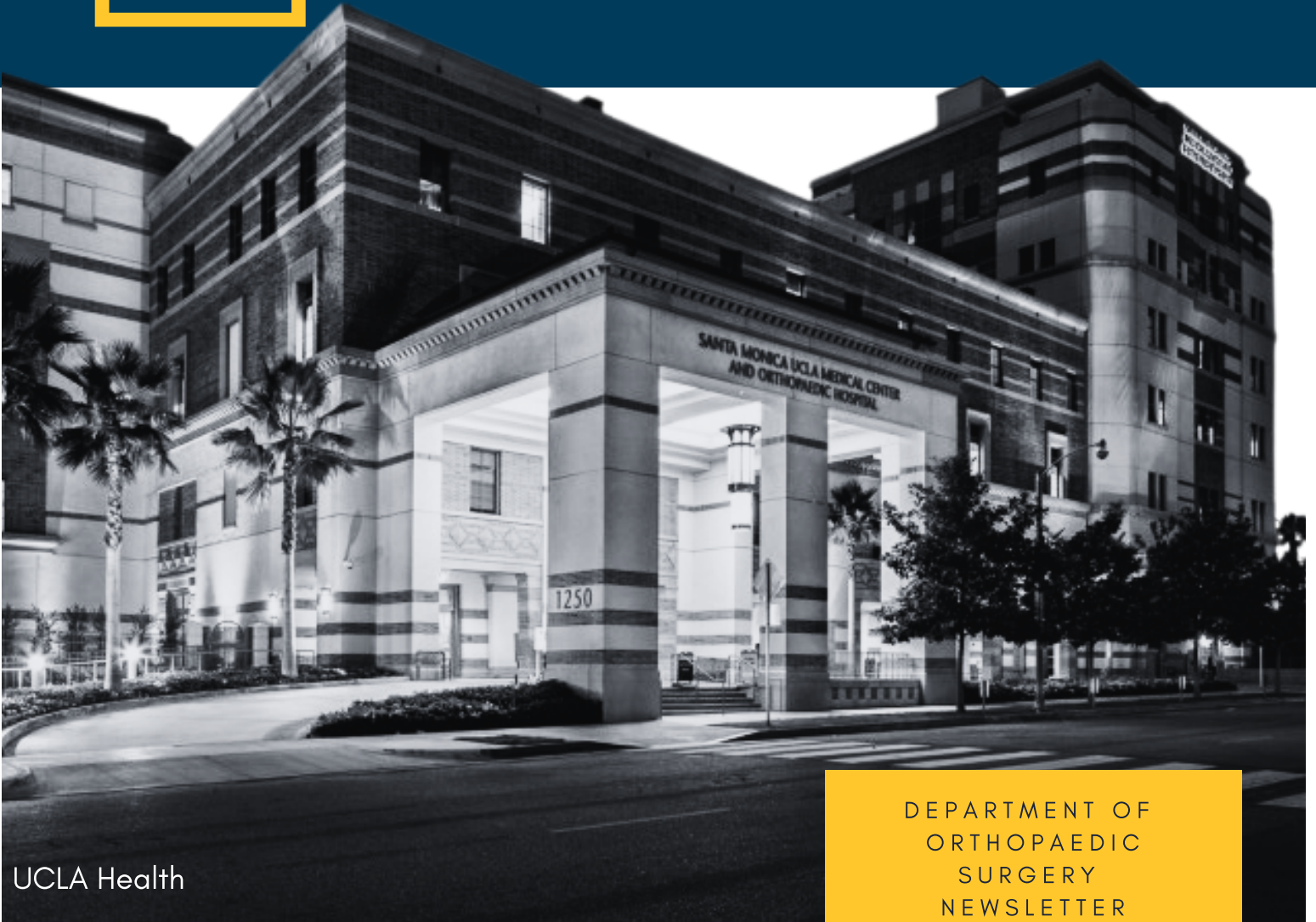




DEPARTMENT OF  
**ORTHOPAEDIC**  
SUMMER ISSUE • 2021  
SURGERY



UCLA Health

## WELCOME MESSAGE

**The Department of Orthopaedic Surgery is excited to bring you our new Newsletter!**

We will use this opportunity to share operational updates, quality and safety initiatives, and our efforts towards equity, diversity, and inclusion.

