



focus on research:
*DMEI's Scientists on Leading
Edge of Vision Research*

• DMEI •
inVIsion

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEAN MCGEE EYE INSTITUTE

patient care
education
vision research
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DMEI clinical directory

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Dean McGee Eye Institute

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The Dean McGee Eye Institute is dedicated
to serving all Oklahomans and the global
community through excellence and leadership in
patient care, education, and vision research.



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SUMMER 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

invisions

2 president's view

4 news

- DMEI Colleagues Hold Major AUPO Leadership Positions
- Dr. Dahr Named 117th President of Oklahoma County Medical Society (OCMS)
- OCMS Leadership Academy Class of 2017-2018
- Dr. Skuta Receives AGS President's Award
- 22 Ophthalmologists Recognized
- Dr. Hausheer Inaugurated as President of Oklahoma State Medical Association
- Dr. Callegan Named George Lynn Cross Research Professor
- Dr. Bradford Named OU Presbyterian Health Foundation Presidential Professor
- Dr. Moreau Receives Regents' Award for Superior Teaching
- DMEI Technician Regionally Recognized
- AAO Mid-Year Forum
- Dr. Karamichos Awarded W. Stanley Muenzler, MD Professorship in Corneal Disease

15 faculty & staff

- DMEI Doctor Volunteers in Africa
- Dr. Firestone Recognized for Teaching Excellence
- Dr. Siatkowski Serving as President of AAPOS
- New Orthoptist Joins DMEI
- Dr. Bradford Lectures in Ireland
- Dr. Kevin Fuller New DMEI Scientist
- Five Ophthalmologists Appointed to DMEI/OU Clinical Faculty
- Global Eye Care Programs
- Faculty & Staff Awards and Activities

donors

28 philanthropy update

- Meet Another DMEI Centenarian
- Remembering Great Community Leader
- Vision Advancement Foundation Supports Patients in Need
- Grateful Patient Gives Back to DMEI
- Additional Clinical Space Opens in August
- 2017 Annual Donors
- Receive Tax Deduction and Make Gift that Pays Income for Life
- 2017 Acers Society

invisions

38 research

- 34th Annual Evening of Excellence Honorees
- Golden Anniversary for National Eye Institute
- Save the Date: 12th Annual OU Vision Workshop/3rd Annual Robert E. Anderson Lecture
- BrightFocus Foundation Honors Vision Researchers
- Karamichos Inducted into ARVO's Dowling Society
- Graduate College Appoints Dr. Karamichos as Strategic Director
- Dr. Tanito Impacts Eye Care in Japan

45 education

- OU Board of Regents Recognition
- Ophthalmology Resident Achieves Special Honor
- Vincent Venincasa, MD Named New Chief Resident
- Save the Date: MDLVG Seminar
- Dept. of Ophthalmology Graduates of 2018
- Incoming 2018 Residents & Fellows
- DMEI Distinguished Visiting Lecturers
- Save the Date: 27th Annual Walter J. Stark Lectureship
- 42nd Annual DMEI Ophthalmology Symposium/OU Resident & Alumni Meeting, 39th Tullios O. Coston, MD Lecture, & 15th Acers Society Reception
- Save the Date: 2019 DMEI Ophthalmology Symposium/OU Resident & Alumni Meeting and 40th Coston Lecture
- Resident/Alumni Awards

feature focus

54 DMEI Scientists on Leading Edge of Vision Research

last look

60 last look

FRONT COVER PHOTO CREDITS:

Top Left - John Jernigan/Point of View

Bottom Left - David McNeese

Right - Rob Mattson/Noble Research Institute

Vision Research Programs Vital to Eye Institute & Health Sciences Center's Success



Gregory L. Skuta, MD

UNTIL 1995 AND BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF DR. ROBERT E. "GENE" ANDERSON

at the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI) and the University of Oklahoma (OU), the OU Department of Ophthalmology had never held an R01 research grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). With Dr. Anderson's R01 grants, the recruitment of additional world-class vision scientists and their grant support, and the acquisition of a National Eye Institute (NEI) core grant and a large Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (CoBRE) grant, DMEI and the Department catapulted

to a ranking among the top 10 departments of ophthalmology in the nation in approximately 10 years. As recently as 2011, Dr. Anderson was among the country's top three vision researchers with regard to annual NIH grant support. The Department also has received generous support from Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB) and, in 2015, was ranked seventh in the nation in cumulative RPB support among departments of ophthalmology affiliated with a public university.

As a vision researcher at DMEI and as chair of the Department of Cell Biology from 1998 to 2007, Dr. Anderson played a pivotal role in establishing vision research as a basic science research priority in multiple departments on the campus such that, in 2010, approximately 25% of all of the R01 grants at the OU Health Sciences Center (OUHSC) were focused on vision-related research. As one example, the chair of the Department of Physiology, Dr. Jianxing Ma, is renowned for his landmark work in diabetic retinopathy. In Fiscal Year 2018, the NEI was among the top three of all of the NIH institutes with respect to the number of funded projects at OUHSC.

For the NEI, only about 20-25% of R01 grant proposals are funded. The fact that all tenured and tenure-eligible basic scientists in the Department of Ophthalmology have at least one R01 or R21 NIH grant (at least

three of our scientists have or will soon have two R01s) is a testament to the high level of vision research underway at DMEI/OU and to the talent of our scientists as they labor in a very competitive funding environment. In keeping with a spirit of campus collaboration, all of our tenured and tenure-eligible basic scientists also have joint or adjunct appointments in the Departments of Cell Biology, Microbiology and Immunology, or Physiology. As recently as 2011, only Dr. Anderson among our basic scientists held an endowed chair. Now five—Drs. Anderson, Callegan, Carr, Karamichos, and Rajala—occupy an endowed chair or professorship. In addition, three of our basic scientists—Drs. Anderson, Callegan, and Carr—have been named George Lynn Cross Research Professors, one of the highest honors that can be bestowed on a basic scientist in the Health Sciences Center.

Consistent with our organizational mission, our scientists have served the scientific community in multiple key leadership positions. Dr. Anderson has served as president of the International Society for Eye Research and as vice president of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO), from which he has received the prestigious Proctor Medal (along with other major life achievement awards). Both he and Dr. Michelle Callegan have been honored as ARVO Gold Fellows for their service to the organization, the world's largest devoted to vision research. Drs. Callegan,

Carr, and Karamichos have recently chaired the Program Committee for their respective ARVO sections, and Dr. Elliott recently served as chair of ARVO's Members-in-Training Committee and was recognized as an ARVO Silver Fellow in 2018. Numerous other examples of leadership and service by our scientists are shared throughout this and past editions of *InVision*.

In this edition, our feature story highlights the enormous contributions being made by our vision scientists across a broad spectrum of ophthalmic disease with the intent of better understanding and treating conditions that can lead to blindness. With their efforts and in collaboration with our clinicians and surgeons, I am confident that the precious sense of sight can and will be preserved for many who otherwise would have experienced its loss.

“...three of our basic scientists—Drs. Anderson, Callegan, and Carr—have been named George Lynn Cross Research Professors, one of the highest honors...”



Gregory L. Skuta, MD
President and Chief Executive Officer
Dean McGee Eye Institute
Edward L. Gaylord Professor and Chair
Regents' Professor
Department of Ophthalmology
University of Oklahoma College of Medicine

DMEI Colleagues Hold Major AUPO Leadership Positions

DR. R. MICHAEL SIATKOWSKI BEGAN

his one-year term as president of the Program Directors Council (PDC) for the Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology (AUPO) on April 1. The PDC consists of seven of the nation's leading residency program directors. Members of the PDC are elected to seven-year terms from among and by their peers.

Dr. Siatkowski, one of the nation's premier ophthalmic educators, has held numerous national leadership roles and also became president of the American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus on July 1 (see page 17).

At the AUPO Banquet in Austin, Texas, on January 26, it was announced that Mr. Garyl

Geist, the Dean McGee Eye Institute's (DMEI's) executive vice president and chief operating officer, has been elected by his peers for a three-year term as a trustee-at-large on the nine-member AUPO Administrators Council. Geist has served in his DMEI administrative role since February 2015.

"These AUPO leadership positions represent great honors and responsibilities for both Dr. Siatkowski and Garyl Geist," stated Gregory L. Skuta, MD, DMEI president and chief executive officer. "Mike and Garyl's talents as leaders are very well known, and Garyl's election to this Council is particularly impressive when one considers that he entered the world of ophthalmology just 3 1/2 years ago!" ■



R. Michael Siatkowski, MD

*David W. Parke II, MD Professor of Ophthalmology
David Ross Boyd Professor
Vice Chair for Academic Affairs
Residency Program Director*



Garyl G. Geist, MAcc

*Executive Vice President
Chief Operating Officer
Dean McGee Eye Institute
Administrator – Department of Ophthalmology*

DR. DAHR NAMED 117TH PRESIDENT of the Oklahoma County Medical Society

SAM S. DAHR, MD WAS HONORED IN

January as the 117th president of the Oklahoma County Medical Society (OCMS) during the inaugural dinner at the Oklahoma City Golf & Country Club.

Dr. Dahr, now a Clinical Professor, has been assisting the Dean McGee Eye Institute in providing part-time clinical coverage for patients with uveitis (inflammation of the eye) at the Oklahoma Health Center location. He is a highly respected, fellowship-trained uveitis specialist and vitreoretinal surgeon currently in private practice in Oklahoma City. Dr. Dahr is a graduate of Stanford University and the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine, completed his ophthalmology residency at the University of Cincinnati, and pursued his fellowship training at the National Eye Institute (medical retina and uveitis/ocular immunology) and the University of Cincinnati (vitreoretinal surgery/ocular oncology).

The OCMS is a physicians' organization with a 117-year commitment to improving the health of Oklahoma County's citizens and the well-being of its physicians. ■



2017 President David Holden, MD (left) presents gavel to Sam Dahr, MD (right), 2018 president of the Oklahoma County Medical Society. He will serve in this role for one year.



Sam Dahr, MD (left) is pictured (left to right) with his wife, Lana Tolaymat, PhD; mother, Bushra Dahr; and father, A.S. Dahr, MD.



Janine E. Collinge, MD

*Clinical Associate Professor
Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus
Dean McGee Eye Institute*



Alexander Davis, MD, PhD

*Clinical Assistant Professor
Cornea and External Disease
Dean McGee Eye Institute*

OKLAHOMA COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY CLASS OF 2017-2018

THE OKLAHOMA COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY (OCMS) LEADERSHIP ACADEMY is open each year to physicians who want to expand their leadership skills, learn more about the business and politics of medicine, and learn how their active participation is vital to the strength of our medical community. This year's class included Dean McGee Eye Institute faculty members Drs. Janine Collinge and Alexander "Alex" Davis.

The Academy sessions are held one Saturday morning each month for five months from October to April. The Academy's faculty members include highly regarded community leaders with expertise in their respective areas. ■



Pictured (left to right): Alexander Davis, MD, PhD; Timothy Vavricka, MD; Nigam Sheth, MD; Chad Smith, MD, FACOG; Janine Collinge, MD; and Nimish Parekh, MD.

Gregory L. Skuta, MD Receives AGS President's Award



Pictured (left to right): Gregory L. Skuta, MD (DMEI president, chief executive officer, and glaucoma specialist) and Cynthia Mattox, MD (current president of the American Glaucoma Society).

AT THE MARCH 2018 AMERICAN GLAUCOMA SOCIETY (AGS) Annual Meeting held in New York City, Dr. Gregory L. Skuta was presented with the AGS President's Award. The awardee is recommended by the AGS president and approved by a special committee of the AGS comprised of past, present, and future AGS presidents and the AGS Program Committee chair for "significant contributions to the glaucoma community through his or her scientific achievements, service to the Society, and/or service to the profession as a whole." Dr. Skuta served as AGS Program Committee chair from 1997 to 2000 and as AGS president in 2005-2006. ■

22 DMEI OPHTHALMOLOGISTS RECOGNIZED AS *BEST DOCTORS IN AMERICA AND/OR CASTLE CONNOLLY TOP DOCTORS*

- + Ann Acers-Warn, MD, MBA
- + John M. Bell, MD
- *+ Cynthia A. Bradford, MD
- *+ Reagan H. Bradford Jr., MD
- *+ Bradley K. Farris, MD
- *+ Stephen R. Fransen, MD
- *+ Layne E. Goetzinger, MD
- + Jean R. Hausheer, MD, FACS
- * Ralph B. Hester III, MD
- *+ David W. Jackson, MD
- *+ Mahmoud A. Khaimi, MD
- * Ronald M. Kingsley, MD
- * Annie Moreau, MD, FACS
- *+ Rebecca K. Morgan, MD
- *+ Anil D. Patel, MD
- *+ Steven R. Sarkisian Jr., MD
- * Vinay A. Shah, MD
- *+ R. Michael Siatkowski, MD
- *+ Rhea L. Siatkowski, MD
- *+ Gregory L. Skuta, MD
- + Deana S. Watts, MD
- *+ Tammy L. Yanovitch, MD

- * *Best Doctors in America*
- + *Castle Connolly Top Doctors*
- *+ *Both*

Dr. Hausheer Inaugurated as President



Dr. Jean R. Hausheer at the podium during her inaugural as president of the Oklahoma State Medical Association (OSMA).

