Speaker Biographies

2015 Southern California Chordoma Community Conference
March 14, 2015

Steven Giannotta, MD
Keck School of Medicine of USC

Steven L. Giannotta M.D., Chair of Neurological Surgery, joined the Department of Neurosurgery at USC in 1980. He earned his medical degree and did his residency at University of Michigan. He is involved in many local, national and international committees and organizations.

Dr. Giannotta has gained recognition for his work in cerebrovascular disease of the brain and spinal cord. He has surgically treated over 1000 intracranial aneurysms. In conjunction with his associates Dr. Giannotta has developed a comprehensive approach to the gamut of cerebrovascular conditions. Techniques utilized in this comprehensive program include but are not limited to microsurgical clip ligation for aneurysms, coil embolization for aneurysms, microvascular excision, embolization, stereotactic radiosurgery using the Gamma Knife for arteriovenous malformations, carotid endarterectomy and extracranial to intracranial bypass procedures for cerebrovascular occlusive disease.

Dr. Giannotta also has an interest and special expertise in surgical approaches to the cranial base. He has surgically removed more than 400 acoustic neuromas and along with several colleagues in otolaryngology has developed a team approach to complex cranial base lesions including acoustic neuromas, meningiomas of the cranial base, complex aneurysms that require cranial base approaches and other benign conditions affecting the base of the brain and skull. Complex conditions may require several modes of therapy including surgical excision, embolization, and stereotactic radiosurgery using the Gamma Knife and Cyberknife.

Gabriel Zada, MD
Keck School of Medicine of USC

Dr. Zada is an expert in brain and pituitary tumor surgery as well as a variety of endoscopic and minimally invasive neurosurgical techniques. He received fellowship training in endoscopic skull base and pituitary surgery as well as pituitary neuro-endocrinology. He then received further clinical training working with the pioneers of endoscopic skull base surgery in Naples, Italy. He has a keen clinical and academic interest in brain tumor surgery and neuro-oncology, and has published over 70 peer-reviewed articles on various neurosurgical topics, mostly relating to brain and pituitary tumors as well as endoscopic skull base surgery. He is the Co-Director of the Keck USC Pituitary Center and the Director of the USC Endoscopic Skull Base Surgery Program.
Garni Barkhoudarian, MD  
John Wayne Cancer Institute, St. John’s Health Center

Dr. Garni Barkhoudarian is an Assistant Professor of Neurosurgery and Neuroscience at the John Wayne Cancer Institute at Saint John’s Health Center in Santa Monica, CA.

Dr. Barhoudarian’s clinical interests include pituitary disorders, benign and malignant brain tumor surgery, neuroendoscopy and minimally invasive brain surgery, trigeminal neuralgia and hemifacial spasm, and mild to severe head injury/concussion. He has a special interest in the advancement of technologies for minimally invasive neurosurgical procedures.

Dr. Barkhoudarian is the director of the Brain Tumor Center Skull-Base Microdissection Anatomy Lab. He is involved in a number of clinical and translational research studies, evaluating the genetics, proteomics, diagnosis, treatment and results of patients with malignant metastatic tumors, meningiomas, chordomas and pituitary tumors. He has also evaluated active and former NFL athletes and Mixed-Martial Arts athletes with chronic, repetitive concussions and brain injury. He has authored over 20 peer-reviewed articles and over 10 book chapters.

Dr. Barkhoudarian is a volunteer faculty at the Harbor-UCLA medical center, training residents in pituitary disorder management and surgery. He is also actively involved in the national neurosurgical organizations, particularly in writing national board examination and preparatory questions.

Dr. Barkhoudarian is an active member of the Armenian American Medical Society and the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry. He is a former president of the Armenian International Medical Fund, through which the Armenian Cochlear Implant Project is administered.

Patrick Hsieh, MD  
Keck School of Medicine of USC

Dr. Hsieh is Associate Professor of Neurological Surgery and Director of Neurosurgery Spine Program at Keck Medicine of USC. Dr. Hsieh was a distinguished scholar at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute in 1998 where he performed research in the field of neuro-genetics at the National Institutes of Health. He completed a surgical internship and neurosurgery residency at Northwestern University McGaw Medical Center where he also received specialized training in spinal deformity surgery and advanced minimally invasive spine surgery. Additionally, Dr. Hsieh has specialized training in spinal oncology and complex spinal reconstructive surgery at Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Hsieh’s research interests include prospective outcome studies on spinal oncology surgery, spinal deformity surgery and minimally invasive spine procedures. He is particularly interested in clinical trials on the management of Chordomas and other primary spinal tumors. Dr. Hsieh also studies spinal biomechanics and the application of osteobiologics and nanoparticles for spine reconstructions. Additionally, his expertise and interests includes chordoma and sacral tumors and scoliosis. Dr. Hsieh has participated in five major research studies throughout his training, as well as over a dozen major presentations at national conferences. He has also co-authored over 15 peer-reviewed journal articles in scientific publications.
Lilia Loredo, MD
Loma Linda University Medical Center

Dr. Loredo is Assistant Professor of Radiation Oncology, Department of Radiation Medicine at Loma Linda University Medical Center. She also holds staff appointments at three other California medical institutions: San Bernardino County Medical Center; White Memorial Medical Center in Los Angeles and Glendale Adventist Medical Center.

