

Distinguished Speakers



Jeffrey C. Bassett, MD MPH

Dr. Bassett is one of a small number of cancer surgeons fellowship trained in urologic oncology and health services research. He specializes in minimally invasive advanced surgical options for cancers of the urinary tract including prostate, bladder, kidney, and testicular cancer. Dr. Bassett perform single-incision robotic surgery to optimize this patient's outcomes with faster recovery.

His research is focused on improving outcomes for urologic cancer patients with the use of genomic testing, 3D imaging and navigation, and enhanced recovery protocols after surgery.



Lauren Bennett, PhD

Dr. Bennett is the Director of Neuropsychology and Clinical Training for Hoag Hospital. Her primary clinical and research interests are in neurodegenerative diseases and sports neuropsychology. Dr. Bennett earned her doctorate in clinical psychology from the California School of Professional Psychology at Alliant International University, Los Angeles. She

completed her training at several top-tier institutions, including UCLA (pre-internship), Children's Hospital Los Angeles (pre-internship), and University of Maryland/VA Maryland Healthcare System (internship). Dr. Bennett completed a two-year neuropsychology postdoctoral fellowship, specializing in both sport and geriatric neuropsychology, at the Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health in Las Vegas. Dr. Bennett is the author of numerous publications centering on the long-term cognitive effects of repetitive head impacts in sports and dementia related cognitive changes.



Beth Darnall, PhD

Dr. Darnall is Associate Professor at Stanford University School of Medicine, Department of Anesthesiology, Perioperative, and Pain Medicine. She directs the Stanford Pain Relief Innovations Lab, and is principal investigator for NIH and PCORI-funded clinical trials on behavioral treatments for chronic pain. She is Chief Science Advisor at AppliedVR, a scientific member of

the NIH Interagency Pain Research Coordinating Committee, and twice has briefed the U.S. Congress on the pain and opioid crises. Her work has been featured in Scientific American, NPR Radio, BBC Radio, and Nature. She has authored five books for patients and clinicians. In 2018 she spoke on the psychology of pain relief at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.



Pearly Chen

Pearly is the Vice President at HTC, heading Business Development & Content Partnerships for VIVEPORT, the world's first virtual reality content subscription service Infinity for all PCVR headsets and a growing family of standalone headsets.

She also manages HTC's \$100 million global accelerator Vive X since its inception in 2016, leading investments in a growing global portfolio of innovative startups (100+) in virtual and augmented reality space.

As Chief of Staff to Cher Wang, Founder & Chairwoman of HTC, she has worked closely with Wang and her executive team as a cross-functional executive and thought partner on strategic business planning, high-priority initiatives, global engagement and board affairs since 2012. She also represented Wang during her tenure at APEC Business Advisory Council between 2009-2015, chairing its Finance and Economic Working Group, SME & Entrepreneurship Working Group, and ABAC Women's Forum, often speaking at high-profile international political and business forums on innovation and women leadership.

Prior to HTC, Pearly was an Investment Professional at Goldman Sachs, providing investment advisory and portfolio management service to its Asia Pacific corporate and high net worth clients. A dynamic, high energy global citizen, multi-linguist, voracious reader, avid traveler, competitive triathlete and mother of two, she believes that everyone has the capacity to create a legacy that impacts lives of many others. Putting to good use of her infectious energy and unique global perspectives, she makes it her life's goal to inspire and help others thrive.



Adam Elsesser

Adam is co-founder, president, chairman and CEO of Penumbra, a global healthcare company innovating the latest medical technologies, including pioneering use of virtual reality in immersive therapeutics to advance patient care. Prior to Penumbra, Adam led SMART Therapeutics, Inc., a medical device company focused on neuro-intervention, as its Chief

Executive Officer and, after its acquisition by Boston Scientific Corporation, President of SMART Therapeutics within Boston Scientific Corporation. Before his work in healthcare, Adam was a partner at the law firm of Shartsis Friese LLP. He received a BA from Stanford University and a JD from Hastings College of the Law.



Aaron Gani

Aaron Gani is the founder and CEO of BehaVR, Inc., creating digital therapeutics for mental and behavioral health through the unmatched psychological power of Virtual Reality. Gani has been creating applications and experiences with technology throughout his career in healthcare and financial services, up to and including serving as Chief Technology Officer of Humana,

a Fortune 50 managed care organization. After a decade+ in healthcare leading technology development of population health, utilization management, disease management programs, pharmacy benefit management, primary care, urgent care, Health IT, and clinical analytics, and constantly working on ways to improve and empower consumer health with technology, data and analytics, Gani identified the crucial gap between knowledge, tools, and activations for improving mental and behavioral, and believes Virtual Reality experiences can close that gap. Gani is a founding member of the Strategic Advisory Board of the Digital Medicine (DiMe) Society, and a founding advisory board member of the International Virtual Reality Healthcare Association (IVRHA). Gani holds a Master's in Predictive Analytics from Northwestern University, an MBA, General Management and Health Sector Management from Duke University's Fuqua School of Business, and a BS in Management/CIS from the University of Louisville.