IN APRIL 2018, JEAN R. HAUSHEER, MD, FACS, began her one-year term as president of the Oklahoma State Medical Association (OSMA). Dr. Hausheer was honored during the OSMA Reception and OSMA/OSMA Alliance Inaugural Dinner and Awards Ceremony on April 28. She is the first Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI) ophthalmologist to serve as OSMA president and is a Clinical Professor in the University of Oklahoma (OU) College of Medicine. Other Oklahoma ophthalmologists who have served as OSMA president in recent years include Drs. Lee Schoeffler of Tulsa, John Robinson of Shawnee, and Todd Brockman of Tulsa. Drs. Schoeffler and Robinson are both resident alumni of the OU Department of Ophthalmology.

From medical school to retirement, physicians rely on the OSMA to champion health care and safety for Oklahomans and support doctors in advancing the compassionate practice of medicine. Some 4,000 physicians, residents, and medical students are represented by the OSMA. Through their voluntary membership, the OSMA, a nonprofit organization, represents them and their interests in promoting the welfare of patients, the science and art of medicine, and the betterment of public health. The OSMA provides legislative and regulatory advocacy, professional development, practice resources, and other benefits spanning all medical practice structures and specialties. ■

Members of her family join Dr. Hausheer for a photo opportunity honoring her inauguration as OSMA president.



of Oklahoma State Medical Association



Jean R. Hausheer, MD, FACS (center) is pictured with past OSMA presidents. Lee E. Schoeffler, MD (back row, far right) was president of the association in 2009 and is a 1975 ophthalmology resident alumnus of the University of Oklahoma.



Pictured (left to right): Ryan D. Vincent, MD, Jean R. Hausheer, MD, FACS, and Vinay A. Shah, MD. Drs. Vincent and Shah were both residents at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, where Dr. Hausheer was their residency program director before coming to DMEI. Dr. Shah is now a Clinical Professor and vitreoretinal surgeon at DMEI, and Dr. Vincent is a glaucoma specialist with the Wolfe Eye Clinic in Iowa.

Michelle C. Callegan, PhD, Named George Lynn Cross Research Professor

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER (OUHSC)

Spring Faculty Awards Ceremony on April 23, Provost Jason R. Sanders, MD, MBA announced that Michelle C. Callegan, PhD, James P. Luton Professor of Ophthalmology, Professor of Microbiology and Immunology, and Edith Kinney Gaylord Presidential Professor, was named a George Lynn Cross Research Professor. To qualify for this highly prestigious professorship, which became effective on July 1, a faculty member “must have demonstrated outstanding leadership over a period of years in his or her field of learning or creative activity and have been recognized by peers for distinguished contributions to knowledge or distinguished creative work.” Dr. Callegan joins Drs. Robert E. “Gene” Anderson and Daniel J.J. Carr as George Lynn Cross Research Professors in the Department of Ophthalmology.

Dr. Callegan, who also serves as Associate Director of Student Affairs for the Oklahoma Center for Neuroscience (OCNS), joined the faculty at OU in 1999 after completing her postdoctoral fellowship training in the Department of Ophthalmology. She rose to the rank of Professor in the Department in 2011.

Her research in the pathogenesis and treatment of bacterial ocular infections has been generously supported by numerous funding agencies, including the National Institutes of Health/National Eye Institute (NIH/NEI), Research to Prevent Blindness, and



Pictured (left to right): Michelle C. Callegan, PhD – James P. Luton Professor of Ophthalmology, Professor of Microbiology/Immunology, and Edith Kinney Gaylord Presidential Professor – and Jason R. Sanders, MD, MBA – OUHSC’s Senior Vice President and Provost.

the Department of Defense. She holds two R01 grants from the NIH, has more than 65 peer-reviewed publications, is particularly well known for her important work on *Bacillus* endophthalmitis and endogenous endophthalmitis, and is considered one of the world’s top scientists working on the pathogenesis of endophthalmitis.

Dr. Callegan is past Program Committee chair for the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology’s (ARVO’s) Immunology/Microbiology section, serves on ARVO’s Awards Committee, and has been recognized as a Gold Fellow by ARVO for her service to this large international organization. In addition, Dr. Callegan was the recipient of OCNS’ Distinguished Service Award in 2013. ■

CYNTHIA A. BRADFORD, MD, Named an OU Presbyterian Health Foundation Presidential Professor



*Cynthia A. Bradford, MD
Professor of Ophthalmology
Immediate Past President
American Academy of Ophthalmology*

PROVOST JASON R. SANDERS, MD, MBA ANNOUNCED at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (OUHSC) Spring Faculty Awards Ceremony on April 23 that Cynthia A. Bradford, MD, Professor of Ophthalmology and immediate past president of the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO), has been named an OU Presbyterian Health Foundation Presidential Professor. Presidential Professorships are awarded to those faculty members “who excel

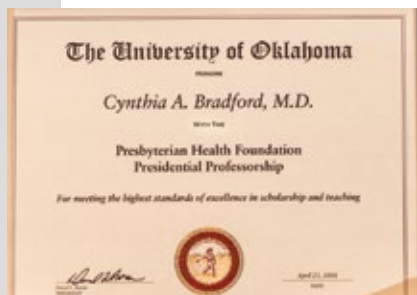
in their professional activities and who relate those activities to the students they teach and mentor.” Dr. Bradford joins Drs. R. Michael Siatkowski, Daniel J.J. Carr, James F. McGinnis (now retired), Michelle C. Callegan, and Bradley

K. Farris as members of the ophthalmology faculty who have received Presidential Professorships.

Dr. Bradford, who completed her residency in ophthalmology at the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI), celebrated her 30-year anniversary as a member of the DMEI/OU comprehensive ophthalmology faculty in 2017. She rose to

the rank of Professor in the Department of Ophthalmology in 2006 and is a skilled educator who has directed medical student education at DMEI/OU for more than 20 years and also has been committed to resident surgical education. Dr. Bradford has received at least four teaching awards, including the E.L. and Thelma Gaylord Faculty Honor Award, two Excellence in Attending at VA Awards, and the prestigious OUHSC Regents’ Award for Superior Teaching.

An esteemed leader in the profession of ophthalmology, Dr. Bradford has served as Secretary for State Affairs and Senior Secretary for Advocacy for the AAO, was president of the Academy in 2017, and has received the AAO’s Senior Achievement Award and two Secretariat Awards. She also has served as president of the Oklahoma Academy of Ophthalmology (OAO) and was the recipient of the OAO’s Distinguished Service Award in 2015. ■



DR. ANNIE MOREAU NAMED RECIPIENT OF Regents' Award for Superior Teaching

DR. ANNIE MOREAU, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA (OU) DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY, was named a recipient of the Regents' Award for Superior Teaching at the OU Health Sciences Center (OUHSC) Spring Faculty Awards Ceremony on April 23. This is one of the highest teaching awards that can be conferred to members of the medical school/health sciences center faculty. Dr. Moreau joins an impressive slate of previous Department of Ophthalmology recipients of this award, which includes Drs. Cynthia A. Bradford, Bradley K. Farris, and R. Michael Siatkowski.

Dr. Moreau, who joined the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI)/OU faculty in 2012, has been a

devoted teacher and mentor for ophthalmology (and other) residents and received the E.L. and Thelma Gaylord Faculty Honor Award in 2015. She had previously received the M. Dewayne Andrews, MD Excellence in Teaching Award in Graduate Medical Education from the Academy of Teaching Scholars in 2014. In 2011, DMEI/OU ophthalmology residents established an educational award known as the Annie Moreau, MD Resident Teaching Award to recognize exceptional contributions to resident education by DMEI/OU clinical fellows. (She was, of course, the first recipient of this award!) Dr. Moreau also is a past recipient of the Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Award and the Excellence in Attending at VA Award.

Even with an enormous clinical and surgical practice, Dr. Moreau serves on the OUHSC Faculty Senate, is a member of the DMEI Executive Committee and the Admissions Board for the College of Medicine, and chairs the Medical Student Promotion Committee. In addition, she was recently selected as a voting member of the OU Chapter of the Gold Humanism Honor Society.

DMEI and the Department of Ophthalmology are fortunate to have many devoted educators. This award for Dr. Moreau is reflective of her remarkable talents and gifts but also is representative of the Institute and Department's deep commitment to the education and professional development of OU's medical students, residents, and fellows. ■



Pictured (left to right): Jason R. Sanders, MD, MBA – OUHSC's Senior Vice President and Provost – and Annie Moreau, MD, FACS – Associate Professor of Ophthalmology.

DMEI Technician Regionally Recognized



Tracy Kuhlman, COT
2017 Outstanding Ophthalmic
Technician Award Nominee

TRACY KUHLMAN, COT HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED in the “Top Five” in the Midwest region by Local Eye Site and Icare USA. The awards recognize the quality care and dedication of ophthalmic technicians, who demonstrate exemplary talents in clinical practices, patient care, and collaboration.

“We’re delighted to show our appreciation to hard-working ophthalmic technicians,” said Icare President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) John Floyd. “We’ve read countless inspirational stories, and it’s clear to us that there are many individuals in this profession going above and beyond at work.”

Kuhlman exhibits teamwork with doctors and colleagues as well as industry leadership through peer mentorship.

DMEI President and CEO Gregory L. Skuta, MD stated, “We congratulate Tracy on this very special recognition and are grateful to her and all of our ophthalmic technicians for their truly outstanding contributions to the provision of world-class eye care at the Dean McGee Eye Institute.” ■

AAO MID-YEAR FORUM



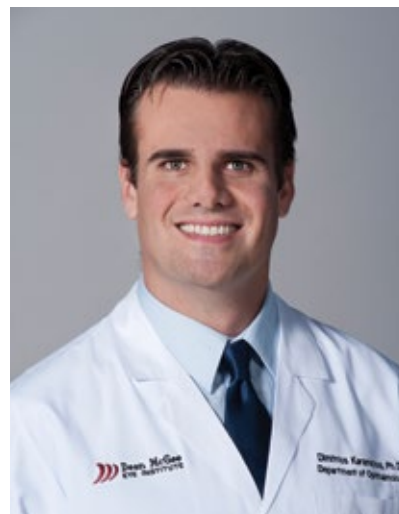
Pictured (left to right, front to back): Amalia Miranda, MD, Ann Acers-Warn, MD, MBA, Kyle Rogers, MD, Brett Gudgel, MD, Gregory Skuta, MD, David Parke II, MD, and Keith Carter, MD are shown standing in view of the Lincoln Memorial during the American Academy of Ophthalmology's (AAO's) Mid-Year Forum, which was held in April in Washington, DC. Among this distinguished group, two currently serve as Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI) faculty, one is a former faculty member, three are current or past residents, and one (Dr. Parke) is a former DMEI president and chief executive officer (CEO) and the current CEO of the AAO. Dr. Carter (back, right) is serving as the Academy's president in 2018. Dr. Carter was also the 26th Annual Walter J. Stark Memorial Lecturer at DMEI in 2017. Dr. Miranda (front left) was a 2017 AAO Guest of Honor.

Drs. Reagan and Cynthia Bradford are shown with the Lincoln Memorial in the background during the AAO's Mid-Year Forum in Washington, DC in April.

Cynthia Bradford, MD served as the Academy's president in 2017, and Reagan Bradford Jr., MD was a 2017 AAO Guest of Honor. Both have served on the DMEI faculty for more than 30 years.



Dr. Dimitrios Karamichos Awarded W. Stanley Muenzler, MD Professorship in Corneal Disease



THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA (OU) BOARD OF REGENTS HAS APPROVED

the appointment of Dimitrios Karamichos, PhD as the W. Stanley Muenzler, MD Associate Professor in Corneal Disease.

Dr. Karamichos was recruited to the faculty at the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI)/OU in 2013 from the Schepens Eye Research Institute/Harvard Medical School as an Assistant Professor and was promoted to Associate Professor in the Departments of Ophthalmology and Cell Biology in 2017. A native of Greece, Dr. Karamichos earned his PhD in tissue engineering/molecular biology from University College London and pursued postdoctoral fellowships at University College London and the University of Texas - Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas.

His research, which is supported by R01 funding from the National Eye Institute (NEI) and other agencies, focuses on keratoconus and corneal wound healing and fibrosis.

Dr. Karamichos is a nationally and internationally recognized leader in corneal research and has served as chair of the Program Committee for the Cornea Section of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO). He also serves or has served as president of the Oklahoma Chapter

for Neuroscience and as vice president of the OU Health Sciences Center's Graduate College Council.

"As a resident alumnus (1964) of the OU Department of Ophthalmology and a prominent corneal surgeon in the Oklahoma City metropolitan area for almost 50 years, Dr. Stan Muenzler during his illustrious career performed hundreds (if not thousands) of corneal transplants for keratoconus and scarred corneas, which Dr. Karamichos has studied extensively in his landmark research," stated Gregory L. Skuta, MD, DMEI president and chief executive officer. "Dr. Muenzler would undoubtedly be very proud to be associated with Dr. Karamichos and his highly translational and clinically relevant research efforts."

It should be noted that Dr. Karamichos arrived in Oklahoma City in August 2013, the same month that Dr. Muenzler passed away. The Muenzler Endowed Professorship was established in his memory by friends, family, and colleagues and is to be awarded to an individual with specific research and/or clinical expertise in corneal disease. ■

DMEI Doctor Volunteers in Africa on World's Largest Civilian Hospital Ship

IN JANUARY 2018, JEAN R. HAUSHEER, MD, FACS spent time working in Douala, Cameroon on *Africa Mercy*, the world's only floating civilian hospital. The ship arrived in Douala in August, 2017 and departed for Conakry, Guinea in June 2018. Volunteers like Dr. Hausheer from over 49 nations have served onboard *Africa Mercy*, which was acquired in 1999 and built specifically for the Mercy Ships mission. It is the largest non-governmental hospital ship in the world. ■



Professor Epee (front left), the Minister of Health in Cameroon, and Dr. Hausheer (front right) are pictured with two Cameroonian ophthalmologists (back row), who learned new eye surgical techniques aboard the *Africa Mercy* ship.



