

**University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**  
**Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery Fellowship**

**Contact Information**

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**Program Description**

Our fellowship program in Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery at the University of North Carolina is a three-year program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). One fellow is accepted at the first-year level each year. The educational objectives are:

- 1) To prepare fellows to provide excellent clinical care, both medical and surgical, in the comprehensive evaluation and management of women with pelvic floor disorders, including urinary incontinence, pelvic organ prolapse, neurogenic bladder, defecatory dysfunction, fecal incontinence, and complex benign conditions such as vesicovaginal and rectovaginal fistulas and congenital anomalies.
- 2) To provide the fundamental research and analytical skills necessary for a successful career as an academic leader in Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery and to nurture a drive towards independent scientific investigation.
- 3) To promote skills in teaching, curriculum development, and leadership essential for excellence as future educators, mentors, and leaders in our field.

We aim to train FPMRS subspecialists while promoting the academic goals of teaching and research within this rapidly advancing subspecialty. This goal is accomplished through a multidisciplinary team approach to patient care involving nationally and internationally recognized experts in GI Medicine, Urology, Colorectal Surgery, and Neurology. Our diverse patient population allows for training opportunities in multiple surgical modalities including vaginal, abdominal, laparoscopic, and robotic approaches. In addition, the medical care offered to patients allows for advanced training in physical therapy, pain management, neuromodulation, and pharmacotherapy. This collaborative effort encourages a diverse range of clinical and scientific viewpoints and experiences.

The School of Medicine at the University of North Carolina and UNC Healthcare comprise North Carolina's most comprehensive public center for medical care, health careers, education and biomedical research. The UNC Department of OBGYN also has a very strong research program and was ranked #6 nationally for NIH funding this year. The close association with the nationally recognized UNC School of Public Health further expands the quality and diversity of opportunities available. The Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at UNC is one of only a few departments in the nation with fellowships in all recognized Ob/Gyn subspecialties. The residency program, ranked as the #2 OBGYN residency program in the nation, recruits outstanding physicians from across the country and is fully staffed with 7 residents in each year.

**A major strength of the program is the diversity of experience and expertise within the faculty.**

### **Core Faculty**

**Jennifer M. Wu, MD, MPH** is a Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology who has been the Division Director of Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery and is now serving as interim chair of the Department until 4/15/20. After 4/15, she will become the Executive Vice Chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She earned her B.A. in Biology from Harvard University and her M.D. from the University of California at San Francisco. She trained in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Brigham and Women's Hospital & Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, MA and then completed a fellowship in Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Concurrently, she completed the NIH T32 Triangle Clinical Research Fellowship in Reproductive Health and received her Master's in Public Health in Epidemiology at the UNC School of Public Health. After graduating from fellowship in 2007, she served on the faculty at Duke University until 2013, when she decided to rejoin the UNC-Chapel Hill Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Dr. Wu is a former Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Women's Health (BIRCWH) K12 scholar and was then funded by a NICHD K23 career development award to evaluate the genetic epidemiology of pelvic floor disorders. She is actively involved with NIH-funded studies, industry-sponsored trials and investigator-initiated studies. She is an Assistant Editor of the *Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery* journal. She assumed the role of Division Director in February 2018 and had previously served as interim Division Director from 2015-2016. As the Division Director, her vision is to be a premier division of FPMRS which provides outstanding clinical and surgical care, trains future leaders in FPMRS and conducts innovative research.

**Elizabeth Geller, MD** is a Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology as well as Fellowship Program Director in the Division of Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery. She is board-certified in Obstetrics and Gynecology and Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery. She received a Bachelor of Science degree from Duke University, then completed medical school at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and residency in Ob/Gyn at the University of California at Irvine. She completed her Fellowship at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2008. She has established an expertise in robotic and minimally invasive surgery and is a member of UNC's Computer and Robotic Enhanced Surgery (CARES) Center, where she chairs the Education Committee. She is Ob/Gyn Clerkship Director for the Physician Assistants Training Program. She also directs the Interstim Neuromodulation Program and serves on the UNC Data Safety Monitoring Board. Her national leadership roles include the position of member of the AUGS Board of Directors, membership on the AUGS Program Committee, prior Chair of the Fellowship Directors Committee and prior Programming Chair for the AUGS Fellows Day

