Applicant,
The Vanderbilt Neurosurgery Resident Training Program maintains a core mission of producing proficient, compassionate, and technically excellent neurosurgeons well prepared for their career. The Department of Neurological Surgery at Vanderbilt provides comprehensive care for pediatric and adult patients with disease or injury involving the brain, neurovascular system, spine, and peripheral nervous system, while also educating tomorrow’s Neurosurgical leaders and advancing clinical and basic science research in the Neurosciences.

Our high volume program enables residents to not only gain the clinical experience that they need as a foundation of their surgical career, but to also pursue highly specialized research interests in a mentored environment. As a result, our residents routinely publish their work in leading journals, present their findings annually at national conferences, and land prestigious awards. In addition to a well-constructed intern year and busy clinical years rotating on each subspecialty service, there are two years in the middle of the residency designated as elective years in which residents may follow one of three tracts: the Enfolded Clinical Fellowship Tract, the Clinical Outcomes Training Tract, or the Basic Science Tract. Each path offers skillsets individualized to a particular residents’ career goals identified through structured mentoring. For example, residents declaring for the Enfolded Fellowship tract may elect to spend two years with the endovascular unit, designated as a major part of our Advanced Certification Comprehensive Stroke Center, developing an advanced understanding and technical ability in catheter-based treatment of neurovascular disease. Those in the Clinical Outcomes Training Tract enroll in one of several degree-gaining programs offered at Vanderbilt such as the MPH or MSCI programs and develop an overarching theme for their own clinical research career. Residents in the Basic Science Tract embed in one of several bench laboratory opportunities at Vanderbilt in order to lay the foundation for a successful career as a surgeon-scientist.

Our Professionalism and Wellness Curriculum allows us to engage in a slightly “different” way both inside and outside our work. From simulated patient encounters for the incoming interns to journal club dinners to resident-faculty rafting trips or basketball games, this program highlights the part of being a neurosurgeon often times overlooked during the busy workweek. Important lessons are certainly learned at the elbow of an attending surgeon during a challenging operation, but managing neurosurgery as a career, these lessons often come in the quiet moments of reflection afterwards, and even on occasion out on the softball field! The overarching goal of our residency program is to produce well-rounded neurosurgeons, poised to be leaders in their field, engaged in their patients, and pushing the field forward.

I hope you can tell how enthusiastic we are about our outstanding program and our current group of residents. This is an outstanding team of men and women that I am very proud of. We hope you will consider training at Vanderbilt and enjoying all that Nashville has to offer.

Sincerely,
John C. Wellons, III, MD, MSPH
Residency Program Director
Professor of Neurological Surgery and Pediatrics