Welcome Applicants! A Message From Our Program Director

On behalf of the Department of Neurology, I am delighted to introduce you to our residency program and to the many exciting developments at Cornell. Our neurology residency features robust clinical, research, educational, and leadership opportunities at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, Weill Cornell Medical College, the Brain and Mind Research Institute, and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. You will be struck by the kindness and mentorship culture fostered by our department and institution. Most importantly, we hope to showcase our neurology residents who are diverse, accomplished, scholarly, and practice our specialty skillfully and with humanism.

~ Matthew S. Robbins, MD

Meet Our Department Leadership

Dr. Matthew Fink (Chair of Neurology)

Dr. Matthew E. Fink, is the Louis and Gertrude Feil Professor of Clinical Neurology, chairman of the Department of Neurology and associate dean for clinical affairs at Weill Cornell Medicine. He also serves as neurologist-in-chief and chief of the Division of Stroke and Critical Care Neurology at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center. Dr. Fink is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, and served as resident and chief resident in internal medicine at Boston City Hospital. He trained in neurology at The Neurological Institute of New York at NewYork-Presbyterian/Columbia University Medical Center, and served as chief resident under Dr. Lewis P. Rowland. Later, he joined the faculty of Columbia University and became the founding director of the neurology-neurosurgery intensive care unit at New York-Presbyterian and was appointed associate professor of clinical neurology and neurosurgery at Columbia University.

Dr. Costantino Iadecola (Director and Chair, Brain & Mind Research Institute)

In 2012, Dr. Iadecola was named Director and Chair of the Feil Family Brain and Mind Research Institute, a new departmental focusing on 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. An international leader in stroke and dementia research, his work 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.
**Program Director: Matthew Robbins, MD**

Dr. Matthew Robbins is the neurology residency program director at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell. He earned his B.S. from Yale University and his M.D. from SUNY-Downstate College of Medicine. He completed his neurology residency at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine/Montefiore Medical Center, where he was chief resident and then completed a headache fellowship. After nearly a decade on faculty at Montefiore-Einstein in a variety of roles, he joined the Cornell faculty in 2018.

Dr. Robbins is a Fellow of the American Academy of Neurology (AAN) and the American Headache Society (AHS), where he serves on the Board of Directors and directs all resident education programming including the national Resident Education Program. He serves on the Board of Directors of the New York State Neurological Society. He is an associate editor, Resident and Fellow section co-editor, and social media editor for Headache. He regularly presents at scientific meetings and has published widely on topics including headache procedures, headache in pregnancy and the elderly, cluster headache, new daily persistent headache, unusual primary and secondary headache disorders, unusual forms of migraine aura, and neurologic education. He has won the Members’ Choice award for the best publication in Headache, the Above and Beyond award from the AHS, and an AB Baker Teacher Recognition Award from the AAN. He has led organizational initiatives related to headache including guidelines and quality measures. He is an active participant in patient advocacy activities including Headache on the Hill, and is a graduate of the Palatucci Advocacy Leadership Forum of the AAN, where he has also served as an advisor.

**Associate Program Director: Natalie Weathered, MD**

Dr. Natalie Weathered is an Assistant Professor of Neurology at Weill Cornell Medical College and an Assistant Attending Neurologist at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell. She received her medical degree from the University of Utah after majoring in biology at the University of Notre Dame. She then completed an internship in internal medicine and residency in neurology at the University of Utah. She has also completed fellowships in vascular neurology at the University of Utah and in neurohospitalist medicine at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center. Concurrent with her neurohospitalist fellowship, she participated in the T32 neuro-epidemiology training program which culminated in a masters of epidemiology granted by the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health. Currently, she is the Vice Chair of the Neurohospitalist Section of the American Academy of Neurology.

She specializes in the acute, inpatient management of patients with general neurological disorders, including but not limited to stroke, seizure, demyelinating disorders, neuromuscular disease, movement disorders, and encephalopathy and brain injury. This year, she won our departmental “Teacher of the Year” Award.

