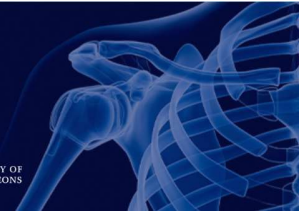


# MUSCULOSKELETAL GALAXY

JUNE 5 - 8, 2026 | CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

AAPA  
American Academy of  
Physician Associates

AAOS  
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF  
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS



## Agenda

### Hilton Chicago

#### Friday, June 5, 2026

7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. **On-Site Registration**

8 a.m. - 12 p.m. **Acute Care Splinting/Casting: Orthopaedic Techniques in Immobilization**  
*(Separate registration required.)*

Travis Randolph, PA-C, Russ Avellana, PA-C, Andrea Murabito, PA-C, Emma Friedman, PA-C, Brett Wassink, PA-C, MPAS

This 4-hour workshop will focus on proper immobilization techniques for different fractures requiring a splint or cast. The course will place a strong emphasis on splinting techniques and also demonstrate a short arm cast and short leg cast. This is a hands-on workshop that will allow each attendee to practice each splint/ cast. We will discuss proper techniques for applying splints/ casts and provide education on patient instructions. This workshop will provide each attendee with the basic concepts in casting and splinting and allow you to feel confident with immobilizing acute orthopaedic injuries in your practice.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Demonstrate proper positioning and techniques for splinting upper/ lower extremity injuries
- Demonstrate proper positioning and techniques for casting upper/ lower extremity injuries
- Discussion of different Orthopaedic injuries that require immobilization
- Discussion of patient education regarding their cast/ splint

12 p.m. – 1 p.m. **Lunch (On Your Own)**

1 - 1:15 p.m. **Welcome Remarks**

1:15 – 2 p.m. **Cracking the Code: The Language of Fractures**

Chuck Dowell, PA-C, ATC

This interactive presentation is designed to sharpen participants' ability to confidently identify and describe basic fractures and dislocations using accurate,

standardized terminology. Through practical examples and plain X-ray review, attendees will learn how to recognize common injury patterns and translate what they see into clear, meaningful communication. Emphasis will be placed on improving discussions with orthopedic colleagues, reducing vague descriptions, and enhancing diagnostic accuracy—all while making fracture talk a little less intimidating and a lot more effective.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Discuss basic fractures and dislocations
- Identify and describe basic fractures and dislocations on plain x-rays
- Communicate radiographic findings clearly and effectively with orthopedic colleagues to improve diagnostic accuracy and patient care

2 – 3 p.m.

### **Introduction to MSK Radiology**

Brooke Beckett, MD

We will cover the basics of radiographic ordering and image interpretation with emphasis on arthritis, infection and tumors. We will also discuss the basics of MRI imaging for joints and touch on advantages and limitations of other advanced MSK imaging such as CT and US.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Determine appropriate radiographic views for bones and joints
- Describe fracture patterns on routine radiography
- Discuss the basics of arthritis imaging and diagnosis
- Discuss aggressive versus non-aggressive bone tumors and tumor-like conditions

3 – 3:30 p.m.

### **Exhibits/Break**

3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

### **Preoperative Medical Optimization: The Intersection of Medicine and Orthopedic Surgery**

Kelsey Leadman, PA-C

Medical optimization prior to elective surgery is important to improve postoperative outcomes. By learning what modifiable risk factors have been identified to be important in elective hip and knee arthroplasty you will be able to implement targeted preoperative interventions into your daily practice and improve patient outcomes.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Discuss the medical optimization prior to elective knee and hip arthroplasty is important
- Identify what modifiable risk factors affect outcomes in elective knee and hip arthroplasty
- Implement targeted preoperative interventions using these modifiable risk factors to optimize elective knee and hip arthroplasty patients prior to surgery

4:30 – 5:30 p.m.

**Oncology**

Session Information Coming Soon!

**Saturday, June 6, 2026**

7 a.m. - 6 p.m.

**On-Site Registration**

7 – 8 a.m.

**Breakfast (Provided)**

8:15 - 9 a.m.

