

Beyond the Bone



2025 Graduation

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Message from the Chair

Robert D. Zura, MD



I am pleased to report that many positive activities are afoot at LSU orthopedics, including new faculty members who are expanding our research and clinical efforts into novel arenas.

New faculty

Rachel Matthews, Ph.D., a postdoc originally from the U.K., is a kinesiology specialist who is spearheading a robust research program in Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Her primary research interests are the effects of stress on performance, metabolic function in athletes and female athletic performance.

On October 1, 2025, Avrey Novak, M.D. joined the department as an Assistant Professor – Clinical. Dr. Novak completed her residency at the University of Washington in Seattle, during which time she worked at Harborview Medical Center. She completed her orthopaedic trauma fellowship at the University of Texas in Houston.

New facility

Some of the most exciting news is that our 10-year goal of establishing a research and athletic performance institute is coming to fruition. This June, the Board of Supervisors gave the

green light for The Institute for the Health and Performance of Champions, and in October the Board of Regents approved the institute, an effort supported initially by \$85 million from Our Lady of the Lake with a commitment for additional funding in the future.

The Institute, which will have a medical arm and a performance arm, will be located in Baton Rouge adjacent to the new basketball arena. One substantial goal is to promote student athlete health, well-being, and overall performance in the highly competitive world of collegiate athletics. We will also be conducting research on the health, well-being and performance of Tactical (Warfighters, Astronauts, Firefighters and other members of the Emergency Services) and Operational (Energy and Agriculture Industry Members) athletes. The Institute will use its resources to address the unique physiological, psychological and environmental stressors that affect these populations. We are thrilled to say that Our Lady of the Lake has been an outstanding clinical and research partner, and we look forward to working with them going forward. This will afford our residents unparalleled access to athletes, performance and orthopaedic care, and may result in faculty growth as well.

Message from the Chair

CONTINUED

The expansion of our residency program has resulted in us having the largest program in *the* state, and we matched our second class of five this year. Our new residents hail from all over country, including Florida, Indiana, South Carolina and Louisiana! Dr. Mike Hartman is working on a rotation schedule, a process which has been so much more complex than we anticipated; we will soon have six residents at a time in Baton Rouge.

It was an outstanding match this year, with residents soon undertaking fellowships at Brown University, the University of Utah, Kerlan-Jobe/Cedars Sinai, and Vanderbilt University.

Faculty happenings

Michelle Moore, Psy.D., dually appointed in the Department of Psychiatry and Orthopaedic Surgery at LSUHSC, has been promoted to Assistant Dean of Faculty Development for our department. She is continuing to push the boundaries in orthopedics by prioritizing wellness for medical professionals. Dr. Moore conducted a symposium on this topic at the AOA Annual Meeting in Minneapolis in June. The symposium will be featured as a manuscript in the Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery.

Dr. Moore is changing the vernacular of our department, as well as the way we communicate with each other. She is educating our faculty on communication styles amongst professionals with varied DISC (Dominance, Influence, Steadiness and Conscientiousness) profiles. We had an awesome retreat on leadership styles and difficult conversations led by Drs. Moore and Sonya Van Nuland at the New Orleans Yacht Club.

Dr. Moore has also completed her coaching certification; numerous faculty and students are benefitting from her ability to personalize their career development. Her skillset is particularly useful for those in a transition period, such as PGY1s and those moving from residency to fellowship. I'm pleased to say that word of her talents and results is getting out as she led a seminar for the Orthopaedic Trauma Section at Indiana University.

Don Garguilo, D.O., a gifted pediatric orthopedic surgeon who is on the board of the New Orleans Medical Mission Services, has been promoted to Associate Professor.

Chris Marrero, M.D., a skilled general orthopedics practitioner with an emphasis in sports medicine, adult reconstruction, and trauma, has been

promoted to Clinical Professor. It was truly fun when we surprised him by bringing his family to the graduation ceremony and revealing that we had created a new award—the Dr. Christopher Marrero award which recognizes excellence in one of the department’s missions (patient care, research, education, community engagement, and leadership) with character and integrity. Chris was the inaugural winner – community engagement.

Dr. Vin Dasa, the Irv Cahen Chair of Orthopaedic Surgery, continues to have fruitful research collaborations with industry partners at Ochsner Kenner. Dr. Jessica Rivera runs a prolific, well-funded lab and has recently taken over the IRB at LSU, an enormous undertaking! Dr. Luis Marrero has secured a substantial amount of NIH funding to investigate a potential “first-in-class” therapy for arthrofibrosis that could surpass anything we have at present.

UMC, our trauma center, just celebrated its 10th Anniversary! We look forward to many more decades of partnership with LCMC.

Our alums continue to step up to the plate to support our program. Tiger Bones continues to be an incredibly supportive alumnae group. Dr.

Doug Letson, our Tiger of the Year, has been a tireless supporter of our program, traveling here from Tampa annually for a two-day orthopedic oncology seminar. We plan to host an alumni gala at the AAOS in New Orleans on March 5, so mark your calendars! More details to follow.

This year’s graduation ceremony welcomed Dr. Bob Anderson from OrthoCarolina. Dr. Anderson gave an incredible talk about his career treating athletes with foot and ankle injuries. As a “thank you” to him, we gave him an LSU baseball bat—then LSU won the college world series! Drs. Bob Anderson and Adam Starr are our good luck charms...both of their bats led to baseball nattys just a few days after visiting LSU! Geaux Tigers!

A difficult event for everyone was the New Year’s Day terror attack on Bourbon Street. Our people did their best to not only heal those affected, but to seek out information that could help in the event of another such attack. Working with Tulane, we were able to access deidentified autopsy results and compare those to the injuries of the survivors, information that will help us plan for future possible events. I am extremely proud of our residents and faculty members for giving 150% to these efforts.

Focus on Faculty



FEATURING

Matthew Cable, M.D.

A self-described late bloomer, Matthew Cable, M.D., Associate Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery and Oncology at LSU, said that for a while, he wasn't aware that orthopedic oncology was a subspecialty.

Dr. Cable, who obtained his M.D. at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine, followed by an orthopaedic residency at the Detroit Medical Center, says, "Once I learned about the possibility of pursuing orthopedic oncology, I never looked back. I was enthralled not only by helping these patients, but by the variety of clinical situations involved."

"I trained at the safety net hospital of Detroit and saw a plethora of trauma cases, but also trained alongside Dr. David Markel, a prominent joint surgeon; we did hundreds of knee and hip replacements so I walked away with an abundance of experience. I also credit Dr. Terrance Peabody from Chicago, who told me that you have to get a concrete understanding of orthopedic surgery before you begin in orthopedic oncology. I took that to heart when looking at the 'ivory tower' programs and instead opted for a high-volume trauma center."

Dr. Cable's passion for the subspecialty led him to a two-year Sarcoma Advanced Clinical and

Research fellowship at the Huntsman Cancer Institute and Primary Children's Hospital at the University of Utah.

And then he made his way to New Orleans.