Dr. Hausheer (center) examining a patient aboard the *Africa Mercy* ship.



Dr. Hausheer (center) teaching Dr. Christine Touma Mama (standing, right) tips on how to examine postoperative patients aboard the *Africa Mercy* ship.

Brian K. Firestone, MD

Recognized for Teaching Excellence

IN MARCH, DR. BRIAN K. FIRESTONE WAS NOMINATED BY THE STUDENTS of the University of Oklahoma (OU) College of Medicine, Class of 2019 (third-year medical students) – Oklahoma City Campus for the 2018 Aesculapian Award for Teaching Excellence in the category of Faculty – Clinical Sciences. He was one of only three nominees for this very special award, the recipient of which (Dr. Mark I. Pogemiller - Pediatrics) was announced at the Aesculapian Awards Banquet on April 26.

As shared in a letter to Dr. Firestone, a Clinical Assistant Professor, from Dr. Russell G. Postier, Executive Dean (now Emeritus) of the OU College of Medicine, this nomination represents “... a clear statement of our students’ appreciation of the time, energy, and creativity you put into your teaching.” Given that most nominees come from much larger departments, such as Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Pediatrics, etc., this nomination signifies the great respect with which Dr. Firestone is held by OU medical students.

Dr. Firestone’s exceptional attributes as a gifted educator are well known, as he received both the Dean McGee Eye Institute’s E.L. and Thelma Gaylord Faculty Honor Award and the OU College of Medicine’s M. Dewayne Andrews, MD Excellence in Teaching Award in Graduate Medical Education in 2017. ■



Brian K. Firestone, MD

DR. SIATKOWSKI SERVING AS PRESIDENT OF AAPOS

ON JULY 1, DR. R. MICHAEL SIATKOWSKI BEGAN HIS ONE-YEAR OF SERVICE as president of the American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus (AAPOS). The organization's goals are to advance the quality of children's eye care, support the training of pediatric ophthalmologists, support research activities in pediatric ophthalmology, and advance the care of adults with strabismus.

Dr. Siatkowski's titles include Vice Chair for Academic Affairs and Residency Program Director at the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI). He holds the David W. Parke II, MD Endowed Chair in Ophthalmology and was the first ophthalmologist to be named a David Ross Boyd Professor. He is currently president of the Program Directors Council for the Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology and has served as a director of the American Board of Ophthalmology and as vice chair of the Residency Review Committee



AAPOS members participated in Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill in March. Drs. Blake Forcina (left), an Oklahoma City pediatric ophthalmologist, and R. Michael Siatkowski (right), now AAPOS president, are pictured with Senator James M. Inhofe (center) in his Washington, DC office.

for Ophthalmology for the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

“We are very proud of Dr. Siatkowski's continuing extraordinary achievements but especially his unwavering commitment to serving patients, his colleagues, and our wonderful profession,” said Dr. Gregory L. Skuta, DMEI president and chief executive officer. ■



NEW ORTHOPTIST AT DMEI

IN APRIL, LAURIE HAHN-PARROTT, CO JOINED the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI) as a Certified Orthoptist.

Hahn-Parrott, who is also a Certified Ophthalmic Technician, earned her Bachelor of Science degree in psychology at the College of Charleston in Charleston, South Carolina, and completed her orthoptic preceptorship at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. She was previously an orthoptist at DMEI early in her career. She also has worked at Cincinnati Children's Hospital and Colorado Children's Hospital in Denver, two of the nation's top 10 children's hospitals. While in Cincinnati, Hahn-Parrott earned her Master of Business Administration degree from Xavier University.

Her leadership roles have included service as president of the American Association of Certified Orthoptists and on the board of the American Orthoptic Council and the *American Orthoptic Journal*. She also has served on committees of the American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus. ■

IN MAY, AT THE ANNUAL IRISH COLLEGE OF OPHTHALMOLOGY CONFERENCE IN KILKENNY, IRELAND, Dr. Cynthia A. Bradford (right), Immediate Past President of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and now Presbyterian Health Foundation Presidential Professor at the University of Oklahoma, presented "Physician Wellness - Caring for the Care Givers." She is pictured with other key speakers, Mr. Michael Burdon (left), Consultant Ophthalmologist, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, England, and President, Royal College of Ophthalmologists, and Dr. Alison Blake (center), President, Irish College of Ophthalmology.



Dr. Kevin Fuller Joins DMEI/OU as New Scientist

KEVIN K. FULLER, PHD JOINED THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA (OU) Departments of Ophthalmology and Microbiology/Immunology in early June as a member of the basic science faculty. His laboratory will be located on the lower level of the Dean McGee Eye Institute's (DMEI's) Parke Pavilion.

A native of Toledo, Ohio, Dr. Fuller earned his undergraduate degree *summa cum laude* from Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio and his PhD from the University of Cincinnati, where he was Graduate Student of the Year in 2009. He completed his postdoctoral fellowship at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth in Hanover, New Hampshire, where he was also a research scientist before coming to OU.

Dr. Fuller's scientific and research interests focus on fungal disease and fungal infections of the cornea in particular. His research is supported by an R21 grant from the National Eye Institute.

"Dr. Jimmy Ballard, the chair of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology, and I are delighted that Dr. Fuller has agreed to join the DMEI/OU faculty," said Dr. Gregory L. Skuta, DMEI president and chief executive officer. "We are confident that he will further advance the outstanding scientific contributions made by the OU Health Sciences Center in the pathogenesis and treatment of infectious and inflammatory eye disease." ■



Kevin K. Fuller, PhD



LEA D. BENNETT, PHD will join the basic science faculty as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Ophthalmology in September 2018. More to come in the next edition of *InVision!*

FIVE OPHTHALMOLOGISTS APPOINTED



NATHAN W. BLESSING, MD joined the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI)/University of Oklahoma (OU) Department of Ophthalmology as a Clinical Assistant Professor and member of the faculty in ophthalmic plastic and reconstructive surgery in early August.

A native of Tulsa, an Eagle Scout, and a National Merit Scholar, Dr. Blessing earned his undergraduate degree (*summa cum laude*/Phi Beta Kappa) from Emory University and his medical degree (Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society/Special Distinction) from the OU College of Medicine. He completed his internship at OU, followed by a residency in ophthalmology and a fellowship in ophthalmic plastic and reconstructive surgery at the esteemed Bascom Palmer Eye Institute in Miami, Florida.



ASHVINI K. REDDY, MD joined DMEI/OU in mid-August as an Associate Professor of Ophthalmology. Her clinical focus is on uveitis (inflammatory eye disease). She also provides services in medical retina.

A native of Texas, Dr. Reddy earned her undergraduate degree (*cum laude*) from the University of Texas at Austin and her medical degree from Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, where she also completed her internship and ophthalmology residency. Her fellowship training in uveitis and medical retina was completed at the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute/University of Miami (Florida). She most recently served on the faculty at the Wilmer Eye Institute/Johns Hopkins University and was previously on the faculty at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville.

Dr. Reddy has a prolific publication record with more than 50 original peer-reviewed articles and published reviews. She serves as chair of the American Academy of Ophthalmology's (AAO's) Online Education Committee and is on the Editorial Board for the Uveitis Section of the AAO's Ophthalmic News and Education (ONE) Network. Dr. Reddy was a recipient of the Academy's Secretariat Award in 2016 and will receive an AAO Achievement Award in 2018.

TO DMEI/OU CLINICAL FACULTY



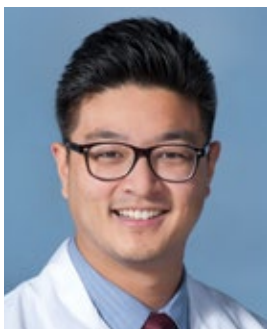
JAMES C. O'BRIEN, MD became a member of the neuro-ophthalmology faculty as an Assistant Professor at DMEI/OU in late August.

Dr. O'Brien is a native of Texas and earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Texas at Austin and his medical degree from the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, where he was inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society. He completed his internship at Houston Methodist Hospital, followed by a residency in ophthalmology at DMEI/OU. He served in outstanding fashion as chief resident during 2016-2017. He also completed a neuro-ophthalmology fellowship at DMEI/OU in 2017 - 2018.



SUN YOUNG (SUNNY) LEE, MD, PHD joined DMEI and the OU Department of Ophthalmology as a clinician scientist and Assistant Professor in early September. Her clinical focus will be on retina/vitreoretinal surgery, and her research interest is in Müller gliosis in the retina and its applications in proliferative vitreoretinopathy and degenerative retinal diseases.

A native of South Korea, Dr. Lee completed an MD, PhD, internship, ophthalmology residency, and vitreoretinal surgery fellowship at prestigious universities in South Korea before coming to the United States (she is now a US citizen) to pursue research at the Wilmer Eye Institute/Johns Hopkins University and the Doheny Eye Institute/University of Southern California (USC). She then completed a residency in ophthalmology at USC and finished a vigorous two-year fellowship in vitreoretinal surgery at the University of Iowa this summer. Dr. Lee already has more than 25 original peer-reviewed publications and book chapters.



JEREMY F. TAN, MD will become a Clinical Assistant Professor at DMEI/OU beginning in mid-September as an ophthalmic plastic and reconstructive surgeon.

Dr. Tan, who is a native of New Jersey, earned his undergraduate degree (major in ceramics and minor in biology) from the University of Delaware, where honors included *summa cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa, and Phi Kappa Phi. He completed his medical studies at Temple University in Philadelphia, where he was inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society, and his ophthalmology residency at DMEI/OU. During the 2015-2016 academic year, Dr. Tan was outstanding in his service as chief resident. He completed his fellowship in ophthalmic plastic and reconstructive surgery with Ophthalmic Surgeons and Consultants of Ohio in Columbus, Ohio.

Global Eye Care

IN APRIL, RESIDENT OPHTHALMOLOGISTS AND FACULTY TRAVELED to China to serve, teach, and discover. Drs. Andrew Melson (chief resident), Joshua Hendrix (resident), James O'Brien (neuro-ophthalmology fellow), Janine Collinge (faculty), and Bradley Farris (faculty) spent two weeks in China teaching and providing patient care. They were joined by Drs. Yun Liu and Paul Chen from California, who also helped with translation as they do each year. The Global Eye Care Program divides its efforts equally to meet local needs and those in other countries and works to develop collaborations that support and strengthen existing resources. ■



Pictured is the DMEI/China team taking care of over 400 patients in Qionglai, a small rural hospital about 1.5 hours from Chengdu, Sichuan Province.

THE GLOBAL EYE CARE PROGRAM HAS THREE MAIN ACTIVITIES, TO:

- Serve – medical and surgical missions;
- Teach – local personnel and engage in residency and fellowship training; and
- Discover – research needs and ways to best meet them.

FACULTY & STAFF AWARDS AND ACTIVITIES



MARTIN-PAUL AGBAGA, PhD, recently published Hopiavuori B.R., Deák F., Wilkerson J.L., Brush R.S., Rocha-Hopiavuori N.A., Hopiavuori A.R., Ozan K.G., Sullivan M.T., Wren J.D., Georgescu C., Szweda L., Awasthi V., Towner R., Sherry D.M., Anderson R.E., Agbaga M.P. “Homozygous Expression of Mutant ELOVL4 Leads to Seizures and Death in a Novel Animal Model of Very Long-Chain Fatty Acid Deficiency,” *Molecular Neurobiology*, Feb. 2018; and Schori C., Agbaga, M.P., Brush R.S., Ayyagari R., Grimm C., Samardzija M. “ELOVL4 5-bp Deletion Does Not Accelerate Cone Photoreceptor Degeneration in an All-Cone Mouse,” *PLoS One*, Jan. 2018. His recent presentations include Agbaga M.P., Hopiavuori B., Feng L., Brush R.S., Anderson R.E. “Depletion of Retinal Very Long Chain Fatty Acids Cause Age-Related Rod Photoreceptor Cells Dysfunction,” 13th Congress of the International Society for the Study of Fatty Acids and Lipids (ISSFAL), Las Vegas, NV, May 2018; Hopiavuori B.R., Deák F., Wilkerson J.L., Brush R.S., Rocha-Hopiavuori N. A., Hopiavuori A.R., Ozan K.G., Sullivan M.T., Wren J.D., Georgescu C., Szweda L., Awasthi V., Towne R., Sherry D.M., Anderson R.E., Agbaga M.P. “Homozygous Expression of Mutant ELOVL4 Leads to Seizures and Death in a Novel Animal Model of Very Long-Chain Fatty Acid Deficiency,” 13th Congress of the ISSFAL, Las Vegas, NV, May 2018; Brush R.S., Sullivan M., Agbaga M.P., Zavy M., Craig L., Anderson R.E. “Decreased Very Long Chain Polyunsaturated Fatty Acids in Sperm Is Strongly Correlated with Lower Sperm Count and Motility,” 13th Congress of the ISSFAL, Las Vegas, NV, May 2018.



