

Resident Timeline

Readers of DermWorld Directions in Residency requested a resident timeline to help you facilitate improved learning, career building, and research study during your dermatology residency. The AAD Resident and Fellows Committee (RFC) Chair Morgan Murphrey, MD, MS, and RFC committee member Kristen Chen, MD, have assembled a full multi-year look at the important milestones of residency.

First year of dermatology residency | PGY-2

Exams/learning	Career building	Academics and research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Familiarize yourself with your program's approach to didactics and consider your own study schedule. There are many textbooks, but two primary ones include <i>Dermatology</i> by Bologna and Fitzpatrick's <i>Dermatology</i>; many residents also use <i>Dermatopathology</i> by Elston. Common review books include Jain and Alikahn (among others). Familiarize yourself with the available textbooks but commit and stick to the 1-2 that work best for you. Focus on building a "bookshelf," understanding the types of dermatologic conditions, and becoming an expert in morphology. Build a foundation rather than focusing on esoteric details. <p>March: Basic exam</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This exam is primarily for self-assessment. This is not something to cram for; instead, use it to assess your learning progression over the last 10 months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career building can start as early as your first year of residency. You may be approached by physician recruiters or receive mailings, but do not feel pressured! This is your time to explore and introduce yourself to all that dermatology has to offer. Take opportunities to learn more about what your career can look like (i.e., career fairs, conversations with mentors). Think about key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > <i>Do you think you will want to pursue a fellowship after residency?</i> > <i>Do you prefer academic or private practice?</i> > <i>Would you prefer to work for a physician-owned practice, or are you open to private equity-owned practices?</i> As you explore and have conversations, take notes! These will be helpful down the line. <p>If you are considering a dermatopathology fellowship, plan early! You will apply in July of your 2nd year, earlier than other fellowships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look ahead at this year. Are there conferences you want to attend? Do you plan to present? Talk with your program early about educational opportunities to help facilitate scheduling. Take note of key dates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > September: AAD Abstracts due for Annual Meeting! Apply for committees within organizations that excite you (i.e., AAD Councils, Committees, and Task Forces). Try to stay up to date with your case logs.



Morgan Murphrey, MD, MS, is a cosmetic laser dermatology fellow at Mass General/Harvard, and is chair of the AAD Residents and Fellows Committee.



Kristen Chen, MD, is academic chief resident at University of Wisconsin and is also a member of the AAD Residents and Fellows Committee.

Resident Timeline

Second year of dermatology residency | PGY-3

Exams/learning	Career building	Academics and research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 4 total CORE exams (Medical, Peds, Surgery, DermPath). The CORE exams focus on fundamentals of knowledge and specific details and facts relevant to the tested topic. • You begin these exams in 2nd year and complete them in 3rd year. • There are 4 seatings offered during your residency (Feb./July/Nov./Feb.) • You can take as many as 4 CORE exams in 1 session, or as few as 1 CORE exam in 1 session. • Most residents double up and take 2 exams in 1 session at least once, so they complete all exams in 3 sessions. • Popular study resources include Alikhan/Jain, DermQBank, AAD Board Prep Plus, Derm-In-Review, Self-Assessment in Dermatology, and Dr. Mariwalla's Boards University videos (highly recommend!) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around this time, you should decide if you are pursuing a fellowship. • For those pursuing dermpath, applications open now! • For those pursuing other fellowships (pediatrics, Mohs, cosmetics), work on building mentoring relationships. • Seek out guidance from others who have recently applied and plan ahead. • Ask for letters of recommendation early (around the end of 2nd year, or at least 1 month before the due date). • If you are not pursuing a fellowship, now is the time to think more seriously about your future practice. • It is never too early to start looking but be wary of pushy recruiters. • Consider big picture things like location and type of practice. • Find mentors and seek advice — they have been through this and want to help! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second year offers more time to explore your academic interests. • Consider conference requests and presentation opportunities. Plan early! • If your program offers elective time, consider elective planning for your senior year. • Many organizations offer scholarships or grants for externships with attendings. These experiences can be life changing, and you should be sure to apply early! • Many residencies require published research or quality improvement projects. Be sure to stay on track to meet any requirements of your program. • Continue entering your cases into your case logs!!
<p>February: CORE #1 +/- 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on updating your CV and resume. 	

More resources!



As you continue the path toward your career, check out the AAD's career development page (www.aad.org/member/career), which offers a multitude of invaluable resources.

Resident Timeline

AAD career launch resources



Check out the AAD's career launch resources (www.aad.org/member/career/launch) for more high-yield information.

Third year of dermatology residency | PGY-4

Exams/learning	Career building	Academics and research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congrats on how far you have come! Your first year was focused on developing a strong foundation. During your senior year, it's time to fill up your "bookshelf" with books of knowledge. • Keep up your momentum and keep reading!! • You will take 2 or 3 CORE exams. Continue studying accordingly. • After finishing your COREs, it's not long before you begin preparing for boards. • As you move toward studying for the APPLIED exam, think about big-picture concepts and clinical next steps. • Kodachromes are key! A great approach to studying is reviewing kodachromes and thinking through associations, next steps, and therapeutics. <p>July: CORE #2 +/- 3</p> <p>November: CORE #3 +/- 4</p> <p>February: CORE (additional opportunity as needed)</p> <p>JULY: BOARDS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fellowship applications generally open at the end of 2nd year, or early 3rd year. • Finalize your CV and ask for your letters of recommendation early! • You can apply early, but there's no need to rush! Make sure you are ready before you submit. • For those who are not pursuing a fellowship, consider starting the job hunt earlier rather than later. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > <i>In our experience, most senior residents start their job hunt by January of their senior year, if not earlier.</i> • AAD's Career Compass (aadcareercompass.org) can be a great place to evaluate the job market. • Be sure to interview broadly, and don't be afraid to negotiate! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior year is your chance to work on and wrap up projects you pursued in residency. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > If you are not finished with projects, consider passing them off to younger residents who may be seeking opportunities. • Continue working with organizations that you align with and consider how you can stay involved after residency. • Wrap up any administrative tasks or requirements specific to your residency program. • Be sure to make sure your case logs are complete by graduation!!

Resident Timeline

Residency Examination Schedule

Residency Year	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring
PGY2				March: Basic Exam
PGY3			February: Core #1/#2	
PGY4	July: Core #3	November: Core #4	February: Core Offered	July: Applied Exam

NEW

Attend the AAD *Virtual* Career Summit

October 21, 2023 | 9am – 2pm CST

Navigate your future with confidence.

Join us for the highly anticipated FREE AAD Career Virtual Summit on October 21, 2023 from 9am to 2pm CT! Register now to secure your spot for this engaging and informative online event that brings together dermatology professionals and industry experts for a half-day of live sessions, interactive Q & A, networking, and connecting with recruiters from private practices, hospitals, and health systems nationwide.

- Meet 1-1 with employers via live chat to explore new career opportunities
- Engage in interactive webinars and panel discussions

Scan to Register



AAD Career Compass

Powered by Health eCareers

23-685-MKT