University of Missouri School of Medicine

Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery

RESIDENCY LEADERSHIP

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WELCOME TO MIZZOU

On behalf of the Department of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery, we welcome you to Mizzou. The otolaryngology residency program has been here since the first official trainee in 1970. Initially formed as a division of general surgery, the practice became its own Department in 2004. We have graduated residency alumni who can be found throughout the United States in traditional, hospital, military, and academic practices.

Clinically, the Department provides the premier otolaryngic care for patients of central Missouri. Our surgeons, in tight coordination with our endocrinology colleagues, deliver nearly all the surgical thyroid and parathyroid care for the hospital system. The full complement of oncologic ablative and reconstructive surgery is performed within our Department. With the only fellowship trained neurotologist in this region, our Hearing and Balance Center is the cochlear implant provider for patients of mid-Missouri, along with comprehensive audio and vestibular assessment and rehabilitation. Our allergy center is a major provider for sublingual and subcutaneous immunotherapy for pediatric and adult patients with aeroallergens. Our faculty collectively have extensive fellowship training in head and neck oncology, microvascular surgery, rhinology, otolaryngic allergy, facial plastic and reconstructive surgery, neurotology, and pediatric otolaryngology.

The pride of our Department lies in medical education. Our program provides a balanced experience of surgical exposure, clinic exposure, as well as time for cognitive development through didactic conferences, workshops, and individual study. Resident otolaryngology education doesn't exist purely within the confines of our campus. The Department funds and facilitates opportunities for residents to attend external courses, conferences, and workshops to hear from experts around the country.

Discovery and innovation play a growing role in our enterprise. We have two well-funded basic and translational science research faculty members in our Department. We have several ongoing industry funded clinical trial projects that fuel our enterprise. These endeavors—in addition to a multitude of clinical projects—are facilitated by a research coordinator who helps enormously with facilitate grant acquisition, IRB clearance, and patient recruitment.

Our clinicians are involved in shaping the practice of medicine and otolaryngology at the University of Missouri and beyond. Our Faculty hold leadership positions in the American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery and other national subspecialty associations as well as throughout University of Missouri Health Care and the School of Medicine.

Columbia is on of the top cities to live in the country. Being at the south edge of the Campus, we are exposed to the beauty and brilliance of our University. We have a vibrant downtown and cultural scene in addition to great trails and parks.

Thanks for your interest in our program and we hope to see you in Columbia in the future!

Susie Early, MD
Residency Program Director

Patrick Tassone, MD
Assistant Residency Program Director

GENERAL INFORMATION

Our program alternates matriculating two or three residents per year. Applications are submitted through ERAS and residency slots are filled through The Match, organized by NRMP. We interview approximately 50 candidates per year. Although applicants are encouraged to have a strong academic record and research experience, we search out for other factors that make outstanding residents and physicians: strong work ethic, collegial demeanor, and self-motivation. These are not factors that can be easily represented by a single metric and therefore we employ holistic application review. By this, we do not employ a USMLE cut off or specific point algorithm to select applicants for interview, as we feel that such methodology fails to acknowledge the diversity of experience each candidate possesses.

RESIDENCY TRAINING OUTLINE

Residency training provides a graduated experience with increased responsibilities as you progress through the training process. While rotations change based on resident complement and other circumstances, below is a general guide of what our residents are doing year by year.

PGY1: With six months of ENT built into the first year, residents receive early surgical and patient management experience within otolaryngology. The other six months are off of the ENT service, but provide exposure to general surgery, ICU care, emergency medicine, anesthesia, pediatric surgery, and vascular surgery.

PGY2: The PGY2 year is split between rotations at the VA, on the university otolaryngology service (primarily pediatric otolaryngology), as well as part of the head & neck team.

PGY3: The PGY3 year incorporates two months of research, time at the VA as the midlevel resident, and remaining months on the head & neck and university otolaryngology services.

PGY4: An additional one month of research provides the ability to tie up loose ends on bigger projects as well as start smaller projects to complete during the remainder of the residency. Additional focused exposure to otology is acquired through beginning rotations with our neurotologist. The remainder of the year is split as chief of the head & neck team. A one-month experience in private practice facial plastic surgery in Springfield, MO is an optional rotation for our senior residents in their PGY4 year.

PGY5: The PGY5 year is the chief resident year. Further otologic experience is gained and 4-6 months are spent as the chief of the VA service, which allows the greatest autonomy to develop patient care and operative experience. The remainder of time is spent on the university otolaryngology service. Chiefs are responsible for oversight of inpatient consults, as well as administrative duties.

MEDICAL TRAINING SITES

Otolaryngology training occurs at two main training sites in Columbia: MU Health Care—University Hospital and the VA. The VA and University Hospital are located across the street from each other. A new Women's and Children's Hospital was opened adjacent to University Hospital in 2024.