ROBERT E. ANDERSON, MD, PhD, was awarded the Oklahoma Chemist of the Year-2018, which was presented in April at the 63rd Annual Oklahoma Pentasectional Meeting of the American Chemical Society. He recently published Rajala A., Wang Y., Brush R.S., Tsantilas K., Jankowski C.S.R., Lindsay K.J., Linton J.D., Hurley J.B., Anderson R.E., Rajala R.V.S. “Pyruvate Kinase M2 Regulates Photoreceptor Structure, Function, and Viability,” *Cell Death and Disease*, Feb. 2018; Hopiavuori B.R., Deák F., Wilkerson J.L., Brush R.S., Hopiavuori N.A., Hopiavuori A.R., Ozan C.G., Sullivan M.T., Wren J., Georgescu C., Szweda L., Awasthi V., Towner R., Sherry D.M., Anderson R.E., Agbaga M.P. “Homozygous Expression of Mutant ELOVL4 Leads to Seizures and Death in a Novel Animal Model of Very Long-Chain Fatty Acid Deficiency,” *Molecular Neurobiology*, Feb. 2018; and Ash J.D., Hollyfield J.G., LaVail M.M., Anderson R.E., Bowes Rickman C., Grimm C. (editors), *Advances in Experimental Medicine and Biology*, Vol. 801, *Retinal Degenerative Diseases*, Springer (New York), 2018.



CYNTHIA A. BRADFORD, MD, has been named a Presbyterian Health Foundation Presidential Professor in the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine (see page 11). She recently presented the following lectures: 44th Naquin Lecture, Greater Baltimore Medical Center, “Cataract Surgery: The Patient is Still the Most Important Player,” April 2018; Irish College of Ophthalmology, Kilkenny, Ireland, Symposium: 100 Years of Ophthalmic Society in Ireland, “Physician Wellness: Caring for the Caregivers,” and Annual Mooney Lecture, “The Challenge of Cataract Surgery,” May 2018.



MICHELLE C. CALLEGAN, PhD, was awarded a George Lynn Cross Research Professorship, July 2018 (see page 10). She recently published Coburn P.S., Miller F.C., LaGrow A.L., Parkunan S.M., Randall C.B., Staats R.L., Callegan M.C. “TLR4 Modulates Retinal Inflammatory Gene Targets in Bacillus Endophthalmitis,” *BMC Ophthalmology*, April 2018. Her recent presentations include Callegan M.C., Coburn P.S., Miller F.C., LaGrow A.L., Land C., Chen Y., Gao W., Zhang

FACULTY & STAFF AWARDS AND ACTIVITIES

L. “Efficacy of Nanosponges in Protecting Retinal Function During Bacterial Endophthalmitis,” Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) Annual Meeting, Honolulu, HI, May 2018; Mursalin M., Coburn P., Arroz E., Miller F.C., Astley R., Fouet A., Callegan M. “Contribution of S-layer to the Pathogenesis of Bacillus Endophthalmitis,” American Society for Microbiology Microbe Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, June 2018; “Host/Pathogen Battles in Bacterial Intraocular Infections,” Oklahoma State University, Department of Microbiology and Molecular Biology Seminar Series, Stillwater, OK, Feb. 2018; “Host/Pathogen Battles in Bacterial Intraocular Infections,” Oklahoma Christian University, Department of Biology Seminar Series, Edmond, OK, April 2018; and “Mentoring vs. Sponsorship,” Leadership Development for Women in ARVO Program, Honolulu, HI, April 2018.



DANIEL J.J. CARR, PhD, recently presented “CD8⁺ T Cells Control HSV-1 Replication in the Nervous System but not the Cornea in HSV-1 Δ NLS-Vaccinated Mice Lacking Virus-Neutralizing Antibody” as part of an oral platform session, 102nd Annual Meeting of the American Association of Immunologists (AAI) Meeting, Austin, TX, May 2018. He also participated in the Career Roundtable Luncheon as an advisor for new faculty at the AAI Meeting, May 2018. He recently published Gurung H.H., Carr M.M., Bryant K., Chucair-Elliott A.J., Carr D.J.J. “Fibroblast Growth Factor-2 Drives and Maintains Progressive Corneal Neovascularization Following HSV-1 Infection,” *Mucosal Immunology*, Jan. 2018; and Royer D.J., Elliott M.H., Le Y.Z., Carr D.J.J. “Corneal Epithelial Cells Exhibit Myeloid Characteristics and Present Antigen via MHC Class II,” *Investigative Ophthalmology and Visual Science*, March 2018. He was recognized for his service on the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) Members-in-Training Committee at the ARVO Annual Meeting, Honolulu, HI, May 2018. He was a member of the Department of Defense VRRP-CBT Review Panel, Jan. 2018 and National Institutes of Health (NIH) 2018/05 ZRG1 F07-U (20) L Immunology Fellowship Review Panel, Feb. 2018.



SAM S. DAHR, MD, is the 2018 president of the Oklahoma County Medical Society, an 800-member physician organization (see page 5). He serves on the writing committee for the 2019 American Academy of Ophthalmology Basic and Clinical Science Course uveitis textbook. He is currently in his second-year of a four-year term as the sole retina specialist on the Food and Drug Administration Medical Devices Advisory Committee.



MICHAEL E. ELLIOTT, PhD, recently received funding from the Oklahoma Center for Adult Stem Cell Research (OCASCR) entitled, “Role of Cav1 on the Maintenance of Corneal Epithelial Stem Cells – A New Therapy.” Dr. Jami Gurley, a postdoctoral fellow in his laboratory, received an Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology (OCAST) grant entitled, “The Role of TRAF3 in Retinal Function and Inflammation.” Dr. Elliott was recognized as a Silver Fellow at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) in Honolulu, HI. He is also currently serving as a member of the Research Grant Review Committee (RGRC) for the American Diabetes Association. He recently published Tarantini S., Valcarcel-Ares M.N., Yabluchanskiy A., Tucsek Z., Hertelendy P., Kiss T., Gautam T., Sonntag W.E., de Cabo R., Farkas E., Elliott M.H., Kinter M.T., Deak F., Ungvari Z., Csiszar A. “Nrf2 Deficiency Exacerbates Obesity-Induced Oxidative Stress, Neurovascular Dysfunction, Blood Brain Barrier Disruption, Neuroinflammation, Amyloidogenic Gene Expression and Cognitive

Decline in Mice, Mimicking the Aging Phenotype,” *The Journals of Gerontology. Series A, Biological Sciences and Medical Sciences*, June 2018; Sudharsan R., Elliott M.H., Dolgova N., Aguirre G.D., Beltran W.A. “Photoreceptor Outer Segment Isolation from a Single Canine Retina for RPE Phagocytosis Assay,” *Advances in Experimental Medicine and Biology*, Jan. 2018; Keller K.E., Bhattacharya S.K., Borrás T., Brunner T.M., Chansangpetch S., Clark A.F., Dismuke W.M., Du Y., Elliott M.H., Ethier C.R., Freddo T.F., Fuchshofer R., Giovingo M., Gong H., Gonzalez P., Huang A., Johnstone M.A., Kaufman P.L., Kelley M.J., Knepper P.A., Kopczynski C.C., Kuchtey J.G., Kuchtey R.W., Kuehn M.H., Lieberman R.L., Lin S.C., Liton P., Liu Y., Lütjen-Drecol E., Mao W., Masis-Solano M., McDonnell F., McDowell C.M., Overby D.R., Pattabiraman P.P., Raghunathan V.K., Rao P.V., Rhee D.J., Chowdhury U.R., Russell P., Samples J.R., Schwartz D., Stubbs E.B., Tamm E.R., Tan J.C., Toris C.B., Torrejon K.Y., Vranka J.A., Wirtz M.K., Yorio T., Zhang J., Zode G.S., Fautsch M.P., Peters D.M., Acott T.S., Stamer W.D. “Consensus Recommendations for Trabecular Meshwork Cell Isolation, Characterization and Culture,” *Experimental Eye Research*, June 2018; Royer D.J., Elliott M.H., Le Y.Z., Carr D.J.J. “Corneal Epithelial Cells Exhibit Myeloid Characteristics and Present Antigen via MHC-II,” *Investigative Ophthalmology & Visual Science*, March 2018; McLaughlin T., Falkowski M., Park J.W., Keegan S., Elliott M., Wang J.J., Zhang S.X. “Loss of XBP1 Accelerates Age-Related Decline in Retinal Function and Neurodegeneration,” *Molecular Neurodegeneration*, April 2018. His recent presentations include Elliott M.H., McClellan M.E., Freeman W.M., Stamer W.D. “Role of Caveolae as Mechanosensors in Schlemm’s Canal,” platform presentation, ARVO Annual Meeting, Honolulu, HI, April/May 2018; and Gurley J., Carr D.J.J., Elliott M.H. “TRAF3 (TNF Receptor-Associated Factor 3), a Potential Regulator of Retinal Inflammation, is Highly Expressed in the Murine Retina,” poster presentation by Dr. Jami Gurley, ARVO Annual Meeting, Honolulu, HI, April/May 2018.



BRADLEY K. FARRIS, MD, recently gave the following presentations: “Idiopathic Intracranial Hypertension,” Department of Neurology Grand Rounds, University of Oklahoma College of Medicine, Jan. 2018; “Transient Visual Loss,” Good Shepherd Hospital, Departmental Grand Rounds, Swaziland, Africa, Feb. 2018; “Unilateral Visual Loss,” Qionglai County Hospital, Qionglai, China, April 2018; and “Optic Nerve Sheath Decompression Update-2018,” 15th China-USA Academic Congress of Ophthalmology, Chengdu, China, April 2018.



JEAN R. HAUSHEER, MD, FACS, is immediate past president of the Oklahoma Academy of Ophthalmology, president of the Oklahoma State Medical Association (see page 8), and vice president of the Christian Ophthalmology Society. The American Academy of Ophthalmology has named her as executive editor of third edition of the textbook *Basic Techniques of Ophthalmic Surgery*, due to be published in 2019.



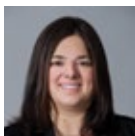
DIMITRIOS KARAMICHOS, PhD, was awarded a new National Institutes of Health (NIH)/ National Eye Institute (NEI) R01 grant, Project Title: Sex Hormones and Keratoconus, 2018-2021. He recently published Sharif R., Bak-Nielsen S., Hjortdal J., Karamichos D. “Pathogenesis of Keratoconus: The Intriguing Therapeutic Potential of Prolactin-Inducible Protein,” *Progress in Retinal and Eye Research*, May 2018; Sharif R., Sejersen H., Frank G., Hjortdal J., Karamichos D. “Effects of Collagen Cross-Linking on the Keratoconus Metabolic Network,” *Eye (London, England)*, March 2018; Lee A., Karamichos D., Onochie O.E., Hutcheon A.E.K., Rich C.B., Zieske J.D., Trinkaus-Randall V. “Hypoxia Modulates the Development of a Corneal Stromal Matrix

FACULTY & STAFF AWARDS AND ACTIVITIES

Model," *Experimental Eye Research*, May 2018; Sharif R., Priyadarsini S., Rowsey T.G., Ma J.X., Karamichos D. "Corneal Tissue Engineering: An In Vitro Model of the Stromal-nerve Interactions of the Human Cornea," *Journal of Visualized Experiments*, Jan. 2018; Rowsey T.G., Karamichos D. "The Role of Lipids in Corneal Diseases and Dystrophies: A Systematic Review," *Clinical and Translational Medicine*, Dec. 2017; Priyadarsini S., Nicholas S.E., Karamichos D. "3D Stacked Construct: A Novel Substitute for Corneal Tissue Engineering," *Methods in Molecular Biology*, [PubMed - in process]. He was selected as the Director of Strategic Partnerships and Program Development for the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center Graduate College effective July 1 (see page 43).



MARIA E. LIM, MD, recently published Thompson A., Lim M.E., Freedman S., Thompson M., Enyedi L. "Microphthalmia, Dermal Aplasia and Sclerocornea: Endoscopic Cyclophotocoagulation in the Management of Congenital Glaucoma," *Journal of Glaucoma*, Jan. 2018.



ANNIE MOREAU, MD, FACS, was recently selected to be a voting member of the Gold Humanism Honor Society, University of Oklahoma (OU) Chapter, April 2018; lectured at the Oklahoma City University Physician Assistant Program on the "Basic Principles of Oculoplastics for Mid-Level Providers," Feb. 2018; and received an OU Regents' Award for Superior Teaching for superior accomplishments in teaching, April 2018 (see page 12).



RAJU V.S. RAJALA, PhD, recently published Rajala A., Wang Y., Brush R.S., Tsantilas K., Jankowski C.S.R., Lindsay K.J., Linton J.D., Hurley J.B., Anderson R.E., Rajala R.V.S. "Pyruvate Kinase M2 Regulates Photoreceptor Structure, Function, and Viability," *Cell Death and Disease*, Feb. 2018; Rajala A., Wang Y., Soni K., Rajala R.V.S. "Pyruvate Kinase M2 Isoform Deletion in Cone Photoreceptors Results in Age-Related Cone Degeneration," *Cell Death and Disease*, June 2018; Rajala R.V.S., Rajala A. "Redundant and Nonredundant Functions of Akt Isoforms in the Retina," *Advances in Experimental Medicine and Biology*, May 2018; Rajala A., Wang Y., Rajala R.V.S. "Constitutive Activation Mutant mTOR Promote Cone Survival in Retinitis Pigmentosa Mice," *Advances in Experimental Medicine and Biology*, May 2018; Wang Y., Rajala A., Rajala R.V.S. "Nanoparticles as Delivery Vehicles for the Treatment of Retinal Degenerative Diseases," *Advances in Experimental Medicine and Biology*, May 2018; and Rajala A., Wang Y., Abcouwer S.F., Gardner T.W., Rajala R.V.S. "Developmental and Light Regulation of Tumor Suppressor Protein PP2A in the Retina," *Oncotarget*, Dec. 2017. He recently presented Rajala R.V.S., Wang Y., Rajala A. "Insulin-Like Growth Factor 1 Receptor is Necessary for Rod Photoreceptor Structure and Function," Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology Annual Meeting, Honolulu, HI, April/May 2018. He served as a member of the Biology of the Visual System Study Section, National Institutes of Health Center for Scientific Review for Feb./June 2018 study section meetings; was a grant reviewer for Presbyterian Health Foundation seed grants, April 2018; and was a GREAT Symposium judge for the OU College of Medicine, April 2018.