"The city had no orthopedic oncologists for quite a while after hurricane Katrina. I was emailing with Dr. Andy King, the interim chair, at the same time Dr. Zura was in the process of being recruited. They were both seeking an orthopedic oncologist, so it seemed like providence."

Dr. Cable set about building the LSU orthopedic oncology program. "I began Level one call with Dr. Peter Krause, doing quite a lot of hip, knee, and complex joints. This was particularly helpful because the second half of orthopedic cancer treatment is often rebuilding the hip and knee, so it's similar to complex joints. I built volume in the oncology department largely through word of mouth, which included driving out to Thibodaux and Baton Rouge to introduce myself to private practices."

Dr. Cable is pleased to be of service to the local population. "There is an overwhelming unmet need here as roughly half of New Orleans is uninsured or underinsured." In addition, he notes that patients are also referred from Pensacola and Lake Charles, 200 miles or more, because they can't be seen elsewhere.

"LSU reminds me of Detroit in that there is history in the name without it ever feeling like an intellectual silo. You could say that it's a blue-collar program that treats every kind of problem—which is where I fit in. This program has always withstood the test of time—that is why our residents are so resilient!"

Dr. Cable, giving an example of pushing surgical



boundaries, says, “I recently had a case that a major cancer center would have slated for amputation because the tumor went around most of the femoral artery. It didn’t involve the bone, so we did a dissection and removed the femoral artery from the tumor. It was a slow, tedious process of tying off the little branches off the artery, but the surgery was a success.”

“Another complex case involved the removal of the sacrum by a five-surgeon team: orthopedic oncology, spine, general surgery, vascular, and plastic surgery. It took three days to take bone from the leg, manage the resulting bone defect, and do the flaps.”

As for what is important in the educational arena, Dr. Cable notes, “I firmly believe in the power of mentoring as I myself have benefitted greatly from being guided by veteran surgeons. When residents rotate on my tumor service, I am getting them at a unique time as they have already learned basic surgical skills and chosen their specialty, which usually is not orthopedic oncology. They learn that we are often pushing the boundaries of surgery and that they have to be very familiar with anatomy, regardless of their chosen specialty...essentially, they have to get comfortable being uncomfortable. These surgeries often occur close to the groin and neck and can be quite delicate.”

And in his free time? “Well, my family and I live ‘in the box,’ so at Mardi Gras we see it all. I have two terrific daughters who make me go to every single parade!”

FEATURING

Meredith Warner, M.D., M.B.A. & Jessica Rivera, M.D., Ph.D.

There is new hope from an old technique for patients at risk of limb loss. Transverse Bone Transport, a technique using bone cortex distraction to increase blood flow to the lower leg for wound healing, has essentially been rediscovered from the original work of Professor Gavriil Abramovich Ilizarov.



Meredith Warner, M.D., M.B.A. and Jessica Rivera, M.D., Ph.D., both who have served as military surgeons, have successfully used this technique on nine patients. Dr. Rivera: “You make a cut on the side of the bone and use the device to pull the bony cortex away from the rest of the bone, thus causing a robust vascular response in the entire limb. While this vascular phenomenon is not new, this technique is exploiting that without changing the length of the bone in the hope that the vascular benefits will help with wounds in patients such as those with venous insufficiency or diabetes.”

“This particular device was invented by two surgeons in Dallas who worked with the original limb lengthening expert, Professor Ilizarov. Unlike the large Ilizarov frame, however, this one is small. Finally, it looks like we have a better solution for patients who have had multiple procedures and are at risk for losing limbs.”

Drs. Warner and Rivera recently presented a nine-case series at the Limb Lengthening and Reconstruction Society annual meeting in Philadelphia. Providing details, Dr. Rivera notes, “The device is on the patient’s body for six weeks. From the basic science it seems that the vascular benefits can last a good six months. The literature on the Ilizarov technique indicates an increase in blood flow to the affected limb compared to the other limb for up to six months. However, we are not sure if someone with underlying diabetes will have vascular consequences/a recurrence of wounds. This is truly a last-ditch effort and is my passion. Both Dr. Warner and I are pleased to be able to address the issue of limb loss from another direction.”

Department News & Updates



LSU Orthopaedics Welcomes Marie-Line Kam as the Clinical Trials Research Coordinator

Marie-Line Kam is a native of Prince George's County, Maryland. She obtained her bachelor's degree in Public

Health Science, along with a certificate in Women's Studies from the University of Maryland College Park, before completing her master's degree in Medical Genetics and Genomics at Tulane University School of Medicine. She is a recent alum of the APHL•CDC Fellowship, where she completed her fellowship in Newborn Screening, focusing on Cystic fibrosis at the New Jersey Department of Health. She is most passionate about bridging health disparities in minority communities and aims to obtain her Doctorate in Public Health in the near future. In her free time, she enjoys traveling, exploring new hobbies, and spending time with loved ones.

on receiving a research grant for his project, "Establishing a pre-clinical model of arthrofibrosis." Under the mentorship of Dr. Luis Marrero, Dr. Monroig is supported by a research team that includes Miguel A. De Jesus (gap year research fellow, Ponce Health Sciences in Puerto Rico), Alexandra Chimento (second-year medical student, LSUHSC), and Molly Chaffee (pre-med undergraduate, Tulane University). Dr. Monroig's research aims to develop an in vivo rat model to study arthrofibrosis, a debilitating condition that causes painful, restricted joint movement. This work has the potential to significantly improve future treatments for patients suffering from this condition.

Dr. Michael J. Leddy, III, MD, FAAOS has been named Chair of the AAOS Board of Councilors.

LSu Orthopaedics is proud to congratulate

Dr. Michael J. Leddy, III, MD, FAAOS on his recent appointment to Chair of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) Board of Councilors. He is the first Louisiana surgeon to hold this position, and previously served as the BOC representative for Louisiana before being elected to serve as secretary, then chair-elect, and now chair.



Dr. Monroe Laborde Awarded 2025 Newman Community Service Award at Louisiana Orthopaedics Association Meeting

Dr. Carlos Monroig Awarded a Grant for Arthrofibrosis Research with Dr. Luis Marrero

LSU Orthopaedics congratulates Dr. Carlos Monroig, PGY-1 Orthopaedics resident,

Congrats to Dr. Michelle Moore on Her Recent Appointment to Assistant Dean of Faculty Affairs

LSU Department of Orthopaedics are pleased to announce that Dr. Michelle Moore, Associate Professor of Clinical Pediatrics, has agreed to serve as one of two new Assistant Deans for Faculty Affairs, effective April 8, 2025. Dr. Moore earned her Bachelor's degree from Marymount Manhattan College with a double major in psychology and theatre, and earned her Master's degree



Department News & Updates CONTINUE

in School Psychology and Doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology from Pace University in NY, NY. In addition, she completed her internship and fellowship training in the LSU Department of Psychiatry and joined the faculty in 2011.

Dr. Moore is board-certified in Clinical Psychology and is a Certified Wellness Provider and a Certified Executive Coach. Since 2023, she has held a joint appointment in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery where she serves as Director of Faculty Development and developed an Executive Coaching program for the department. Dr. Moore also served as Section Chief for Psychology from 2022-2025, Psychology Internship Training Director, and was awarded the Anderson/Searle Professorship in Psychiatry in 2019 and the Mollie Wallick Professorship in Psychiatry in 2022.