**Program Coordinator: Janice Void**

A native New Yorker, Janice has previously served as program coordinator for many years in various specialties before joining our Neurology Family. She brings a wealth of experience and dedication to the program.

Janice believes it is critical to sustain the foundation of our own wellness in order to positively influence those around us. She encourages resident well-being and promotes individual growth. She even leads us in mediation and other exercises during our mindfulness Mondays!

“Acknowledging the good you already have in your life is the foundation for all abundance”. —Eckhart Tolle
**Vice Chair of Education: Joseph Safdieh, MD**

Dr. Joseph E. Safdieh is currently the Lewis and Rachel Rudin foundation Education Scholar, Assistant Dean – Clinical Curriculum, Vice Chairman for Education and Associate Professor of Neurology at Weill Cornell Medicine. He 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 from New York University School of Medicine, where he received the Alpha Omega Alpha Award for graduating first in his class. He completed his neurology residency training at the Weill Cornell, where he also served as Chief Resident.

Currently, Dr. Safdieh is the director of the medical student Neurology Clerkship, a role he has held since 2007. As assistant dean, he is responsible for overseeing the entire clinical curriculum at Weill Cornell. 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. He has been recognized for his excellence in medical student education locally, nationally and internationally. He previously held the position of medical director of the Neurology Residents Clinic and also served as Director of Outpatient Training for the Neurology Residency Program.

Dr. Safdieh also currently serves on the education committee of the American Academy of Neurology, as well as the publications committee and the Undergraduate Education Subcommittee. He recently completed a 2-year term as chair of the Consortium of Neurology Clerkship Directors of the AAN. Additionally, he is currently editor-in-chief of Neurology Today, the official news source of the American Academy of Neurology.

**MSKCC Site Director: Jacqueline Stone, MD**

Dr. Jacqueline Stone is an Assistant Attending of Neurology at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and serves as the Director of Neurology Resident Education. She has had a longstanding interest in neurology as she studied the Biological Basis of Behavior (in addition to Hispanic Studies and Chemistry) at the University of Pennsylvania prior to receiving her medical degree from the New York University School of Medicine. Since that time, she has been a Cornell “lifer” as she completed her internship, residency, and chief residency at New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center and continues to hold an academic appointment at Weill Cornell Medical College as an instructor. During residency, Dr. Stone was first exposed to the field of Neuro-oncology while rotating at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. She pursued Neuro-oncology fellowship and stayed on as faculty at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center where she specializes in treating patients with primary and secondary central nervous system malignancies as well as the neurological complications of cancer and its treatment. She conducts research in the treatment of malignant gliomas as well as quality of life issues for brain tumor patients including fertility preservation, pregnancy, and sexual function. Dr. Stone has a strong interest in medical education and is a dedicated member of the program leadership of the Neurology Residency Training Program at New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center.

**Associate Program Director: Richard Isaacson, MD**

After serving as neurology residency program director for several years, Dr. Isaacson now serves as Assistant Dean of Faculty Development, Director of the Alzheimer’s Prevention Clinic and Associate Program 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.
Vice Chair Neurology Operations, Louise Klebanoff, MD

Dr. Louise Klebanoff 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 for Clinical Research in Neurology, Claire Henchcliffe, D.Phil, MD

Dr. Claire Henchcliffe received her medical degree from Columbia University, College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York, and her doctorate from Oxford University, UK. After a period of basic neuroscience research at Cambridge University, UK and University of California, Berkeley, she completed 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.

Resident Clinic Director, Ulrike Kaunzner, MD, PhD

Dr. Kaunzner studied medicine in Jena and Paris, and received her medical degree from the Friedrich Schiller University in Jena, Germany. She then continued her postdoctoral training in Neuroinflammation/Neuroimmunity at the Rockefeller University, New York. She then completed her internship and Neurology residency at the New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center. She completed her fellowship in Multiple Sclerosis and Neuroinflammation at the Judith Jaffe MS Center of Weill-Cornell Medicine.

She now is an Assistant Attending Neurologist at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medicine and is the director of our Resident Continuity Clinic.