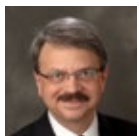


STEVEN R. SARKISIAN JR., MD, in February was the first surgeon in the USA to use the OMNI Surgical System from Sight Sciences. This is the first Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved device for both ab interno canaloplasty and ab interno goniotomy for 360 degrees. His recent oral presentations include "Tolls, Detours, and HOV Lanes: Navigating the MIGS Superhighway by Personalizing Outcomes for Your Glaucoma Patients," moderator and presenter of Glaucoma Case Presentations, American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery (ASCRS)

Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, March 2018; “Video Case Presentations-Complications and a ‘Reay of Hope’,” panelist, ASCRS Annual Meeting, Washington DC, March 2018; “Glaucoma Fighting Challenge Debate Rematch—Is Trabeculectomy Dead?,” referee, ASCRS Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, March 2018; and “Surgical Glaucoma Spotlight: MIGS Lessons from the Learning Curve,” moderator, ASCRS Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, March 2018. He also presented the poster “Interim Results of a Prospective, Randomized Phase 2 Study Evaluating the Safety and Efficacy of Travoprost Intraocular Implants: 3-Month Outcomes” at the American Glaucoma Society Annual Meeting, New York City, NY, March 2018.



R. MICHAEL SIATKOWSKI, MD, became president of American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus (AAPOS) in July 2018 (see page 17); president of the Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology (AUPO) Program Directors Council in April 2018 (see page 4); and a member of the San Francisco Match Advisory Committee in 2018. He recently published Miller J.L., Johnson P.N., Harkey K., Siatkowski R.M. “Assessment of Outcomes with a Sedation Protocol During Bevacizumab Intravitreal Injection in Preterm Infants with Retinopathy of Prematurity,” *The Journal of Pediatric Pharmacology and Therapeutics*, Feb. 2018; and Melson A., Siatkowski R.M. “What Causes Nystagmus?,” *The American Orthoptic Journal*, Jan. 2018. He was a co-author for O’Brien J.C., Siatkowski R.M., Farris B.K. “What Don’t You See?,” a podium presentation during the Frank B. Walsh Session, North American Neuro-Ophthalmology Society Annual Meeting, Waikoloa Village, HI, March 2018. His invited lectures include “Teaching Patient Safety in an Era of CLER,” AUPO Breakfast with Colleagues, AUPO Annual Meeting, Austin, TX, Jan. 2018; 23rd Annual Hogan-Ferguson Lecture in Ethics, University of Texas at San Antonio, April 2018; and American Academy of Ophthalmology Webinar for Medical Students, “Preparing for the Match,” March 2018. He was also a visiting professor at Boston University, Feb. 2018.



GREGORY L. SKUTA, MD, delivered the keynote address at the White Coat Ceremony for the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine Class of 2022 on August 16 at the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. In October 2018, he will receive the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the University of Wisconsin (Madison) Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences. He was a resident there from 1982 to 1985 and served as chief resident from 1984 to 1985.



LILY L. WONG, PHD, led a new initiative (IWD ARVO 2018) sponsored by the Women in Eye and Vision Research (WEAVR) Leadership Committee on a social media campaign which was launched during the week of International Women’s Day (IWD) in March 2018 to raise awareness of pioneering contributions made by the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) female members. The featured members were designated #ARVOwomen in the campaign. She represented the WEAVR Leadership Committee and gave an interactive scientific presentation to a group of high school science students who participated in the High School Vision Program at the 2018 ARVO Annual Meeting in Honolulu, HI. This outreach program is designed to preview the world of eye and vision research to high school science students so they may consider the eye field as a future profession. She is co-investigator of a grant entitled “Role of Cav1 on the Maintenance of Corneal Epithelial Stem Cells—A New Therapy” awarded by Oklahoma Center for Adult Stem Cell Research to Michael H. Elliott, PhD (July 2018-June 2019).

PHILANTHROPY UPDATE



Pictured (left to right): Angela Plant, OD; Ruby Caruso (center), age 103; and her daughter, Myra Jennings.

Meet Another DMEI Centenarian

AT THE DEAN MCGEE EYE INSTITUTE (DMEI), WE love to celebrate our patients who are centenarians! Mrs. Ruby Caruso turned 103 on March 29 and is a patient of Dr. Angela Plant's at our Edmond office. If you are a DMEI patient age 100 or more and would be willing to have your name included in the next edition of DMEI *InVision*, please contact the Development Office at 405.271.7801 or at DMEI-Development@dmei.org. We would love to add your picture too! ■

DID YOU KNOW...

An excerpt from Stephen King's newest book, *The Outsider*, features an injured character choosing the Dean McGee Eye Institute for his eye care needs.

On page 193, with regard to a man with a serious traumatic eye injury, a character named Ralph says, "The doctors at Dean McGee up in Okie City are trying to save it..."





Jim Durbin
Executive Director of Development

Remembering A GREAT COMMUNITY LEADER

THE DEAN MCGEE EYE INSTITUTE (DMEI) LOST A FRIEND AND OKLAHOMA CITY A PROMINENT civic and business leader, William M. “Bill” Bell III, on November 6, 2017. Mr. Bell finished his distinguished career as Vice Chairman, Trust and Investment Management, at BancFirst in 2014.

For more than three decades, Bell was a champion of DMEI and several other organizations. He joined the DMEI Foundation Board of Directors in 1995 and served until his passing in 2017. He also served on many other professional, business, and civic boards. These included the American Bankers Association, Oklahoma Bankers Association, Mortgage Bankers Association, Better Business Bureau, Allied Arts, Historic Green Mountain Falls Foundation, Oklahoma City Golf and Country Club, Oklahoma School of Science and



William M. “Bill” Bell III (1935 – 2017)

Mathematics Foundation, ONEOK, and the Devon Implementation Committee, just to name a few.

Mr. Bell leaves an extraordinary legacy of generosity and service to others and will be greatly missed by DMEI and all who knew him. ■



Pictured (left to right) in May 2013: Gregory L. Skuta, MD, William M. Bell III, and G. Rainey Williams Jr. Williams is chair of the DMEI Foundation Board of Directors.

VISION ADVANCEMENT FOUNDATION SUPPORTS PATIENTS IN NEED

with Gift in Honor of DMEI Alumnus, Jeffrey W. Grisham, MD

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE VISION ADVANCEMENT FOUNDATION (VAF) was looking for a way to honor Jeffrey W. Grisham, MD for returning to his home town of Bartlesville, Oklahoma to practice ophthalmology and for serving the community, surrounding counties, and southeastern Kansas for 30 years in a caring, professional, and competent manner. The Board knew Dr. Grisham was a resident alumnus of the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI) and reached out to the Institute to see if it was possible for VAF to support DMEI in a way that honored Dr. Grisham.

Jim Durbin, DMEI Executive Director of Development, informed the VAF Board of the Institute's Patient Financial Assistance Program (PFAP), which assists low-income or uninsured patients with the costs of necessary care. "I let the Board know that donations to PFAP allow DMEI to provide direct care to patients in need," says Durbin. "It was a really good match for VAF. They donated \$10,000 to the program."

A statement from the VAF Board reads, "The Patient Financial Assistance Program (PFAP) falls in line with one of our goals of providing compassionate care to those in need. We are thankful DMEI provides this service and that DMEI allowed us to participate in the program. It was a fitting way to honor Dr. Grisham." ■



Dr. Jeffrey Grisham and Mary Ann Grisham at the 2016 Annual Acers Society Reception.

On behalf of the hundreds of patients who benefit from the Patient Financial Assistance Program, DMEI is grateful to the Vision Advancement Foundation for its support. If you would like to help provide care to those in need, donate online at www.dmei.org/donate-now and select Patient Financial Assistance Program (PFAP) or mail a check in the enclosed envelope.

Grateful Patient Gives Back to DMEI

BY APRIL WILKERSON

WHEN SHE WAS IN HER 20s, CYNDI DAVIS LEARNED she had pigmentary glaucoma. The diagnosis took her by surprise, but she also didn't realize its threat to her long-term vision.

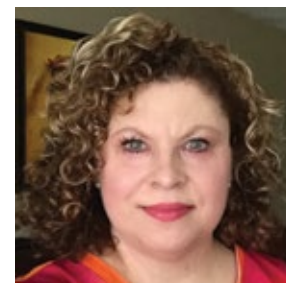
Pigmentary glaucoma is a type of open-angle glaucoma in which the pigment layer of the iris rubs on the lens, causing the pigment to shed onto neighboring structures. In turn, the eye is unable to drain properly, which causes the pressure in the eye to increase. Irreversible damage and loss of vision can ultimately occur, and there is no cure for the condition.

Davis, who lives in Ada, received initial treatment from a local physician, including glaucoma drops and a type of laser surgery. But the pressure in her eyes wasn't decreasing, and she had begun experiencing severe headaches, blurry vision, nausea and sudden, temporary vision loss.

"At the time I was diagnosed, I didn't really know about or understand the disease enough to even know what questions to ask or the seriousness of this disease," she said. "To my knowledge, no one in my family had ever been diagnosed with pigmentary glaucoma."

After several years of treatment, Davis' doctor knew the time had come to refer her, telling her, "If you have any hopes of seeing any future grandchildren, something has to be done now," she said. That's when she arrived at the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI) and became a patient of Steven R. Sarkisian Jr., MD.

Dr. Sarkisian has worked tirelessly to preserve her eyesight, Davis said, and he is always looking to the future when she will likely need additional treatments. "My eyes have not always been the most 'cooperative' in response to some of my treatments, yet Dr. Sarkisian has never wavered, always considering my specific case and, seemingly magically, pulling out new and innovative options," Davis said. "He is constantly fighting for my eyesight."



Cyndi Davis, DMEI patient and donor.

Davis sees Dr. Sarkisian and his staff regularly for exams and pressure checks. She also decided to become a monthly donor to the DMEI Foundation, in gratitude for her care and as a way to "pay it forward" for others who are facing conditions that threaten to take away their eyesight but may face financial hurdles.

"The thought of going blind is very scary, regardless of the situation," Davis said. "Donating to DMEI is my way of ensuring the same level of care, and chance to save vision, is given to everyone, regardless of their ability to pay. Every time I step through those doors, I am instantly filled with hope and optimism. I know that I am going to receive quality, state-of-the-art care from some of the best doctors in the world." ■

If you would like to join Cyndi in supporting the mission of DMEI, please donate online at www.dmei.org/donate-now or send a check in the enclosed envelope.

ADDITIONAL CLINICAL SPACE OPENS IN AUGUST THANKS TO SUCCESSFUL \$3.1 MILLION CAMPAIGN



APPROXIMATELY 9,300 SQUARE FEET OF THE THIRD FLOOR of the Thomas E. Acers, MD Pavilion has been converted into 20 examination lanes and associated space for diagnostic imaging and other procedures. The new clinical floor opened for patient care on August 6. Although the addition is multi-purpose, it will allow the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI) to consolidate its retina services into a “retina-friendly” center within DMEI. In this center, services for retina patients will be centralized, helping to improve patient flow and convenience and ultimately allowing DMEI physicians to treat more patients suffering from diabetic retinopathy, age-related macular degeneration, and other retinal diseases.

In addition, centralizing DMEI’s retina specialists in such a way will open space in other clinics to create room for the five new physicians joining the Institute this summer. These additional faculty members will help DMEI meet the increasing demand for ophthalmic services and allow the Eye Institute to continue to fulfill its mission of caring for all Oklahomans who need us.

“Adding these 20 examination lanes was critical to caring for our patients,” states Gregory L. Skuta, MD, DMEI’s president and chief executive officer. “The 27% growth in patient visits over the last several years made it necessary for us to undertake this project. What has been deeply gratifying is how numerous donors generously rose to the occasion. In just nine months, supporters from across the state and even around the country, donated \$3.1 million to this project and made the expansion possible. We are truly grateful for their belief in our mission!” ■



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With a charitable gift annuity, you make a donation using cash, marketable securities or other assets, and we, in turn, pay you a fixed amount for life. With this gift, you can boost your retirement income and feel secure because you receive reliable, predictable payments for as long as you live.

HERE'S AN EXAMPLE

Barbara, 75, transfers \$25,000 in exchange for a charitable gift annuity.

Barbara receives annual payments of \$1,550, a rate of 6.2 percent.

RATE CHART <i>(effective July 1, 2018)</i>			
ONE RECIPIENT		TWO RECIPIENTS	
Age	Rate	Age	Rate
60	4.7%	60/65	4.3%
65	5.1%	65/70	4.7%
70	5.6%	70/75	5.2%
75	6.2%	75/80	5.7%
80	7.3%	80/85	6.6%
85	8.3%	85/90	8.0%
90+	9.5%	90/95+	9.3%

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

- A partial income tax charitable deduction for your gift when you itemize.
- Part of each payment is income tax-free throughout your estimated life expectancy.

