

# Chairman's Message

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The Department is also engaged in innovative initiatives. A passion of mine for some time has been to develop a Center for Surgical Ethics. With the help of renowned surgeon and ethicist Alberto Ferreares, MD, JD, Chair of Department of Surgery at University of Buenos Aires in Argentina, we held our first ever Surgical Ethics Conference. We were fortunate for the Surgical Ethics Conference to be added to the annual Summer Seminar in Healthcare Ethics Week at UW, and it was a wonderful way to inaugurate this program. A very special thank you to the surgery faculty who participated as well as our staff, Megan Sherman and Mark Cumpston, for their efforts in putting this together (read more on page 20).

Along with the bounty of this time of year, we have also had some significant departures. Dr. Ted Kohler, Professor in the Division of Vascular Surgery, retired. His enthusiasm for the practice of vascular surgery at the VA and his commitment to teaching our residents is without equivalent. He will be profoundly missed. Please read more about his career and the lives he touched on page three.

Dr. David Heimbach, Professor Emeritus in the Division of Trauma, Critical Care & Burn Surgery, recently passed away. His pioneering work in the care of burn patients – through both clinical practice and ground-breaking research – led to significant advances in the field of burn care and made the Burn Center at Harborview Medical Center a premiere burn center in the country. Please read his obituary on page two.

Finally, a word about finances: Healthcare across the nation is in some turmoil due to differing perspectives on how healthcare should be paid for. Changes in reimbursement for services are having an impact on all healthcare institutions. This impact is particularly felt in academic medicine because of a concurrent decrease in federal research funding and the increasing resources required to carry out our teaching mission. While the costs of teaching are, to some extent, covered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, medical schools and academic programs must also contribute. The faculty and administrative leadership have been working hard to address

these funding issues while unyieldingly remaining true to our mission.

We reaffirm our commitment to all parts of our mission – excellent clinical care, the very best in training, and conducting ground-breaking, innovative research. Doing this in a less costly way requires all of our commitment and ingenuity. But, we will prevail and take this great department and school to new heights of excellence. I am proud of our dedicated faculty and staff. It is truly a pleasure to serve as the Chair of this great department.



Sincerely,

**Douglas E. Wood, MD,  
FACS, FRCSEd (ad hom)  
The Henry N. Harkins  
Professor and Chair**

## Dr. David Heimbach Memoriam



**I**t is with sadness that we share the passing of Dr. David Heimbach from cancer in August 2017. In a letter to Department of Surgery faculty, Dr. Doug Wood, The Henry N. Harkins Professor and Chair wrote:

“David passed peacefully from cancer surrounded by his loving family. He bravely faced his disease. As most of you know, David was an important figure in the UW Department of Surgery for over three decades, and a national leader in burn surgery and burn care.

In 1977 David became the Director of the University of Washington Burn Center at Harborview Medical Center (HMC). He became an early advocate of early burn wound excision, a technique that was later widely adopted. As a noted burn surgeon, he was a leading surgeon-scientist, with extensive publications, including clinical studies on the use of the skin substitute, Integra. David trained a generation of burn surgeons and advocated their development, helped to establish

the importance of burn centers and their development around the U.S. His work gained him widespread admiration and prestige. He was elected president of the **American Burn Association (ABA)** and of the **International Society for Burn Injuries (ISBI)**. In 2002 he stepped down as the Director of the Burn Center at Harborview Medical Center, and in 2011 he retired as an active professor at the University of Washington and was awarded Professor Emeritus status. David was known for his wry sense of humor, his holistic approach to patient care, his dedication to training, and for making UW and HMC a leading center for burn care in the world. Perhaps his biggest legacy has been his burn fellowship through which he trained over 25 burn fellows, many of whom are now national and international leaders in burn care. He made an indelible mark on our department, and left a lasting legacy that benefits all patients with burn injuries today. Our thoughts and sincere condolences go out to David's family. We will miss him.”

The family has requested that donations in his name be given to the **Washington State Council of Firefighters Burn Foundation (WSCFF)**.