On behalf of the Department of Neurology at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine we would like to introduce you to our Residency program. As the third largest Residency program in the country, and one of the most respected clinical neurology and neuroscience departments in the nation, we are committed to excellence in the areas of clinical teaching, research and education. We expanded our program to 42 residents (and 20 Fellows) and are seeking highly qualified applicants.

The mission of the Department is threefold—to provide unparalleled care to patients; to expand knowledge of the causes, treatments, and cures for neurological disease; and to train the next generation of clinicians and neuroscientists. Widely recognized as an international referral center, neurologists from Latin America, Florida, and the rest of the United States, consistently turn to our 75 faculty members (56 clinical, 19 research) for expertise in solving complex neurological problems.

The department is comprised of clinical divisions, research laboratories, clinical laboratories, and research centers including:

- National Parkinson’s Foundation Center of Excellence
- McKnight Brain Institute for Memory Disorders
- Brain Endowment Bank for Pathology
- Sleep Disorders Center
- International Center for Epilepsy
- Kessenich Family MDA ALS Center
- Stroke and Cerebrovascular Disease Division, American Stroke Association—Award Winning
- Multiple Sclerosis Center of Excellence
- Patrick Cesarano Neurovascular Laboratory

The depth and breadth of clinical exposure make UM/Jackson an ideal place to train. We invite you to learn more about our program by reading this newsletter and visiting our website:

http://neurology.med.miami.edu

Sincerely yours,

Ralph L. Sacco, MD, MS, FAHA, FAAN
Chair, Department of Neurology
President-Elect of the American Academy of Neurology

Leticia Tornes, MD
Director, Neurology Residency Program
Assistant Professor, Clinical Neurology
Michael Benatar, MBChB, DPhil, was born and raised in South Africa, where he also attended medical school. As a Rhodes Scholar he then completed a PhD in neuroscience at Oxford University in the United Kingdom. This training abroad explains the unusual letters behind his name: MBChB (MD) and DPhil (PhD). He then completed a neurology residency and neuromuscular fellowship, both at Harvard, and a Masters in the Science of Clinical Research at Emory University, where he was on the faculty for about 8 years. Dr. Benatar joined the Department of Neurology at the University of Miami in 2010 as Walter Bradley Chair in ALS Research and the Chief of the Neuromuscular Division, which comprises 6 faculty members with special-ized clinical programs in amy-o-trophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), myasthenia gravis, muscular dystrophy and inherited neuropa-thies, as well as electro-myography (EMG) and neuromuscular pathology. In addi-tion to these clinical services, the neuromuscular division is home to very active investigator-initiated, clinical and translational research programs focused on ALS, myasthenia gravis and inherited neuropathies. The neuromuscular faculty is well known for their commitment to resident edu-cation, with most faculty hav-ing received teaching awards in recent years. All neurology residents participate in the aforementioned programs and acquire hands-on experience performing electrodiagnostic studies through a formal month-long neuromuscular rotation. The Neuromuscular Division also offers clinical and research fellowships, and there is ample opportunity for residents to get involved in ongoing research projects.

Hi everyone! I was born and raised in Arequipa, Peru, where I acquired a deep love for neuroscience. At the Department of Functional Neurosurgery at UCLA, I authored several publications on the use of molecular imaging for brain tumors and nanotechnology for movement disorders. While exploring options for residency training, the reputation of high-level patient complexity and hands-on clinical and research training at the University of Miami Neurology program stood out. A clinical elective with the Neurology Service convinced me that this was the place to best combine my interests in becoming a superior clinician, teacher and scientist. After interviewing all over the country, I realized that this was a very rare and special combination! Since starting residency here, I expanded on my interest in clinical research as part of the Resident Clinician Research Track, which has honed my skills to the point that I can capably conduct independent research. With the expert mentorship of Drs. Kanner, Singer, Benatar, Adams and Luca, this has translated into multiple peer-reviewed publications, book chapters and national presentations. Serving as a Chief Resident provided the unique opportunity to develop student and resident educational activities. I am currently doing a Neurophysiology fellowship here at UMI! Taking this all together with the amazing sense of true friendship among the faculty and residents, I simply love this program and I hope that you will too!
Resident Spotlight: Renata Chalfin, MD

