

# Introduction to the Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery

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*Stil Kountakis, MD, PhD*  
*Porubsky Professor and Chair*



# Vision and Mission Statements

## *Vision:*

To be a nationally recognized leader in Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, driving excellence in patient care, cutting-edge research, and innovative education.

## *Mission:*

The Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery at the Medical College of Georgia is dedicated to advancing the field of otolaryngology through the provision of exceptional patient-centered care, conducting impactful research, and delivering comprehensive education to future leaders in the field. By embracing innovation, collaboration, and community engagement, we strive to make a positive impact on the lives of individuals locally and globally.



# Health Science Campus

- **Schools**

Medical College of Georgia  
Dental College of Georgia  
Graduate School  
College of Nursing  
College of Allied Health Sciences

- **4400+ Students**

- **1150+ Faculty**

- **Funded Research (Extramural Grant Support)**

**\$108.7 Million NIH**

**\$161.9 Million Total**



# Residency Program Hospitals

- Wellstar MCG Health  
520 Beds
- Charlie Norwood Veterans Affairs Medical Center  
156 Beds
- Wellstar MCG Children's Hospital of Georgia  
149 Beds
- TOTAL 825 Beds

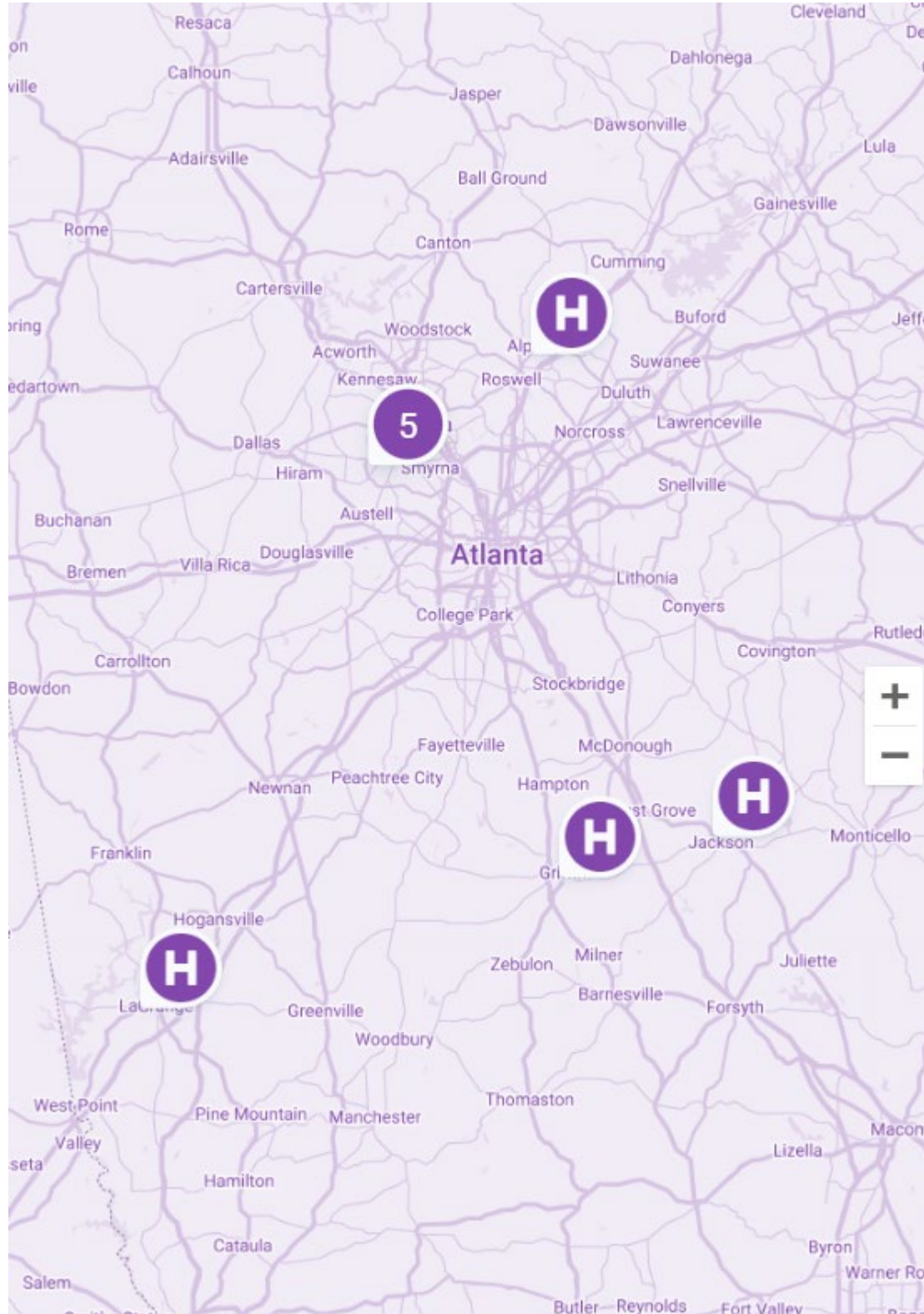








# Wellstar Health System



- Not-for-profit healthcare organization based in Marietta, Georgia
- Averages over 1.5 million patient visits annually
- Employs more than 20,000 team members
- Estimated budget: \$5.5 Billion
- Offers a wide range of services: emergency care, surgical services, maternity care, and specialized treatments in areas like cardiology and oncology

## Wellstar Cobb Hospital

3950 Austell Road  
Austell, GA, 30106

## Wellstar Douglas Hospital

8954 Hospital Drive  
Douglasville, GA, 30134

## Wellstar Kennestone Regional Medical Center

677 Church Street NE  
Marietta, GA, 30060

## Wellstar North Fulton Medical Center

3000 Hospital Boulevard  
Roswell, GA, 30076

## Wellstar Paulding Medical Center

2518 Jimmy Lee Smith Parkway  
