

**Navigating Early-Career Decisions for Residents and New
Graduates: Success in Physiatry Practice
Resident Edition
Saturday, March 13, 2021
Faculty Biographies**



Francis J. Lopez, MD, MPH, FAAPMR

Session Director

Dr. Francis Lopez is currently the Associate Residency Program Director at the New York University (NYU) department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R). After graduating from the University of California at Davis, he completed a Masters in Public Health in Epidemiology at the University of California at Los Angeles. He later completed a research internship at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, GA before becoming a regional epidemiologist with the New York City Department of Health. He completed his medical degree at St. George's School of Medicine and subsequently completed a PM&R residency at NYU. After residency, Dr. Lopez worked at three different academic institutions: University of Pennsylvania, Montefiore/Jacobi/Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and NYU. He was awarded teacher of the year at all three institutions. Dr. Lopez has been the author of several book chapters in orthopedic and physiatric textbooks. Clinically, he concentrates on treating conditions of the upper limb as well as general musculoskeletal/pain conditions. In his free time, Dr. Lopez loves to spend time with his family, to travel, and to cook. In the last 7 years, he has run 4 marathons and countless half marathons.



Prakash Jayabalan, MD, PhD, FAAPMR

Dr. Prakash Jayabalan is Director of Clinical Musculoskeletal Research at the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab and Assistant Professor at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, Chicago, USA. He received his medical degree from King's College London and PhD from the University of Missouri in Pathobiology where his research focused on tissue engineering of cartilage and biological markers of joint disease. He is an alumnus of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center residency training program and completed Sports Medicine fellowship training at the Shirley Ryan AbilityLab/Northwestern University, where he stayed on as faculty. He has received multiple research grants and awards for his laboratory's work which focusses on using biological markers to develop novel, individualized rehabilitation and exercise strategies for individuals with knee osteoarthritis. His clinical practice focusses on treating sports injuries and degenerative musculoskeletal conditions. Dr Jayabalan is a current recipient of a KL2 Mentored Career Development award from Northwestern University Clinical and Translational Scientist Institute (NUCATS) to investigate cartilage response to stress in the healthy and osteoarthritic state. All of his accomplishments were recently recognized as he was chosen as a '40 under 40' Chicago scientist.



Sara Cuccurullo MD, FAAPMR

Dr. Sara Cuccurullo, Professor and Chairman, Residency Program Director, Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine, Medical Director and VP, JFK Johnson Rehabilitation Institute, Physician-in-Chief Rehabilitation Services HMH

Dr. Cuccurullo received her medical degree from SUNY Downstate in 1987 and completed her residency in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R) at Rutgers-RWJ/JFK Johnson Rehabilitation Institute (JRI). She was board certified in 1992.

She joined the staff of JFK Johnson Rehabilitation Institute in 1991 and served as the Residency Program Director (PD) since 1998. She taught the PM&R Board Review Course since 1991. Dr. Cuccurullo is Editor-in-Chief and published the fourth edition of The PM&R Board Review Textbook in 2019. The royalties are donated to the JFK Johnson PM&R Residency-Education-Fund. She has received the Teacher-of-the-Year Award six times and the RWJ Volunteer Faculty Award several times. In addition, she received multiple awards including: the Distinguished Alumni Award, the 2018 AAP Outstanding Service Award, the 2019 AAPM&R Distinguished Member Award and in October 2019 was named as a NJ Top Health Care Influencer. She has served as Past President of the National Residency and Fellowship Program Director Council and is currently President of the National Chair Council. She served as a Board member of the AAP since 2014-2020 and was appointed AAP Co-Chair of the Women in Academic Physiatry Task Force. She authored 40 book chapters, over 20 articles and over 75 abstracts.

She developed a residency competency model and published seven peer reviewed papers on this model. She was appointed Chair of Rutgers-RWJ Medical School and the Medical Director/VP for JFK Johnson Rehabilitation Institute in February 2014. Her clinical research is entitled the JFK Johnson Stroke Recovery Program and the related Stroke-HEART™ Trials. Dr. Cuccurullo is a principle investigator in this project and has been invited both nationally and internationally to present this published research. In March 2018 Dr. Cuccurullo was appointed Chair at Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine and Physician-in-Chief of Rehabilitation Care Transformation Services of Hackensack Meridian Health Network.



