Welcome Applicants! A Message From Our Program Director

On behalf of both the Department of Neurology and the Brain and Mind Research Institute, we would very much like to welcome you as an applicant to our program.

This newsletter will highlight several of the crown jewels of our program: most importantly, our residents, but also of course our hospitals, our faculty and our future plans.

I hope you find this a useful source of information, but if you have any specific questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me directly at rii9004@med.cornell.edu. We look forward to getting to know you better on your interview day.

~ Richard Isaacson, MD

Meet Our Department Leadership

Dr. Matthew Fink (Chair of Neurology)
Matthew E. Fink, MD, the Louis and Gertrude Feil Professor of Clinical Neurology, was named Chair of the Department of Neurology in October 2012. Dr. Fink attended college at the University of Pennsylvania, medical school at the University of Pittsburgh, and served as resident and chief resident in internal medicine at the Boston City Hospital. He trained in neurology at Columbia and later joined the faculty and became the founding director of the Neurology-Neurosurgery Intensive Care Unit at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital. Prior to Weill Cornell, Dr. Fink served as President and Chief Executive Officer of Beth Israel Medical Center NY and Chair of Neurology.

Dr. Costantino Iadecola (Director, Brain and Mind Research Institute)
In 2012, Dr. Iadecola was named Director of the Brain and Mind Research Institute, a new entity with departmental privileges representing a hub for translational neuroscience research at Weill Cornell. He was also appointed the Anne Parrish Titzell Professor of Neurology, a prestigious chair previously held by Drs. Fred Plum & M. Flint Beal. His research focuses on mechanisms of cerebrovascular regulation, and on molecular pathology of ischemic brain injury and neurodegeneration. A major area of interest also lies in interactions between cardiovascular risk factors, stroke & Alzheimer’s disease.
**Vice-Chair of Operations: Dr. Louise Klebanoff**

Louise Klebanoff, MD has been named the Chief of General Neurology and the Vice Chair of Operations for the Department of Neurology at Weill Cornell Medical College. She is also an Assistant Attending Neurologist at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center.

Dr. Klebanoff received her medical degree from Georgetown University Medical Center, graduating first in her class, and went on to complete a residency in Neurology and a fellowship in Critical Care Neurology at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/ Columbia University Medical Center.

Prior to joining the Weill Cornell faculty, Dr. Klebanoff served as Attending Neurologist at Beth Israel Medical Center, where she also held leadership roles on various committees and served as the first female president of the Medical Board. Dr. Klebanoff is board certified in Psychiatry and Neurology. She is a member of the Alpha Omega Alpha honor society, the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Neurology.

**Vice Chair of Clinical Research: Claire Henchcliffe**

Claire Henchcliffe, MD, D.Phil received her medical degree from Columbia University, College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York, and her doctorate from the University of Oxford, UK. She completed her training at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York, with internship in the Department of Medicine and residency in Neurology at the Neurological Institute of Columbia Presbyterian. This was followed by a fellowship in Movement Disorders, also at the Neurological Institute.

Dr. Henchcliffe now serves as Director of the Parkinson's Institute, and as Vice Chair for Clinical Research in Neurology at the NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center. In addition to seeing patients with Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders, Dr Henchcliffe’s team conduct a number of clinical trials available for patient participation.
Dr. Joseph Safdieh received his bachelor’s degree in neuroscience, summa cum laude, from the College of Arts and Science of New York University. He received his MD degree from the New York University School of Medicine, graduating first in his class. He completed his neurology residency training at the NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, where he also served as Chief Resident in the Department of Neurology. Dr. Safdieh is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Alpha Omega Alpha, the medical honors society. He is the author of a number of book chapters, scientific papers, and reviews, and has recently completed a textbook of neuroanatomy.

Dr. Safdieh serves as the director of the medical student Neurology Clerkship for the Weill Cornell Medical College. He is medical director of the Neurology Clinic at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital and also serves as Director of Outpatient Training for the Neurology Residency Training Program. He is well respected as an innovative medical educator, and has developed numerous curricula for the teaching of neurology to both medical students and other physicians.

Dr. Richard Isaacson serves as Director of the Alzheimer’s Prevention Clinic, Weill Cornell Memory Disorders Program, and Director of the Neurology Residency Training Program at Weill Cornell Medical College/NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital. He previously served as Associate Professor of Clinical Neurology, Vice Chair of Education, and Education Director of the McKnight Brain Institute in the Department of Neurology at the University of Miami (UM) Miller School of Medicine. He completed his residency in Neurology at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center/Harvard Medical school, and his internship at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach, FL. Prior to UM, he served as Associate Medical Director of the Wien Center for Alzheimer’s disease and Memory Disorders at Mount Sinai. He is a graduate of the accelerated 6-year B.A./M.D. program at the University of Missouri - KC School of Medicine.

