

Chapter Member Spotlight



Name: Andy Chang, M.D., Pediatric urology

Practice location: Children’s Hospital Los Angeles Main Campus and Satellite Locations in San Gabriel Valley and Orange County

Number of years in practice: 16

I emigrated to the United States from Taiwan at an early age and spent my formative years in Ohio before settling in Cerritos, CA in my early teens. Having moved around several times, I found my ability to adjust and adapt to new environments hinged on peer acceptance through group activities such as athletics. I graduated from the public magnet high school, Whitney, as a valedictorian and matriculated at Stanford University, majoring in Biological Sciences. My M.D. was obtained at Keck School of Medicine (we were the first med school class to wear the Cardinal robes at graduation). My urology training was at Los Angeles County – University of Southern California Medical Center (now Los Angeles General Medical Center) and in the last year I served as chief resident. During urology residency, I was exposed to the joys of taking care of pediatric urology patients under the tutelage of the late Brian Hardy, M.D. Those experiences led me to pursue a career in Pediatric Urology.

I spent 3 years at the University of Pennsylvania and Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia completing my Pediatric Urology fellowship training. Since then, I have been back at CHLA as a faculty member.

Pediatric urology is the first subspecialty with a Certificate of Added Qualification issued by the American Board of Urology. To be a board-certified pediatric urologist, one must complete a 2-year ACGME recognized Pediatric Urology fellowship program, practice as a pediatric urologist, and pass the American Board of Urology general written exam, oral exam, and pediatric urology written exam. With our prolonged training, we are as comfortable treating hernias and hydroceles to Wilms tumors and metastatic testicular cancers. I am part of the first generation of American Board of Urology certified and recognized pediatric urologists.

I am fortunate enough to belong to a group of dedicated, supportive, and caring pediatric urologists and staff at CHLA that allows me to deliver the best care I can to those kids entrusted to me by their parents, guardians, care providers, and pediatricians. My colleagues and team also provide the needed support for me to take on the newer duties as the Vice Chair of Operations for the Department of Surgery at CHLA.

What do you do before work that sets the tone for your day?

A good night’s sleep generally dictates how my following day will go. I always thought that I

could function just as effectively on 4 hours of sleep versus 8 or 9. Although this still holds true for problem solving, diagnostic abilities, and physical dexterity, I found that I can be the best version of myself with a good night's rest.

What are some challenges or struggles that you face at work?

The challenge has been to find enough time in the day for me to do all that I would like to do. Problems and challenges ebb and flow, but the lack of time has been a persistent and consistent issue.

How do you work through or overcome your challenges or struggles?

I've thought about time travel or accessing the quantum realm, but unfortunately neither is yet within the realm of possibility in the near or distant future. For now, I try to prioritize, delegate, and not over commit or over promise.

After work, what do you do for your own wellness?

My days are pretty long, between clinical, administrative, academic, and research responsibilities. I try to get home to see my two young boys before they go to bed. I then mentally unwind with mindless TV watching or video gaming. When I have time, I try to swim. On the weekends, when the conditions are good and I'm not on call, I try to get in a few surf sessions. I also got into smoking meats and enjoy sharing the end products of my efforts with family, friends, and colleagues.

From what/whom does your inspiration or motivation stem?

I often reflect upon the sacrifices my immigrant parents made for me and my sibling. They had burgeoning careers in Taiwan but gave them all up and started from scratch in a country in which they had limited language and cultural understanding. I strive to do right by them for the sacrifice they made to better the lives of me and my sibling.

From my parents, I was instilled the trait of doing my best and being considerate to others. And from sports I learned perseverance and "practicing the way you play." I apply that to all that I do and give it my best effort.

Wellness Tip: What is the one thing you would recommend to our readership to do each day to take care of oneself?

As physicians, we have sacrificed a lot to be where we are in our careers. So working hard and sacrificing ourselves to our profession becomes routine and natural. However, we are not merely defined by our careers. I recommend that we find hobbies and activities outside of work that allow us to decompress and unwind. We need to first take care of ourselves so we can be around to take care of others.

Contact information: achang@chla.usc.edu