

Aaron A. Hofmann, MD

The Knee Society's 2027 Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient

For nearly five decades, Dr. Aaron Hofmann has devoted his career to improving the lives of patients with hip and knee disease—not only through the care he has provided, but through the lasting impact of his ideas, mentorship, and programs.

Professional Journey

Raised in Medina, North Dakota, Aaron earned his bachelor's degree from North Dakota State University before receiving his medical degree from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas. He completed his orthopedic residency under the mentorship of Vert Mooney, MD, followed by a research and clinical fellowship with Jo Miller, MD, in Montreal, Canada.

In 1981, Aaron joined the faculty of the University of Utah under the leadership of Harold Dunn, MD. He went on to become Professor of Orthopaedics and served as Chief of Orthopaedics at the Salt Lake City VA Medical Center.

Innovation in Joint Reconstruction

Throughout his career, Aaron has approached innovation in a straightforward way: when he saw a problem, he looked for a better way to solve it.

That philosophy contributed to important advances in joint replacement, including the Natural-Knee, his work in cementless fixation and biologic ingrowth, and his description of the subvastus approach to total knee arthroplasty. In collaboration with Roy Bloebaum, PhD, his research also helped advance the understanding of biologic fixation and bone ingrowth into porous-coated implants. His work as a surgeon, researcher, and implant designer has contributed to the evolution of hip and knee reconstruction over the past several decades.

Education and Mentorship

Education and mentorship have always been central to his work. In 1989, while at the University of Utah, Aaron established the Adult Reconstruction Fellowship, with Rodney L. Plaster, MD, as his first fellow. He later continued that commitment through the Aaron A. Hofmann Adult Reconstruction Fellowship at the Hofmann Arthritis Institute. Over the course of the fellowship's history, Aaron has trained 47 adult reconstruction fellows, extending his influence as an educator through the surgeons and patients they now serve.

His commitment to education has also included the establishment of two endowed chairs at the University of Utah: The Albert and Margaret Hofmann Chair, honoring his parents, and the Aaron and Suzanne Hofmann Chair, dedicated to supporting humanitarian work. He also established resident research funds at Duke University honoring Michael Bolognesi, MD, and at the University of Texas Southwestern honoring Richard E. Jones, MD.

Humanitarian Service and Leadership

Aaron's commitment to patients extends far beyond his own operating room. He founded Operation Walk Utah to provide joint replacement surgery to patients who otherwise would have little or no access to care.

He also founded Total Joint Orthopedics, Inc. with Lawrence Dorr, MD, combining their experience as surgeons and implant designers to develop high-quality joint replacement systems. Humanitarian service was incorporated into the company's mission from the beginning, donating one implant for every ten sold.

Legacy

Through all of these accomplishments, those who know Aaron understand that medicine has never been solely about recognition. It has been about solving problems, teaching others, and helping patients return to the lives they want to live.

And behind that remarkable career has been his family—his beautiful wife, Suzanne; their successful daughters: Erin, Cortney, and Becky; their sons-in-law: Fabio and Conan; and their three amazing grandchildren: Dominick, Vivian, and Harper.

Aaron Hofmann's legacy is found not simply in the implants he helped design or the surgical techniques he helped advance. It lives in the patients who can walk again, the surgeons he has taught and mentored, and the work that will continue because he chose to share what he learned.

