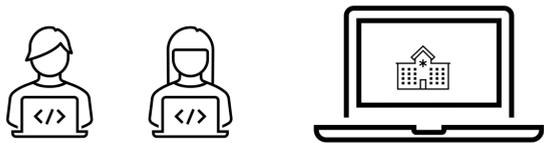


Residency Programs' Online Presence is More Important during Virtual Application Cycles

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BACKGROUND

- The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated an entirely virtual residency application cycle for the 2020-2021 General surgery match season
- With travel restrictions, candidates' perceptions are dependent on their online experience of programs



METHOD

- We hypothesized residency programs' online presence would have increased utility and influence for applicants
- Extensive Surgery Residency website modifications were made including:
 - Reorganization of webpages and links
 - Virtual tour video
 - Resident pictures, hometowns, and hobbies were added to rosters
 - Recent alumni page added
 - Diversity featured
- Pageview data were captured by IT office
- Anonymous survey was extended to all interviewed candidates

RESULTS

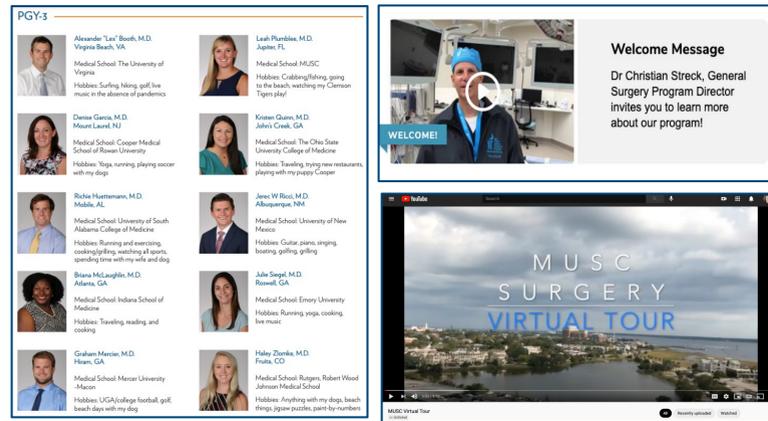


Figure 1. Examples of webpage updates

- 75 of the 108 interviewed candidates completed the survey
- The median age was 27 with 53% Males (n=40)
- The mean number of interviews was 17 (SD 7)
- Our website was satisfactory or very satisfactory compared to other programs (83.9%) and none found it unsatisfactory
- Most applicants state our institution's online presence impacted their decisions to interview (51.6%); We appreciate a trend that males were more impacted than females (p=0.053)
- A trend was observed that students with fewer interviews were more likely to be impacted by online presence (p=0.4), **Figure 3**

- The webpage saw a statistically significant increase in pageviews compared with the anesthesia department residency page (p=0.01)
- Pageview trends over the year show peaks in September and October

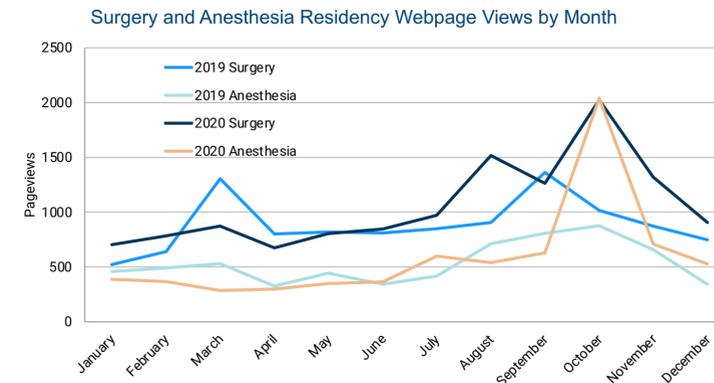
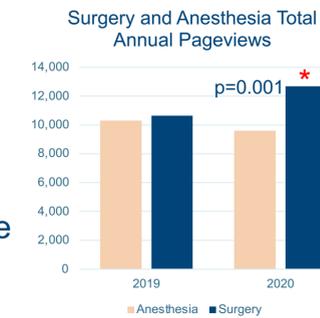


Figure 2. Pageviews by month

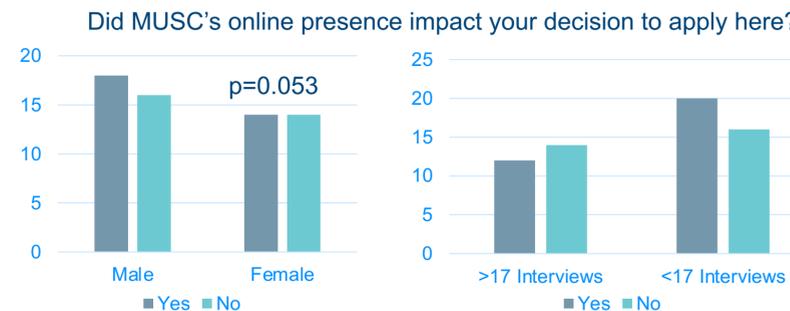


Figure 3. Impact by gender and no. of interviews

CONCLUSIONS

- The programs' online presence impacted the decision to interview for white applicants (68%), but significantly less for non-white applicants (31%, p<0.03)

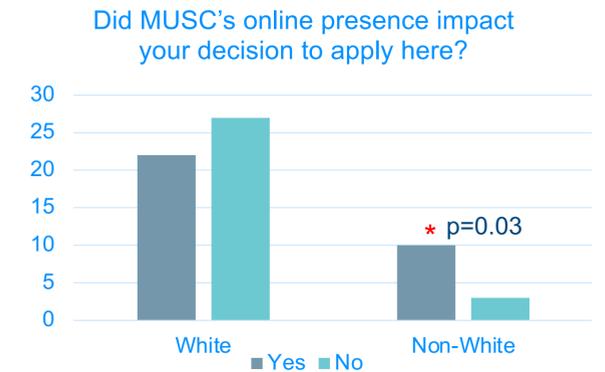


Figure 4. Online presence impact by race

SUMMARY

- Applicants utilized residency program websites more during the 2021 virtual application cycle
- Most applicants depend on institutions' websites to supplement their decision-making
- Efforts to enhance residency webpages may positively influence the applicants' decision to interview
- Questions? Contact quinnkr@musc.edu