In each issue, we will feature different subspecialties and highlight innovative orthopaedic care. Every newsletter, we will celebrate achievements, awards, and the Bru[W]ins of members in our Ortho team!

DEPARTMENT OF  
ORTHOPAEDIC  
SURGERY  
NEWSLETTER

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# THE CHAIR'S CORNER

BY NICHOLAS  
BERNTHAL, M.D.

Every day, we come to work knowing we stand on the shoulders of giants. From Marshall Urist's discovery of BMP to Harry McKellop's highly cross-linked polyethylene, from Harlan Amstutz's resurfacing arthroplasty to Jeff Eckardt's endoprotheses, the UCLA orthopaedic department has always been at the forefront of discovery. We continue down that path today, leveraging the unparalleled resources of the Orthopaedic Hospital Research Center to redefine translational musculoskeletal basic science, the UCLA Orthopaedic Outcomes Unit to employ artificial intelligence and machine learning to advance surgical outcomes, and the collaboration with the School of Engineering to design more compliant, functional prosthetics.

## Nicholas Bernthal, M.D.

Board Certified, Orthopaedic Oncology Surgeon with expertise in sarcomas. He is also the Interim Chair and Executive Medical director at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Nicholas Bernthal, MD  
Orthopaedic Surgery

We commit to pushing these boundaries while **always keeping the patient first**. Our staff, trainees, and faculty continue to provide exceptional care for every patient with musculoskeletal injury, disability, or pathology. That care is why we are trusted to care for the Los Angeles Lakers, the US Military's Wounded Warriors via Operation Mend, and many of the Olympians who just performed so magnificently in Tokyo. It is also why we were ranked #5 in the nation in orthopaedic care by US News and World Report last week.

## "WE COMMIT TO PUSHING THESE BOUNDARIES WHILE ALWAYS KEEPING THE PATIENT FIRST."

The last 18 months have been an extraordinarily challenging time for all of us. The COVID pandemic has made us re-evaluate how we work, how we interact, and what we value. What it has not changed is how much a group of committed, dynamic, caring people can achieve when they treat every patient like a family member. Whether removing a cancer or helping a child walk, fixing a fracture or replacing a hip, addressing a spinal cord injury or transplanting a hand, our Department will answer the call. We commit to provide the best care of today while discovering better care for tomorrow.

Welcome to the UCLA Department of Orthopaedic Surgery Newsletter.

Friends and Colleagues,

Ranking systems are notoriously fickle and often flawed. Despite that, I am deeply proud to let you know that our Department has ranked #5 in the nation in orthopaedics this year in the US News & World Report. This represents the first time our program has cracked the top 5 and is a major factor in UCLA Health moving up to the #3 hospital in the nation.

We work here to provide world-class care for our patients, push scientific boundaries, and train the next generation of orthopaedic leaders. In a year that challenged us in so many ways, it carries special meaning to be recognized for achieving our missions.

Our work is not done, as there is much to do. But tonight, I hope everyone takes a moment to stop and take a deep breath. Each and every one of us has a hand in this success. Celebrate a job well done.

**I am proud to say, we are UCLA Orthopaedics.**

Sincerely,  
Nick

Nicholas M. Bernthal, MD, FAOA  
Interim Chair and Jeffrey J. Eckardt Endowed Chair  
Department of Orthopaedic Surgery  
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA



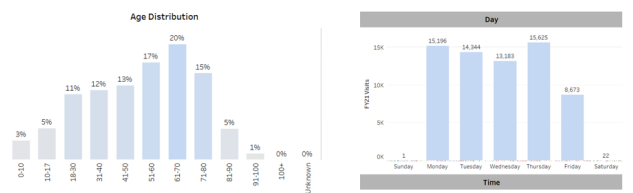
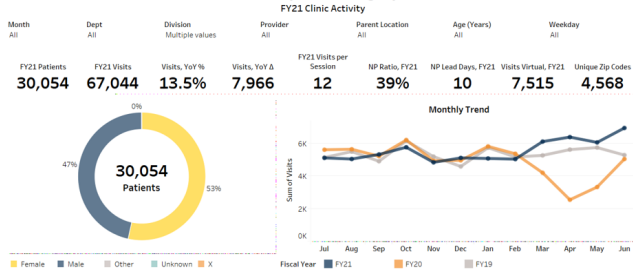
# OPERATIONAL METRICS

