

## CNS SPRING CONFERENCE 2023: CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA NEUROLOGY 2023 SPEAKER PROFILES



**Adib A. Ablá, MD** is chief of vascular neurosurgery and director of UCSF's surgical program for cerebrovascular disorders. Dr. Ablá's research interests include computer modeling of brain aneurysms and their treatments, as well as laboratory testing of specific approaches and new techniques to improve outcomes for cerebrovascular surgery patients. He is particularly involved in research addressing fusiform aneurysms of the basilar. He also studies minimally invasive treatments for hypertensive hemorrhage. Dr. Ablá earned his medical degree from the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, completed a neurosurgery residency and a cerebrovascular and skull base fellowship at the Barrow Neurological Institute, completed a vascular neurosurgery fellowship at UCSF, and before joining UCSF, he was director of cerebrovascular surgery at the University of Arkansas for three years.



**Ian Bledsoe, MD** is an Associate Professor of Neurology at UCSF Weill Institute for Neurosciences. Dr. Bledsoe has a special interest in dystonia. Dr. Bledsoe's research interests include finding better treatments for dystonia and using neuroimaging to improve understanding of what causes the condition. Dr. Bledsoe received his medical degree from the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. He completed a residency in neurology and a fellowship in clinical neurophysiology and electromyography at Stanford and a fellowship in movement disorders and a master's degree in clinical research at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. Before attending medical school, Bledsoe earned a bachelor's degree in violin performance at Northwestern University. He continues to play and perform in his free time.



**Cynthia Chin, MD** directs spinal pain management at the UCSF Imaging Center at China Basin. She is an expert in CT-guided spinal injections to treat pain. She also has expertise in magnetic resonance neurography, and spinal and nerve diffusion imaging. In her research, Chin studies advanced imaging of the spine and nerves. Chin earned her medical degree at Tufts University School of Medicine, where she completed a residency in radiology. She completed a neuroradiology fellowship at UCSF. Chin is a member of the American Roentgen Ray Society, American Society of Neuroradiology and American Society of Spine Radiology.



**Philip Ente, MD** is a neurologist in Lompoc, California. He is currently an Adjunct Professor at Cedars Sinai Hospital and has been affiliated with UCLA Neurology Group Practice and Marian Medical Center. Dr. Ente also conducts research with an interest in olfaction and neurogastronomy.

He completed his Medical Education at the University of Paris (U De Pierre Et Marie Curie), his residency at the Medical College of Pennsylvania and a Fellowship at the Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia.



**Neelam Goyal, MD** is a Clinical Associate Professor of Neurology & Neurological Sciences at UCSF. Dr. Goyal completed her medical school education at SUNY Downstate in Brooklyn, NY. She completed her neurology residency and a fellowship year in neurophysiology with a focus on neuromuscular disorders at Stanford and joined the faculty of Stanford University School of Medicine in the division of Neuromuscular Medicine. Dr. Goyal specializes in the diagnosis, management, and electrophysiological testing of neuromuscular disorders, with expertise in immune-mediated disorders (myositis, myasthenia gravis, CIDP, and vasculitis) and ALS. Her research interest includes monitoring and management of short and long-term toxicity of immunosuppressive agents. Her clinical focus includes ALS,

Myasthenia Gravis, Inclusion body myositis, and neuromuscular disorders.



**Richard P. Knudsen, MD** graduated, with Highest Honors, from UC Davis with an individual, interdepartmental major in Human Biology. He attained his medical degree from the University of Cincinnati and completed his Pediatric Residency at UC Irvine Medical Center. He returned to University of Cincinnati (hometown) and attained, in a 3-year post-doctoral Fellowship, his formal training in Pediatric Neurology. He later achieved a second Fellowship, in Advanced Clinical Neurophysiology/Electroencephalography/Epileptology,, from the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. He has served, in academic Professorships, at the University of Washington and at the University of California. He is Board Certified in 5 + disciplines; his passion is Sleep-Wake Medicine. He is an active member of the Sleep Research Society and of our California Sleep Society. He is a Fellow, Elect, of the AASM. He is published in MedLinkNeurology and in Medscape; Dr.

