



Letter from the Chairman

L. Scott Levin, MD



Dear Colleagues,

It is a pleasure and honor to write this Chairman's letter for the distinguished University of Pennsylvania Orthopaedic Journal. I want to congratulate the editors, **Jason Hsu, MD**, and **Roshan Shah, MD, JD**, and staff of Volume 20 for putting together a remarkable collection of scientific articles, editorials, and reviews. As **Fred Kaplan, MD**, writes on page 136, the journal was founded by **Carl Brighton, MD, PhD**, and a group of residents and attendings committed to the academic mission of Penn Orthopaedic Surgery. For so many years, the journal has been entirely run by residents and supported by industry unrestricted educational grants and advertising. I would like to acknowledge our industry colleagues and our continued partnership in the educational mission of our department.

I joined the faculty last summer as the 10th Chairman of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. I am humbled by this honor and follow a distinguished list of orthopaedic surgeons who preceded me over the previous 120 years. My predecessors' commitments to clinical care, education, and research have fulfilled the missions of this great medical school and University. **Richard Lackman, MD**, who served in an exemplary fashion as chairman of this great Department, stepped down in December of 2009 to devote more time to the Comprehensive Cancer Center and his oncology practice. In addition, Dr. Lackman will assume the Presidency of the Musculoskeletal Tumor Society in 2010. I would also like to recognize **Brian Sennett, MD**, for his efforts as Interim Chairman prior to my arrival. Dr. Sennett was instrumental in developing the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery physician compensation incentive plan and spearheaded the budgetary process for Fiscal Year 2010. His leadership during this time of transition was extraordinary.

I have spent the last six months getting to know our residents, faculty, research community, and the University of Pennsylvania. I am delighted that we were able to match eight of the best orthopaedic applicants to next year's intern class, including **Gabe Horneff**, **Kevin McHale**, **Christos Photopoulos**, **Matthew Sullivan**, **Ryan Taylor**, and **Stephan Torres** in the 5-year track, and **Andrew Milby** and **Sarah Yannascoli** in the 6-year track. They will join an outstanding complement of orthopaedic residents and will enjoy the unwavering commitment of this department to our residents. Our residents have received many accolades in this past year, but one notable honor that showcases the academic excellence that is at the heart of UPOJ, is last spring's Orthopaedic Research Educational Foundation's Northeast Regional Competition. Out of 52 research submissions chosen

for presentation, 24 came from Penn Medicine, and first and second place prizes went to **Nirav Pandya, MD**, and **Albert Gee, MD**, respectively. Equally notable are **Surena Namdari, MD, MSc**, who won the Jacqueline Perry Award for his paper on treating stiff knee gait, and **Jesse Torbert, MD, MS**, for being selected for the OREF Clinician Scientist Development Program.

Good seeds deserve a nurturing and resource rich environment, so I am especially excited to open the **Department of Orthopaedic Surgery Human Fresh Tissue Laboratory** this fall. This laboratory will give our residents the opportunity to study human anatomy in a controlled situation so they can facilitate their learning and become better surgeons. The opportunity for the surgical residents to have this type of facility further enhances the training programs at Penn Medicine, which are among the best in the country.

Our research laboratory continues to be among the leading orthopaedic research laboratories in the world. Under the able leadership of **Louis Soslowsky, PhD**, the lab is composed of six NIH funded investigators that include Drs. Lou Soslowsky, **Robert Mauck**, **Eileen Shore**, **Fred Kaplan**, **Ling Qin**, and **Dawn Elliot**. In addition to the McKay Research Lab, Dr. Soslowsky directs the **Penn Center for Musculoskeletal Disorders** which is an NIH-funded, multidisciplinary, collaborative effort across several schools at Penn that brings together a multitude of researchers dedicated to the musculoskeletal system. I am particularly proud that Dr. Soslowsky is this year's winner of the Ann Vaughn Donner Kappa Delta Award from the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons. I congratulate Lou for his exemplary efforts over his 12 year tenure at Penn resulting in this magnificent tribute that is so well-deserved. I have enjoyed the opportunity to spend time with Lou, helping move our research mission forward and complementing our clinical and educational programs.

