

During my research year in residency, it was required that we present our research towards the end of the year to faculty, residents, and a guest attending. In June of 2020, much was happening in the world. COVID-19 was still an unknown. George Floyd had just been murdered at the end of May and protests were occurring. Prior to my virtual presentation, an attending made some insensitive comments about recent events in his opening remarks that were disappointing and hurtful, particularly prior to my presentation as a black resident. Though his comments made me feel uncomfortable and sad, I had quite gotten used to not voicing my discomfort or my feelings about the topic, as I was “just a lowly second year resident” and it would not matter anyway. I felt like I could not even help others understand by initiating a conversation about it, so why even try?

I had voiced my discomfort to Lorraine, who was a senior resident at the time. She, too, felt that the comments made were inappropriate. Unlike me, she had immediately voiced her concern to the attending directly via email, with a detailed explanation about why his comments to a large, captive audience were hurtful, particularly towards black residents and faculty who were on the virtual meeting. She made a choice to confront this difficult situation without any semblance of hesitance. While this may not have been her first time in life displaying courage by addressing injustices, it was the first time I bore witness to an act of courage by Lorraine. It took courage to approach this well-respected and revered attending about what people could consider is a controversial topic – the abysmal treatment of black people in the United States.

It was no surprise that Lorraine eventually became administrative chief resident the next year. She was known as a natural born leader with courage and conviction amongst coresidents and attendings within our residency. She frequently expressed that she wanted her legacy to be to leave things better than she found it. Since then, I have seen many examples of courage from Lorraine: standing up to another attending regarding patient care; advocating for patients, staff, and coresidents; and addressing wrongdoings by her coresidents. It is something that comes at such a great cost socially and professionally, but this has never hindered her from doing what is right. Moreover, it is infectious, and

forces others around her to hold others and themselves more accountable. For me, it has truly been inspirational to watch.