Fall 2024

EYE

UCLA Department of Ophthalmology
Jules Stein Eye Institute and Doheny Eye Institute
UCLA Health

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EYE MAGAZINE
is a publication from the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology.

Jules Stein Eye Institute and Doheny Eye Institute are proud affiliates.

Letter from the Chair

Dear Friends,

In each fall issue of *EYE Magazine*, we celebrate our graduating class of residents and fellows. It is with great pride and joy we extend heartfelt congratulations, as their graduation marks the culmination of years of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. Their journey is one of tremendous growth and achievement, and remarkable milestones reached.

Our residents and fellows exemplify the highest standards of excellence in their clinical practice, research, and education. Their commitment to patient care, their contributions to advancing medical knowledge, and their unwavering dedication to their professional development are truly inspiring.

As they step into the next phase of their careers, they carry with them the skills, understanding, and values that will lead them to continued success. They are ambassadors of the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology, and as alumni, they will represent us with distinction and honor. Their future patients, colleagues, and communities will benefit from their expertise and compassionate care.

This educational pillar is overseen by award-winning faculty who seek knowledge of the eye in all its intricacies, leading the charge in our understanding of blinding eye diseases. They are dedicated to finding treatments that will slow or stop disease progression, and possibly, even reverse the damage these diseases have caused. In this issue, you can read about the efforts of our clinicians and vision scientists who are striving to unlock the secrets of age-related macular degeneration.

It is with a heavy heart we mark the passing of **Dr. Allan Kreiger**, the founding chief of the Retina Division. Dr. Kreiger was a brilliant clinician, surgeon, researcher, and educator who greatly impacted our field. He was also a friend and mentor who said that training the next generation of ophthalmologists is how a physician could best contribute to alleviating human pain and suffering. As we think of Dr. Kreiger and the legacy he left, we welcome in this issue our incoming class of residents and fellows who will advance our and Dr. Kreiger's mission of making a difference in the lives of our global community. And I thank you for your shared dedication to this intent.

With warm regards,

Anne L. Coleman, MD, PhD

Bradley R. Straatsma, MD, Endowed Chair in Ophthalmology
Chair, UCLA Department of Ophthalmology
Director, Jules Stein Eye Institute
Affiliation Chair, Doheny Eye Institute

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EYE

UCLA DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

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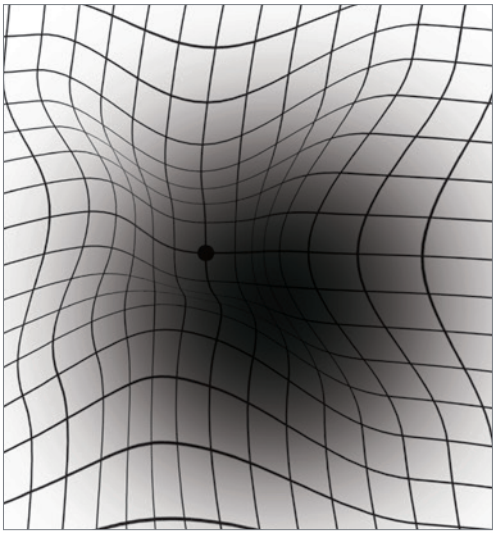

FEATURE

Unlocking the Secrets of Age-Related Macular Degeneration

Approximately 20 million people in the United States have age-related macular degeneration, and the disease currently affects almost 200 million people globally. It is a challenge that Jules Stein Eye Institute vision-scientists, Doheny Eye Center UCLA clinicians, and Doheny Eye Institute researchers are taking a front-line role in fighting.

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RESEARCH FOCUS

Dr. Gabriel Travis Honored for Contributions to Science

Dr. Travis is receiving the 2024 Endre A. Balazs Prize from the International Society for Eye Research for his body of work. The award acknowledges a distinguished scientist whose outstanding contributions have provided significant progress in the field of experimental eye research.

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FOCUS

BEST HOSPITALS U.S.News & WORLD REPORT OPHTHALMOLOGY 2024-2025

UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF Age-Related Macular Degeneration

Marjorie Paulson reached her 69th birthday with near-perfect vision, and for years needed only a mild prescription for reading glasses. But as Marjorie approached 70, she began noticing changes in her sight: colors that seemed dull, difficulty seeing clearly at night, and—most alarming—a growing blurriness in the center of her vision.

After a full eye examination at the UCLA Stein Eye Institute, Marjorie was diagnosed with age-related macular degeneration (AMD), a disease of the retina that is the leading cause of severe vision loss in adults over age 50.

MACULAR DEGENERATION is a particularly challenging condition, with implications for nearly 20 million Americans and unique issues for research. It is a challenge that UCLA Stein Eye Institute clinicians, Jules Stein Eye Institute researchers, Doheny Eye Center UCLA clinicians, and Doheny Eye Institute researchers take a frontline role in fighting.

"The progression of AMD is not well understood, even as our knowledge about the disease continues to grow," says **Colin A. McCannel, MD**, professor of ophthalmology and assistant chief of retinal disorders and ophthalmic genetics at the UCLA Stein Eye Institute.

"We know that lifestyle, diet, and other environmental factors contribute to the risk of developing AMD and vision loss," says Dr. McCannel. "We also understand that more than 30 genes have been identified as significant risk factors for AMD. However, what remains unclear is how these genes interact."

Nevertheless, the steps toward unlocking the secrets of AMD have produced significant headway.

"In my 25 years as a physician, we have made tremendous strides in our understanding and treatment of macular degeneration," says **Michael S. Ip, MD**, Gavin S. Herbert Endowed Chair for Macular Degeneration and service chief of the Retina Division at the Doheny Eye Centers UCLA.

"I tell patients with macular degeneration they will not go blind," says Dr. Ip. "The worst case is dense spots in the center of the vision in both eyes, which is not ideal but is much better than complete vision loss. But thanks to advances in the field, along with early diagnosis and treatment, it is now much less common to see that level of disability."

A particularly challenging condition

AMD occurs when aging and other related issues damage the macula—the layer of the retina that controls sharp, straight-ahead vision.

AMD is usually talked about as two disease forms, dry and wet. However, with our current understanding, it is perhaps best to think about the wet form of AMD as a complication of the dry form that only about 10 to 15 percent of patients develop.

"The dry form of AMD causes deterioration within the retina and the layer under the retina, called the retinal pigment epithelium (RPE)," says Dr. McCannel. "Changes in the eye produced by dry AMD include small deposits under the retina called drusen, irregular pigmentation, and areas under the retina where the RPE has died off."

The changes caused by dry AMD can advance slowly over decades. As dry AMD progresses, increasing amounts of atrophy, or tissue loss, develop, usually with loss of vision occurring in the center of vision. Severe, central vision loss typically happens later in life when a person is in their late 80s or 90s.

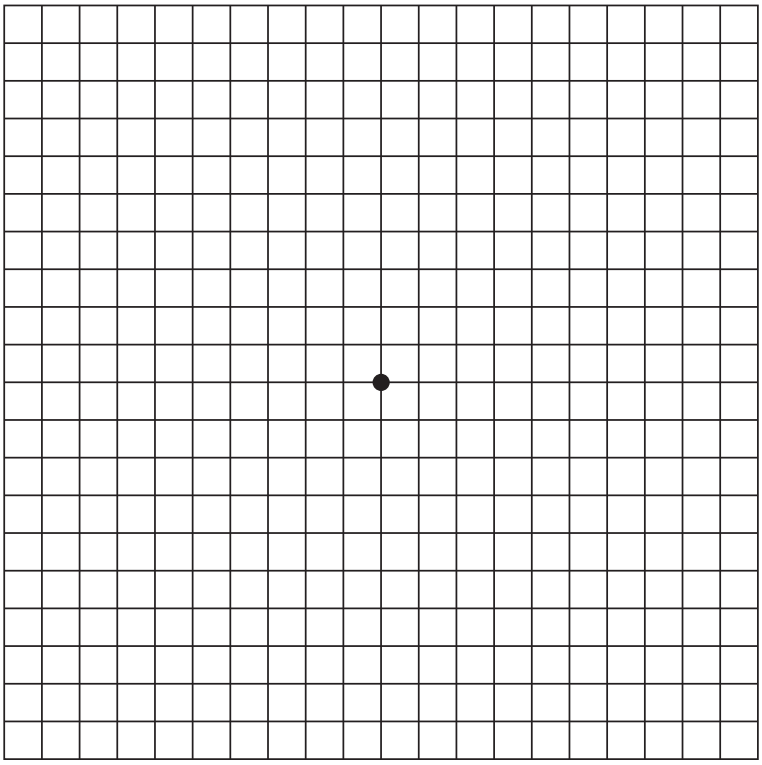
Wet macular degeneration can occur at any stage of the disease, early or late, but it is most common when the dry disease is at a more advanced stage.

