

2023 EDITION

UCLA-VA GREATER LA PM&R CONNECTION

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Harman Grewal, PGY-3
Michelle Jin, PGY-3
David Underhill, PGY-3

A Letter from the Program Director

Fall is here, but Los Angeles is still as sunny and warm as ever... just like the heart of our UCLA/Greater Los Angeles VA PM&R team! I am pleased to share some PM&R Residency and Pain Medicine Fellowship updates and highlights with you in this latest "UCLA-VA Greater LA PM&R Connection" e-newsletter (made possible by our brilliant resident-run editorial staff).

Our PM&R program was founded in 1955 and is steadily becoming finer with age. Our highly regarded ACGME-accredited PM&R Pain Medicine Fellowship is entering its 23rd year and grown to 5 coveted fellowship positions. We are so proud of the hundreds of bright residents and fellows who have completed their training and contributed to the tight-knit collegial culture here. Our faculty look forward to mentoring many talented diverse generations to come with each recruitment season. (Learn more about some core faculty featured in this E-dition's "Co-directors Corner"),

A key to our success is the strong family of trainees, faculty, alumni, friends, and ancillary staff across our associated facilities which include: California Rehabilitation Institute, UCLA, Long Beach VA, Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, California Pain Medicine Center, and the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System. We value this vast diverse network and solid base of support you have helped establish. Thank YOU!

With warmest regards,



Dixie Aragaki, MD
Program Director, UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine/UCLA Medical Center/
VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System PM&R Residency
Professor, Department of Medicine, Division of PM&R
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

P-Emmy-&-R Graduation



Pain Fellowship Graduates

Dr. David Hemmati
Dr. Melissa Phupanich
Dr. John Chan
Dr. Ryan Hagens



*Congratulations to
the Class of 2023!*



*Dr. Grace Zhang
UCLA/VA Pain Medicine
Fellowship*

*Dr. Elizabeth Weiner
Icahn School of Medicine at
Mount Sinai SCI Fellowship*



*Dr. Lindsay Smith
University of Washington Brain Injury Medicine
Fellowship*



*Dr. Ryan Alano
California Rehabilitation Institute*



*Dr. David Schulze
UC Davis Pain Medicine
Fellowship*



*Dr. Michael Chung
UCLA PM&R Interventional Spine
Fellowship*



*Dr. Derek Bui
Dartmouth Pain Medicine
Fellowship*

Graduation 2023



*Dr. Ryan Smith (left)
Kaiser Santa Rosa--Outpatient PM&R*



*Dr. Jerry Luo (left)
UCLA Inpatient Consultant/Outpatient Rehab*

Residency Co-Directors Corner: *Dr. Kevan Craig*

Residency Site Director
Children's Hospital Los Angeles

How did your interest grow in rehabilitation medicine?

In the summer break between my first and second year of medical school, I started a research project with Dr. Jacquelin Perry at Rancho Los Amigo Medical Center. She introduced me to Dr. Lance Stone, the Chief of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) at Rancho. Dr. Stone asked about my specialty, and I mentioned PM&R, specifically TBI because of my experience with patients who recovered so well after a devastating brain injury. He recommended that I explore Pediatric PM&R by doing a rotation with Dr. Dennis Matthews at Denver Children's Hospital. I followed his advice and fell in love with the field. The more I learned, the more passionate I became about it. This feeling continues today.

What are your responsibilities at CHLA?

I am responsible for the entire division of Pediatric Rehab Medicine (PT/OT/ST, acute inpatient, and outpatient rehab). I am currently looking to hire someone to help me cover these services.

What is a typical day like for you?

I like to get to the hospital between 4-4:30 AM. I answer emails and talk to the nurses about overnight issues. When the residents arrive, I discuss the cases with them. Somedays we have Care Progression Rounds or Huddles where all the therapists, program coordinator, social worker, charge nurse, and medical team meet and discuss the patients. Then we round on our patients. After rounds, we do consults, team and family conferences, admissions, and discharges. Once per week, we have rehab follow-up clinic. On certain days we have grand rounds and other educational activities as well.



What advice would you give to your former self?

As far as my path goes, I wouldn't change a thing. As far as my personal life goes, I wouldn't take things so personally and would enjoy the process more. I would take time to really understand where people are coming from and not to judge. I am more aware of this now, but it wasn't always like this.

What is your fondest memory of residency training?

I did a combined Peds/PM&R residency at the Children's Hospital of Cincinnati and the University of Cincinnati. The comradery there was absolutely the best. At Children's Hospital, there were usually nearly 20 residents on call. We always helped each other out. If one resident was slammed, the other residents would help. The teamwork was incredible.

Any updates about CHLA?

Because I'm so busy, I'm looking to hire someone part-time to help with clinics and to cover for me for vacations. While I prefer someone who is Pediatric Rehab trained, I am open to anyone with a general PM&R background. I have many new programs in mind but will need help to get them off the ground.

Pain Fellowship Co-Directors Corner: *Dr. Allen Chen*

Fellowship Site Director
UCLA

How did your interest grow in rehabilitation medicine?

