.

Emergency medicine is wonderfully unpredictable. The next patient may need a thoughtful conversation, a difficult diagnosis, a critical procedure, or simply a physician willing to step forward and do what needs to be done. Residency is where we build the knowledge, skills, judgment, and confidence to meet those moments.

That philosophy shapes how we teach. We believe residents learn by doing, thinking, and receiving great feedback. Interactive learning and high-quality feedback are at the core of our educational approach. Whether weekly conference, simulation lab, or emergency department, we want residents actively engaged in their own development. Our faculty are teachers and coaches whose job is to challenge you, support you, and progressively get out of your way as you grow into an independent emergency physician.

Sanford USD Medical Center provides a high-acuity, resource-rich academic environment where emergency medicine residents have meaningful ownership of their patients and exceptional access to procedures. We are large enough to provide the pathology, specialists, technology, and resources of an academic medical center, yet the right size for our residents to remain at the center of emergency care and education.

So how did I end up in South Dakota?

Family brought me here. I grew up in New Jersey, graduated from Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, and completed my Emergency Medicine residency at West Virginia University. My wife grew up in rural South Dakota, and in 2016 we moved to Sioux Falls to be closer to family. Since then, South Dakota has become home. I joined Sanford Health and quickly found a health system and community where I wanted to stay. When the opportunity arose to help build an Emergency Medicine residency here, saying yes was easy.

My goal as Associate Program Director is not simply to help you complete residency. It is to give you the tools to continue growing long after your residency training ends. Here, you will graduate ready to care for patients in any setting and prepared to be a lifelong learner, dedicated to caring for the patients who need you most.

Kenji Hamanaka, MD, FACEP

Associate Program Director

Sanford USD Emergency Medicine Residency