Hiram, GA, 30141

## Wellstar Spalding Medical Center

601 South 8th Street  
Griffin, GA, 30224

## Wellstar Sylvan Grove Medical Center

1050 McDonough Road  
Jackson, GA, 30233

## Wellstar Windy Hill Hospital

2540 Windy Hill Road SE  
Marietta, GA, 30067





# Program Hospitals

- Wellstar MCG Columbia County- 150 Beds, July 2026

May 2025





# Residency Program

- Five Year, fully-accredited program
- 3-2-3-2-3 Residents per year (2 this year)
- 3 Current Fellows (Laryngology, Endocrine & Rhinology)
- Strengths
  - Excellent clinical experience
  - Tremendous academic opportunities
  - Residents placed in top tier fellowships and competitive private practices across the US
- 91 have completed the program since 1979
  - 100% board-certified
  - Many leaders in Otolaryngology



# Academic Leadership

- President of the AAO-HNS
- St. Louis University
- U Mass
- UTMB
- Duke University
- Cleveland Clinic
- Henry Ford Hospital
- Medical College of Georgia
- Univ of West Virginia
- Univ of Florida
- Univ of South Florida
- Oklahoma
- Univ of Pittsburgh
- UT San Antonio
- Univ of Mississippi
- Baylor College of Medicine
- MUSC
- Portsmouth Naval
- Indiana University
- Ohio State
- Univ of Kentucky



# Resident Clinical Experience

- AU Outpatient visits: 1,500 per month
- AU Surgical Procedures: >300 per month
- Primary Surgeon cases – FY2025: 3,364
- Clinical Teams:
  - Blue (H&N Surgery, Endocrine, Sleep)
  - Green (Rhinology/Skull Base, Otology, FPRS)
  - Red (Laryngology, Pediatric OTO)
  - VA
- Elective Sites:
  - The Georgia Center for Facial Plastic Surgery (Chen)
  - Fort Eisenhower – Facial Plastics experience (Vincent)
  - Southern Otologic Clinic – Otology experience (Moretz)
  - Augusta/Aiken ENT – General/Facial Plastics experience (Owen)





# Rotations

- **PGY1:** 6 months OTO-HNS (MCG and VA)  
6 months other (Anesthesia, Gen Plastics, Peds Surg, Surg Onc, Trauma ICU, Acute Care Surgery)
- **PGY 2:** 10 months OTO-HNS (MCG)  
1 month Allergy  
1 month Research
- **PGY 3/4:** 10 months OTO-HNS (MCG and VA)  
1 month Research  
1 month Elective (FPRS, Audiology, Neuroradiology)
- **PGY 5:** 12 months MCG OTO-HNS Chief (4m Blue, 4m Red, 4m Green)