"With wet AMD, abnormal blood vessels grow under the retina and cause fluid buildup, along with bleeding and eventual scarring," says Dr. McCannel. "The proliferation of abnormal blood vessels under the retina is stimulated, in part, by a protein called vascular endothelial growth factor."

This combination of symptoms in wet AMD results in rapid deterioration of vision. And without treatment, vision loss typically advances to legal blindness within three to six months.

The Amsler grid helps in detecting and monitoring AMD. With normal vision, there is a circular dot in the grid's center, and the grid lines and squares are clearly marked and perfectly straight.

On page 6 you can see how this grid might look if you have AMD.



"We know that lifestyle, diet, and other environmental factors contribute to the risk of developing AMD and vision loss. We also understand that more than 30 genes have been identified as significant risk factors for AMD. However, what remains unclear is how these genes interact."

COLIN A. MCCANNEL, MD

> “Identifying AMD early is one of the most important reasons to receive regular eye examinations—especially as we grow older.”
>
> MICHAEL S. IP, MD

A disease in stages

Dry AMD is characterized in three stages: early, intermediate, and late.

- With **early dry AMD**, there are no symptoms.
- With **intermediate dry AMD**, some people still may not experience any symptoms, while others may notice mild blurriness in their central vision, colors that may seem less bright, or some trouble seeing in low lighting. As the dry AMD advances, many patients notice it takes longer and longer to adjust to dim lighting conditions when coming from brighter lighting.
- With **late AMD**, patients may notice that straight lines begin to appear crooked or wavy, with the blurry area near the center of vision growing over time.

An advanced condition known as atrophic age-related macular degeneration, or geographic atrophy, can—without intervention—lead to legal blindness.

“Identifying AMD early is one of the most important reasons to receive regular eye examinations—especially as we grow older,” underscores Dr. Ip.

Who is at risk?

Age is the most important factor. Three other major contributors to developing AMD are:

- Family history of AMD
- Race, with whites six times more likely than Blacks or Hispanics to be affected by AMD due to several genetic factors, and
- Smoking, which triples the risk.

Other factors, such as high blood pressure and eating a high-fat, low-vegetable diet, can also contribute to AMD.

AMD currently affects almost 200 million people globally. And with an increasingly aging population, that impact is expected to rise to 288 million people by 2040.

When the major risk factors are combined with increasing age, the chances of developing AMD grow considerably. Worldwide, while less than one-half of one percent of people between 50 and 60 are diagnosed with AMD, that number quadruples for those aged 70 to 80. Among people over 80, nearly 12 percent have AMD.

What patients need to know

For those with AMD, the issues surrounding a future living with the disease will be affected by the progression and the form of the disease. Although late AMD does not cause complete blindness, it robs the patient of central vision and the ability to see faces, read, drive, and easily navigate once routine activities of normal life.

“I tell patients who are diagnosed with AMD their disease course is not very predictable,” says Dr. McCannel. “But we can create a plan for how they can deal with the condition and maintain a lifestyle that is as comfortable as possible.”

For most dry AMD, no medication or treatment yet exists. Says Dr. McCannel, “The advancement of the disease, however, can be slowed with lifestyle changes, such as a diet rich in green leafy vegetables like spinach, kale, and collard greens. There is also a vitamin supplement called AREDS 2, which is a formula of age-related eye disease vitamin supplements that can slow the progression as much as 20 percent over five years.”

For wet AMD, as well as the dry AMD variant called geographic atrophy, there are specific treatments available. UCLA Department of Ophthalmology physicians recommend treatment of wet AMD with medications that have been around for years, and newer and better versions are becoming available, which are typically injected in the eye every four to 16 weeks. For geographic atrophy, recent FDA-approved treatments are injected every four to eight weeks and can slow the disease progression by about 20 percent over two years.

Clinical trials for AMD

The UCLA Stein Eye Institute and Doheny Eye Centers UCLA are conducting a broad range of clinical trials for age-related macular degeneration (AMD). These trials include cutting-edge stem cell-derived retina pigment epithelial cell replacement for geographic atrophy due to AMD, as well as gene therapy studies for both wet and dry AMD. There is also a study involving an oral agent for dry AMD.

Clinical trials study new treatments that are not currently FDA approved and evaluate their effects on human health outcomes. Each study has specific inclusion and exclusion criteria; only subjects who meet all criteria may be enrolled. Clinical trials are usually funded by pharmaceutical companies to move their new treatments forward with FDA approval.

There may be more than one treatment group in a clinical trial. For example, sometimes there are two treatment groups that each receive a different dose of the experimental treatment, and there may also be one group that receives a placebo or "sham treatment," which acts as a control group. In retina research, a sham treatment typically involves a treatment that simulates the true treatment; however, the actual investigational medication is not given. For other studies, everyone may receive the treatment.

UCLA clinician researchers rely on patients who choose to participate in clinical trials to obtain FDA approval of new treatments and to gain greater understanding of the disease to better halt the progression of AMD.

There are many reasons patients choose to participate in clinical trials. Some have experienced a family member or friend who lost vision due to AMD or feel their participation may help themselves or younger family members. Choosing to participate in a clinical trial is completely voluntary. Either way, the UCLA Stein Eye Institute and Doheny Eye Centers UCLA care for all patients, whether or not they are interested in participating in clinical trials.

If you are interested in possibly participating in a clinical trial, let your UCLA ophthalmologist know.

Rosaleen M. Ostrick, MPH, MA
Administrative Director, Retina Clinical Research
Jules Stein Eye Institute

Normal Vision

Vision with AMD

Dr. McCannel notes the new medications for geographic atrophy represent significant progress but even better and more powerful medications are needed.

"Treatments developed for wet AMD have been refined over the past 20 years and can dramatically slow the progression of vision loss," says Dr. McCannel. "However, the constant challenge in our research is identifying interventions for dry AMD as well and finding answers that stop the progression of both forms—and ultimately reversing the damage."

Gaining more understanding of the underlying mechanisms of AMD will provide better objectives for treatment interventions that may slow or even stop the disease.

"Current medication has produced exciting results for the management of wet AMD," says Dr. McCannel. "We have also made notable progress with understanding dry AMD (non-geographic atrophy), but we have not progressed to the point of successfully developing treatments. We have a long way to go before we can better treat all dry AMD."

Fighting AMD: a future with new research directions

Clinicians and researchers are deeply involved in the exploration of AMD with the hope of someday preventing all vision loss from AMD occurring in the first place. "But at this point, given the understanding, we are focused on conducting research on how to optimize current treatments, as well as developing therapies with emerging and new technologies, such as stem cell treatments," says Dr. McCannel.

