

BCM Neurosurgery remains among top ten in NIH funding, new rankings report

The newest Blue Ridge rankings are in, and once again, the Department of Neurosurgery at Baylor College of Medicine is among the top programs in the nation for NIH funding. Check out the table below for the full top ten list.

From the Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research		
Rank	Name	Neurosurgery
1	University of California San Francisco	\$25,321,311
2	Stanford University	\$17,507,937
3	University of California Los Angeles	\$15,017,083
4	University of Florida	\$11,390,129
5	Duke University	\$9,804,848
6	Northwestern University Chicago	\$8,687,968
7	Johns Hopkins University	\$7,298,972
8	Baylor College of Medicine	\$6,274,399
9	University of Pennsylvania	\$5,944,454
10	Washington University St. Louis	\$5,824,852

*Rankings as compiled by Robert Roskoski Jr. and Tristram G. Parslow

Dr. Sameer Sheth discusses deep brain stimulation and depression in Houston Chronicle feature



Dr. Sameer Sheth

A team of Baylor College of Medicine researchers led by Dr. Sameer Sheth and featuring Dr. Wayne Goodman, professor and chair of the Menninger Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, as well as Dr. Kelly Bijanki, assistant professor of neurosurgery, is making strides in the fight against treatment-resistant depression.

The team believes that deep brain stimulation, which can best be described as a “pacemaker for the brain,” can be used to target specific areas of a patient’s brain affected by depression. Drawing on inspiration from a similar procedure used on patients suffering from epilepsy, Dr. Sheth believes that individualized treatment is needed to provide relief for patients on a case by case basis.

Click [here](#) to read the full feature.

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Here we are already a few months into 2022. The pandemic seems to be regressing with fewer cases being diagnosed in Houston and fewer patients requiring hospitalization. We have been fortunate at Baylor College of Medicine to have had leaders in the national spotlight, such as Dr. Peter Hotez, providing important guidance through the pandemic. Staffing in the hospital remains a challenge, but the nursing shortages seem to be easing. We also welcomed Jenna Millerhaj as our new neuroscience service line director to help our service on the hospital side of things. In this newsletter, you will also see our other new faculty and staff additions.

In a large academic department, there are bound to be changes in the faculty and we are sorry to see Dr. Daniel Raper move on from Baylor back to UCSF. Dr. Raper is an extraordinary neurosurgeon, and he will be missed. We are very close to hiring another cerebrovascular surgeon to join Dr. Tanweer. We will also miss Jill Seeley who is seeking an exciting opportunity outside of medicine. On the spine side, Drs. Grochmal and King have done a fantastic job helping Dr. Ropper develop the spine surgery program and continue to attract patients to the Spine Center. You will also see the new additions to our residency program in this newsletter. Congratulations to Dr. Patel and the educational leadership team including Gina Collier and Jill Goodson for another successful match.



On the research side, we have had a tremendous amount of activity and have maintained our top ten NIH funding status. I am grateful to all of our scientists for continuing to submit and receive extramural funding. Dr. Sheth, Vice Chair of Research, and I have been working hard to continue to develop our research program with recruiting efforts.

Clinically, the department remains in a strong position. We have been recognized for our quality scorecards and for our Press Ganey scores. I would like to acknowledge our entire clinical operations team, led by Ramanveer Virk, for these accolades.

Finally, as we head into Spring, I hope that everyone will take the opportunity to enjoy the few weeks of mild weather before the summer hits. Travel restrictions are being lifted and things are starting to feel a bit more normal again.

MR-Guided Focused Ultrasound Offers ET Patients New Hope

In February, Drs. Sameer Sheth and Ashwin Viswanathan, along with Dr. Nora Vanegas of BCM Neurology, hosted a webinar in which they presented the current medical and surgical options available to those diagnosed with essential tremor.

In particular, the experts discussed magnetic resonance-guided (MR-guided) ultrasound as a treatment option for patients suffering with ET or tremor dominant Parkinson's disease who have not responded to medication. The non-invasive procedure uses focused beams of ultrasonic energy guided by MRI to target areas deep in the brain with no incisions or permanent implants.