# Academic Conference Schedule

- Thursday Morning Didactics (Residents, Faculty, Guest Lecturers)
- Tumor Board- weekly – Thursday at Noon
- Planning Conference – weekly by specialty
- Grand Rounds- 1st Tuesday each month
- Journal Club- 4th Tuesday each month
- Temporal Bone Lab- 2/month x 6 months
- Rhinology/skull base lab
- Laryngology Conference – Bi-monthly; 6x/year



# Dr. James T. Lowe, Jr.

## Temporal Bone Lab



14 Stations (enough for each resident to drill simultaneously)

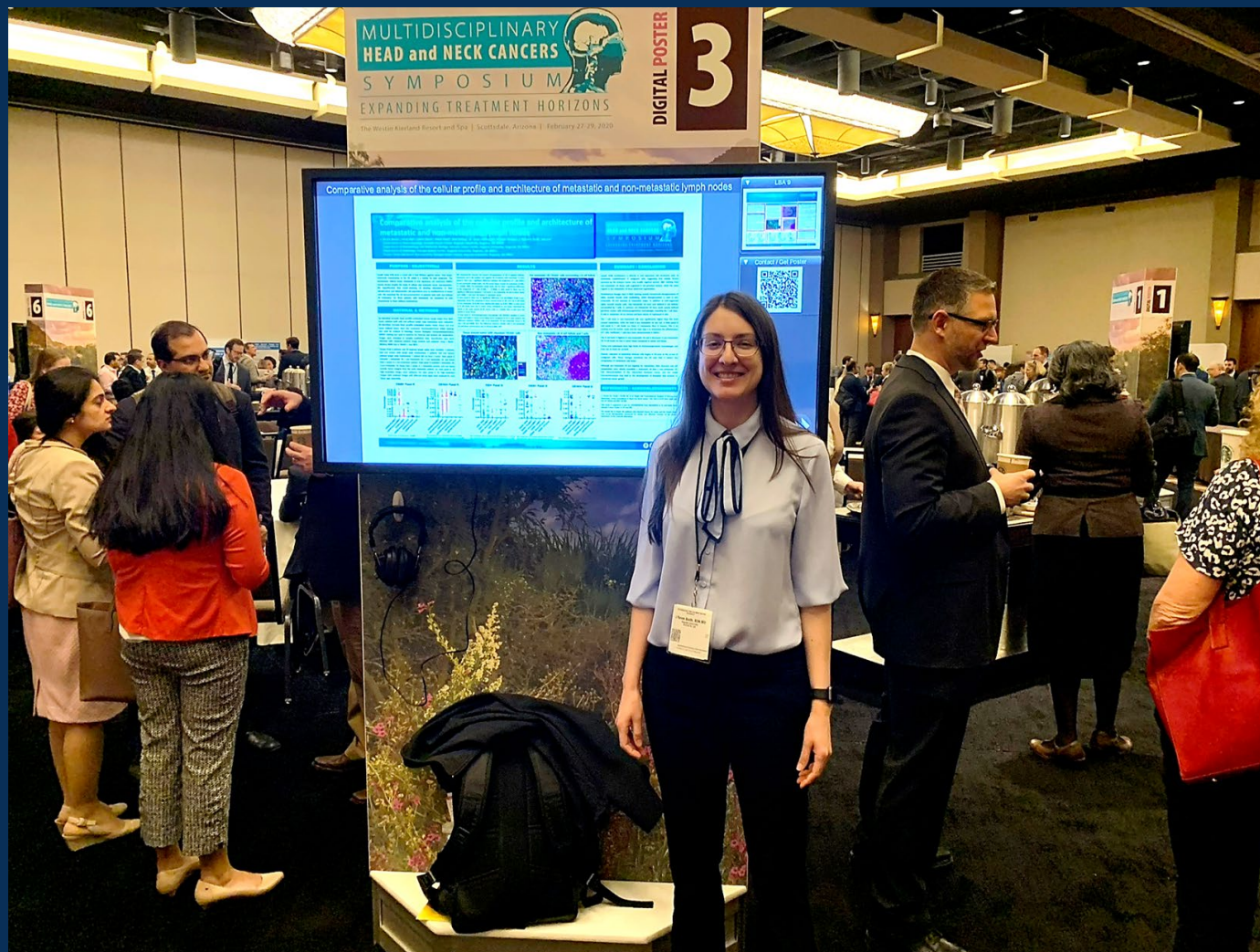
Equipped for skull base and rhinology cadaver dissections

