



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Groundbreaking Program Encourages Underrepresented Minorities to Consider Career in Neurosurgery

District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser Proclaims Sept. 7-13, Pathway to Neurosurgery Week

Washington, DC—Today, the Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS) Foundation launched its Pathway to Neurosurgery program in Washington, DC. The initiative is dedicated to alleviating health care disparities by encouraging high school students from underrepresented groups to pursue a career in neurosurgery or medicine.

High school students from the [E.L. Haynes](#), A District of Columbia Public Charter School, were selected to participate in a [full-day symposium](#) at the [CNS Annual Meeting](#), an international conference of neurosurgeons gathering to discuss the latest advancements in the field. The guest students will attend inspiring presentations and participate in hands-on laboratory stations to gain insight into a neurosurgeon's daily life. At the end of the symposium, the students will be invited to apply for scholarships, and up to two will be selected for year-long mentorships with local neurosurgeons in Washington, DC.

In recognition of this groundbreaking program, District of Columbia Mayor **Muriel Bowser** [proclaimed](#) Sept. 7-13 as Pathway to Neurosurgery Week.

Elad I. Levy, MD, CNS president and professor and chair of neurosurgery at the State University of New York at Buffalo, stated, "The CNS is thrilled that Mayor Bowser has recognized the Pathway to Neurosurgery program. As CNS president, it has been a privilege to witness the growth and development of this critical mission-centric project, offering exposure to the wonders of neuroscience to these exceptional students."

Only 4% of practicing neurosurgeons in the U.S. are Black, 5% are Hispanic and 8% are women. In contrast, approximately 14% of the U.S. population are Black, 19% are Hispanic and 50% are women.

"African Americans, Hispanic Americans and women are significantly underrepresented in neurosurgery, and the CNS Pathway to Neurosurgery program aims to address this problem by promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in neurosurgery. Our goal is to inspire students to consider neurosurgery as a career option to foster innovations in patient care that can improve outcomes and reduce minority health disparities," said **Tiffany R. Hodges, MD**, co-chair of the CNS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee and associate professor of neurosurgery at Case Western Reserve School of Medicine.

Edjah K. Nduom, MD, co-chair of the CNS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee and associate professor of neurosurgery at Emory University School of Medicine, added, "There are persistent racial health disparities in the United States, including in neurosurgical care, and the evidence is clear that diversifying the neurosurgical workforce is an important tool in our fight to end these disparities. The CNS Foundation is working to expand the Pathway to Neurosurgery program nationwide to harness all of the diverse talent of our people to improve health outcomes for everyone."

"This unique program highlights what we can achieve when we all come together. The CNS Foundation's Pathway to Neurosurgery program will make a difference and open doors and opportunities that did not exist before," concluded **Martina Stippler, MD**, chair of the CNS Foundation, vice-chief of the division of neurosurgery at Beth Israel Medical Center and associate professor of neurosurgery at Harvard University.

*** MORE ***

Neurosurgery is a highly specialized medical field dedicated to excellence in the diagnosis, treatment and surgical management of disorders affecting the nervous system (including the brain, spinal cord and peripheral nerves). The specialty plays a critical role in improving patient outcomes and advancing scientific knowledge in the neurosciences.

The Pathway to Neurosurgery program is supported by generous grants from [Medtronic](#), [Stryker](#) and [MicroVention](#).

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Founded in 1951, the Congress of Neurological Surgeons is the global leader in neurosurgical education, serving to promote health and improve lives through innovative neurosurgical education, advancement of clinical practice & scientific exchange. The CNS Foundation's philanthropic mission is to improve worldwide patient health by supporting innovative programs that allow neurosurgeons to collaborate globally as researchers, learners, educators, and caregivers. For more information, visit www.cns.org.

