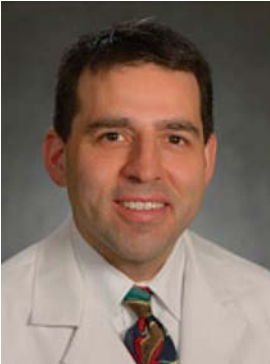




Letter from the Program Director

Daniel C. Farber, MD



What a year it has been! As I near the end of my first full year as Program Director, I reflect on what has been anything but a “usual” year. Just over a year ago, I took over the official reins of the residency program from the adept and long-standing hands of Craig Israelite, MD. Craig shepherded the residency, with the help of Jaimo Ahn MD, PhD and many others, through many incremental and not-so-incremental changes and challenges, sustaining it as one of the top orthopaedic residencies in the country. Last year’s theme was of transition of leadership and the adoption of our newest residents from Hahnemann University Hospital upon its closure. This year’s theme (and it is everyone’s theme) is COVID. COVID struck shortly after I finished and submitted last year’s update. With this pandemic came an opportunity to showcase Penn’s strengths. Last year’s chiefs, Dan Gittings, Mark Hasenauer and Matt Sloan skillfully re-organized our resident team into platoons to make sure all the hospitals were covered and had back-ups available in case of the unknown. The rotation and call schedules were rapidly revamped to ensure Penn’s orthopaedic patients still received the best possible care. I was impressed by our residents who stepped up and volunteered not only to continue treating the orthopaedic patients, but to help in any and all capacities that the hospital system needed during the early days of the crisis. Our outstanding faculty helped transition the educational program into the “zoom” age as our entire didactic program went virtual overnight. The incomparable Shannon Savelloni, our program coordinator, stepped up to facilitate all the logistical challenges that COVID threw our way, all the while preparing for her maternity leave in early May. Lauren Johnson, our (at the time) brand new residency administrative assistant was thrown into the fire just moments after stepping into the frying pan and performed brilliantly during Shannon’s maternity leave even with the challenge of fully remote work. With the able help of Vincent Moretti, MD, our Associate Program Director, and many others, we celebrated the Department’s first ever virtual “Research Day” featuring Leesa Galatz, MD as our distinguished guest speaker. Soon to follow was our virtual graduation. Certainly not what our graduates had been expecting for the previous 4+ years, but still a heartfelt send-off to honor their accomplishments.

This current year saw the sad absence of any outside rotators to our program due to COVID but we did have the opportunity to really get to know our Penn students who are

a fabulous group. The absence of rotators and the decision to keep the entire residency application process virtual completely altered the usual landscape. We arranged multiple online information sessions for students including sessions aimed at those under-represented in medicine arranged by our own Brian Perez, MD and Viviana Serra Lopez, MD along with Larry Wells, MD, the Department’s new Vice Chair of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. We offered students opportunities to be paired with residents and faculty to learn more about our program and for us to learn more about our applicants. Those efforts amongst others led to a strong and diverse class of applicants and interviewees this past January and we hope to see a truly diverse class of interns in just a few weeks. Many thanks to the faculty who combed through the hundreds of applications to help narrow down our interview list and the core group who spent 3 days glued to their computer screens doing virtual interviews of nearly 100 medical students!

This year’s administrative chief residents, Chrissy Nypaver, MD, Mike Eby, MD, and Bill Ryan, MD have been an enormous help. Their skilled assistance has allowed us to continue to navigate the in-person restrictions of COVID for education as well as the resurgence program of Penn’s Health System which saw most orthopaedic divisions ramp back up rapidly as we learned how to deal with the virus and still provide needed conservative and operative orthopaedic care. We welcome next year’s (2021-22) chief residents, Agnes Dardas, Yudi Kerbel, and Liane Miller, who are excited to make their mark at Penn Orthopaedics.

Meanwhile, we have gathered a core group of educators from all divisions to start revamping the orthopaedic curriculum which will incorporate virtual didactics, in-person (COVID safe) labs, hi-fidelity simulation technology, the soon to be released AAOS online curriculum, sub-specialty conferences, and improved feedback mechanisms. We thank Dr. John D. Kelly IV who has generously given his time and money to endow both the yearly Wharton Orthopaedic Leadership Forum and the inauguration of the Penn Orthopaedic Leadership Academy Fellows program with four of our residents. All this aims to keep Penn at the forefront of orthopaedic education and training.

We congratulate our graduating chief residents as they head to some of the top fellowships in the country.

- Gerald Andah, MD—Joints: Montefiore
- Adnan Cheema, MD—Shoulder & Elbow: Mayo Clinic
- Michael Eby, MD—Spine: Emory
- Chelsea Hendow, MD—Spine: Thomas Jefferson University
- Christina Nypaver, MD—Hand: University of Chicago

- William Ryan, MD—Trauma: Carolinas Medical Center
- Christopher Scanlon, MD—Joints: NYU
- Kimberly Stevenson, MD—Joints: University of Utah
- Matthew Webb, MD—Joints: Stanford

We couldn't have such a fantastic program without the brilliant faculty both in the clinic and in the lab that take the time to teach and train our residents. And we certainly wouldn't be where we are without the unwavering support of

our chairman, Dr. L. Scott Levin, who is dedicated to making this the best program in the nation.

A final thanks to all of our graduates! You carry the Penn flag and represent us well all over the country and the world, providing first-rate care and leadership in Orthopaedic Surgery. I wish everyone health, wellness, success, and life-long learning.