University Hospital is a 390-bed hospital with the only Level I trauma center and helicopter service in central Missouri. Physicians throughout the state refer many of their most complicated cases to our flagship hospital. The 390-bed hospital specializes in treating the most severe illnesses and injuries. Its seven-story Critical Care Tower provides the latest in medical technology for critically ill or injured patients. It is the site of most inpatient procedures including the larger head and neck procedures or operations performed on medically complex patients. Attached to the University Hospital is the Ellis Fischel Cancer Center and Children's Hospital. The Children's Multi-Specialty clinics are connected by a sky bridge and host our pediatric otolaryngology clinics and multi-disciplinary pediatric aerodigestive clinic.

Three of our outpatient ENT clinics: the Hearing and Balance Center, the ENT Allergy Center, and Columbia ENT are located within blocks of each other on Keene Street which is a short 10-minute drive from University Hospital. We have full-service audiology and vestibular testing, a wide range of allergy testing and treatment options, a cosmetic plastic surgery clinic, and clinics that treat the range of patient issues. As Missouri is one of the most allergenic states, we have a robust allergy practice that provides subcutaneous and sublingual immunotherapy. In addition, on Keene Street, within a block of our clinics, there are 2 outpatient surgical locations which we utilize for patient care.

The VA is where our department has the opportunity to give back to the veterans in our community. The VA is staffed by many of the same Faculty who cover the University Hospital. The VA experience provides greater resident autonomy regarding patient care management, with appropriate oversight by Faculty physicians.

Capital Region Medical Center (CRMC) is located in Jefferson City, a 30-minute drive from Columbia. The clinical expansion of our Department to CRMC increases the availability of general ENT services including otologic surgery and endocrine surgery. Here, residents are afforded increased clinical and surgical experiences.

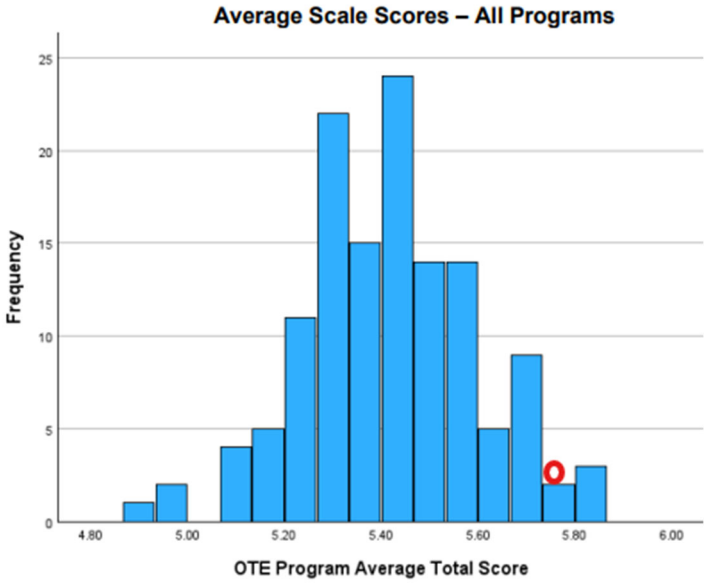
CONFERENCES, CURRICULUM, COURSES

Residency education is accomplished through more than "on-the-job" training. Our program provides a curriculum of educational opportunities that allow physicians to interface academically with otolaryngology topics in multi-faceted ways.

Grand rounds are held Wednesday mornings followed by VA case conference to review upcoming VA cases with Faculty and resident input. Didactics are held from 4-6 p.m. on Tuesdays. We are utilizing the Otolaryngology Core Curriculum as a basis for didactic lectures as well as over 30 hours each year of hands-on teaching by our faculty including microvascular labs, airway lab, pediatric airway skills, ultrasound/FNA lab, facial plating sawbone lab, and temporal bone drilling. In addition, each year our faculty lead a gross anatomy dissection course over 2 days for all of our residents.

We believe medical education is more than simply learning about patient care and having medical knowledge. To reflect that, our curriculum incorporates learning about the business of medicine, health care payment and delivery systems, and medical legal issues.

Learning is best achieved with a balance of time spent on clinical experiences, didactic sessions, as well as self-directed study. We hope to have struck the right balance, as our residents have aggregately scored well in the top half of all training programs on the Otolaryngology Training Exam year after year. In 2026 our resident scores ranked in the top five programs in the country.



We are proud of our residents' achievement on the Otolaryngology Training Exam. Every year, our residents aggregately score in the upper aspect of the bell curve in comparison to other training programs.

