

SURGERY SYNOPSIS



CHAIR'S MESSAGE



DOUGLAS E. WOOD,

MD, FACS, FRCSEd

The Henry N. Harkins Professor & Chair

In this issue of *Surgery Synopsis*, we focus on the impact of philanthropy in education and research within the Department of Surgery—and why your support matters now more than ever.

PHILANTHROPY & EDUCATION

Federal funding, particularly for our training programs, has been capped for years, covering only a fraction of training costs. We have supplemented the full costs of training our surgeons from a variety of other resources, including clinical dollars leaving only modest room for growth

or innovation. Today, philanthropy is more critical than ever to ensure we can continue training the next generation of surgeons.

Your generosity has made impactful differences. Philanthropic gifts allow us to expand residency programs—such as our planned growth in General Surgery and Plastic Surgery—and to launch new initiatives like rural and global health tracks. These efforts help us meet the surgical needs of the Pacific Northwest and the entire WWAMI region while preparing academic leaders for the future.

Beyond clinical training, philanthropy enriches education by supporting residents learning and providing research opportunities. A number of residents take 1-2 years out of clinical training explore research interests, be trained in research techniques, and participate in impactful research projects. Many of them take an academic year or two in the middle of their clinical training to participate in research projects

Residents, with the assistance of the department secure funding for these endeavors. Some funds come from the research project; however, with federal and foundation funding becoming scarcer, we look to our philanthropic resources to fill in the gaps. In this issue, we highlight several funds that assist in our training efforts.

THE DANA LYNGE, MD FUND FOR THE UW PROGRAM FOR GLOBAL & RURAL SURGERY (PROGRESS)

A relatively new fund that underscores UW's commitment to surgical equity in underserved and remote regions. This endowment supports the development of innovative training pathways and service models that prepare surgical trainees to deliver high-quality care in resource-limited settings. [Learn more about the Advancing Rural Surgery Training Fund.](#)

CHAIR'S MESSAGE.....	1
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EDUCATION & RESEARCH PHILANTHROPIC HIGHLIGHTS

FUELING SURGICAL DISCOVERY

ESOPHAGEAL AND MINIMALLY INVASIVE SUPPORT FUND	5
AORTIC RESEARCH FUND CATALYZES ADVANCEMENTS IN CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY	5
THE SOFT TISSUE PLASTIC SURGERY RESEARCH FUND: TRANSFORMING GRATITUDE INTO DISCOVERY	6
THE HERBERT E. COE ENDOWED CHAIR IN PEDIATRIC SURGERY: ADVANCING EQUITY, EDUCATION, AND GLOBAL HEALTH	7
CREST GIFT FUND: POWERING INNOVATION IN HEALTHCARE SIMULATION.....	8
PLAY-TO-HEAL AT HARBORVIEW MEDICAL CENTER.....	9
ESCALATING EXCELLENCE WITH THE MALS RESEARCH FUND	10

EMPOWERING SURGICAL EDUCATION

HARKINS ANNUAL FUND TRAINEE DEVELOPMENT.....	11
HOWIE FUND: SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SURGICAL SCIENTISTS.....	12
SCHILLING RESEARCH LEGACY: RESIDENT FELLOWSHIP, LECTURESHIP AND SYMPOSIUM	14
DANA LYNGE FUND ADVANCING RURAL AND GLOBAL SURGERY.....	15
COLORECTAL SURGERY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM LAUNCH	16

FEATURES

SEATTLE SURGICAL SOCIETY.....	17
-------------------------------	----

GETTING TO KNOW DOS KEVIN LABADIE, MD.....	19
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SURGERY NEWS

NEW FACULTY	22
HONORS & AWARDS	23
EVENT RECAPS	27
IN THE MEDIA	29
MARK YOUR CALENDAR	18

THE JOHN A. AND HELEN R. SCHILLING TRAVELING SURGICAL FELLOWSHIP

Established in 1986, this fund has been pivotal in supporting surgical residents' research experiences within the department, to other UW departments or occasionally research experiences outside the UW. [Learn more about the Schilling traveling fellowship.](#)

As important, philanthropic funds enable residents to attend and present at national meetings. These experiences are transformative: they help young surgeons build networks, discover new areas of interest, and connect with mentors who shape their careers. The number of presentations by our residents at the recent American College of Surgeons Clinical Congress demonstrates the power of your giving. Without philanthropic support, these opportunities would simply not exist.

THE HENRY N. HARKINS ANNUAL FUND

Through initiatives like the Harkins Scholars Program, residents are enabled to present research, attend advanced courses, and pursue unique development opportunities. [Learn more about the Harkins Annual Fund for Surgery Resident Education.](#)

PHILANTHROPY IN RESEARCH

With federal funds becoming scarcer and more competitive, philanthropy has become more essential to achieving our research efforts. We have highlighted several of our research projects as well as some of the funds that support these efforts.

THE HOWIE FUND

This fund is the cornerstone of our department research support, providing critical startup funding for new surgeon-scientists, as well as enabling resident research training. Recent recipients of Howie funds for their research projects include Drs. **Rhea Udyavar** and **Katie Liu**. These funds help us recruit promising surgeon scientists and provide resources necessary for them to develop sustainable, grant-funded research programs. [Learn more about the Howie Surgery Research Fund.](#)

SPECIALTY RESEARCH

We also feature other specialty-specific research projects for which philanthropy is important.

CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY

The Aortic Research Fund catalyzes lifesaving advances in the prevention and treatment of aortic conditions. [Learn more about the Aortic Research Fund in Cardiothoracic Surgery.](#)

GENERAL SURGERY

The Esophageal and Minimally Invasive Surgery Fellowship Support Fund provides essential support in the Division of General Surgery for early-career physicians who seek to further develop and hone their skills in minimally invasive surgery through a one-year fellowship. [Learn more about the Esophageal and Minimally Invasive Surgery Fellowship Support Fund.](#)

PLASTIC SURGERY

The Soft Tissue Plastic Surgery Research Fund promotes advancement of our understanding of degloving injuries of the trunk and extremities. [Learn more about the Soft Tissue Plastic Surgery Research Fund.](#)

PEDIATRIC SURGERY

Herbert E. Coe Endowed Chair in Pediatric Surgery has been instrumental in supporting both trainees and faculty in initiatives that advance equity, global surgery, planetary health, and the advancement of women in surgery. [Learn more about the Herbert E. Coe Endowed Chair in Pediatric Surgery.](#)

CREST GIFT FUND

Powering innovation in healthcare simulation, the CREST Gift Fund directly supports the development of new training tools, educational programs, and global partnerships that elevate the quality of surgical and interprofessional healthcare

education. [Learn more about the Crest Gift Fund.](#)

TRAUMA, BURN & CRITICAL CARE

Play-to-Heal Fund has been able to support many child-focused improvements in the burn center at Harborview Medical Center. [Learn more about the Harborview Burn Center Fund.](#)

VASCULAR SURGERY

Philanthropic investment transformed a single clinical success in treating a patient with Median Arcuate Ligament Syndrome (MALS) into a national Center of Excellence led by Dr. **Benjamin Starnes**. The MALS Center expands access to experienced surgeons and offering patients the prospect of curative treatment rather than mere palliation. [Learn more about the Neurogenic MALS Research Fund.](#)

These funds—and your generosity—transform ideas into action, ensuring that our residents and faculty can innovate, lead, and serve communities locally and globally.

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

SURGERY NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

A **new ACGME-accredited Fellowship in Colorectal Surgery** has been approved and the first fellow began training in August 2025. Congratulations to Dr. **Mukta Crane** as the director of this program.

As always, we celebrate the achievements of our faculty. In this issue, you'll read about **Dr. Jonathan Sham's prestigious career development award**, **Dr. Estell Williams with the Committee for Minority Faculty Advancement (CMFA) Award**, and **Dr. Patrick Javid's election to the Association of Pediatric Surgery Training Program Directors**.

