Each year, the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery is privileged to host several distinguished professors in honor of individuals who have demonstrated extraordinary talent and tireless devotion in the name of family, friends, and orthopaedic surgery. It is in commemoration of these individuals - Mrs. June Wapner, Dr. Edgar L. Ralston, Dr. Ernest Gentchos, and Dr. Leo Leung - that we highlight these special events.

The First Annual June Wapner Endowed Lectureship
May 24th, 2012
Guest Lecturer: Dr. Roger Mann, MD
Director of the Foot and Ankle Fellowship Program,
Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery
Oakland Bone & Joint Specialists, Oakland, CA
Covered by: Joshua Gordon, MD

The June Wapner lectureship was founded as a tribute to Mrs. June Wapner, cherished wife of Dr. Keith Wapner, director of the Foot and Ankle department at Pennsylvania Hospital. As conveyed in Dr. Wapner’s meaningful opening remarks, Mrs. Wapner left behind a legacy of love and courage. Dr. Wapner met his wife-to-be while he was an intern. She was a clinical lab manager, and Dr. Wapner fondly recalled finding numerous creative ways to make his way to the lab to confirm results or otherwise tend to patient care in the chemistry lab. Their two children inherited Mrs. Wapner’s strength and perseverance; one is currently working on Capitol Hill and the other is studying at Temple Law School. Mrs. Wapner is remembered by all who knew her as a loving wife and mother and as a woman of tremendous fortitude.

Dr. Roger Mann served as the inaugural guest speaker. Dr. Mann is counted among the most prominent Foot and Ankle surgeons of his time. Among his countless accomplishments, Dr. Mann has published over 120 scientific journal articles, nearly 100 book chapters and is the co-author of one of the most widely used textbooks on Foot and Ankle surgery. Dr. Mann began his first lecture with an excellent review of the diagnosis and operative treatment of Pes Cavus. He also drew on his over 40 years of expertise to succinctly describe the indications for surgical intervention for Pes Planus.

This year we welcomed Dr. Alexander Shin for our Ralston Lectureship series, a tradition held in tribute to our former chairman, Dr. Edgar Lee Ralston. Dr. Ralston was born in Dubois, Pennsylvania, earned a bachelor’s degree from Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio, and received his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1937. He completed his residency and fellowship at New York Orthopaedic Hospital Columbia / Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City and eventually joined the Penn faculty in 1947. Dr. Ralston was the Chairman of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Pennsylvania from 1960 - 1977. During his tenure, he grew the department from one hospital, 5-6 faculty members, and several interns to a robust department which covered 6 hospitals, carried 30 faculty members and taught 40 residents. Dr. Ralston is best known for his staple textbook, The Handbook of Fractures, which is still carried in every orthopaedic resident’s pocket on a daily basis. We owe much of what our department has become today to the hard work, perseverance, and love of orthopaedic surgery left behind by Dr. Ralston. This lectureship series is a small token of our appreciation.

Dr. Shin earned his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania, recalling a number of fond and humorous memories working with Dr. Sennett as the orthopaedic intern and Dr. Heppenstall in the operating room. He went on to complete his Orthopaedic Residency at Naval
Regional Medical Center in San Diego, CA and his Hand and Microvascular fellowship at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN where he currently practices. Dr. Shin shared his passion and enthusiasm for microvascular and complex brachial plexus repair and reconstructive surgery. A unique field, many of his presented cases left the audience awestruck at his courage in the operating room, and his dedication to helping patients whom other physicians had refused further treatment. He spoke specifically about traumatic adult brachial plexus injuries, demonstrating numerous incredible videos of success despite the tremendous odds working against his patients. To say the least, Dr. Shin’s visit was inspiring and opened our eyes to a new frontier of orthopaedic surgery.

It was our pleasure to host such a unique, dedicated, and extraordinary orthopaedic surgeon to the University of Pennsylvania in honor of Dr. Edgar L. Ralston.