BY HARDY SHAH & KSENIA KURNAKOVA

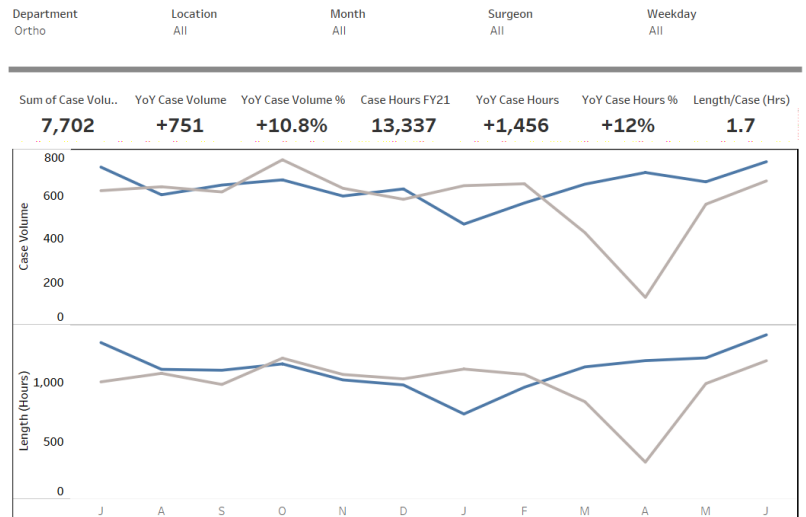
In FY21, Orthopaedic Surgery provided care to over 30,000 patients during over 67,000 visits. The number of visits in FY21 increased by over 13% compared to FY20 with a continuing upward monthly trend from February 2021 to present.

Similarly, OR cases increased in FY21 compared to FY20 by almost 9% and totaling almost 12,000 cases with a continuing upward monthly trend from February 2021 to present.

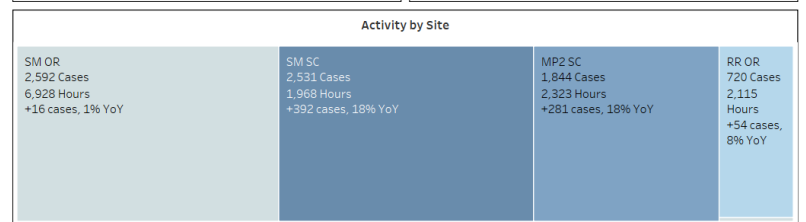
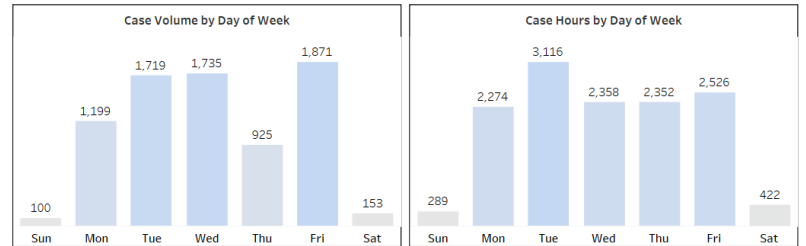
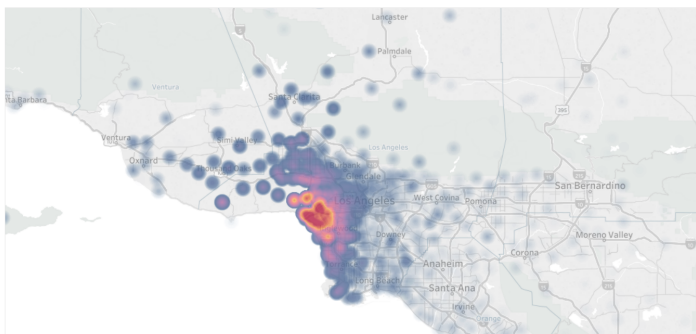
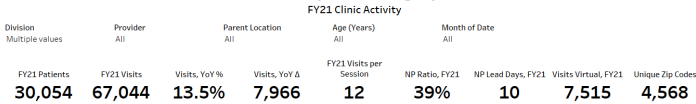
## Orthopaedic Surgery



## OR Activity Dashboard



## Orthopaedic Surgery



# QUALITY & SAFETY INITIATIVES

BY DON PARK, M.D.