held during the AUGS annual scientific meeting. During residency at the University of California at Irvine she also served as Chief Administrative Resident, ACOG Section Chair, and Lead Fellow for the AUGS Fellows Task Force. Her teaching excellence is demonstrated by receiving the Berlex Best Teaching Resident Award at UC-Irvine, the Fellows Teaching Award at UNC and the annual Golden Tar Heel Teaching Award as faculty at UNC. Her research interests include clinical outcomes with robotic pelvic reconstructive surgery, minimally invasive surgery for incontinence and pelvic floor dysfunction, neuromodulation, cognitive function with the use of anticholinergics, and predictors of chronic pain after mesh implant.

**AnnaMarie Connolly, MD** is a Distinguished Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology in the Division of Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery and also serves as the Vice Chair for Education, the Residency Program Director, and the Education Division Director. She is board-certified in Obstetrics and Gynecology and FPMRS and completed her fellowship in Urogynecology and Reconstructive Pelvic Surgery at the University of North Carolina. Her areas of research include nationally recognized work in medical education as well as work on the effects of pregnancy and childbirth on the pelvic floor. Dr. Connolly's commitment to education has also been recognized by both the School of Medicine and the University with multiple awards and leadership roles. She is Director of the UNC-CH Teaching Scholars Program, a monthly educational faculty development seminar series for 12-15 participating faculty members from the School of Medicine. On the national level, she has served as the Vice Chair for the ACGME OBGYN Review Committee and is currently a Board Examiner for the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She is the past Council Chair of the AUGS Education Council. She serves as the co-director of both the ACOG Robert C. Cefalo Leadership Institute as well as the CREOG Residents As Teachers and Leaders Program. With support of the Foundation for Excellence in Women's Health Research, Dr. Connolly is responsible for the development of the myTIPreport program, a web-based program for "real-time" work-place feedback on milestones and surgical skills currently in use nationally in over 300 residency and fellowship programs of 28 specialties and subspecialties including OBGYN, FPMRS, other OBGYN subspecialties, as well as other specialties such as Urology, Plastic Surgery, General Surgery, Colorectal Surgery, Anesthesia, and Diagnostic Radiology among others.

**Dr. Marcella Willis-Gray, MD** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Medical Director of our Raleigh office. Dr. Willis-Gray grew up in Chesapeake, VA and went to Xavier University of Louisiana in New Orleans where she obtained a degree in Biology with a minor in Chemistry. She went on to attend medical school at the University of Virginia and then came to the triangle to complete her residency in OB/GYN at Duke University. She completed her fellowship in Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery here at UNC in 2018. Her areas of surgical expertise include laparoscopic sacrocolpopexy, vaginal reconstructive repair, and sacral neuromodulation. She has a specific interest in medical education and is the Medical Student Clinical Clerkship Director for the Urogynecology Division. She also heads the Transition to Residency Course for 4<sup>th</sup> year students interested in OBGYN and 1<sup>st</sup> year course title *Contemporary Topics in Women's Health*. Dr. Willis-Gray is also passionate about health care disparities and increasing diversity within medicine. She is an active member of the UNC OB/GYN Diversity Task Force. Her research interests include clinical outcomes research, postoperative recovery and minimizing opioid medication usage.

**Maggie Wilkins, NP** is a Clinical Nurse Practitioner in Women's Health in the Division of Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery and Medical Director of our Hillsborough office. She received her undergraduate Nursing degree from Clemson University and received her graduate Nurse Practitioner degree from Emory University. She previously worked at Duke University as the Urogynecology Lead Nurse for 3 years and worked in the Duke OB/GYN Department assisting with gynecology consultations. Ms. Wilkins is excited to return to this specialty - in large part due to the patient population and focus on improving quality of life. As a nurse practitioner, she hopes to build on this knowledge, play an active role in research, and explore her clinical interests in sexual dysfunction.