Baylor Medicine, in partnership with Texas Children's Hospital, is one of a few selected centers in the U.S. with the expertise and technology to provide MR-guided focused ultrasound therapy to patients. Click [here](#) to watch the webinar and learn more.

Neurosurgery Team Updates

NEW EMPLOYEES

Rodddrecus Dowdell, Senior Coordinator, Patient Support Services

Cristina Flores, Communications Associate

Joey Grochmal, MD, PhD, Assistant Professor

Shivani Kulkarni, Student Helper

Afshan Momin, DNP, MSN, Instructor - Nurse Practitioner

Bailey Pascuzzi, Research Coordinator II

Nicole Provenza, Postdoctoral Associate

KM Rahman, Research Assistant II

Herminia Regalado, Medical Assistant II

Theresa Sapio, Medical Assistant I

Abu Bakar Siddik, Postdoctoral Associate

Katie Steck, Research Technician I

Andrew Watrous, PhD, Assistant Professor

PROMOTIONS

David Bauer, MD, has been promoted to Associate Professor

Raissa Mathura has been promoted to Research Coordinator II

Ana Melendez has been promoted to Medical Assistant III

Alexander Ropper, MD, has received a secondary appointment in the Department of Surgery

Welcome, new residents!

Match Day 2022 was Friday, March 18 and we are excited to welcome our newest residents to the Department of Neurosurgery at Baylor College of Medicine! In January of last year, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education approved the expansion of our program to accept four residents per year, making us one of the largest programs in the country.



Miller Douglas, Emory U.



Tyler Hughes, U. of Iowa

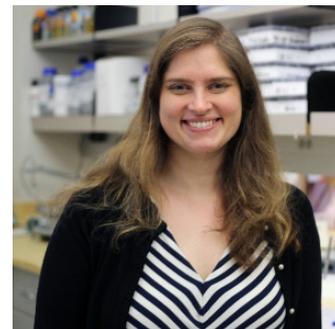


Somto Ngwudike, U. of Mississippi



Jordan Guntin, U. of Illinois

Dr. Jamie Anastas, assistant professor, has been awarded a grant from CureSearch for Children's Cancer for her work developing a therapy for pediatric highgrade glioma that takes advantage of a brain tumor vulnerability. Through her project, titled Combinatorial targeting of HDACs and LSD1 to treat pediatric brain tumors, Dr. Anastas hypothesizes that combined treatment with two repurposed therapies will block pediatric brain tumor growth. Click [here](#) to read more about the project.



PUBLICATIONS

Adkinson J., Tsolaki E, Sheth, S.A., Metzger, B.A., Robinson, M.E., Oswald, D., McIntyre, C., Mathura, R.K., Waters, A.C., Allawalla, A.B., Borton, D., Pouratian, N., Bijanki K. Imaging versus electrographic connectivity in human mood-related fronto-temporal networks. *Brain Stimulation*. 2022 Mar 9. [Available here](#).

Allawala A, Sheth SA. In Reply: A Novel Framework for Network-Targeted Neuropsychiatric Deep Brain Stimulation. *Neurosurgery*. 2022 Jan 1. [Available here](#).

Barak T, Ristori E, Ercan-Sencicek AG, Miyagishima DF, Nelson-Williams C, Dong W, Jin SC, Prendergast A, Armero W, Henegariu O, Erson-Omay EZ, Harmancı AS, Guy M, Gültekin B, Kilic D, Rai DK, Goc N, Aguilera SM, Gülez B, Altinok S, Ozcan K, Yarman Y, Coskun S, Sempou E, Deniz E, Hintzen J, Cox A, Fomchenko E, Jung SW, Ozturk AK, Louvi A, Bilgüvar K, Connolly ES Jr, Khokha MK, Kahle KT, Yasuno K, Lifton RP, Mishra-Gorur K, Nicoli S, Günel M. PPIL4 is essential for brain angiogenesis and implicated in intracranial aneurysms in humans. *Nat Med*. 2021 Dec 27. [Available here](#).