In FY21, UCLA Orthopaedics made great strides in quality and safety with the development and utilization of a series of new Tableau dashboards. The dashboards enable customization and tracking of quality and safety metrics in real-time on department, division, and individual provider levels, contributing to transparency and greater access to valuable data. The data provided in the dashboards supports quality improvement decision-making allowing identification of complications trends.

**"UCLA HEALTH RECENTLY RECOGNIZED ORTHOPAEDICS AS ONE OF THE HIGHEST ACHIEVING DEPARTMENTS WITH RESPECT TO QUALITY AND SAFETY PROCESSES"**

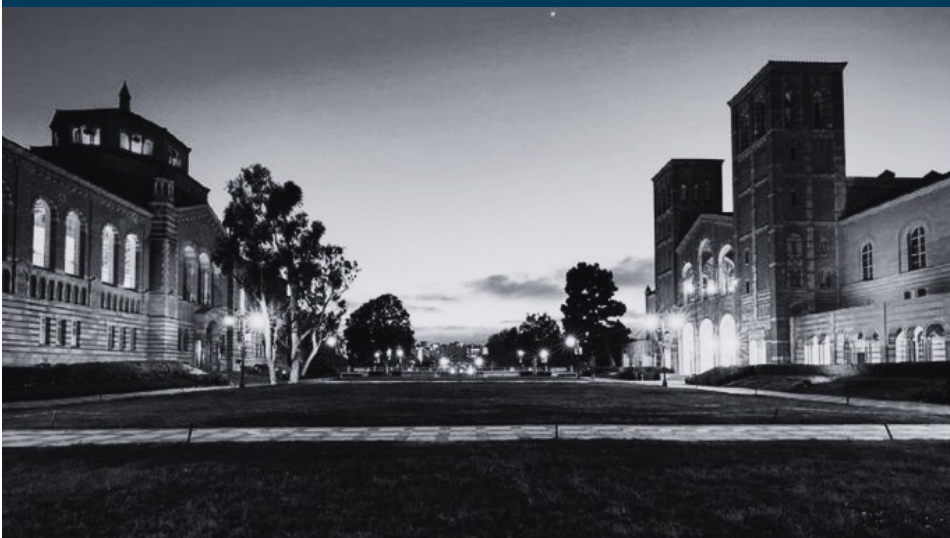
The department is collaborating with Quality Informatics and Analytics to overlay quality and safety metrics with cost and reimbursement. UCLA Health recently recognized Orthopaedics as one of the highest achieving departments with respect to quality and safety processes.

The department replicated quality processes utilized by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid's Value Based Purchasing program to improve performance in primary total joint arthroplasty through identification of innovative ways to reduce and prevent complications.

## Don Park, M.D.

Board Certified, fellowship trained Orthopaedic Spine Surgeon with an expertise in minimally invasive spine surgery. He is also the Vice Chair of Quality and Safety for the department of Orthopaedic Surgery at UCLA.





## COVID-19 RESPONSE

BY MAURICIO  
SILVA, M.D.

In December 2019, China reported the first case of an unknown respiratory disease caused by a novel coronavirus, initially referred to as severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The disease, later named coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19), rapidly spread around the world. Ten of the first twenty confirmed COVID-19 cases in the United States occurred in California, with the first case confirmed on January 26, 2020.

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. Sixteen months later, by July 2021, the pandemic caused 35 million infections and over 600,000 deaths in the United States alone. California still accounts for the largest number of cases and deaths in the United States.

The initial response to the pandemic required unprecedented adjustments to clinical operations at UCLA Orthopaedics. First, the department canceled or delayed all scheduled surgeries, allowing only for the most urgent cases. As a result, the department went from 497 surgical procedures in February of 2020, to only 131 surgical procedures, a 74% reduction, in April of the same year. During that time, Orthopaedic clinic visits reduced by 53%, from 5,383 to 2,552 visits.