Knudsen enjoys generating, serially, provocative lectureships for his respected colleagues.



**Stella B. Legarda, MD** is the current California Neurology Society President and Membership Chair of CNS. She is a pediatric neurologist, clinical neurophysiologist, and epilepsy specialist practicing in Monterey, California. In 2013 Dr. Legarda left academia to join her current multispecialty Montage Medical Group where her current research interests in applied neuromodulation compel her practice to include adults with epilepsy and other acquired central nervous system disorders (stroke, Parkinson disease, encephalopathies, postencephalitis, and dementias). She has published in peer-reviewed medical journals on a range of subjects namely epilepsy, clinical neurophysiology, and the value of infralow frequency (ILF) brain training in neurology practice. [Dr. Legarda recently penned a chapter "Remediating Brain Instabilities in a Neurology Practice" in the second edition of 'Restoring the Brain: Neurofeedback as an Integrative Approach to Health' (Ed. Kirk,H, 2020), and in 2020

received a Physician Scholar grant award from the Montage Health Foundation to evaluate the treatment response of patients with post-concussion syndrome to ILF neuromodulation.] Dr. Legarda has held past academic appointments at the University of Florida College of Medicine and at Georgetown University College of Medicine. Dr. Legarda is also a current CNS Delegate to the CMA.



**Dana McDermott, DO**, is a board certified Neurologist by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, dedicated to providing thorough, compassionate and comprehensive patient care, particularly for patients and their families suffering from neurodegenerative diseases. She received her Bachelors degree in Biology and Pre-medicine with Honors at Kent State University and a Masters degree in Medical Sciences with a concentration in mental health at Boston University. After obtaining her medical degree from the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, she completed her residency and served as a chief resident in neurology at the University of California, Irvine, followed by a subspecialty fellowship at the University of California, San Francisco, in Behavioral Neurology.



**Jamie McDonald, MD** is a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Neurology at Stanford University School of Medicine. She specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of multiple sclerosis and other demyelinating diseases, including neuromyelitis optica spectrum disorder (NMOSD) and myelin oligodendrocyte glycoprotein antibody disease (MOGAD). Dr. McDonald earned her BS in Human Development at Cornell University, an MS in Human Nutrition at Columbia University, and her MD from the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland School of Medicine. Dr. McDonald completed her internship and adult neurology residency at the University of Utah. She completed a two-year clinical MS/neuroimmunology fellowship at Stanford Health Care Multiple Sclerosis Center. Dr. McDonald received

the National MS Society's Sylvia Lawry Physician Fellowship, including formalized training in conducting clinical trials. As part of her fellowship, she completed a master's degree in epidemiology and clinical research.



**Mark Morrow, MD**, is a neurologist with Montage Medical Group. He was born and raised in Massachusetts and attended the combined undergraduate/medical school program at Boston University. He is board-certified in neurology by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology. Dr. Morrow interned at Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center, then completed his neurology residency at UCLA Medical Center. Dr. Morrow spent three years as a clinical and research fellow in neuro-ophthalmology at the University of Toronto. He served as chief of neurology at Olive View-UCLA Medical Center in Sylmar, Calif., and as associate director of the Multiple Sclerosis Center at Providence St. Vincent Medical Center in Portland, Ore. Most recently, Dr. Morrow served as chairman and residency program director at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, Torrance, Calif., and as clinical professor of neurology at the David Geffen (UCLA) School of Medicine. Dr. Morrow's expertise is in

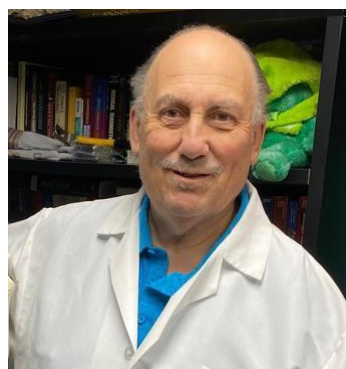
problems of vision and eye movement, dizziness and balance disorders, and conditions like MS and NMO.



