



**For Immediate Release**

**Contact:** Cathy Powers, NREF

(847) 378-0540

[cmp@aans.org](mailto:cmp@aans.org)

**Leading by Example: The Bagan Family Funds Research  
for Pediatric Brain Tumors in 2015–2016**

(Rolling Meadows, IL) - During his tenure as president of the AANS, Merwyn Bagan, MD, MPH, FAANS(L), made a significant donation to the Neurosurgery Research & Education Foundation (NREF). Through his close work with the organization, he was inspired to support its goals as well as to lead by example. Dr. and Mrs. Carol Bagan dedicated their donation to further the progress of the specialty, and their hope was that if one family endowed a fellowship, others would follow.

While the benefit of the Bagan's example continues to echo through both the AANS and the NREF, the benefits of that particular gift began to bear fruit at the 2015 AANS Annual Scientific Meeting, when the inaugural Bagan Family Fellowship was conferred. The new, Young Clinician Investigator Award will exist as a permanent tribute to the Bagan's global dedication to medicine, neurosurgery and neurosurgical education. It will further the progress of the specialty, as the award supports junior faculty who are pursuing careers as clinical investigators. Applicants must be neurosurgeons within two years of the end of their clinical training, who are full-time faculty in a teaching institution located in North America.

Dr. Bagan chose to be very involved in the selection process. Both Dr. and Mrs. Bagan enjoyed getting to know fund awardee, Amanda Muhs Saratsis, MD. Dr. Saratsis is assistant professor of neurological surgery at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and an attending physician at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Hospital of Chicago. Dr. Saratsis' award funds her examination into the underpinnings of pediatric brainstem glioma. She hopes to identify potential therapeutic targets and biomarkers of this disease that will improve clinical diagnosis and management.

"The Bagans' support means that applications made to the National Institutes of Health and other funding sources on behalf of this project have a better chance of being accepted. I'm hopeful that this project can really make a difference for children diagnosed with diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma (DIPG), which currently has the highest mortality rate of all pediatric solid tumors," commented Dr. Saratsis.

Dr. Bagan's own illustrious career began with an undergraduate degree from Dartmouth College and a medical degree from Boston University. He completed his neurosurgical training at the National Institutes of Health and The Johns Hopkins Hospital. He was in private practice until 1993, and in 1995, Dr. Bagan received a master's degree in public health from Boston University School of Public Health.

From 1995 to 2000, the Bagans lived in Nepal, and furthered the specialty of neurosurgery in that country. Dr. Bagan worked as a volunteer at the Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital (TUTH) and was named visiting professor at the Tribhuvan University Institute of Medicine's department of surgery in 1997. He established a neurosurgical unit there, and trained two general surgeons to become neurosurgeons. Dr. Bagan was instrumental in obtaining more than \$1 million in medical equipment for the hospital. In recognition of his

contributions, his Majesty King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev of Nepal presented Dr. Bagan with the Suprabal Gorkha Dakshina Bahu Award.

In honor of his accomplishments and outstanding service to the development of neurosurgery and care of needy patients in Nepal, the AANS honored Dr. Bagan with the 2000 Humanitarian Award.

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***About the NREF***

The Neurosurgery Research and 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.