

UC San Diego Health

Steven Garfin, MD



Steven Garfin, MD, is interim dean of the University of California San Diego School of Medicine. In this role, he directs the school's educational mission, including the evolution of its curriculum, and provides oversight for all academic and clinical departments and research units.

He has a leadership role in all School of Medicine councils and collaborates with medical school deans across the five University of California medical campuses.

An internationally recognized leader in orthopedic surgery, Dr. Garfin joined the UC San Diego School of Medicine faculty in 1981 and has served as chair of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery since 1997. Under his oversight, the department received more than \$21 million in annual grant funding and ranked nationally for research output.

Dr. Garfin is well established as a forward-thinking leader, having been involved in designing and assessing surgical techniques and instrumentation to treat spinal disorders. At UC San Diego Health, he was the first to articulate the need for a world-class ambulatory building to support Jacobs Medical Center, a vision that resulted in the opening of the Koman Family Outpatient Pavilion.

In his clinical practice, Dr. Garfin specializes in complex reconstructive spine surgery, but also provides treatment for all types of spine conditions, including adult scoliosis, disc herniation and spinal cord injury. He has received many awards for teaching, research and clinical care, including work that has contributed to current international standards for spine surgery.

Dr. Garfin earned his medical degree at the University of Minnesota and completed both an internship in surgery and an orthopedic surgery residency at UC San Diego School of Medicine. He completed a fellowship in adult spine disorders at Pennsylvania Hospital.

He is a member or has served in leadership roles for several national and international spine societies, including the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, American Orthopaedic Association, International Society for the Study of the Lumbar Spine (ISSLS), the Orthopaedic Research Society, and the Lumbar Spine Research Society. He is a past president of the North American Spine Society (NASS), the International Society for the Advancement of Spine Surgery, and the Cervical Spine Research Society (CSRS). Dr. Garfin also serves on the Executive Governing Board for UC San Diego Health.

Among his many achievements, Dr. Garfin was named one of the top 28 surgeons in the U.S. by *Orthopedics This Week* in 2012. In 2013, he was honored with a lifetime achievement award by the International Society for the Study of Lumbar Spine, and by NASS with both the Wiltse Award and the Selby Award.

Dr. Garfin has edited 21 books, authored more than 145 book chapters, and published over 300 peer-reviewed articles. He is deputy editor of the *Spine Journal*, which has the highest impact factor of orthopedic specialty journals, and reviewer for a number of other orthopedic and spine peer-reviewed journals. His research awards include two Volvo Awards from ISSLS, multiple awards from NASS and CSRS, and the Orthopaedic Research Society New Investigator Recognition Award.

He was the director of all American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons spine courses from 1990 to 1998, including the spine section of their instructional course lectures at annual meetings. He has also led or co-led a number of research grants supported by the National Institutes of Health, Department of Veterans Affairs and industry. Additionally, Dr. Garfin has served as the national principal investigator for a number of clinical trials for innovative new technologies in Phase I testing or through clinical trials leading to FDA and Medicare approvals.

Photo by K.C. Alfred, San Diego Union-Tribune