**Marc R. Nuwer, MD, PhD** is the CNS representative on Medicare Services. Dr. Nuwer obtained his MD and PhD from Stanford, then his neurology residency and fellowships in epilepsy and neurophysiology at UCLA. He presently serves as Director of the Clinical Neurophysiology Program. He is the first neurologist to develop spinal cord intraoperative monitoring, reducing the risk of surgery by more than 60%. He went on to pioneer critical care EEG monitoring. Together with Epileptologist J Engel, they built the first commercial epilepsy monitoring unit. Dr. Nuwer championed an international effort changing EEG from a paper-ink method to a digital method. In his role in the American Medical Association's policy-making body, he advocates for improvement in medical care across the US. Dr. Nuwer is recognized internationally as a leader in his field. Dr. Nuwer is a past president of CNS and serves as advisor on Medicare and as our representative to Medicare.



**Paula Ravin, MD** serves as Chair of the Association of California Neurologists' Foundation. She is an Associate Professor of Neurology at UCLA, with a specialty in movement disorders. She has been at UCLA since 2016. Her background includes undergraduate at Yale University, Medical School at Wayne State University School of Medicine, Neurology residency at Georgetown University School of Medicine, and she did a fellowship in movement disorders at NIH. She chairs the Association of Neurologists Foundation on behalf of the California Neurology Society.



**George Sarka MD, DrPH, MPH** is a Past President of CNS (2015-2016) and presently services as Secretary. He is an Associate Clinical Professor of Medicine at UCLA; Past Governor of the American College of Physicians, S. California, Chapter Region II (2008-2012); Past President of the LA Neurological Society (2006-2009); and Past President of the Los Angeles County Medical Association-District 1(2006-2008). He received his Doctor of Medicine and Master of Surgery (MDCM) from McGill University Faculty of Medicine in 1980; a Master of Public Health (MPH) from UCLA in 2003; and his Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) from UCLA in 2013. Dr. Sarka did his Internship/Residency in Internal Medicine at the Medical College of Wisconsin Affiliated Hospitals (1980-1983); his Fellowship in Rheumatology at Louisiana State University (1983-1985); and a second Residency in Neurology at the Los Angeles County- University of Southern California Medical Center (1985-1988). He is board certified in 11 subspecialties including: Internal Medicine; Rheumatology; Neurology; Geriatrics; Sports Medicine; Headache Medicine; Emergency Medicine; Public Health and General Preventive Medicine via the ABPM; Public Health via the NBPHE; Occupational Medicine and Hypertension. He is also a medical and public health historian and has given over 1,000 lectures. He is currently on staff at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center/UCLA; Memorial Care, Saddleback Medical Center, CME Director and an Internist and Multispecialty-Public Health Specialist at California State University, Northridge in the Klotz Student Health Center in Northridge, California.



**Anand Veeravagu, MD** is Associate Professor of Neurosurgery and Associate Professor of Orthopedic Surgery, by courtesy, and Director of Minimally Invasive NeuroSpine Surgery here at Stanford. Dr. Veeravagu is focused on advancing minimally invasive surgical techniques for diseases of the spine and cares for patients with a wide range of spinal disorders. Dr. Veeravagu graduated from the Johns Hopkins University Biomedical Engineering program with a focus on spinal cord injury and regeneration. He accepted a position to complete his MD at the Stanford University School of Medicine. While a medical student, Dr. Veeravagu worked with neurosurgery and the molecular imaging program to develop novel, non-invasive imaging tools and treatments for malignant neoplasms of

central nervous system. Dr. Veeravagu subsequently completed his neurosurgical residency at Stanford. As a resident, Dr. Veeravagu was appointed by the President of the United States as a White House Fellow in 2012, serving as Special Assistant to Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta and Chuck Hagel to guide Department of Defense Policy on traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, and mental health treatment for the United States military. One of 14 people from around the nation to be selected, Dr. Veeravagu served as a speech writer, national security advisor, and health consultant directly to the Secretary of Defense. After completion of his neurosurgical residency, Dr. Veeravagu was awarded the prestigious Neurosurgical Research and Education Foundation Post-Residency Clinical Fellowship Grant and completed his fellowship training in minimally invasive and complex deformity spine at Stanford University with both neurosurgical and orthopedic training. Dr. Veeravagu also completed a clinical scholar rotation at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine focused on endoscopic and robotic spine surgery. Dr. Veeravagu's research efforts are focused on the utilization of large national databases to assess cost, quality, and effectiveness of various treatment algorithms as well as predictive analytics. Dr. Veeravagu is also an author and writes about current events, health policy, and public health-related topics for the San Francisco Chronicle, The Daily Beast, The BBC, and the Huffington Post.