We also share highlights from the from the **Association of Women Surgeons' gala honoring Dr. Carlos Pellegrini, recipient of the Dr. Charles W. Putnam Distinguished Member Award**. Finally, **Dr. Lorrie Langdale received the Distinguished Philanthropist Award at the ACS Clinical Congress**.

The Seattle Surgical Society is a well-established professional organization. With its emphasis on the continuing education of its members, it should come as no surprise that the majority of the society's officers hail from the University of Washington. In fact, **ten of its twelve officers, including current president Dr. Nicole White, are either current or former UW faculty or alumni**.

We are excited to introduce **two new faculty members to our department**:

Dr. **Kevin Labadie**, Assistant Professor and surgical oncologist at the VA Puget Sound Health Care System

Dr. **Erin McIntosh**, Assistant Professor, Division of Vascular Surgery

Our **#GettingToKnowDoS** feature this issue is devoted to Dr. Labadie.

Thank you for your continued support to the Department of Surgery. Your partnership empowers us to deepen and broaden our missions of education and research. Giving to our educational mission helps us to train outstanding clinicians and scholars who will serve communities locally, nationally, and globally. Your generous giving to our research endeavors, especially at this time in history, is essential to achieving our research mission. Giving to our research mission helps us add to the body of knowledge and transform ideas into action to the benefit of all.

Thank you for your continued generosity and I hope you enjoy this issue of *Surgery Synopsis*.

Sincerely,



Douglas E. Wood, MD, FACS, FRCSEd
The Henry N. Harkins
Professor & Chair
Department of Surgery
University of Washington

IN MEMORIAM



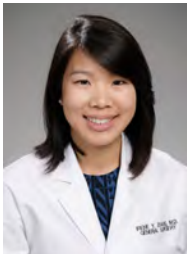
LUIS FELIPE TORRES, MD
1943 – 2025

It is with sadness that we share that our colleague and UW general surgery residency alumnus Luis Felipe Torres de la Garza, MD, passed away peacefully on November 23, 2025. Dr. Torres was a Chief Resident in our program who was so proud to be a lifelong Harkins Alumni member; he went on to have an influential career in global surgery, with his wonderful family at his side. The Torres family recognized the impact of our program on his life, and shared his story with the University. To learn more about Dr. Torres' life or to make a gift to the **Harkins Annual Fund for Surgery Resident Education** in his honor.

FUELING SURGICAL DISCOVERY

DONOR SUPPORT DRIVING PROGRESS ACROSS EVERY DIVISION

ESOPHAGEAL AND MINIMALLY INVASIVE SUPPORT FUND



Dr. Irene Zhang

The **Esophageal and Minimally Invasive Surgery Fellowship Support Fund** provides essential support in the Division of General Surgery for early-career physicians through a one-year specialized fellowship. The fund prepares physicians for careers in esophageal and minimally invasive surgery through comprehensive training, ensuring fellows gain expertise in advanced laparoscopic and robotic techniques while developing the skills to become leaders in this field.



Dr. Alex Lois

The Department of Surgery **Advanced Gastrointestinal Minimally Invasive and Foregut Surgery Fellowship** graduates exemplify this mission. Dr. **Irene Zhang** (2024-2025) is now bringing these innovative surgical techniques to the Alaska Native Medical Center in Anchorage, serving a historically underserved population. Dr. **Alex Lois** (2023-2024) is a foregut surgeon and assistant professor at the University of Chicago, where he develops new techniques for complex diaphragmatic hernia repair. Dr. **Mary Kate Bryant** (2022-2023) has launched a successful career at the Medical University of South Carolina. She co-chairs a national task force for the Society of American Endoscopic and Gastrointestinal Surgeons and is recognized as a leader in surgical ergonomics. Their achievements demonstrate the impact this fellowship has in training surgeons who advance the field while expanding access to cutting-edge care.



Dr. Mary Kate Bryant

DONATE NOW TO THE ESOPHAGEAL AND MINIMALLY INVASIVE SURGERY FELLOWSHIP SUPPORT FUND



AORTIC RESEARCH FUND CATALYZES ADVANCEMENTS IN CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY



Dr. Scott DeRoo

Support for the **Aortic Research Fund** in Cardiothoracic Surgery helps catalyze lifesaving advances in the prevention and treatment of aortic conditions, giving hope and options to patients, including those with the most complex cases.

The Davidson Family Foundation were the first donors to this impactful fund, having experienced the traumatic nature of an aortic dissection with someone close to their family. In gratitude for the care received from Dr. **Scott DeRoo** and the Multi-disciplinary Thoracic Aortic Program team, they made an initial investment of \$50,000 in 2022. The family was so pleased with the impact their gift had on research being conducted by the team that they committed an additional gift of \$250,000 to further advance aortic research in the Division of Cardiothoracic Surgery.

DONATE NOW TO THE AORTIC RESEARCH FUND IN CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY



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THE SOFT TISSUE PLASTIC SURGERY RESEARCH FUND: TRANSFORMING GRATITUDE INTO DISCOVERY



Dr. Kari Keys

When a grateful patient experienced exceptional care following a severe soft tissue injury, they chose to give back by establishing The Soft Tissue Plastic Surgery Research Fund. Under the leadership of Interim Division Chief, Dr. **Kari Keys**, this philanthropic investment has become a catalyst for advancing understanding of degloving injuries of the trunk and extremities—an area with limited data to guide optimal treatment. A degloving injury is a traumatic injury that results in the top layers of skin and tissue being torn away from the underlying muscle, connective tissue or bone.

“This fund allows us to build a deeper understanding of diagnosis, early intervention, and long-term treatment strategies—moving beyond anecdotal experience to evidence-based care,” explains Dr. Keys.

The fund has enabled a pilot study examining surgical treatment of a closed degloving injury sequelae.

“What began as one patient’s gratitude has evolved into a research program that will benefit future patients facing debilitating injuries.”

Dr. Keys has done the preliminary data collection and analysis for the outcomes of surgical management of symptomatic degloving injuries has been completed. Her team has submitted an abstract for presentation of this work at regional and national conferences, and

will shortly begin writing a manuscript to submit for peer-reviewed publication. Looking ahead, the fund will facilitate multidisciplinary collaboration with Dr. **Scott Brakenridge**, in the Division of Trauma Surgery and leverage data from the Trauma Registry.

“What began as one patient’s gratitude has evolved into a research program that will benefit future patients facing debilitating injuries,” says Dr. Keys. “This is philanthropy in action—transforming personal experience into scientific discovery that advances the field and improves outcomes for trauma patients across our region and beyond.”

DONATE NOW TO THE SOFT TISSUE PLASTIC SURGERY RESEARCH FUND >>>

FUELING SURGICAL DISCOVERY

DONOR SUPPORT DRIVING PROGRESS ACROSS EVERY DIVISION

THE HERBERT E. COE ENDOWED CHAIR IN PEDIATRIC SURGERY: ADVANCING EQUITY, EDUCATION, AND GLOBAL HEALTH

Over the past four years, the Herbert E. Coe Endowed Chair in Pediatric Surgery has been instrumental in supporting both trainees and faculty in initiatives that advance equity, global surgery, planetary health, and the advancement of women in surgery.

This fund has provided salary support for three women research fellows in the Division of Pediatric General Surgery at Seattle Children’s Hospital. Together, these fellows have achieved an exceptional record of 35 peer-reviewed publications and 40 presentations. Each aspires to a career in pediatric surgery and is deeply committed to improving access to safe surgical care for children worldwide, while also addressing racism and discrimination within healthcare systems.

The Coe family’s generosity has also enabled faculty-led research and education focused on health equity, climate change mitigation in surgical services, and global outreach—bringing surgical care to nearly 100 children in Central America over the past several years.

Most recently, Department of Surgery Chair **Douglas Wood**, MD, FACS,



Top Row: SCH surgical team Carrie Foster, Sarah Greenberg and Hannah Cockrell working in Central America; Sarah Greenberg, Liz Hansen and Hannah Cockrell presenting a climate change panel discussion at the Academic Surgical Congress; SCH Central America surgical team.