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Ahmad and Harvey Chim, Brandon Donnelly as well as former residents, Drs. Corinne Cloud, Barton Wax, and Blaine Session. Participants were treated to a combination of lectures and labs related to common hand fractures, wrist fractures, and complex elbow injuries.

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A Moment to Celebrate: Promotions of Dr. Dominic Gargiulo and Dr. Christopher Marrero

Congratulations to both Dr. Gargiulo and Dr. Marrero on their new promotions.

Dr. Zura and Dr. Rivera publish 10 papers to supplement JBJS PREP-IT Investigation

A recent article by Dr. Iberê Pereira Datti, published in the New England Journal of Medicine, brought attention to the Pragmatic Randomized Trial Evaluating Preoperative Alcohol Skin Solutions in Fractured Extremities. However, a recent commentary led by Drs. Gerard Slobogean, MD, MPH; Nathan N. O'Hara, PhD, MHA; and Sheila Sprague, PhD, was released to dispute Dr. Datti's findings.

Dr. Zura and Dr. Rivera contributed to the investigation, publishing ten papers in support of the commentary. As a side note, Dr. Zura served on the Adjudication Committee, and Dr. Rivera was part of the Military Core.

Dr. Accousti Takes Part in Scoliosis Segment on Local News



LSU Orthopaedics Holds a Successful April Grand Rounds With a Focus on Hand and Upper Extremity

True to how LSU Orthopaedics operates, on April 24th and

25th the department held another stimulating and congenial Journal Club/Grand Rounds, with this month's event focused on Hand and Upper Extremity.

The April 24th Journal Club and dinner at Katie's restaurant, sponsored by our industry partners Skeletal Dynamics, featured guest speakers Dr. Deana Mercer (University of New Mexico) and Dr. Louis Catalano (Steadman-Hawkins Clinic and University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Center). These notable surgeons facilitated discussions on some of the latest research in hand surgery, including classification of open distal radius fractures, plate fixation vs metacarpal intramedullary nailing, simple vs comminuted radial head fractures treated with ORIF, and radial head arthroplasty for fractures.

Participating in the following day's Grand Rounds were a number of LSU faculty, including Drs. Rick





LSU Orthopaedics Welcomes Dr. Avery Novak to the Team!

Dr. Avery Novak was born and raised in Spokane, Washington. She moved to Seattle to pursue her undergraduate studies in Biology at the University of Washington, graduating in 2014.

She remained in Seattle to attend medical school at the University of Washington and subsequently completed her residency in Orthopaedic Surgery at the same institution. During her residency, Dr. Novak developed a strong interest in orthopedic trauma while training at Harborview Medical Center, a high-volume Level I trauma center.

To further her training she completed a fellowship in orthopedic trauma at the University of Texas in Houston. Dr. Novak is thrilled to join the faculty at LSU as an orthopedic traumatologist and looks forward to getting to know and serving the New Orleans community. Dr. Novak will officially join the program on October 1, 2025 as an Assistant Professor - Clinical

From the entire team at LSU Ortho, we welcome Dr. Novak to the program, and can't wait to see what she accomplishes.

Dr. Novak and Dr. Marrero Appointed to New Student-Focused Roles in LSU Orthopaedics

As of July 21st 2025 Drs. Chris Marrero and Avery Novak have been appointed to two new student-focused roles within the Orthopaedics program.

Dr. Marrero was appointed to the position of Specialty-Specific Careers Director. He will serve as the primary departmental advisor for



all students (Years 1–4) pursuing a career in orthopaedic surgery.

Dr. Novak was appointed to the position of Senior Student Rotation Director (Effective October upon her arrival). She will take the lead in managing and enhancing senior student rotations.

In the words of Dr. Zura:

“These appointments represent a significant investment in student success, and we are deeply grateful to Dean DiCarlo and Dr. DeSilvia in the Office of Student Affairs for their continued support of departmental initiatives. Their partnership has allowed us to formalize these vital roles and better position our students for successful careers in orthopaedic surgery.”

“Both Dr. Marrero and Dr. Novak are tireless, experienced educators who are deeply committed to student mentorship. I’m confident their leadership will offer meaningful guidance and continuity to all students exploring orthopaedics.”

From everyone here at LSU Orthopaedics we would like to congratulate Dr. Marrero and Dr. Novak on this appointment.

Celebrating a Surgical Innovation: Dr. Neil Maki's 1989 Arthroscopic Bankart Suture Repair





Dr. Matthews and Dr. Scott Selected to Attend Orthopaedic Research Society's Young Investigator Initiative

Dr. Rachel Matthews and Dr. Matthew Scott, Postdoctoral Fellows in the Department of Orthopaedics at LSU Health

Sciences Center, have been selected from an international pool of applicants to attend the Orthopaedic Research Society's Young Investigator Initiative (YII), to be held October 17-19, 2025, in Rosemont, Illinois.



The YII is a multi-disciplinary grant mentoring and career development program that provides young investigators in the musculoskeletal sciences with guidance on constructing well-founded research proposals and securing funding for basic, translational, or clinical research.

LSU Orthopaedics Welcomes Adrianna Peters as Administrative Coordinator

LSU Dept. of Orthopaedics welcomes Adrianna to the role of Administrative Coordinator. She is taking over the role from Ms. Edwina Jackson.



As for Adrianna's background she received her bachelor's degree in Health Education and a promotion from Southeastern Louisiana University, and she is currently pursuing a master's degree in Public Health. Adrianna began her career as a Patient Navigator in the Mammography Department where she earned her certification and developed a strong foundation in patient support.

From there, she transitioned into research and have spent the past five years working as a Research Coordinator. Most recently, she gained additional experience supporting IRB processes.

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Dr. Carter Clement Awarded Lutz Biedermann Grant

During the 60th Annual Meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina, the Scoliosis Research Society (SRS) announced this year's recipient of the Lutz Biedermann award recipient Dr. Carter Clement.



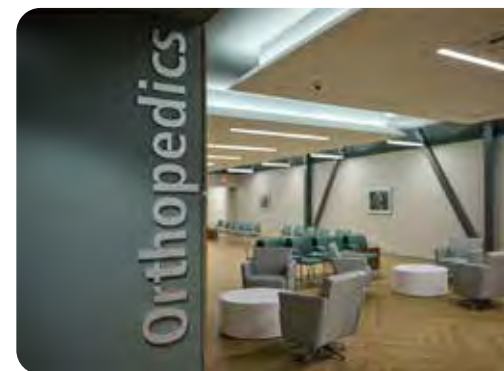
Dr. Clement was given this award for his research proposal titled: Improving Materials for Vertebral Body Tethering Using Soft Tissue Allografts. The award grants \$72,700 to Dr. Clement's research over a two year span.

