

## M. WADE SHRADER, MD, JOINS CENTER FOR PEDIATRIC ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY

As an undergraduate at Mississippi State University, Wade Shrader's aspirations were not aimed towards the medical field; instead, his sights were set on the stars. And we're not talking about Hollywood.

Upon graduating with an aerospace engineering degree, Shrader, now a Phoenix Children's Hospital pediatric orthopaedic surgeon, accepted a job as a flight engineer for NASA hoping to benefit society through his work; however, due to budget constraints, NASA was not progressing, and Shrader was frustrated with the standstill.

### A CALL TO ACTION

Meanwhile, at home, Shrader's father-in-law was diagnosed with and died from cancer at the young age of 49, leaving a lasting impression on Shrader. As painful as the loss was for him, it also served as an intriguing glimpse into the world of medicine. While still working at NASA, Shrader began attending night school to complete his premed requirements.

Shrader was accepted at the University of Chicago Pritzker Medical School where his fascination with biomechanics led him towards orthopaedics. To pursue this curiosity, Shrader took a research assistant position in the gait lab where he worked with orthopaedic surgeons and experienced the magic of the operating room, inspiring him to choose orthopaedics as a career.

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— Carol Shrader, Wade's wife



**Pediatric Orthopaedic Surgeon Wade Shrader, MD,** a one-time NASA flight engineer, brings experience in cutting-edge hip procedures to the Hospital.

While in medical school, Shrader and his wife were blessed with triplets, two boys and a girl. The children were born premature at 29 weeks. As a result of the early birth, Shrader's two boys were diagnosed with cerebral palsy (CP) at the age of 2.

After the diagnosis, Shrader leaned towards joint replacement as his sub-specialty so he could avoid treating children living with cerebral palsy. The disease was too close to him and his family.

His perspective changed when he entered his first pediatric orthopaedic rotation. Shrader's career path shifted again.

“I was fortunate to take care of this little girl with CP and help her family deal with the same issues I had dealt with as a parent. That's when I knew my purpose here in life.”

As a parent of children with cerebral palsy, Shrader has discovered he relates to parents on a level many doctors cannot, which extends the scope of care and support he provides.

“We had a difficult experience when our boys were first diagnosed with CP,” says Shrader's wife, Carol. “I would have given anything for a doctor like Wade who understood the path we were facing.”

As his father-in-law's illness had led him into medicine, his sons' led Shrader into his specialty.

### A FOCUS ON KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, HIP DISORDERS, RESEARCH

Shrader completed his fellowship in pediatric orthopaedics/scoliosis in 2005 and moved to Arizona where he co-founded the



**Shrader's children** visit with Mickey during a visit to the Magic Kingdom. Clockwise, from top: Claire, Benjamin, Cate, and Mason.

Center for Orthopedic Research and Education (CORE Institute), a group based in Phoenix's Northwest Valley providing orthopaedic surgical care to patients across the region.

Today, as a surgeon with Phoenix Children's Hospital's Center for Pediatric Orthopaedic Surgery, Shrader treats more children living with cerebral palsy than any other physician in Arizona. It was Shrader who was the first in Arizona to perform the Ganz osteotomy, a surgical procedure that deepens the hip socket to prevent the pain of hip dislocation, something often experienced by children with cerebral palsy.

Shrader and fellow Phoenix Children's pediatric orthopaedic surgeon Judson Karlen, MD, have performed two Ganz osteotomies this year, and two more are scheduled. Shrader and Karlen are the only surgeons performing Ganz osteotomies in Arizona and together lead the Hospital's Hip Preservation Program.

Beyond the Ganz procedure, Shrader also performs hip resurfacing. Another colleague, child/adolescent sports medicine specialist and orthopaedic surgeon Jeffery Vaughn, DO, performs more hip scopes to repair labral tears than anyone else in the state. With this level of collective talent, Phoenix Children's Center for Pediatric Orthopaedic Surgery can now treat any hip condition in children and young adults.

In addition to his work with hip preservation and children with special needs, Shrader leads the Center for Pediatric Orthopaedic Surgery's research efforts and is eager to grow that program, along with the division's academic endeavors.

Shrader's own son, Benjamin, faced bilateral hip reconstruction to avoid severe joint pain caused by his cerebral palsy. Lee Segal, MD, Herbert J. Louis Endowed Chair and Division Chief of the Center for Pediatric Orthopaedic Surgery at Phoenix Children's, performed the surgery.

A mere 15 years ago, children like Benjamin would have been forced to wait, and if they developed arthritis, undergo a hip replacement. Now, with procedures such as those performed at Phoenix Children's Hospital, Benjamin doesn't have to wait for treatment, improving his quality of life.

Shrader spends three days a week at Phoenix Children's Specialty and Urgent Care – Northwest Valley Center, where he cares for children living with CP. Though a pediatric specialist, Shrader also holds a transition clinic to treat young adults living with various disorders.

No longer a practicing rocket scientist, Shrader now is helping kids live a pain free life so they too can aim for the stars.