



UW Medicine

ORTHOPAEDICS  
AND SPORTS MEDICINE

# 2025-2026 Spine Fellowship



# University of Washington/Harborview Medical Center Department of Orthopaedic Surgery & Sports Medicine Spine Service

## About Our Service

We have the privilege of working with a staff of dedicated Spine Service ARNP's and PA's on the floor and in our clinics. We have a total of 3 Orthopaedic and 1 Neurosurgical Spine residents on service, as well as 1 Rehabilitation Medicine fellow. Our case range throughout the year is widespread and can be roughly divided as follows: Trauma 30%, degenerative disorders 30%, deformities 25%, and neoplasia/infection 15%. The distribution between cervical and thoraco-lumbar pathology is approximately 50-50. The overall spine case load within our teaching hospitals exceeds 1,500 surgical procedures annually. With the daily exposure to residents and medical students, we place great emphasis on teaching, teamwork and collegiality.

## Mission

To train spine surgeons who will become respected leaders, based on their character and their clinical, research and educational efforts. We aim to do so by graduating well-rounded inquisitive, ethically minded and highly knowledgeable spine surgeons, who are capable of providing state of the art spine surgery covering the entire spectrum of spinal disorders, while advancing the standard of spinal care.



2024 - 2025 Spine Group, from left: Dr. Viral Patel, Dr. Haitao Zhou, Dr. Karina Katchko, Dr. Celeste Tavolaro, Dr. Hannah Groff (ACE), Dr. Collin Lamba (ACE), Dr. Nathan Sinz (ACE), Dr. Carlo Bellabarba, and Dr. Richard Bransford

## Program Information

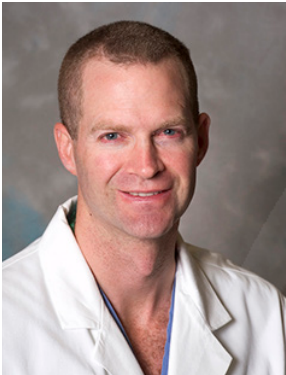
The UW Spine Post-Residency Training program was established in 1987 by Paul Anderson. To date, we have trained over 70 spine surgeons, with roughly one-third of graduates entering an academically affiliated practice. The other two-thirds are well-respected leaders in their regions all across the globe.

Our program is unique in that we provide care for a quarter of the land mass of the USA, spanning Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho. These services are provided by the only Level-One Trauma Center and genuine academic tertiary care facilities. Our program is interdisciplinary and combines 3 Orthopaedic Post-Residency Spine Clinical Instructors (ACEs) with 2 Neurosurgical fellows. This arrangement provides exposure to the widest possible range of spinal pathology with respect to the nature and location of spinal disorders, and their treatment options. We offer mentoring and assistance with attaining career and employment objectives.



# Fellowship Faculty

## Program Director: Richard Bransford, MD



Professor of Orthopaedics & Neurosurgery, University of Washington School of Medicine  
Director of University of Washington Spine Education & Research  
Director of Harborview Medical Center Spine Quality Improvement  
Site(s) of Practice: Harborview Medical Center

Patient Care Philosophy: His favorite aspect of patient care is surgery, but he thinks that it is of the utmost importance that patients have an adequate understanding of their issues, expected outcome and prognosis.

Research & Clinical Interests: Spinal Disorders and Trauma Surgery, general orthopedic surgery, third-world orthopedic disorders and education of third-world physicians.

## Carlo Bellabarba, MD

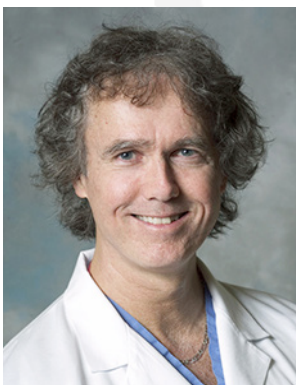


Professor of Orthopaedics & Neurosurgery, University of Washington School of Medicine  
Chief of Orthopaedics, Harborview Medical Center  
Hansjoerg Wyss Endowed Chair, Department of Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine  
Site(s) of Practice: Harborview Medical Center

Patient Care Philosophy: Treats each patient as if he or she were a family member, and uses the full extent of his research and clinical experience to tailor a treatment program to each patient's unique clinical situation.

Research & Clinical Interests: Surgical treatment of the full range and complexity of spine conditions throughout the spine, from the upper cervical spine to the sacrum.

## Randall Chesnut, MD, FCCM, FACS

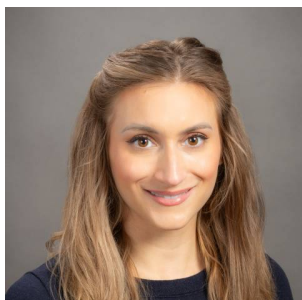


Professor of Neurosurgery & Orthopaedics, University of Washington School of Medicine  
Director of Neurosurgical Spine and Neurotrauma Services, Harborview Medical Center  
Site(s) of Practice: Harborview Medical Center.