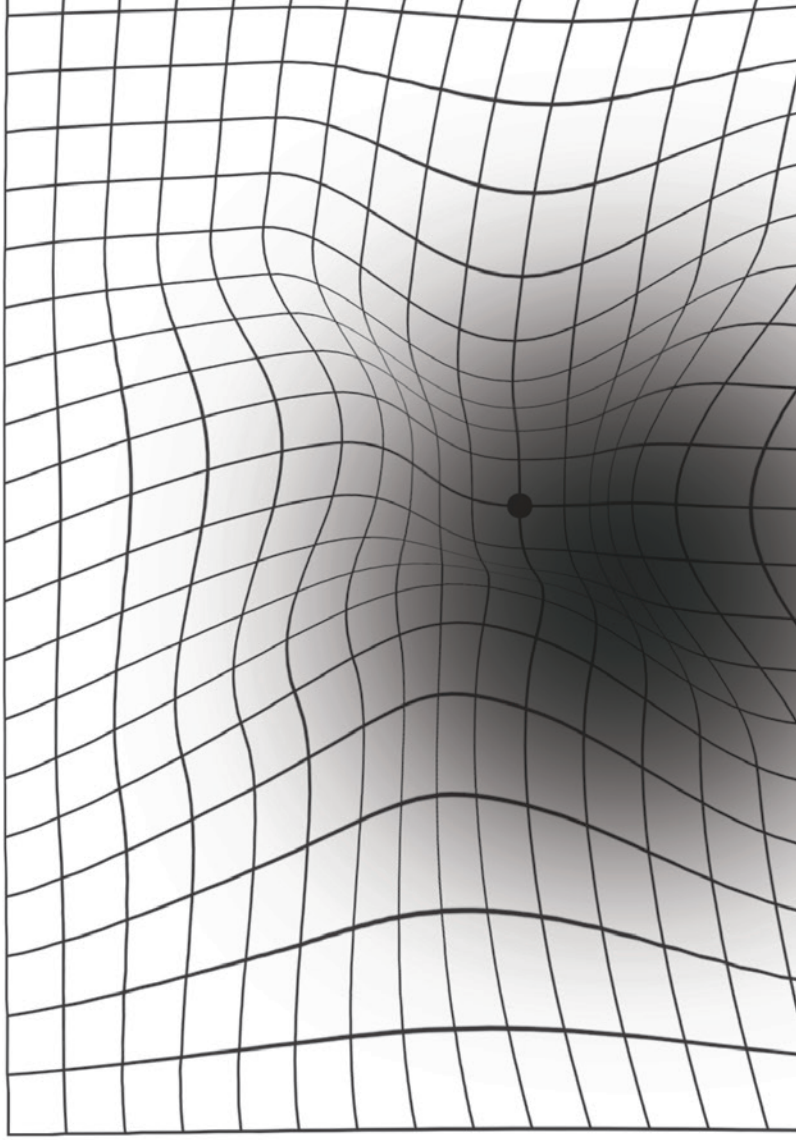
"For patients that already have AMD, the Holy Grail would be the rejuvenation of the retinal and RPE tissues," continues Dr. McCannel, "which would stop the progress and ideally reverse the damage. Our current focus is on using stem cell technologies to stimulate renewed growth in the affected areas. We currently have early phase clinical trials that use stem cell derived RPE cells under the retina in areas affected by AMD."

In these trials, conducted in cooperation with the UCLA Broad Stem Cell Research Center, Jules Stein Eye Institute researchers have developed stem cell derived RPE cells derived from the patient, usually obtained from a small skin biopsy.

"The benefit of using the patient's own tissue to create the RPE cells is that the body's immune system will not attack and destroy them," Dr. McCannel says. "These trials are early phase research, but we are optimistic this autologous stem cell treatment approach will have profound benefits to our patients with AMD. The results of clinical trials show we can indeed slow the growth of the spots in the center of vision with these anticomplement injections," says Dr. McCannel, "just as we can already slow the progression of wet AMD, which is excellent progress."

Dr. Ip directs the Doheny Image Reading Center, which works with industry and medical partners to design the protocols and the analysis of clinical trials for both dry and wet AMD.

"We've seen firsthand in clinical trials how new treatments work for geographic atrophy," says Dr. Ip, "and as a field, we've made transformative strides in wet macular degeneration—it's been a revolution. Now the research field for wet macular degeneration is focusing on the durability of treatment, and minimizing damage from geographic atrophy, whether for treating eyes with small amounts of atrophy before they enlarge or treating eyes that are a high risk for developing geographic atrophy. That is where the field is going."



For someone with AMD, the lines on the Amsler grid can appear wavy, blurred, or distorted. There may be blank spots on the grid or areas that appear darker.

Is customized treatment coming?

As research directions point toward using a patient's own cells for developing treatments, therapies may emerge that target the disease with specialized treatment for the needs of individual patients.

"Treatments that are widely effective may not be effective for every patient," says **Deborah A. Ferrington, PhD**, chief scientific officer at the Doheny Eye Institute. "Given the multiple pathways to AMD that involve many genetic and environmental factors, targeted therapies will be the way of the future."

One approach to creating targeted therapies relies on induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs), a relatively recent innovation that has shown potential: progress with iPSCs includes using patient-specific cells to identify the optimal treatment for each patient, with a goal of opening the door to personalized medicine.

"Researchers continue to ask critical questions about cellular changes associated with aging, factors that influence pathology, and the potential to protect against pathologic changes," says Dr. Ferrington. "As these mysteries are unraveled, the scientific community will move closer to discovering groundbreaking therapies for AMD."

Learning to live with age-related macular degeneration

Patients with age-related macular degeneration (AMD) receive exemplary care from eye care specialists who are dedicated to preserving their sight, but what do they do if they experience difficulty going about daily activities?

Because AMD does not affect peripheral vision, patients are able to compensate by learning how to capitalize on their remaining sight. The UCLA Vision Rehabilitation Center (VRC) provides potential solutions for people with vision impairment. Through careful evaluation with the vision rehabilitation team, patients at the VRC are provided with a specialized rehabilitation plan tailored to their individual needs, which may include use of low vision devices, such as filters for glare control, task lighting, magnifiers, telescopes, electronic aids, visual assistive mobile apps for smartphones or tablets, and computer assistive technology, which patients are taught to effectively utilize. In addition, patients may join the UCLA support group for low vision, which meets remotely via Zoom every other month to offer help with coping with vision loss.

The services provided by the VRC can be a potential game changer—helping patients maintain their independence by better utilizing the remaining vision they have.

Dr. Gabriel Travis Wins Prestigious Award for Contributions to Vision Science

Dr. Travis' contributions to vision science earned him the 2024 Endre A. Balazs Prize from the International Society for Eye Research—given "to honor a distinguished scientist whose outstanding contributions provide significant progress in the field of experimental eye research."

As a UCLA Department of Ophthalmology vision scientist, **Gabriel H. Travis, MD**, investigates basic questions that, in many cases, have unknown relevance to specific human diseases. Among the most fundamental: How are we able to see in daylight? His group has discovered several processes that are substantially stimulated by visible light and has continued to study how natural light exposure affects the dynamics of visual retinoids.

But in elucidating the biochemical pathways involved in visual cycles, Dr. Travis' group has identified proteins that are highly relevant to certain inherited visual disorders. This includes Leber congenital amaurosis, a disease that is responsible for 20 percent of childhood blindness; and Stargardt macular degeneration, which causes loss of central vision and sensitivity to light. "Once you start learning about specific proteins that are involved in visual processes, you may discover that the genes for those proteins, when mutated, can lead to a blinding disease or some other visual problem," says Dr. Travis, Charles Kenneth Feldman Chair in Ophthalmology at the Jules Stein Eye Institute.

Dr. Travis' contributions to vision science earned him the 2024 Endre A. Balazs Prize from the International Society for Eye Research—given "to honor a distinguished scientist whose outstanding contributions provide significant progress in the field of experimental eye research." The Balazs Prize is one of only four awards bestowed every two years by the organization at its biennial meeting. Dr. Travis will accept the award and deliver a plenary lecture at the 2024 meeting in Buenos Aires, October 20–24. "To be recognized by such an important society for the work we've done over the years is a great honor," he says.

Dr. Travis has several ongoing projects in the laboratory related to photoreceptor cells—in particular, the specialized neurons in the retina, known as rods and cones, that provide vision in low light and bright light, respectively. One of the key light-sensitive proteins is known as an opsin. In vertebrates, when light enters the eye a derivative of vitamin A called 11-*cis*-retinaldehyde captures the photoreceptor cell, causing it to change shape—the process of isomerization. The opsin then releases retinaldehyde, and the only way to recover sensitivity is to convert that so-called trans-retinaldehyde back to 11-*cis*-retinaldehyde and recombine it with the opsin.

"You can think of this visual cycle like a mousetrap, in which the mouse is the photon, and the chromophore is the mousetrap," Dr. Travis says. "When the mouse comes, it snaps shut, and then you have to put energy into resetting the mousetrap so it's ready to spring again. In that metaphor, we're interested in understanding the process of resetting the mousetrap."

Approximately two decades ago, Dr. Travis' lab was one of the first to discover that Rpe65 was the retinoid isomerase involved in the biochemical machinery that allows the eyes to reset. This important finding also set them on a new direction. "While we were studying Rpe65, which is the slow visual cycle that caters to rods, we discovered that the rate of being able to convert the chromophore into a new opsin visual pigment that's light sensitive is much too slow to keep up with the rate of chromophore consumption," Dr. Travis explains.

