



Erin Crawford, MD

## it just felt right

BY SUSAN LORIMOR  
PHOTO BY MARK LEIBOWITZ

When Erin Crawford chose Stanford University for her residency, she knew in her gut that it was the correct decision for her. “It just stood out. I just knew once I interviewed that that’s where I wanted to be,” she says.

The California native was drawn to the institution in part because of the Center for Immersive and Simulation-based Learning (CISL), which she says blew the other residency programs she interviewed with out of the water. CISL allows residents to practice crisis moments before they are actually in them, honing their skills.

While Crawford says she just had a feeling Stanford was right for her, there were several reasons why that was so. The residents she saw when

she interviewed really seemed happy to be at the institution, and she realized she would have amazing mentors at the Farm. But it was when she was interviewing at out-of-state institution that she had perhaps another “aha” moment.

“I remember a resident at that dinner there [as part of the interview process] saying ... ‘No program will make you happier than being near the people you love,’” Crawford recalls, thinking of her now-fiance and her family in California. “That was a really clarifying moment as well.”

So, Crawford chose Stanford for her residency, and Stanford selected her as well. Now a clinical assistant professor, she leads the resident rotation for bariatric anesthesia, having become an expert of sorts in working with obese patients. She also is on the thoracic anesthesia team

and will soon begin to co-facilitate the Peer Support and Resiliency in Medicine (PRIME) wellness retreat for CA-1 residents, as well as regular PRIME group sessions throughout the year.

Crawford is happy in having selected Stanford for her residency, and she realizes many of her important life decisions were also gut decisions. Of course, there were lists of pros and cons that she constructed, but the decisions just felt right. For instance, it’s how she knew she wanted to become a physician, or attend Duke University as an undergraduate.

And now, it is how she knows she is in the right place. “I tell the residents all of the time now that if I can’t be an anesthesiologist there’s nothing else in medicine that I would want to do,” she says. **SA**