**Antonia Decker, PA** is a Physician Assistant in the Division of Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery. She received her undergraduate degree from UCLA and later a graduate degree from USC in the field of Computer Science. After working in the aerospace industry for a decade, she pursued her dream of working in the field of medicine, first by becoming a licensed practical nurse, and later pursuing a second master's degree from Rosalind Franklin University School of Medicine in physician assistant studies. She has practiced in the field of Urology for several years and joined our group in 2019. She has a passion for helping to improve the quality of life for women and is excited to expand her knowledge in this growing and important field.

**Leigh Anne Wall, NP** is a Family Nurse Practitioner in the Division of Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive surgery. She received her undergraduate at Queen's University and received her graduate Nurse Practitioner degree from University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She previously worked in Family practice for 2 years near Richmond, Virginia. She also joined our group in 2019. She is passionate about Women's Health and is excited and rewarded daily by the patient population she cares for.

**Kristy Borawski, MD** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Urology. Dr. Borawski received her Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Medicine in a combined BS-MD program at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Albany Medical College in 2003. She completed her Urology residency in 2009 at Duke University Medical Center and then stayed at Duke for a fellowship in Urodynamics, Reconstructive Urology and Incontinence, which she completed in 2010. She joined UNC Urology in 2010 and has served as the Director of Urodynamics since August 2010. She has expertise in Female Urology, Reconstructive Urology and Neurourology, with a special interest in the urologic management of spinal cord injured patients.

#### **Off-Service Faculty**

##### **Minimally Invasive Gynecology**

**Erin Carey, MD** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Division Director of the Minimally Invasive Gynecologic Surgery Division. Dr. Carey received her Bachelor of Liberal Arts and Doctor of Medicine in a combined BA-MD program at the University of Missouri, Kansas City, in 2006. She completed her residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota in 2010 and a fellowship in Advanced Laparoscopy and Pelvic Pain at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2012. Dr. Carey also received a Master of Science in clinical research at the UNC-Chapel Hill Gillings School of Public Health in 2012. She worked at the University of Kansas Medical Center as an Assistant Professor at the Center for Pelvic Pain and Sexual

Health, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology before returning to UNC in 2016 to lead the MIGS Division.

### **Urology**

UNC, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

**Kristy Borawski MD** is a urologist in our core FPMRS faculty. See her description listed above.

UNC Rex, Raleigh, North Carolina

**John Kaspar MD** is a urologist with a special interest in female urology with Associated Urologists and North Carolina. He is board certified in Urology and Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery. He received his Bachelor's degree at Washington University in St. Louis, a Master's Degree in Microbiology and his medical degree at Wake Forest University. He completed an internship in general surgery and residency in urology at Pennsylvania State University. He has been in private practice for 21 years.

### **Colorectal Surgery**

UNC Rex, Raleigh, North Carolina

**Laura Altom, MD** is a fellowship trained colon and rectal surgeon with North Carolina Surgery. She is board certified in both general and colon and rectal surgery. She completed her medical degree at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, general surgery residency training at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and her colon and rectal fellowship training at the Oschner Clinic in New Orleans. She also studied health outcomes and has a Master's in Public Health from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She sees all aspects of colon and rectal surgery including colon and rectal cancers, inflammatory bowel disease, diverticulitis and other benign disease of the colon and rectum, all benign anorectal disorders such as hemorrhoids, fissures and fistulas, pelvic floor issues such as rectal prolapse and fecal incontinence, as well as performing high resolution anoscopy for screening of anal dysplasia.

**Reza Rahbar, MD** is a fellowship trained colon and rectal surgeon with North Carolina Surgery. He completed his medical degree at UNC, followed by residency in general surgery at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. He completed a fellowship in colon and rectal surgery at Louisiana State University Medical Center. He is Board certified in General Surgery and Colon and Rectal Surgery. His interests include colon and rectal cancers, inflammatory bowel disease, diverticulitis and other benign disease of the colon and rectum, and benign anorectal disorders such as hemorrhoids, fissures and fistulas.