Welcome Applicants!
As a third year, I am busy in the midst of stroke alerts and consults at Jackson, where we see a wide range of neurologic diseases, from dementia and medication-induced parkinsonism, to Tolosa-Hunt Syndrome and status epilepticus (just to cite a few of the consults from the last two days alone). Experts in our field like Dr. Verma, Dr. Adams, Dr. Rammohan, Dr. Romano, and Dr. Kanner lead rounds and teach us the intricacies of the neurologic exam and diagnosis, so we don’t have to be dependent on CTs and MRIs. Our fellows and chief residents teach us their already vast knowledge of neuroanatomy and pathology during noon conference. And really, UM has a knack of teaching you things without you even realizing, including efficiency, integrity, and leadership.

A little about me personally, I was born in the former Soviet Union but grew up in south Florida, so I was eager to return “home” after college at Cornell University, a year of graduate studies at Hopkins, and completing medical school at the new University of Central Florida in Orlando. Neurology has always been a fascination to me as I read, "The Man Who Mistook His Wife For a Hat" by Oliver Sacks, but in Miami, you actually see and experience those amazing patients with your own eyes, ears, and hands, which is irreplaceable.

For now, I am still charting my journey, but I hope to open up an Ideal Neurology Clinic when I finish my training. I have no doubt that my experience here will make me an excellent neurologist and advocate for my patients.
Faculty Spotlight: Andres Kanner, MD, FANA

Andres Kanner, MD, FANA is a Professor of Clinical Neurology, Chief of the Epilepsy Division and Director of our Comprehensive Epilepsy Center. Dr. Kanner was born and raised in Mexico. He came to the United States in 1977, where he completed Residency trainings in Psychiatry and Neurology, followed by a fellowship in Epilepsy and Clinical Neurophysiology at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation. Dr. Kanner is board in Neurology, Psychiatry, Clinical Neurophysiology and Epilepsy. He rejoined our Faculty in January 2013. The Epilepsy Division has 8 Faculty members and provides comprehensive evaluation and management at the outpatient clinics and at the inpatient video-EEG monitoring units in Jackson Memorial Hospital (level IV), University of Miami Hospital (level IV) and the Miami Veterans Administration Hospital (Epilepsy Center of Excellence). The Epilepsy team provides continuous video-EEG monitoring coverage for all cases of status epilepticus (24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week in all 3 institutions). In addition, patients undergo comprehensive evaluation to establish the type of epilepsy syndrome, formulate a treatment plan, including epilepsy surgery. All residents enjoy rotating through our services in the course of their training. During the rotations, residents participate in weekly didactic conferences in addition to direct patient care.

I believe that the brain is the most important organ in the body, and any brain pathology will lead to debilitating consequences. Therefore neurology residency was my number one choice. On the journey to finding the right neurology residency, I wanted to find a residency program that could provide me with excellent training in clinical neurology and research. UM is a unique program that truly provided me with extensive clinical training in multiple setting, including Jackson Memorial Hospital, one of the largest public hospitals in the country. Throughout the years I became more interested in the growing field of vascular interventional neurology and the research aspect. By applying into the Resident Clinician Research Track after starting residency, I received direct mentorship from world-leading clinician researchers. During the first 2 years of my residency, I was able to publish over 15 peer-reviewed manuscripts and posters, presented multiple platform presentation at international meetings, and received 3 travel awards. I am the current president of the University of Miami Stroke Intervention Interest Group geared towards providing research opportunity for medical students and residents. I also would like to say that Miami is a great and fun city to live in with year-long good weather. Best of luck throughout the interview process and we hope to be seeing you here!