TIP: CONSIDER GIVING APPRECIATED ASSETS

Funding a gift annuity with appreciated assets, such as securities, will not only provide you with reliable payments for life and allow you to support DMEI's work, it can offer financial benefits. You will receive a federal income tax charitable deduction (when you itemize) in the year the gift is made and eliminate part of the capital gains tax you would have paid if selling the securities.

REQUEST YOUR PERSONALIZED ILLUSTRATION

We would be happy to send you a free, no-obligation illustration showing you the increased benefits you can receive from a charitable gift annuity. Your personalized illustration will include your potential income tax charitable deduction and our annual payments to you for life. **Contact Jim Durbin at 405.271.7803 or jim-durbin@dmei.org to begin.**

Source: The Stelter Company. The information in this article is not intended as legal or tax advice. For such advice, please consult an attorney or tax advisor. Figures cited in examples are for illustrative purposes only. References to tax rates include federal taxes only and are subject to change. State law may further impact your individual results.

2017 Acers Society

HONORING DR. THOMAS E. ACERS, BENEFITING OPHTHALMOLOGY RESIDENT & FELLOW EDUCATION

LIFETIME MEMBERS

Jackie Acers*
Ann Acers-Warn, MD, MBA
Andrew K. Bailey, MD
Sterling S. Baker, MD
Ray M. Balyeat, MD
Donald E. Beahm, MD
David A. Bernitsky, MD
Charles P. Bogie III, MD, PhD
Matthew D. Bown
D. Randolph Brown Jr., MD
Robert H. Bullington Jr., MD
Adam A. Carver, MD
William S. Clifford, MD, MBA
Russell D. Crain, MD, PC
Sam Dahr, MD
James L. Dunagin Jr., MD
Bradley K. Farris, MD
William J. Faulkner, MD
Stephen R. Fransens, MD
Luther L. Fry, MD
John M. Garber, OD
Garyl G. Geist, MAcc
Robert D. Gourley, MD
Jeffrey W. Grisham, MD
Scott M. Guess, MD
Jean R. Hausheer, MD, FACS
John J. Herlihy, MD*
P. Lloyd Hildebrand, MD, FACS
Kimberly A. Howard

Rick D. Isernhagen, MD
David W. Jackson, MD
Alison Acers Jetton
Kevin A. Kerr, MD
Mahmoud A. Khaimi, MD
Robert T. Lee, MD
James H. Little, MD
Amalia M. Miranda, MD
Steven N. Montgomery, MD
Annie Moreau, MD, FACS
W. Stanley Muenzler, MD*
Jacquelyn A. Jetton O'Banion,
MD
David W. Parke II, MD
Anil D. Patel, MD
Helga Fuenfhausen Pizio, MD
John A. Robinson, MD
Nelson R. Sabates, MD
Siv Brit Saetre, MD
Steven R. Sarkisian Jr., MD
Lee E. Schoeffler, MD
David L. Schwartz, MD
Mark H. Scott, MD
Gregory L. Skuta, MD
Michael L. Soper, MD
Donald U. Stone, MD
Scot A. Sullivan, MD
Matthew P. Traynor, MD
Roland A. Walters, MD
Deana S. Watts, MD

G. Rainey Williams Jr.
James B. Wise, MD
Tammy L. Yanovitch, MD, MHSc
David E. Zuech, MD

ANNUAL MEMBERS

Steven H. Dewey, MD
Aaron C. Fortney, MD
Thomas A. Hawkins, MD
Ronald M. Kingsley, MD
Walter J. Peters Jr., MD
Ensa K. Pillow, MD
Allyson Doiron Schmitt, MD
R. Michael Siatkowski, MD
Rhea L. Siatkowski, MD
Kurt D. Weir, MD
Brian A. Welcome, MD
Thomas C. Wolf, MD

**Deceased*

THE ACERS SOCIETY WAS ESTABLISHED by the alumni of the University of Oklahoma Department of Ophthalmology in recognition of its first full-time chair, Dr. Thomas E. Acers. The Society exists to support ophthalmology resident and fellow education of the highest quality. Proper training and supervised clinical experience for tomorrow's ophthalmologists will best serve both patients and the profession. Members of the Acers Society share this commitment.

Chair: William S. Clifford, MD, MBA, Garden City, Kansas

Committee Members: Ann Acers-Warn, MD, MBA, Lawton, Oklahoma
Donald E. Beahm, MD, Great Bend, Kansas
P. Lloyd Hildebrand, MD, FACS, New York, New York
James H. Little, MD, Norman, Oklahoma
Annie Moreau, MD, FACS, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Roland A. Walters, MD, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Ex-Officio: R. Michael Siatkowski, MD, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

34th Annual Evening of Excellence

ON JANUARY 25 AT THE NATIONAL COWBOY AND WESTERN HERITAGE MUSEUM, David E. Rainbolt and M. Dewayne Andrews, MD, FACP were both honored with Dean's Awards at the annual Evening of Excellence event. Mr. Rainbolt received the Dean's Award for Distinguished Community Service, and Dr. Andrews received the Dean's Award for Distinguished Medical Service. The Evening of Excellence event is hosted by the University of Oklahoma (OU) College of Medicine Alumni Association and honors individuals and organizations making significant contributions to research and the field of medicine in Oklahoma. Proceeds from the Evening of Excellence support medical research at the College of Medicine. ■



David E. Rainbolt serves as the current chair of the Dean McGee Eye Institute Board of Directors and is Executive Chairman for BancFirst Corporation.



M. Dewayne Andrews, MD, FACP served on the Dean McGee Eye Institute Board of Directors from 2011 to 2015, as the Executive Dean and Vice President for Health Affairs of the OU College of Medicine from 2002 to 2017, and as the Provost and Senior Vice President of the OU Health Sciences Center from 2011 to 2015.

EVENING OF EXCELLENCE HONORS

DEAN'S AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY SERVICE

1985 – Dean A. McGee

In 1971, Dean A. McGee, president of the Kerr-McGee Corporation, developed a retinal detachment. This was successfully repaired by Drs. Tullos O. Coston and Thomas E. Acers. Inspired by this experience, Mr. McGee joined the effort to establish an eye institute. His stature within the community, leadership, and personal generosity provided the catalyst for the creation of the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI), which bears his name.

1986 – Stanton L. Young

Mr. Young served for many years on the DMEI Board of Directors and as chair of the Oklahoma Eye Foundation and DMEI Foundation Board of Directors. The Stanton L. Young Endowed Chair in Ophthalmology was established in his honor in 2013.

1997 – James R. Tolbert III

Mr. Tolbert currently serves as chair emeritus on the DMEI Board of Directors. Serving the Institute for over 45 years, he joined the Board of Directors in 1972 and served as chair of the Board for more than 20 years.

2004 – Libby and G.T. Blankenship

Mr. Blankenship served on the Board of the Oklahoma Eye Foundation from 1988 to 2013.

2009 – Polly and Larry Nichols

Mr. Nichols currently serves on the DMEI Board of Directors.

2010 – Michael S. Samis

Mr. Samis currently serves on the DMEI Board of Directors. From 1998 to 2018, he served as chair of the University Hospitals Authority and Trust and is currently the chairman of the Board of OU Medicine, Inc.

2012 – Martha Ferretti, PT, MPH and Joseph J. Ferretti, PhD

Dr. Joseph Ferretti served on the DMEI Board of Directors and as provost and senior vice president of the University of Oklahoma (OU) Health Sciences Center from 1995 to 2011.

2017 – Jeanne Hoffman Smith

Mrs. Smith served on the Board of the Oklahoma Eye Foundation from 1988 to 2013.

2018 – David E. Rainbolt

Mr. Rainbolt has served as chair of the DMEI Board of Directors since 2013 and is the executive chairman of BancFirst Corporation.

DEAN'S AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED MEDICAL SERVICE

1989 – Tullos O. Coston, MD

In 1971, Drs. Tullos O. Coston and Thomas E. Acers repaired a retinal detachment experienced by Dean A. McGee, president of the Kerr-McGee Corporation. Dr. Coston served as the part-time chair of the OU Department of Ophthalmology from 1962 to 1972.

1994 – Thomas E. Acers, MD

Dr. Thomas E. Acers was named as the first full-time chair of the OU Department of Ophthalmology in 1972. Under his leadership, the current site of the Eye Institute was chosen, and construction of the original building began. On December 4, 1975, DMEI was dedicated with Dr. Acers as its first president. During Dr. Acers' eventful tenure from 1972 to 1991, the Institute and Department experienced tremendous growth while establishing a new standard of clinical care and retaining a primary focus on education in ophthalmology.

1998 – John R. Bozalis, MD

Dr. Bozalis currently serves on the DMEI Board of Directors and is the former chairman at the Oklahoma Allergy and Asthma Clinic.

2007 – David W. Parke II, MD

In 1992, Dr. David W. Parke II succeeded Dr. Acers as the Institute's second president and as chair of the Department. As a result of Dr. Parke's leadership, DMEI, building on its history of clinical and educational excellence, established one of the nation's premier vision research programs and embarked on a major construction and renovation project to double the size of its facilities. Dr. Parke now serves as the chief executive officer of the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

2018 – M. Dewayne Andrews, MD

Dr. Andrews served on the DMEI Board of Directors from 2011 to 2015. He was the executive dean of the OU College of Medicine from 2002 to 2017 and the provost and senior vice president of the OU Health Sciences Center from 2011 to 2015.

DEAN'S RECOGNITION OF A DISTINGUISHED OKLAHOMA INSTITUTION

2001 – Dean McGee Eye Institute

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

2009 – Stanton L. Young

The Board leadership of Stanton L. Young provided consistent strength and stability to the Dean McGee Eye Institute. Critical to the Institute's success and unique among major American eye institutes was the incorporation of the Institute as a separate charitable entity with its own governing Board of Directors and the adoption of an affiliation agreement with the University of Oklahoma. The committed and insightful stewardship of volunteer Board members such as Mr. Young has been critical to the Institute's growth and development.

A GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY FOR THE NATIONAL EYE INSTITUTE

ESTABLISHED IN 1968, THE NATIONAL EYE INSTITUTE (NEI) celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. The NEI was created by Congress out of the National Institute of Neurological Disease and Blindness. As part of the federal government's National Institutes of Health (NIH), the NEI's mission is to conduct and support research, training, health information dissemination, and other programs with respect to blinding eye diseases, visual disorders, mechanisms of visual function, preservation of sight, and the special health problems and requirements of the blind.



Robert E. "Gene" Anderson, MD, PhD
*Director of Vision Research
Dean A. McGee Professor
George Lynn Cross Research Professor*



Michelle C. Callegan, PhD
*James P. Luton Professor
Edith Kinney Gaylord Presidential Professor
George Lynn Cross Research Professor*

Paul A. Sieving, MD, PhD, the NEI's director, spoke at the dedication ceremony for DMEI's major expansion on September 30, 2011.

Drs. Robert Anderson, Michelle Callegan, Daniel Carr, Michael Elliott, Kevin Fuller, Dimitrios Karamichos, Darren Lee, and Raju Rajala all currently receive NIH/NEI funding totaling \$5,442,847. In addition, all eight of these scientists hold joint or adjunct appointments in basic science departments at the OU Health Sciences Center. ■

CURRENT TENURED AND TENURE-ELIGIBLE BASIC RESEARCH FACULTY
UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY



Daniel J.J. Carr, PhD
Stanton L. Young Professor
George Lynn Cross Research Professor
Past Presidential Professor



Kevin K. Fuller, PhD
Assistant Professor



Darren J. Lee, PhD
Assistant Professor



Michael H. Elliott, PhD
Associate Professor



Dimitrios Karamichos, PhD
Associate Professor
W. Stanley Muenzler Endowed
Professorship in Corneal Disease



Raju V.S. Rajala, PhD
M.G. McCool Professor



SAVE THE DATE

3rd Annual Robert E. Anderson, MD, PhD Lecture
October 18, 2018

12th Annual OU Vision Workshop
October 18-19, 2018

Tullos O. Coston, MD Lecture Hall at DMEI (Acers Pavilion, Fifth Floor)

Patricia A. D'Amore, PhD, MBA, FARVO

Charles L. Schepens Professor of Ophthalmology and Professor of Pathology
Harvard Medical School, Boston, Massachusetts

BrightFocus Foundation HONORS VISION RESEARCHERS

ON APRIL 30, BRIGHTFOCUS FOUNDATION recognized Xi-Qin Ding, PhD, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, with the Elizabeth Anderson Award for Macular Degeneration Research.

Dr. Ding and five other award recipients are among a larger group of scientists who will lead 30 new vision research grants from BrightFocus, a \$4.2 million investment toward defeating the leading causes of age-related vision loss. The awards were presented at a ceremony held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology.

“These outstanding women and men are pursuing the untried, unexpected, and most promising paths to saving sight. Their relentless drive for cures powerfully reflects the legacies these awards honor,” said Stacy Pagos Haller, president and chief executive officer of BrightFocus Foundation, a premier source of private research funding to end diseases of mind and sight. ■



*Xi-Qin Ding, PhD
Associate Professor,
Department of Cell Biology,
Joanne I. Moore Professorship
in Pharmacology*

RESEARCH FACULTY— DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

Martin-Paul Agbaga, PhD
Robert E. Anderson, MD, PhD
Lea D. Bennett, PhD
Richard S. Brush, BS
Michelle C. Callegan, PhD

Daniel J.J. Carr, PhD
Phillip S. Coburn, PhD
Michael H. Elliott, PhD
Kevin K. Fuller, PhD
Dimitrios Karamichos, PhD

Darren J. Lee, PhD
Sun Young (Sunny) Lee, MD, PhD
Feng Li, MD, MPH, MS
Raju V.S. Rajala, PhD
Lily L. Wong, PhD

Karamichos Inducted into ARVO's Dowling Society

DIMITRIOS KARAMICHOS, PHD WAS INDUCTED into the Dowling Society during the 2018 meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) in Honolulu, Hawaii.

