

Presenters



Shadi Barbu, MD

Dr. Barbu is a board-certified neurologist at The Cole Center, part of The University of Tennessee Medical Center's Brain & Spine Institute. Her clinical expertise includes caring for patients with Parkinson's disease and all other movement disorders. She is trained in managing patients with deep brain stimulation and the use of botulinum toxin for various movement disorders. After earning her medical degree from the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University, she completed her neurology residency at the Barrow Neurological Institute, where she also pursued fellowship training in clinical movement disorders and deep brain stimulation.

Dr. Barbu's research interests include risk and protective factors for the development and progression of Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders and further exploring the role of deep brain stimulation in the management of movement disorders. She has been involved in several clinical trials of pharmaceuticals to potentially treat Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders.

She and her husband, Cris, enjoy traveling and pursuing outdoor adventures including rafting, hiking, and zip lining.



Carter Gerard, MD

Dr. Gerard received his medical degree from the University of Louisville School of Medicine. He completed his residency in neurological surgery at Rush University in Chicago. Dr. Gerard completed two fellowships in stereotactic, functional, and epilepsy neurosurgery, one under the instruction of Ryder Gwinn, MD at Swedish Neuroscience Institute (Seattle) and the other with Prof. Steven Gill at Southmead Hospital-National Health Service (University of Bristol England).

He is a board-certified neurosurgeon and a member of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons/Congress of Neurological Surgeons Section on Stereotactic and Functional Surgery (ASSFN) in addition to the AANS/CNS Section of Pain. Dr. Gerard's clinical interests include deep brain stimulation, Parkinson's disease, essential tremor microvascular decompression, trigeminal neuralgia, temporal lobectomy, vagal nerve stimulation, epilepsy, neuro-oncology, and general neurosurgery.



Christopher Tolleson, MD, MPH

Dr. Christopher Tolleson is a Movement Disorder Specialist and Medical Director of The Cole Center for Parkinson's and Movement Disorders, part of The University of Tennessee Medical Center's Brain & Spine Institute.

He completed his medical school training at the Medical College of Georgia and his neurology residency at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. Afterwards, he did a fellowship in Movement Disorders at Vanderbilt University from 2010-2011 and then stayed on as faculty for over 6 years.

Since arriving at The University of Tennessee Medical Center in 2017, Dr. Tolleson has been working to expand the Movement Disorder program that Dr. Michelle Brewer helped establish. He has been involved with Parkinson's Disease research throughout his career and has numerous peer reviewed articles. His passion within the Parkinson's research world is looking at therapies which may slow down or even cure Parkinson's as well as continuous surgical therapies in later Parkinson's Disease.

On a personal level, he has loved living in Knoxville and engaging in the many outdoor activities around the city. He spends most of his time outside of medicine with his three children (Nora, Caleb and Gabriel) and his beautiful wife, Leigh.



Luis E. Zayas, MD, PT

Dr Luis E. Zayas is a board-certified neurologist & internist at The Cole Center, part of The University of Tennessee Medical Center's Brain & Spine Institute. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy at the University of Puerto Rico in 1998. He worked for three years as a physical therapist before completing medical school at Universidad Iberoamericana (UNIBE) in the Dominican Republic in 2005.

After earning his medical degree, Dr. Zayas completed his internal medicine residency at St. Barnabas Hospital in Bronx, NY, and a neurology residency at Cooper University Hospital in Camden, NJ. He completed a yearlong fellowship in neuro-critical care at the Cleveland Clinic, Ohio, and another fellowship in movement disorders at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, NE. He is board-certified in Internal Medicine, Neurology, and Epilepsy.

Dr. Zayas joined The Cole Center in the spring of 2021. Dr. Zayas has a passion for sharing his knowledge on Parkinson's Disease with the community as demonstrated by his catalog of over 60 educational videos on social media. He serves as the Medical Director for community outreach for the Cole Center. He is particularly enthusiastic about fitness. When he's not working on educational programs and events, he keeps active with his beautiful wife and three amazing children (two lovely young ladies and one bright young man).

Keynote Presenter



Alberto J. Espay, MD, MSc, FAAN, FANA

Dr. Alberto Espay is Professor and Endowed Chair of the James J. and Joan A. Gardner Center for Parkinson's disease at the University of Cincinnati. He has published over 300 peer-reviewed research articles and 8 books, including Common Movement Disorders Pitfalls, which received the Highly Commended BMA Medical Book Award in 2013, and Brain Fables, the Hidden History of Neurodegenerative Diseases and a Blueprint to Conquer them, coauthored with Parkinson patient and advocate Benjamin Stecher, selected by the Association of American Publishers for the PROSE Award honoring the best scholarly work in Neuroscience published in 2020.

He has served as Chair of the Movement Disorders Section of the American Academy of Neurology, Associate Editor of the Movement Disorders journal, and on the Executive Committee of the Parkinson Study Group. Among other honors, Dr. Espay has received the Cincinnati Business Courier's Health Care Hero award, the Spanish Society of Neurology's Cotzias award, and honorary membership in the Mexican Academy of Neurology. He currently serves as President-Elect of the Pan-American Section of the International Parkinson and Movement Disorders Society. He directs the first biomarker study of aging (CCBPstudy.com) designed to match people with neurodegenerative disorders to available therapies from which they are most biologically suitable to benefit, regardless of their clinical diagnoses.