Many orthopaedic patients chose to delay routine care during the pandemic over safety concerns. The pandemic brought new challenges to UCLA Health faculty and staff, including the department of Orthopaedics, with complex and dynamic guidelines, including protocols and safety measures such as masking, temperature checks, testing, daily health questionnaire, personal protective equipment utilization, and much more. Orthopaedic faculty and staff worked tirelessly to ensure delivery of high-quality, patient-centered care to all of our patients while adapting and navigating the new environment.

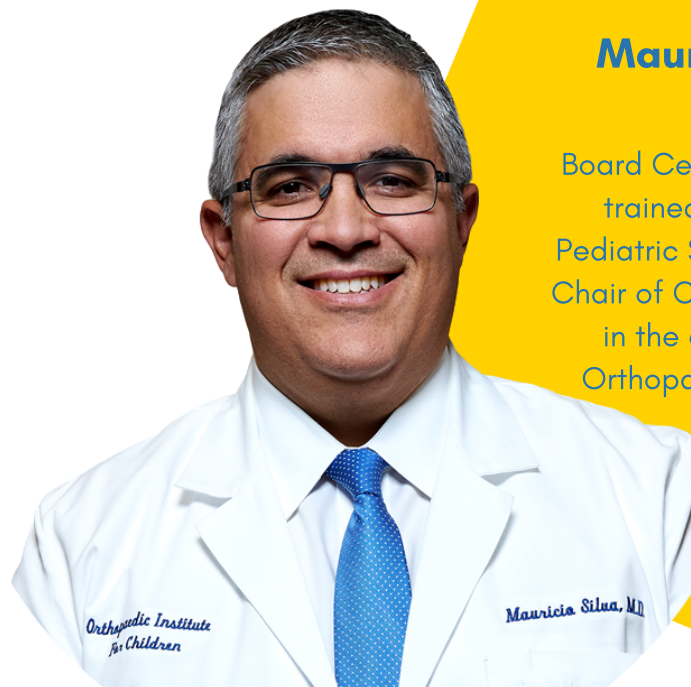
## "The pandemic brought new challenges to UCLA Health faculty and staff, including the department of Orthopaedics"

Telehealth became the innovation, essential to providing patients with access to care during the pandemic, with 7,500 virtual visits in Orthopaedics in the last 12 months. The department is proud of everything that faculty and staff have accomplished together during this difficult year!

Today, the number of COVID-19 cases has dramatically decreased with almost 70% of the Los Angeles county population over 16 years of age fully or partially vaccinated. As more people return to their pre-pandemic life, the department of Orthopaedics has seen a progressive increase in clinical volumes.

Over the past 12 months, our clinic visits increased by almost 14% and surgical cases increased by almost 11%, compared to prior 12 months. June 2021 has been the busiest month of the fiscal year, with Orthopaedic surgeons performing 599 surgeries across all UCLA locations.

Orthopaedic leadership extends deep and sincere gratitude to all faculty and staff for the hard work and dedication in ensuring department's success through tumultuous times.



### **Mauricio Silva, M.D.**

Board Certified, fellowship trained Orthopaedic Pediatric Surgeon and Vice Chair of Clinical Operations in the department of Orthopaedic Surgery at UCLA.

# EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

BY SHARON  
HAME, M.D.

UCLA Orthopaedics is dedicated to fostering a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion for faculty, staff, trainees, and patients. Recently, the department created an 11-member Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee led by the Interim Vice Chair of EDI and comprised of representatives from the clinical faculty, research faculty, staff, and residency program. The committee’s goals include increasing awareness, improving representation, decreasing disparity, and promoting education.

**"The committee’s goals include increasing awareness, improving representation, decreasing disparity, and promoting education"**

On November 4, 2020, the department hosted its first grand rounds on EDI entitled "The Path Forward: Diversity in Orthopaedic Surgery", featuring presentations by Dr. Kathleen Brown, Dr. Lynn Gordon, and Dr. Daniel Kozman. A second grand round on May 5, 2021, entitled "Disparity Based Research in Orthopaedic Surgery: Understanding a Problem as a Pathway to a Cure" featured eight disparity-related research projects presented by current trainees in the department. Dr. Oluwaferanmi Okanlami, served as the keynote speaker, presenting on "Disabusing DisabilityTM: Demonstrating That DISability Doesn't Mean INability".