**Evaluating Hip Pain That is NOT Arthritic! Where Do We Start?**

Alli Mack, PA-C, MS, MPH

At the end of this session, participants will gain knowledge in basic hip anatomy, appropriate workup, special tests, diagnostic tests (X-ray/ MRI findings), and treatment plans.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Develop an appropriate workup plan for common hip complaints
- Describe basic hip anatomy
- Illustrate basic hip physical exam
- Interpret basic hip imaging

8:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. **Needle Know-How: Mastering MSK Injections** *(Separate registration required.)*

Chuck Dowell, PA-C, ATC, Russ Avellana, PA-C, Andrea Murabito, PA-C, Patricia Rose, MMSc, PA-C, Brett Wassink, PA-C, MPAS

This workshop provides a foundational introduction to musculoskeletal (MSK) injection therapy. Participants will review common MSK conditions amenable to injection treatment, explore commonly used anesthetic and corticosteroid agents, and examine the relevant anatomy for each procedure. Proper techniques for performing common MSK injections will be discussed, along with potential reactions and complications associated with each injection type.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Identify indications, contraindications, risks, benefits, materials, and proper techniques for common MSK injections
- Identify upper- and lower-extremity conditions that can benefit from injection therapy
- Demonstrate hands-on skills to locate key anatomical landmarks and place needles accurately
- Recognize the acute inflammatory response and manage common complications from MSK injections

9 – 10 a.m.

### **Beyond the Demigod - Achilles' Disorders**

Megan Flynn, MD

This presentation will highlight the anatomy, diagnostic pathways, and management of sports foot and ankle injuries, focusing particularly on the achilles tendon.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Differentiate between the clinical presentation of achilles tendinopathy and achilles rupture
- List the treatment options available for patients with achilles tendon disorders
- Discuss the most recent research between surgical and nonsurgical management of achilles tendon ruptures
- Determine the best next steps in treatment for achilles tendon disorders in different patient presentations
- Provide patients with reasonable expectations in postoperative rehabilitation following achilles tendon rupture whether it was treated operatively or nonoperatively

10 - 10:30 a.m.

### **Exhibits/Break**

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. **Sports-Knee**

Edward “Barry” McDonough, MD

The purpose of this talk is to discuss the physical exam findings associated with different disorders of the knee. We will also discuss how these findings help determine our indications for surgery and show examples of cases.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Discuss physical exam findings for ligamentous injuries
- Discuss how physical exam findings determine surgical indications
- Show examples of cases demonstrating these findings

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. **Pins, Plaster, and Pus: A Case-based Discussion of Pediatric Trauma and Infections**

R. Carter Clement, MD, MBA

This session will provide a case-based discussion reviewing common pediatric fractures, including growth plate injuries, and infections such as septic hips and osteomyelitis.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Recognize common pediatric fracture patterns
- Work up common pediatric musculoskeletal infections
- Refer fractures and infections when appropriate

12:30 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. **Lunch (Voucher Provided)**

1:15 p.m. - 2 p.m. **Spinal Deformity – understanding the consequences of a change in the shape of your spine**

Patrick Knott, PhD, PA-C

This session will review the different types of spinal deformity that can develop in certain patient populations. The assessment and measurement of deformity can help predict the long term consequences of a change in spinal alignment.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Describe the etiology of different types of spinal deformity, and the patient populations that are affected
- Perform an assessment of the spine that includes careful description and measurement of spinal deformity
- Discuss how different types of scoliosis can impact long term quality of life
- Describe other common spinal deformities such as flat back syndrome, and how they arise

1:15 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. **The Focus POCUS Musculoskeletal Ultrasound Workshop** *(Separate registration required.)*

Erica Miller-Spears, PA-C, ATC, RMSK, Tanner Eiben, DO, CAQSM, Alli Mack, PA-C, MS, MPH, Ayush B Shrestha, MD, CAQSM, Frank Woo, MD

The Musculoskeletal Galaxy Focus POCUS ultrasound workshop will cover an introduction to basic ultrasound principles including proper scanning techniques, review of imaging normal anatomy, review of possible pathology encountered during basic MSK US, and discuss techniques for US guided injections. Attendees will learn proper MSK imaging techniques for the shoulder, wrist/ hand, knee and lower leg/foot. Learning is facilitated through an interactive and practical format with the direct supervision of the faculty.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Describe types of ultrasound machines, machine knobology, and ultrasound technology
- Guide needles for procedures by selecting proper probes, identifying soft tissue, and obtaining accurate images
- Use ultrasound imaging to identify normal muscle, tendon, ligament, and nerve anatomy
- Review ultrasound images (shoulder, wrist and hand, knee, ankle), including some common pathology of these areas

2 p.m. - 3 p.m.