**Robert Wechsler, MD, PhD** is a clinical instructor in the department of neurology at the University of Washington. He is a long-time, active member of the American Epilepsy Society. Dr. Wechsler is board president of the Epilepsy Foundation of Idaho, and serves as their Professional Advisory Board Chair. He is the owner of Consultants in Epilepsy and Neurology, PLLC, and medical director of the epilepsy monitoring unit at St. Luke's Boise. Dr. Wechsler earned a medical degree from Finch University of Health Sciences/The Chicago Medical School, where he also received a PhD in neuroscience. He completed his residency in neurology at Barrow Neurological

Institute/St. Joseph's Hospital and a fellowship in epilepsy at Stanford University Hospital Comprehensive Epilepsy Center. Dr. Wechsler is active in epilepsy research. He is a member of the Epilepsy Studies Consortium, and has participated as an investigator in many epilepsy clinical trials and publications.

## **CNS LEGISLATIVE SECTION**



**Robert Weinmann, MD**, is a Past President of the California Neurology Society (2021-22) and Legislative Chair. He is also a past president of the Union of American Physicians and Dentists (UAPD). He has testified before the United States Congress and the California Legislature on healthcare issues including anti-trust reform. He spoke at the White House on managed care at the invitation of former President Bill Clinton. His op-eds have appeared in numerous newspapers and other media including the Congressional Record. He states that his public policy agitation in healthcare is bipartisan. Dr. Weinmann graduated from Yale University with a B.A. in Comparative Literature then attended medical school and completed his neurology training at Stanford University. Dr. Weinmann was formerly editor-in- chief of *Clinical EEG and Neuroscience*).



**Steve Cattolica** is the CNS Advocacy Consultant and Lobbyist. He is an experienced lobbyist with a demonstrated history of working in the government relations industry. Skilled in Nonprofit Organizations, Government, Media Relations, Coalitions, and Legal Writing. Building on more than 35 years of experience in health care and workers' compensation, he is proficient with lobbying, organizational and on-demand regulatory compliance consulting. He has a BA in Physical Sciences from U.C. Berkeley, and a Teaching Credential in Physical Sciences and Math from St. Mary's College of California.



**Johanna Rosenthal, MD** is Legislative Co-Chair of CNS. She received her Bachelor of Science degree and continued her education to obtain her M.D. at George Washington University Hospital. She then completed her residency in Neurology at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles and did her research in neuropathology at University of California – Los Angeles. Dr. Rosenthal is a neurologist in Fullerton, California, a Neurohospitalist in Colton at Arrowhead and Assistant Professor at CUSM.



**Jeffrey Klingman, MD** is Chief of Neurology, Kaiser Permanente, N. California. Dr. Klingman serves on a range of committees, including the New Technology Committee of The Permanente Medical Group, American Academy of Neurology, Movement Disorder Society, California Neurological Association, and American Stroke Association. He is also a Trustee of the California Medical Association, President of the American Heart Association (East Bay), and Past President of the Alameda Contra Costa Medical Association. Dr. Klingman received his medical degree from Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas, and he completed both his internship and residency at the Los Angeles County University of Southern California Medical Center. Dr. Klingman has coauthored numerous articles, including evidence based guidelines, primarily related to

stroke care.

Stella Legarda, MD – see under speakers.

**ADDITIONAL BOARD OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS:**



**Steven Holtz, MD** is a past president of CNS and serves as CNS liaison to the AAN. He graduated from Boston U, School of Medicine medical school in 1974, did his residency at Kaiser Oakland and then a residency and fellowship in Boston. He held a clinical appointment in Neurology at UCSF and recently retired from practice in Walnut Creek.