Dr. Luis Marrero and His Team Awarded Phase I Small Business Innovation Research Grant

Recently, Dr. Luis Marrero and his team were awarded a \$315,000 Phase I Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grant from the NIH's National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) to explore new treatments for non-compliant arthrofibrosis.

LSU Orthopaedics Residents Have a New Home in Lafayette

The newly renovated \$35 million facility in Lafayette brings internal medicine, orthopaedics, sports medicine, and physical therapy together under one roof, creating a state-of-the-art, high-volume environment with nearly 100 patient care rooms. LSU Orthopaedics residents will gain invaluable hands-on experience here, advancing their skills in sports medicine and beyond while learning side-by-side with fellows and faculty.



Research News



Vinod Dasa, MD - Director of Research

The department of Orthopedics commitment to research continues to grow as we strengthen our infrastructure and grow our research portfolio. Our students are as productive as ever working on projects with nearly all members of our faculty. Our clinical trials across Ochsner Kenner and UMC continue to grow with novel multi institutional/ructional studies ranging from examining PEEK femoral components in TKA to infection mitigation in trauma. We continue to invest in talent acquisition with the addition of Ash Farhoud as our research administrator and Dr Anand Paul as our data scientist. Our collaborations with Baton Rouge continue to grow and shape performance research across multiple disciplines. Congratulations to all of our faculty, students, and residents for their hard work and accomplishments.

Dr. Luis Marrero's research on pharmacotherapy for non-compliant arthrofibrosis will be funded with an NIH/NIAMS grant of \$305,000 annually that he secured with an impact score of 23. As the principal investigator, he is building on a collaboration with NovoMedix to test their small-molecule interleukin-11 (IL-11) inhibitors as additional treatment options for musculoskeletal fibrosis. This research gained international recognition when visiting research fellow Miguel De Jesus received a \$1,000 travel award to present their findings in South Korea.

Dr. Marrero has been actively training the next generation of physician-scientists. He is mentoring orthopaedics resident Dr. Carlos Monroig (PGY2) and dermatology resident Dr. Collins Langley (PGY3), each of whom has secured \$5,000 grants. Dr. Monroig is working on establishing an in-house preclinical rat model for arthrofibrosis, while Dr. Langley co-leads an interdisciplinary study of IL-11 inhibitors in a keloid model. For this, Dr. Marrero provides core fibrosis expertise, complemented by clinical mentorship from dermatology's Drs. Christopher Haas and Deborah Hilton. The team also includes immunologist Dr. Cindy Morris (Tulane), dermatologist Dr. Katie Wiltz (LSUHSC-NO alumna), and medical students Mary Cadence Gatterer and Connor Parrino.

Dr. Marrero is also promoting internal collaborations by utilizing a new micro-computed tomography unit that he obtained through the School of Medicine. Some projects involve studying the structural basis of osteoarthritis pain using banked material from Dr. Vinod Dasa's total knee arthroplasty patients, improving the healing of Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*-infected fractures with Dr. Jessica Rivera, and investigating bone bioenergetics after cold exposure with Dr. Matt Scott.

The Marrero lab's scholarly output has been robust. A manuscript on peri-articular myopenia in osteoarthritis was recently published in *Nature – Scientific Reports*, following a foundational paper on IL-11 in arthrofibrosis published in *Osteoarthritis and Cartilage*. Dr. Marrero's dedication to mentorship is evident in two trainee manuscripts currently under review: the first, which presents the first data on the NovoMedix anti-fibrotics by orthopaedics intern, Dr. Ryan Schroeder, and a study on targeting the cannabinoid-2 receptor for non-psychoactive pain and inflammation management by 4th-year medical student Collin Touns. Over the past year, work in the Marrero lab has resulted in over 15 abstracts being presented at major conferences, including the Orthopaedic Research Society, the Osteoarthritis Research Society International, the Louisiana Orthopaedic Association, and the Association of Academic Physiatrists.

Meet the Research Team

Research Administrator:

Ashraf Farhoud

Basic Science:

Drs. Jessica Rivera and Luis Marrero

Statistician and data analysis:

Dr. Claudia Leonardi

Project development and manuscript preparation:

Dr. Amy Bronstone

Data Science:

Dr. Anand Paul

Student research committee leadership:

Robby Branstetter, Erik Piedy

The Rivera lab is currently working on multiple funded basic science projects, all of which fall under the umbrella of wound healing and infection. Dr. Scott, Jessica's research fellow, spent the past year helping Jessica fulfil those research contracts and mentoring our medical student researchers, while also developing his personal research goals related to bone marrow adiposity and bone health. Medical students in Rivera lab have been productive despite a relatively recent joining. Julianne Guercio (M1) is doing both in vitro and in vivo work related to macrophage inflammation in response to calcium sulfate beads, after having her \$5,000 MSREP grant funded at the end of Spring 2025. Ty Gregory (M1) and Richard Harkrider (M1) have been testing the in vitro cytotoxicity of bromelain, adding context to our labs funded projects related to bromelain use in wound debridement. John Carleton, a PhD candidate under the mentorship of Dr. Rivera, is moving forward with his research evaluating neuropeptide signaling in macrophages and the downstream implications for wound healing. He hopes to utilize a similar methodology to evaluate our lab's favorite botanical, bromelain.

The pediatric orthopaedic research team has continued to grow this year with over 50 active research projects and dozens of student- and resident-investigators. Five of these projects led to publications in 2024, followed by 5 more in 2025 to-date. Notable examples include discrete

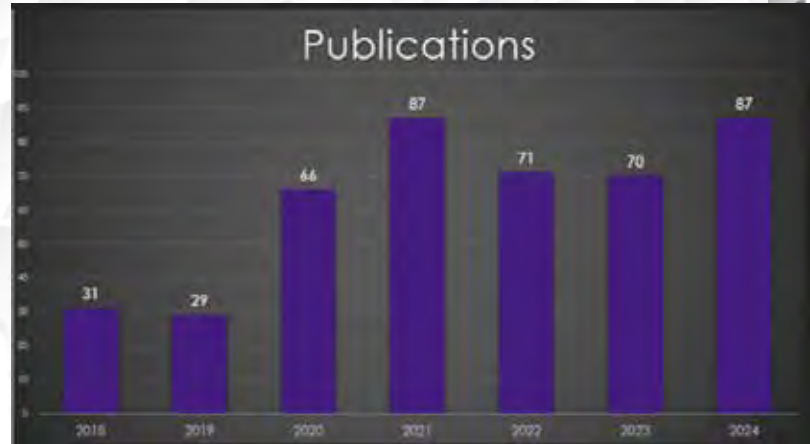
choice experiments on patellar dislocations and osteochondritis dissecans by Sylvia Culpepper (2023-2024 research fellow) and Ravi Rajendra (PGY-5), both published in the Journal of Pediatric Orthopaedics. Dr. Clement continues to lead most of the research efforts in collaboration with clinical research coordinator, Armandi Smith. The team was joined by senior medical student, Miguel De Jesus, for the 2024-2025 academic year during which time he served as a visiting research fellow. Miguel has been very productive with numerous ongoing projects, including multiple studies examining patient- and parent-decision making for common pediatric orthopaedic conditions. Additionally, Camille Denny (L2) joined the team for a summer research elective and is leading a project entitled "Optimizing intraoperative imaging techniques for periacetabular osteotomy surgery" which involves comparing X-ray modalities using 3D-printed pelvis models. The team also delivered over 20 abstract presentations at regional and national conferences during 2024-2025 including the POSNA and AOA annual meetings. Notable examples include research on pediatric fellowship compensation presented by Collin Toups (L4) at POSNA and a study on the use of telehealth for early onset scoliosis presented by Ms. Culpepper at ICEOS. We are looking forward to another productive year!

