Duke Anesthesiology’s innovative curriculum program, known as ACES (Academic Career Enrichment Scholars), is a highly selective resident research track designed to increase the number of graduates pursuing academic careers and help them gain status as independently-funded researchers. It matches up to two residents per year.
The primary focus of the nationally-acclaimed Duke Anesthesiology Residency Program is the development of clinical skill and expertise required for the practice of anesthesiology. However, many of our residency applicants aspire to careers in academic anesthesiology and seek to supplement their clinical training with opportunities for research and publication. In the past, the knowledge gained through clinical training was sufficient for an appointment as a junior faculty member and to conduct meaningful laboratory or clinical research. But the quickening pace of innovation makes it difficult to perform state-of-the-art research without additional postdoctoral training. Increasingly, the skills necessary for successful scientific investigation falls outside the scope of clinical residency programs.

Given these challenges, how is our specialty working to prepare the next generation of physician-scientists? Duke Anesthesiology created the ACES Program to integrate advanced clinical and research training without prolonging the duration of the traditional residency and fellowship system. Our goal is to prepare outstanding clinicians with the skills and experience necessary for successful careers in academic anesthesiology.

By combining a modified four-year anesthesiology residency with a year of subspecialty fellowship, the ACES Program is designed to offer trainees up to 13 months of dedicated research experience while meeting the American Board of Anesthesiology clinical training requirements for both residency and fellowship certification. The five-year curriculum is individualized to meet the academic goals of each scholar and will not require selection of a clinical fellowship until after completing subspecialty rotations. In addition to house staff salary and benefits, a stipend will be provided to each scholar during the CA-1 through CA-4 (fellowship) years. Individuals completing the program will be eligible for enrollment in the NIH T32 post-doctoral research training program in conjunction with a faculty appointment.

The ACES Program includes a lecture series designed to address the career development objectives of the scholars, who will also have the opportunity to select a prominent clinician-scientist in anesthesiology to visit Duke as part of the Invited Lecturer Series.
MEET SOME OF OUR DEPARTMENTAL MENTORS

ACES residents are provided protected research time during the CA-3 year to work with prominent scientists and clinicians across Duke University. One of the fundamental goals of this protected research time is to encourage ACES residents to accumulate high-yield experiences that will ultimately serve as building blocks for successful careers as physician scientists.

BENEFITS OF THE ACES PROGRAM

- Up to 13 months of dedicated research time
- Faculty position and slot on NIH T32 Fellowship
- Range of nationally-renowned mentors
- ACES-focused lecture series
- Residents target their interests by choosing mentors/projects from anesthesiology or outside departments
“I AM EXTREMELY GRATEFUL FOR THE UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES AFFORDED BY THE ACES PROGRAM. I AM CONFIDENT THAT THIS INNOVATIVE PROGRAM WILL HELP ME REACH MY OWN GOALS AS I STRIVE TO BECOME A SUCCESSFUL PHYSICIAN-SCIENTIST IN ANESTHESIOLOGY, CRITICAL CARE AND PERIOPERATIVE MEDICINE.”

DR. KENDALL SMITH, ACES SCHOLAR

Offers to interview for the ACES Program are by invitation only. If you have any questions about the program, please contact:

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