The prestigious Dowling Society recognizes individuals for their significant support for eye and vision research. The society is named for vision researcher and first chair of the ARVO Foundation Board of Governors, John E. Dowling, PhD. Robert E. "Gene" Anderson, MD, PhD from the Dean McGee Eye Institute/University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center is also a member of the Dowling Society.

As part of his contribution to the Dowling Society, Dr. Karamichos and his collaborator, Dr. Tor Paaske Utheim of Norway, have established the "Karamichos/Utheim Keratoconus Travel Grant," which will be available for the 2019 ARVO Annual Meeting.

As of 2017, the ARVO Foundation has supported travel expenses for 864 researchers from around the world to report their work at ARVO annual meetings. ■



Pictured (left to right): John E. Dowling, PhD, FARVO, ARVO Foundation Governor Emeritus; Dimitrios Karamichos, PhD, Associate Professor of Ophthalmology and Cell Biology, W. Stanley Muenzler Professorship in Corneal Disease; Paul Sternberg Jr., MD, FARVO, ARVO Foundation Chair; Gary W. Abrams, MD, FARVO, ARVO Foundation Governor Emeritus; Nicolas G. Bazan, MD, PhD, FARVO, ARVO Foundation Governor Emeritus; and J. Mark Petrash, PhD, FARVO, ARVO Foundation Immediate Past Chair.

GRADUATE COLLEGE APPOINTS DR. DIMITRIOS KARAMICHOS TO ROLE AS STRATEGIC DIRECTOR



THE GRADUATE COLLEGE AT THE University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center is pleased to announce that effective July 1, Dr. Dimitrios Karamichos will serve as the Director of Strategic Partnerships and Program Development for the Graduate College. He is an Associate Professor in the Departments of Ophthalmology and Cell Biology and holds the W. Stanley Muenzler, MD Endowed Professorship in Corneal Disease. His scientific laboratory is located on the fourth floor of the Dean McGee Eye Institute's Thomas E. Acers, MD Pavilion. ■

DMEI Research Alumnus Impacts Eye Care in Japan

BY APRIL WILKERSON

FROM 2004 TO 2006, DR. MASAKI TANITO

served as a visiting scientist and postdoctoral fellow at the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI), a relationship that not only furthered his expertise as a physician-researcher but continues to advance his career in Japan today.

After earning his MD and PhD degrees in Japan, Dr. Tanito joined Dr. Robert E. Anderson's laboratory at DMEI, drawn by Dr. Anderson's reputation as a leading scientist in the field of lipid metabolism and oxidation in the retinal degeneration process. While at DMEI, Dr. Tanito continued to research retinal damage induced by light, and he explored several neuroprotective molecular pathways and agents that could potentially serve as therapeutics in the prevention of retinal degeneration.

Dr. Tanito also was a prolific writer while in Oklahoma. "During my two-year stay in Professor Anderson's laboratory, I published 10 peer-reviewed scientific papers, three review articles and six peer-reviewed papers in collaboration with other scientists at the Dean McGee Eye Institute," he said.

"In the same period, I reduced my best golf score from 101 in Japan to 85 in Oklahoma City," he joked.

When he returned to Japan in 2006, Dr. Tanito became an Associate Professor in the Department of Ophthalmology and worked at the hospital of Shimane University. In 2014, he moved to Matsue Red Cross Hospital as Director General of the Division of Ophthalmology. In these hospitals, his primary work was on cataract, glaucoma, vitreoretinal and corneal transplantation surgeries. In 2008, he began performing glaucoma tube shunt surgery, one of the earliest introductions of this technique in Japan.

Three years ago, Dr. Tanito invented a minimally invasive glaucoma surgery (MIGS) that allows the surgeon to reduce intraocular pressure with the smallest (less than 1 millimeter) corneal incision. His six papers on the procedure's efficacy were published in several medical journals.

"I coined this procedure 'microhook ab interno trabeculotomy,'" he said. "After the specialized surgical device for this procedure was released by the company, microhook ab interno trabeculotomy became one of the most frequently performed glaucoma surgeries in Japan. At least 300 surgical sites, including 50 university hospitals, have started performing this procedure as of January 2018."

During another visit to DMEI, in 2011, Dr. Tanito's career took a leap forward again. DMEI glaucoma specialist Dr. Mahmoud A. Khaimi introduced Dr. Tanito to endoscopic cyclophotocoagulation, a glaucoma surgery that had not yet been used in Japan. In collaboration with a Japanese company, Dr. Tanito developed a domestic device for the procedure and used it to conduct clinical trials. He expects the Japanese government to approve it as a medical device in early 2019.

In April 2018, Dr. Tanito returned to the university where he earned both of his degrees – Shimane Medical University in Shimane, Japan. He was named Professor and Chair of Ophthalmology at Shimane University Faculty of Medicine and is one of the youngest ophthalmology department chairs in Japan. "Dr. Tanito's influence on the ophthalmologic community in Japan is impressive. We are grateful for his impactful work with Dr. Anderson at the Dean McGee Eye Institute, congratulate him on his success, and also appreciate his friendship with all of us here," stated Gregory L. Skuta, MD, DMEI president and chief executive officer. ■



Pictured (left to right): Dr. Masaki Tanito, Mrs. Naoko Tanito, and Dr. Robert E. Anderson.

OU BOARD OF REGENTS RECOGNITION

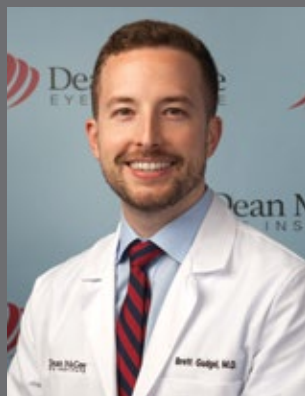
TO HONOR THE DEAN MCGEE EYE INSTITUTE'S (DMEI'S)

recognition among the nation's leading academic ophthalmology centers and departments of ophthalmology, University of Oklahoma (OU) Board of Regents Chair Clayton I. Bennett and President David L. Boren (now Immediate Past President) presented a resolution and special certificate to Drs. Gregory L. Skuta and Robert E. "Gene" Anderson on January 24 at the Board of Regents Meeting in Norman. This represented a very special distinction for the Institute and Department. ■



Pictured (left to right): Clayton I. Bennett, Chair, OU Board of Regents; Chris A. Purcell, PhD, Vice President for University Governance; Regent Phil B. Albert; Regent C. Renzi Stone (center back); Dr. Gregory L. Skuta; Dr. Robert E. "Gene" Anderson; Regent Leslie J. Rainbolt-Forbes, MD, Vice Chair, OU Board of Regents; and OU President David L. Boren.

Ophthalmology Resident Achieves Special Honor



BRETT M. GUDGEL, MD began a two-year term on July 1 as a member of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education's Residency Review Committee (RRC) for Ophthalmology. This is an exceptional honor and a very important post, as he will be involved in setting national standards for training and evaluating programs nationwide. In his capacity, Dr. Gudgel will be the only resident serving on this committee, and was chosen out of all the PGY-2 residents nominated nationwide. He is also the first University of Oklahoma (OU) Department of Ophthalmology resident to ever be selected for the RRC and is the only resident from the entire OU College of Medicine currently serving in this capacity. ■

Vincent D. Venincasa, MD Named New Chief Resident



DR. VINCENT VENINCASA HAS BEEN SELECTED as chief resident for the 2018-2019 academic year, which started on July 1. Dr. Venincasa was born and raised in Orlando, Florida and has one younger brother. He met his wife, Kiran (a University of Oklahoma general surgery resident), at the University of Miami where they both completed their undergraduate studies and medical school. Dr. Venincasa enjoys playing basketball and watching the University of Miami Hurricanes' football games in the fall. His and his wife's pastimes include traveling, cooking, literature, and art.

Dr. Venincasa's predecessor as chief resident, Andrew T. Melson, MD, will remain at the Dean McGee Eye Institute/University of Oklahoma as the 2018-2019 neuro-ophthalmology fellow. ■

SAVE THE DATE
Friday, November 30, 2018

Macular Degeneration/ Low Vision/Glaucoma (MDLVG) Seminar

PLEASE JOIN US for this informative seminar to learn from the Dean McGee Eye Institute faculty and an occupational therapist and also hear about the latest adaptive devices and technology for those experiencing low vision.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list for this seminar, please call 405.271.1611.



UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

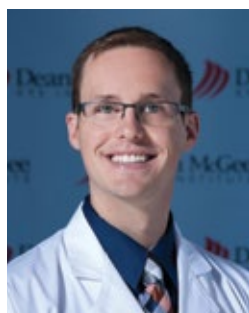
THE GRADUATES OF 2018



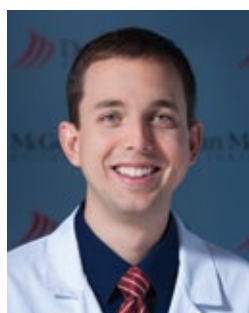
JOSHUA F. HENDRIX, MD has completed three years of residency training and will enter private practice as a comprehensive ophthalmologist in Dalton, Georgia.



CHRISTINA M. LIPPE, MD has completed three years of residency training. She will remain at the Dean McGee Eye Institute for six months to pursue an advanced study preceptorship in oculoplastics and neuro-ophthalmology. She will then enter private practice as a comprehensive ophthalmologist in Wyomissing, Pennsylvania.



ANDREW T. MELSON, MD has completed three years of residency training and will enter a neuro-ophthalmology fellowship at the Dean McGee Eye Institute/University of Oklahoma.



JASON C. SMART, MD, has completed three years of residency training and will enter private practice as a comprehensive ophthalmologist in Las Vegas, Nevada.



ANDREW E. HACK, MD has completed a one-year cornea fellowship and will enter private practice as a cornea specialist in Greenville, South Carolina.



JAMES C. O'BRIEN, MD has completed a one-year neuro-ophthalmology fellowship and will be joining the neuro-ophthalmology faculty at the Dean McGee Eye Institute/University of Oklahoma as an Assistant Professor.



SHRIPAAD Y. SHUKLA, MD has completed a two-year vitreoretinal surgery fellowship and will enter private practice with Retina Vitreous Consultants in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.



JUSTIN M. SPAULDING, DO has completed a one-year glaucoma fellowship and will enter private practice with the Cataract and Laser Institute of Southern Oregon in Medford, Oregon.

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY INCOMING 2018 RESIDENTS & FELLOWS

INCOMING 2018 RESIDENTS



Pictured (left to right): Drs. Huck, Batliwala, Kim, Bugg, and Jin.

Shahzad Y. Batliwala, DO

College: University of Texas at Tyler
Medical School: University of North Texas Health Science Center

Victoria A. Bugg, MD

College: University of Oklahoma
Medical School: University of Oklahoma College of Medicine

Andrew H. Huck, MD

College: Butler University
Medical School: Indiana University School of Medicine

Haoxing “Douglas” Jin, MD

College: Cornell University
Medical School: Baylor College of Medicine

Alice Y. Kim, MD

College: University of Southern California
Medical School: University of Southern California - Keck School of Medicine

INCOMING 2018 FELLOWS

Craig D. Eck, MD

Cornea Fellow
Medical School: University of Missouri-Columbia School of Medicine
Residency: Saint Louis University School of Medicine

Abayomi E. Fabunmi, MD

Glaucoma Fellow
Medical School: Meharry Medical College
Residency: Case Western Reserve University

Andrew T. Melson, MD

Neuro-Ophthalmology Fellow
Medical School: Saint Louis University School of Medicine
Residency: Dean McGee Eye Institute/University of Oklahoma

Stanley S.K. Park, MD

Retina Fellow
Medical School: Ohio State University College of Medicine
Residency: Havener Eye Institute/Ohio State University
Uveitis Fellowship: Bascom Palmer Eye Institute/University of Miami



DMEI Distinguished Visiting Lecturers



JANUARY 15, 2018

Steven A. Newman, MD (center)
Professor of Ophthalmology, University
of Virginia Health System

Grand Rounds Guest Lecture: "Systemic
and Retinal Disorders Masquerading as
Neuro-Ophthalmology"

MARCH 5, 2018

Constance E. West, MD (center)
Boston, Massachusetts

Grand Rounds Guest Lecture:
"Extracting Quality Data From an
EHR – Lessons Learned"



MAY 7, 2018

Linda Lawrence, MD (center)
Salina, Kansas

Grand Rounds Guest Lecture:
"Datura, Dilation into Darkness"



SAVE THE DATE: October 1, 2018

THE 27TH ANNUAL WALTER J. STARK MEMORIAL LECTURESHIP

8:30 am–9:30 am • Tullio O. Coston, MD Lecture Hall

George A. Williams, MD

Chair, Department of Ophthalmology

Director, Beaumont Eye Institute

Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine

Royal Oak, Michigan

President-Elect, American Academy of Ophthalmology

Chair, Ophthalmic Mutual Insurance Company

Past President, American Society of Retina Specialists

42nd Annual DMEI Ophthalmology Symposium 39th Annual Tullos O. Coston, MD Lecture, &



Pictured (left to right): William S. Clifford, MD, MBA, Chair of the Acers Society; Anne L. Coleman, MD, PhD, Tullos O. Coston, MD Lecturer; and Gregory L. Skuta, MD, DMEI President and Chief Executive Officer.