In addition to the EDI educational efforts, the department also supports Women in Orthopaedic Surgery Group, focused on mentoring female residents, fellows, and faculty. Department’s long-term EDI goals include: establishment of a sub-internship scholarship program for underrepresented minority medical students, conducting research into the disparity in orthopaedic care, expansion of our mentorship programs, and creation of an adaptive sports program at UCLA. UCLA Orthopaedics Surgery strives to meet its commitment to the reduction in healthcare inequalities through its long-term goals as well as by creating a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion.



UCLA



# EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

## EDI Committee goals:

- Conduct a department-wide EDI survey using the survey tool developed by the David Geffen School of Medicine to understand EDI climate, needs, and opportunities with the goal of developing an action plan based on the results. Implement the action plan and re-survey the department to confirm improvements.
- Incorporate EDI topics into Grand Rounds.
- Establish a visiting student scholarship program for medical students from underrepresented backgrounds to foster interest in Orthopaedic Surgery and encourage students to visit the department.
- Develop and support the Adaptive Sports Medicine Program with recreational and competitive components for athletes admitted to UCLA and UCLA undergraduate student-athletes. The program aims to start by supporting wheelchair tennis and wheelchair basketball. The program's long-term goal is to support UCLA adaptive sports teams.

## Committee Members

**Sharon Hame, M.D.- Committee Chair**

**Elizabeth Lord, M.D.**

**Adam Sassoon, M.D.**

**Ajay Gurbani, M.D.**

**Aurelia Nattiv, M.D.**

**Brooke Crawford, M.D.**

**Kristopher Jones, M.D.**

**Alice Soragni, Ph.D.**

**Chad Ishmael, M.D.**

**Ksenia Kurnakova, M.P.H**

**Julianne Ho, M.B.A**

**Marie Dyer-administrative support**

"I am extremely honored to help lead the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery's efforts to foster an environment of equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice. Through education, training, and exposure the department is poised to make important changes that will have an enduring impact on the lives of our faculty, staff, trainees, and patients."

**Sharon L. Hame, MD**

Interim Vice Chair for Equity,  
Diversity and Inclusion



# PROMOTIONS

BY DAVID  
MCALLISTER, M.D.

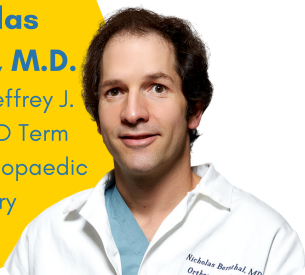
In FY21, the following Orthopaedic faculty members received recognition for academic and creative contributions to the University.

## Endowed Chairs:

- **Nicholas Bernthal, M.D.**, Inaugural Jeffrey J. Eckardt, MD Term Chair in Orthopaedic Surgery
- **Rachel Thompson, M.D.**, Inaugural William and Patricia Oppenheim Presidential Chair in Pediatric Orthopaedics

**Nicholas  
Bernthal, M.D.**

Inaugural Jeffrey J.  
Eckardt, MD Term  
Chair in Orthopaedic  
Surgery



**Rachel  
Thompson, M.D.**

Inaugural William and  
Patricia Oppenheim  
Presidential Chair in  
Pediatric Orthopaedics



## Academic Promotions:

- **Jennifer Beck, M.D.**, promoted to Health Sciences Clinical Associate Professor
- **Allen Chen, M.D.**, promoted to Health Sciences Clinical Associate Professor
- **Don Park, M.D.**, promoted to Health Sciences Clinical Associate Professor
- **Erik Zeegen, M.D.**, promoted to Health Sciences Clinical Associate Professor

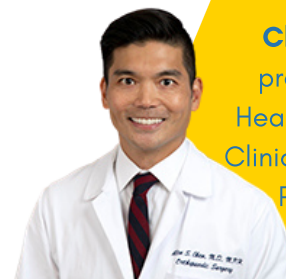
**Jennifer  
Beck, M.D.**

promoted to Health  
Sciences Clinical  
Associate Professor



**Allen  
Chen, M.D.**

promoted to  
Health Sciences  
Clinical Associate  
Professor



**Don Park, M.D.**

promoted to  
Health Sciences  
Clinical Associate  
Professor



**Erik  
Zeegen, M.D.**

promoted to  
Health Sciences  
Clinical Associate  
Professor



# TRAINING PROGRAM

BY NELSON  
SOOHOO, M.D.

