

APRIL 2026

NM NEUROLOGY

WELLNESS

NEWSLETTER



READ THROUGH TO THE END FOR A
SPECIAL FEATURE!

KUDOS TO OUR RESIDENTS, AND MORE!



"KUDOS TO SARAH WYCKOFF (PGY3) FOR HER PARTICIPATION AS AN NM PEER SUPPORTER FOR THE NM P2P NETWORK!" - DR. BEGA



"KUDOS TO TRISTAN (PGY2) FOR HIS PROCEDURAL EXPERTISE AND VOLUNTEERING TO HELP THE CONSULTS TEAM WITH BOTH AN LP AND ONB IN ONE AFTERNOON!" - EMILY CASALETTO (PGY3)



"KUDOS FOR ALLISON (PGY3) FOR DOING SO MANY INPATIENT ONBS FOR OUR INPATIENT HEADACHE PATIENTS! SHE EVEN DID ONE OVERNIGHT ★" - MEGHANA SHOWNKEEN (PGY4)



"KUDOS TO EMMA (PGY2) AND MARIA (PGY3) FOR STAYING LATE TO FACILITATE A DISCHARGE AND DOING IT SEAMLESSLY. THEIR EFFORT AND ATTENTION TO DETAIL (AND POSITIVE ATTITUDE!) ARE VERY APPRECIATED!" - JYOTI GREWAL (STROKE FELLOW)



"KUDOS TO SEAN (PGY2) FOR HELPING WITH UPDATES TO THE RESIDENCY HANDBOOK! REALLY THOUGHTFUL SUGGESTIONS OF USEFUL INFORMATION/TIPS AND TRICKS!" - SARAH WYCKOFF (PGY3)



"KUDOS TO EMMA (PGY2) FOR CLEANING THE WORKROOMS!" - DERRICK BARNAGIAN (PGY3)