His career focus spans undergraduate, graduate, and continuing medical education, as well as patient, caregiver and community education/outreach. His recent efforts have focused on the development of Alzheimer’s Universe (www.AlzU.org) a vast online educational portal on AD which has reached over 100,000 people in 33 countries.

A native New Yorker, Janice has previously served as program coordinator for 17 years in various specialties before joining our Neurology Family. She brings a wealth of experience and dedication to the program. Janice encourages individual growth and promotes self awareness and well being for all of our trainees.

She joined the WCMC Department of Neurology in June 2015.
Lisa DeAngelis, MD
Chair, MSKCC Neurology
Co-Executive Director, Brain Tumor Center
Chair, American Academy of Neurology Science Committee

Edward Avila, DO
Site Director, MSKCC Neurology Residency Training

Jacqueline Stone, MD, PhD
Assistant Attending, MSKCC Neurology
US News & World Report Hospital Rankings

NYP is Ranked #3 for Neurology/Neurosurgery
NYP is Ranked #1 in NYC for Neurology/Neurosurgery
MSKCC is Ranked #2 for Cancer

After Residency

Class of 2013
Nuri Jacoby—Neurophysiology, Weill Cornell
Ali Saad—Vascular, Emory
Bianca Santomasso—Neuro-oncology, MSKCC
Jacqueline Stone—Neuro-oncology, MSKCC
Julie Tsao—Epilepsy, Emory

Class of 2014
Dara Bier—Neuro-ophthalmology, Weill Cornell
Natalie Cheng—Vascular, UCSF
Michael Lerario—Vascular, Weill Cornell
Carolina Maciel—Neuro-critical Care, Yale
Justin Marcus—Epilepsy, Yale
Alex Merkler—Neuro-critical Care, Weill Cornell/Columbia
Vaishali Saini—Private Practice

Class of 2015
Vivian Chin—Neuromuscular, Columbia
Linn Katus—Movement Disorders, Mount Sinai
Uli Kaunzner—Multiple Sclerosis, Weill Cornell
Alex Miller—Neuro-oncology, MSKCC
Kate Nearing—Vascular, U. Tennessee
Tom Tropea—Movement Disorders, Penn

Class of 2016
Baxter Allen—Epilepsy, Weill Cornell; Neuro-critical Care, UCLA
Isha Duggal—Private Practice, NYC
Kyung-wha Kim—Epilepsy, Weill Cornell
Ursela Siddiqui—Multiple Sclerosis, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
Prasad Shirvalkar—Pain, UCSF
Peter Yan—Informatics, Weill Cornell

Class of 2017
Aaron Gusdon—Neuro-critical care, Johns Hopkins
Daniel Kurz—Multiple Sclerosis, Mount Sinai Hospital
Evan Noch—Neuro-oncology, MSKCC
Setareh Omran—Vascular, Columbia
Neal Parikh—Vascular, Columbia
Alyssa Rehm—Neurophysiology, Columbia
Krithiga Sekar—Epilepsy, Columbia

Our resident ratio is ~ 50% female to 50% male
Administrative Chief Resident: Neal Parikh, MD

Born in New York City, I returned after being raised in Nashville and Wichita and then attending college in New Haven. After college, I lived in Tokyo for a year pursuing public health policy advocacy and research. I attended Weill Cornell Medical College and was thrilled to stay for residency. During residency, I have been productively involved in clinical research projects with multiple mentors, which has given me the opportunity to present work at the American Academy of Neurology annual conference and the International Stroke Conference. Additionally, I served as a delegate of the AAN to Capitol Hill as part of the Neurology on the Hill program and subsequently attended the Palatucci Advocacy Leadership Forum. After residency, I will pursue further training as a vascular neurology and neuro-epidemiology fellow at Columbia. In my spare time, I enjoy swimming, travelling locally, cocktail bars, the East River Ferry, and spending time with my growing family.

I chose Cornell for residency for many reasons: clinical rigor, excellent mentors, bountiful research opportunities, intimate department, friendly folks, and a great neighborhood and quality of life.

Chief Resident, Operations and Scheduling: Setareh Omran, MD

I'm a graduate of the Weill Cornell Medical College satellite branch in Qatar. Throughout medical school, I had the pleasure of completing clinical rotations and performing research at New York Presbyterian Hospital - Weill Cornell. The enthusiasm for neurology, abundance of research opportunities, and extent of direct contact with leaders in the field were some of the main reasons that made me decide to stay here for residency. I believe the department invests heavily in the future of its residents, and strives to bring out the best in everyone. I am pursuing a fellowship in Vascular Neurology at Columbia University Medical Center, after which I plan to work at an academic institution and become a clinician educator. Having traveled from a young age, I spend most of my vacations going to a new destination. In my spare time, I enjoy cooking, hiking and knitting.