The Orthopedic Surgery Interest Group is excited to ramp up its activity throughout the coming school year. With over 100 members across four years of medical students, OSIG has steadily grown in size with plans to improve outreach across our campus and the New Orleans community. Over the coming months, our students will have the opportunity to volunteer with Special Olympics Louisiana, hear from several orthopedic surgeons about their practice, learn about various topics in orthopedic surgery from our faculty, and assist the Student Run Community Clinic with mobility aid donation drives. Additionally, OSIG will be increasing its collaboration with the MSK Research Committee with plans to coordinate student journal clubs and workshops. Daniel Zuckerman will be serving as President of OSIG for the coming year with a great team comprised of Zach Carter, James Aulds, Mia Angelo, and Sherry Dymond. We look forward to a year of growing student involvement with the Department

of Orthopedics.

In the past year, the Musculoskeletal Student Research Committee (MSK) at LSU has grown to over 130 members, each significantly contributing to the advancement of orthopedic literature. Leveraging guidance from junior and senior mentors, all student members have demonstrated a strong commitment to learning the research process. Most importantly, they have embraced the critical revision process, demonstrating adaptability in responding to feedback and refining their work. As a result of their dedication, students have delivered over 100 podium and poster presentations in the past year across numerous prestigious events. Committee members have represented MSK and LSU at the Louisiana Orthopedic Association Annual Meeting, LSU Orthopedic Surgery Research Day, LSU Research Symposium, Orthopedic Research Society conference, Cancer Advocacy Group of Louisiana NeauxCancer conference, and the Orthopedic Value-Based Care conference.

The committee remains dedicated to providing students with the information, guidance, and faculty connections necessary to produce high-quality research. For the 2025-2026 academic year, Robby Branstetter will serve as the Senior Advisor to the Chairman, Erik Piedy will serve as Chairman, with Callie Dickinson as the new Chair-Elect. Through their efforts, the committee continues its mission to advance orthopedic research and education at LSU.



Please visit the research section of the department website for more detailed information.

Meet the Staff



Edwina Jackson-Phillips

Secretary - LSU Health Science Center

There are physicians all over the U.S. who can thank Edwina Jackson-Phillips for helping them get through medical school. Ms. Jackson-Phillips, newly retired from 17 years as Administrative Coordinator in the LSU Department of Orthopedics, has gained the trust of many a budding doctor.

A native New Orleanian, Ms. Jackson-Phillips spent 15 years in New York, where she supervised the administrative staff and then the contract management staff at Montefiore Medical Center. “I returned to New Orleans to help my mother and grandmother, thinking that my stay would be temporary. But things evolved and I began doing contract work with attorneys.”

Looking for something more permanent, Ms. Jackson-Phillips interviewed at LSU and was selected to fill the position of Administrative Coordinator. “This was just after Katrina hit and it was obviously a stressful time for everyone. But the LSU orthopedics department quickly proved itself to be like a big, caring family. While it has been a pleasure to work with true professionals, I think I value the personal aspects of my role over everything.”

This perception of her coworkers was solidified when she revealed that her husband was having medical issues. “They couldn’t have been more supportive, asking me, ‘What do you need? Do you want to work from home part-time?’ They are a deeply caring group of faculty members.”

“I have wonderful memories of my time with LSU, some of which were with the lovely Drs. Melancon and Ricciardi before they passed away. There were memorable Christmas parties where I got to know the doctors and their wives. And seeing Dr. Dasa’s family grow has been delightful.”

“Sometimes we are so busy that we forget to really see a person. But I had a lot of medical students confide in me over the years...I think they knew that I ‘saw’ them. I appreciate the fact that they trusted me; we laughed and found some positive in the situation and we all grew from it.”

“I appreciate and respect all the wonderful physicians I had the pleasure to work with and beside during my time in the LSUHSC-N.O. Department of Orthopedic Surgery. While there may be some people who don’t see this job as important, I take my commitments seriously and I’m going to keep my word. I can thank my fellow church members for helping me understand what it means to let go and embrace what’s to come. I look forward to exploring the world through travel and embracing more time with my husband.”

Welcome to the
LSU Orthopaedics Family!

School Ties



Events

Rajendra's Mardi Gras 2025

Weddings

Dr. Bronson Fong
married Alyssa Guillory PM&R resident
on May 10, 2025



Awards & Accolades

Awards 2025 Winners

Jack Winter's Award Adam L. Haydel, MD



Orthopaedics In-Training Award Nathan J. Redlich, MD



King Award Daniel Gelvez, MD



Rooney Award E. Scott Yerger, MD

D 'Ambrosia Award Robert D. Anderson, MD

Research Speaker Award Jason C. Mussell, PhD

Award Categories:

Jack Winter's Award – Graduating resident with the best research

Orthopaedics In-Training Award – Graduating resident who has the highest In-Training Score Averaged over 4 years (PGY2-5 year of training)

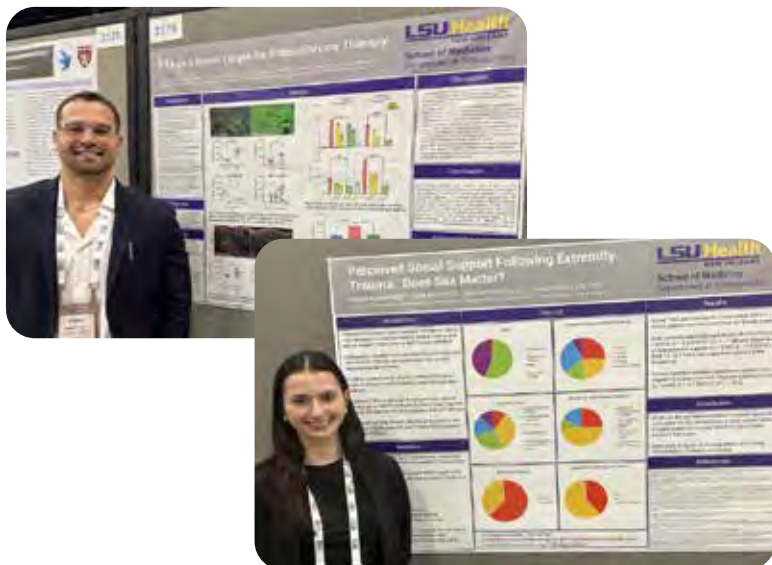
King Award – Teaching award given to resident / Named after Dr. Andrew King (Emeritus Professor & Past Chairman for the Department of Orthopaedics)

Rooney Award – Teaching award given to Faculty / Named after Dr. Ronald Rooney (Former Faculty and advisor/mentor to residents & students)

D 'Ambrosia Award – Given to Guest Speaker for Graduation & Research Day / Named after Dr. Robert D. D' Ambrosia (Former Chairman for the Department of Orthopaedics, lectureship/ research day named in his honor for his longstanding contribution to the program)

Research Speaker Award – Given to Research Faculty Speaker

Updates



Congratulations to Anna & Miguel for Representing LSUHSC Ortho at This Year's Orthopaedic Research Society Annual Meeting!

