



In Memoriam: Dean Gerald Lorich, MD (1963-2017)



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We write this obituary with heavy hearts — we lost Dean Lorich suddenly and prematurely on December 10, 2017. He was a remarkable colleague, surgeon, researcher, educator, role model and of course father, and will be sorely missed by for whom he made a profound impact.

Dean G. Lorich was born in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania on July 10, 1963. Beginning in 1981 he attended University of Pennsylvania, played collegiate football, and graduated in 1985 with a major in Chemistry, with honors (Summa Cum Laude, Deans list, Alpha Chi Omega). He continued his education at University of Pennsylvania as a medical student (1985-1990); completed with honors (Penn Medical Scholar). He was accepted for Orthopaedic Residency in 1991 at University of Pennsylvania completing his residency training in 1995 and during which he completed multiple research projects. Dr. Lorich then was then selected as an Orthopaedic Trauma Fellow (1995-1996) on the Orthopaedic Trauma Service of the Hospital for Special Surgery under the direction of David L. Helfet, MD. Subsequently, he undertook the prestigious and world-renowned Martin Allgöwer Traveling Trauma Fellowship with further specialized training in orthopaedic trauma by Rheinhold Ganz (2001). Dr. Lorich started as an Orthopaedic Surgeon and Assistant Professor at University of Hawaii (1996) and subsequently went on to Albert Einstein School of Medicine, New York (NY) becoming Chief of Orthopaedic Trauma (1998) and Jacobi Medical Center, NY, Chief of Orthopaedic Surgery (1998). In 2002, Dr. Lorich returned 'home' to Weill Cornell Medicine, NY Presbyterian Hospital, and Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) as Associate Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery and Associate Director Orthopaedic Trauma Service. He also was elected to the Board of Trustees for the NY State Orthopaedic Society, Associate Team Physician for the NY Rangers and AO/ASIF Foundation teaching faculty. He won numerous awards including the HSS Philip D. Wilson Resident Teacher of the Year (2006), Department of Defense Orthopaedic Visiting Scholar

(in collaboration with the Orthopaedic Trauma Association and American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons), Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (2007) and Roger E. Joseph Prize for Humanitarian Medical Rescue Work award (2010).

During the prolific course of his orthopaedic career, Dr. Lorich was principal investigator on 230 scientific presentations at orthopaedic conferences of which 92% were presented by an Orthopaedic Resident, Fellow or medical student he mentored. Dr. Lorich published 197 articles in his career with an average of 15 articles per year over the past 10 years, multiple chapters in textbooks and numerous additional manuscripts currently accepted for publication. He received 12 grant awards for his research and was editor or reviewer for 10 orthopaedic journals.

His research contributions focused on improving outcomes through surgical innovation, and optimizing patient outcomes and vascular research. His 11 vascularity research articles led to new innovation in the treatment of hip, proximal humerus and patella fractures, all which were a central clinical interest. He then published new surgical techniques and outcomes studies based on these vascular research findings including novel use of a mesh plate to better protect the patella vasculature and novel techniques for fibula allograft augmentation for treatment of select femoral neck fractures. Other significant contributions include his recognition of an alarming complex fracture associated with long-term alendronate therapy (atypical femur fractures).

His publications include 38 ankle fracture articles, 38 hip fracture articles, 28 proximal humerus articles, 11 quantitative vascularity articles, 6 articles on atypical femur fractures, 14 patella fractures articles, 6 clavicle fracture articles. He also published numerous other groundbreaking innovations and research findings which have helped advance the specialty of Orthopaedic Trauma and other orthopaedic specialties.

Most of all Dr. Lorich was a devoted family man and is survived by his wife Deborah and three daughters, Tristin, Bianca, and Tatiana. His incredible legacy will live on through his research, and all he impacted so positively including the patients whose thousands of lives and limbs he restored and of course the residents, fellows, students, and colleagues who all benefited from his teaching and remarkable surgical skills.