

Speaker Bios

The Future of Musculoskeletal Health

Orthopedic Medicine and Indiana's Leadership Opportunity



Dr. Amrou Awaysheh

Professor and Endowed Chair

Indiana University Kelley School of Business

Dr. Amrou Awaysheh is the OneAmerica Foundation Endowed chair and a Professor of Operations and Supply Chain Management and Sustainability at the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University. Dr Awaysheh is the Executive and Academic Director of the IU Business Sustainability and Innovation Lab, raising more than \$64 million to study and enhance sustainability practices in manufacturing facilities. Dr. Awaysheh's work has appeared in top academic journals as well as the popular press such as Forbes, the Economist, the Financial Times, and the World Economic Forum. Professor Awaysheh has won more than 35 awards for teaching and research and was a finalist for professor of the year by The Economist. Professor Awaysheh's research has been awarded more than \$9 million from public sources and more than \$16 million from private institutions. In his teaching, Dr Awaysheh educates physicians how to think strategically to leverage their operations and empowers them on their leadership journey.



Hallie Brinkerhuff, PhD

Senior Director, R&D and Innovation

Zimmer Biomet

Dr. Hallie Brinkerhuff is the Senior Director of R&D and Innovation for Zimmer Biomet. With over 25 years working in orthopedics, Hallie has spent most of her career leading innovation teams focused on the identification and exploration of advanced materials and technologies to satisfy the unmet patient needs. She is an alumna of Case Western Reserve University with a B.S./M.S. in biomedical engineering and holds a PhD in biomedical engineering with a focus on orthopedic biomaterials from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Hallie has a passion for needs-driven innovation, fostering innovation culture, and STEM education.



Ryan Christner
President and CEO
OrthoWorx

Ryan Christner is President and CEO of OrthoWorx, leading the organization's mission to strengthen Northern Indiana's orthopedic industry through three strategic pillars: Talent Development, Community Enrichment, and Innovation. A lifelong Kosciusko County resident, Ryan brings over 14 years of orthopedic experience in operations, supply chain, and logistics. He holds a bachelor's degree and MBA from Grace College. Ryan is deeply committed to workforce transformation, serving on the Education Workforce Committee and OrthoWorx Academy Advisory Board, and has studied global apprenticeship models through the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation's iLab initiative in Switzerland. With a passion for aligning people, purpose, and progress, Ryan is driving OrthoWorx to become a model for industry-led innovation and regional growth.



Dr. Allyn Decker
Vice President of Operations and Engagement
OrthoWorx

Dr. Allyn Decker is Vice President of Operations and Engagement at OrthoWorx. Dr. Decker previously served as Director of Community Engagement at the Warsaw campus of Ivy Tech Community College. He also served in several roles at Grace College in Winona Lake, Indiana for 16 years including Chair of the Communication Department, Program Director in the School of Professional and Online Education (SPOE), and Dual Credit coordinator. For 13 years, Dr. Decker served as Vice President of Organizational Learning and Development with Lake City Bank in Warsaw, where he led a team in creating Lake City University, a comprehensive corporate university that achieved outstanding results in employee retention and career development. He also consults organizations on a variety of topics including public, interpersonal, and organizational communication, personality styles, managing teams, and strategic planning.

**Hicham Drissi**

Vice Chair for Orthopaedic Research,
Dept. of Orthopaedics and
Dir. of the Emory Musculoskeletal Research Center
Emory University School of Medicine



Dr. Hicham Drissi is a Professor of Orthopaedics and Professor of Cell Biology at Emory University. He also is Vice Chair for Orthopaedic Research in the Department of Orthopaedics and is the Director of the Emory Musculoskeletal Research Center at Emory University School of Medicine. Dr. Drissi has an established track record in defining regulatory mechanisms that govern the growth and differentiation of various skeletal tissues including bone, cartilage, and more recently intervertebral disc. A long standing and current focus of his laboratory has been geared toward identifying treatment modalities to accelerate fracture healing as well as solutions for inflammatory joint diseases such as osteoarthritis and post-traumatic osteoarthritis. His laboratory is actively working on methods to halt degenerative disc disease, which accounts for a large population of Americans that suffer from back pain. His work in these areas is currently supported by funding from the NIH and VA and he has published over 200 peer-reviewed manuscripts.

**Dr. Drew Flamm**

President of Grace College & Grace Theological Seminary

Dr. Drew Flamm began his tenure as the seventh president of Grace College & Grace Theological Seminary in 2022. Dr. Flamm has served at Grace since 2013. During his time as president, the institution has experienced record-breaking growth both at the college and the seminary. Dr. Flamm holds a bachelor's degree in comprehensive communication from Cedarville University, a master's in communication and leadership from Gonzaga University, and a doctorate in educational leadership from Indiana State University. Dr. Flamm and his wife, Stephanie, live in Winona Lake, Indiana, with their three sons.