Patient Care Philosophy: Strives to create active partnerships with his patients to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Research & Clinical Interests: Clinical interests include brain and spinal injuries including sports-related injuries. Research interests include improvement of care for traumatic brain and spine injuries, investigation of outcomes in trauma care systems in developing countries in Latin America, and target therapy in the management of traumatic brain injury.

## Karina Katchko, MD



Assistant Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery, University of Washington School of Medicine  
Site(s) of Practice: Harborview Medical Center

Patient Care Philosophy: Tailor each patient's treatment program to their unique clinical situation and help them return to the activities that are most important and enjoyable to them.

Clinical Interests: Surgical treatment of the full range and complexity of spine conditions oncology

# Fellowship Faculty

## Christoph Hofstetter, MD, PhD



Associate Professor of Neurological Surgery, University of Washington School of Medicine Site(s) of Practice: Harborview Medical Center

Patient Care Philosophy: Believes in creating active partnerships with his patients to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Clinical Interests: Complex spine surgery with an emphasis on minimally invasive techniques and a focus on degenerative spinal disorders and spinal oncology

## Viral R. Patel, MD



Clinical Assistant Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery, University of Washington School of Medicine Site(s) of Practice: Harborview Medical Center, UWMC-Roosevelt

Patient Care Philosophy: Provide optimal patient care and provide the best experience for the patients going through surgery

Research & Clinical Interests: Research in sacral trauma, adolescent idiopathic scoliosis, post-operative spinal wound infection and related complications. Clinic interests include research in adult spinal deformity and minimal invasive spine surgery

## Fangyi Zhang, MD



Professor of Neurological Surgery and Orthopaedics, University of Washington School of Medicine Director of Neurosurgical Spine Fellowship Program Site(s) of Practice: Harborview Medical Center

Patient Care Philosophy: Strive to create active partnerships with patients and their families

Research & Clinical Interests: Clinical research in spine trauma and disorders. Research interests include the outcomes study of spine surgery, spinal cord blood flow regulation and acute spinal cord injury

## Haitao Zhou, MD



Associate Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery, University of Washington Medical School of Medicine Site(s) of Practice: Harborview Medical Center

Patient Care Philosophy: I believe that all patients should be treated by their doctors as if they were a family member. I believe that spending time communicating to the patient can solve issues.

Research & Clinical Interests: Clinical research in adult deformity



# Fellowship Specifics

The usual weekly schedule ranges from 2-3 OR days and 2 clinic days per week, and one research/vacation backup day, depending on the rotation. Call frequency is approximately 1/5, with the same ratio applying to weekends. Weekend call usually extends from Friday AM through Sunday AM. Our ACEs/Fellows report between 250 to 300 cases per year.

	BRANSFORD	BELLABARBA	UW/COMBINATION
MON	HMC Spine Clinic	HMC Operating Room (Bellabarba)	HMC Operating Room (Bellabarba)
TUES	HMC Operating Room (Bransford)	HMC Operating Room (Bransford)	UW-Roosevelt Bone & Joint Clinic (Patel)
WED	HMC Operating Room (Bellabarba)	HMC Operating Room (Bellabarba)	UWMC Operating Room (Patel)
THUR	HMC Operating Room (Bransford)	HMC Spine Clinic	HMC Spine Clinic
FRI	HMC Operating Room (Bransford)	HMC Operating Room (Bransford)	HMC Operating Room (Bransford)

# Fellowship Specifics

## Spine Education Meetings

Daily:	7:00-7:15am	HMC On-Call Sign Out Conference
Tuesday:	7:00-8:30am 6:30-8:00am	Spine Indications (UWMC) M&M (4th week)
Wednesday:	7:00-8:00am	Spine Grand Rounds (HMC, 3rd week)
Thursday:	7:30-8:30am 8:30-9:15am	Research Report vs. Didactic Conference (HMC) Spinal Radiology Conference (HMC)
Friday:	7:15-8:15am	Spinal Indications (HMC) M&M (4th week)

## Spine Annual Events

ACE/Fellows Research Day and Graduation Dinner  
AOSpine Fellowship Retreat  
Attendance at one sponsored Society Meeting in North America  
Attendance at two AOSpine Courses  
Funding to present UW generated research



2018-2019 Spine ACE Ashraf El Naga, MD  
presenting his research project

## Resources

- Applied Biosciences Research Laboratory
- Spinal Biomechanics Laboratory
- Research staff and experienced Senior Study Coordinator Jessica Schisel
- Epidemiologists
- Spinal Database
- Trauma Database
- Selected AOSpine North America Fellowship Site
- Research Funding available through 3 Endowed Spine Chairs and several ongoing grants
- Free access to UW Research Library



# Meet Our Current Spine ACEs



## Alexander Li, MD

Dr. Li received his Doctor of Medicine from Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences in Bethesda, MD. He completed his orthopedic surgery residency at the Naval Medical Center in Portsmouth, VA.