Diana M. Molinares-Mejia, MD, FAAPMR

Dr. Diana M. Molinares-Mejia is Cancer Rehabilitation physiatrist and an expert on improving function, independence, and quality of life of survivors throughout the cancer continuum. She has particular expertise in the diagnosis and management of shoulder dysfunction in breast cancer survivors, rehabilitation of patients with leptomeningeal disease, neck dysfunction in head and neck cancer survivors, and the effects of prehabilitation in patients undergoing high-risk oncological treatments. Additionally, she has published on the impact of disparities in rehabilitation services in the Hispanic population.



Alex Moroz, MD, FAAPMR

Dr. Alex Moroz is a Residency Program Director and Vice Chair of Education in Rehabilitation Medicine at NYU Grossman School of Medicine. Over the years, he interviewed over 2300 residency, fellowship, and faculty applicants, and guided hundreds of residents and medical students in developing an amazing CV.



Mooyeon Oh-Park, MD, MS, FAAPMR

Dr. Mooyeon Oh-Park is Burke Rehabilitation Hospital's Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer, oversees the clinical operation of inpatient and outpatient services, Graduate Medical Education and clinical research at Burke. Dr. Oh-Park is board-certified in PM&R, Electrodiagnostic/Neuromuscular Medicine, and Sports Medicine and a Professor in the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine and Department of Neurology at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Montefiore Health System. She received 16 teaching awards with 50 peer reviewed publications including the textbook of Geriatric Rehabilitation (2019). She serves on editorial board of American Journal of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and editor-in-chief for Current Report on Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. Her expertise and interest include geriatric rehabilitation from sports injuries of master athletes to frail older adults. Dr. Oh-Park was the honoree of the Crain' Notable Women in Healthcare in 2018-2019. Most recently, she also received 2020 C-Suite Award and Doctor of Distinction 2020 for her exceptional leadership during the pandemic by the Westchester County Business Journal.



Annie Purcell, DO, FAAPMR

Dr. Annie Purcell is a private practice outpatient Physiatrist in Northern California. She has been the co-owner of Redding Spine and Sports Medicine for 11 years, starting the private practice immediately following completion of her Interventional Spine fellowship year after finishing PM&R Residency at NYU Rusk. She has been involved in billing, coding and reimbursement at a national level as the AMA CPT Advisor for the AAPM&R for the past five years and is the past chair of the Reimbursement and Policy Review Committee, where she remains a member.



Cynthia Racine MD, FAAPMR

Dr. Cynthia Racine matriculated from the University of Kentucky School of Medicine followed by residency at NYU Rusk Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. She is an attending practicing at the Brooklyn VA. Her practice includes acupuncture, general rehabilitation, and NCS/EMG. She is the designated polytrauma and prosthetics/orthotics physician at the facility. Dr. Racine oversees resident physicians from NYU Langone Rusk physical medicine and rehabilitation where she also serves as Associate Program Director.



Jaspal Ricky Singh, MD, FAAPMR

Dr. Jaspal Ricky Singh is Vice Chair & Associate Professor in the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine.

He is the Director of Interventional Spine and Co-Director of the Weill Cornell Center for Comprehensive Spine Care.

He is a triple-board certified physician specializing in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Sports Medicine and Pain Medicine. He earned his undergraduate degree at The George Washington University majoring in biology and religious studies. He then attended the George Washington University School of Medicine and completed his residency at the University of Pennsylvania. Additionally, Dr. Singh went on to fulfill a fellowship in Interventional Pain and Sports Medicine at the University of Colorado – Denver.



Virtaj Singh, MD, FAAPMR

Dr. Virtaj Singh is a board-certified physiatrist with subspecialty board certification in Pain Medicine. He is the Medical Director at Seattle Spine and Sports Medicine and also serves on the clinical faculty at the University of Washington Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. In addition to his primary clinical responsibilities, he is also the Head Team Physician for the two-time Major League Rugby Champions Seattle Seawolves. Most importantly, he is a three-time kickball champion!!!



Brandee Waite, MD, FAAPMR

Dr. Brandee Waite is a sports medicine physician who strives to keep her patients active. She is also an established expert in health, fitness, medical education and academic medicine. With a dynamic personality, Dr. Waite has a passion for educating her patients, other physicians and the public about relevant sports medicine topics. Having successfully navigated a traditionally “male” field, she has mentored many aspiring professionals seeking to achieve similar goals in competitive careers. She is a Professor at the University of California Davis. Dr. Waite received her medical training at Stanford, UC San Francisco and Johns Hopkins. She has served as sports medicine fellowship director and director of several faculty search committees. Dr. Waite has been a team physician for Team U.S.A. Track and Field, the Sacramento Kings (NBA) as well as the Sacramento Ballet and now works with professional soccer and Division I NCAA teams in Sacramento, CA.