

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 edu-cational 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

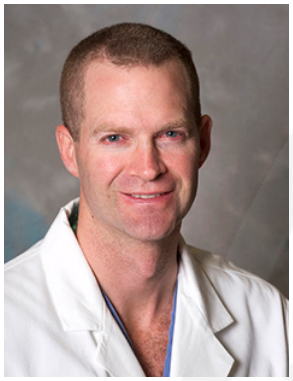
Program Information

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 ter-tiary care facilities. Our program 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.

Karina Katchko, MD



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

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

Fellowship Faculty

Philip Louie, MD



Associate Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery, University of Washington School of Medicine Site(s) of Practice: UWMC - Montlake

Patient Care Philosophy: I want every patient to understand their condition and their options before we decide on treatment together. Many spine problems improve without surgery. When surgery is the right choice, I use the least disruptive approach that will give a durable result. I measure success by how well my patients return to the work, sport and daily life that matter to them. We are in this together!

Research & Clinical Interests: Minimally invasive spine surgery, cervical and lumbar disc replacement, cervical myelopathy and radiculopathy, lumbar stenosis and spondylolisthesis, lateral lumbar interbody fusion, revision spine surgery, and spine conditions in athletes

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 defor-mity and minimal invasive spine surgery

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 fami-ly 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.

*Schedule is subject to change depending on program year and clinical needs.

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

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

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

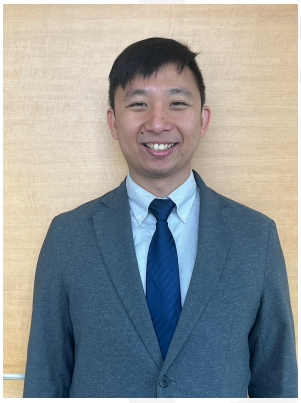
- Applied Biosciences Research Laboratory
- Spinal Biomechanics Laboratory
- Research staff and experienced Senior Study Coordinator Jessica Schisel
- Epidemiologists
- Spinal Database
- Trauma Database
- Selected AOSpine North America Fellowship Site
- Research Funding available through 3 Endowed Spine 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 Tavolaro, 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

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

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Harborview Medical Center Orthopaedic Administration
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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