



Pete S. Batra, MD, FACS

The Stanton A. Friedberg, MD, Endowed Chair
of Otolaryngology and Bronchoesophagology

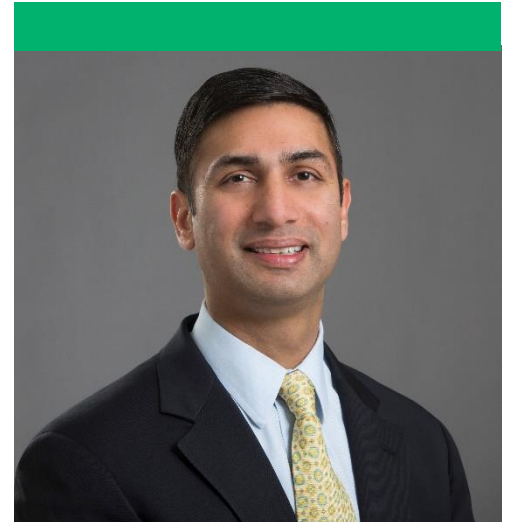
Advancement of Medicine

The Rush Department of Otorhinolaryngology — Head and Neck Surgery continues to thrive in the clinical, educational, research and service domains. Rush otorhinolaryngology remains a market leader in adult inpatient and outpatient surgery in the greater Chicago area. Our surgeons (19), audiologists (9), advanced practice providers (8) and sleep language pathologists (2) deliver the highest-quality care through 16 clinical programs at seven locations throughout the Chicago area and Northwest Indiana. *U.S. News & World Report* rates our program No. 28 nationally, and the residency program is ranked No. 1 in Illinois by Doximity.

We welcomed several new faculty members to our team this year. **Mohamed Elrakhawy, MD**, joined the Section of Otology/Neurotology after completing the Delaware Otologic Medicine and Surgery Fellowship. **Steven Soltes, MD**, joined the department as a comprehensive medical otolaryngologist after a successful career in community practice in Chicago's south suburbs. **H. Steven Sims, MD**, joined the department as professor, section chief of laryngology and director of the Chicago Institute of Voice Care after a successful 20-year career at University of Illinois Chicago. **Ryan Nesemeier, MD**, joins the Section of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery as director of facial gender affirmation surgery after being in practice at The Ohio State University for more than four years.

Research

Our faculty and residents have made substantial contributions to advancing research in our specialty. The department has committed a corpus of \$500,000 in seed grants for faculty and residents to promote discovery and innovation over the next five years. Your generosity in supporting the Friedberg Chair contributes to this effort. The department successfully hosted two Friedberg Research fellows this past year. **Sean Setzen** and **Marcin Marciniak** had a very successful year working closely with several faculty on important research projects, resulting in several





publications. Finally, the endowed chair funding has supported part of the salary for a second full-time clinical research coordinator, **Lauren Kret**, to enhance our scholarly throughput.

Clinical Studies and Trials

Our faculty members remain committed to participating in clinical trials to evaluate novel treatments and surgical devices in rhinology, head and neck cancer, sleep surgery and other subspecialties. Our faculty and residents have 48 active prospective and retrospective research studies and have contributed to 46 peer-review publications over the past year. Your generosity has continued to support research efforts for faculty and residents for clinical and basic science studies. This summer, we will commit an additional \$80,000 to faculty and residents for seed grant funding.

Other major research initiatives include:

- Cognitive Impairment in Chronic Rhinosinusitis research in conjunction with Allergy/Immunology. Prospective study funded by NIH/NCATS (completed).
- ENLIGHTEN 1: A phase III, randomized, blinded, controlled, parallel-group trial to evaluate the efficacy and safety of LYR-210 for the treatment of chronic rhinosinusitis (CRS) in adult subjects. FDA clinical trial funded by Lyra Therapeutics Inc. (completed).
- FLAVOR: A randomized, double-blinded, placebo-controlled trial to determine the safety and efficacy of CYR-064 theophylline nasal spray for the treatment of post-viral hyposmia. Clinical trial funded by Cyrano Therapeutics (completed).
- A Prospective, Multi-Center, Open-Label Study to Evaluate the Safety and Effectiveness of TurbAlign™ to achieve Middle Turbinate Medialization after Functional Endoscopic Sinus Surgery (FESS). Principal investigator: Dr Batra (launch summer 2025).

