

# Clinical Neuroscience Scholars Program

The Vanderbilt Brain Institute is pleased to announce that the generous support of the [Dan Marino Foundation](#) and the [JB Marshall Laboratory for Neurovascular Therapeutics](#) has enabled us to offer a Clinical Neuroscience Scholars certificate program. This program will run in conjunction with the Clinical Neurosciences Institute, and the Departments of Psychiatry, Neurology and Neurosurgery. It offers scholarship opportunities for students currently in their 2nd or 3rd year of the VBI PhD program.

## Program Goals

*Providing Graduate Students and Residents with a transformative educational experience*

Vanderbilt Neuroscience recognizes that in traditional programs, graduate students may research Parkinson's disease genetics, yet never interact with a patient. Likewise, residents may only have an opportunity to track patient progress without understanding novel targets for therapeutics in the coming decades.



Fellows and residents will be able to take their turn at basic science projects on a fast track to publishing. They can review introductory courses in lab science, build up their lab experience, and interact with scientists in order to gain a better understanding of how today's research informs tomorrow's therapies.

Graduate students can experience how their research topics are valid in a clinical setting and then apply this experience to support the relevancy of their future publications and grant applications.

## Getting Started

The program is designed to provide trainees working on projects related to clinical issues in the neurosciences an opportunity to work with a clinical mentor in an effort to understand the realities of CNS clinical care. Candidates should self-identify clinical mentors who do not have basic science laboratories, yet have a strong clinical presence in the subfield of interest. Working with the mentor, students will outline a program that is mutually beneficial for the clinician and student, thereby providing an outlet for new collaborations based on clinically relevant topics.

### **How does it Work?**

Outstanding candidates will be selected and paired with a clinical mentor and basic science mentor. Trainees will be refreshed and introduced to fundamental concepts in clinical neuroscience with a short series of didactic lectures and unique opportunities to interact with patients in an informal setting, allowing them to share their stories. Emphasis will be placed on introducing trainees to the powerful bioinformatics, genetic, clinical trial, and discovery tools developed by The Medical Center. Next steps include step-by-step instruction in establishing clinical and research trials by participating in an active program.

All Clinical Neuroscience Scholars from VBI will be expected to participate in clinical shadowing with exposure to patients in the field of research. They will supplement their educational base through additional readings, seminars, classes or journal clubs with the objective of understanding current issues in diagnosis, disease management, patient care, treatment modalities, and patient



experience. This program should be considered as a supplement to the primary objective of the thesis projects of students and time commitment should average 8 hours/month.

### **Submission Materials**

- Their CV
- The CV of their identified clinical mentor
- A 500 word statement on how their research would benefit from participation in the certificate program

- A 500 word statement on how this program would help them achieve their long term career goals
- A draft proposal from the applicant on specific lecture series or training activities outside of shadowing which will be used to augment the shadowing experience
- A letter from the laboratory PI supporting their participation in this program

These documents should be assembled into a single PDF and submitted to [Roz Johnson](#) by **April 23rd at 5:00 pm**. Late applications or incomplete applications will not be considered.

### **Expectations**

- Shadowing clinical mentors should occur an average of four times during the program. One of these shadowing experiences can be done with a colleague in a closely related discipline (e.g., a Neurosurgeon specializing in DBS and a clinical Neurologist in movement disorders).
- Progress reports from the clinical mentor will be due on 11/2011 and 5/2013 (tentatively).
- VBI Clinical Neuroscience Scholars will present as a group at the Wednesday afternoon forum in lieu of their annual presentation requirement for VBI. These will be scheduled for Spring of 2013 and clinical mentors are strongly encouraged to attend.
- These are named scholarships supported by the generous support of The Dan Marino Foundation and the JB Marshall Foundation. Students will self-identify as either a Marino or JB Marshall scholar on their CVs, published works, posters and email correspondence.
- Two meetings will be held with the Clinical Scholars Steering Committee to discuss progress, additional training opportunities and funding.
- Students will perform all mandatory testing for education required to work with patient populations including HIPPA, Vanderbilt Credo and safety training.

- Failure to meet these expectations will result in ineligibility for Travel Scholarships or dismissal from the program.

This portion of the program is geared towards those pursuing a PhD (rather than an MD, PhD) although dual degree applicants will be considered with a solid and immediately tangible rationale. Students are expected to identify their own clinical mentors and discuss their needs and interests to find appropriate matches but are directed to the website of the Departments of Neurology, Neurosurgery and Psychiatry. The clinical mentor cannot be the same as the laboratory mentor. Appointments to the program will be for 1 year with the possibility of renewal. Eight applicants will be selected from the VBI graduate program. Two residents and fellows will be selected from the Departments of Neurosurgery, Neurology and Psychiatry to partner with research mentors (program announcement is forthcoming in the fall of 2012).

### **Program Oversight**

The Neuroscience Clinical Scholar's program steering committee is comprised of

- Robert Singer, MD: Neurosurgery Faculty Advisor  
[robert.singer@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:robert.singer@vanderbilt.edu)
- BethAnn McLaughlin, PhD: VBI Faculty Advisor  
[Bethann.McLaughlin@Vanderbilt.edu](mailto:Bethann.McLaughlin@Vanderbilt.edu)
- David Charles, MD: Director Clinical Neurosciences and Neurology Faculty Advisor  
[david.charles@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:david.charles@vanderbilt.edu)
- Mark Wallace, PhD: VBI Director  
[Mark.Wallace@Vanderbilt.edu](mailto:Mark.Wallace@Vanderbilt.edu)

### **Other materials:**

Clinical mentors must have primary appointments in:

[Neurology](#), [Psychiatry](#) or [Neurosurgery](#)

### **Scholars Need Your Support**

Today's competitive training environment requires researchers and residents to understand both clinical and basic science to provide the best care. In order to provide this unique patient oriented training, students are paired with sponsors and foundations interested in investing in the next generation of care providers. Only through the financial support of researchers, clinicians and patients will we be able to place our trainees in pivotal roles allowing them to access world class medical research while understanding the realities of patients and families living with neurological disease and dysfunction. Naming opportunities are available for as little as \$90 a month and include membership in the [Canby Robinsons Society](#). To learn more about this program and meet our trainees, please contact Dr. McLaughlin.