Middle Row: Erica Johnson presenting at ACS Quality and Safety; Coe Funds supported SCH women’s surgery team operating in Central America.

Bottom Row: Nicole Chicoine; Erica Johnson as part of an SCH perioperative microaggressions panel; Hannah Cockrell presenting at the American Pediatric Surgical Association annual meeting.

FRCSEd, has supported an innovative study on gendered language in medical education. Using natural language processing to analyze the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) milestone descriptors across specialties, this project examines how gendered phrasing may perpetuate bias in the evaluation of trainees, particularly

women in procedural and traditionally male-dominated fields.

Through these efforts, the Herbert E. Coe Endowed Chair continues to elevate the mission of Seattle Children’s and the University of Washington—to improve the health and welfare of children with surgical disease, and to empower the clinicians dedicated to their care.

DONATE NOW TO THE HERBERT E. COE
ENDOWED CHAIR IN PEDIATRIC SURGERY >>>

FUELING SURGICAL DISCOVERY

DONOR SUPPORT DRIVING PROGRESS ACROSS EVERY DIVISION

CREST GIFT FUND: POWERING INNOVATION IN HEALTHCARE SIMULATION



Dr. Robert
Sweet

The Center for Research in Education and Simulation Technologies (CREST) is the research and development engine of the University of Washington Department of Surgery’s Division of Healthcare Simulation Science. Established in 2016 under the leadership of Dr. **Robert Sweet**, Executive Director for the WWAMI Institute for Simulation in Healthcare (WISH) and the Center



Exploratory Laparotomy procedure of manikin's abdomen to assess trauma and stop bleeding. Communication, actuation, and verification is controlled by the CREST-designed MoHSES (Modular Healthcare Simulation and Education System) platform. -Subject-matter expert, Col. Rob Rush (right), is seen operating during the pilot of a larger study. This project was designed and manufactured within CREST and created with DOD funding.

for Research in Education and Simulation Technology, CREST brings together engineers, artists, and educators to design and build cutting-edge simulation tools that transform how healthcare professionals are trained.

CREST designs and builds both physical and virtual models that replicate real-world clinical scenarios—from trauma care to surgical procedures—enabling learners to practice and refine their skills in a safe, controlled environment. The team has pioneered the use of lifelike tissue analogues and open-source simulation platforms that are now used by educators and institutions around the world.

These tools are not just technological achievements—they are vital resources for healthcare trainees and patients alike. In addition to training future clinicians, CREST’s models and systems are increasingly used to support patient education, helping individuals better understand procedures, risks, and outcomes as part of the informed consent process.

CREST relies entirely on external funding to sustain its work. The CREST Gift Fund directly supports the development of new training tools, educational programs, and global partnerships that elevate the quality of healthcare education. Philanthropic support ensures that CREST can continue to innovate, expand access to high-quality training, and shape the future of healthcare—through immersive learning that prepares providers and empowers patients with clarity, confidence, and compassion.

DONOR HIGHLIGHT

Iva and Larry Hirsch, made a four-year pledge into the CREST Gift Fund which will be used by Dr. Rob Sweet and the CREST team to continue work in research and development within simulation sciences. Iva and Larry are grateful patients of Dr. Sweet and wanted to give back to support him and his priorities.

DONATE NOW TO THE CREST GIFT FUND >>>

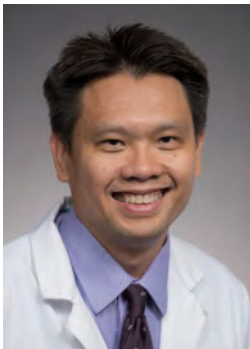
FUELING SURGICAL DISCOVERY

DONOR SUPPORT DRIVING PROGRESS ACROSS EVERY DIVISION

PLAY-TO-HEAL AT HARBORVIEW MEDICAL CENTER

The Play-to-Heal fund was created over a decade ago by former Burn Center director and professor emeritus Dr. **Nicole Gibran**, in partnership with a family whose child had received care by their team. Through their advocacy and the generosity of many individual donors, corporate support and philanthropic foundations, this fund has been able to support many child-focused improvements in the burn center and elsewhere on the Harborview Medical Center campus.

Harborview Medical Center is the region’s only Level 1 pediatric trauma and verified burn center, meaning children with the most severe injuries come to us for exceptional, next-level care. For most of our young patients and their families, this is the most challenging time of their lives, often involving multiple operations, repeated wound care and an extended stay in the hospital.



Dr. Tam Pham

Unfortunately, the hospital environment can feel less than welcoming, especially for younger children. By creating child-friendly spaces in our hospital, the hospital environment not only decreases everyone’s stress, it also accelerates the child’s healing process. Using the Play-to-Heal funds, Burns and Trauma surgeon Dr. **Tam Pham** has already led several child-friendly improvement projects, such as a newly remodeled therapy gym, playrooms to provide a sense of well-being for our youngest patients, colorful wall murals, and an update to the Maleng OR Waiting areas, with the goal of improving the outpatient OR waiting area to help brighten moods and reduce preprocedural stress. This project is ongoing, with other areas of the hospital and burn center being targeted for child-friendly improvements, as well.



The Maleng outpatient surgical waiting area upgrade. This project was designed in conjunction with prior HMC pediatric patients and their families. Our common goal was to create an uplifting and less stressful environment for patients/families during perioperative care.



Play-to-Heal funds supported the decor upgrade on the 9th floor ICU to highlight our focus on children’s care.

DONATE NOW TO THE HARBORVIEW BURN CENTER FUND

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FUELING SURGICAL DISCOVERY

DONOR SUPPORT DRIVING PROGRESS ACROSS EVERY DIVISION

ESCALATING EXCELLENCE WITH THE MALS RESEARCH FUND

In early 2020, Dr. **Benjamin Starnes**, former Division Chief and Professor of Surgery in the Division of Vascular Surgery, successfully treated a patient for Median Arcuate Ligament Syndrome (MALS), a compressive dysautonomia where the thick ligament of the diaphragm compresses the nerves on top of the aorta and celiac artery.

Patients with MALS are typically young women in their second and third decades of life, present with terrible epigastric pain with eating and unintentional weight loss of 20 to 30 pounds. This condition was previously incurable, and the patient expressed such gratitude that she attracted more patients to Starnes’ practice which soon lead to philanthropic support—a grateful patient’s family made a substantial donation to establish a dedicated MALS research fund, which

CT Scan (sagittal view or view from the side) of a patient with MALS showing a normal celiac artery on the left and extreme compression (blue arrow) on right with deep exhalation. This image reveals how difficult the diagnosis can be to make, especially if the scan is not done with respiratory variation.



provide seed money to study the syndrome more intensively and to allow Dr. Starnes to connect with international experts.

The donation funded a three-month sabbatical for Dr. Starnes to pursue focused research, collaborate with world authorities, and develop clinical protocols, directly enabling the creation of the United States’ only MALS Center of Excellence. This targeted philanthropy covered travel, expert consultation, and program development that clinical revenue alone could not have supported.

Philanthropic investment transformed a single clinical success into a national center led by Dr. Starnes, expanding access to experienced surgeons and offering patients the prospect of curative treatment rather than mere palliation. Donor-driven gifts will continue to underwrite research, patient outreach, and the infrastructure needed to scale specialized care.



Mark Robison and Dr. Benjamin Starnes

DONOR HIGHLIGHT

Mark and Sheri Robison have given a total of \$100,000 to Vascular Surgery to support Dr. Ben Starnes’ work. In addition to this generous gift, the Robison’s also gave another \$50,000 to Neurological Surgery last year.