This year, medical students Miguel A. De Jesus and Anna LeJeune earned the incredible honor of representing the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the 2025 Orthopaedic Research Society (ORS) Annual Meeting, a premier international forum for musculoskeletal research. ORS brings together leading scientists, clinicians, and industry professionals from around the world to showcase cutting-edge discoveries in orthopedic innovation, biomechanics, and translational research.

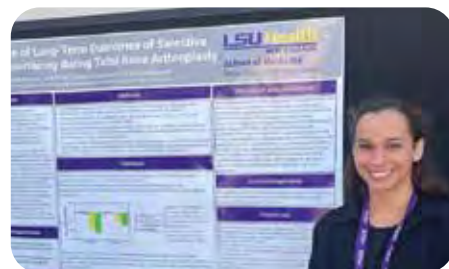
Second-year medical student Anna LeJeune collaborated with Dr. Jessica Rivera to present their research titled “Perceived Social Support Following Extremity Trauma: Does Sex Matter?” Additionally, visiting research fellow Miguel A. De Jesús, a rising fourth-year medical student from Ponce Health Sciences University in Puerto Rico, was mentored by Dr. Luis Marrero in presenting “IL-11 as a Novel Target for Arthrofibrosis Therapy.”

Miguel A. De Jesús Receives Award to Present Arthrofibrosis Research at International Osteoarthritis Congress



Miguel A. De Jesús, a visiting medical student from Ponce Health Sciences University in Puerto Rico, has secured a \$1,000 travel award from Fundación Intellectus to present “IL-11 as a Novel Target for Arthrofibrosis Therapy” at the 2025 OARS International Congress in Icheon, South Korea. Fundación Intellectus, which is part of the Ponce Health Sciences Educational Foundation, has awarded over 1,600 scholarships and donations to Puerto Rican students in the fields of health and social sciences since 2014. Miguel is currently completing a gap-year research fellowship in the LSUHSC-NO Department of Orthopaedic Surgery. This innovative work was initiated by incoming PGY-1 resident Ryan Schroeder and mentored by Dr. Luis Marrero.

LSU Ortho Students Represent the Program at the 2025 Orthopaedic Value-Based Care Annual Meeting



This year, medical students Callie Dickinson (pictured above), Erik Piedy, Audrey Ulfers, Tara Korbal, Daniel Zuckerman, Joseph Mouton, Grace Brandhurst, Rafael Guzman-Arevalo, Matthew Bratton and Gregory Laborde earned the incredible honor of representing the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the 2025 Orthopaedic Value-Based Care (OVBC) Annual Meeting, a premier forum with the mission to bring together orthopedic surgeons, anesthesiologists, healthcare executives, pharmaceutical leaders, and consultants and a focus on fostering collaboration around value-based care and innovation in musculoskeletal (MSK) health.

Meet the Chiefs



FEATURING

Dong Katherine, M.D.

A team player who also appreciates the importance of independence, Katherine Dong, M.D., a fifth-year resident from New Jersey, has hit her stride at LSU Orthopedics. After earning a degree in Biochemistry and Cell Biology from Rice University, Dong attended Baylor College of Medicine before making her way to LSU.

“Even as an intern at LSU I felt the program’s strong sense of camaraderie as well as resident support, both of which make people genuinely feel like part of a team,” says Dr. Dong.

“I particularly appreciate the skill of my surgeon-mentors, who are not only superb in the OR, but are just awesome when it comes to communicating with patients. They have leaned into the fact that sometimes surgery is the easy part...it’s the postop period that requires looking at the patient holistically.”

“The LSU surgeons I’ve worked with are particularly careful about ensuring that we have the correct indications,” adds Dr. Dong. “They do everything possible to make sure we are doing the right surgery on the right patient.”

Now settled on spine, Dr. Dong notes, “Dr. Henry Eiserloh was instrumental in fostering my interest in spine as well as what it means to be committed to teaching residents. Even in my off time I have scrubbed in with him on fascinating cases including dural defects and spinal deformities.”

“I also appreciate the mentorship of Dr. Amit Bhandutia. I feel extremely fortunate to have found a mentor in my subspecialty who has taught me everything I know about spine call and who truly leads by example of what it means to be a good leader and invested in resident development both in the OR and out.”

Soon headed to a spine fellowship at Brown University, Dr. Dong will carry with her the wide variety of experiences she has had at LSU. “The number of sites in this program is atypical, as is the variety of patient populations and cases.”

Her advice to incoming residents? “Your success is up to you. It is your responsibility to put in the time and to ask the right questions—both of your mentors and patients. Patient care starts prior to the operating room. Overall, I am thrilled to have had a residency program that gave me an edge via early operative experience and strong camaraderie. If you give it all you’ve got, try to learn something from everyone you interact with, and maintain a healthy support system—then you are laying a solid foundation for success.”



Meet the Chiefs



FEATURING

Ravi Rajendra, M.D.

While Dr. Ravi Rajendra, a fifth-year resident, is first and foremost a physician, he equally embraces the role of a coach. “At LSU, we care for a diverse population of patients across Louisiana who often present not only with complex orthopaedic pathologies, but also with significant medical comorbidities. Many face additional challenges related to social determinants of health. As orthopaedic surgeons, part of our role extends beyond the operating room – we coach our patients through their injuries both before and after surgery, guiding and encouraging them towards what is possible for their lives.”

An Alabama native who attended the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, Dr. Rajendra is a big fan of the LSU residency. “LSU has thoroughly prepared me for fellowship. I can’t say enough about my pediatrics experience at Children’s Hospital – it is unparalleled in its depth and in the graduated autonomy it offers. In addition, I’m also grateful for the autonomy we have in Lafayette and Baton Rouge where we manage our own clinic and book operative cases under the supervision of an attending, while having longitudinal follow-up over these patients.”

As for why he selected pediatric orthopedics, he states, “Kids are fun, big dreamers, and want to get back to life. I enjoy the breadth of cases in pediatric orthopaedics from smaller

tendon transfers in the foot and ankle, where the anatomy is beautiful, to complex spinal deformity cases, which require thoughtful planning around level selection and surgical strategies for curve correction.”