Brian Hodorek

President & CEO, Co-Founder
Ignite



Brian has been in the orthopedic industry since 2001, with experience in R&D including Product Development Engineer, Group Manager, and Director of R&D for large and mid-size companies. Brian has been focused on Upper Extremity nearly his entire career with a majority of his work concentrated on shoulder and elbow arthroplasty. He holds over 50 patents issued or currently in prosecution and co-authored a chapter in Dr. Mark Frankle's book, *Reverse Shoulder Arthroplasty: Biomechanics, Clinical Techniques, and Current Technologies*. He has led global teams in designing and launching flagship shoulder and elbow systems for multiple companies. He is currently the President and CEO of Ignite Orthopedics, which has organically created radial head and shoulder arthroplasty systems that have each been acquired by Johnson and Johnson Medtech. Brian's passions include surgeon relationships, innovating in the Upper Extremity field, and creating new revolutionary designs as opposed to evolving current technology. He has a Bachelors of Science in Mechanical Engineering Technology from Purdue University, West Lafayette, and a Masters of Business Administration with a concentration in Finance from Purdue University, West Lafayette. Brian resides in Winona Lake, Indiana with his wife Amber and three children. He enjoys spending time with family, Purdue football and basketball, working on cars and boats, and spending time on the lakes.



Melissa Kacena, PhD

Director, Indiana Center for MSK Health
Indiana University School of Medicine

Melissa A. Kacena, PhD, is a Chancellor's Professor, Vice Chair for Research and Edward H. and Yvonne J. Boseker Professor of Orthopaedics, and Director of the Indiana Center for Musculoskeletal Health at Indiana University School of Medicine. She also is a Research Career Scientist at the Roudebush VA Medical Center in Indianapolis. Her research improves musculoskeletal health through the understanding of the interaction of the bone and hematopoietic systems. Her studies focus on improving the treatment of metabolic bone disease, hematopoietic disorders, and fracture in the context of spaceflight, aging, Alzheimer's disease, and type 2 diabetes. Dr. Kacena's laboratory has been consistently funded by the National Institute for Health, the Department of Defense, the US Army, and Veteran's Affairs since 2007. The American Society for Bone and Mineral Research presented Dr. Kacena with the esteemed Fuller Albright Award (2017) and more recently the Stephen M. Krane Award (2023). Dr. Kacena has served in several leadership roles including Council Member for the ASBMR. She is President of Advances in Mineral Metabolism, Secretary/Treasurer of Association of Osteobiology, and Editor-in-Chief for Current Osteoporosis Reports.



Emiko Kreklau

Executive Director, Catalyst Corridor
Grace College



Emi Kreklau is the Executive Director of the Catalyst Corridor initiative at Grace College, through which she is leading the implementation of several community partnership projects designed to support the mission of Grace College and enhance the Warsaw-Winona Lake and greater Kosciusko County community. Prior to joining Grace College, she worked at Eli Lilly and Company as a cancer research scientist and later was the Head of R&D Operations. At Lilly, she was a member of the team of scientists that discovered the breast cancer drug Verzenio® and received the Heroes of Chemistry award from the American Chemical Society. She received a bachelor's degree in integrated science at Northwestern University and earned her doctorate in pharmacology and toxicology from the University of Louisville.



Jim Lancaster

Orthopedics Executive
Leadership Team, All-IN Kosciusko

Jim Lancaster has more than 30 years of experience within the medical device industry. Jim joined Zimmer Biomet in 2007 and held several roles in the U.S., Great Britain, and the Netherlands including Senior Vice President, Head of Global Product Development and Global Headquarters Executive Director. His responsibilities included new product and service development, platform technologies, and the broader organic innovation ecosystem within the Zimmer Biomet enterprise. In 2019 Jim was named the business unit leader of the newly formed Global Reconstructive business – coming from consolidation of the Hip, Knee, Bone Cement, Early Intervention and CD Diagnostics businesses. Jim is a named inventor on patents in both the hip and knee area and has authored or coauthored more than 10 peer reviewed publications.



Roman Natoli, MD, PhD

Associate Professor
Indiana University Indianapolis



Dr. Roman M. Natoli is an Associate Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery at the Indiana University Department of Orthopaedic Surgery. He was an Orthopaedic Trauma Fellow for Shock Trauma at the University of Maryland from 2015-16 before joining the IU Department of Orthopaedic Surgery as an Assistant Professor. Patient care is the staple of Dr. Natoli's work. He has been higher than the 65th percentile for an orthopaedic trauma surgeon based on LCG benchmarking throughout his career, allowing ample source observation of post-traumatic problems on the lives of patients including fracture related infections (FRIs), failed bone healing after fracture (nonunion), and post-traumatic osteoarthritis (PTOA). Dr. Natoli has conducted extensive research including in FRIs, spanning from basic science murine models through prospective clinical trials. Dr. Natoli is Section Co-Editor for the journal Current Osteoporosis Reports, Orthopedic Management of Fractures section.