DONATE NOW TO THE NEUROGENIC MALS RESEARCH FUND



HARKINS ANNUAL FUND TRAINEE DEVELOPMENT

For nearly 70 years, the Harkins Surgical Society has built a vibrant community connecting generations of University of Washington (UW) Department of Surgery trainees, faculty, and alumni. Established in tribute to Dr. Henry N. Harkins, the founding chair of the department, the Harkins Society celebrates a proud legacy of surgical excellence. Membership in the Harkins Surgical Society is automatic upon graduation of residency, and notably, membership no longer require dues. Today, it connects and honors a global network of more than 1,000 distinguished alumni who share in that tradition. Through initiatives like the Harkins Scholars Program, the Society provides vital support for residents to present their research, attend advanced courses, and pursue unique development opportunities—empowering them to carry forward the UW tradition of leadership and innovation in surgery.

“Harkins connects and honors a global network of more than 1,000 distinguished alumni.”

The Harkins Annual Fund sustains these efforts by providing flexible, direct support to programs that strengthen our community and enrich surgical education. In an era of decreasing federal research funding and growing financial pressures in academic medicine, philanthropic gifts to the annual fund ensure that our residents and faculty have the resources they need to thrive. Every contribution—large or small—helps sustain the mission of the Harkins Society, advancing Dr. Harkins’ legacy and equipping the next generation of UW-trained surgeons to lead with skill, compassion, and vision.



Drs. Jonathan G. Sham, President, Harkins Surgical Society, and Edwin “Ned” Brockenbrough, at 2025 Harkins Alumni Award Dinner

As the first chairman of the University of Washington’s Department of Surgery, Dr. Henry Harkins was a visionary leader, establishing the Henry Harkins Surgical Society in 1955 with a goal of building community amongst UW Surgery trainees and supporting their professional development. In the nearly 70 years since that time, UW Medicine has emerged as a world-renowned surgical residency program, and the Harkins Society still strives for the same goals.

Philanthropic support helps further strengthen our programs, and enables us to continue recruiting top candidates from across the country. Gifts made to the Harkins Annual Fund for Surgery Resident Education support educational opportunities for our residents, including funds to support research activities as well as expenses to travel to and participate in conferences and professional development opportunities.

DONATE NOW TO THE HARKINS
ANNUAL FUND FOR SURGERY
RESIDENT EDUCATION >>>

HOWIE FUND

SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SURGICAL SCIENTISTS

Promoting innovation in surgical science is fundamental to the Department of Surgery’s (DoS) research mission and the Howie Surgery Research Endowment Fund (Howie Endowment), in particular, has been foundational in supporting research across every division in the department.



Dr. K. Alvin Merendino

Named for Ruth and Raymond Howie, the Howie Surgery Research Endowment Fund was established in 1981 with a \$1.5M gift after Mrs. Howie

underwent surgery at UW Medical Center, where she met Dr. K. Alvin Merendino. Dr. Merendino was a pioneering open-heart surgeon who led the team that performed the Northwest’s first open-heart surgery in 1956 at Harborview Medical Center and later served as Department Chair 1964-1972. Dr. Merendino was passionate about research and innovation, and the Howies’ gift inspired by Dr. Merendino continues to be a tremendous boon to the department’s research mission on multiple fronts.

Perhaps most impactful, the Howie Endowment provides critical startup funding to new surgeon-scientist

recruits to help defray the cost of protected research time and the necessary resources to hire lab staff, purchase supplies and begin developing the pilot data, methodologies and techniques that will help faculty researchers develop sustainable, grant-funded research programs. Recent recipients of Howie Endowment funds include Drs. **Rhea Udyavar**, Assistant Professor in the Division of General Surgery; **Katie Liu**, Assistant Professor in the Division of Plastic Surgery and faculty in the UW Institute for Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine (ISCRM); and **Scott Brakenridge**, Associate Professor in the Division of Trauma, Burn and Critical Care Surgery.



Dr. Rhea Udyavar



Dr. Katie Liu



Dr. Scott Brakenridge

Dr. Udyavar’s research aims to characterize the physiologic effects of chronic stress on clinical and patient-centered outcomes among patients undergoing surgery, with a focus on creating interventions that target patients’ lived environment and associated stressors in order to improve surgical outcomes for all patients.

HOWIE FUND

SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SURGICAL SCIENTISTS

Dr. Liu’s lab focuses on two main areas of research. First, it investigates the mechanisms of nerve regeneration, aiming to accelerate the process to improve patient outcomes. Second, the lab works to prevent the degeneration of motor endplates in muscle tissue, ensuring that when regenerating axons reach the target muscle, new neuromuscular junctions can successfully form, restoring the vital connection between nerves and muscles.

Dr. Brakenridge’s research seeks to improve understanding and treatment of sepsis and persistent critical illness, as well as outcomes for trauma patients. His research includes the development of predictive models for sepsis treatment response and the enhancement of cancer treatment outcomes, as well as for informing clinical practices and policies that impact patients’ long-term recovery.

Other notable recent recipients include:

- Dr. Chris Childers, Assistant Professor
- Dr. Farhood Farjah, Professor
- Dr. Meghan Flanagan, Associate Professor
- Dr. Charles Liu, Assistant Professor
- Dr. Harveshp Mogal, Associate Professor
- Dr. Deepika Nehra, Associate Professor
- Dr. Katie O’Connell, Associate Professor
- Dr. Jonathan Scott, Associate Professor
- Dr. Jonathan Sham, Associate Professor
- Dr. Barclay Stewart, Associate Professor
- Dr. Matthew Sweet, Professor
- Dr. Sara Zettervall, Associate Professor

The Howie Endowment is a critical resource in supporting the department’s research mission. A research portfolio as robust as ours depends on grateful patients, alumni, and friends of the department who see the value in the innovative work we do. We’re incredibly grateful for their support. These gifts live on long after they are given and make a truly meaningful impact on healthcare.

HOWIE FUND RECIPIENT HIGHLIGHT



Dr. **Christopher Childers** is the principal investigator of the PAYOR Lab (Payment and Outcomes Research). This research is dedicated to understanding how physician payment systems and reimbursement policies influence provider behavior and healthcare outcomes. His research integrates clinical insight, health policy analysis, and rigorous economic research to examine how financial incentives shape decision-making in real-world healthcare settings.

[Learn more about Dr. Childer’s research from his April 2025 Grand Rounds lecture “RVUS 101, and A Little 201” >](#)

DONOR HIGHLIGHT

The Howie’s visionary gift in 1981 has created an enduring impact for research. Since 1981, the market value of the fund has grown to \$8.35M and distributes approximately \$300,000 each year to invest in research for the Department.

DONATE NOW TO THE HOWIE SURGERY RESEARCH FUND

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SCHILLING RESEARCH LEGACY:

RESIDENT FELLOWSHIP, LECTURESHIP AND SYMPOSIUM



Dr. John A. and Helen R. Schilling

The John A. and Helen R. Schilling Travelling Surgical Fellowship, established in 1986, has played a pivotal role in supporting surgical residents at the University of Washington (UW) in their research development. Originally designed to fund travel to other institutions, the endowment was amended in 1996 to support research experiences within UW’s robust academic environment. Alongside the Schilling Endowed Lectureship and Research Symposium, the Fellowship reflects the Schillings’ enduring commitment to advancing surgical science and education through philanthropy.

Over the years, the fellowship has provided critical financial support for resident salaries and tuition, enabling participation in prestigious research programs such as NIH-funded T32 fellowships and

UW’s Tumor Immune Microenvironment (TIME research Lab) fellowship as well as the Rural Surgery Track fellowships. This support has expanded the scope of resident research, allowing trainees to explore global surgical epidemiology, clinical trials, systems of care, and molecular biology among other interests.

The fellowship continues to be a cornerstone of the department’s mission to cultivate future surgeon-scientists through a culture of mentorship, integrated training, and evidence-based care. We look forward to building on the generosity of Mrs. Helen and Dr. John Schilling with philanthropic efforts to support the expansion of our research training programs and their mentors.