Faculty Spotlight: Dileep Yavagal, MD

Dileep R. Yavagal, MD is Director of Interventional Neurology and Co-Director of Neuroendovascular Surgery and Associate Professor of Neurology and Neurosurgery at the University of Miami & Jackson Memorial Hospitals. Dr. Yavagal is an international leader in endovascular therapy for ischemic and hemorrhagic stroke. He is considered a pioneering researcher the field of intra-arterial (IA) delivery of stem cells in stroke therapy. He is the immediate Past-President of the Society for Vascular and Interventional Neurology (SVIN). Dr. Yavagal has received several state and federal research grants to study endovascular stem cell therapies for ischemic stroke using small and large animal models of stroke in his research laboratory. Currently, he is the leading investigator on the steering committee of the first US multicenter clinical trial of IA delivery of autologous bone marrow stem cells for ischemic stroke, RECOVER Stroke. He was one of the investigators on the steering committee of the MR RESCUE trial. He is also a steering committee member of the currently ongoing SWIFT-Prime randomized clinical trial of endovascular stroke therapy.
Faculty Spotlight: Leticia Tornes, MD

Leticia Tornes, MD, is an Assistant Professor of Clinical Neurology, Director of the Residency Program and part of the Multiple Sclerosis and Epilepsy Divisions. Dr. Tornes was born and raised in Miami. She attended the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, followed by Neurology Residency, where she was chief resident, followed by Fellowships in Clinical Neurophysiology and Multiple Sclerosis/Neuroimmunology. Dr. Tornes is board certified in Neurology and Epilepsy. She joined our Faculty in July 2011 and was Associate Program Director for one year. She took over as Program Director in April of 2013. Clinically, she evaluates and treats epilepsy patients and patients with multiple sclerosis (MS). Her particular clinical interests include women with epilepsy and cognitive dysfunction in multiple sclerosis. Her research interests currently focus on MS and she is involved in 16 clinical trials with the MS division, including one where she is the principal investigator evaluating a medical food for the treatment of cognitive issues in MS. Having trained at the University of Miami in recent years, Dr. Tornes has firsthand experience with our residency program. This provides the residents with the unique opportunity to work with a true resident advocate that strives to make our program the very best!

Class Representatives

- Le Treice Irving, MD
  Ohio State University
  Class of 2019

- Janice Leon, MD
  University of Miami
  Class of 2019

- Ye Hu, MD
  St. George’s University
  Class of 2018

- Manuel Melo Bicchi, MD
  Universidad Iberoamericana, Dominican Republic
  Class of 2018

- Ima Ebong, MD, MS
  University of Kentucky
  Class of 2017

- Nicole Beaton Sur, MD
  Boston University
  Class of 2017

Resident Spotlight: Nicole Beaton Sur, MD

Welcome Applicants!

I hope you enjoy your visit as much as I love being a part of this program! I grew up in Miami and though I snuck away to Boston for medical school for a few years, I came right back home to UM for Neurology Residency. Coming to Miami was the easiest and best decision I have made for my career and I absolutely love our program. We see an abundance of interesting and challenging cases, as well as the typical “bread and butter” Neurology. We are taught by leaders in the field and it is truly a privilege to work with our diverse faculty and staff.

One of the things I enjoy the most is the close-knit, family atmosphere that this program provides. We work hard, but always have a good time and a good laugh in the process. This program also allows you to explore your interests via a multitude of different research opportunities - both clinical and basic science - while working alongside leading mentors and experts in the field. There’s also the added benefit of living in the beautiful city of Miami, where it’s sunny and warm year round. Who wouldn’t want to spend a post call day soaking up some sun and going for a swim on the pristine coast that is South Beach?

As I continue on to pursue a fellowship in Vascular Neurology, I am thrilled and humbled by the opportunity to stay with the UM Neurology family. Best of luck and do not hesitate to get in touch with questions!
Questions?