The UCLA Orthopaedic Surgery Residency and UCLA Biodesign Program Partnership  
The UCLA Biodesign Program brings together outstanding individuals from healthcare, engineering, and business to address significant clinical needs through the development of novel technologies.

The partnership between the UCLA Biodesign Program and the Department of Orthopaedics began in FY20, when one of the UCLA Orthopaedics trainees, Peter Hsiue, M.D., was selected for the inaugural class of the UCLA Biodesign Fellowship. Dr. Hsiue and his team worked to identify and address the clinical needs within the space of interventional neuroradiology. The team conducted over 1800 hours of primary research within the UCLA Health system, including time in the interventional neuroradiology suite where the team worked with interventionalists and participated in neurovascular procedures.

The unique opportunity of structured collaboration provided by the Biodesign Program, allowed the team to quickly identify a clinical need and refine the solution to maximize the benefit to the patient, provider, and healthcare system.

Dr. Hsiue's team ultimately chose to create a soft-robotic neurovascular catheter to aid navigation through the network of cerebral blood vessels and facilitate the passage of therapeutic devices. Dr. Hsiue later co-founded a company, Protean Surgical Instruments, securing funding through various entrepreneurial competitions.



The partnership between the UCLA Orthopaedics and Biodesign Program continues. In the coming year, our resident, Alexander Uphill-Brown, M.D. from the class of 2025 will spend a year as a Biodesign Fellow and Dr. Nelson SooHoo will participate in the Biodesign Faculty Accelerator Fellowship.

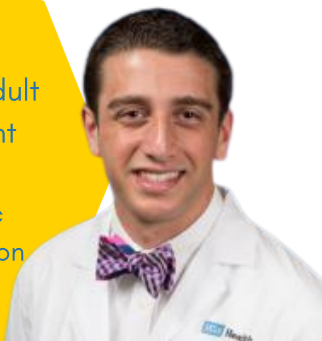


# GRADUATING RESIDENTS

**Armin**

**Arishi, M.D.**

Up next: Fellowship, Adult Reconstruction & Joint Replacement  
Rothman Orthopaedic Institute, Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Philadelphia, PA



**Gideon**

**Blumstein, M.D.**

Up next: Fellowship, Spine, Rush University Medical Center, Chicago, IL



**Zachary**

**Burke, M.D.**

Up next: Fellowship, Musculoskeletal Oncology, Mount Sinai Hospital/ University of Toronto, Ontario



**Nicholas,**

**Gajewski, M.D.**

Up next: Fellowship, Pediatric Orthopaedic Surgery, duPont Hospital for Children, Wilmington, DE



**Karren**

**Takamura, M.D.**

Up next: Fellowship, Hand & Upper Extremity, Brigham & Women's/ Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA



**PengCheng**

**"Jack"**

**Wang, M.D.**

Up next: Fellowship, Hand & Upper Extremity, NYU Hospital for Joint Diseases





**UCLA Orthopaedic  
Residency  
Graduation 2020**



# INCOMING RESIDENT INTERNS PGY-1

**Lisa  
Su, M.D.**

University of California,  
Los Angeles David Geffen  
School of Medicine



**Troy  
Sekimura, M.D.**

University of California,  
Los Angeles David Geffen  
School of Medicine



**Varun  
Gudapati, M.D.**

University of California,  
Los Angeles David Geffen  
School of Medicine



**Nicole  
Hung, M.D.**

University of California,  
San Francisco School of  
Medicine



**Brian  
Zukotynski, M.D.**

University of California,  
Los Angeles David Geffen  
School of Medicine



**Ryan  
Ouillette, M.D.**

University of California,  
San Diego School  
of Medicine



UCLA has a proud tradition of training leaders in Orthopaedic Surgery dating back to 1975. We aim to profile our former alumni who continue to make impactful contributions to our field

Dr. Natalie Leong graduated from the UCLA Orthopaedic Surgery Residency in 2017 and went on to complete her fellowship in Sports Medicine at Rush University, later joining the faculty of the University of Maryland School of Medicine and the staff of the Baltimore Veterans Administration Medical Center. In addition to clinical practice in sports and shoulder surgery, Dr. Leong runs a ligament and tendon regeneration laboratory with Dr. Jie Jiang, Ph.D. The laboratory has received five research grants totaling \$2.4 million since its inception.