JOHN A. AND HELEN R. SCHILLING TRAVELING SURGICAL FELLOWSHIP

DONOR HIGHLIGHT

The original gift was made by Dr. John Schilling and Helen Schilling, but recent gifts from additional donors have infused the corpus of the fund. Every dollar made to this fund is an investment that will amplify the funds impact for future generations.

Total gifts to the fund are \$2.28M, the total market value is \$6.2M. This illustrates the impact of endowed funds over time; they grow with the market and create considerable long-term impact, providing stability for the department that comes into even sharper focus during times where other sources of funding are being stymied.

DONATE NOW TO THE JOHN A. AND HELEN R. SCHILLING TRAVELING SURGICAL FELLOWSHIP

DANA LYNGE FUND ADVANCING RURAL AND GLOBAL SURGERY



Dr. Dana Lynge

The Dana Lynge, MD, Fund for the UW Program for Rural and Global Surgery (PROGRESS), is a cornerstone of the University of Washington’s commitment to advancing surgical equity across underserved and remote regions. This developing endowment supports expanding innovative training pathways and service models that prepare surgical trainees to deliver high-quality care in resource-limited settings. By investing in strategic partnerships and immersive learning experiences, the fund strengthens the capacity of local, regional and global health systems while fostering leadership in rural and global surgery.

Current focus areas include establishing annual and short-term rotations with the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) and expanding our rural training

program with The Billings Clinic in Montana. Both ANTHC and The Billings Clinic serve as critical hubs within the WWAMI region’s health system framework, offering trainees exposure to high-impact clinical environments and culturally responsive care. In addition, the fund supports the development of our existing NIH/Fogarty Fellowship Programs in Ghana, Burkina Faso and Nepal, where trainees like Dr. Hannah Wild conduct research focused on injury prevention and control. These initiatives not only enhance surgical education but also reinforce the infrastructure of rural and global healthcare delivery across the Pacific Northwest and internationally.

DONOR HIGHLIGHTS

Dr. Dana Lynge was the heart of our Global and Rural Surgery program efforts. He was a dedicated and compassionate general surgeon deeply committed to bringing high-quality care to rural and remote communities regionally and globally.

His family, friends, and fans have launched efforts to pay tribute to his legacy, and establish an endowed program in his honor.

To date, we have raised more than half of our goal of \$100,000 but we are not there yet. The endowed fund will ultimately provide flexible funding to be used to expand training opportunities, develop new partnerships, and enhance curriculum design for our rural surgery program.



Dr. Hannah Wild
operating in Burkina Faso

DONATE NOW TO THE ADVANCING RURAL SURGERY TRAINING FUND



COLORECTAL SURGERY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM LAUNCH

The University of Washington (UW) Department of Surgery is proud to announce the inaugural year of the Colorectal Surgery Fellowship Program, marking an exciting milestone in its ongoing commitment to surgical education, innovation, and excellence in patient care.

This ACGME-accredited fellowship is the second of its kind in Washington State and one of only seven programs on the West Coast. Under the leadership of Dr. Mukta Krane, Section Chief of Colorectal Surgery and Program Director, the fellow will train under nationally recognized colorectal surgeons and leaders in surgical education. The fellowship offers advanced, comprehensive training in the diagnosis and management of benign and malignant diseases of the colon, rectum, and anus. Fellows will gain extensive experience in minimally invasive techniques including laparoscopic and robotic surgery, complex pelvic procedures, and multidisciplinary cancer care.

Clinical training will span multiple institutions, including UW Medical Center-Montlake, UW Medical Center-Northwest, and the Fred Hutch Cancer Center, providing broad exposure to diverse pathologies and patient populations.

In partnership with Dr. Krane, China Hardison was named the Program Administrator and has been instrumental in developing and launching the fellowship. In addition to serving as the administrator for the colorectal service, Ms. Hardison has dedicated the past 18 months to structuring the fellow’s rotations, coordinating accreditation requirements, and providing comprehensive support to faculty and to the incoming fellow throughout every stage of implementation. Her leadership, attention to detail, and deep institutional knowledge have been instrumental in establishing a strong foundation for the fellowship’s long-term success.



Dr. Dirir
Abdullahi

This August, the team was thrilled to welcome their inaugural colorectal surgery fellow, Dr. Dirir Abdullahi. A Seattle native, Dr. Abdullahi completed his undergraduate studies in neurobiology and earned his medical degree from the UW School of Medicine. He went on to complete his general surgery residency at the Morehouse School of Medicine. Dr. Abdullahi brings a deep commitment to improving outcomes for diverse patient populations. Dr. Abdullahi is actively involved in community health initiatives and research, with a particular focus on health equity and culturally

adapted interventions, such as implementing Stop the Bleed programs within refugee and immigrant communities.

As a team, they look forward to shaping future leaders in colorectal surgery through this fellowship, fostering an environment rooted in innovation, collaboration, and compassionate, patient-centered care.



Dr. Abdullahi's Welcome Barbeque – Front row: China Hardison, Mukta Krane, Nikol Yonemura, and Dirir Abdullahi Back row: Charles Liu, Sarah Atkinson, and Raga Siddharthan

DONATE NOW TO THE COLORECTAL
EDUCATION AND RESEARCH FUND >>>

SEATTLE SURGICAL SOCIETY

Originating in 1910, the Seattle Surgical Society continues to provide a forum for the development of surgical education and comradery through its monthly meetings, a rotation of guest speakers, round tables, and annual meeting. With its emphasis on the continuing education of its members, it should come as no surprise that the majority of the society’s officers hail from the University of Washington. In fact, ten of its twelve officers, including current president Dr. Nicole White, are either current or former UW faculty or alumni!

The University of Washington has had strong leadership presence within the society for over 100 years. Past presidents include former Chair Carlos Pelligrini, MD and current Chair Douglas Wood, MD, FACS, FRCSEd. UW Professor Emeritus Hugh Foy, MD, won the most recent **Lifetime Community Service Award**, which was established to recognize and honor a healthcare provider who has made substantial life-long contributions in service to the health and well-being of the citizens of the Pacific Northwest. The current program Chair is **Nick Cetrulo**, MD, who was preceded by Johnathan Sham, MD ‘24, Colette Inaba, MD ‘22 and Elina Quiroga, MD ‘21.



Dr. Nicole White,
Seattle Surgery
Society President

Dr. **Nicole White**, Clinical Professor and Section Chief of Northwest General Surgery, shares the society’s impact on her personally, “My journey with Seattle Surgical Society began at a Monday dinner meeting as a fellow 20 years ago. I am thankful for the initial exposure and years of engagement, leading to leadership of this important organization. Being a member of Seattle Surgical Society has shaped my career and been a critical part of my experience as a surgeon in Seattle. The opportunity to network, socialize and collaborate with like-minded peers is invaluable. Additionally, as

the sixth female president I must pay homage to my role models and predecessors. Lorrie Langdale, MD ‘06, Carolina Wasicek, MD ‘11, Patricia Dawson, MD ‘15, Lily Chang, MD ‘17, and Alison Perrin, MD ‘22.”

Please join us on January 23, 2026 for the 116th Annual Seattle Surgical Meeting, and banquet.

CURRENT SEATTLE SURGICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS

UW FACULTY

- Nicole White, MD, FACS—President
- Andre Dick, MD—Past president
- Elina Quiroga, MD—Secretary
- Colette Inaba, MD—Governor
- Jonathan Sham, MD, MBEE—Governor

FORMER UW FACULTY OR ALUMNI

- Jared Brandenberger, MD—Governor
- Nicole Zern, MD—Governor
- Kaj Johansen, MD—Historian
- Vlad Simianu, MD—Governor
- Katherine A. Mandell, MD, MPH—Governor

SEATTLE SURGICAL SOCIETY

Tradition of incoming president Dr. Nicole White presenting outgoing president Dr. Andre Dick with the Seattle Surgical presidential pin. The outgoing president presents the incoming president with the official gavel and its engraved box. The box has every president’s name adorned on metal plaques. This has been the official ceremony to pass on the torch, since 1910.



