It is with great honor and humility that I write to you for the first time in my official capacity as the new Chief of the Division of Plastic, Maxillofacial, and Oral Surgery at Duke University. Over the years, I have met many, but not all of you. In the years to come, I hope to have the opportunity to get to know all of our tremendous alumni and to keep you informed of the ongoing growth and success of your alma mater. I want to take a few moments to share some thoughts as we embark on an ambitious course for the future of Duke Plastic Surgery.

I came to Duke nearly 16 years ago, recruited by Dr. L. Scott Levin, and was charged with building upon the foundations originally set by Drs. Kenneth Pickrell, Nicholas Georgiade, and others in Pediatric Plastic Surgery and Craniofacial Surgery. During these years, I immersed myself in the history of the Division and the achievements that made Duke one of the top Plastic Surgery training programs in the country. I became acutely aware of the tradition of excellence and the never-ending quest to lead the nation and to advance the specialty while providing the very best care in the world for Duke patients. Most of you trained under the leadership of five men: Drs. Kenneth Pickrell, Nicholas Georgiade, Donald Serafin, L. Scott Levin, and my immediate predecessor Gregory Georgiade. To list the accomplishments of these leaders in our field would be nearly impossible. Suffice it to say that there are incredibly large shoes to fill. There is truth behind the cliché, “If I see further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.”

It comes as no revelation to you that Surgery at Duke has been, and will always be, among the world’s great Departments of Surgery. Much of the ascendance of Duke Plastic Surgery came during the tenure of one of the world’s most influential Chairmen in Surgery, Dr. David Sabiston. Indeed, many of your careers were influenced directly or indirectly by Dr. Sabiston’s leadership. Three years ago, Duke brought back a remarkable former resident to lead the Department of Surgery into the future, Dr. Allan Kirk, Chairman of Surgery and Surgeon-in-Chief for the Duke Health system. In June, he shared the progress and accomplishments of the Department during his first three years,
and what he shared was nothing short of remarkable and inspiring. Dr. Kirk has proven to be an advocate for Plastic Surgery and worked with me during my recruitment to bring tremendous resources to grow the Division of Plastic Surgery to surpass the greatest times in our illustrious history.

Every alumnus of the program came to Duke with a purpose: not to be just average, not to be good, but to be great. But in terms of the training program, what does it mean to be great? Once again, our prior leaders laid the groundwork. It starts with having a teaching and learning environment based on trust, teamwork, and tradition. It involves creating an atmosphere of family and friendship. It requires a commitment to lifelong learning and giving back to our communities and to the specialty. It involves the fostering of ingenuity and passion. Finally, it involves tireless effort, enthusiasm, and inspiration by the faculty and leadership. A great Plastic Surgery Division and training program is one that embraces and advances the specialty across its breadth. My predecessors led Duke to its greatest times in our illustrious history.

As an institution, Duke has transformed in ways we could never have imagined. We are blessed to have a group of highly talented core faculty, residents, and staff of Duke Plastic Surgery, each of whom contributes to the specialty and inspires others, who themselves excel. "Let such teach others, who themselves excel." - Alexander Pope

In closing, I am grateful to all of those who gave me the opportunities to prepare for the challenge of serving as the next Chief of the Division of Plastic, Maxillofacial, and Oral Surgery. I recognize the tremendous responsibility that comes with being entrusted to growing the Duke legacy. Our future is bright, but the heights we will reach would not be possible without the accomplishments of our past. To all of you who made Duke great, I hope to meet you next year in Durham.

With warm personal wishes on behalf of the faculty, residents, and staff of Duke Plastic Surgery,

Jeffrey R. Marcus, MD
Chief, Division of Plastic, Maxillofacial, and Oral Surgery

To all of you...
THE DUKE DIVISION OF PLASTIC, MAXILLOFACIAL, AND ORAL SURGERY HAS A THREEFOLD MISSION:

We aim to provide compassionate, cost-effective, and high-quality patient care to all patients, their families, and loved ones.

We immerse plastic surgeons in training in an environment that challenges and subsequently educates them across a spectrum of disciplines, including patient care, research, and academic pursuit.

We perform cutting-edge research that translates into improved patient care at Duke and around the world.

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