Her research focus is in various neuroimaging techniques in multiple sclerosis. She is the recipient of the 2019 Clinical Research Training Scholarship in Multiple Sclerosis funded by the American Brain Foundation, Consortium of Multiple Sclerosis Centers, and Biogen in collaboration with the American Academy of Neurology.
OUR DIVISION CHIEFS

Howard Fine, M.D.  Neuro-Oncology
Claire Henchcliffe, M.D., D.Phil.  Neurodegenerative Disorders
Ana C. Krieger, M.D., M.P.H.  Sleep Neurology
Babak Navi, M.D., M.S.  Stroke and Hospital Neurology

Hooman Kamel, M.D.  Neurocritical Care
Padmaja Kandula, M.D.  Epilepsy and Clinical Neurophysiology
Louise Klebanoff, M.D.  General Neurology

Michael Rubin, M.D., C.M.  Neuromuscular Disorders
Timothy Varianian, M.D., Ph.D.  Multiple Sclerosis and Neuro-Immunology
Lisa DeAngelis, MD
Physician-in-Chief, Memorial Hospital
Lillian Rojtman Berkman Chair in Honor of Jerome B. Posner

Edward K. Avila, DO
Acting Co-Chair and Vice Chair for Clinical Affairs, Department of Neurology
Co-Director, Neuro Advanced Care Unit

Ingo K. Mellinghoff, MD
Acting Co-Chair and Vice Chair for Research, Department of Neurology
Chief, Brain Tumor Service
Evnin Family Chair in Neuro-Oncology

Yasmin Khakoo, MD
Director, Child Neurology Program
Chief Resident, Sarah Bobker, MD

Dr. Sarah Bobker grew up in South Florida. She received both her undergraduate and medical school degrees at Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana. While in medical school, Sarah served as Class Secretary for all four years, was elected by her peers to the Gold Humanism Honors’ Society, and graduated with the Leon A. Weisberg Memorial Award for excellence in Neurology. While in residency here at Cornell, she held several leadership positions, being the PGY2 Class representative, QI Chief, and Research Chief before becoming one of the Chief Residents this year. Her interest in Neurology was born out of a love for dance and the mind-body connection, an interest which also propelled her to become a registered yoga teacher. Sarah will be pursuing a fellowship in Headache Medicine at UCSF beginning next summer. Currently, she is also the Assistant Editor for the Residents and Fellows section of Headache, the journal of the American Headache Society.

Chief Resident, Kellyann Niotis, MD

Dr. Kellyann Niotis was raised in Manalapan, NJ and graduated summa cum laude with Honors in Biology from Lafayette College for her research on the effects of circadian rhythm on the photointrinsic iris response. After college, she attended medical school at Geisinger Commonwealth Medical College, where she was a member of the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society. While in medical school, Kellyann spent time abroad in the Amazon Jungle learning about medicinal plants and traditional healing practices. During residency, she served as the program Wellness Chief. Kellyann has also been conducting an independent research study using wrist biotrackers to improve resident sleep and exercise habits for which she has been the recipient of the McGraw Research Fellowship. In her free time, she is an avid scuba diver, world traveler, fitness enthusiast and a dog mom to her goldendoodle puppy, Hudson. After residency, she is pursing a fellowship in movement disorders at Mount Sinai – Beth Israel.

Chief Resident, Neha Safi, MD

Dr. Neha Safi was born and raised in Sinking Spring, PA. She attended the University of Pennsylvania where she graduated with Honors in Biological Basis of Behavior for her research in the social behaviors of autism phenotype mice and a minor in Healthcare Management, all the while dancing on Penn Masti, a South Asian fusion team. She then went on to the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University where she received the Matthew T. Moore Prize in Neurology and was inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society. Currently, she serves as one of the Chief Residents and her research focuses on utilizing various MRI sequences to quantify the effect of newer disease modifying therapies on chronic active lesions in patients with multiple sclerosis with the hopes of developing a novel method to monitor disease progression. Aside from dance, she enjoys Broadway shows, new restaurants, and whirlwind traveling. Next July, she will be a fellow in the Corinne Dickinson Goldsmith Center for Multiple Sclerosis at Mount Sinai Hospital.
US News & World Report Hospital Rankings
NYP Hospital is Ranked #1 in NYC and #5 in the Nation
NYP is ranked #1 in NYC and #4 in the Nation for Neurology/Neurosurgery
MSKCC is ranked #2 for Cancer Care