For more information and application information, visit our website: http://neurology.med.miami.edu.

Our main Residency page and Frequently Asked Questions section cover a variety of topics, and the Campus Tour and Photos and Life in Miami sections will provide details about living in South Florida. If you have additional questions, our program managers Andy and Terry, our 2016-2017 Administrative Chief Residents, our Program Director Dr. Tornes, and our Associate Program Directors Drs. Dib and Kottapally are all happy to help. Good luck!

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Dannaly Reyes-Baerga, M.D.
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Danielle Spengler, MD
Administrative Chief Resident
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Holiday Party 2015

Educational activities

Weekly professors’ rounds

Daily noon conferences

Weekly bedside teaching (Dr. Adams)

Resident Research Day Dinner
Aleksey Androsov, MD  
General Neurology

Nirav Bhatt, MD  
Vascular Neurology

Ima Ebong, MD  
Clinical Neurophysiology

Christian Camargo, MD  
Sleep Medicine

Oliver Otite, MD  
Neurocritical Care

Melissa Fellman, MD  
Clinical Neurophysiology

Rajiv Singh, MD  
General Neurology

Dannaly Reyes-Baerga, MD  
Neurorehabilitation

Habibullah Ziyayee, MD  
Vascular Neurology

Danielle Spengler, MD  
Movement Disorders
Resident Clinician Researcher Track

The Neurology Resident Clinician Researcher Program is aimed to provide residents with necessary faculty mentorship, administrative guidance, infrastructure and research facilities in order to pursue rewarding clinical and basic neuroscience research during residency. It is expected that a research track resident will become conversant in research techniques and will accumulate enough data to submit a career development grant (e.g. NIH K08) upon graduation. While ~25% of our residents already hold graduate degrees, the program also provides flexibility for residents without a Ph.D. or M.S. to pursue advanced research training. Once accepted, residents are given a stipend for grant seminars, conference travel etc., and are provided extra educational opportunities to succeed in basic and clinical research. Over the last 4 years, our residents have published more than 50 peer-reviewed publications, and several have recently been involved in the Northern Manhattan Study (NOMAS), the first prospective cohort study among Whites, African Americans, and Caribbean Hispanics to investigate the risks and determinants of stroke and help fill gaps in our knowledge of the epidemiology of stroke and vascular disease in minority populations. This NIH study was founded at Columbia University by Dr. Sacco and is one of a myriad of projects at UM.

Faculty Spotlight: Tatjana Rundek, MD, PhD

Dr. Tatjana Rundek joined the University of Miami in May of 2007 and is currently Professor of Neurology at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. She also maintains an adjunct research faculty position in Neurology at the Neurological Institute at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. She serves as a Chair of Clinical Translational Research in Neurology and Director of our Clinical Translational Research Division. Her research is directed towards the use of ultrasound for early detection, intervention and prevention of functional and structural changes of arterial wall inflammation. She is PI and co-investigator on multiple NIH grants, and has received foundation support to study the relationship between vascular risk factors, subclinical atherosclerosis, genetics and stroke. She also investigates sex-specific disparities in stroke. She is a fellow of the ANA, a member of the American Heart Association and AAN. She is President of the Neurosonology Communities of Practice of the American Institute in Ultrasound in Medicine, the largest professional medical ultrasound organization in the US. Dr. Rundek serves on the Intersocietal Accreditation Commission (IAC) Vascular Testing Board of Directors, a national organization that accredits clinical ultrasound, echocardiography, nuclear/PET, MRI, CT and carotid stenting programs.

Recent Graduate Spotlight: Anita Tipirneni, MD

Hello Applicants!