That led Dr. Travis and his team to investigate an alternate retinal visual cycle for cone visual pigment regeneration. They found that in the Müller cell visual cycle, the RGR opsin protein and retinol dehydrogenase-10 convert trans-retinol to 11-*cis*-retinol during exposure to visible light. Dr. Travis and his colleagues have continued to focus on unraveling the biochemical processes involved in this conversion. Recently, they found a protein in the cone cell that does the important work of oxidizing the 11-*cis*-retinol it picks up from the Müller cells and oxidizes it into 11-*cis*-retinaldehyde, which turns into a visual pigment that returns light sensitivity.

The clinical relevance to Dr. Travis' studies comes from the fact that the genes for several of the proteins involved in the visual cycle pathways are affected in human inherited retinal and macular degenerations. "We are working to understand what these proteins normally do, and how loss of function causes blindness in people with disease-causing mutations," he explains. Such an understanding is helping to inform treatment strategies such as gene therapy.

Dr. Travis' group recently described the role of a protein, RDH12, that is affected in Leber congenital amaurosis. They have also contributed important findings on how another protein, ABCA4, can cause recessive Stargardt disease. "In diseases that are inherited through Mendelian mechanics—where it's a single gene that passes down a recessive disease-causing trait—once you understand what a protein normally does and then know that it is broken or missing in that disease, it's a really powerful way of understanding the disease mechanism," Dr. Travis notes.

IN TRIBUTE

A Towering Figure in Ophthalmology

Dr. Allan E. Kreiger
1935–2024

Allan E. Kreiger, MD, professor of ophthalmology emeritus and founding chief of the Retina Division in the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology and the Jules Stein Eye Institute (1976–2001) lost his battle with cancer on June 30, 2024.

"Dr. Kreiger was beloved by his patients, trainees, and colleagues for his exceptional skill, unwavering dedication, and compassionate care," says **Anne L. Coleman, MD, PhD**, chair of the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology, director of the Jules Stein Eye Institute, and affiliation chair of the Doheny Eye Institute. "His impact extended far beyond his professional achievements; he was a mentor and friend to many, always willing to share his knowledge and lend a helping hand. His dedication to his profession and the compassionate care he provided will have a lasting impact on generations to come."

Born in San Pedro, California, in 1935, Dr. Kreiger received his MD from the UCLA School of Medicine in 1963 and conducted both his internship (1964) and residency in ophthalmology (1967) at UCLA. Dr. Kreiger joined the Department in 1967 as a clinical instructor in surgery. He became assistant professor in 1969 and associate professor in 1971. He rose to the position of professor of ophthalmology in 1977 and became professor of ophthalmology emeritus in 2006. Dr. Kreiger was associate chief of ophthalmology at Harbor–UCLA Medical Center from 1967 to 1968, and its chief from 1969 to 1972.

"As founding chief of the Retina Division in the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology and the Jules Stein Eye Institute (1976–2001), Dr. Kreiger led an outstanding retinal disease and surgery research, training, and patient care program by leading vitreoretinal education programs, conducting substantial research, and steadily advancing patient care activities," says **Bradley R. Straatsma, MD, JD**, founding chair of the Department and founding director of the Institute. "He substantially advanced the academic activity of our Department."

"Dr. Kreiger personified the highest standards in patient care, education, and mentorship," says **Bartly J. Mondino, MD**, former Department chair and Institute director. "He was beloved by faculty, trainees, and patients alike. He was an expert at diagnosing and treating complex forms of retinal diseases and contributed instrumentation and techniques to the profession and published studies that added to the world's literature."

When asked his most important professional contribution, Dr. Kreiger said it was educating residents and fellows saying, "Training the next generation of ophthalmologists and retinal specialists is where you can contribute the most to alleviating human pain and suffering."

Dr. Kreiger is survived by his wife, Kristin, and daughters, Gretchen and Karen.

"Training the next generation of ophthalmologists and retinal specialists is where you can contribute the most to alleviating human pain and suffering."

ALLAN E. KREIGER, MD

Department Representation at 2024 AUPO Meeting

Faculty and staff from the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology contributed to the 58th annual Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology (AUPO) meeting, which promotes excellence in ophthalmic education, research, and ethical practice.

Anne L. Coleman, MD, PhD, chair of the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology, director of the Jules Stein Eye Institute, and affiliation chair of the Doheny Eye Institute, presented "Unique Opportunities and Challenges for Women and Underrepresented in Medicine Faculty Members" and moderated a breakfast roundtable on "Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Department." **Deborah A. Ferrington, PhD**, an AUPO Research Director Council member and chief scientific officer of the Doheny Eye Institute, moderated a roundtable on "The Role of Philanthropy in Supporting Research."

The meeting, held January 31 to February 3, 2024, in Austin, Texas, offered educational activities blending research, education, and patient care for academic departments, with programming geared toward department chairs, residency directors, directors of medical student education, research directors, department administrators, and residency program coordinators.

Jules Stein Eye Institute/Doheny Eye Institute Take the Spotlight at ARVO

The Jules Stein Eye Institute and the Doheny Eye Institute took center stage with an impressive 140 presentations at the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) annual meeting May 5–9, 2024, in Seattle, Washington. ARVO is the largest international organization dedicated to advancing research in the field of vision research. Their annual meeting is one of the largest gatherings for eye and vision scientists at all career stages to share the latest research findings, as was represented by the work of our vision scientists.

Department Faculty Take on Leadership Roles at ARVO

Congratulations to **SriniVas R. Sadda, MD**, who was welcomed as ARVO President for the 2024–25 fiscal year. At the close of the 2024 meeting, Dr. Sadda, director of artificial intelligence at Doheny Eye Institute, announced his theme for the 2025 meeting: Imagining, Innovation, and Intelligence in Vision Science, saying, "We are in an era of unprecedented scientific and technological innovation in ophthalmology, with artificial intelligence–powered tools allowing us to gain incredible insights into eye diseases from the microscopic to macroscopic level. The 2025 Annual Meeting is a perfect opportunity to celebrate these innovations and really delve into the frontiers of vision science and how we can push the boundaries of what we thought was possible."

In other leadership news, **Sophie X. Deng, MD, PhD**, was announced as the ARVO President-Elect and **Joseph L. Demer, MD, PhD**, was named ARVO Vice President-Elect.

Breakfast Forum at ARVO

The Doheny-UCLA Breakfast Forum was held May 5, 2024, during the ARVO meeting. Scientific experts shared their novel perspectives on unrecognized determinants of retinopathy. Speakers included **Julia V. Busik, PhD, FARVO**, **Arup Das, MD, PhD, FARVO**, and **Mike Sapieha, PhD**. The forum was moderated by **Kaustabh Ghosh, PhD**.

Alumni Reception at ARVO

Approximately 200 esteemed guests attended an alumni reception on May 6, 2024, at the ARVO meeting. It was a vibrant occasion filled with reminiscing, networking, and camaraderie as alumni from various parts of the world came together to celebrate shared experiences and forge new connections. The diverse turnout underscored the enduring bond and the collective spirit that unites our alumni communities, showcasing the strength and vitality of the Doheny and Jules Stein Eye Institute alumni networks.

ARVO 2024 Travel Award Winners

Each year, preceding the ARVO meeting, the Doheny Eye Institute organizes an event to better prepare researchers and medical students in presenting their findings to the global vision-research community. This year, four outstanding researchers were honored with $500 travel awards sponsored by the Doheny Alumni Association in recognition of their outstanding research presentations. Congratulations to the winners: **Mahesh Agarwal**, **Irene Santiago**, **Anna Urrea**, and **Ayesha Nuri Karamat**.

American Academy of Ophthalmology Mid-Year Forum 2024

The American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) Mid-Year Forum was held in Washington D.C. on April 17–20, 2024. Ophthalmologists go to the capital and meet with members of Congress and their staff to directly advocate for patients and learn about health care policy changes.

This year, five UCLA Department of Ophthalmology residents, **Leila Chew, MD**, **Kendall Goodyear, MD**, **Elise Ma, MD, PhD**, **Sagar Rambhia, MD**, and **Junru Yan, MD**, were accepted into the AAO Ambassador Program and attended this year's Mid-Year Forum. Additionally, **Jiwei Sheng, MD**, a retina fellow sponsored by the American Society of Retina Specialists, and **Alexander Engelmann, MD**, a neuro-ophthalmology fellow sponsored by the North American Neuro-Ophthalmology Society, attended as Advocacy Ambassadors.