Dr. Leong also serves as an associate editor of the Journal of Knee Surgery and as a research committee member of the Arthroscopy Association of North America.

On a personal note, Dr. Leong has recently welcomed her second child. Dr. Leong extends her gratitude for the privilege of training at UCLA, and looks forward to seeing Orthopaedic faculty and fellow alumni at future events!

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

BY KSENIA  
KURNAKOVA



# GRANT SPOTLIGHT: WYSS MEDICAL FOUNDATION

BY NICHOLAS  
BERNTHAL, M.D.

In F21, the Wyss Foundation made a generous 10-year, \$3 million commitment to advance outcomes of Orthopaedic Trauma care at UCLA under the direction of Eric Johnson, M.D.

This transformational gift forms the backbone of the Department's new Orthopaedic Outcomes Unit, a multidisciplinary effort aimed at understanding best practices in orthopaedics and optimizing patient outcomes. Leveraging the infrastructure of UCLA's machine learning and artificial intelligence algorithms, this effort ambitiously aims to redefine the term "success" in orthopaedic surgery.

We are deeply indebted to the Wyss Foundation and believe this work will reflect the Foundation's mission to identify "innovative, lasting solutions that improve lives."

# BRU[w]INS



**Jennifer Beck, M.D.**

New Member- Fellow  
of The American  
Orthopaedic  
Association



**Andrew Jensen, M.D.**

WOA/OREF Young  
Investigator Award

**Kristofer Jones,  
M.D.**

New Member- NFL  
Musculoskeletal  
Injury Committee



## MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to our staff and faculty who have reached a milestone anniversary over the course of fiscal year 2021!

### 1 YEAR

**Huyen Thi Lam Nguyen, M.D.**  
**Catherine Huevo, M.A.**  
**Hardy Shah, Chief Admin. Offcer**  
**Kyle Yang, M.D.**  
**Davis Wachtell, Research**  
**Beatriz Tovar, M.A.**

### 10 YEARS

**Monica Banuelos, Admin Asst.**  
**Kimberly Gilliam, Admin Asst.**  
**Kerry Hoffmann, Admin Asst.**  
**Peter Alexakis, M.D.**

### 25 YEARS

**Lillian Embray, Admin Asst.**

### 30 YEARS

**Catherine Harris- Gorzadek, Admin Asst.**

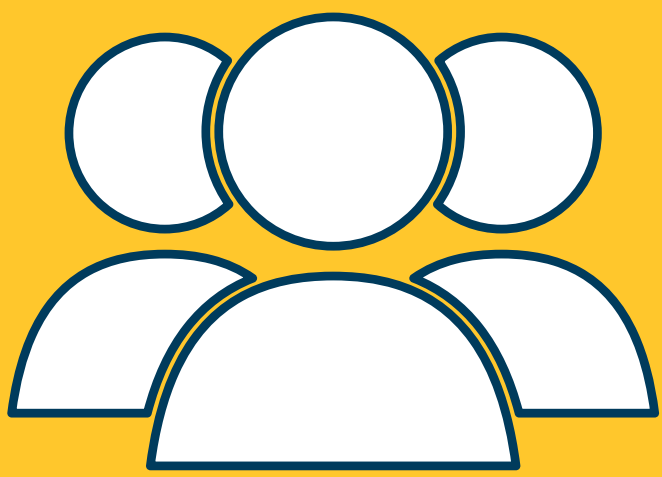


# UPCOMING EVENTS

**AAOS ANNUAL  
MEETING-SAN DIEGO  
AUG 31- SEPT 3, 2021**

**21st ISOLS GENERAL  
MEETING- LOS ANGELES  
MAY 9-13, 2022**

**Show us your Bru[W]ins!**



**We want to hear from you!**

Every issue as we will highlight leading-edge Ortho care and research, we'd like the opportunity to showcase the honors and awards of individuals from our Ortho Team.

This invite is extended to every Ortho Team member. We'd like a chance to celebrate with you! Please email your latest accomplishment or award and a brief description to Melanie Caluza.

You're also welcome to send us the accomplishments of others on our Ortho Team that you'd like to celebrate.