I spent many years studying research and neuroscience. When I decided on residency in Miami, I knew I would have great clinical training through our diverse and abundant patient population. However, I have also been able to further my research career. Through the research track I participated in special educational activities and have been mentored by top clinical researchers. These experiences have allowed me to produce and present original research projects at national meetings. As a senior resident I fostered research activities among the junior residents and taught evidence-based neurology. My combined training in clinical neurology and research have allowed me to match into a top fellowship in vascular neurology at UCLA. Through these years I have also been able to make new lifelong friends and enjoy the perks of living in Miami!

Hope you enjoy this interview season and consider all UM Neurology has to offer.

Good luck!
Faculty Spotlight: Ralph L. Sacco, MD

Ralph L. Sacco, MD, MS, is the Chairman of Neurology, Olemberg Family Chair in Neurological Disorders, Miller Professor of Neurology, Epidemiology and Public Health Sciences, Human Genetics and Neurosurgery, Executive Director of the Evelyn McKnight Brain Institute at the Miller School of Medicine, University of Miami, and Chief of the Neurology Service at Jackson Memorial Hospital, as well as President-elect of the American Academy of Neurology (AAN). He was the first neurologist to become president of the American Heart Association (AHA), and was previously Professor of Neurology, Chief of Stroke and Critical Care Division, and Associate Chairman at Columbia University.

Dr. Sacco is the PI of the NINDS-funded NOMAS, the FL-Puerto Rico Collaboration to Reduce Stroke Disparities, and the Family Study of Stroke Risk and Carotid Atherosclerosis, as well as co-investigator of multiple other NIH grants. He has also been the Co-Chair of international stroke treat-ment and prevention trials. Dr. Sacco has published extensively with over 425 peer-reviewed articles and 102 invited articles. His research has also addressed stroke and vascular disparities. He has been the recipient of numerous awards and has lectured extensively at national and international areas of stroke prevention, treatment, epidemiology, risk factors, vascular cognitive impairment, human genetics and stroke recur-rence.

Faculty Spotlight: Kristine O’Phelan, MD

Kristine O’Phelan, MD received her medical degree from Boston University School of Medicine. She completed a residency in neurology at University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Hospital and fellowship training in Neurotrauma and Neurocritical Care at UCLA. Her major subspeciality interest is in critical care of neurotrauma, subarachnoid hemorrhage and multimodality monitoring. She currently directs the Neuroscience Intensive Care Unit at Jackson Memorial Hospital, one of the largest neuro-ICUs in the country and has a busy, high-acuity service.

Dr. O’Phelan has been honored to receive the Chairman’s Award for Teaching Excellence, as voted by the Neurology Residents at UM/JMH, and is an Associate Professor of Clinical Neurology. She balances the rigors of academics, including clinical care, teaching, research, and family, including a 9-year-old daughter Conner, and 5-year-old son, Aidan. She has been thrilled to return to Miami to help develop the neurocritical care division here and finds working with the team of nurses, a clinical pharmacist, neurology and neurosurgery residents and fellows enormously gratifying.

Faculty Spotlight: Walter G. Bradley, DM, FRCP

Dr. Bradley, Professor and Chairman Emeritus, is one of the greatest strengths of our training program. As past Director of the Neuromuscular division and former medical director of the Kesseni Family MDA ALS clinic, Dr. Bradley maintains a role teaching the Neurology residents at Professor’s Rounds. A world-renowned clinician, and master educator, he is most recognized by Neurology Residents and Neurologists around the world for his seminal textbook, Neurology in Clinical Practice.

With over 400 publications and multiple millions of dollars in research funding over his illustrious career, Dr. Bradley is a true pioneer and leader in the field.
Top 10 reasons for Ranking UM #1

10. The weather
9. Outstanding benefits, salary, and educational allowance
8. Great cost of living, ocean views and no state tax!
7. Did I mention the weather …?
6. Team-oriented approach/comfortable atmosphere
5. Resident Research Track
4. Program commitment to teaching/education
3. Exposure to a diverse array of neurologic disease
2. World-renowned faculty
1. The residents!!!