Dr. Loredo completed her undergraduate education in nursing at Loma Linda University. She subsequently attended Loma Linda University School of Medicine and was awarded her MD degree. She fulfilled her internship and residency in radiation oncology at LLUMC. She is also licensed to practice medicine in California and Florida.

Dr. Loredo holds memberships in several professional organizations including:
- American College of Radiology
- American Medical Association (AMA)
- American Association for Women Radiologists
- American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology (ASTRO)
- California Radiological Society
- California Medical Association
- San Bernardino County Medical Society
- Gilbert H. Fletcher Society

Dr. Loredo is a leader in a variety of investigations of proton radiation therapy with special focuses on:
- Cancers of childhood
- Cancers of the head and neck
- Melanomas of the eye
- Tumors of the skull base and spine
- Benign and malignant brain tumors

She is the author and co-author of several papers on these topics in peer-reviewed literature. As a fluent speaker of Spanish and English, she also plays a special outreach role in the Hispanic community.

John Carmichael, MD
Keck School of Medicine of USC

John D. Carmichael, MD, is an associate professor of clinical medicine in the Department of Medicine’s division of endocrinology, diabetes and metabolism at Keck School of Medicine of USC. He is the Co-Director of the USC Pituitary Center, where he focuses his clinic on the care of patients with pituitary tumors, and the treatment of pituitary deficiencies. He is the principal investigator for many clinical trials in pituitary medicine at USC.

Dr. Carmichael is board certified in internal medicine and diabetes, endocrinology and metabolism. His clinical and research interests include the diagnosis and treatment of pituitary disease. He has received
NIH funding for his research in growth hormone feedback mechanisms in patients with acromegaly and type 2 diabetes mellitus.

He has written articles for *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism, Clinical Endocrinology, Pituitary, Endocrine, and Current Opinion in Endocrinology and Diabetes*. He sits on the editorial board for Pituitary and is a senior editorial board member for Endocrinology, Diabetes & Metabolism Case Reports. He is a member of the Endocrine Society, the Pituitary Society, and the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists where he serves on the Pituitary Scientific Committee.

After finishing his clinical training at NYU in 2004, Dr. Carmichael worked as a clinical researcher at NYU focusing on clinical trials in pituitary disease. In 2006, he went on to work at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in their pituitary center. His work included care of patients with pituitary disease and clinical research in the diagnosis and treatment of patients with pituitary tumors. He held an appointment in the department of medicine at UCLA, devoting his time to the education of medical students, residents and fellows in multiple topics related to pituitary disorders. In 2014, Dr. Carmichael joined the faculty at the Keck School of Medicine of USC.

**James Hu, MD**  
**Keck School of Medicine of USC**

James Hu, MD, FACP, is the medical director of the Sarcoma Program of USC, and is considered one of the nation’s experts in the disease. Dr. Hu has more than 20 years of clinical experience in medical oncology and brings this acumen to the bedside. Understanding the rarity of sarcoma cancers, Dr. Hu has the breadth of clinical experience as well as the academic discipline to provide each patient with an individualized treatment program. He has collaborated with other national experts to bring clinical trials to USC. He is a member of the Connective Tissue Oncology Society, and has linked the Sarcoma Program of USC with the international collaborative group: Sarcoma Alliance for Research through Collaboration (SARC), to further direct research into sarcoma.

Dr. Hu has authored several review articles on sarcoma, in both national and international peer reviewed journals. As a former military commander of a combat support hospital, Dr. Hu has years of experience in the issues surrounding young adult disease and along with Dr. Siegel, is the co-director of the Adolescent and Young Adult program of USC and Children’s Hospital Los Angeles. This program offers specialized services tailored to adolescent and young adult patients who comprise a significant portion of patients diagnosed with sarcomas. Dr. Hu and his medical oncology team pride themselves on patient accessibility and are committed to providing comprehensive oncology care to the patient with sarcoma.

Dr. Hu is a local Angeleno, having grown up in the neighborhood surrounding LA County+USC Medical Center. Dr. Hu is proud to be a part of USC and grateful for an opportunity to give back to his community.
Dr. Chen’s goal is to make USC Neuro-oncology the leader in innovative treatments for brain and spine tumors. As a result, emphasis is placed on translating new findings made in the laboratory to clinical trials. Laboratory efforts are directed toward research on endoplasmic reticulum stress, understanding glioblastoma endothelial cells, and development of novel anti-invasion therapies such as vicrostatin, a unique disintegrin made at USC, and noscopine. Technological advances that may be used in the treatment of brain or spine tumors are being developed, patented, and will soon be highlighted. Novel clinical trials currently available or soon to be available at USC include anti-EGFRviii vaccine therapy, IL-4-pseudomonas exotoxin for convection enhanced delivery, and anti-tenascin brachytherapy. Surgical therapy is based on the newest techniques in microdissection and image guidance using neuronavigational therapy, with a soon to be added intraoperative MRI scanner. Spine oncology is especially unique as Dr. Chen is one of the few fellowship trained spine surgeons focused on spine cancer. Decisions on therapy are made through tumor board via a multi-disciplinary team dedicated to neuro-oncology including neurosurgery, medical oncology, radiation oncology, neuropathology, and neuro-radiology.