3D printing capability

\$250,000 available for research



# Research



- 3 months (1m each PGY 2, 3, 4 years)
- Complete major project by end of PGY3
- One publishable paper per year required

# Research Support

- Department research assistant
- MCG Dean's Summer Research Fellows
- Established collaboration with basic scientists
- Numerous IRB-approved clinical trials
- Ample research funds
- Culture of investigation
- Quality



# Call Responsibility (Average 5-7 x per Month)

- PGY 1- In-house vs. Home Call depending on rotation
- PGY 2- Primary Home Call Q4/5
- PGY 3- Primary Home Call Q4/5
- PGY 4- Back-up Chief Call Q4/5
- PGY 5- Back-up Chief Call Q4/5
- Attending- 100% of time





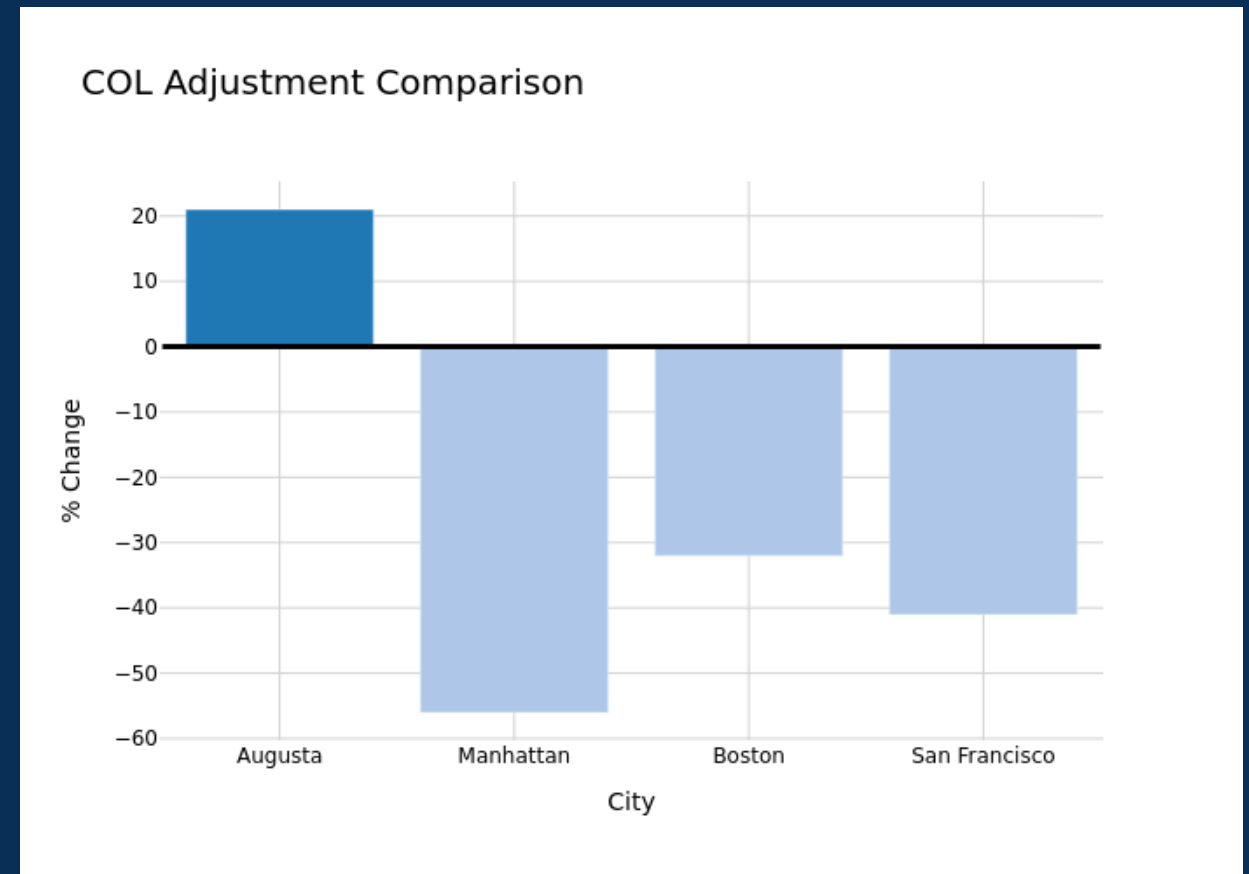
# Resident Benefits

- Health Insurance
- Disability Insurance
- Malpractice Insurance
- Coats and Laundry
- Meals on call
- 3 weeks vacation
- Meeting costs covered for presentations \$1000 regional, \$1500 national meetings
- Loupes up to \$1000
- In-service incentive
- Book money \$250 per year



# Why Augusta Stands Out: Cost of Living Advantage

- Augusta Offers Exceptional Value for Residents: (Nanu et al., Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, 2024):
- Pre-COL Stipend: \$60,963
- Post-COL Adjusted Stipend: \$73,626
- Increase: +\$12,664 (+21%)
- Augusta ranks #1 nationally for stipend increase after cost-of-living adjustment
- Lower living costs mean more financial flexibility and better quality of life for residents.



Nanu DP, Tiwana HS, Akella DS, Nguyen SA, Khan S, Carr MM. Navigating the Discrepancy: How Cost of Living (COL) Adjustments Impact Otolaryngology Residents' Salaries. Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg Found. Published online October 1, 2024. doi:10.1002/ohn.978