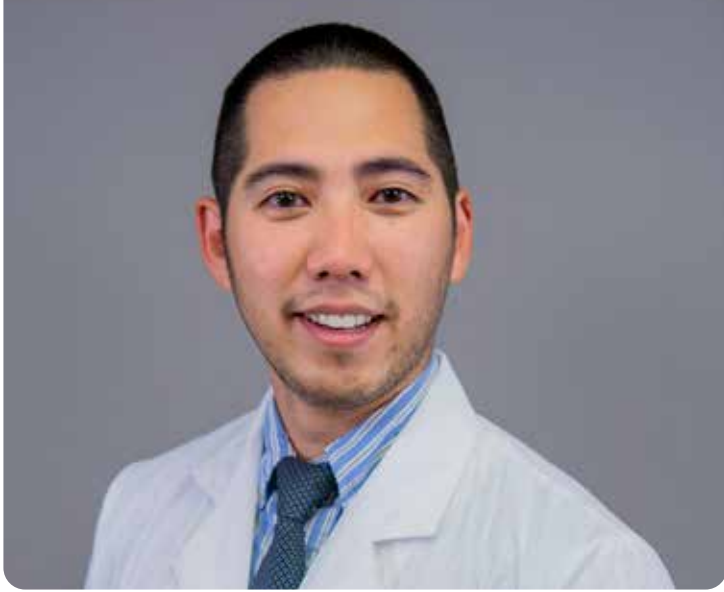
Dr. Rajendra, who will be heading to Intermountain Children’s Hospital in Salt Lake City for a fellowship, reflects on the future of pediatric orthopedics, saying, “We must keep delivering the most patient-centered care possible—and targeting the treatment to the child and their stage of growth. I could see AI contributing to guided growth planning and overall helping to improve surgeon performance by analyzing larger databases to stratify what works for a given patient.”



Dr. Rajendra, who is fairly certain there is no Mardi Gras in Utah, says, “All year long there are interesting and fun things happening in New Orleans. We live Uptown and host a big party for Krewe D’Etat where all the residents come and have a great time. I’m going to miss it.”



Meet the Chiefs



FEATURING

Bronson Fong, M.D.

Bronson Fong, M.D., a PGY-5 resident, had so many trips to the ER in his youth that he decided it felt like home. The son of an orthopedic surgeon, Dr. Fong also covered local athletic events with his dad, seeing an array of injuries and finding a deep interest in this field.

“When I attended LSU as an undergraduate, I majored in econometrics. Turning qualitative data into quantitative results to make well-informed decisions is ubiquitous in everything from politics, business, and medicine. After a short career in DC

advocating on behalf of Blue Water Navy Veterans and working as a bitcoin consultant, I found my heart was always in medicine. As I moved into medical training, I came to see that bitcoin and patient care are both linked to the ability of team members to share ideas and move forward with a common goal.”



And why select LSU for residency?

“As a medical student I was struck by how confident the LSU residents were in the OR. I could see that this program was a true meritocracy—you earned your cases. The solid mix of private and academic rotations, combined with the unlimited surgical volume, was especially appealing.”

And one of his standout experiences at LSU? “My Lafayette rotation afforded me a high case volume and unparalleled autonomy. The third- and fifth-year residents indicate their patients in clinic, select the vendors, the surgical approach, perform the cases, and direct the postoperative rehabilitation. There are very few programs like this in the country.”



Soon heading to Cedars Sinai Kerlan-Jobe in LA for a sports medicine fellowship, Dr. Fong notes, “I’m particularly interested in cutting edge technology and innovation in sports medicine. I feel like residency has taught me the bones. Fellowship will make me a ‘soft tissue master.’ I’m thrilled that in sports medicine there is nothing bread and butter about our days as we see an enormous breadth and complexity of cases.”

“As for our LSU residency, I genuinely believe that with our autonomy and repetition, this program could make anyone a great orthopedic surgeon.”



Meet the Chiefs



FEATURING Gelves, Daniel, M.D.

Daniel Gelvez, M.D., a fifth-year resident from Fort Worth, Texas, spent last spring navigating fellowship interviews and teasing out the nuances between different training programs. “I am so grateful that LSU has prepared me well for just about anything I will face as a spine fellow. Even within the world of spine there are a wide variety of surgeries. I am excited to work in a program that has it all...I am thrilled to be headed to Vanderbilt.”

A graduate in Biology from the University of Texas at Dallas, Dr. Gelvez earned a medical degree at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. Knowing that he wanted a residency with a large Level 1 trauma center, Dr. Gelvez headed to LSU.

“One of the clinical highlights from last year is that I got an early start on being trauma chief in the last week of June! This solidified my opinion that communication between team members is vital. It’s critical to patient care and team chemistry that everyone knows their role for the day and that we close the loop at the end of the day.”

“Dr. Bhandutia was a great mentor and is a major

reason several of us have chosen to go into spine. Since he works with the trauma team, I had the opportunity to cover spine trauma and handle cases involving paralysis and weakness. When I rotated in Baton Rouge at Dr. Hank Eiserloh’s private practice, I got to see a variety of spine cases, was exposed to doing microsurgery under loops and got to learn how to navigate around important structures.”

“There will be a lot to miss at LSU...I already miss the chiefs who graduated. It’s so easy to feel part of the New Orleans community and there is always something fun and interesting to do here.”

Not only is Dr. Gelvez headed to Vanderbilt, but he will soon be headed down the aisle. “I recently became engaged to my girlfriend, who is a general surgeon. We have not set a date yet...we have to work around quite a few schedules and deadlines!”



Congrats to Our 2026 Fellowship Matches



Katherine Dong - Brown University Spine



Daniel Gelvez - Vanderbilt University Spine

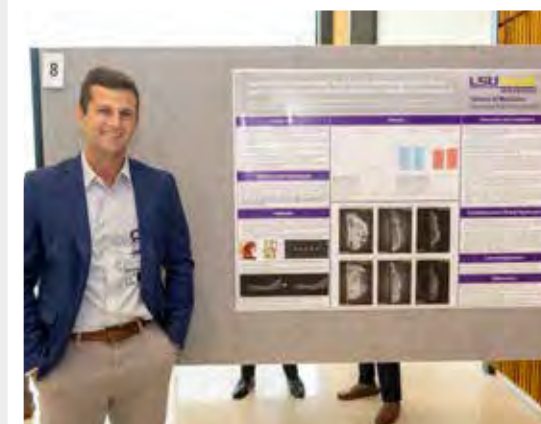
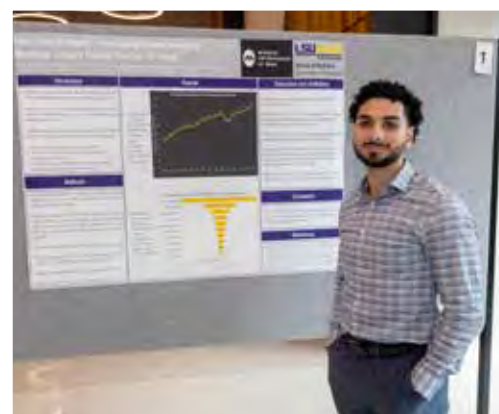
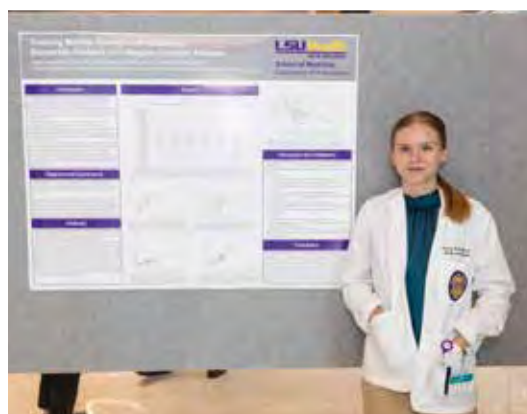