Our educational curriculum is enhanced by additional Department-sponsored experiential opportunities. PGY1s participate in the Midwest Otolaryngology Simulation Training bootcamp to gain practical beginning otolaryngology skills. Residents are involved with two regional consortiums that meet yearly to advance knowledge and research within their sub-specialty: PGY4s attend and present research at the Midwest Head and Neck Cancer Consortium and PGY3s attend and present research at the Midwest Pediatric ENT Consortium. We also send PGY3 residents to a cadaveric sinus course, and we send all residents at least twice during residency to an allergy course led by Dr. Christine Franzese at various sites throughout the Midwest.

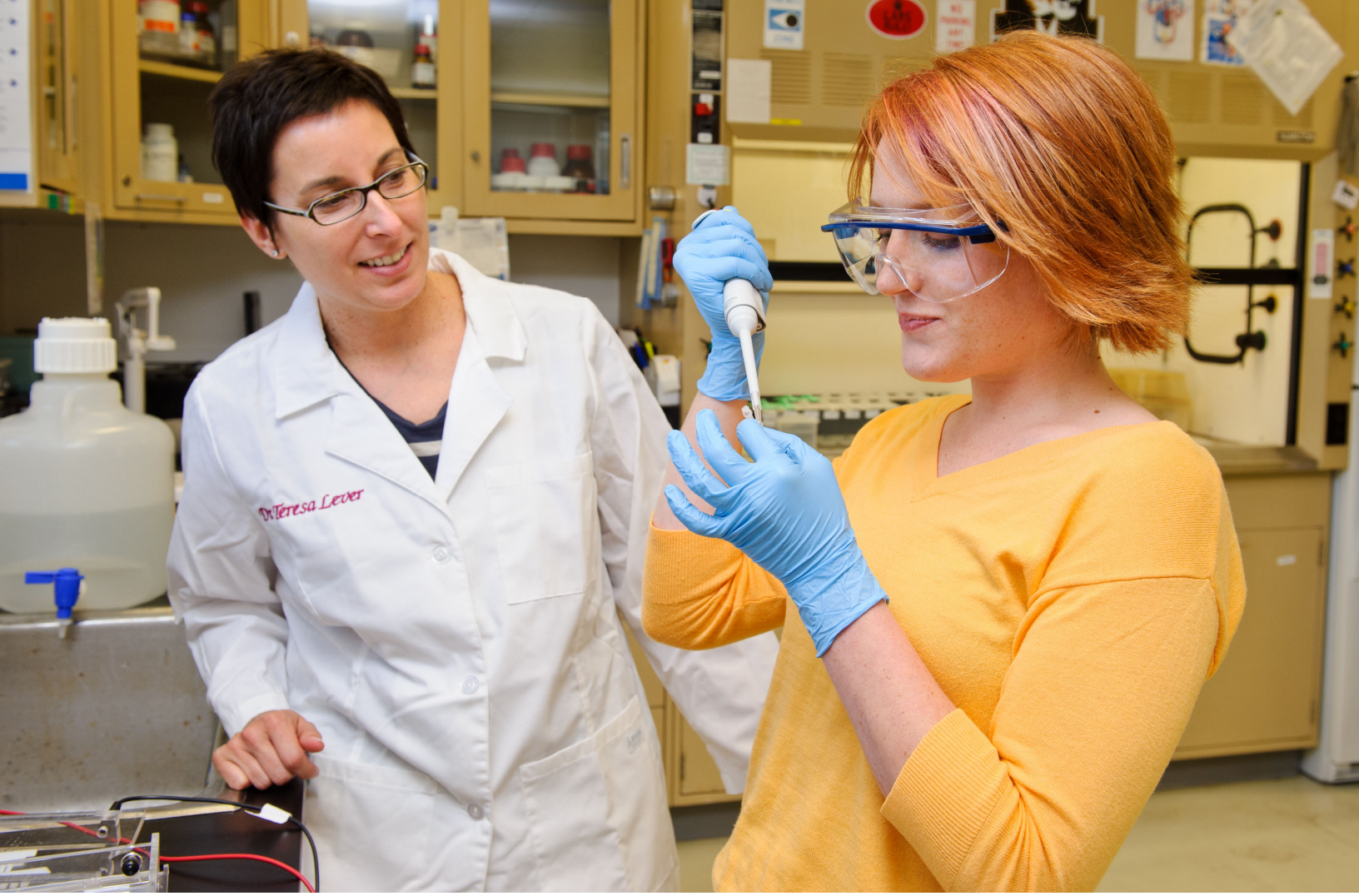
Our temporal bone drilling lab is equipped with eight drilling stations, flat screen monitors, and a freezer for specimen storage. We are grateful to have an abundant supply of temporal bones available from the Gift of Body Program administered by the Department of Pathology & Anatomical Sciences at the University of Missouri. Residents are immersed in temporal bone drilling sessions throughout the year led by Faculty. Ready access to the lab (it is located steps from our resident and faculty offices) affords residents the opportunity to drill whenever desired, whether in preparation for a case or to further skills.