# Resident Mentoring

- Assigned to faculty member during 1<sup>st</sup> year
- Four annual meetings scheduled
- Other meetings as needed/desired
- Additional mentoring readily available depending on interests





# Faculty

- Ed Porubsky – General (Washington U) Professor Emeritus
- Stil Kountakis – Rhinology-Sinus Surgery (UVA)
- Greg Postma – Laryngology (UNC, Vanderbilt)
- David Terris – Head and Neck/Endocrine (Stanford)
- Ken Byrd – Head and Neck/Skull Base (MUSC, Pittsburgh)
- Michael Groves – General/Sleep/Head and Neck/Associate DIO (Michigan, Baylor)
- Sarah Hodge – Otology/Neurotology (UNC, House Clinic)
- Christopher Johnson – Laryngology (NMC San Diego, MCG)
- Heather Koehn – Pediatric Oto/FPRS (UNC, Vanderbilt)
- Jason May – Pediatric Oto/Otology (VCU, Wayne State U, Pitt, Missouri)
- Drew Prosser – Pediatric Oto (AU, Cincinnati)
- Sallie Long – Head and Neck/Microvascular (Columbia, Miami)
- Daniel Sharbel – Head and Neck/Microvascular (MCG, Vanderbilt)
- Forest Weir - Head and Neck/Microvascular (USC, Cincinnati, UAB)
- Diana Bigler – Rhinology-Sinus Surgery (Kentucky, MCG)
- Emad Ali – General/Endocrine/Sleep (Damascus University, MCG)
- Clinical faculty: Johnson (FPRS), Moretz (Otology), Chen (FPRS), Vincent (FPRS)

# Faculty Recruitment

- Recruiting:
  - Otolaryngology/Neurotology
  - General Otolaryngologist
  - Facial Plastics
  - 6 additional faculty positions approved through FY 2029
  - 3 General APP positions approved
  - Columbia County Hospital
    - 1 Gen ENT FY2027
    - 1 Gen ENT FY2028
    - 1 APP FY2027



# Subspecialties

- Head and Neck
- Thyroid/Parathyroid
- Otology/Neurotology
- Pediatric Otolaryngology
- Facial Plastic and Reconstructive
- Rhinology/Sinus Surgery
- Skull Base Surgery
- Laryngology
- Sleep Disorders and Surgery
- Trauma – shared with OMFS
- General Otolaryngology