After graduating from Harvard, I spent four years working various jobs around the globe trying to figure out what I wanted to do as a career. I was on the peak of Mt. Elbrus in Russia (one of the seven summits) as part an expedition team for the National Foundation for the Blind, helping a blind climber complete the first blind ski descent of the mountain. It was there, at 18,500 feet altitude, that I decided to pursue a career in which I could help those with functional injuries live a full and robust life. I was fortunate to go to medical school at NYU where we had a strong PM&R department and presence. Out of my class, a half dozen of us went into the field. Having early exposure to the PM&R allowed me to weigh my options as I progressed through various rotations, and the combination of outpatient clinics, procedures, and lifestyle was appealing to me.

What are your responsibilities at UCLA Spine?

My main role at the UCLA spine center is to provide quality, evidence-based, and patient-centric non-operative spine care. The vast majority of spine care is non-surgical, so my partners and I all have very busy clinical practices. Our interventional physiatry group is close-knit and very supportive of one another. In addition, as the Co-Director of the UCLA/West LA VA Pain Fellowship and the Course Director of the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine Outpatient Spine Clerkship, I am very involved in training and education for fellows, residents, and medical students. I also represent UCLA Spine and Physiatry as an instructor for the International Pain and Spine Intervention Society (IPSIS) and North America Spine Society (NASS).

What advice would you give to your former self?

Never stop learning. Residency and Fellowship are just the tip of the iceberg. Our field is constantly changing and evolving, and there are ample opportunities to contribute to that evolution



whether it's through research, teaching, or being involved in national and international societies. Also, choose a geographic location that keeps you engaged, happy, and fulfilled outside of work. Whether it's the ocean, mountains, restaurants, or going out until 4am (or all of the above), figure out what gives you day-to-day joy and find a place that provides it.

What is your fondest memory of residency training?

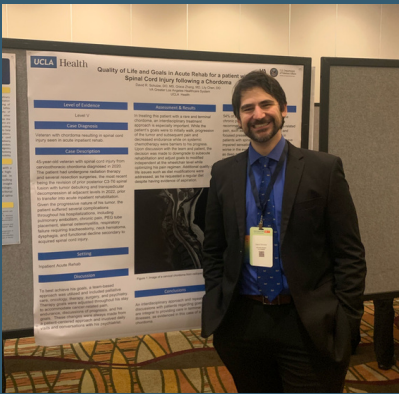
I did my residency at the University of Washington in Seattle. In addition to meeting and working with some incredible co-residents who are now leaders in our field, I was able to have a lot of fun! Kitesurfing in Hood River, Oregon, weekday night skiing in Snoqualmie, wakeboarding on Lake Washington, and going out until 4am in Belltown and Capitol Hill are my fondest memories of residency.

Any updates about UCLA Spine?

Yes! After receiving much feedback from current and prior ACGME fellows about their positive experiences on the UCLA spine rotation, we are happy to be adding a second fellow to our rotation. As our group has grown, we now have more than enough clinical volume to support an additional fellow. Starting in 2024, we are increasing to five total fellows, and will have two concurrent fellows on the UCLA Spine rotation, with each fellow rotating with Dr. Fish, Dr. Solberg, and myself for around 5 months of their one-year fellowship. Our interventional spine/physiatry group continues to grow, and we are hopeful that we can continue to expand both our geographic and educational impact.

Research Accomplishments 2022-2023

- Published Manuscripts: 39+
- Books/Chapters: 30+
- Conference Presentations: 20+
- Funded Projects: 10+
- Editorial Roles: 4



*Association of Academic Physiatrists
(AAP) Annual Meeting 2023 in Anaheim, CA*



*American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
(AAPM&R) Assembly 2022 in Baltimore, MD*

Residency Events

Dinner with Alumni Advisors



Research Day 2023



Team to Win Volunteering



Trivia Night



Bowling Night



Hiking



Beach day



With our therapy mini horse



Ultrasound Training



Happy Hour



UCLA/VA Greater Los Angeles HS PM&R Residency
Welcomes the Class of 2026!



R. Cameron Allred
Midwestern U AZ COM



Antonio Casco-Zuleta
Case Western Reserve U SOM



Catherine Cho
Touro Univ COM-CA



Kristen Clark
Stony Brook U SOM



Kyle Kinder
U Iowa Carver COM



Sam Olson
Stony Brook U SOM



Sneh Patel
U Miami Miller SOM

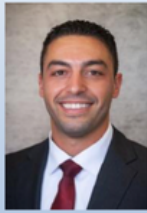


Anton Pham
Rocky Vista Univ COM



Jennifer Tram
UC San Diego SOM

UCLA/VA Greater Los Angeles HS
PM&R Pain Medicine Fellows 2023-2024



Karim Fahmy, DO



Nicholas Peterson, MD



Rachel Sunico, MD



Grace Zhang, MD

UCLA/VA Greater Los Angeles HS PM&R Residency
Welcomes the Class of 2027!