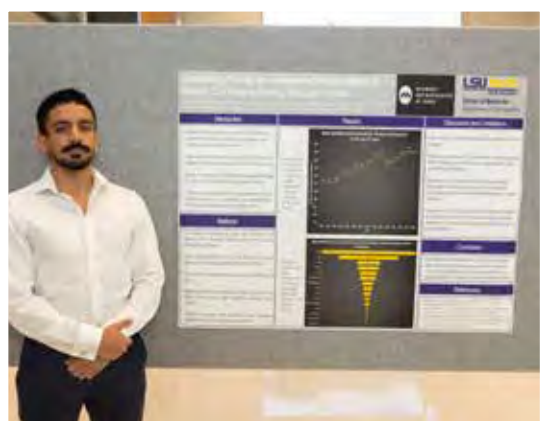
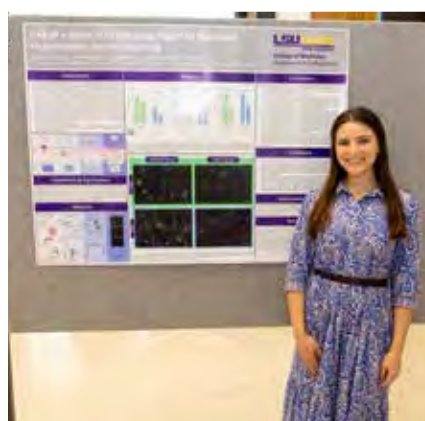
Ravi Rajendra - University of Utah Pediatric Orthopaedics



Bronson Fong - Cedars Sinai / Kerlan-Jobe Sports Medicine

Research Day







Graduation 2025



Left to Right

Adam Miller, MD
University of Utah Foot and
Ankle Fellowship

Austin Broussard, MD
American Sports Medicine
Institute Sports Fellowship

Nathan Redlich, MD
Massachusetts General
Hospital & Brigham and
Women's Hospital Spine
Surgery

Adam Haydel, MD
Cleveland Clinic Combined
Hand Fellowship

Welcome 2025 New Residents



Austin Darden
Indiana University School
of Medicine



Faith Darden
Indiana University School
of Medicine



Luke Larochelle
Medical University of
South Carolina



Andrew Pierce
Florida International
University



Ryan Schroeder
Louisiana State University
New Orleans

Graduation 2025



Graduation 2025



Tiger Bones

Tiger of the Year

Doug Letson, M.D.





Tiger of the Year Recipient **Doug Letson, M.D.**

A graduate of LSU medical school and orthopedic residency, Dr. Doug Letson is a Senior Physician Executive at the Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, Florida. Dr. Letson, a professor of Orthopaedic Oncology at LSUHSC and a professor of surgery, radiology and orthopaedics at the University of South Florida, completed his fellowship in musculoskeletal oncology at Massachusetts General Hospital – Harvard Medical School.

Dr. Letson, whose entire family are physicians going back to the 1800s, says, “I was initially interested in sports medicine, but it quickly became evident that I missed being of service to genuinely sick patients. During my training in the mid-80s, the field of orthopedic oncology was just beginning to emerge and only had a few fellowships in the country. I was very drawn by the complexity and challenge of this subspecialty.”

“A decade ago, I took an orthopedic oncology course at Oxford University in the UK,” said Dr. Letson, who has taught residents at LSU for 15 years. “While there I had the opportunity to do research and leadership training as well. That led to my becoming a visiting research professor at Oxford, something I’ve done each year since.”

Dr. Letson, who has been with the Moffitt Cancer Center for 35 years and is a lead designer for Stryker,

notes, “I am proud to have been on the forefront of the development of limb salvage surgery and have over 10 patents in limb salvage surgery. In the 1980s more than half of patients with malignant bone tumors were getting amputations—now more than 90% are able to undergo limb salvage surgery! We have made great strides.”

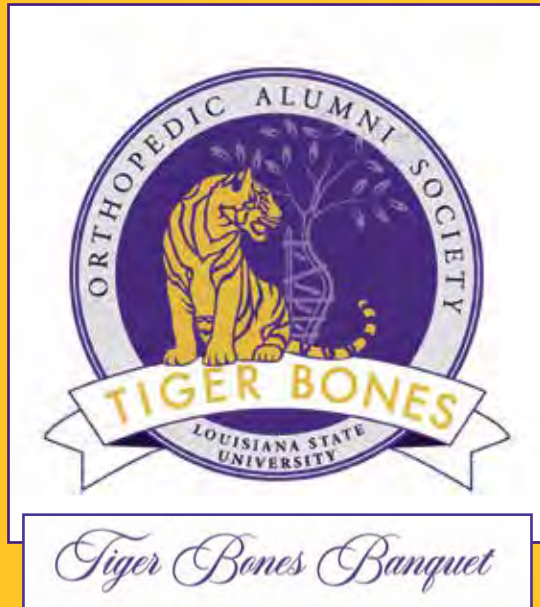
As for his alma mater, Dr. Letson states, “LSU is frankly an amazing place for education, in part because students are afforded the opportunity to perform surgery earlier than at most institutions. I did much of my early work at Charity...then when I went to Harvard it turned out that I had done twice as many surgeries as my peers.”

“I really value the experience I had at Children’s Hospital, during which time I became more interested in pediatric surgery. It was memorable to be able to develop an implant with magnetic gears where the child puts his or her legs into the device and the magnets turn the gears.”

Commenting on how he has seen LSU evolve, Dr. Letson says, “While training at Charity we didn’t have particularly novel technologies. The new hospital and training facilities are equipped with massive cadaver labs and the most modern surgical technology in the country. And not only is the training streamlined, but patient care is as well.”



Tiger Bones



Save the Date

*LSU Orthopaedic Surgery Alumni
&
Special Guests Reception*

March 5, 2026

5:30-7:30pm

Antoine's Restaurant

12th Night Room

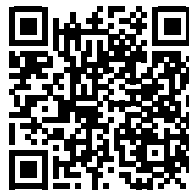
713 St. Louis Street

Please Scan the QR code to update your info
Invite to follow in early 2026



We are grateful for those who have supported Tiger Bones, the Resident Educational LSU Orthopaedic Resident Fund. Your generosity benefits the LSU Orthopaedic Residency Training Program – having a direct impact on its residents through expanded access to training experiences, technology updates, and educational opportunities that are necessary in a residency training program.

Your online donation can be made at
<https://give.lsuhealthfoundation.org/tigerbones>



OR please mail your check made payable to:

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c/o LSU Health Foundation
2000 Tulane Avenue, 4th Floor

Questions: 504-568-5717

We thank you for your generous support!



Department of
Orthopaedics