

# Tarik F. Ibrahim MD, MS Fellowship Chicago Area Schweitzer Fellowship Program



Health & Medicine recognizes and honors the life and legacy of Tarik F. Ibrahim by naming an outstanding Fellow working with underserved populations the Tarik F. Ibrahim MD, MS Fellow. This honors Dr. Ibrahim's calling of ensuring the health and well-being of underserved populations and his passion for service and charity within the field of medicine.

**The Tarik F. Ibrahim MD, MS Fellowship was created by a Fellow for Life who was deeply inspired by Dr. Ibrahim's life.**

*The legacy that I want to share about Tarik Ibrahim is that he was the most selfless person I've ever met. His character and accomplishments were undoubtedly a reflection of the love and support he received throughout his life from his parents. He was so giving of himself to others in every aspect of his life. Treating his friends and family with love, care and compassion were instinctive to him, as it was to treat strangers like friends, as it was to offer himself in the little free time he had to be of service to others and help mentor medical students and younger residents. He never once complained about the hours he worked or how little time he had to himself. He truly enjoyed being a doctor and caring for the sick. It was his calling. It brought him joy and filled him with life.*

THE ALBERT  
SCHWEITZER  
FELLOWSHIP®

Chicago Area

**HEALTH &  
MEDICINE**  
POLICY RESEARCH GROUP

**2024-25 Tarik F. Ibrahim MD, MS Fellow**

GRACE KEEGAN  
University of Chicago,  
Medicine

# About Tarik F. Ibrahim MD, MS

Dr. Ibrahim was born on September 2, 1981, in Grosse Pointe Shores, Michigan. He graduated from Penn State College of Medicine in 2010 and completed a neurosurgical residency at Loyola University Medical Center.

Alongside Dr. Ibrahim's ambitions in the operating room, one of his most impressive successes was publishing 39 publications and presentations, with first authorship on several. His academic achievements, nationally and internationally, have contributed to the neurosurgical and neurosciences disciplines. Additionally, Tarik completed a six-month training in cerebrovascular and micro-neurosurgery with the world-renowned neurosurgeon, Professor Juha Hernesniemi at Helsinki University, Finland, who stated, "We love Tarik very much, he has so great future as brilliant neurosurgeon." Dr. Ibrahim was accepted to the prestigious skull base and cranial nerve surgery fellowship at the Swedish Medical Center in Seattle, Washington.

Dr. Ibrahim is loved and respected by his patients and the medical community. He was dedicated to the advancement and practice of neurological surgery.



"Tarik is an incredible young man beaming with ambition, intelligence, and compaction. Simply put HE made us all better."

*Anand V. Germanwala MD, Assistant Professor and Residency Program Director of Neurological Surgery at Loyola University School of Medicine.*

"There are many patients who walk today because of his dedication, who see because of his perseverance, who hear because of his intelligence, and who breathe because of his love. We are all better doctors, nurses, students... indeed, people for knowing Tarik... Tarik has proven that one's good and kind work can be eternal... Great man..."

*Russ P. Nockels, MD, Professor and Vice Chairman of Neurological Surgery. Loyola University Medical Center and Stritch School of Medicine.*

"Tarik is still with us and guiding our thoughts and actions by a legacy that continues to teach us."

*Douglas Anderson, MD., Professor and Department Chair, Neurological Surgery Loyola University Medical Center and Stritch School of Medicine.*

# About Tarik Syndrome



## What is Tarik Syndrome?

Tarik Syndrome is reversible postoperative blindness secondary to occipital seizures.

This rare syndrome was first recognized and described by Dr. Ibrahim and should be considered in any patient with postoperative visual impairment.

Dr. Ibrahim found a treatable cause — now known as Tarik Syndrome — when one of his patients developed what was thought to be permanent blindness following spinal surgery. Loyola University Vice Chairman of Neurological Surgery Dr. Russ P. Nockles described Dr. Ibrahim's discovery as "sight-saving scholarly work."

"It will always stand as a testament to Tarik's astonishing passion for helping patients when all else had presumably failed. His actions flew in the face of global medical knowledge. His work on this single patient will justifiably solidify his legacy in the field of Neurosurgery forever," he said.

Thanks to Dr. Ibrahim's dedicated research, occipital lobe seizures and status epilepticus amauroticus (SEA) should now be considered as a possible cause of postoperative vision loss. If SEA is with aggressive antiseizure treatment, permanent vision loss may be prevented. This scientific breakthrough is now aptly named Tarik Syndrome.

"It will forever cement Tarik's contribution to patient care. We know the importance of this syndrome and how it will benefit patients worldwide. It surely is a testimony to a great mind & caring heart."

*Russ P. Nockles, MD Professor and Vice Chair, Neurological Surgery, Loyola University*

# Sources and Links

- Ibrahim TF, Sweis RT, Nockels RP. Reversible Postoperative Blindness caused by Bilateral Status Epilepticus Amauroticus Following Thoracolumbar Deformity Correction: Case Report, Journal of Neurosurgery, 2017 April, 1-5.  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1a40sOUAaU1FNTQZBZUuwwp5sgl4mnMNH/view>
- Ziegler A, Spencer D, Nockles RP, Leonetti, J, Ibrahim TF. Tarik Syndrome: Reversible Postoperative Blindness Secondary to Occipital Seizures. World Neurosurgery, (2019) 131:58-61.) <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wneu.2019.07.186>  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SAGE966gw7iNHFAW-Ar6Gvf\\_5B-IC2\\_C/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SAGE966gw7iNHFAW-Ar6Gvf_5B-IC2_C/view)
- Ziegler A, Spencer D, Nockels R, Ibrahim T, Leonetti J. Reversible Postoperative Blindness Secondary to Occipital Seizures: Tarik Syndrome. American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery annual meeting AAO-H&N. September 2019: New Orleans, LA (Poster).  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JhvjZLpCBGznO4WyTCFf3P-OD9VjqdyN/view>

## About the Chicago Area Schweitzer Fellowship Program

Founded in 1996, Health & Medicine's Chicago Area Schweitzer Fellows Program cultivates health and human services professionals to address health inequities. Each year, 26 students design and implement projects to improve the health of underserved Chicago communities. Fellows' projects often address the social determinants of health, and their activities frequently include tutoring, violence prevention, health education, healthy lifestyle promotion, and outreach to vulnerable and marginalized groups.

THE ALBERT  
SCHWEITZER  
FELLOWSHIP®

Chicago Area

HEALTH &  
MEDICINE  
POLICY RESEARCH GROUP