Proclamation



PATHWAY TO NEUROSURGERY WEEK

SEPTEMBER 7-13, 2023

WHEREAS, our nation has a long history of health disparities and healthcare inequities among racial and ethnic minority groups; and

WHEREAS, diversity, equity, and inclusion within medical professions foster innovations in patient care that can improve patient outcomes and reduce minority health disparities; and

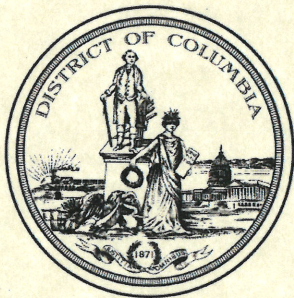
WHEREAS, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and U.S. women are significantly underrepresented in neurosurgery, the medical field dedicated to the diagnosis, treatment, and surgical management of nervous system disorders; and

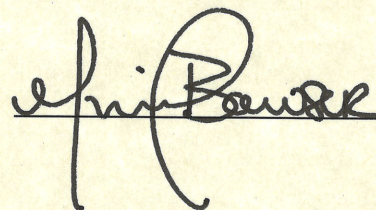
WHEREAS, the Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS) embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion in order to attract and retain the best and brightest from all demographics; and

WHEREAS, CNS's Pathway to Neurosurgery program seeks to empower individuals from underrepresented communities to pursue and succeed at careers in neurosurgery; and

WHEREAS, during its 2023 annual meeting, CNS will present an immersive neurosurgery experience at E.L. Haynes Public Charter School and offer students opportunities to apply for scholarships:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, THE MAYOR OF WASHINGTON, DC, do hereby proclaim September 7-13, 2023, as "PATHWAY TO NEUROSURGERY WEEK" in Washington, DC.







2023 Pathway to Neurosurgery Program

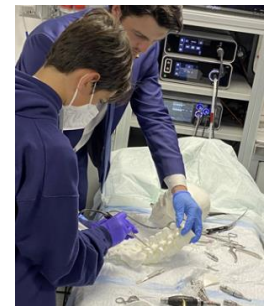
Monday, September 11, 2023 • Washington, D.C.

9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Walter E. Washington Convention Center

Local 2023 Partner:

[E.L. Haynes, A District of Columbia Public Charter School](#)



The Program

The annual program is dedicated to alleviating health care disparities by encouraging high school students from underrepresented groups to pursue a career in neurosurgery or medicine. High school students attend a full-day symposium at the CNS Annual Meeting, an international conference gathering neurosurgeon leaders who present and discuss the latest advancements in the field. The guest students will attend inspiring presentations and participate in hands-on laboratory stations to gain insight into a neurosurgeon's daily life. They will be joined by neurosurgeons from around the United States and the world for a casual sit-down lunch where they can ask questions in an informal and comfortable setting. At the end of the symposium, all high school attendees will be invited to apply for year-long scholarships. Up to two students will be selected for year-long mentorships with local neurosurgeons at nearby institutions.

Long Term: Overwhelmingly positive response from participating students and neurosurgeons has demonstrated an opportunity for expansion of the program. The CNS Foundation has established a coalition of young neurosurgeons from across the United States with a one-year charge to develop replicable best practices for the Pathway to Neurosurgery program.



By collaborating with this diverse group, who represent the best of the future for a more inclusive neurosurgery discipline, the CNS Foundation plans to expand this program nationwide.

CNS Foundation Leadership

- **Tiffany Hodges, MD**, Co-Chair, CNS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee; Assistant Professor of Neurosurgery at Case Western Reserve School of Medicine.
- **Edjah Nduom**, Co-Chair, CNS Diversity Equity, and Inclusion Committee; Associate Professor in the Department of Neurosurgery at Emory University School of Medicine.



"Before today, I didn't know about neurosurgery as a career. Now I'm really considering it!"

– a San Francisco Achievers Student

Past Local Partners:

2022: [Oasis for Girls](#) and [San Francisco Achievers](#), in cooperation with the University of California, San Francisco, Department of Neurosurgery

2021: [BreakThrough](#), in cooperation with the Department of Neurosurgery, Dell Medical School