Dr. Nicole White presenting outgoing president Dr. Andre Dick with the Seattle Surgical presidential pin.



Dr. Hugh Foy receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award 2025

mark your calendar



2026 UNIVERSITY FACULTY LECTURE

FEBRUARY 5, 2026

5:30–6:30 pm Lecture
6:30–7:30 pm Reception
HUB 160–Lyceum

AWARDEE & SPEAKER

Dr. Douglas E. Wood
The Henry Harkins Professor & Chair

Dr. Wood will present on lung cancer screening, saving lives with science, and policy.

The University Faculty Lecture is open to the campus community and the lecture will be followed by a public reception.

The event will be hybrid with a live audience in the HUB 160–Lyceum, while also being broadcast online with live Q&A from questions submitted via email or text.

2026 RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM & ANNUAL SCHILLING LECTURE

MARCH 2026

department of surgery
event calendar



GETTING To Know DoS

KEVIN LABADIE, MD
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
VA PUGET SOUND HEALTH CARE SYSTEM



IN YOUR MEDICAL EDUCATION, DID YOU ALWAYS WANT TO BE A SURGEON?

The answer to that is no. I was interested in urology early on in medical school, and did some research with the team at University of California, Irvine, but early on in my clinical rotations I really gravitated toward internal medicine and oncology. It wasn't until my last rotation of my third year when I did general surgery, that I absolutely fell in love with it and became set on being a surgeon, and eventually a surgical oncologist. I'm so happy I figured it out. I really love what I do.

WHAT IS YOUR AREA OF RESEARCH, AND HOW DID YOU GET INTERESTED IN IT?

My parents are both chemists so I've always been interested in science and investigation. I am interested in translational



Left-Kevin and his wife Anna at Stevens Pass, WA

Right-Kevin, his brother Brian, his mom Sharada and his father Jeff at Heavenly Ski Resort in South Lake Tahoe

research examining the tumor microenvironment, looking at the cells that make up tumors and how they interact—the cancer cells, the immune cells, the stromal cells, and to understand how they influence cancer and cancer progression. I started doing this work when I was a resident at UW working with Drs. Venu Pillarisetty,

Ray Yeung, and Jim Park. They really took me under their wing, brought me into the lab and helped cultivate my interest in this area. As a fellow, I became interested in the microbiome, so now I am focused on understanding how bacteria influence the tumor microenvironment in gastrointestinal cancers.



Kevin and his wife Anna in
Val Gardena, Italy

SO FAR, WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND MOST CHALLENGING IN YOUR SURGICAL CAREER?

Through training, the biggest challenge was balancing life as surgeon with a life outside of work. I think the work that we do is more than a job, and it can be very consuming in the right ways- because we get to take care of people who are sick and need us. There's really nothing more special. With that said, we also have a family and friends and personal demands - so it at times can be tough to balance it all – so you just do your best. But more recently, I have found that

RAPID FIRE

WHAT'S THE LAST BOOK YOU READ, OR ARE CURRENTLY READING?

The last book I read is called All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr. It is one of my favorite books and was actually the second time I have read it. It's historical fiction based in World War II-era France. I love historical fiction.

WHAT TV SHOW, IF YOU HAVE ANY TIME, ARE YOU CURRENTLY WATCHING?

My wife and I are watching Game of Thrones. I have seen it before, but my wife hasn't, so we are watching it together. It's a great series!

WHAT IS YOUR GO-TO SNACK?

Apples and peanut butter. Or popcorn.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE GUILTY PLEASURE?

Donuts. I like a good, glazed chocolate donut.

WHO'S YOUR INSPIRATION, AND WHY?

My mom and dad are my inspirations—they're both amazing people, and I'm inspired by what they've done in their careers, for their personal lives, and for our family. I would love the life that they created for themselves and for our family. They have made a close-knit loving family, stayed in good health, have traveled the world, and have a wonderful cabin in the mountains.

IF A MOVIE WAS MADE ABOUT YOUR LIFE, WHO WOULD PLAY YOU?

This is a hard question for me to answer because I do not pay close attention to actors. But I would say Rich Madden, the actor who plays Rob Stark in Game of Thrones—he seems like a good and honest guy.

caring for very sick patients can be very challenging; and seeing some patients die or have surgical complications...those can be really, really challenging and really impactful.

GETTING To KNOW DoS

KEVIN LABADIE, MD
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
VA PUGET SOUND HEALTH CARE SYSTEM



Kevin and his family in South Lake Tahoe, CA

WHAT'S SOMETHING YOU'VE ACCOMPLISHED THIS PAST YEAR THAT YOU'RE MOST PROUD OF?

Finishing my fellowship in surgical oncology. It was an amazing two years at City of Hope Cancer Center. It was a challenging fellowship, but it was so much fun. I was especially proud of being chosen to be Chief Administrative Fellow and winning the "Fellow of the Year" award at graduation. I'm very proud of that and my time as a fellow at City of Hope.

WHAT IS THE BEST CAREER ADVICE YOU'VE EVER RECEIVED?

There is so much good advice that I've received from many great mentors through the years. A couple pieces of advice that have stuck with me along the way are to "always find joy in everything you do," and "nice people finish first in this business," meaning the business of medicine and surgery. And then, finally, I try to embrace the "four H's" every day—honesty, humility, hard work, and humor.

WHAT ARE YOU KNOWN FOR PROFESSIONALLY OR PERSONALLY, OR BOTH?

I'm not sure I'm known for much professionally, but I guess I could say that I'm known to be a hard worker and to care a lot about my patients.

Personally, I guess I would say I'm known for having an identical twin brother who's also a medical oncologist, and I've been told that I'm a good skier.



Kevin, his brother Brian, and his two nieces, Avery (left) and Eden (right)

new faculty



KEVIN LABADIE, MD
Assistant Professor
VA Puget Sound Health
Care System

Dr. Kevin Labadie is a surgical oncologist who joined the VA Puget Sound Health Care System in October. Dr. Labadie was born and raised in the San

Francisco Bay Area and completed his undergraduate and medical education at the University of California, Santa Barbara and Irvine. He completed his general surgery residency at the University of Washington and returns to join the faculty after completing a two-year fellowship in Complex General Surgical Oncology at the City of Hope National Cancer Center in the greater Los Angeles area.

At the VA-Puget Sound, Dr. Labadie's clinical practice will focus on the surgical treatment of gastrointestinal and hepatopancreatobiliary malignancies. Dr. Labadie will join the established VA hepatology group and build a surgical program that will expand access for veterans to hepatic surgery within the VA system. Additionally, he plans to incorporate minimally invasive and robotic surgical approaches to treat veterans with gastrointestinal cancers. As a surgeon-scientist, Dr. Labadie will examine how microbiota modulate the gastrointestinal tumor microenvironment to identify new opportunities for cancer treatment.

Outside of work, Dr. Labadie enjoys spending time with his wife Anna. They enjoy skiing, mountain biking, and traveling.



ERIN MCINTOSH, MD
Assistant Professor
Division of Vascular Surgery

Dr. Erin McIntosh joined the Division of Vascular Surgery as Assistant Professor this October. Dr. McIntosh was born and raised on the east coast just

north of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She completed her undergraduate degree in neuroscience at the University of Pennsylvania. After college, she stayed at the University of Pennsylvania to work as a clinical research assistant in Cardiology, while completing her post-baccalaureate studies. She then continued her education at Cooper Medical School in Camden, New Jersey. She completed her general surgery training in Boston, Massachusetts at St. Elizabeth's Medical Center (now Boston Medical Center-Brighton), as well as a two-year NIH-T32 research fellowship in the Harvard-Longwood Research Training in Vascular Surgery program at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. After seven years in Boston, Dr. McIntosh pursued her vascular surgery fellowship training at Washington University in St. Louis.

Dr. McIntosh will primarily be based at Harborview Medical Center and UW Medical Center-Northwest. She has clinical interests in acute and chronic complex aortic pathology, limb preservation, and carotid disease.

