

Thomas C. Schuler, M.D., F.A.C.S

“Our chief purpose at The Virginia Spine Institute is to improve lives.”



Dr. Thomas Schuler is passionate about improving lives. In 1992, through visionary leadership he founded The Virginia Spine Institute (VSI) with the mission to provide the best quality spinal health care with the greatest patient satisfaction. As CEO Dr. Schuler has grown VSI into the premier multidisciplinary spinal health care organization in the mid-Atlantic region and is renowned nationally. The Virginia Spine Institute has personally improved over 50,000 lives. In addition to those people millions more across the country have been helped through the technological and care advances that have been pioneered by Dr. Schuler and his team of experts. Dr. Schuler has been the spine consultant to the NFL Washington Redskins since 1993 and has been nationally recognized among the *Top 12 Spine Surgeons for Professional Athletes*. Dr. Schuler has lectured nationally and internationally on advances in spinal health care, as well as on business developments in the medical arena. Dr. Schuler's commitment to advancing spinal health care led him to found The Spinal Research Foundation (SRF), a national 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to improving spinal health care for all Americans through research, education, and patient advocacy. He has been the Chief Scientific Officer since its inception and in 2004 became President and sits on the Board of Directors. In 2006, Dr. Schuler was elected to the Young Presidents Organization (YPO). At that time he was the only practicing physician in YPO. The Young President's Organization has further enhanced his professional development as a business leader.

Dr. Schuler is an active neurological and orthopedic spine surgeon. In fact, he earned the honor of being recognized among the *100 Best Spine Surgeons and Specialists in America*. He is a leading expert in the treatment of the cervical and lumbar spinal disorders. He is double board certified in spinal surgery and in orthopaedic surgery. He holds Fellow status in the American College of Spine Surgery, in the American College of Orthopaedic Surgery, and in the American College of Surgeons. Through his leadership, The Virginia Spine Institute has pioneered many innovations in modern spinal health care, including genetic engineering in surgery, cervical and lumbar artificial disc replacements, minimally invasive spine surgery, the use of bioresorbable implants, contemporary pain management techniques, and comprehensive rehabilitation and functional restoration programs. These developments at VSI have greatly improved the lives of a diverse population of people from weekend warriors to professional and Olympic athletes. His dedication to spine advocacy efforts through national societies, regional programs and practice organizations earned him distinguished honors on the *Top 10 Spine Surgeon Advocates* ranking. His medical and research team consists of medical doctors, doctors of physical therapy, Ph.D.'s, physician assistants, and more than 80 various support personnel.

Dr. Schuler has also been a recipient of many *Top Doctor* and *Top Surgeon* awards, including the Washingtonian Magazine, Consumer Research Counsel of America, Becker's Orthopedic & Spine, and the Best of the United States. He has also been the recipient of the Spine Journal Editor's Choice Award for outstanding research publication. The Virginia Spine Institute has been the recipient of many awards and accolades on a local and national level. VSI has been designated as a Center of Excellence by the Spinal Research Foundation. Other notable recognition includes The Washington Business Journal's Best Places to Work, Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce Best of Reston Award for community service, the Washingtonian Magazine Best Places to Work Award, and the Web Marketing Association's Award for Health Care Provider Standard of Excellence.

Dr. Schuler is active in many professional societies and organizations. Dr. Schuler is an active member of the North American Spine Society. He is a founding member of the Degenerative Spine Study Group. Dr. Schuler is the Director of Residency and Fellowship Education programs at the Virginia Spine Institute. Dr. Schuler is the Chairman of the Advisory Board of Washington First Bank. He has held the position of Communications Chair for the US Capital Chapter of YPO and is a founding member of the WPO/YPO Health Network Committee.

Dr. Schuler was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; the youngest of five children. At the age of 16, his family moved to South Bend, Indiana, when his father became Director of the Radiation Research Laboratory at the University of Notre Dame. His desire to contribute to society was kindled as an Eagle Scout and while participating in a Presidential Classroom for Young Americans. Dr. Schuler attended the University of Notre Dame, graduating with an honors degree in biology in 1982. He then matriculated into the Indiana University School of Medicine where he received his doctorate of medicine in 1986. In 1991, he completed his residency in orthopaedic surgery at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Michigan. He then completed a spinal surgery fellowship at the internationally renowned Kerlan-Jobe Orthopaedic Clinic in Inglewood, California. Upon completion of his formal training in 1992, he moved to Reston, Virginia, and his passion became a reality.

Dr. Schuler is a devoted family man with a loving wife and three wonderful children. His interests outside of his profession include fly fishing, photography, rock collecting, wildlife study, hiking, travel, and fitness. He resides in Great Falls, Virginia, with his family and their three dogs, two birds, and one hamster.