Walter Greenleaf, PhD

Dr. Greenleaf is a neuroscientist and a medical technology developer working at Stanford University. With over three decades of research and development experience, Walter is considered a leading authority in the fields of digital medicine and medical virtual reality technology. Walter is currently a Distinguished Visiting Scholar at Stanford University's Virtual

Human Interaction Lab, the Director of Technology Strategy at the University of Colorado National Mental Health Innovation Center, and Member of the Board of Directors for Brainstorm: The Stanford Laboratory for Brain Health Innovation and Entrepreneurship. In addition to his research at Stanford University, Walter is currently the technology and neuroscience advisor to several early-stage medical product companies and accelerator / incubator programs.



Brendon Hale, PhD

Dr. Hale is a Senior Principal Research Scientist at OptumLabs who is responsible for developing best approaches and uses for Digital Therapeutics (DTx) technologies and devices in healthcare. His academic background is in Human Performance and Neuroscience and he has applied this expertise to develop national health and wellness programs, developed expertise in designing

science-based behavior change in DTx, and he has developed digital interventions as an entrepreneur. His most recent research and development efforts have expanded to include XR technologies. The DTx team at OptumLabs is actively investigating how best to bring new DTx technologies to healthcare and how to integrate these capabilities into an ecosystem that provides value to patients, caregivers, providers, hospital systems and learning organizations like OptumLabs. Brendon and the DTx team are focused on bringing emerging technologies to the healthcare system and ensuring they deliver maximum value throughout the healthcare system.



Robert G. Louis, MD, FAANS

Dr. Louis is the Chief of Neurosurgery and Director of the Skull Base and Pituitary Tumor Program at Hoag Neurosciences Institute in Orange County, California. His expertise includes endoscopic and minimally invasive treatment of benign and malignant brain tumors, sellar and parasellar tumors and skull base tumors. Since 2015, Dr Louis has been

involved with the development and implementation of Virtual and Augmented Reality technologies for pre-operative simulation and rehearsal and intraoperative navigation. The 3-D VR/AR platform is provided by Surgical Theater and was developed based on flight simulator technology from F-16 fighter jets. This technology allows the surgeons to literally rehearse complicated operations in virtual reality; affording them the opportunity to visualize critical anatomy and navigate potential pitfalls. The results are making the operations safer and more effective for patients. Under his guidance, Hoag Neuroscience Institute has become the highest volume center for Augmented Reality in Neurosurgery in the United States.



Todd Maddox, PhD

Dr. Maddox is the Vice President of Research & Development at AppliedVR. His passion is to apply his 25 years of psychological and neuroscientific expertise, gained by managing a large human learning, memory and performance laboratory, to help build better education and training solutions in the healthcare sector.

After receiving his Ph.D. in Psychology and Neuroscience, Todd embarked on a 25-year academic research career achieving status as a leader in the fields of human learning, memory and performance. Todd published over 200 peer-reviewed scientific articles, resulting in over 12,000 academic citations, and hundreds of speaking engagements. During his 25-year academic career he was awarded over \$10 million in federal grants from the National Institute of Health, National Science Foundation, and Department of Defense to support his research. Since entering the private sector, Todd has embarked on a mission to translate the amazing body of research conducted in the "Ivory Towers" into plain English, and to help the healthcare sector provide better care for patients and better training for healthcare professionals. Todd is especially interested in applying his expertise in the psychology and neuroscience of learning, memory and performance to the use of immersive technologies healthcare.



Vivek A. Mehta, MD

Dr. Mehta is Neurosurgeon with particular expertise in complex and minimally invasive brain and spine surgery. He is a member of the Hoag Epilepsy Surgery Program at the Pickup Family Neurosciences Institute. He was raised in Orange County and completed medical school with Alpha Omega Alpha Honors at The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. In college, he was

named to the USA Today All-Academic First Team as one of the top 20 colleges students in the United States. After completing medical school, Dr. Mehta completed advanced training in neurosurgery at the University of Southern California under Drs. Michael Apuzzo, Martin Weiss, Gordon McComb and Steven Giannotta and in Epilepsy and Stereotactic Neurosurgery with Dr. Charles Liu. Prior to joining Hoag, he was on staff at the University of Southern California as an attending neurosurgery at Los Angeles County + USC Medical Center, the nations busiest Level 1 neurosurgery trauma center. He is an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Clinical Neurosurgery at the USC Keck School of Medicine.



Charles Nduka, MA, MD, FRCS

Dr. Nduka is a graduate of both Oxford University and Imperial College London. He is a practicing surgeon specializing in restoring facial expressions. He is also a leading researcher in facial paralysis and developed a concept of wearable facial expression biosensing and rehabilitation. His obsession with virtual reality started over 25 years ago when he published

a review in the British Journal of Surgery on the use of VR for surgical training. He founded Emteq Labs five years ago to develop VR hardware and software tools to provide objective evaluation of emotional and cognitive responses to immersive experiences.



Gregory F. Welch, PhD

Dr. Welch is the AdventHealth Endowed Chair in Healthcare Simulation at the University of Central Florida College of Nursing. He is also the co-director of the UCF Synthetic Reality Laboratory. He holds additional faculty appointments in the Department of Computer Science at the UCF College of Engineering and Computer Science and in the UCF Institute for Simulation & Training.

Professor Welch is also a distinguished UCF Pegasus Professor – the university’s highest faculty honor. Dr. Welch has co-authored more than 100 publications, and is a co-inventor on multiple patents. He has co-chaired conferences, workshops, and seminars; served on numerous international program committees. His current research interests include virtual and augmented reality, motion tracking systems, 3D telepresence, and stochastic estimation, with applications to training and education.