Alyssa Anderson



Austin Davis



Helena Drolshagen



Andrew Lai



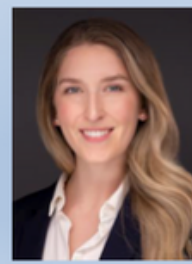
Anthony Loffredo



Ellie Ok



Jordan Steelquist



Maya Tarasenko

Check out our new website!



Home > Departments > Medicine >

Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Residency Program

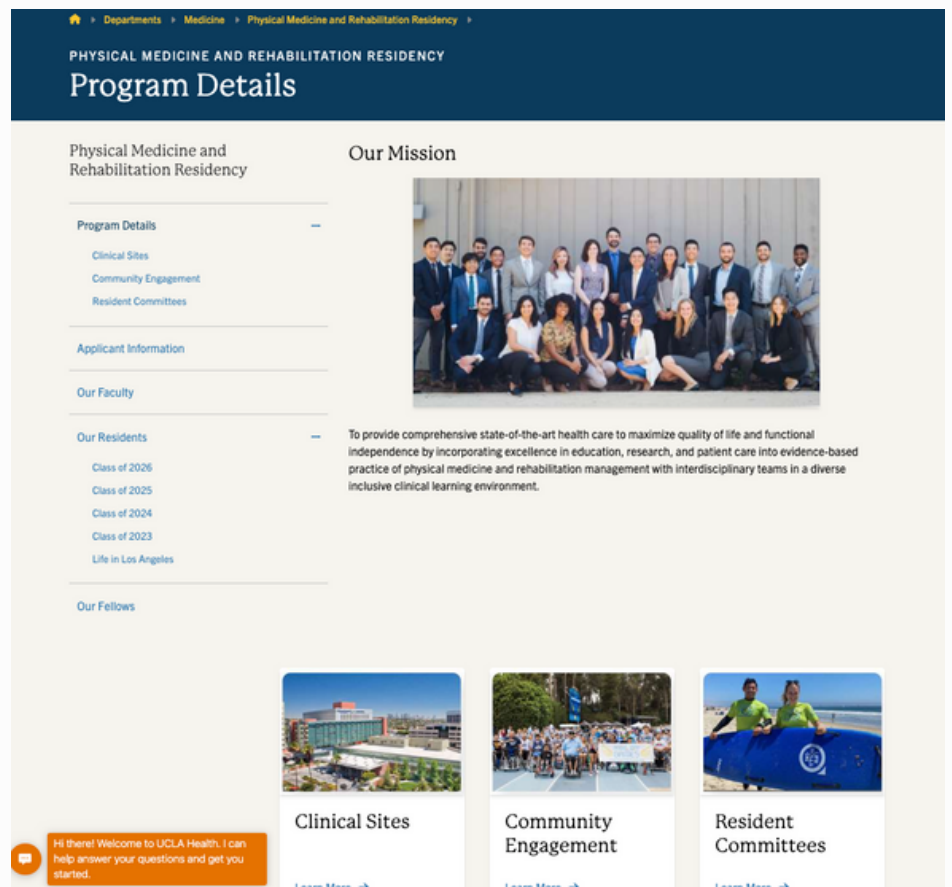
[Program Details](#) [Applicant Information](#) [Our Faculty](#) [Our Residents](#) [Our Fellows](#)



Welcome to the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Residency Program!

Welcome to the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine/UCLA Medical Center/VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Residency Program. The field of physical medicine and rehabilitation is constantly evolving and we are proud to be a part of the exciting progress. Since 1955, our program has trained over 400 physiatrists and remains dedicated to providing quality healthcare to veterans, training compassionate ethical skilled physiatrists, supporting scientific discovery and field advancement through research, and producing leaders in education, patient care, and advocacy.

[Learn More](#) →



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PHYSICAL MEDICINE AND REHABILITATION RESIDENCY

Program Details


Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Residency

- Program Details
 - Clinical Sites
 - Community Engagement
 - Resident Committees
- Applicant Information
- Our Faculty
- Our Residents
 - Class of 2026
 - Class of 2025
 - Class of 2024
 - Class of 2023
 - Life in Los Angeles
- Our Fellows

Our Mission




To provide comprehensive state-of-the-art health care to maximize quality of life and functional independence by incorporating excellence in education, research, and patient care into evidence-based practice of physical medicine and rehabilitation management with interdisciplinary teams in a diverse inclusive clinical learning environment.




[Clinical Sites](#)

[Learn More](#) →



[Community Engagement](#)

[Learn More](#) →



[Resident Committees](#)

[Learn More](#) →

Hi there! Welcome to UCLA Health. I can help answer your questions and get you started.



<https://www.uclahealth.org/departments/medicine/physical-medicine-rehabilitation-residency>

UCLA / VA Greater Los Angeles HS PM&R Residency and Pain Medicine Fellowship

Alumni Reception

Saturday, November 18, 2023
5:00-7:00 pm

- Room: Warwick, 3rd Floor
- Hilton New Orleans
Riverside
- Two Poydras Street
- New Orleans, Louisiana
70130



#aapmr23 | NEW ORLEANS, LA & VIRTUAL
NOVEMBER 15-19, 2023

GET CONNECTED
Alumni Receptions at #aapmr23



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