### **Lower-Extremity Fractures**

Patricia Rose, MMSc, PA-C

This session offers a structured, high-yield approach to evaluating lower-extremity fractures—from interpreting radiographs to describing injury patterns with accuracy and reviewing appropriate management pathways. We will examine both commonly encountered fractures and less frequent but high-risk injuries, emphasizing how to recognize those requiring urgent intervention. Throughout the lecture, we will explore mechanisms of injury, associated soft-tissue considerations, potential complications, and key principles that guide early management in the acute setting.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Identify and describe common lower extremity fractures including their mechanisms of injury and clinical presentations
- Apply a systematic approach to accurately describe lower extremity fractures on radiographs, analyzing location, angulation, displacement and associated soft-tissue injuries
- Outline effective management strategies for these fractures, including proper immobilization, indications for surgical versus conservative approaches and potential complications

- Distinguish fractures requiring urgent intervention from those safe for outpatient follow-up

3 – 3:30 p.m. **Exhibits/Break**

3: 30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. **Not Just Small Adult Bones...**

R. Carter Clement, MD, MBA

This session will review a broad range of common pediatric orthopaedic conditions with a particular focus on hip pathologies, spinal deformities, lower extremity malalignment, foot deformities, and osteochondroses.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Recognize common pediatric hip pathologies
- Evaluate osteochondroses and “growing pains”
- Identify common pediatric foot and alignment disorders
- Work up typical pediatric spinal deformities

4: 30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. **Lower Extremity Radiology**

Brooke Beckett, MD

We will concentrate our time on common pathologies of the knee, including ligamentous, meniscal, and cartilaginous; several common injury patterns will be discussed. We will also touch on hip imaging for FAI as well as MRI grading of long bone stress injuries.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Discuss pathologies of the lower extremity, with focus on MRI findings
- Recognize femoracetabular impingement (FAI)
- In the knee, recognize ACL, MCL, lateral ligamentous tears, meniscal tears
- In the ankle, recognize achilles tears, PT and peroneal tendon tears
- In bones, recognize stress injuries

## **Sunday, June 7, 2026**

7 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. **On-Site Registration**

7 – 8 a.m. **Breakfast (Provided)**

8:15 - 9 a.m. **Red Flags in the Evaluation of Routine Neck Pain**

Patrick Knott, PhD, PA-C

This session will review the comprehensive musculoskeletal and neurologic evaluation of the patient with neck pain. We will also review the more concerning red flags that can point to more serious conditions.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Perform a detailed musculoskeletal and neurologic examination in the evaluation of neck pain
- Identify common neck complaints that are seen with typical osteoarthritis and degenerative disc disease
- Recognize the more concerning red flags in the history and on physical exam that point to more serious conditions
- Discuss how cervical spine instability, central spinal canal stenosis, and foraminal stenosis can lead to disabling neurologic injury if missed

8:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. **Needle Know-How: Mastering MSK Injections** *(Separate registration required.)*

Chuck Dowell, PA-C, ATC, Russ Avellana, PA-C, Andrea Murabito, PA-C, Patricia Rose, MMSc, PA-C, Brett Wassink, PA-C, MPAS

This workshop provides a foundational introduction to musculoskeletal (MSK) injection therapy. Participants will review common MSK conditions amenable to injection treatment, explore commonly used anesthetic and corticosteroid agents, and examine the relevant anatomy for each procedure. Proper techniques for performing common MSK injections will be discussed, along with potential reactions and complications associated with each injection type.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Identify indications, contraindications, risks, benefits, materials, and proper techniques for common MSK injections
- Identify upper- and lower-extremity conditions that can benefit from injection therapy
- Demonstrate hands-on skills to locate key anatomical landmarks and place needles accurately
- Recognize the acute inflammatory response and manage common complications from MSK injections

9 – 10 a.m.