OUR RESIDENTS, WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

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

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

Class of 2018
Yahya Atalay — Vascular, Weill Cornell; INR, Weill Cornell
Jaclyn Burch — Vascular, University of Rochester
Trent Hodgson — Neuromuscular, Stanford
Radhika Jagannathan — Aging and Dementia, Columbia
Matthew Mercuri — Neurophysiology/EEG, Weill Cornell
Caroline Miranda — Neurophysiology/EMG, Columbia
Antonio Moya — National Clinical Scholars Program, UCLA

Class of 2019
Ashley Aaroe — Neuro-oncology, MD Anderson
Mais Al-Kawaz — Neurocritical Care, Johns Hopkins; INR, Mount Sinai
Brian Andersen — Neuro-oncology, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
Christopher Brown — Neurohospitalist, Weill Cornell
Darya Khazanova — Neurocritical Care, UCSF
Jessica Wilcox — Neuro-oncology, MSKCC

Class of 2020
Saeedeh Azary — Neurophysiology/EEG, Brigham & Women’s Hospital
Sarah Bobker — Headache, UCSF
Stephanie Buchman — Vascular, Weill Cornell
Shea Ehnholt — Neurophysiology/EEG, Weill Cornell; Neurocritical Care, TBD
Ashwin Malhotra — Neurophysiology/EMG, Weill Cornell
Kellyann Niotis — Movement Disorders, Mount Sinai Beth Israel
Neha Safi — Multiple Sclerosis, Mount Sinai
Bhavan Shah — Neurophysiology/EEG, Weill Cornell
RESIDENT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Melvin Parasram, DO, MS: Resident Wellness Representative

Dr. Melvin Parasram was born and raised in The “Boogie Down” Bronx, NY. He earned his medical degree from Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine and matched at Weill Cornell Neurology, his number one choice! He is interested in pursuing neuro-critical care as a career and will focus on clinical neurological management. He serves as the wellness chief resident and is implementing ways to increase resident resiliency. He’s heavily involved in community service and hopes to raise awareness about stroke education to underserved populations. When he’s not wearing his white coat, he spends time with friends and family, travels, explores NYC, cheers on the Yankees and the Giants, and catches up with the latest shows on Netflix.

Kurt Qing, MD, PhD: Resident Research Representative

Dr. Kurt Qing was born in China and grew up in Indiana. He studied Biomedical Engineering in college, after which he earned his MD/PhD from Indiana University where he focused on neuroengineering. He is most interested in electrophysiology and is planning to pursue a fellowship in this field, in hopes of building an academic career. Kurt’s current research involves EEG analysis in critically-ill patients in the ICU. Aside from work, he spends a good amount of time dancing, specifically break-dancing, but also enjoys swimming, surfing, and other activities.

Shamelia Loiseau, MD: PGY-3 QI Representative

Dr. Shamelia Loiseau may have been born in Queens, NY, but she identifies as a “true” Long Islander. She attended CUNY Hunter College where she studied biology with a concentration in neurosciences and philosophy. There, she had the opportunity to conduct research on breast cancer and adult onset neurodegenerative disease. She received her medical degree from the University of Rochester School of Medicine, and currently, this is her second year serving as the Quality Improvement Representative. In her spare time, she enjoys music, dance, chile con queso and lots of reality TV! Her current interests include neuro-oncology, stroke, neuro-critical care, medical education and palliative care.