Doctor Ben-Youssef is a physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist who trained at Loma Linda University Medical Center and at Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center in California. During residency he served as chief resident, and after finishing residency he pursued additional neuro-rehabilitation training at Rancho with special focus on spinal cord medicine, stroke and brain injuries. He subsequently joined the Rancho Los Amigos staff as chief of the Spinal Cord Injury Outpatient Center. During that time he helped establish the Spinal Cord Injury Patient Centered Medical Home and worked as acting medical director. He later joined the University of Southern California with the Department of Neurology as an assistant professor of neurology and physical medicine and rehabilitation and as the medical director of the Acute Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit. Doctor Ben-Youssef has background training in surgery and research. Early in his career, he did an internship in general surgery at the University of Southern California and did another year of surgical training at Loma Linda University Medical Center followed by four years of clinical research in solid organ transplantation and transplant immunology, and he published dozens of research papers and abstracts and presented at national and international medical meetings. He is currently involved in two research projects with USC and Rancho studying robotic exoskeleton devices and stem cell therapy in spinal cord injured patients.
Sam Nam, MD  
Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

Dr. Samuel Nam completed his medical training at USC in Internal Medicine before completing his Geriatric Fellowship at UCLA, and Palliative & Hospice Fellowship at San Diego Hospice and the Institute of Palliative Care Medicine. After fellowship, he joined Cedars-Sinai Medical Center as the Palliative Care Faculty, and currently works at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center as the Director of Palliative Care Program, and Assistant Clinical Professor at David Geffen School of Medicine, UCLA.

Dr. Nam has expertise in the treatment of patients with advanced medical illness, particularly in the areas of acute symptom management, chronic disease management, supportive care and end-of-life care. Dr. Nam, also specializes in the assessment and treatment of cancer pain.

Janice White, PhD, CCC-SLP  
Keck Hospital of USC

Janice has 30 years experience as a Speech language Pathologist. She has a doctorate in Communication Sciences and Disorders from the University of Georgia with specialty in Adult Neurological disorders. Janice is a certified brain injury specialist. Janice has worked at all levels of the continuum of care including inpatient, outpatient, home health and acute rehabilitation. Janice was the Administrative Director at Sutter Rehabilitation Institute in Roseville, where she worked to develop the inpatient and outpatient Speech Pathology at Sutter Lakeside. She is currently the Director of Inpatient Rehabilitation at Keck Hospital of USC.

Cherise Lathan, PT, DPT, NCS  
Keck Medical Center of USC

Cherise Lathan, PT, DPT, NCS, is a Licensed Physical Therapist and Board Certified Neurologic Clinical Specialist. Cherise received her Bachelor’s degree from Boston College and Doctor of Physical Therapy from the University of Southern California. She completed her clinical residency at the University of Southern California and Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center. She has been engaged in rehabilitation of individuals with neurologic impairment and has expertise in stroke, spinal cord injury, the management of the critically ill within the intensive care unit, and early mobility. Dr. Cherise Lathan is currently faculty at the Keck Medical Center of USC, and is a professor of Clinical Physical Therapy at the University of Southern California.
Heather Lee, PhD
Developmental Associates, LLC

Dr. Heather A. Lee earned a M.S. and a Ph.D. from North Carolina State University in Industrial/Organizational Psychology. She is a Senior Partner with Developmental Associates.

Dr. Lee, a Certified Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR), is an organizational consultant specializing in the nonprofit, governmental and educational sectors. She is a faculty member for the NC Certified Public Manager Program and the Women in Office program of the Institute of Political Leadership. She previously served as Associate Professor of Human Resources and Psychology at William Peace University and Vice President – Human Resources for Easter Seals of North Carolina. For the last three years she has been a board member and Chairperson for the Chordoma Foundation.

Dr. Lee is an expert in emotional intelligence testing and incorporating EI testing in selection and promotion processes for public and nonprofit managers. She specializes in organizational assessment, performance management systems, and hiring process design for law enforcement positions.

Dr. Lee routinely offers training programs on emotional intelligence, group processes, performance management and effective hiring strategies. She is certified to administer a variety of assessment instruments to aid in organization, leadership and individual development and is a Certified Trainer for Higher Education and Business EQi.

Shannon Lozinsky, MSW, LCSWA
Chordoma Foundation

Shannon has been in the fields of social work and education for over 15 years, and earned her Master of Social Work at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2003. She has worked for a number of public and private social service organizations, and spent time in private practice providing mental health services to children and families. Shannon joined the Chordoma Foundation as the Patient Services Manager at the end of 2014. Along with providing patient navigation services, she will be developing and implementing a suite of new programs to enhance patient services provided to the chordoma community.