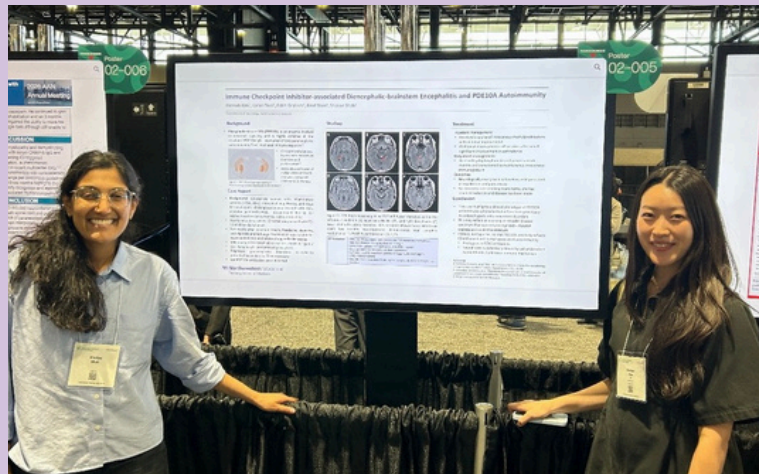
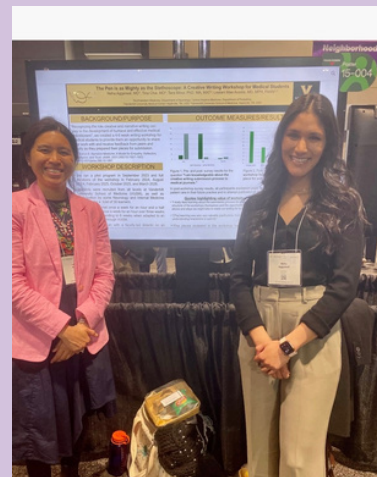
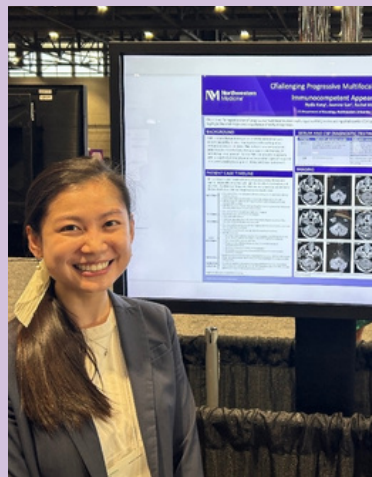
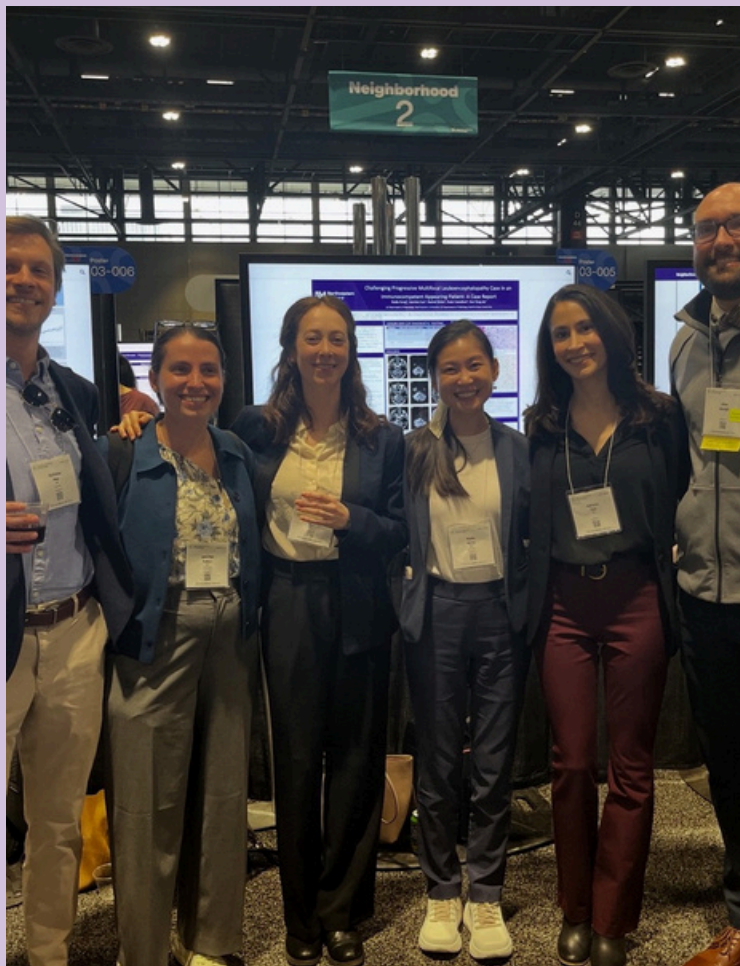
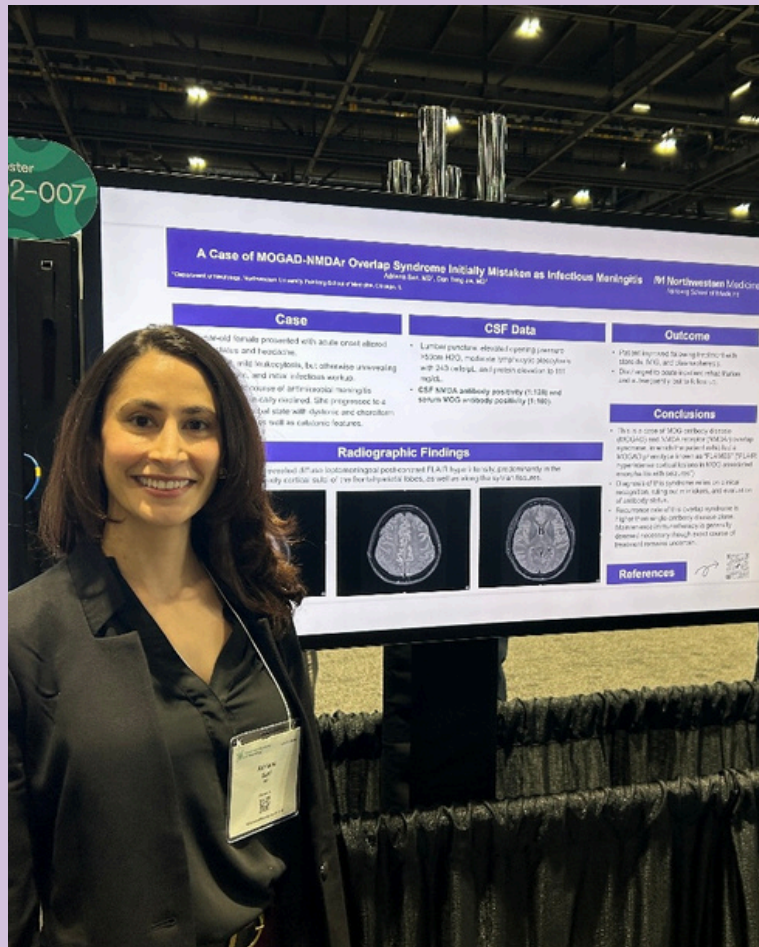