Two residents, both current editors of this issue of the UPOJ, **Jason Hsu** and **Roshan Shah**, have completed a successful year of basic science research under the tutelage of Drs. Soslowsky and Mauck, respectively, and I am looking forward to continued excellence from **Chancellor Gray, MD**, and **Mara Schenker, MD**, as they enter the lab in July. Both Jason and Roshan were recipients of **OTA Resident Research Grants**, and Mara was recently awarded the **OREF Resident Clinician Scientist Training Grant**, in collaboration with Roshan Shah and Robert Mauck, for the study of tissue engineered meniscus implants.

Our clinical programs continue to grow and many changes have occurred in the past year. We have hired **Andrea Evenski, MD** to join Richard Lackman in Orthopaedic Oncology. **Dr. Jaimo Ahn** is our newest MD, PhD in the Department and will be working with **Samir Mehta, MD**,

Bruce Heppenstall, MD, and **John Esterhai, MD** to build our trauma program. Dr. Ahn was recently awarded the **OREF Young Investigator Grant** to study BMP activity in a mouse fracture model. **David Pedowitz, MD** joins **Keith Wapner, MD** and **Wen Chao, MD** in building Penn Orthopaedic's Division of Foot and Ankle Surgery. Our faculty continues to grow with recruits in hand surgery, spine surgery, and adult reconstruction on the horizon.

Over the last six years I have pursued a keen interest in composite tissue allotransplantation as it relates to orthopaedic surgery. In collaboration with **Abraham Shaked, MD, PhD**, the Chief of Transplantation at Penn Medicine, I have started developing a program to perform Hand Transplantation here at the University of Pennsylvania. Other programs that I am excited about include an Extremity Salvage and Reconstruction program with Samir Mehta, MD and John Esterhai, MD for patients threatened with extremity amputation. We have also moved forward with a Combined Hand Program with our plastic surgery colleague, **Ben Chang, MD**, at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and the recruitment of **Scott Kozin, MD** from The Shriners Hospital for Children to create a brachial plexus program for both adults and children.

In another major honor, **Fred Kaplan, MD** has been named to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences. Fred, with his colleague Eileen Shore, PhD, has been instrumental in discovering the FOP gene. They have both devoted their life's work to unlocking the mysteries of this disease and work tirelessly with various researchers to impact the molecular mechanisms of heterotopic ossification as it may relate to osteoporosis and other metabolic bone diseases.

I am also pleased to announce that **G. Russell Huffman, MD, MPH** has received the Japanese Orthopaedic Association's Exchange Traveling Fellowship. This is a highly coveted opportunity for Dr. Huffman to visit top Japanese academic medical centers over a three week period. Additionally, **Gwo-Chin Lee, MD** has received the prestigious John N. Insall Travelling Fellowship and **John Kelly IV, MD** has been

named Chairman of the FDA Expert Panel on Orthopaedic and Rehabilitation Devices.

As I look to the future for our Department, I have defined a very ambitious goal. I am an aficionado of Jim Collins and the book *Good to Great* and as a hobby have read many books on leadership and leading organizations to success. Penn Orthopaedics is already, to say the least, great. *U.S. News and World Report* lists HUP as the 25th best orthopaedic hospital in the nation. However, there is no question that our objective is to always continue striving for greatness. In the next five years, my goal is to rank in the top 5 orthopaedic programs in the nation. This will take a lot of hard work, but we have the vision and talent of our faculty, residents, and dedicated support personnel to achieve this goal. When I think of our stellar Department, our superb faculty and residents, and our dedicated alumni, I am sure we will become even a more robust research, clinical, and educational powerhouse, achieving multiple breakthroughs that can change the lives of our orthopaedic patients.

This past year has been an outstanding one for Penn Orthopaedics, and we are well on our way to reaching our goal. The Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at Penn Medicine has a rich history, becoming a distinct discipline from general surgery in 1877 and formally the nation's first freestanding Department of Orthopaedic Surgery in 1889 under the leadership of Dr. DeForrest Willard. One important way that we will honor our history is through the **DeForrest Willard Alumni Society**, which was inaugurated this year for all alumni of Penn Orthopaedics. I am truly delighted to join the standard of excellence established by my predecessors and to work with all of our excellent faculty, fellows, and residents.



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