Four faculty members also attended due to their national society leadership roles: **Simon Fung, MD**, AAO Young Ophthalmologists Committee Member and head of the inaugural California Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons Young Ophthalmologists Committee; **JoAnn Giaconi, MD**, AAO Secretary for Communications; **Peter Quiros, MD**, North American Neuro-Ophthalmology Society Councilor; and **Victoria Tseng, MD, PhD**, AAO Regional Representative for State Affairs.

L to r: Charles "Tom" Foscue, chair of the Doheny Eye Institute Board of Directors; Marissa Goldberg, chief executive officer, Doheny Eye Institute; Dr. Anne Coleman, chair of the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology, director of the Jules Stein Eye Institute, and affiliation chair of the Doheny Eye Institute; and Ronald Olson, board member, Doheny Eye Institute.

Opening 2025: Doheny Eye Center UCLA–Pasadena

A state-of-the-art Doheny Eye Center UCLA clinical center is being built on the vision-science campus of the Doheny Eye Institute in Pasadena. The Doheny Eye Center UCLA, located at 150 N. Orange Grove Blvd., will be staffed by UCLA Department of Ophthalmology physicians providing the highest quality of vision care through the detection, diagnosis, and treatment of all ocular diseases.

Kendal Thomas Welcomed as UCLA Stein Eye Institute Clinic Director

The UCLA Stein Eye Institute welcomes **Kendal Thomas** as clinic director in the Department of Ophthalmology. Kendal oversees clinical operations, ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements, maintaining high standards of patient satisfaction, safety, and quality, and supervising staff in accordance with UCLA health policies and procedures.

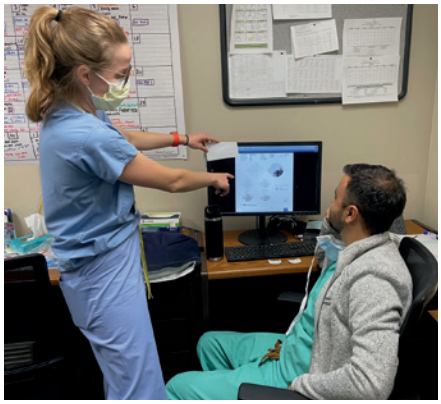
"I am thrilled to join such a highly esteemed and globally recognized program in the UCLA Stein Eye Institute," says Kendal. "I am learning from the greatest minds in the specialty, and I am leveraging my experience to foster an environment that patients continue to identify as best in class."

Kendal has an extensive background in health care management, public health, and leading ambulatory healthcare facilities. He previously served with Ochsner Health System, working with physicians and front-line team members in the development of access, quality, finance, and experience-oriented goals. At the onset of the pandemic, Kendal led and supported the implementation of a new daily escalation huddle for hospitalists, which quickly addressed physician concerns, and separately managed a successful expansion of outpatient access initiatives to ramp critical outpatient specialists.

He earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from Morehouse College and a Master of Public Health degree from Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center in Health Policy and Systems Management.

Thank You Volunteer Faculty

They say it takes a village to raise a child, and it certainly takes a village to train a resident. We are incredibly grateful for the ophthalmologists who choose to work for—or volunteer at—our affiliate hospitals, where our residents spend two-thirds of their residency training. These doctors take time away from their private practices and other professional obligations to teach our residents, whether it is in the operating room or in the clinics. They bring a wealth of experience and a different viewpoint on many clinical issues, which rounds out a resident's education. The UCLA Stein Eye Institute's ophthalmology residency program would not be as strong of an experience or have the world-class reputation it has without the contributions of these leaders.



Volunteer Faculty Members Drs. Peter Cornell and Ekjyot "Joey" Gill are shown with UCLA Stein Eye Institute residents during their rounds at Olive View–UCLA Medical Center.

Top right: Dr. Sasha Hubschman (giving the peace sign) and Dr. Joey Gill. Bottom left: Dr. Angela Oh and Dr. Peter Cornell. Bottom center: Dr. Sagar Rhambia, Dr. Joey Gill, and Dr. Alan Kong. Bottom right: Dr. Erin NaPier and Dr. Joey Gill.

Congratulations Dr. Kenneth Hoffer

Kenneth J. Hoffer, MD, UCLA Department of Ophthalmology volunteer faculty member and 2024 Thomas H. Pettit Lecturer, was honored at the 50th anniversary meeting of the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery (ASCRS) April 5, 2024, in Boston, Massachusetts. As the founder of ASCRS and its president (1974–75), Dr. Hoffer was recognized as a visionary who started the society that changed the course of cataract surgery, and with it, ophthalmic history.

"We were instructed if you find a foreign body in the eye, you get it out—immediately," said Dr. Hoffer. "And I was saying, put a foreign body in the eye. This was the mentality that had to be bridged with all these ophthalmologists. This mentality controlled everything. I was told, 'I'm not going to allow you to speak about it at our meeting. I'm not going to allow you to publish an article about it in our journal.' That was the world of 1974."

But Dr. Hoffer and others wanted to talk about intraocular lenses—the artificial replacement lens that's used in approximately 3.5 million cataract procedures performed annually in the United States—they wanted to research them, use them, refine them, and improve techniques and outcomes. That desire is what spurred Dr. Hoffer, only 29 years old at the time, to create what is now the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery.

Kenneth J. Hoffer, MD

AWARDS & HONORS

Ava K. Bittner, OD, PhD, Smotrich Family Optometric Clinician-Scientist Chair, was honored as a Gold Fellow at the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology annual meeting in Seattle, Washington, May 5–9, 2024, for her individual accomplishments, leadership, and contributions to the Association.

Joseph L. Demer, MD, PhD, Arthur L. Rosenbaum, MD, Chair in Pediatric Ophthalmology, presented the keynote lecture of the Arthur Jampolsky Fellows Society, "Treating Strabismus Caused by Pathology of the Orbital Pulley System," May 20, 2024, at the Smith-Kettlewell Eye Research Institute, in San Francisco, California.

Dr. Demer gave the keynote lecture of the 80th annual meeting of the Japanese Association for Strabismus and Amblyopia on June 15, 2024, in Hamamatsu, Japan.

Sophie X. Deng, MD, PhD, Walton Li Chair in Cornea and Uveitis, was honored as a Silver Fellow at the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology annual meeting in Seattle, Washington, May 5–9, 2024, for her individual accomplishments, leadership, and contributions to the Association.

Dr. Deng presented the 2023–2024 Kimura MD Lecture on May 30, 2024, at UC San Francisco.

Deborah A. Ferrington, PhD, Stephen J. Ryan-Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation Endowed Presidential Chair, presented the inaugural M. Cristina Kenney, MD, PhD, Memorial Lecture, "Mitochondria: The Retina's Achilles' Heel in Age-related Macular Degeneration," on June 1, 2024, at the University of California, Irvine, Gavin Herbert Eye Institute.

Gary N. Holland, MD, Jack H. Skirball Chair in Ocular Inflammatory Diseases, was awarded the S. Rodman Irvine Prize at the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology Annual Seminar on June 7, 2024. The Irvine Prize recognizes excellence in a Department of Ophthalmology faculty member whose relationships with patients and students are exemplary; whose professional actions illustrate the finest traditions of the medical profession and the vision-science community, and whose teaching demonstrates a dedication to transmission of knowledge to future generations.

Congratulations to **Dr. Kevin Miller**, chief of the Cataract and Refractive Surgery Division, who penned the guest editorial in the April 2024 special refractive cataract surgery edition of *Ophthalmology Management* and to Jules Stein Eye Institute ophthalmologists **Drs. John D. Bartlett**, **Shawn Lin**, and **Mitra Nejad** who contributed articles to the special issue: www.ophthalmologymanagement.com/issues/2024/april/.

Dr. Miller also served as an expert source for the article, "Cataract Surgery: What It Is and How Much It Costs," in the June 21, 2024, edition of *U.S. News & World Report*.

Dr. Deborah Ferrington presents the inaugural M. Cristina Kenney Memorial Lecture.

Dr. JoAnn Giaconi joins S. Rodman Irvine Prize honoree Dr. Gary Holland, who received his prestigious award during the Department's Annual Seminar on June 7, 2024.

