



# Letter from the Chair

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I am writing this Chairman's letter at an unprecedented time in the history of modern medicine and the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at Penn Medicine. Although the pandemic has been front and center on the minds of all of us, I feel that there is so much to be thankful for and would like to share with you the collective success we have had over the past year. First, I have never worked harder to assure

that our patients, faculty, residents, fellows, staff and their families remain safe and informed. Second, our commitment to excellence across all missions remains paramount. Our clinics have remained open to evaluate and treat acute and ongoing musculoskeletal issues that require in-person evaluation. We have ramped up our telemedicine efforts dramatically with the help of a committed and skilled administrative staff led by Neil Ravitz. Calvin Jordan has reorganized our operational needs with incredible speed and skill. Our site managers are present and leading our staff. We have adequate PPE and are doing what needs to be done to keep our workforce safe. Our clinical faculty are presenting every urgent or necessary surgical case to me for review and yes – we remain in the operating rooms for orthopaedic trauma cases and staged reconstruction that cannot and should not wait to assure good outcomes for our patients.

Our residency program director Daniel Farber assisted by Vince Moretti have continued to elevate and enhance our educational programs using webinars via Zoom, GoToMeeting, BlueJeans and other digital platforms that have kept us more connected than we ever have been before! Craig Israelite gave his heart and soul as residency program director for more than a decade and we plan to recognize him during a special event in the near future.

Despite our animal labs being closed and our research teams being at home, tremendous work is ongoing in grant writing, manuscript preparation and brainstorming with regards to new basic science projects. This past week, I spoke with Joel Boerckel, Ph.D. about ideas for a new R01 centered around mechanobiology and angiogenesis as it relates to hand allotransplantation. Our watchword in science at Penn —“collaboration”—remains our theme. Lou Soslowsky and our McKay partners have been unwavering in their determination to continue to build Penn Orthopaedic Research. We are now ranked #3 in NIH funding nationally. Our goal is #1!

The hand division continues to be led by David Bozentka and we function here at Penn as an integrated team of orthopaedic

surgeons, plastic surgeons and neurosurgeons to effectively provide upper extremity care. Our close collaboration with our shoulder and elbow colleagues and trauma colleagues provides world-class expertise in every aspect of upper extremity surgery. Our transplant team is preparing for our fifth hand transplant that will be performed in a quadmembral amputee we hope sometime this year.

Keith Wapner has asked that we identify a successor for his position as chief of foot and ankle surgery, and we are currently recruiting for a new chief with his help and guidance.

Our adult reconstructive team has been productive across all missions. This year, Dr. Charles Nelson was nominated and elected as a Director of the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery. This is well-deserved and provides another example of Penn faculty leading at the national level. In addition to peer review funding, Craig Israelite and the adult reconstructive division has been named the beneficiary of a \$1 million industry grant for the “My Mobility Study” working with Zimmer Biomet and Apple.

The sports medicine division continues to thrive. In a major breakthrough for our department, Penn Medicine and Penn Orthopaedics has been named the team physicians for the Philadelphia Flyers hockey team. Brian Sennett has been instrumental in negotiating this arrangement and has also been selfless in working with the Philadelphia 76ers and Joel Embiid to coordinate contributions for Penn's efforts fighting the COVID-19 crisis.

The spine division led by Harvey Smith was fortunate to recruit Amrit Khalsa from Hahnemann when that hospital closed. In addition to Amrit, we have welcomed to our faculty Susan Harding from Hahnemann. She is a very well respected orthopaedic traumatologist, consummate educator and skilled clinician. We also enrolled five of the Hahnemann residents into our residency program—all have been outstanding.

The shoulder and elbow division has been active locally and nationally. We were prepared to have the first ASSH-ASES combined society elbow course in May here at Penn in our cadaver laboratory, but this was canceled due to the COVID crisis. We hope to reschedule the course for next year.

The oncology division led by AAOS Past President Kristy Weber continues to expand its reach. Publications in high impact journals such as Cancer Medicine, Science, and Cell are a tribute to her engagement across our health system and School of Medicine. As the first woman president of the AAOS, she led our Academy admirably. Despite us not meeting in person in March in Orlando, she conducted the business of the AAOS at the highest levels of transparency and integrity, and her legacy as the first female President of the Academy is something we all should be proud of.

Our development efforts have again exceeded our goal; and as of this writing we have raised more than \$3.5 million in philanthropy for our Penn orthopaedic department. This number does not reflect the soft credit for the recently closed \$1.3 million support for COVID-19 research from 76ers player Joel Embiid and owners Josh Harris and David Blitzer.

The department closed a \$3 million commitment to support orthopaedic trauma research from the Wyss Medical Foundation. Mr. Hansjörg Wyss has contributed 6.25 million dollars to our department in the past decade. This recent gift was created in memory of Penn orthopaedic alumnus, Dean Lorich who passed away in 2017. The inaugural Lorich Lecture was to be given by David Helfet in April but will be rescheduled soon.

I try to share the achievements of the Penn Orthopaedics team with you each year. The team always comes first. I want to make you aware of a few opportunities that I have had over the last year that have reflected well on Penn Orthopaedics. I completed my term as President of the American Society for Surgery of the Hand in September 2019. I am currently serving as Orthopaedic Regent of the American College of Surgeons and was elected as the Vice Chair of the Board of Regents in July 2019. This is a one-year term, and it has been an honor to lead the regents through the pandemic crisis and to protect and advocate for the entire house of surgery.

I served on the search committee for the new Chair of the Department of Neurosurgery. Daniel Yoshor from Houston will assume the chair position this July. We all wish Sean Grady well. He has been a close friend, confidant and amazing partner in establishing the Penn Spine Center. Our collaborative relationship with Neurosurgery is exemplary and we intend to grow spine clinical care, spine research and education in the years to come working with both Sean and Dan. We were

recently recognized as a Blue Cross Distinction+ Center for expertise and efficiency in delivering specialty spine care.

The health system continues to expand in our region and beyond. Penn Orthopaedics has established affiliate relationships as well as placed our orthopaedic faculty at Grandview Hospital, Cape Regional, Bayhealth, Princeton and Chester County Hospital. Growth has been strategic and based on patient demand for our outstanding care and superb outcomes.

Our MSKR service line is hitting on all cylinders, and our disease teams continue to mature and expand, meeting the musculoskeletal health needs of our patients and communities by providing high quality, efficient, and value based care.

As I complete my eleventh year as Chairman of the Department of Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, I am humbled by our team's commitment to excellence and high performance year over year. I feel like we are just getting started. The business management author Jim Collins has been referred to many times over the last 11 years. His book "Good to Great" has served many well, and I reflect on our journey of "good to great." We have always been good and great in many ways. Yet our work is never done. We have tremendous opportunities in the next decade to advance our missions and define our legacy further. I have had preliminary discussions with our CEO Kevin Mahoney about our next phases of growth and achievement. It centers around building a new Penn Orthopaedic Hospital on the PPMC campus. While it is a vision for us and a goal, I believe it is achievable. I hope to share the evolution of this concept and conceptual "blueprints" with you the next time we meet. With appreciation for your belief in Penn Medicine and our Penn Orthopaedic Family.