**Sharon Yegiaian, MD** Is a Past President of CNS and presently the Webmaster. She was an undergraduate at USC and attended medical school at the University of Vermont. She did an Internship and Neurology residency at the University of Arizona. She then did a Neuromuscular & Autonomic Fellowship at Mayo Clinic and an EMG Fellowship at UCLA. Dr. Yegiaian is in private practice in Pasadena. She is director of the Pasadena Center for Neuromuscular Medicine and primary investigator of Care Access Research. She is a clinical professor at Casa Colina Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Residency Program, voluntary assistant Professor of Neurology at UCLA Neuromuscular Medicine, and Neurology Faculty at Huntington Hospital.



**Robyn G. Young, MD** is a Past President of the California Neurology Society (2013-2014) and is present Treasurer of CNS. Prior to that she served as President of the San Francisco Neurological Society (2007-2008) and remains ex officio on the board. She grew up in Hoopston, IL, home of the 'Cornjerkers'. She earned a BS in chemistry at Stanford and her MD at Yale, where her thesis related to neurotransmitters in a rat model of Parkinson's. She then did an Internal Medicine residency at California Pacific Medical Center and a Neurology residency at UCSF. She is in private practice in Alameda, CA, with a clinical interest in M.S. and neuroimmunology.

## **HOSTED PROGRAM SPEAKERS**

**Robert Wechsler, MD, PhD** - See above with CNS speakers



**Robert Cowan, MD** is a professor in the Stanford University School of Medicine Department of Neurology and Neurological Sciences and (by courtesy) in the Department of Anesthesiology, Perioperative & Pain Medicine. He is Director of Headache Research and holds the endowed position of the Betty Higgins Family Foundation Directorship in Headache Research. Dr. Cowan has held several nationally elected positions, including chair of the sections on Chronic Daily Headache and In-office Patient Education for the American Headache Society. He is past president of the Headache Cooperative of the Pacific and a fellow of the American Academy of Neurology and the American Headache Society. He has served on the boards of the Alliance for Headache Diseases Advocacy, the Headache Cooperative of the Pacific, the American Headache and Migraine Association, and the American Council for Headache education. His research focuses on advancing the understanding of chronic daily headache. Dr. Cowan is widely published in peer-reviewed journals, including Headache and Neurology. He reviews articles for Headache and other publications and is an editor for Headache Currents. He has authored the book The Keeler Migraine Method and Chronic Daily Headache, as well as multiple textbook chapters. He has volunteered his time and expertise to serve the Alliance for Patient Access, Veterans Administration, and community health programs.



**Said R. Beydoun, MD** is Professor and Division Chief, Neuromuscular Medicine, at the Department of Neurology at Keck Medicine of USC, University of Southern California. He is Program Director of an ACGME-accredited Clinical Neurophysiology Fellowship, which trains three physicians each year. Dr. Beydoun advocates an integrated approach to clinical diagnosis, diagnostic testing, and treatment options for patients with neuromuscular diseases. As a principal investigator, Dr. Beydoun has participated in multiple research clinical trials. His clinical and research areas of expertise in the field of Neuromuscular Medicine include:

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), Myasthenia Gravis, Peripheral Neuropathy, Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy (CIDP), Multifocal Motor Neuropathy (MMN), and TTR Amyloid Neuropathy. He has been published in several scientific journals on topics related to neuromuscular diseases. He is co-Editor-in-Chief of TouchReviews in Neurology. He is an elected fellow of the American Academy of Neurology and a fellow of the American Association of Neuromuscular and Electrodiagnostic Medicine. He is a member of the medical/scientific advisory board of the Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America. He is medical director of the Certified ALS Treatment Center of Excellence at Keck USC. Dr. Beydoun also serves on the board of directors for the California Neurology Society.



**Stephen Yeung, DO** is presently Medical Director at Novartis. Prior to that Dr. Yeung was Director of the Multiple Sclerosis Program for Loma Linda University and the Riverside University Health System, and before that a Senior Research Associate at Elan Pharmaceuticals. He obtained his medical education at Midwestern University, completed a neurology residency at Loyola University in Chicago and then did an MS fellowship at UC San Diego.