Stacy L. Pineles, MD, professor of ophthalmology, presented the Gunter von Noorden Lecture, "Functional and Systemic Effects of Strabismus and Serious Pediatric Eye Disease," on January 20, 2024, at the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas.

SriniVas R. Sadda, MD, Professor of Ophthalmology, received a four-year R01 grant from the National Institutes of Health, National Eye Institute, funding his research project: In Vivo Imaging of the Human Retina at the Molecular Level.

Edmund Tsui, MD, MS, assistant professor of ophthalmology, gave the keynote lecture, "OCT Biomarkers of Intraocular Inflammation" at the Carolyn Smith Uveitis Symposium on March 22, 2024, at the Vanderbilt Eye Institute in Nashville, Tennessee.

NEW FACULTY APPOINTMENTS

Reza Alizadeh, MD

Health Sciences
Assistant Clinical Professor

Dr. Alizadeh specializes in the medical and surgical treatment of glaucoma and refractive cataract surgery.

Dr. Alizadeh was a board-certified ophthalmologist in his home country of Iran before completing a two-year glaucoma research fellowship at the UCLA Stein Eye institute. He then completed his ophthalmology residency at the University of Arizona, where he served as chief resident and went on medical missions to rural Mexico. He completed his fellowship at the Havener Eye Institute at Ohio State University, receiving advanced training in glaucoma surgery, including laser and minimally invasive glaucoma surgery.

Dr. Alizadeh is an avid supporter of scientific advancements in improving outcomes, and he is excited to share his expertise with his patients. He has authored dozens of peer-reviewed articles and has presented his work at scientific meetings. He is an active member of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Glaucoma Society.

Dr. Alizadeh sees patients at the UCLA Stein Eye Institute in Westwood, the Stein Eye Institute–Calabasas, and the Stein Eye Institute–Santa Monica.

Clémence Bonnet, MD, PhD

Health Sciences
Assistant Clinical Professor

Dr. Bonnet specializes in the clinical and surgical treatment of corneal diseases. A member of the Cornea Division, she conducts research on limbal stem cell deficiency, ocular surface diseases, and corneal imaging.

Dr. Bonnet obtained her MD at Paris Descartes University in 2015. She received her master's degree in surgical sciences from Université Paris Creteil in 2018. She graduated with a research international fellow degree in cornea diseases and surgery at the UCLA Stein Eye Institute in 2019. She obtained her PhD in cell biology from Paris Cité Université and UCLA in 2022 summa cum laude, publishing several papers advancing the understanding of limbal stem cell biology in major peer-reviewed journals.

Dr. Bonnet sees patients at the UCLA Stein Eye Institute in Westwood.

UCLA Department of Ophthalmology Annual Seminar

The Department of Ophthalmology held its Annual Seminar on June 7, 2024, at the UCLA Stein Eye Institute's RPB Auditorium. The educational event covers current clinical and research aspects of selected ophthalmic subspecialties and includes sessions from full-time faculty of both the Department of Ophthalmology/Jules Stein Eye Institute and the Doheny Eye Institute, along with nationally prominent invited lecturers.

The Seminar was highlighted by the following keynote lectures:

54th Doheny Memorial Lecturer

Joseph F. Rizzo III, MD
Simmons Lessell Professor of Ophthalmology
Massachusetts Eye & Ear Infirmary

54th Jules Stein Lecturer

Russell N. Van Gelder, MD, PhD
Boyd K. Bucey Memorial Chair
University of Washington
Department of Ophthalmology

21st Bradley R. Straatsma Lecturer

Tamara R. Fountain, MD
Professor of Ophthalmology
Rush Medical College
Department of Ophthalmology

21st Thomas H. Pettit Lecturer

Kenneth J. Hoffer, MD
Former Clinical Professor
UCLA Department of Ophthalmology

The 2024 Excellence in Research Awards were also presented at the Seminar. Congratulations to Resident **Ken Kitayama, MD, PhD**, Clinical Fellow **Adrian Au, MD, PhD**, International Research Fellow **Wei-Yu Lai, MD**, and Postdoctoral Fellow **Lin Zhang, PhD** on being honored for their exceptional research projects.

L to r: Drs. Anthony Arnold, Tamara Fountain, Bradley Straatsma, Anne Coleman, and Robert Goldberg.

10th Annual Pacific Retina Club and International Retinal Imaging Symposium 2024

The International Retinal Imaging Society (IntRIS) hosted a combined meeting with the Pacific Retina Club, May 30–June 1, 2024, at the UCLA Meyer & Renee Luskin Conference Center.

The Pacific Retina Club brought together retina specialists to exchange their expertise in the evaluation and management of retinal diseases and covered a broad array of innovative topics including the latest surgical techniques, imaging advances, emerging treatments for wet and dry AMD, and the most current guidelines for the top-level care of retinal vascular and pediatric and inherited retinal diseases as well as tumors and uveitis.

The International Retinal Imaging Symposium 2024 convened global experts to facilitate the advancement of knowledge, science, and innovation in the field of retinal imaging.

The 2024 combined meeting hosted nearly 180 attendees and included spirited case presentations, a diverse spectrum of scientific talks, and engaging expert panel discussions delivered by many of the world's leaders in the field of retinal disease. **Dr. Mark W. Johnson** delivered the keynote Alexander R. Irvine Lecture, and **Dr. James G. Fujimoto** delivered the Lawrence A. Yannuzzi Award Lecture.

Course organizers were **Drs. David Sarraf**, **Amani Fawzi, K. Bailey Freund**, **H. Richard McDonald**, and **SriniVas Sadda**.

L to r: Drs. Alexander Brucker, Cynthia Toth, K. Bailey Freund, James Fujimoto (Lawrence A. Yannuzzi Lecture), Nadia Waheed, David Sarraf, Amani Fawzi, Brandon Lujan.

L to r: Drs. H. Richard McDonald, Mark Johnson (Alexander R. Irvine Lecture), David Sarraf.

Zeiss Advanced Cataract Surgery Course

Faculty, fellows, and residents of the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology and elsewhere attended the Alcon Vision Advanced Cataract Surgery Course on February 3, 2024, at the Westin South Coast Plaza in Costa Mesa, California.

Directed by **Dr. Kevin Miller**, course attendees participated in an anterior and pars plana vitrectomy lab and an affiliated technologies lab. Working with Zeiss representatives and faculty instructors, participants had the opportunity to use Zeiss instruments and practice advanced cataract surgical techniques. Elements explored included the Mel 90 excimer laser, iris suturing, intraocular lens fixation in the absence of capsule support, capsule tension rings and segments, veracity surgical planning, astigmatism planning and alignment with the IOLMaster 700, CALLISTO eye, ARTEVO 800 Digital Microscope, miLOOP lens fragmentation, optical coherence tomography imaging, FORUM PACS System, and LensAR ALLY FLACS. The course also had a complex video cases workshop.

Annual Comprehensive Ophthalmology Review Course

The UCLA Stein Eye Institute and Doheny Eye Institute presented the Annual Comprehensive Ophthalmology Review Course, February 8–11, 2024, at the UCLA Stein Eye Institute in Westwood.

The four-day intensive virtual and in-person program is aimed at ophthalmologists and trainees and reviews the clinical essentials of each subspecialty in ophthalmology. The course helps participants prepare for OKAPS, ABO, and maintenance recertification examinations. Clinically oriented, UCLA course faculty and guest faculty concentrated on the epidemiology, clinical presentation, diagnosis, and management of ophthalmologic disease, as well as covering important clinical principles of ophthalmology and updating any changes to traditional clinical protocols. Course directors were **Drs. John Irvine** and **Mitra Nejad**.

Doheny Annual Continuing Medical Education Conference

The 53rd Doheny Eye Institute Annual Continuing Medical Education Conference and Society of Scholars Ceremony featured clinical and research presentations by Doheny alumni and UCLA faculty. Held at the Doheny Eye Institute in Pasadena on March 23, 2024, the program provided updates in neuro-ophthalmology, anterior segment, and uveitis.

The Irvine Memorial Lecture was presented by **Neil R. Miller, MD**, Frank B. Walsh Professor of Neuro-Ophthalmology at Johns Hopkins University, and honored **Narsing Rao, MD**, from the USC Roski Eye Institute and Keck School of Medicine at USC, as the 2024 Doheny Society of Scholars inductee. The course was directed by **Drs. Peter Quiros**, **Judy Chen**, and **Hugo Hsu**.