Publication, Presentations, Conferences—Abbreviated

- Published 12 original peer-reviewed publications in 2024
- Served as president of the American Rhinologic Society and member of the Executive Committee from September 2023 to September 2024
- Directed Rush Update in Otolaryngology 2024, an in-person comprehensive ENT course that was hosted in the Joan and Paul Rubschlager Building at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago



- Guest panelist for Tarabichi Stammberger Ear & Sinus Institute. Virtual Case of the Month panel broadcast for Dubai, United Arab Emirates, in August 2024
- Keynote speaker at the 14th Singapore Sleep, Allergy, and Rhinology Course held in Singapore in July 2024
- Guest speaker at the 24th Congress of the International Society of Inflammation and Allergy of the Nose and the 24th Congress of the International Rhinologic Society in Tokyo in April 2024
- Guest speaker at the 13th Annual Summer Sinus Symposium in New Orleans in July 2024
- Guest panelist at ARS at COSM 2024 in Chicago in May 2024
- Visiting Professor at Mayo Clinic Scottsdale in November 2024
- Delivered two expert series on contemporary diagnosis and endoscopic management strategy for inverted papilloma and medical and surgical decision making in FESS failures at the American Academy of Otolaryngology meeting in Miami in September 2024
- Served as a member of the American Academy of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS) Annual Meeting Program Committee

Education

Thanks to your continued generosity, we've been able to make meaningful strides in shaping the education of future leaders in otolaryngology. Your support helps ensure that top-tier residents can engage fully in our dynamic and evolving training programs. In addition to comprehensive clinical and academic instruction, our residency program offers unique educational tracks that allow participants to pursue a master's degree in clinical research or health systems management or earn a global health certification — each of which plays a critical role in guiding long-term career paths.

Your philanthropic investment enhances the overall resident experience by funding board preparation resources, annual in-service training exams, travel associated with the global health track and other valuable career-development tools. The fund enables residents and fellows present research at national conferences and funds course attendance for chief residents, strengthening their skills and helping them prepare for the next stage of their careers.

This past year, our department hosted several high-impact national educational events, including the *Rush University Otolaryngology Global Health Symposium*, *Rush ENT Course for PCPs* and *Rush*



Update in Otolaryngology 2024. In the year ahead, we will continue these offerings and proudly introduce the *Rush Head and Neck Comprehensive Cancer Symposium* to our educational portfolio.

We are also deeply appreciative of your support for our visiting lectureship program, which allows us to bring nationally recognized experts to Rush to share insights during grand rounds and other academic engagements. Recent distinguished visitors included:

- **David Kaylie, MD**, Professor and Director of Neurotology, Duke University School of Medicine (Otology Visiting Professor)
- **Thomas Heineman, MD, PhD**, Physician's Clinic of Iowa (Sleep Visiting Professor)
- **Eileen Raynor, MD**, Professor of Pediatric Otolaryngology, Duke University School of Medicine (Graduation Day Speaker)

In addition, your contributions have directly supported hands-on learning and research in our skull base lab, where residents and fellows benefit from the acquisition of anatomical specimens for advanced surgical training and research. This has enhanced their technical skills and deepened their understanding of complex anatomy in a safe, educational environment.

Community Outreach

Service remains a key pillar of our departmental mission. Under the leadership of **Ashok Jagasia, MD, PhD**, the department continues to contribute to community and global health initiatives through the Center for the Underserved in Rush ENT, or the CURE Initiative. The department holds a weekly otolaryngology clinic for people accessing Chicago's shelter system through in-person and telemedicine visits. Dr. Jagasia continues weekly outreach in Central Illinois to provide ENT services for rural communities with limited access to care. Many of these patients receive surgical care at Rush University Medical Center and Rush Oak Park Hospital. Our faculty and residents continue to engage in global health trips to the Dominican Republic semi-annually to provide a wide array of surgical services. Your generosity supported additional supplies for this mission. We are also now participating in the Rush REACH program, which provides high school and early college students from populations that are underrepresented in health care with career development opportunities.



The Year Ahead: 2025 and Beyond

We have a clear vision of what lies ahead, and we are grateful for your support in the following areas:

- Organize clinical and academic services under the Enterprise Department umbrella across the Rush System for Health
- Recruit four more specialists to the department (pediatric otolaryngologist, sleep surgeon, head and neck surgeon, and rhinologist/skull base surgeon)
- Launch an FDA clinical trial to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of TurbAlign™ for middle turbinate medialization after endoscopic sinus surgery
- Publish two impactful prospective clinical studies on microbiome changes in chronic rhinosinusitis and sinonasal tumors in conjunction with the Division of Allergy and Immunology
- Deliver two expert series and serve on two panels at the American Academy of Otolaryngology meeting in fall 2025
- Continue to serve on multiple organizational committees (Chairs Council, Surgical Chairs Council, chair of the Rush Medical Group Finance Committee, Rush Oak Brook Surgery Center Board) to support our institutional mission

With Gratitude

Thank you for your continued support of the Department of Otorhinolaryngology — Head and Neck Surgery. Your generosity has been instrumental in helping us thrive as we expand our clinical services and advance our academic mission. The Friedberg Chair has enabled us to pursue groundbreaking research and deepen our commitment to excellence in education and training. These advancements would not be possible without your partnership.

I remain deeply grateful for your support and extend my heartfelt thanks for your enduring generosity.

With sincere appreciation,

Pete Batra, MD