### **Joint at the Hip: Infectious Diseases and Orthopaedics**

Allison Lastinger, MD

In this session, attendees will learn about the importance of multi-disciplinary care for patients with prosthetic joint infections and other musculoskeletal

infections. They will learn about the diagnosis of prosthetic joint infection and about treatment strategies.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Discuss the importance of multi-disciplinary care for patients with prosthetic joint infections
- Discuss the main diagnostic tools for diagnosing prosthetic joint infection
- Discuss the important treatment principles in prosthetic joint infection

10 - 10:30 a.m. **Exhibits/Break**

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. **Shoulder Problems: Anatomy, Evaluation, and Case-Based Management**

Anthony A. Romeo, MD

This comprehensive session will cover the essentials of managing shoulder health, starting with a deep dive into shoulder anatomy, biomechanics, and physiology. Current epidemiological trends will also be reviewed to help attendees understand the true frequency and impact of these injuries in clinical practice. The pillars of a solid evaluation (mastering patient history, performing targeted physical exams, and utilizing initial diagnostic tools) will be addressed. Finally, attendees will learn how to interpret advanced imaging indications to ensure precise care and clearly define shoulder instability to better differentiate between complex pathologies.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Describe the anatomy of the shoulder, biomechanics and physiology basics as well as epidemiology including the incidences of shoulder injuries
- Discuss history, physical exam and initial diagnostics
- Interpret advanced imaging indications related to shoulder problems
- Define instability in the shoulder joint
- Identify shoulder weakness

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. **Small Structures, Big Consequences: Getting the Hand Exam Right the First Time**

Vanessa JS Smith, PA-C

Hands are injured every day—by slammed doors, kitchen knives, sports collisions, workplace machinery, and seemingly minor falls. In this session, learners will develop a systematic approach to the hand exam that prioritizes

precision and early recognition of high-risk injuries. Emphasis will be placed on identifying tendon, ligament, and fracture patterns that are commonly missed in primary care settings. Participants will learn how subtle exam findings can dramatically alter management and referral urgency. Practical guidance will be provided on splinting, initial treatment, and patient counseling. Through case-based discussion and partner practice, attendees will gain confidence in evaluating hand injuries accurately and efficiently. The goal is simple: prevent missed diagnoses that lead to permanent dysfunction.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Describe the relevant anatomic and radiographic anatomy of the fingers and hand using appropriate terminology for location, direction, and injury patterns
- Apply a systematic approach to the clinical examination of finger and hand conditions, differentiating findings in acute trauma versus subacute or chronic presentations
- Interpret hand and finger radiographs using a structured method to identify, describe and triage common fractures and dislocations
- Analyze clinical case scenarios to correlate history, physical exam findings, and imaging to determine appropriate initial management
- Select and differentiate appropriate splinting techniques for common acute finger and hand injuries prior to specialist referral

12:30 p.m. – 1:15 p.m. **Lunch (Voucher Provided)**

1:15 p.m. – 2 p.m. **Wrist, Elbow, Repeat: Exceptional Evaluation and Early Orthopedic Management**

Vanessa JS Smith, PA-C

Wrist and elbow complaints are common in primary care, urgent care, and emergency settings and often result from falls, overuse, sports injuries, and repetitive workplace activities. In this session, learners will develop a structured approach to evaluating wrist and elbow conditions, with emphasis on recognizing injury patterns that are frequently overlooked early in care. Participants will learn to identify key physical exam findings, interpret wrist and elbow radiographs, and perform high-yield elbow examination maneuvers that guide diagnosis and management. Practical guidance will be provided on initial treatment, splint selection, and appropriate referral timing. Through case-based discussion, attendees will gain confidence in managing wrist and elbow conditions efficiently and safely before specialty referral.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Describe the relevant anatomic and radiographic anatomy of the wrist and elbow using appropriate terminology for location, direction, landmarks, and common injury patterns
- Apply a structured approach to the clinical examination of the wrist and elbow, differentiating findings in acute traumatic versus subacute or chronic presentations
- Interpret wrist and elbow radiographs to distinguish normal anatomy from common abnormal findings encountered in primary and acute care settings
- Analyze clinical case scenarios to integrate history, physical examination, and imaging findings to select appropriate splinting and evidence-based initial management

1:15 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. **The Focus POCUS Musculoskeletal Ultrasound Workshop** (*Separate registration required.*)

Erica Miller-Spears, PA-C, ATC, RMSK, Tanner Eiben, DO, CAQSM, Alli Mack, PA-C, MS, MPH, Ayush B Shrestha, MD, CAQSM, Frank Woo, MD

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- Guide needles for procedures by selecting proper probes, identifying soft tissue, and obtaining accurate images
- Use ultrasound imaging to identify normal muscle, tendon, ligament, and nerve anatomy
- Review ultrasound images (shoulder, wrist and hand, knee, ankle), including some common pathology of these areas

2 p.m. – 3 p.m. **Orthobiologics in Modern Orthopaedics**

Wendell Cole, MD

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Discuss the basics of tissue healing