Ryan Initiative for Macular Research

The 14th annual Ryan Initiative for Macular Research (RIMR) was held in Irvine, California, April 4–6, 2024.

Over 100 researchers and clinicians from academia and industry met to discuss atrophic age-related macular degeneration (AMD) research. Topics included structural and functional endpoints; designing the next generation of clinical trials; mitochondria, lysosomes, other organelle interactions; big data and AI; Bruch's membrane and drusen; multiomics, "Is AMD multiple diseases?", and features that distinguish aging from AMD." **Michael F. Chiang, MD**, director of the National Eye Institute, delivered the Pepperberg Memorial Lecture. The Doheny Eye Institute program was chaired by **Dr. SriniVas Sadda**.

UCLA Aesthetic Eyelid and Facial Rejuvenation Course

The popular two-day UCLA Aesthetic Eyelid and Facial Rejuvenation Course was July 12 to 13, 2024, at the UCLA Stein Eye Institute. The course is a tightly focused survey of surgical and nonsurgical options for periorbital and facial rejuvenation. Multidisciplinary faculty—renowned experts in their fields—focus on practical techniques and conceptual pearls designed to send participants home with tools they can immediately apply to their own practice. Elements included cadaver dissection, didactic lectures, one-on-one faculty interaction, and networking on an international level.

Dr. Jocelyne Kohn, an internationally renowned oculoplastic surgeon from Santiago, Chile, and a graduate of the UCLA Stein Eye Global Fellowship in Orbital and Ophthalmic Plastic Surgery, presented the Shorr Lecture. The course was directed by **Drs. Robert Alan Goldberg**, **Daniel Rootman**, and **Jonathan A. Hoenig**, and **Dr. Kelsey Roelofs** served as laboratory director.

Did you know pets, farm animals, and zoo animals get cataracts too?

It's true. It may come as news to some that ophthalmology is a subspecialty within veterinary medicine, and many veterinary ophthalmologists perform cataract surgery—even attending UCLA Department of Ophthalmology cataract surgery courses directed by **Kevin M. Miller, MD**, chief of the Cataract and Refractive Surgery Division.

In fact, the veterinary community uses the very same cataract surgical instruments on animals that ophthalmologists use on humans. Dr. Miller shared his expertise about using these sophisticated instruments at the 5th Veterinary Ophthalmic Surgery Meeting in Chicago, Illinois, July 19–21, 2024, when he presented the keynote speech, "How phacoemulsifiers work and tips for optimizing their use."

Resident and Fellow Graduation and Award Ceremony

Residents, fellows, and faculty were honored for excellence at the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology graduation ceremony on June 15, 2024, at UCLA's Luskin Conference Center.

The 2024 graduating class of residents.

TEACHING AWARDS

Faculty Teaching Award
Jay Sridhar, MD

Fellowship Faculty Teaching Award
Laura Bonelli, MD

Medical Student Teaching Award
John Cheng, MD

Resident Teaching Award
Angela Oh, MD

Fellow Teaching Award
Adrian Au, MD, PhD

Destinations of 2024 Graduating Residents

Sarah Cheng, MD, PhD (EyeSTAR)
Oculoplastics Fellowship
UC San Diego
San Diego, CA

Kendall Goodyear, MD
Oculoplastics Fellowship
Texas Oculoplastic Consultants

Robert Gunzenhauser, MD
Glaucoma Fellowship
UCLA Stein Eye Institute
Los Angeles, CA

Sasha Hubschman, MD
Oculoplastics Fellowship
University of Illinois
Chicago, IL

Maltish Lorenzo, MD, MS
Private Practice
Southern California

J. Ben Margines, MD, MHCI
Vitreoretinal Surgery Fellowship
UC Irvine
Irvine, CA

Angela Oh, MD
Oculoplastics Fellowship
UCLA Stein Eye Institute
Los Angeles, CA

Michel Sun, MD, PhD (EyeSTAR)
AbbVie, Inc.
Associate Medical Director
San Francisco, CA

Iris Zhuang, MD
Glaucoma Fellowship
Duke University
Durham, NC

Destinations of 2024 Graduating Fellows

Adil Ahmad, DO
Cornea Fellow
Private Practice
New Jersey

Maryam Ashrafkhorasani, MD
Retina International Fellow
Undecided

Carla Berkowitz, MD
Cornea Fellow
Private Practice
San Diego, CA

Mehdi Emamverdi, MD
Retina International Fellow
Fellowship, NEI/NIH
Bethesda, MD

Alexander Engelmann, MD
Neuro-Ophthalmology Fellow
Oculoplastic Fellowship
Cleveland Clinic
Cole Eye Institute
Cleveland, OH

Mona Fayad, MD
Pediatric Ophthalmology Fellow
UCLA Faculty-Pediatrics
Los Angeles, CA

Juan Fernandez, MD
Neuro-Ophthalmology Fellow
US Army

Abbas Habibi, MD
Retina International Fellow
Glaucoma Research
Doheny Eye Institute
Pasadena, CA

Wei Yu Lai, MD
Pediatric Ophthalmology International Fellow
Attending Physician
Kaoshiung Veterans General Hospital
Taiwan

Jack Lemon, MD
Medical Retina Fellow
Private Practice
San Francisco, CA

Albert Liao, MD
Retina Fellow
Ophthalmic Consultants of Boston
Boston, MA

Mostafa Mafi, MD
Retina International Fellow
Surgical Fellowship
UCLA Stein Eye Institute
Los Angeles, CA

Alireza Mahmoudi, MD
Retina International Fellow
Fellowship
Bascom Palmer Eye Institute
University of Miami
Miami, FL

Stephanie Midtling, MD
Glaucoma Fellow
Private Practice
San Diego, CA

Promporn Patarajierapun, MD
International Research Fellow
Cornea Faculty
Thammasat University
Thailand

Shani Pillar, MD
Uveitis Fellow
Academic Uveitis Specialist
Israel

Connie Sears, MD
Oculoplastics Fellow
Private Practice
San Diego, CA

Jiwei Sheng, MD
Retina Fellow
Private Practice
Washington, DC

Jasaman Tojjar, MD
Retina International Fellow
Undecided

Jared Widder, DO
Glaucoma Fellow
Naval Medical Center
San Diego, CA

Narge Zandvakil, MD
Glaucoma Fellow
Glaucoma Faculty
University of Indiana
Indianapolis, IN

Incoming Residents

The UCLA Stein Eye Institute welcomes the 2028 incoming class of residents who began their residency on July 1, 2024.

Elliot Choi, MD, PhD
Case Western Reserve

Samuel Cohen, MD
Stanford University School of Medicine

Reem Karmouta, MD
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Christopher Le, MD
University of Colorado School of Medicine

Samuel Lee, MD
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Erik Souverin, MD
Keck School of Medicine University of Southern California

Run Zhou Ye, MD, PhD
Université de Sherbrooke Faculté de Médecine et des Sciences de la Santé

Lydia Zhong, MD
Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis

Incoming Fellows

UCLA Stein Eye Institute Clinical Fellows

Adrian Au, MD, PhD
Retina (2nd Year)

Christian Bardan, MD
Cornea

Blake Fortes, MD
Retina (2nd Year)

Robert Gunzenhauser, MD
Glaucoma

Thanh-Liem Huynh-Tran, MD
Neuro-Ophthalmology

Katherine Lucarreli, MD
Oculoplastics (2nd Year)

The graduating class of residents and fellows celebrate along with their recently retired colleague Manju Rideau (center, Hawaiian shirt), an orthoptic technician at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center who has been with UCLA since 1980.

