

Atlanta Rotation Experience

As a Duke resident, one's fourth year is an exciting time. Now a senior resident, your role within the residency begins to transition to one of a leader and a teacher for junior residents. It is also a time when fellowship interviews, the important next step in one's future career, take place. Most importantly, it is a time when all eight residents travel away from the Duke nest for a period of 6 months. For the fifth straight year, four residents have traveled south to spend that time with the staff of Children's Orthopaedics of Atlanta at Atlanta's Scottish Rite Pediatric Hospital.

Saturdays in the fall in the state of Georgia are a beautiful time of the year. The fall foliage is exploding with color, temperatures are balmy and the sun is almost constantly shining. It is an ideal place to enjoy the outdoors. For an orthopaedic resident at Atlanta's Scottish Rite hospital however, it also means pop Warner football, fall soccer season, and activity on the monkey bars are in full swing. As one of only two tertiary pediatric referral hospitals for the entire Atlanta metropolitan area, a near constant stream of fractured arms, legs and elbows comes through the doors of the ED. It is quite common for a resident in a 24-hour call shift to perform close to 20 closed reductions, pin multiple supracondylar humerus fractures and decompress a periosteal abscess in a septic child. Although the pediatric trauma experience is astounding, to call the time there solely a trauma rotation would be a huge mistake.

The program boasts nine faculty members, covering the gamut of elective pediatric orthopaedics. They maintain a high-volume clinical practice that affords us residents a tremendous clinical and surgical experience. From scoliosis to shoulder instability, from spatial frames to palliative cerebral palsy releases. Although we are away from Durham, those who rotate in Atlanta are still very much in touch with the Duke family. Dr Dennis Devito and Dr Cliff Willimon both Piedmont members, are key faculty that we were work with. From T2-L2 fusions with Dr Devito to multi-ligament knee reconstructions with Dr Willimon, both provide an amazing and rich learning experience. Most importantly, however, is the time outside of the OR and clinic that they spend with us, frequently inviting the residents out for dinner or to watch the Blue Devils' football and basketball teams at a local watering hole.

Lastly, the Atlanta experience is remarkable for the camaraderie that one builds with their coresident on rotation with them. The two residents from Duke almost are always together—whether it be discussing surgical cases, critiquing each other's postreduction films, or going to Chastain Park for a quick run. It truly is a unique time and experience that we as Duke residents will always have and be able to look back upon fondly.

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