- Define common orthobiologic therapies used in orthopaedic surgery
- Discuss the mechanism of action for PRP, CBMA, and MFAT
- Identify clinical applications and updated literature evidence for orthobiologic use
- Discuss emerging peptide therapies and their regulatory landscape

3 p.m.- 3:30 p.m. **Exhibits/Break**

3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. **Breaking It Down: Upper Extremity Fractures Made Simple**

Chuck Dowell, PA-C, ATC

This lecture will guide participants through standard methods for describing fractures and fracture patterns using a systematic review of injury radiographs. We'll focus on fractures not covered in previous sessions or those you're likely to encounter while on call. Topics include traditional descriptive techniques, assessment of associated soft tissue injuries, and emergent treatment strategies for acute fractures.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Identify and describe common upper extremity fractures with confidence
- Apply proper management techniques, including immobilization and fracture reduction
- Tell at a glance which fractures need urgent treatment versus those safe for outpatient follow-up
- Describe fractures in detail—location, angulation, displacement, and any soft tissue involvement

4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. **Upper Extremity Radiology**

Brooke Beckett, MD

This session will concentrate on MRI of common shoulder pathologies, including rotator cuff tears, labral tears, and sequelae of dislocation. We will also touch on throwing injuries of the elbow.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Review basic joint MRI sequences and imaging planes
- Describe MRI findings of rotator cuff tears and tendinosis
- Describe MRI findings of shoulder dislocation
- Recognize MRI findings of UCL tears and capitellar OCDs
- Recognize MRI findings of ligaments tears of the wrist

6 p.m. – 8 p.m. **Chicago Iconic Mobster Walking Tour** (*Separate registration required.*)

## Monday, June 8, 2026

7 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. **On-Site Registration**

7 – 8 a.m. **Breakfast (Provided)**

8 – 9 a.m. **Know your worth!**

Mike Harvey, PA-C, MBA

If you don't know your worth as a PA, someone else will decide it for you — and they won't aim high. This talk breaks down the financial realities every PA should understand to advocate confidently for fair compensation. We'll look at how PA salaries are set, why they vary, and which levers actually move your earning potential. Then we'll unpack the true cost of employment salary — benefits, overhead, onboarding — and how organizations calculate your value behind the scenes. You'll get a clear, practical explanation of RVUs: what they measure, how they translate into revenue, and how productivity targets shape modern compensation models. Finally, we'll connect the dots to “knowing your worth,” including how to quantify your contributions, highlight non-RVU work, and use data — not emotion — to negotiate from a position of strength. The goal of this session is to empower you to understand your value and advocate for it with confidence.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Describe PA Value to an organization
- Explain the cost of employment of a PA
- Discuss the components of an RVU
- Prepared to negotiate salary or contract

9 – 10 a.m. **The state of Total Joint Arthroplasty in 2026**

Alexander Gordon, MD

The two sessions will combine to educate participants in the current trends of perioperative management of total joint arthroplasty patients and how to work up and treat a painful total joint.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Describe the role of technology in total joint arthroplasty
- Illustrate perioperative management of the total joint arthroplasty patient
- Discuss outpatient total joint arthroplasty protocols

10 – 10:30 a.m. **Break for hotel check-out**

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.      **Evaluation of the painful total hip and knee arthroplasty**

Alexander Gordon, MD

The two sessions will combine to educate participants in the current trends of perioperative management of total joint arthroplasty patients and how to work up and treat a painful total joint.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Describe common complications of total joint arthroplasty
- Illustrate current workup protocols for painful total joint arthroplasty
- Discuss treatment options for painful total joint arthroplasty

11:30 a.m. – 12:25 p.m.      **Covering the Entire Musculoskeletal Galaxy with Orthopaedic Case Study Presentations**

Travis Randolph, PA-C

Be sure to stay until the end of the conference to catch this presentation! We will summarize all the different orthopaedic injuries discussed throughout the weekend by reviewing the various case studies. The cases will include the patient presentation, physical exam findings, and radiographic results. After discussing the different diagnoses, we will breakdown all available treatment options. Don't miss this worthwhile conclusion!

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Demonstrate common presentations of patients with Orthopaedic injuries
- Review radiographs and MRI findings on patients to diagnose different orthopaedic injuries
- Discuss operative and non-operative treatment options for patients with orthopaedic injuries

12:25 – 12:30 p.m.      **Closing Remarks**

\* This agenda may be updated or modified without notification.