Tips for finding your Research Mentor for 3rd year

1. **Think broadly.**
   - Map out your research interests.
   - Identify potential faculty.
   - Talk to your peers (do this in your first year, i.e., how often they met with their mentor, tips, experiences, etc.)
   - Talk to Dr. Sparks for a broader view of related faculty with interests that align with yours.

2. **Think about how your potential mentor communicates and if this meshes with you.**
   - How frequently do you need contact? (different for all people)
     - i.e., they don't email back for a week.... this might be their communication style.
   - Does your communication style mix well with your mentors? (text, email, phone, zoom)
   - Consideration of the size of the lab/group and the amount of time the potential mentor spends on research.

3. **Ask practical questions.**
   - Where will I sit?
   - Will I have a computer?
   - What statistical support will I have?
   - Have you mentored a med student (from Duke)?
     - If yes... find that individual and contact them.
   - Describe a few projects that you would have me on?
   - Do you have time to mentor a med student?
   - Are you an approved mentor for the 3rd year?
   - Who will I work with day to day? Can I meet them?
   - Schedule a second visit.

4. **Never make your mind up on a first visit.**
   Think about it over the weekend or even take a week.

5. **Get a sense for how you interact with the mentor.** Is this someone that inspires you? Do you think you will both be able to work well together?

6. **If you find an internal or external grant to apply to, let your mentor know.**
   Many mentors will be unfamiliar with med student specific grants. Send a follow-up email to your mentor to remind them of deadlines. **Apply!**

**Questions?** Reach out to Matthew Sparks, MD, director of undergraduate medical research for the Duke Department of Medicine: matthew.sparks@duke.edu

**More information:**
https://medicine.duke.edu/education-and-training/doctor-medicine