"KUDOS TO LAUREN (APP) FOR HELPING THE CONSULTS TEAM ON A BUSY DAY!" - EMILY CASALETTO (PGY3)



"KUDOS TO DR. SETH FOR RECEIVING THE A.B. BAKER TEACHER RECOGNITION AWARD AT AAN!" - NM NEUROLOGY RESIDENTS

HIGHLIGHTS FROM AAN



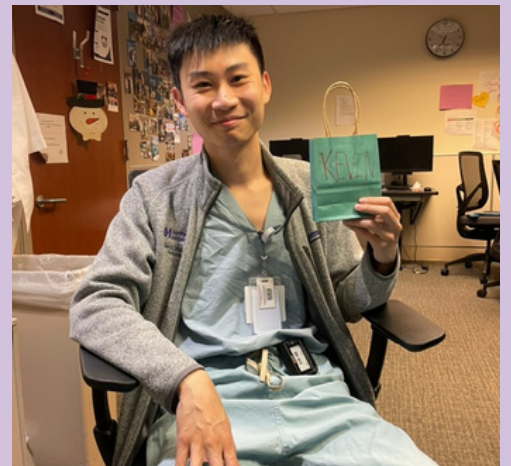
HIGHLIGHTS FROM AAN



HIGHLIGHTS FROM AAN



MORE RESIDENCY FUN (IN THE SUN)



THE VERHAGEN FAMILY'S COMMITMENT TO MOVEMENT DISORDERS

THIS FEATURE IS
ORIGINALLY FROM THE
MOVEMENT DISORDERS
NEWSLETTER AND FEATURES
OUR VERY OWN PGY2
RESIDENT, ROLF!



“What is a legacy? It’s planting seeds in a garden you never get to see.” These wise words from the award-winning show *Hamilton* are in many ways an encapsulation of parenthood. Parents hope that their parental efforts give their children a solid foundation that will guide them through life. There are many examples of children following in their parents’ footsteps. The PDMDC is fortunate to have an example of this within our community. Dr. Leo Verhagen Metman has been a mighty presence in the movement disorders landscape for decades. But, perhaps, his true legacy to the field is through his two sons, Okker and Rolf, who have both decided to pursue the field of neurology.

Rolf is the Verhagens’ second son and is currently in his second year of residency in neurology at Northwestern’s Feinberg School of Medicine. Rolf’s journey into neurology was naturally influenced by both of his parents. His mother, Lisette, is an ICU nurse. When asked about his early exposure to the field of movement disorders, Rolf said, “I still remember when I was in third grade and my family took a trip to a wheelchair basketball game for one of my dad’s patients. Even then, it struck me how much he cared for his patient that he would be willing to drive a couple hours with his boys packed in the back of a Buick just to support his patient on a weekend.” While the seeds of a future in neurology were planted for Rolf, he did not immediately venture into the field. Rolf joined the US Navy as a nuclear instructor for the nuclear propulsion program. After serving for five years, Rolf then enrolled in medical school. Rolf acknowledged that he felt very inspired by his father’s philosophy that his job as a neurologist is one that is in service of others. Rolf felt that his role in the Navy, as well as his role as a neurologist, is in service to others and is a direct reflection of his father’s influence.

