

Press Release



For Immediate Release

Contact: Bailey Wilson

bwilson@aans.org

847.378.0500

David Bergeron, MD, Selected as 2026-27 Van Wagenen Fellow

May 20, 2025 (Rolling Meadows, Ill.) – The William P. Van Wagenen Fellowship Selection Committee has announced **David Bergeron, MD**, as the recipient of the 2026-27 William P. Van Wagenen Fellowship.

Dr. Bergeron, a resident in neurosurgery at the Université de Montréal in Montréal, Quebec, Canada, will spend his fellowship year at the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) in Switzerland, under the supervision and mentorship of Professor Jocelyne Bloch. He will pursue the research topic “Brain-spine interface for motor restoration in subcortical stroke.”

“It is a true honor to accept the William P. Van Wagenen Fellowship. The Fellowship will allow me to join the Defitech Center for Neurorestoration (.NeuroRestore), a world-leading institution in the development of invasive neurotechnologies to restore motor function,” Dr. Bergeron said. “Supervised by neurosurgeon Jocelyne Bloch and neuroscientist Grégoire Courtine, my goal is not only to contribute scientifically to this promising field, but also to develop an unparalleled expertise to bring back to North America as a surgeon-scientist in functional and restorative neurosurgery. I thank the NREF and the AANS for this incredible opportunity.”

As the 2026 Van Wagenen Fellow, Dr. Bergeron will collaborate with neurosurgeon Jocelyne Bloch and the .NeuroRestore team that pioneered the concept of a brain-spine interface, a digital bridge decoding motor intent in the cortex and generating these movements by patterned epidural spinal stimulation. During his fellowship, Dr. Bergeron will develop a brain-spine interface to restore upper limb movements after a subcortical stroke. This will include a mechanistic study in non-human primates and a first-in-human clinical trial of brain-spine interfacing for subcortical stroke.

Michael C. Park, MD, PhD, FAANS, Chair, Van Wagenen Fellowship Committee and 2009 recipient of the William P. Van Wagenen Fellowship says, “On behalf of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) and the Neurosurgery Research & Education Foundation (NREF), we congratulate Dr. Bergeron and welcome him to this select group of neurosurgeons who’ve been awarded this unique and prestigious fellowship.”

The Van Wagenen Fellowship offers post-residency study in a foreign country for a period of twelve (12) months. The William P. Van Wagenen Fellowship was established by the estate of Dr. Van Wagenen, who was one of the founders and the first President of the Harvey Cushing Society, now the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS). The Van Wagenen Fellowship provides freedom in scientific development without the restrictive limitations usually imposed by many research grants and fellowships.

For more information on the Van Wagenen Fellowship or other Neurosurgery Research & Education Foundation (NREF) grant programs, contact NREF at 847.378.0500 or info@nref.org.

To support similar research and educational programs, consider a donation to the NREF, www.nref.org/Donate.

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About AANS

Founded in 1931 as the Harvey Cushing Society, the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) is a scientific and educational association with more than 11,000 members worldwide. The AANS is dedicated to advancing the specialty of neurological surgery in order to provide the highest quality of neurosurgical care to the public. Fellows of the AANS are board-certified by the American Board of Neurological Surgery, the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, or the Mexican Council of Neurological Surgery, A.C. Neurosurgery is the medical specialty concerned with the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of disorders that affect the spinal column, spinal cord, brain, nervous system and peripheral nerves.

For more information, visit www.AANS.org.

About the NREF

The Neurosurgery Research & Education Foundation (NREF) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization created in 1980 by the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) to support research and education efforts that enhance and confirm the critical role neurosurgeons play in improving lives.

The NREF is dedicated to providing education to neurosurgeons at all stages of their careers, as well as funding research into new and existing neurosurgical treatments, in order to identify links between best practices and improved outcomes in patient care. Through voluntary public donations, corporate support, and donations from allied groups, the NREF supports endeavors that impact the lives of those suffering from epilepsy, stroke, brain tumors, spinal disorders, sports-related head injuries, lower back pain and Parkinson's disease.

For more information about NREF, visit www.nref.org.