The 12th Annual Ernest Gentchos Lectureship
March 14th, 2013
Guest Lecture: Dr. Laurence Higgins, MD
Chief of Sports Medicine / Shoulder Service at Brigham and Woman’s Hospital
Covered by: Sarah M. Yannascoli, MD

In tribute to the great educator and clinician, Dr. Ernest Gentchos, the University of Pennsylvania was proud to host Dr. Laurence Higgins as the 2013 speaker for the 12th annual Ernest Gentchos Lectureship series. Dr. Gentchos has been a dedicated member of the Penn Orthopaedic Family for many years, never ceasing to demonstrate his exceptional and fierce dedication to orthopaedic surgery. After growing up in Greece, Dr. Gentchos completed medical school at St. Louis University School of Medicine, served in the medical battalion of the USA Army Air Cavalry during the Vietnam War, and completed his residency training at the University of Pennsylvania. Since that time, Dr. Gentchos has continued to serve as a dedicated faculty member, resident mentor, and an exceptional clinician. Among countless noteworthy academic contributions, he has provided endowed scholarships for high school, college, and medical school students, and made a profound impact on Penn Orthopaedics through his sincere avocation of superior patient care.

This year our dedicated lectureship speaker was Dr. Laurence Higgins. Dr. Higgins completed his medical degree at the State University of New York at Stony Brook School of Medicine, attended residency at the Hospital for Special Surgery, and completed his Sports fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh. He has served as the team physician for both Duke and Pittsburgh University athletes, the Pittsburgh Steeler's, and currently as the team physician for Brookline High School in Massachusetts. His talk on the evolving management of shoulder instability and value-driven healthcare exhibited his experience as a clinician, and passed on a level of wisdom worthy of honoring Dr. Gentchos.

Each year we hope that we can commemorate Dr. Gentchos’s continual contribution to education. We are grateful to Dr. Higgins for imparting his experience and knowledge to our department and echoing the sentiments of our beloved faculty member, Dr. Ernest Gentchos.

The 9th Annual Leo Leung Memorial Lecture
April 18th, 2013
Guest Lecture: Dr. Dan Nagle, MD
Professor of Clinical Orthopaedic Surgery, Northwestern Center for Surgery of the Hand, Chicago, IL
Covered by: Sarah M. Yannascoli, MD

The Leo Leung Memorial Lectureship is held annually as a dedication to Dr. Leo Leung, former chief resident at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Leung grew up in Hong Kong, receiving his undergraduate degree at Brown University and his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania. In 2002, Dr. Leung passed away suddenly during his final year of residency. Throughout his years as a resident, he developed an enthusiasm for the field of hand and upper extremity and was being actively recruited by many competitive fellowships at the time of his passing. He was often warmly referred to as “Leo the Lion” and “The Iron Leung” for his profound loyalty and remarkable work ethic. Through this lectureship series we hope to honor Dr. Leung’s life and contributions to the Penn orthopaedic family.

Our invited speaker for this year’s lectureship series was Dr. Dan Nagle from Northwestern University. Dr. Nagle completed his orthopaedic surgery residency at Northwestern University, receiving subspecialty training in hand and microsurgery in Louisville, Kentucky with Dr. Harold Kleinert and Dr. Joseph Kutz. He has been a long-standing, dedicated faculty member at Northwestern University since 1984, and it was only fitting that he was our invited speaker in memory of Dr. Leung. He lectured passionately about thermal devices and their uses in wrist arthroscopy, CMC arthroplasty, and medical-legal issues facing today’s orthopaedic surgeon. Dr. Nagle shared many pearls from his extensive clinical experience and emphasized the need for continued innovation despite the cost-cutting climate of our current and future healthcare system.

We sincerely thank Dr. Nagle for taking the time to visit the University of Pennsylvania and sharing his experience and insight. It was a true asset to our education and a tribute to the memory of Dr. Leo Leung.