Questions? E-mail neurochiefs@gmail.com

Chief Resident, Education and Research: Evan Noch, MD, PhD

I am originally from the Philadelphia area and received my MD and PhD degrees from Temple University School of Medicine, where I studied the role of oncogenes in the regulation of oxygen and glucose metabolism in the pathogenesis of glioblastoma and medulloblastoma. I am a fourth year resident, in the research track position. My career interest is in neuro-oncology, and my current research utilizes a translational approach to studying the role of the type 2 phosphatidylinositol kinases in brain tumor metabolism. While balancing the lab and overnight consults, I enjoy exploring the city, cooking and baking. I’ve vowed to eat at every restaurant in my area of the Upper East Side before completing residency. I will be a fellow in neuro-oncology at MSKCC in 2017.
Leadership Council

Jackie Burch, MD: Quality Improvement Representative

I grew up in upstate New York (outside Rochester) and graduated from Colgate University, after spending several years conducting research in a translational neuroscience lab while completing my pre-med requirements. I later attended medical school at the University of Rochester. I have yet to narrow down my interests in neurology, but I am currently conducting research in CNS cancer and stroke with fellow resident Neal Parikh under the direction of Dr. Navi and Dr. DeAngelis. Outside the hospital, I like playing and watching soccer, baking, hiking, and getting my nails done with my co PGY-3s, Caroline and Radhika!

Caroline Miranda, MD: Resident Wellness Representative

I was born and raised in NYC, went to Duke for undergrad, and have been at Weill Cornell since. I am currently working on a research project in CIDP, examining serial EMG/nerve conduction studies, but I remain undecided on which area of neurology I'd like to focus long term. I am really good at rocks papers scissors (ask Jackie Burch) and have a twin sister who looks A LOT like me. Ask me anything about Cornell and NYC!

Brian Andersen, MD, PhD: PGY-2 Class Representative

After living in Minnesota for eight years and completing my MD/PhD, I came to Weill Cornell mainly for the great people, clinical training, and research environment. I am passionate about neuro-oncology, especially immunotherapy for brain tumors, and my long term goal is to do a combination of lab research and clinical work in this area. I'm still new to the city, but talk to me if you want to hear about the pleasant surprises I've had in architecture, music, biking, beer, pizza, green spaces, and French bakeries.
Resident Spotlight

Daniel Kurz, PGY-4
I am originally from Ohio. I studied Classics and Molecular Biology at Loyola in Chicago followed by medical school at NYU. My research interests and fellowship aspirations are in neuroimmunology and demyelinating diseases. I like running (NYC Marathon 2015!) and am fond of Easternbloc in the East Village. Going to Mount Sinai for Multiple Sclerosis fellowship and MS in Clinical Research.

Krithiga Sekar, PGY-4
I grew up in Australia and Africa and have travelled to 6 of the 7 continents of the world. I earned and MD/PhD from NYU, where I studied visual perception. Cooking, epilepsy research, running, and hanging out with my friends and family in the New York City area consume most of my time. I am interested in cognitive neuroscience and will be an epilepsy fellow at Columbia next year.

Radhika Jagannathan, PGY-3
I grew up in New York and Vermont, but came to Weill Cornell from St. Louis, Missouri, where I completed my MD/PhD in cancer biology at Washington University in St. Louis. I love living in NYC. I’ve seen incredible shows, eaten amazing food, Escaped from Rooms, and met awesome people (like my neuro girls, Jackie and Caroline). Long term, I think I’d like to specialize in neuro-oncology and pursue basic science questions that address tumorigenesis and CNS metastasis.

Matthew Mercuri, PGY-3
I was born and raised in Scranton, PA. I studied English and philosophy in college. I then went to NYU for medical school and chose to stay in New York City for residency. When I’m not at work, I like to explore the city with my wife and our dog Stella. I would bring my cat, too, if she would walk on a leash properly. I also enjoy making music and watching high-quality long-form television. In terms of career, I remain pluripotent but have a special interest in epilepsy, which is also the subject of my clinical research project.

Mais Al-Kawaz, PGY-2
I Graduated from Weill Cornell in Qatar and started internship this year. Before residency, I took a year off to do clinical and bench research, where I worked to develop mouse models and novel imaging indicators of clinical prognosis in multiple sclerosis. My interests in neurology are specifically in neuro-immunology, multiple sclerosis and neuro-ophthalmology. When I’m not watching mice run on a treadmill, I myself like to run and explore the city’s beautiful parks and restaurants.

Ashley Aaroe, PGY-2
I went to Northwestern for medical school, and before that majored in neuroscience at Johns Hopkins. I wanted to come to Weill Cornell for many reasons - there is an incredible faculty to learn from, and I liked the structure of the residency itself - but far and away the most significant factor was the camaraderie I saw between residents on my interview day. I am Mexican-American, and have an interest in health care disparities. Outside medicine I love ballet, soccer, and lemon meringue pie.

See our website for ALL of our bios!!
Residents Out and About
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Please visit our website for details about the residency program, including our clinical rotations, hospital affiliations, subspecialty opportunities, and housing information.

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