Angela Oh, MD
Oculoplastics (1st Year)

Cherilyn Palochak, MD
Retina (1st Year)

Marko Popovic, MD, MPH
Medical Retina

Alexandra Schulte, MD
Glaucoma

Prashant Tailor, MD
Retina (1st Year)

Adam Tanaka, MD, MPH
Glaucoma

Bryan Zarrin, MD
Cornea

Doheny Eye Clinical Fellows 2024–25

Roxana Godiwalla, DO
Cornea

A. Itzam Marin, MD
Retina (1st Year)

Incoming International Fellows

Jules Stein Eye Institute International Fellows

Hiok Hong Chan, MD
Medical Retina, Singapore

Tal Eshkoly Lior, MD
Medical Retina, Israel

Shahin Faghihi, MD
Medical Retina, Iran

Qingyu Meng, MD
Pediatric Ophthalmology, China

Arash Omidtabrizi, MD
Medical Retina, Iran

Veronika Yehezkeli, MD
Pediatric Ophthalmology, Israel

Doheny Eye International Fellows

Giacomo Boscia, MD
Retina, Italy

Yu-Chien Chung, MD, PhD
Retina, Taiwan

Shahin Golestani, MD
Glaucoma, Iran

Maryam Golmohammadi, MD
Neuro-Ophthalmology, Iran

Hyunduck Kwak, MD
Retina, South Korea

Kang Yeun Pak, MD
Retina, South Korea

Medical retina, neuro-ophthalmology, and oculoplastics are shared Jules Stein Eye Institute and Doheny Eye Institute fellowships.

The 2024 graduating class of fellows.

IN MEMORIAM

Craig H. Kliger, MD, executive vice president emeritus of the California Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (CAEPS), UCLA Stein Eye Institute Cornea and External Diseases Fellow (1993–95), and member of our volunteer clinical faculty, died from cancer April 23, 2024.

Dr. Kliger received his fellowship training under Drs. Bartly J. Mondino, Gary N. Holland, and Robert K. Maloney. "He was recognized by his peers as an excellent fellow," says Dr. Mondino. "Even at that time Craig had a strong interest in ophthalmology at the local and national level, and this passion continued throughout his career."

Dr. Kliger devoted his profession to advocacy, leaving clinical practice to become the only ophthalmologist to serve as a state society executive. He led CAEPS for 18 years and coordinated ophthalmologists' efforts to protect patients' vision. He was instrumental in increasing young ophthalmologists' participation in Congressional Advocacy Day/Mid-Year Forum, creating and funding the Shulman Fellowship. Additionally, Dr. Kliger forged strong relationships with the California Medical Association and other partners to build support for patients' access to ophthalmologists.

Dr. Kliger received the American Academy of Ophthalmology Outstanding Advocate Award in 2022 for his advocacy efforts and service to ophthalmology and patient safety. "As CAEPS members and friends of Dr. Kliger," says Dr. JoAnn Giaconi, "we are all incredibly saddened by his recent passing. He was absolutely selfless in his advocacy for our profession and our patients. He was the person looking out for us California ophthalmologists in Sacramento, with Noridian, and at the federal level, and most ophthalmologists didn't even know what he was doing on our behalf. He also helped promote many of us—residents and practicing ophthalmologists—to the American Academy of Ophthalmology. He will be sorely missed and irreplaceable."

Dr. Lawrence Chong Celebrated as Doheny Distinguished Alumnus

The Doheny Eye Institute honored **Dr. Lawrence Chong** as a Distinguished Alumnus. The March 23, 2024, Alumni Dinner at the Hunt Club in South Pasadena recognized Dr. Chong's tenure at Doheny from 1986 to 2009, where Dr. Chong played an instrumental role in nurturing the next generation of ophthalmologists through his invaluable contributions to the clinical fellowship program, training over 30 fellows in vitreoretinal surgery as well as his international outreach in education.

save the date

for a reception hosted by

UCLA Ophthalmology Alumni Association

and the

Doheny Eye Institute Professional Alumni Association

at the

2024 American Academy of Ophthalmology Annual Meeting

Sunday, October 20, 2024
5:30–9:30 p.m.

Westin, Chicago River North
Riverfront Room
320 North Dearborn, Chicago, IL 60654

RSVP by October 11, 2024
alumni@jsei.ucla.edu

A Forged Connection with the Jules Stein Eye Institute

Gary Kramer's mother was the first person in the family to be treated at the UCLA Stein Eye Institute when she developed glaucoma at a young age. Appreciative of the care she received from **Joseph Caprioli, MD**, David May II Chair in Ophthalmology, and later from **Anthony J. Aldave, MD**, Bartly J. Mondino, MD, Endowed Chair in Ophthalmology, when she needed corneal surgery, Gary's mother and her husband decided to support the work of these doctors, and so began a family tradition of seeing Jules Stein Eye Institute ophthalmologists and showing their appreciation through donations to the Jules Stein Eye Institute.

Gary followed his mother's path to the Jules Stein Eye Institute after another doctor suggested he go for an eye examination when noticing unusual corneal striations during a visit for a different health issue. Gary knew the perfect doctor to help him because of his mother's treatments: Dr. Aldave. Since that initial visit, Gary has seen a variety of ophthalmologists at the Jules Stein Eye Institute, including **Drs. Kevin M. Miller**, **John D. Bartlett**, and **Irena Tsui**, depending on the ophthalmic condition being treated.

Gary's children are also patients at the Jules Stein Eye Institute, providing Institute doctors with the unique opportunity to track the history of three generations of Gary's family as research and clinical treatments evolve.

Because he, like his mother, was also impressed with the treatments and personalized attention he received at the Jules Stein Eye Institute, Gary began discussing research and training projects with the doctors and showed his appreciation through donations to support those efforts. He had given to Dr. Tsui in the past, providing gift cards for pregnant women participating in a study Dr. Tsui was conducting. Recent donations helped fund two medical students presenting research at the May 2024 Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology meeting in Seattle, Washington, and one medical student presenting research at the July 2024 American Society of Retina Specialists meeting in Stockholm, Sweden.

When asked why he and his parents gave to the Jules Stein Eye Institute, he explained his father attended UCLA, and the University has been a part of his life for as long as he could remember—from football games at the LA Memorial Colosseum and Rose Bowl to basketball games at Pauley Pavilion—and they had always supported UCLA. "However," he continued, "The Jules Stein Eye Institute is so advanced and innovative in what they do, including the execution of their research. Also, not everyone can afford the health care they need. My family believes in giving back and helping others."

Gary's belief in and commitment to service runs deep. Prior to his retirement in 2023, Gary worked for the Department of Defense as a contracting officer at the Port Hueneme Naval Base in Port Hueneme, California. He previously served as a contracting officer at both NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory Research and Development Center in Pasadena and at the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area for the National Park Service. Since retiring, he has been happily enjoying his free time and reflecting positively on what was a fulfilling career in serving our nation.

"The Jules Stein Eye Institute is so advanced and innovative in what they do, including the execution of their research. Also, not everyone can afford the health care they need. My family believes in giving back and helping others."

The Best in the West

For 35 consecutive years, UCLA Health has been recognized on the *U.S. News & World Report* national honor roll of best hospitals.

UCLA Stein Eye and Doheny Eye Institutes are ranked #1 in Los Angeles and California and among the top 5 in the nation for Ophthalmology.

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uclahealth.org/eye

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26585 W. Agoura Rd., Suite 330
Calabasas, CA 91302
(310) 825-5000

Stein Eye Institute–Santa Monica
1807 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 203
Santa Monica, CA 90403
(310) 829-0160

Doheny Eye Center UCLA–Arcadia
622 W. Duarte Rd., Suite 101
Arcadia, CA 91007
(626) 254-9010

Doheny Eye Center UCLA–Orange County
Orange Coast Memorial Medical Center
18111 Brookhurst St., Suite 6400
Fountain Valley, CA 92708
(714) 963-1444

Doheny Eye Center UCLA–Pasadena
Huntington Pavilion
624 S. Fair Oaks Blvd., Suite 280
Pasadena, CA 91105
(626) 817-4747

UCLA DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY
Los Angeles and Beyond

Alumni Relations
Email: alumni@jsei.ucla.edu

Philanthropy
Jules Stein Eye Institute Development Office
100 Stein Plaza, UCLA, Room 3-138
Los Angeles, CA 90095-7000
Telephone: (310) 206-6035
Email: giving@jsei.ucla.edu

Volunteer Opportunities
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Tina-Marie Gauthier
Managing Editor
Email: Tina@EyeCiteEditing.com

UCLA Stein Eye Institute | DOHENY EYE INSTITUTE

BEST HOSPITALS U.S.News & WORLD REPORT OPHTHALMOLOGY 2024-2025

For 35 consecutive years, UCLA Health has been recognized on the U.S. News & World Report national honor roll of best hospitals. UCLA Stein Eye and Doheny Eye Institutes are ranked #1 in Los Angeles and California and among the top 5 in the nation for Ophthalmology.