BENEFITS

Resident salaries are consistent across specialties at the University of Missouri based upon post-graduate year: Resident Salaries

Equipping residents with the tools needed for successful development is just as important as the curriculum experience. To springboard new residents into their career, the Department provides each with the tools of the trade: personalized lab coats, a head mirror, a copy of Bailey's, a tuning fork, pocket otoscope, headlight and loupes.

Resident achievements in clinical and scholarly pursuits are appreciated and recognized by the Department. A **reward points program** has been created that rewards research activity, excellence in service, and excellence in education. Residents can earn up to $12,500 worth of points, awarded for various accomplishments. While awarded points are weighted towards research endeavors, other pursuits such as committee membership, educational lectures to other Departments, and efforts to further our specialty locally and nationally (committee and organization involvement) are valued. Points can be redeemed for academic travel, books, and other materials that directly enhance education.



RESEARCH

There is an abundance of discovery at MU. From case reports to NIH funded translational research, there are options for everyone no matter your research background and interests. Throughout the year, residents are engaged in investigative projects that provide further insight into the practice of otolaryngology. Dedicated research time is incorporated in the schedule: two months during PGY3, one month during PGY4. This division allows time for larger projects to mature.

While many of the research projects are resident inspired, each project is supported by a faculty mentor for intellectual and logistic contributions. There are opportunities for translational and bench science with our two dedicated basic science research Faculty. **Teresa Lever, PhD** has an interest in swallowing and dysphagia. Her lab has developed a murine model of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and is studying the effects of serotonin supplementation upon swallow function. **Olga Baker, DDS, PhD** has research interests in salivary gland issues, including radiation and autoimmune induced xerostomia. Both Dr. Lever and Dr. Baker bring a wealth of research experience and NIH-level funding for a variety of projects.

Our Department also participates in various industry sponsored trials in allergy, rhinology, otology, and oncology. For more details, see https://medicine.missouri.edu/departments/otolaryngology-head-and-neck-surgery/research.

Resident research efforts are showcased yearly at our resident Research Forum presented near the end of each academic year. Awards are given for 1st and 2nd place. Successful projects mature to become poster and oral presentations at national meetings and ultimately become published in major journals. Research endeavors are well recognized and supported.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Department of
Otolaryngology
Head and Neck Surgery
2024 Health Sciences Research Day
ERIC DU
First Place Poster Presentation
Clinical Sciences Category II

ALUMNI

Our recent graduates have taken balanced paths, with roughly half entering clinical practice across the United States and the other half pursuing fellowship training.

Otolaryngology graduates from our program are scattered throughout the United States. Whether your career goal is private practice, hospital practice, or an academic practice environment, we can provide you connections to launch your career.

FACULTY

Olga Baker, DDS, PhD
Professor
Research Interest: Salivary gland disorders

Gregory S. Campbell, MD
Assistant Professor
Clinical Interest: General Otolaryngology

C.W. David Chang, MD, FACS
Jerry W. Templer, MD Faculty Scholar
Professor
Clinical Interest: Facial Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery, Rhinology

Laura M. Dooley, MD, FACS
Associate Professor
Clinical Interest: Head & Neck Oncology, Laryngology

Susie Early, MD
Associate Professor
Residency Program Director
Clinical Interest: General Otolaryngology

Christine B. Franzese, MD, FAAOA
Professor
Clinical Interest: Allergy, Rhinology

Tabitha L. I. Galloway, MD, FACS
Associate Professor
Clinical Interest: Head & Neck Oncology, Microvascular Surgery, Sialendoscopy

Eliav Gov-Ari, MD, FACS, FAAP
Professor
Clinical Interest: Pediatric Otolaryngology

FACULTY (cont.)

Stephen P. Hadford, MD
Assistant Professor
Clinical Interest: Facial Plastics & Reconstructive Surgery

Matthew A. Kienstra, MD
Adjunct Assistant Professor
Clinical Interest: Facial Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery, Skull Base Surgery

Albert (Keonho) Kong, MD
Assistant Professor
Clinical Interest: Rhinology & Skull Base Surgery

Teresa E. Lever, PhD
Professor
Research Interest: Swallowing Disorders

Gregory J. Renner, MD, FACS
Professor Emeritus
Clinical Interest: Head & Neck Oncology, Reconstructive Surgery

Arnaldo L. Rivera, MD, FACS
Professor
Advanced Otology Fellowship Program Director
Clinical Interest: Neurotology

Erica T. Sher, MD
Assistant Professor
Clinical Interest: Pediatric Otolaryngology

Patrick T. Tassone, MD
Associate Professor
Assistant Residency Program Director
Clinical Interest: Head & Neck Oncology, Microvascular Surgery

Robert P. Zitsch III, MD, FACS
William E. Davis Chair and Professor
Clinical Interest: Head & Neck Oncology