In her free time, Dr. McIntosh enjoys rooting for Philly sports teams, trying new restaurants, traveling, and spending time outdoors—hiking, running, and exploring the beautiful Pacific Northwest—with her husband and their black lab rescue puppy.

honors & awards

DR. CARLOS A. PELLEGRINI HONORED WITH AWS DISTINGUISHED MEMBER AWARD



Drs. Douglas Wood, Estell Williams, Carlos Pellegrini, Minerva Romero-president of the Latino Surgical Society, Rebecca Petersen, Elina Quiroga, and Lara Oyetunji

The Department of Surgery at the University of Washington (UW) is proud to share that Dr. Carlos A. Pellegrini, Professor Emeritus and former Chair of the Department, was selected as the **2025 recipient of the Dr. Charles W. Putnam Distinguished Member Award** by the **Association of Women Surgeons (AWS) Foundation**, and honored accordingly at the AWS Foundation Gala on October 5th.

This prestigious award recognizes individuals who have demonstrated exceptional support for the mission of AWS—to advance the careers of women in surgery and address gender disparities in the field. Dr. Pellegrini's longstanding commitment to mentorship, equity, and professional development has made a lasting impact on generations of surgeons, both at the UW and nationally.

At the ceremony, Dr. Pellegrini expressed his appreciation for this award: *"I am deeply honored to receive the Charles W. Putnam Award for Mentorship from the Association of Women Surgeons. This recognition is especially meaningful because mentorship is, at its heart, about relationships—about believing in others and helping them see possibilities they may not yet see in themselves."*

Over the years, I have learned that mentoring is never a one-way street. While I may have guided trainees and colleagues, it is I who have been enriched by their energy, creativity, and courage. Mentorship is a privilege—and a responsibility—to lift others as we climb the ladder of our own lives."

Founded in 1981, AWS has grown into a vital organization supporting women surgeons through education, advocacy, and community. The AWS Foundation, established in 1994, funds fellowships, research awards, and scholarships, and annually honors individuals who exemplify its mission.

Dr. Pellegrini's recognition by AWS underscores his legacy as a leader who has championed inclusive excellence in surgery at the UW and beyond. We celebrate this well-deserved honor and thank him for his enduring contributions to our department and the broader surgical community.

honors & awards

DR. PATRICK JAVID ELECTED TO PEDS SURGERY TRAINING PROGRAM DIRECTORS ROLES



In September, Patrick Javid, MD, Professor of Pediatric General Surgery and Director of the Pediatric Surgery

Fellowship Training Program, was elected to the role of Treasurer/Secretary/President-Elect for the Association of Pediatric Surgery Training Program Directors. He will serve as Treasurer/Secretary from 2026-28 and then President from 2028-30.

The organization represents all 59 pediatric surgery fellowship programs in North America and works directly with the Pediatric Surgery Board of the American Board of Surgery and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education to support program directors, program coordinators, and fellows. The organization meets in person semi-annually and develops guidelines for fellowships in all aspects of training including recruitment, interviewing, competency training in and out of the OR, board exam performance, and job searches.

DR. LORRIE LANGDALE WINS DISTINGUISHED PHILANTHROPIST AWARD



Drs. Patricia L. Turner, ACS Executive Director & CEO, Lorrie Langdale, Professor & Chief, Section of General Surgery, and Randolph Bailey, ACS Foundation Chair

CHICAGO, IL — October 20, 2025 — The American College of Surgeons (ACS) Foundation awarded **Lorrie Langdale**, MD, FACS, its 2025 Distinguished Philanthropist Award at the ACS Clinical Congress in Chicago. The honor recognizes Dr. Langdale's exceptional philanthropic support and decades of leadership within ACS, including her roles on the Board of Governors, the ACS Academy of Master Surgeon Educators, and as Program Director for multiple Surgical Education and Self Assessment Program editions.

The Distinguished Philanthropist Award, established in 1989, celebrates outstanding individuals who have significantly supported the ACS Foundation's mission to advance surgical practices, research, and patient care.

"Dr. Langdale's generosity is a powerful force for progress in surgery, but it is her unique combination of philanthropic support and hands-on leadership that truly sets her apart," said H. Randolph Bailey, MD, FACS, Chair of the ACS Foundation. *"Her dedication to advancing trauma care and surgical education, backed by her own clinical experience, has left an indelible mark on the ACS and the patients we all serve."*

honors & awards



Dr. Lorrie
Langdale

Dr. Lorrie Langdale is a Professor & Chief, Section of General Surgery at the University of Washington and chief of general surgery at the Puget Sound VA Medical Center in Seattle. Her giving reflects her clinical focus on trauma and critical care, supporting key ACS initiatives such as Stop the Bleed, the Future Trauma Leaders program, and the Injury Prevention Fund. As a double-board-certified surgeon dedicated to veteran care, her philanthropy is deeply informed by firsthand experience.

"I was first drawn to the Foundation by a specific project. When Dr. Eileen Bulger was the Chair of the Committee on Trauma she had a vision—to identify young surgeons with a commitment to trauma care and foster their growth for the foreseeable future. The goal was to train leaders who would enhance local expertise and form a consortium of strong, powerful advocates for national and international trauma care. As support for this ambitious project approached realization, I saw an opportunity to help put it over the top. This became my first Foundation donation. This program is now in its tenth year, and I am happy to continue to sustain its growth. I have also chosen to support other ACS projects that aim to strengthen public health like Stop the Bleed and gun safety in addition to local food banks, libraries and the arts in Seattle. These projects reflect my moral compass and I am proud to have contributed to their success."

"Philanthropy offers an opportunity to leverage our wealth. While many people define their value in terms of what they have, when it comes to making a difference, the primary impact of wealth is ultimately how it is used. Through donation to the ACS Foundation, we can use the fruits of our labors to generously facilitate leadership, discovery, and service through support of surgery as a whole."

DR. SHAM WINS PRESTIGIOUS CAREER DEVELOPMENT EXCHANGE AWARD



Jonathan Sham, MD, MBEE, Assistant Professor of Surgery, was selected by the European Society of Surgical Oncology (ESSO) to receive the 2025 International Career Development Exchange Award. This honor is bestowed upon an up-and-coming, early career surgical oncologist with leadership potential, and provides support for that surgeon to attend the annual ESSO meeting, which was held from October 15-17 in Gothenburg, Sweden. In addition, the awarded surgeon gets to spend a week at a European healthcare institution to learn from a global leader in surgical oncology.

Due to this award, Dr. Sham was able to visit the Amsterdam University Medical Center, a world leader in pancreas surgery and multicenter clinical trials, where he observed their high-volume minimally invasive pancreas program and met with their research team, who are actively performing over ten multicenter randomized trials as part of the Dutch Pancreas Group. "This was an amazing opportunity," said Dr. Sham, and he plans to implement the many "pearls of wisdom" he learned into his own clinical trials work in the National Clinical Trials Network and Society of Surgical Oncology.

honors & awards

DR. ESTELL WILLIAMS WINS CMFA MINORITY FACULTY MENTORING AWARD

Being awarded the 2025 CMFA Minority Faculty Mentoring Award is a tremendous honor. Selected by the Committee for Minority Faculty Advancement (CMFA) executive committee, I was recognized for my mentorship skills and dedication to advancing equity across the University of Washington School of Medicine.

The award was presented at the CMFA Fall Welcome on October 16, 2025, and again at the Medical School Executive Committee meeting. It is given annually to a faculty member who exemplifies outstanding service to the UW community through mentorship and advocacy.



Drs. Estell Williams, Mariya Sweetwyne,
and Jason Deen

To me, mentorship is the act of helping someone gain agency and confidence in their goals, and watching the ripple effect as they share their gifts with others. It's an investment that yields exponential returns. I approach mentorship with the same empathy and commitment that my own mentors offered me. Dr. Jocelyn Freeman, for example, guided me as a pre-med student in Oakland, California, and continued to support me through every milestone—from my white coat ceremony to matching into general surgery.