**Timothy Sadiq, MD** is a fellowship trained colon and rectal surgeon with North Carolina Surgery. He completed medical school at the University of Kansas, followed by a general surgery residency at UNC, and a fellowship in colon and rectal surgery at The Lahey Clinic in Massachusetts. He completed his Surgical Residency at UNC. He is Board certified in General Surgery and Colon and Rectal Surgery. His interests include complex anorectal disorders, transplantation and stem cell research.

### **Women's Health Physical Therapy**

UNC, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

**Jenn Harrington PT, DPT, WCS, CLT** is a Women's & Men's Health Physical Therapist, Clinical Specialist at UNC and Hillsborough Hospitals. She is APTA Board Certified in Women's Health Physical Therapy. She received her Bachelor of Health Science from the University of Miami in Coral Gables, FL and a Clinical Doctorate in Physical Therapy from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She also completed a Women's Health Physical Therapy Residency at Centers for Rehab Services in Pittsburgh, PA. Jenn has a passion for this field and especially loves educating patients and healthcare providers about the importance of effectively evaluating and treating the pelvic floor. She enjoys providing one on one teaching of our UNC Urogynecology Fellows both in her clinic and in didactic conferences.

UNC Rex, Raleigh, North Carolina

**Erika N. Johnson, PT, MPT** is the Lead Pelvic Health Physical Therapist at our Raleigh location located at UNC Rex Hospital. She received her Bachelor of Health Science in Computer Science at Mary Washington College (now University of Mary Washington), Fredericksburg, VA in 1996 and a Masters in Physical Therapy at Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA in 1998. For 20 years I she has been dedicated to increasing public and professional awareness regarding rehab treatment options in women's and men's pelvic health. In addition to treating patients, her other professional interests include program development and collaboration with practitioners, including UNC Urogynecology Fellows. Having the access and opportunity for this collaboration has greatly improved patient's access to services and to the level of care provided.

**Gynecologic Oncology**

**Paola Gehrig, MD (Professor, Division Director), Linda Van Le, MD (Professor), John Soper, M.D (Professor), John Boggess (Professor), Leslie Clark (Assistant Professor)** of the Division of Gynecologic Oncology. Drs. Gehrig, Van Le, Soper, Boggess and Clark have extensive experience in complex pelvic surgery as well as expertise in complex pelvic reconstruction, gastrointestinal, and genital-urinary procedures. Areas of expertise include large and small bowel procedures, ureteral anastomosis and reimplantation, and urinary diversion procedures. They are also nationally recognized researchers, educators, and mentors in the subspecialty of Gynecologic Oncology and have served as exceptionally strong supporters of the Female Pelvic Medicine/Reconstructive Surgery fellowship program both at the local and national levels.

**Research**

**William Whitehead, Ph.D.** is a Research Professor of Medicine and holds a joint appointment in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Dr. Whitehead is a nationally and internationally recognized expert in Gastrointestinal Medicine specializing the fields of constipation and fecal incontinence. Dr. Whitehead has served as a site Co-Principle Investigator to the Pelvic Floor Disorders Network. He is coordinator of the rotation in the GI Procedures laboratory and serves as an active research mentor to the Fellowship. He has a primary interest in defecatory dysfunction and fecal incontinence, and behavioral and biofeedback therapy for functional gastrointestinal disorders. His expertise includes anal manometry and anorectal biofeedback therapy. Dr Whitehead actively participates in the monthly Pelvic Floor Disorders Conferences.

**Wendy R. Brewster, MD, PhD** is the Director of the Center for Women's Health Research. The mission of the CWHR is to improve the health of women through multidisciplinary research, education and advocacy through the development of researchers and community partnership. Dr. Brewster is also an Associate Professor in the Division of Gynecologic

Oncology, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, School of Medicine, and an Associate Professor in the Department of Epidemiology, School of Public Health. Dr. Brewster is a population scientist with a research interest in early detection and prevention of gynecologic malignancies. Dr. Brewster's academic interests are also in the areas of gynecologic oncology and cancer epidemiology. Dr. Brewster is a clinically active member of the Gynecologic Oncology Division in the Department of Obstetrics. Dr. Brewster received her medical degree from the Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA and completed residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. She then completed her GYN Oncology Fellowship and PhD with an emphasis in cancer epidemiology at the University of California, Irvine.