## Andrea Rowland, MD

Dr. Rowland received her Doctor of Medicine from University of Toledo College of Medicine in Toledo, OH. She completed her orthopedic surgery residency at University of San Francisco in San Francisco, CA.



## Jacob Pearson, DO

Dr. Pearson received his Doctor of Medicine from Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Parker, CO. He completed his orthopedic surgery residency at Samaritan Health Services in Corvallis, OR.

# Harborview Spine ACE Alumni

<b>2025</b>	Hannah Groff, DO	Collin Lamba, MD	Nathan Sinz, MD
<b>2024</b>	Eric Neuman, MD	Andrew Mikeska, DO	Varun Sambhariya, MD    Celeste Tavolaro, MD
<b>2023</b>	Zachary Bailey, MD	Karina Katchko, MD	Ari Holtzman, MD
<b>2022</b>	Jonathan Seavey, MD	Andrew Bachinskas MD	Mark Hsaio, MD
<b>2021</b>	Taylor Beatty, DO	Iain Elliot, MD	Catherine Olinger, MD
<b>2020</b>	Kim Driftmier, MD	Derrick Foge, MD	Jon Kark, MD
<b>2019</b>	Ashraf El Naga, MD	Edward Jung, MD	Eric Renich, MD
<b>2018</b>	Christina Cheng, MD	David Gendleberg, MD	Nathan Wigner, MD
<b>2017</b>	Samia Ghaffar, MD	Farhan Karim, DO	Brett Walker, DO
<b>2016</b>	David Glassman, MD	Jason Pittman, MD	Haitao Zhou, MD
<b>2015</b>	Saad Elrahmany, MD	Alireza Anissipour, MD	Viral Patel, MD
<b>2014</b>	Joshua Shatsky, MD	Max Berdichevsky, MD	Viral Patel, MD
<b>2013</b>	Zachary Child, MD	Mathias Daniels, MD	Mark Manoso, MD
<b>2012</b>	Amit Patel, MD	Sree Harsha Malempati, MD	Saravanaraja Muthusamy, MBBS
<b>2011</b>	Myles Luszczyk, MD	Jeremiah Maddoz, MD	Anuj Varshney, MD
<b>2010</b>	Nguyen Do, MD	Roland Kent, MD	Abilio Reis, MD
<b>2009</b>	Mark Freeborn, MD	Christopher Howe, MD	
<b>2008</b>	Paul Kraemer, MD	Delmore Morsette, MD	Anthony Russo, MD
<b>2007</b>	Troy Caron, MD	Joshua Patt MD	
<b>2006</b>	Elgafy Hossein, MD	David Stevens, MD	
<b>2005</b>	Jason Thompson, MD		
<b>2004</b>	Tim McHenry, MD		
<b>2003</b>	Mike Binette, MD		
<b>2002</b>	Richard Bransford, MD		
<b>2001</b>	John Borkowski, MD		
<b>2000</b>	Andrew Cree, MD	Christopher Summa, MD	
<b>1998</b>	Allain Girouard, MD		
<b>1995</b>	Darrell Brodke, MD		
<b>1993</b>	Edward Dohring MD		
<b>1992</b>	John Steinmann, MD		
<b>1991</b>	Jens Chapman, MD	Walter Krengel, MD	



# Contact Information

Website: [www.orthop.washington.edu](http://www.orthop.washington.edu)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/UWOrthopaedicsSportsMedicine](https://www.facebook.com/UWOrthopaedicsSportsMedicine)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/UWOrthopaedics](https://www.twitter.com/UWOrthopaedics)

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/uwortho/>

**Contact:** Trisha Fujiwara  
Program Coordinator  
206-744-3658  
[tfuji416@uw.edu](mailto:tfuji416@uw.edu)

Harborview Medical Center Orthopaedic Administration  
Office 8th Floor, Ninth and Jefferson Building  
908 Jefferson Street  
Seattle, WA 98104



2023-2024 Spine Service From left to right: Dr. Viral Patel, Dr. Andrew Mikeska (ACE), Dr. Varun Sambhariay (ACE), Dr. Eric Neumann (ACE), Dr. Haitao Zhou, Dr. Celeste Tavoraro (ACE), Dr. Richard Bransford