

ACADEMIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS AND UPDATES FROM DR. W. P. ANDREW LEE

January 25, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

I am delighted to announce the appointment of **Nader Pouratian, M.D., Ph.D.**, as the new Chair of the Department of Neurological Surgery. Dr. Pouratian will start on April 1 and hold the Lois C.A. and Darwin E. Smith Distinguished Chair in Neurological Surgery.

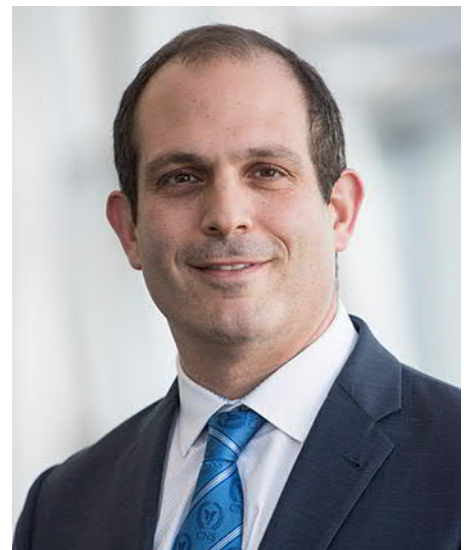
Dr. Pouratian joins us from the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), where he serves as Professor and Vice Chair of Academic Affairs in the Department of Neurosurgery. He has additional appointments and affiliations in Neuroscience, Bioengineering, and Radiation Oncology.

Following his undergraduate education at UCLA, Dr. Pouratian earned his combined medical degree and Ph.D. degree in Neuroscience from the David Geffen School of Medicine. He completed his neurosurgical residency and functional neurosurgery fellowship at the University of Virginia.

Dr. Pouratian joined the UCLA faculty in 2009, became a Vice Chair of Neurosurgery in 2016 and a Professor of Neurosurgery in 2019. That year, his peers elected him as Chair of the Faculty Executive Committee, the representative body of the faculty of the School of Medicine. The committee oversees academic programs and works with the administration to generate consensus with regard to policy, procedures, and organization of the school.

Dr. Pouratian has built a comprehensive, multidisciplinary, NIH-funded academic clinical program. As the Principal Investigator of multiple NIH grants, he investigates basic human neuroscientific principles of movement regulation and illnesses such as Parkinson's disease, chronic pain, depression, disorders of consciousness, cardiac disease, and blindness. He led a first-in-human clinical trial to provide artificial vision for the blind using a novel brain stimulator. Currently, he is leading and participating in active clinical trials of deep brain stimulation for depression and chronic low back pain, as well as brain computer interfaces.

Taking advantage of the opportunities presented by neurosurgery, his research uses advanced imaging and intracranial recordings in humans to understand the network basis of neuropsychiatric disease and to develop targeted therapeutic brain stimulation and other advanced neurotechnologies. His grant portfolio also includes a program in neuroethics.



In his clinical practice, Dr. Pouratian focuses on the surgical management of movement disorders, psychiatric disease, facial pain, and chronic pain syndromes using brain and spinal cord stimulation, radiosurgery, microsurgical techniques, and targeted ablation – including focused ultrasound. He also provides advanced clinical care for patients with peripheral nerve entrapments and tumors.

A passionate educator, Dr. Pouratian has mentored countless neurosurgical trainees, undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and junior faculty. He chairs the Congress of Neurological Surgeons' Education Committee and serves on its Executive Committee. Previously, he chaired its Guidelines Committee, which develops national evidence-based guidelines for neurosurgical care. In addition, his committee service includes the American Society of Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery, where he chairs both the Psychiatric Neurosurgery and Neuroethics committees.

A prolific author of peer-reviewed scientific publications, book chapters, reviews, and case reports, Dr. Pouratian serves on the editorial board of many leading journals in his field, including *Neurosurgery* and *Neuromodulation*.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to Dr. Carlos Bagley, for his leadership as interim Chair of Neurological Surgery; to Dr. Jeffrey Kenkel, for his service as Chair of the Search Committee; and to all the Search Committee members – Dr. Kathleen Bell, Dr. Hak Choy, Dr. Dai Chung, Dr. William Dauer, Dr. Anke Henning, Dr. Hicham Ibrahim, Dr. David McDonagh, Dr. Ohwofiemu Nwariaku, Dr. Larissa Velez, Dr. Steven Vernino, and Dr. Dwain Thiele – for the dedication and insights they brought to this comprehensive national search.

As the Chair of our Department of Neurological Surgery, Dr. Pouratian will work synergistically with Dr. Dauer and his colleagues in the Peter O'Donnell Jr. Brain Institute to enhance programmatic development for various neurological and psychiatric conditions. The strong clinical and research background he brings to the department will allow for meaningful collaborations towards the institute's goal of improving treatment options for brain disease and injury, and discovering ways to prevent such illnesses. This strategic cooperation between the Department of Neurological Surgery and the O'Donnell Brain Institute will further elevate UT Southwestern Medical Center as a national hub for excellence in neuroscience discovery and clinical care.

Please join me in welcoming Dr. Pouratian to Dallas and UT Southwestern.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

W. P. Andrew Lee, M.D.

Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Dean, UT Southwestern Medical School