

# Blending Industry Leadership and Community Trust in Spine Care

By Alexis George



For 25 years, the Masson Spine Institute (MSI) has stood as a beacon of hope and recovery for patients grappling with spinal injury. Established by globally recognized neurosurgeon Dr. Robert Masson, MSI combines a comprehensive multi-modal and community approach to pushing the boundaries of modern medicine.

## It All Starts with Community

Dr. Masson is passionate about lean performance, systems and teams for the best outcomes. With personal experience as a lifelong athlete and sustaining a spine injury himself, he understands the importance of patients trusting their physicians and becoming experts in their injury to participate actively in recovery.

"People don't come to the brand; they come to our personalized style of care. We work one-on-one with every person in our practice and everybody we care for; we consider it part of our culture," says Dr. Masson.

As part of its ongoing commitment to being a trusted community confidant and optimizing strategies for enhancing patient outcomes and functionality, MSI is proud to announce the addition of Dr. Phil Brehnes to its talented team.

## Dr. Phil Brehnes- A Welcome Addition

Dr. Brehnes is a third-generation physician specializing in advanced minimally invasive spine surgery techniques. He is also the Executive Vice President and co-founder of Walqer, LLC, a next generation walking device company dedicated to improving patient mobilization through bio-mechanical optimization.

He is passionate about regenerative medicine and stem cell therapy and holds many awards from high-impact research societies. Alongside distinguished colleagues, Dr. Jay Wright, who specializes in elite pain management and physical medicine treatment, and Dr. Mitchell Supler, who specializes in neurosurgery, Dr. Brehnes will extend MSI's innovative growth trajectory.

"We're very excited to have him. He loves Orlando and is passionately motivated to make Orlando his home for decades," says Dr. Masson. "He's been best in class in everything he's done in his young career. Most importantly, he understands that [being the best in class] is a lifelong progression. He will continue to have that mindset by joining our practice. We don't bend on paths. We innovate, progress, and evolve the mindset extremely well."

## Expanding with AI

Dr. Masson is already a world leader and inventor of the iMAS 360™ lumbar reconstruction platform, increasing his training of other surgeons worldwide. He is also the Founder and CEO of eXpanded eXistence™, an artificial intelligence-enhanced software company backed by mixed reality and machine learning, focused on surgical logistics and performance. True to its innovative spirit, MSI will further leverage artificial intelligence (AI) to revolutionize patient care.

"We will use AI more administratively and organizationally to streamline triaging people to their best care faster," says Dr. Masson. "Everybody's worried about computers playing doctor. I agree; we still want an intimate human encounter but see an opportunity to improve the bureaucracy."

## MSI as a Global Thought Leader

Staying ahead of trends sets MSI apart as a global thought leader. A case in point is the increasing acceptance of artificial disc surgery in spine treatment. Dr. Masson, who has an artificial disc in his neck, has been an educator on artificial disc surgery for nearly 16 years since its FDA approval in 2008.

"We're excited that this continues to evolve, and we will continue to be the community leader in Florida and the country," he says.

MSI is a center of excellence, blending exceptional medical expertise, innovative technology, and unwavering commitment to its patients. The mission remains to find a strategy for people to be their most functional selves.

"We're fiercely passionate about performance. Our goals for people are to get them back to who they were before their spine health crisis. That remains a fundamental difference in our philosophy from traditional spine surgery," says Dr. Masson.

## Dr. Robert Masson

Dr. Robert Masson, M.D., is an internationally recognized private practice neurosurgeon with vast experience in cerebrovascular and skull base surgery. In 1999, he dedicated his 34-year neurosurgical career to minimally invasive spine surgery.

He has treated various elite professional athletes and lifelong weekend warriors, recognizing the importance of spine surgery to highly functional people who have lost their functional capabilities amid a spine health crisis. He is an expert on sports spine surgery.

He is a proud father of five and a lifelong athlete. He enjoys multiple sports, including tennis, prototype racing, basketball and snow skiing. He was second in the 2019 Rolex 24 Hours at Daytona in the Le Mans Prototype 2 Class with his oldest son Kyle. Dr. Masson commits to pushing his person-

al limits, and his hobbies include aviation, back-country skiing, scuba diving, mountain climbing and mountain biking.

## Dr. Phil Brehnes

At the age of 17, Dr. Behrens was one of six students accepted to Indiana University School of Medicine in a combined BS/MD program. He was also awarded the President's Medal of Honor—the highest honor given to a graduating senior. In medical school, he was among the top 15% of his medical school class and a member of Alpha Omega Alpha. He completed his residency in orthopaedic surgery at Cedars-Sinai Hospital in Beverly Hills, California.

He has been nominated for the Hibbs Science Award by the Scoliosis Research Society (SRS), the highest award in translational science at the largest international spine meeting. Dr. Behrens enjoys classic car restoration, skiing, and trap shooting in his free time. He also enjoys spending time with his better half, Mojdeh, and their highly esteemed dog, Charlie.

## Dr. Jay Wright, M.D

Dr. Wright is a graduate of the University of Texas Medical School at Houston, and he completed his residency at the University of Texas Southwestern with a specialty in physical medicine and rehabilitation. Dr. Wright was board certified by the American Board of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation and received additional board certification in pain management.

## Dr. Mitchell Supler

Dr. Supler graduated from the University of Florida with honors and received the Lyerly Award for Excellence in Neurosurgery. He has been certified by the American Board of Neurological Surgery since 1999 and currently serves as the Chief of Surgery at Orlando Health Central Hospital.

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