The Verhagens’ youngest son, Okker, is also an up-and-coming neurologist. Okker is currently finishing his final year of residency at the University of Chicago. When asked where his interest in neurology began, Okker said “This started with a class project where we had the freedom to conduct an

interview with anyone, and I, of course, chose my dad and learned a lot (for an 8-year-old) about Parkinson’s disease.” Leo also recounted this project, “We worked on this together for a while, then went to my office and recorded the session. I still have the clip, and we showed it at his wedding 2 years ago. It is super cute, Okker in a dapper blue blazer with a microphone, starting the conversation with: ‘....so, Dr. Verhagen what IS Parkinson’s disease?.....’ We did multiple takes, so that eventually he could ask all questions without looking at his notes. The best was his ending, where he said in official manner: ‘Thank you, Dr. Verhagen, for telling us about Parkinson’s disease. This was followed by: I’ll see you(giggling) ..tonight?’” Okker had a more direct journey into neurology than his brother. He took a gap year after finishing his undergraduate studies and then went on to medical school. Leo recognizes that it indeed “takes a village” to raise a child, and their village consisted, not coincidentally, of many medical friends. They supported both Okker and Rolf during their studies, and were role models who also influenced their career choices. Okker has decided to pursue neurocritical care which is the perfect blend of his father’s career in neurology and his mother’s career in critical care.

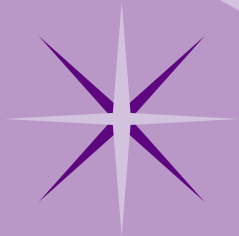
Even though Okker is pursuing a different branch of neurology, he still maintains a close connection with movement disorders. Okker will be running the Chicago Marathon this fall and is fundraising to support the Parkinson’s Foundation. While this decision certainly speaks to Okker’s respect for the Parkinson’s community, it is even more so in dedication to his dad. On his fundraising page, Okker wrote, “His lifelong commitment to improving the lives of those affected by Parkinson’s has been a constant source of inspiration for me. Running this marathon is my way of honoring his work as he begins to wind down his career, while I am just beginning mine (and, perhaps, the only way I can still make him proud after choosing neurocritical care instead of continuing the family business in movement disorders).”

We want to wish Okker good luck as he finishes his residency, trains for the marathon, and fundraises for the Parkinson’s Foundation. We are also thrilled to be ringside, watching Rolf develop as a neurologist. But more than anything, we want to showcase the story of this beautiful family who illustrates service to the Parkinson’s community in so many ways. There are so many hard days and times for those affected by Parkinson’s disease. It is our hope that this story reminds you all that the work that has been done and is being done by previous and current generations is planting the seeds in the garden for tomorrow’s physicians and advances in care.

YOU CAN DONATE TO OKKER’S MARATHON FUNDRAISER FOR THE PARKINSON’S FOUNDATION BY VISITING
[HTTPS://SECURE.PARKINSON.ORG/SITE/TR/CHAMPIONS-MARATHONS/GENERAL?](https://secure.parkinson.org/site/tr/champions-marathons/general?PG=PERSONAL&PX=3227964&FR_ID=7016)
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PETS OF THE MONTH: MEET HELA AND FREYA

THESE TWO LIVE WITH DERRICK (PGY2) AND DEANNE!



DONATIONS AND SUPPORT

LOVE FOLLOWING ALONG OUR WELLNESS ADVENTURES?

CONSIDER MAKING A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE GIFT TO SUPPORT ADDITIONAL EVENTS LIKE THE ONES HIGHLIGHTED HERE!

GO TO [HTTPS://GIVE.NORTHWESTERN.EDU](https://give.northwestern.edu) AND SELECT "MAKE A GIFT." ENTER "NEUROLOGY RESIDENT WELLNESS FUND" IN THE DESIGNATION BAR