My journey has been shaped by many mentors who poured into me with genuine care. Dr. **Carlos Pellegrini** sponsored me to attend my first Society of Black Academic Surgeons conference. Drs. **Brant Oelschlager** and **Giana Davidson** helped me craft my faculty plan, while Drs. Giana Davidson and **Dave Flum** supported the development of the Center for Workforce Inclusion and Healthcare System Equity (WIHSE). Mentorship has also meant thoughtful check-ins with Drs. Jon Ilgen, John Gore, and **Douglas Wood**—moments where I felt truly seen and heard.

Mentorship, at its core, is about showing up with care and consistency. It's the dinner conversations, the walks, the whiteboard sessions filled with ideas and accountability. It's about helping others navigate their path while embracing the full humanity of the journey—including the missteps and growth. I strive to be the kind of mentor who reflects back the future someone envisions for themselves. To my mentors, thank you for your investment. To my mentees, I am deeply grateful for the trust you've placed in me. As Oprah Winfrey said, *"A mentor is someone who allows you to see the hope inside yourself."*

event recaps

STRAUSS LECTURE— THE LEGACY THAT CONNECTS

The Annual Strauss Lecture stands as a testament to the enduring legacy of Dr. Alfred A. Strauss, whose dream of establishing a medical school at his alma mater contributed to the foundation of the University of Washington (UW) School of Medicine and the Department of Surgery. Now in its 76th year, the lecture series celebrates the vision and dedication of Dr. Strauss and his wife, who established this prestigious event in 1950 to advance surgical education at the University of Washington.

Dr. Strauss was a pioneer throughout his distinguished medical career. After graduating first in his class from Rush Medical School in 1908, he trained in Chicago and Germany before devising numerous surgical techniques. His innovations included early pyloroplasty methods, subtotal gastrectomy for ulcers, and the development of the abdominal wall “zipper” for repeated surgical access—



Dr. Douglas Wood, John Friedlander, Dr. Diana Farmer, Dr. Tim Dellit, and Dr. John Strauss

decades ahead of its time. A visionary in gastrointestinal surgery, Dr. Strauss founded the multidisciplinary “Stomach Group” in 1914 and contributed to the development of the first ileostomy bag. His work laid the foundation for modern treatments of inflammatory bowel disease and ulcerative colitis.

The Strauss Lecture continues to honor his legacy, bringing together leading minds in surgery and medicine to share knowledge and inspire progress.

Speakers for the Strauss Lecture are selected by the Chair of Surgery from institutions all over the country—occasionally the world. Speakers are selected

for their leadership in their discipline—individuals who are actively advancing medicine and reflect the skill, vision, and drive exemplified by Dr. Strauss.

The event provides residents and fellows with opportunities to engage with presenters at the Harkins Roundtable, Strauss Dinner, Harkins Alumni Dinner, as well as throughout the day. This affords trainees connections with research and career opportunities throughout the world. The Strauss lectures are made possible by donations to the Dr. Alfred A. Strauss Endowed Lectureship in Surgery, which was established by the estate of Mrs. Margery Friedlander, Dr. Strauss’s daughter.

event recaps

2025 AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS CLINICAL CONGRESS

The Department of Surgery faculty and trainees had the opportunity to showcase their research at this fall's 2025 American College of Surgeons (ACS) Clinical Congress, held in Chicago, Illinois, from October 4-7. The Clinical Congress program addresses essential clinical and non-clinical content. A series of lectures was delivered by world-renowned experts in their respective fields. More than 100 Panel Sessions on timely clinical and non-clinical topics were offered, as well as a wide array of Didactic and Surgical Skills Courses. The Scientific Forum included presentations of late-breaking scientific advances and a large number of exciting surgical research presentations and ePosters. Video-Based Education sessions showcased surgical procedures, and meet-the-Expert Sessions provided a more informal learning experience.

DOS 2025 ACS CLINICAL CONGRESS PRESENTERS

LILY CHANG, MD

Professor

"Transition from Residency into Practice"

DIVYA RAMAKRISHNAN, MD

General Surgery R4

"Burnout and Attrition: Looking from the Perspective of Psychological Safety in Surgical Education"

STEPHANIE VU

Medical Student

"Factors Influencing Skin Graft Loss in Necrotizing Soft Tissue Infection Patients Undergoing Delayed Primary Closure"

"Management and Outcomes of Motorcycle-Related Plantar Avulsion Injuries: Salvage Versus Amputation"

DAVID ZONIES, MD, MPH

Professor

"Annual Update in Trauma Course"

"Meet the Expert: How to Make ECMO Work"

ROGER TATUM, MD

Professor

"High-Resolution Esophageal Manometry (in course SC04, "Building a Comprehensive Anti-Reflux Center)"

JAMIE SCHNUCK OLAPO, MD

Research Resident

"Investigation of Mediterranean Diet to Prevent Episodes of Diverticulitis (IMPEDE) Pilot Trial"

EMMA LASCAR

Medical Student

"Wound Dehiscence Following Post-Operative Radiation for Keloids"

WANG PONG (SEAN) CHAN, MD, MS

General Surgery R1

"Natural Language Processing and Machine Learning Classification of Injury Mechanism in Trauma Patients"

JUDY CHEN, MD

Associate Professor

"I Had Bariatric Surgery and Now I Have Pain: What Do I Do?"

event recaps

ALEXANDRA HERNANDEZ, MD, MCR

General Surgery R4

"Discrimination Impacts Patient-Reported Health Outcomes and Delayed Care in Surgical Patients"

RYAN BADIEE, MD

Plastic Surgery R4

"Fracture Site Matters: Examining Reconstructive Success in Post-traumatic Limb Salvage"

JONATHAN SHAM, MD

Associate Professor

"Robotic Pancreaticojejunostomy Strictureplasty After Pancreaticoduodenectomy"

NICOLE CHICOINE, JD, MD

Clinical Instructor

"Assessing the Impact of Social Work Consultation on Social Determinants of Health Screening Responses in Pediatric Surgical Patients"

FEI WANG, MD

Plastic Surgery R3

"Technique Matters: Factors Affecting Wound Healing in Necrotizing Soft Tissue Infection Patients Undergoing Delayed Primary Closure"

NZUEKOH NCHINDA, MD

General Surgery R4

"Outcomes Following Implementation of a Standardized Opioid-Free Anesthesia Protocol for Laparoscopic Appendectomy in Children"

GRIFFEN ALLEN, MD, MBE

Research Resident

"1:40 PM Reconstruction After Minimally Invasive Perineal Resections: Outcomes of Gracilis and Other Flaps at a High-Volume Center"

"Use and Outcomes of Antibiotics as Primary Treatment for Appendicitis Outside of a Trial Framework"

MATT DELLINGER, MD

Assistant Professor

"Pediatric Tracheal Surgery Update"

EILEEN BULGER, MD

Professor

"Seattle International Consensus Guidance for Severe traumatic Brain Injury"

RAGA SIDDHARTHAN, MD

Assistant Professor

"Anal Fissures"

in the media



ANDRÉ DICK, MD, MPH
Professor

Division of
Transplant Surgery

Seattle Children's Reaches a Medical Milestone: Its 250th Living Donor Kidney Transplant Surgery

Seattle Children's Hospital
October 23, 2025

correction notice

In our previous newsletter, we inadvertently omitted recognition of our esteemed bariatric surgeons, Drs. **Judy Chen** and **Saurabh Khandelwal**, in the *Seattle Magazine* 2025 Top Doctors [feature](#).

We sincerely regret this oversight and extend our congratulations to both physicians for this well-deserved honor.

Surgery Synopsis is an in-house newsletter published on a quarterly basis to highlight the clinical, academic and research activities of the University of Washington School of Medicine Department of Surgery. This publication is distributed to the department's faculty, residents, staff, and friends.

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