Sarah Parauda, MD: PGY-2 Class Representative

Dr. Sarah Parauda is a proud Cornell “lifer”—attending undergraduate, medical school, and now residency all at Cornell University. She grew up in Pleasantville, NY (yes that’s a real place). She is in the new Resident Education Track along with one of her fellow classmates, Moises. Her interest is in combating “neurophobia.” After residency, Sarah is thinking about an academic neurohospitalist career via either vascular, EEG, or Neurocritical care fellowship. In her leisure time, she enjoys cooking, running outside, playing soccer and board games.
HEY! FROM OUR DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Jasmin Harpe, MD, MPH, PGY3

Dr. Jasmin Harpe was born on the East Coast and grew up in Los Angeles. She studied Neuroscience at Johns Hopkins University, earned her Masters in Public Heath at Yale, and attended medical school at Weill Cornell Medical College in NYC, which has been her home for the past seven years. Her career interest lies in headache medicine. She is dedicated to working with women and the underserved as it pertains to neurological disorders as well. Jasmin plans on completing a fellowship in headache. She is also dedicated to inspiring and mentoring future, young physicians.

Moises Dominguez, MD, PGY2

Dr. Moises Dominguez is a second-year neurology resident who was born in the Dominican Republic and was raised in the South Bronx and in Harlem. He attended medical school at Yale University School of Medicine where he conducted research in medical education using video-based learning with a pedagogical strategy called Just-In-Time Teaching. He joined the Weill Cornell family for his neurological training and to work alongside faculty who are heavily invested in medical education research. He is currently interested in a variety of neurology subspecialties, but hopes to ultimately become a future program director.

WHAT WE REALLY THINK...!

What drew you to our residency program?

Close-knit residency, great hospital reputation, and amazing location!
- Nara Michaelson, MD, MS, PGY1

Cornell has an incredibly friendly environment among the residents, and top-notch neurology-focused education.
- Sally Wang, MD, PGY2

Sitting in on a great morning report around a solid wooden table over the best interview breakfast on the trail.
- Virginia Gao, MD, PhD, PGY2

What’s one thing about the program that you wish you would’ve known during the interview process?

The supportive nature of the hospital environment, not only in our department but in other departments as well.
  - Mu Ji Hwang, MD, PGY2

We are a growing department with lots of new attendings from different previous institutions. The connotation of stuffiness that comes with being an Ivy League program has become a thing of the past, but the quality and rigor of the program has remained.
  - Josh Kahan, MD, PhD, PGY2

The flexibility of our elective time to explore different career paths and focus on research.
  - Sally Wang, MD, PGY2

Morning report is one of the biggest assets of this program, both with the variety of neurological pathology seen daily as well as robust discussions fulfilling your intellectual curiosity!
  - Hafsa Shahid, MD, PGY3 (Peds Neurology)

We have the most neurology during intern year—10 whole weeks!
  - Virginia Gao, MD, PhD, PGY2

Where do you live and what’s your commute like?

Payson, where my commute is across the street through the secret underground tunnel.
  - Stephanie Buchman, MD, PGY4

I live near Columbus Circle. I bike when the weather is nice and subway when it’s not.
  - Kurt Qing, MD, PhD, PGY3

I live across the street next to the nursing home. I, however, live independently.
  - Shamelia Loiseau, MD, PGY3

Coleman—my commute is nothing aka amazing
  - Ashwin Malhotra, MD, PGY4

Do you have a favorite spot in NYC?

I have so many favorite spots in NYC, but my most favorite is the New York Botanical Garden!
  - Melvin Parasram, DO, MS, PGY3

The Sweet Shop on 73rd between 1st and York. The curmudgeonly shop owner gets the best ice cream flavors from all around the city.
  - Sarah Parauda, MD, PGY2

What’s your favorite thing to do on your day off?

Church, gym, laundry, and catching up on reality TV!
  - Shamelia Loiseau, MD, PGY3

Eating at new restaurants or making bowls at a ceramics studio!
  - Sally Wang, MD, PGY2

Hanging in Central Park with Kellyann’s Golden-doodle puppy!
  - Stephanie Buchman, MD, PGY4

Check out our website for everyone’s bios!!
RESIDENTS IN THEIR NATURAL HABITAT
For more information, please contact:

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Visit our website for details about the residency program, including our clinical rotations, hospital affiliations, sub-specialty opportunities, and housing information:

CORNELLNEUROLOGY.ORG

Check us out on social media!

@WCMCNeurology
@cornell_neurology

Weill Cornell Medicine