Brandon Noll

Director
Plug and Play Indiana

Brandon Noll is a driving force in Indiana's innovation ecosystem. As Director for Plug and Play Indiana, he leads expansion across the state of this globally recognized, Silicon Valley-based venture capital firm. Brandon connects the world's largest corporations with cutting-edge startups, fostering collaboration while driving strategic investment in key sectors. He works closely with startups at all stages of growth, helping them to navigate the venture capital landscape and achieve their funding goals. His diverse background in economic development, business development, and investment management – coupled with his experience leading global business attraction efforts – provides a unique perspective to build a thriving innovation ecosystem. Brandon is a recipient of the Greater Fort Wayne 40 Under 40 award, recognizing his leadership and impact in the community.



Dr. Kevin Otto

Dane A. Miller Head of the Weldon School of Biomedical Engineering
Purdue University

Dr. Kevin J. Otto is the Dane A. Miller Head and Professor of the Weldon School of Biomedical Engineering at Purdue University, where his research interests include neural engineering, device-tissue interfaces, and neurostimulation. He joined Purdue in 2024, coming from the University of Florida where he was a Professor of Biomedical Engineering (BME) in the J. Crayton Pruitt Family Department of Biomedical Engineering. He was the Senior Associate Chair of the University of Florida BME Department from 2020-2023, leading the academic programs through the COVID pandemic. He was PI on several multidisciplinary, multi-investigator research projects including a 4-year NIH Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Program U01, and two separate DARPA Programs. He is a Fellow of the Biomedical Engineering Society (BMES) and the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering (AIMBE), and a Senior Member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).



Rep. Craig Snow

Indiana State Representative
District 22

Craig Snow has more than 30 years of leadership experience across various industries with a proven track record of driving growth and strategic success. He was elected to the Indiana House of Representatives in 2020, representing District 22. Rep. Snow's career began at Zimmer Orthopedics in 1986, followed by DePuy Orthopaedics from 1994 to 2006. In 2006, he joined Silveus Insurance as a sales representative, advancing to the role of CEO by 2008. He led the company through significant growth, expanding from 35 to 350 employees and navigating the company's successful sale.



Dr. Kurt Weiss

Director, Musculoskeletal Oncology Laboratory
Vice Chair of Translational Research
University of Pittsburgh Department of
Orthopaedic Surgery



Dr. Kurt R. Weiss is an Associate Professor at the University of Pittsburgh Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Division of Musculoskeletal Oncology, where he has joint appointments in Surgical Oncology and Pathology. He serves as an Advisory Dean for the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and as Vice Chair of Translational Research. The Musculoskeletal Oncology Laboratory (MOL) is focused on sarcoma metastatic potential. Much of this translational work is accomplished with samples from the Musculoskeletal Oncology Tumor Registry and Tissue Bank (MOTOR) that Dr. Weiss and his clinical partners established in 2012. The MOTOR now holds over 18,000 unique samples from more than 600 sarcoma patients with clinical annotation, making it one of the largest sarcoma tissue repositories in the country – providing vital biological reagents for both intramural and extramural sarcoma investigators. Dr. Weiss, an author on over 80 peer-reviewed publications, is on the Scientific Steering Committee for the Sarcoma Alliance for Research through Collaboration (SARC) and on the Mentorship Committee for the Connective Tissue Oncology Society, for which he has also served on the Board of Directors. He has served as Chair of the Musculoskeletal Tumor Society (MSTS) Research Committee. He was part of the inaugural Programmatic Panel for the Department of Defense Rare Cancers Research Program. Dr. Weiss is a founding member of the Pittsburgh Cure Sarcoma (PCS) patient advocacy group, as well as the Pittsburgh Sarcoma Research Collaborative (PSaRC). He is a survivor of metastatic osteosarcoma and ascribes his survival to participation in the Phase II study of muramyl tripeptide phosphatidylethanolamine (MTP-PE) under the direction of Dr. Eugenie Kleinerman.



Vince Wong, JD, MBA

President & CEO
BioCrossroads

Vince Wong, JD, MBA, president and CEO of BioCrossroads and Indiana Seed Funds, brings significant valuable multi-national and start-up leadership experience to the organization. Mr. Wong became CEO in early 2024, and most recently was chief commercial officer at Geneoscopy, a venture-backed start-up company focused on developing gastrointestinal diagnostics and where he helped to raise more than \$100 million in venture capital. He serves as a director on the boards of Bionano Genomics, Indiana Biosciences Research Institute, OrthoWorx, and serves as Executive in Residence with IU Ventures. Prior to Geneoscopy, Mr. Wong enjoyed a 17-year career at Roche Diagnostics, where he held senior executive leadership roles, including leading a \$600 million business unit. Indianapolis Business Journal recognized Mr. Wong as one of Indiana's 250 most influential leaders.