Haneef Z, Gavvala JR, Combs HL, Han A, Ali I, Sheth SA, Stinson JM. Brain Stimulation Using Responsive Neurostimulation Improves Verbal Memory: A Crossover Case-Control Study. *Neurosurgery*. 2022 Jan 17. [Available here](#).

Jackson HN, Hadley CC, Khan AB, Gadot R, Bayley JC 5th, Shetty A, Mandel J, Jalali A, Gallagher KK, Sweeney AD, Harmanci AO, Harmanci AS, Klisch T, Gopinath SP, Rao G, Yoshor D, Patel AJ. Racial and Socioeconomic Disparities in Patients With Meningioma: A Retrospective Cohort Study. *Neurosurgery*. 2022 Jan 1. [Available here](#).

Krawczyk MC, Haney JR, Pan L, Caneda C, Khankan RR, Reyes SD, Chang JW, Morselli M, Vinters HV, Wang AC, Cobos I, Gandal MJ, Bergsneider M, Kim W, Liao LM, Yong W, Jalali A, Deneen B, Grant GA, Mathern GW, Fallah A, Zhang Y. Human Astrocytes Exhibit Tumor Microenvironment-, Age-, and Sex-Related Transcriptomic Signatures. *J Neurosci*. 2022 Jan 5. [Available here](#).

Provenza NR, Sheth SA, Dastin-van Rijn EM, Mathura RK, Ding Y, Vogt GS, Avendano-Ortega M, Ramakrishnan N, Peled N, Gelin LFF, Xing D, Jeni LA, Ertugrul IO, Barrios-Anderson A, Matteson E, Wiese AD, Xu J, Viswanathan A, Harrison MT, Bijanki KR, Storch EA, Cohn JF, Goodman WK, Borton DA. Long-term ecological assessment of intracranial electrophysiology synchronized to behavioral markers in obsessive-compulsive disorder. *Nat Med*. 2021 Dec 27. [Available here](#).

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Mandy Sowell, administrator for the department of Neurosurgery, was recognized as a 2021-2022 Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) Women of Excellence Award recipient.

Established in 2018, the awards celebrate individuals who exemplify Baylor's Values, and who have demonstrated exceptional dedication to issues that affect women at the College or in the larger community.

Recipients were recognized during a special virtual ceremony on Tuesday, March 29.

BCM Neurosurgical clinic earns high Press Ganey scores

The results are in and we are proud to announce that our clinic is in the 86th percentile in Press Ganey scores! Among our highest scores are: Moving Through Your Visit (99th percentile rank), Nurse/Assistant (98th percentile rank), and Personal Issues (90th percentile rank). See below for a few patient comments:

- "Dr. Tanweer and his staff were very professional. They explained everything well and answered all of our questions."
- "Very helpful staff on the phone."
- "Dr. Rao is an exceptional doctor. Listens to all your concerns patiently. Provided good advice."
- "Best medical experience ever!"

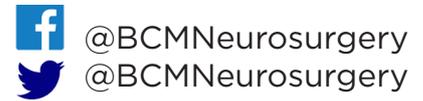
Celebrating high quality patient care

In addition to high Press Ganey scores, the clinical team has also earned high marks for quality metrics over the past year. Such metrics include: medication reconciliation, MyChart activation, tobacco screening, and more. In September 2021, the department was the first in the College (along with PM&R) to meet all quality metrics and has met all metrics every month since then. Great work, team!

Clinical Excellence Awards voting

Calling all faculty and clinical support team members: voting will soon open for our first ever Annual Clinical Excellence Award and we need your help in selecting this year's recipient! This year's quarterly winners were: Ana Melendez, Lona Winnegan, Ruby Farias and Ana Gonzalez. Be on the lookout for eligible candidates and voting deadlines.

***Neurosurgery News* is a publication
of The Department of Neurosurgery at
Baylor College of Medicine.**



To submit content for the next newsletter,
please e-mail:

neurosurgery@bcm.edu

Baylor
College of
Medicine

DEPARTMENT OF
NEUROSURGERY