

Alumni Corner

A recent alumna, Heather Wheeler, MD, shared her career and family news and reflected upon her time as a general surgery resident (2007-2012) at the University of Washington. Many of you will know Dr. Wheeler.

“Hello from exotic Renton, WA! I started my job as a general surgeon at Valley Medical Center in September, and things are going very well so far. I get to do quite a broad range of cases, including some thoracic. I am even starting to go through training to do robotic cases. Thanks again to Gary Mann and Jim Park for giving me a chance to experience the robot when I was a resident. I am really enjoying myself, and I’m so glad I decided to go into general surgery community practice.



Heather Wheeler, MD and husband Eric.

My husband Eric and I got married in December on the beach in Puerto Rico. He also recently started a new job with eBay. We are official East Siders now, as we bought a new house in Renton and moved in about two weeks before our wedding. Our lives are quite different from a year ago!

For those residents who are thinking about going into community or private practice, I want you to know that we are well trained

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Jonathan Kohler, MD & Tam Pham, MD Create “Burns 101”



Jonathan Kohler, MD

In 2005 Dr. Jonathan Kohler (now Chief Resident in the Department of Surgery) and Dr. Tam Pham (now Associate Professor in the Department of Surgery) were an intern and fellow respectively; both on the Burn Service at Harborview Medical Center. They discovered they both had an interest in learning through media ~ specifically video.

This inspired them to take an existing (and great) resource, “Burn Pearls” – an orientation guide for new residents on the burn service - and, with the help of Dr. Nicole Gibran, UW Professor and Department of Surgery Burn Center Director, turn it into “Burn Pearls: The Movie.”

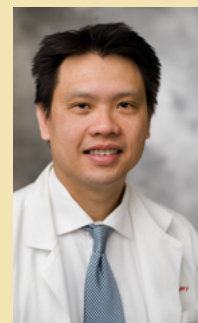
Fast forward to 2013 and their dream has become a reality, but with a twist.

During the intervening 7 years, Dr. Kohler did a research fellowship in Boston where he also got a master’s degree in Health Communications and then returned to UW to complete his residency. Dr. Pham, meanwhile, had become a faculty member in the Department of Surgery in the Division and was involved in the Burn Center on a day-to-day basis.

As Dr. Kohler began to understand better ways of framing the information they wanted to put into a movie, they realized that a 45 minute “Burn Pearls: The Movie,” would be better as a series of short videos. They also realized that most of the information in the videos was generalizable beyond the Burn Center a HMC. So, they edited it to take out site-specific information and have now distributed the finished product on [YouTube](#) and [iTunes U](#). Their hope is that this will be a valuable resource for community hospitals and emergency departments everywhere.

We want to thank Dr. Kohler and Dr. Pham (as well as Dr. Gibran) for their initiative and superb work on this video series. This kind of initiative and creativity are what put UW Department of Surgery ahead of the pack.

We also want to wish Dr. Kohler best wishes as he starts a two-year pediatric surgery fellowship at the University of Chicago, where he will also be a fellow at the Bucksbaum Institute for Clinical Excellence, studying the role that expectations play on outcomes and how video can be used to change these expectations. But even though he will be gone from Seattle, we can keep up with Dr. Kohler by reading his blog at www.hdcarecompass.com or following him on Twitter [@jekohler](#).



Tam Pham, MD

Department of Surgery Grant Activity Report

In the fourth quarter of 2012 our department's researchers received 10 awards totaling \$1.8 million, three of which were new and competing renewals:

Principal Investigator	Title	Sponsor
Nicole Gibran, MD	Northwest Regional Burn Model System Center	US Department of Education
Nicole Gibran, MD	A prospective, open, non-controlled clinical investigation to evaluate the adequacy of a new donor site dressing in surgical burn patients	Molnlycke Health Care AB
Nam Tran, MD	A Prospective, Single-blind, Randomized, Phase III Study to Evaluate the Safety and Efficacy of Fibrin Sealant Grifols as an Adjunct to Hemostasis during Peripheral Vascular Surgery	Grifols, Inc

In the first quarter of 2013, there were an impressive 19 new and competing renewal applications from our department. We will continue to provide the department's grant awards in future newsletter publications.

Congratulations to these investigators for their continued efforts and successes in an ever more difficult funding environment.

Other News in the Department of Surgery...

- **Monica Morrison, PA-C**, Transplant Physician Assistant was recently nominated for the Maria Hall Award for excellence in patient and family centered care. This award recognizes staff and volunteers who put patient and family centered care values into action.
- Hear the word "**Harborview**" and what do you think? The trauma center for the area's most critical cases. You're right. It's that - but it's so much more. Read the [Bellevue Reporter article](#) on **Harborview Medical Center**.

2013 Schilling Lecture — *Continued from page 3*



Thomas Varghese, MD, MS, "*Strong for Surgery: Changing Clinical Practice.*" Dr. Varghese is an Associate Professor in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery and Director of Thoracic Surgery at Harborview Medical Center. He is the Medical Director of the Strong for Surgery program, a novel, patient-centered approach in Washington State focused on improving outcomes by engaging patients in the pre-surgical clinic to modify surgical risk factors. Dr. Varghese presented details of the program as well as future directions.

The Helen and John Schilling Endowed Lectureship was established by the late Helen Schilling to bring distinguished scholars to the Department of Surgery at the University of Washington, and to enhance the Department's commitment to the highest standards of patient care, teaching, research and scholarship. It was Mrs. Schilling's wish that the lectureship be in honor of her husband, John.

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and prepared to do that. We get excellent clinical exposure and technical training at UW, and I rely on that training every day; it has served me well. If any of you have questions about general surgery community practice or if you'd like to spend some time with me in my practice, I encourage you to contact me. My email address is heatherkalani@gmail.com.

I hope everyone enjoys the end of the academic year, and I hope our paths cross in the future!"

Clinical Trial: Physician-Modified Endovascular Grafts — *Continued from page 8*

are proving that the modifications to the device are very effective. The study results will be submitted for product approval to the FDA and the governing agencies of other countries.

Dr. Starnes has recruited Dr. Matthew Sweet (Assistant Professor in the Division of Vascular Surgery) into the research study and others of his team are learning to do modifications to the stents as well. Dr. Starnes is thus far thrilled with the outcomes and with his team. He states that the team makes all the difference; without his co-investigators and the expert assistance of his Research Nurse Coordinator, Ms. Billi Tatum, along with the administrative support of the Department of Surgery, this life-saving device and technique might never have won approval.