



UW Medicine

ORTHOPAEDICS
AND SPORTS MEDICINE

2026-2027 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.



2025 - 2026 Spine Group: Back Row from L to R: Dr. Viral Patel, Dr. Richard Bransford, Dr. Carlo Bellabarba, Dr. Haitao Zhou. Front Row from L to R: Dr. Alexander Li (ACE), Dr. Andrea Rowland (ACE), Dr. Jake Pearson (ACE), Dr. Karina Katchko, MD

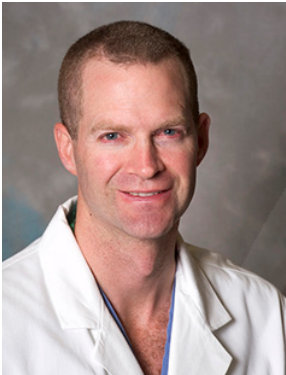
Program Information

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

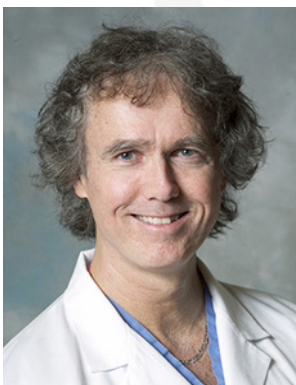


Professor of Orthopaedics & Neurosurgery, University of Washington School of Medicine
Chief of Orthopaedics, Harborview Medical Center
Hansjoerg Wyss Endowed Chair, Department of Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine
Site(s) of Practice: Harborview Medical Center

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

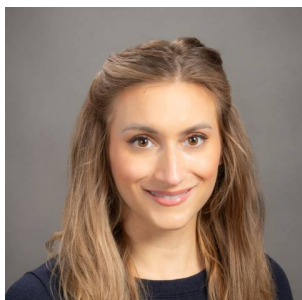


Professor of Neurosurgery & Orthopaedics, University of Washington School of Medicine
Director of Neurosurgical Spine and Neurotrauma Services, Harborview Medical Center
Site(s) of Practice: Harborview Medical Center.

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



Kyle Behrens, MD

Dr. Behrens received his Doctor of Medicine from Chicago Medical in Chicago, IL. He completed his orthopedic surgery residency at the University of Toledo in Toledo, OH.



Jesse Wang, MD

Dr. Wang received his Doctor of Medicine from University of Wisconsin in Madison, WI. He completed his orthopedic surgery residency at University of Virginia in Charlottesville, VA.



Douglas Weaver, MD

Dr. Weaver received his Doctor of Medicine from Ohio State University in Columbus, OH. He completed his orthopedic surgery residency at the University of Chicago in Chicago, IL.

Harborview Spine ACE Alumni

2026	Alexander Li, MD	Jacob Pearson, DO	Andrea Rowland, MD	
2025	Hannah Groff, DO	Collin Lamba, MD	Nathan Sinz MD	
2024	Eric Neumann, MD	Andrew Mikeska, DO	Varun Sambhariya, MD	Celeste Tavoraro, MD
2023	Zachary Bailey, MD	Karina Katchko, MD	Ari Holtzman, MD	
2022	Jonathan Seavey, MD	Andrew Bachinskas, MD	Mark Hsaio, MD	
2021	Taylor Beatty, DO	Iain Elliot, MD	Catherine Olinger, MD	
2020	Kim Driftmier, MD	Derrick Foge, MD	Jon Kark, MD	
2019	Ashraf El Naga, MD	Edward Jung, MD	Eric Renich, MD	
2018	Christina Cheng, MD	David Gendleberg, MD	Nathan Wigner, MD	
2017	Samia Ghaffar, MD	Farhan Karim, DO	Brett Walker, DO	
2016	David Glassman, MD	Jason Pittman, MD	Haitao Zhou, MD	
2015	Saad Elrahmany, MD	Alireza Anissipour, MD	Viral Patel, MD	
2014	Joshua Shatsky, MD	Max Berdichevsky, MD	Viral Patel, MD	
2013	Zachary Child, MD	Mathias Daniels, MD	Mark Manoso, MD	
2012	Amit Patel, MD	Sree Harhsa Malempati, MD	Saravanaraja Muthusamy, MBBS	
2011	Myles Luszczyk, MD	Jeremiah Maddoz, MD		
2010	Nguyen Do, MD	Roland Kent, MD		
2009	Mark Freeborn, MD	Christopher Howe, MD		
2008	Paul Kraemer, MD	Delmore Morsette, MD	Anthony Russo, MD	
2007	Troy Caron, MD	Joshua Patt, MD		
2006	Elgafy Hossein, MD	David Stevens, MD		
2005	Jason Thompson, MD			
2004	Tim McHenry, MD			
2003	Mike Binette, MD			
2002	Richard Bransford, MD			
2001	John Borkowski, MD			
2000	Andrew Cree, MD	Christopher Summa, MD		
1998	Allain Girouard, MD			
1995	Darrell Brodke, MD			
1993	Edward Dohring, MD			
1992	John Steinmann, MD			
1991	Jens Chapman, MD	Walter Krengel, MD		

Contact Information

Website: www.orthop.washington.edu

Facebook: www.facebook.com/UWOrthopaedicsSportsMedicine

Twitter: www.twitter.com/UWOrthopaedics

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

Contact: Trisha Fujiwara
Program Coordinator
206-744-3658
tfuji416@uw.edu

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



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