Pictured (left to right): Valerie L. Lobodiak, MD, John "Russell" Burks, MD, Danielle Melson, Finny T. John, MD, Ashley Burks, and Maria E. Lim, MD during the Acers Society Reception on June 2.

ANNE L. COLEMAN, MD, PhD DELIVERED the 39th Tullos O. Coston, MD Lecture on June 2 as part of the 42nd Annual DMEI Ophthalmology Symposium/OU Resident and Alumni Meeting. Her Coston Lecture was entitled “Looking Beyond Established Risk Factors: Lifestyle and Nutrition in Glaucoma.” She also delivered a second lecture, “Big Data Case Study: IRIS Registry.”

One of the most respected leaders in American ophthalmology, Dr. Coleman is the Fran and Ray Stark Foundation Professor of Ophthalmology at the Stein Eye Institute and Vice Chair of Academic Affairs in the Department of Ophthalmology at the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California - Los Angeles (UCLA). She also is Professor of Epidemiology in UCLA’s Jonathan and Karin Fielding School of Public Health and Director of the Center for Community Outreach and Policy, overseeing the UCLA Mobile Eye Clinic and Center for Eye Epidemiology. Dr. Coleman, who delivered the prestigious Edward Jackson Memorial Lecture in 2015 and the American Glaucoma Society (AGS) Lecture in 2016, is a past president of Women in Ophthalmology and the Los Angeles Society of Ophthalmology. Since her Coston Lecture, Dr. Coleman’s nomination as president-elect of the American Academy of Ophthalmology in 2019 (and president in 2020) has been announced.

A native of Richmond, Virginia, Dr. Coleman earned her undergraduate degree in chemistry at Duke University (*magna cum laude*) and her medical degree from the Medical College of Virginia (MCV) in Richmond, where she was inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society. After an internship in general surgery at MCV, she completed a residency in ophthalmology at the University of Illinois - Chicago and a glaucoma

m/OU Resident and Alumni Meeting, 15th Annual Acers Society Reception

fellowship at the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. Dr. Coleman subsequently joined the faculty at UCLA in 1990 and, with the support of a National Eye Institute (NEI)–funded career development award, earned her PhD in epidemiology from UCLA in 1997. She rose to the rank of Professor in the Departments of Ophthalmology and Epidemiology in 2003.

Dr. Coleman has authored or co-authored well over 200 publications and more than 40 book chapters, and has co-edited such textbooks as *Management of Cataract and Glaucoma* and *Pearls of Glaucoma Management*. Her research interests include the interface of ophthalmology and public health with an emphasis on comparative effectiveness research, visual functioning, and societal impact of eye disease. She serves as an Associate Editor for the *American Journal of Ophthalmology* and on the editorial board of numerous other scientific journals. In addition to the Jackson and AGS Lectures, she has delivered more than

400 presentations around the world, including more than 25 other keynote or named lectures. Dr. Coleman also has mentored more than 60 fellows and international scholars.

A past Trustee-at-Large on the American Academy of Ophthalmology's (AAO's) Board of Trustees and Secretary for Quality of Care, Dr. Coleman also was the Founding Director of the AAO's H. Dunbar Hoskins Jr., MD Center for Quality Eye Care and has received the Academy's Life Achievement Honor Award and at least four Secretariat Awards. In 2016, Dr. Coleman was named a member of the National Academy of Sciences in Engineering and Medicine, one of the highest honors that can be bestowed on a clinician scientist or scientist. She also has been the recipient of numerous other awards.

We are grateful to Dr. Coleman for her extraordinary contributions to the success of this year's Symposium and look forward to her future leadership and service as president of the Academy! ■



SAVE THE DATE! Next year's meeting is scheduled for Friday/Saturday, May 31–June 1, 2019.

40th Tullos O. Coston, MD Lecture (June 1)

David W. Parke II, MD

*Chief Executive Officer
American Academy of Ophthalmology
Past President and Chief Executive Officer
Dean McGee Eye Institute
Professor Emeritus
University of Oklahoma College of Medicine*

RESIDENT/ALUMNI AWARDS



DR. AND MRS. THOMAS E. ACERS RESIDENT HONOR AWARD

In left photo, co-awardee Christina M. Lippe, MD (right), shown with Ann Acers-Warn, MD, MBA (left) and, in right photo, co-awardee Andrew T. Melson, MD (right), shown with Ann Acers-Warn, MD, MBA (left).



ANNIE MOREAU, MD FELLOW TEACHING AWARD

Award recipient Shripaad Y. Shukla, MD (center), shown with incoming chief resident, Vincent Venincasa, MD (left) and outgoing chief resident, Andrew Melson, MD (right).



ROBERT G. SMALL, MD RESIDENT AWARD FOR MEDICAL STUDENT EDUCATION

Awardee Joshua F. Hendrix, MD (right), shown with Gregory L. Skuta, MD (left).

As part of the Dean McGee Eye Institute and OU Department of Ophthalmology's 42nd Annual Resident/Alumni Day, the recipients of a number of awards were announced at the reception and dinner at Devon Tower on the evening of Saturday, June 2.



EXCELLENCE IN ATTENDING AT VA AWARD

Award recipient Andrew K. Bailey, MD (center), shown with outgoing chief resident, Andrew Melson, MD (left) and incoming chief resident, Vincent Venincasa, MD (right).

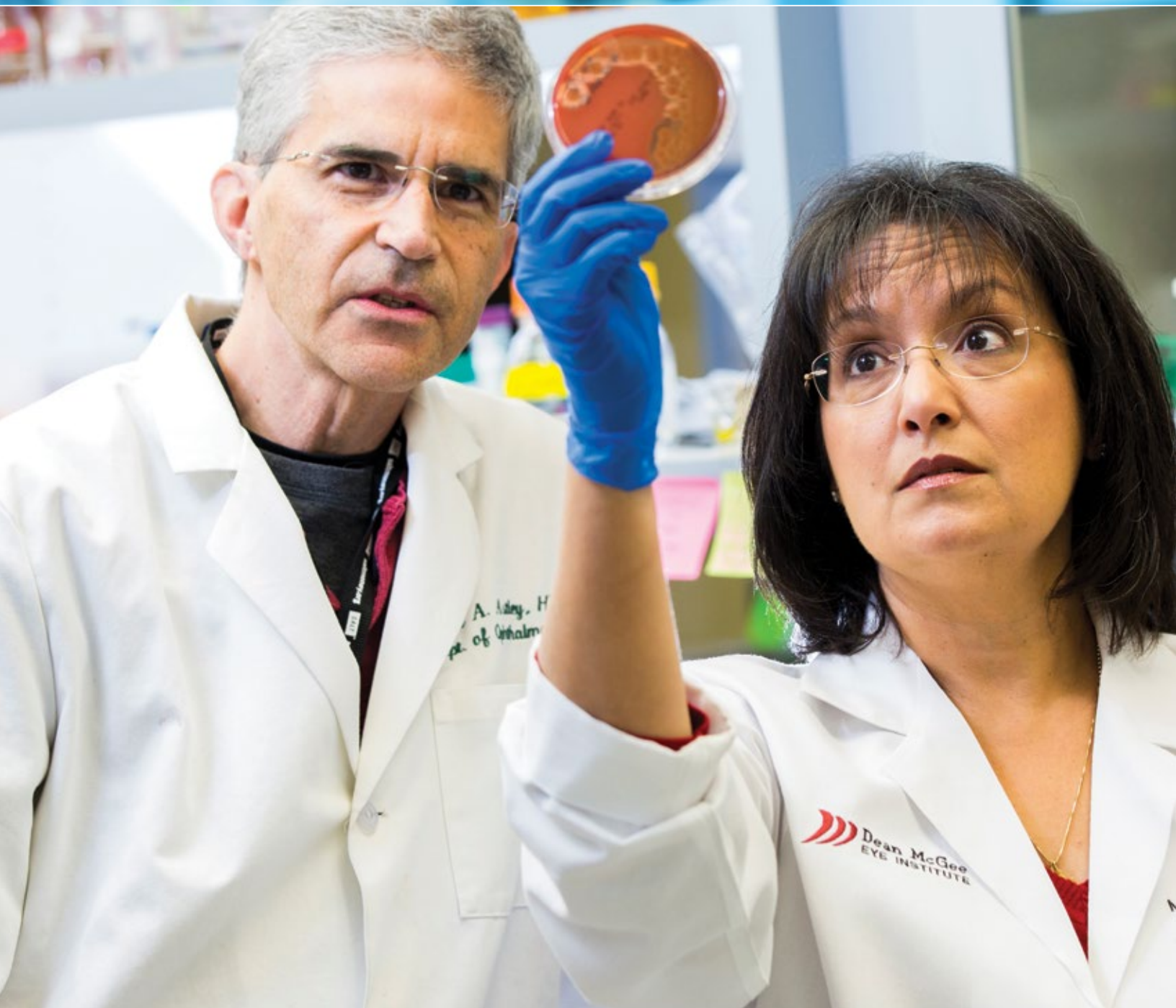


E.L. AND THELMA GAYLORD FACULTY HONOR AWARD

Awardee Vinay A. Shah, MD (center), shown with outgoing chief resident, Andrew Melson, MD (left) and incoming chief resident, Vincent Venincasa, MD (right).



Dr. Basil Mathews (center) received the 2018 Dean McGee Award in Ophthalmology as the most outstanding OU College of Medicine graduating medical student in this specialty area. He will begin his ophthalmology residency at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine in Chapel Hill in July 2019. He is flanked by Dr. Gregory L. and Anne M. Skuta.



*Michelle C. Callegan, PhD (right) evaluates the ocular pathogen *Bacillus cereus* with Roger A. Astley (left), a research assistant in her laboratory, on the fourth floor of DMEI's Acers Pavilion.*



DMEI'S SCIENTISTS ON THE *LEADING EDGE* OF *Vision Research*

BY APRIL WILKERSON

UNDER THE SAME LARGE ROOF AT THE DEAN MCGEE EYE INSTITUTE (DMEI), DOCTORS TREAT PATIENTS SUFFERING FROM A MULTITUDE OF EYE DISEASES, AND RESEARCHERS OCCUPY LABORATORIES SEARCHING FOR NEW WAYS TO ADDRESS THOSE CONDITIONS.

The research enterprise at DMEI is robust and growing. With 10 current, independent, well-funded investigators at this writing and room for more, researchers in DMEI's laboratories are making discoveries that have direct clinical relevance to the patients in nearby exam rooms. Areas of research represent almost every eye condition, and investigations are carried out by a collaborative group of scientists who are known nationally and internationally for their work.

"Our bold objectives in vision research cannot be accomplished in academic silos, but must engage basic scientists and clinicians from across and even beyond this campus working together with vigor, innovation, and imagination," said Gregory L. Skuta, MD, president and chief executive officer of DMEI. "These objectives also are closely

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aligned with President Gallogly's desire to enhance the University's research programs."

DMEI's research program is overseen by Robert E. "Gene" Anderson, MD, PhD, a distinguished researcher in his own right. Of the eight, full-time, tenured and tenure-eligible faculty on the research team in the OU College of Medicine's Department of Ophthalmology (see pages 40-41), four are full Professors, two are Associate Professors and two are Assistant Professors. Each also holds a faculty appointment in one of the college's basic science departments. All have received peer-reviewed funding, mostly from the National Institutes of Health in the form of an R01 grant, considered the gold standard in research funding.

"The research that is being conducted at the Dean McGee Eye Institute is an example of the numerous ways a university can improve the quality of life for people across Oklahoma and beyond. The scientists at Dean McGee represent the highest caliber of researchers, and their work is crucial to the OU Health Sciences Center's reputation as a leader in academic medicine," said OU President James L. "Jim" Gallogly.

One of the major advances in DMEI research is found in the laboratory of Daniel J.J. Carr, PhD, who is developing a vaccine for herpes simplex virus type 1. This virus often remains dormant

in the nervous system, but when it reactivates, it travels down the nerve fibers to the cornea of the eye, where it can significantly compromise vision. The cornea has more nerve endings per area of surface than any tissue in the body, making it extremely sensitive.

Dr. Carr has successfully developed a vaccine in his animal research model and is now developing it for testing in humans.

"We are very excited about the prospect of the development of a vaccine that can be applied for prophylactic or, potentially, therapeutic use," Dr. Carr said. "Our animal studies show this vaccine to be highly protective without compromising vision following virus challenge. We are working with a company, Rational Vaccines, Inc., to develop this vaccine for clinical trials in humans."

Another area of research focuses on the disease keratoconus, an inherited condition in which the cornea begins to bulge and vision is affected. If left untreated, visual impairments and even blindness can develop. DMEI's keratoconus research is conducted by Dimitrios Karamichos, PhD, who recently acquired a cutting-edge 3-D bioprinter to further his aim of engineering new corneas. End-stage keratoconus patients require corneal transplantation. With a significant shortage of corneal tissue, 3-D bioprinted

“Our bold objectives in vision research cannot be accomplished in academic silos, but must engage basic scientists and clinicians...working together with vigor, innovation, and imagination.”

corneas would be a major advancement. Dr. Karamichos' hypothesis involves taking cells from the eye, prompting them to regress to their stem cell state, and then using the 3-D bioprinter to create the native five layers of the human cornea. The newly engineered cornea would then be transplanted back into the patient's eye. Because the transplanted cornea would be comprised of the patient's own cells, the possibility of rejection would be slim to none.

"Keratoconus is the most common ectatic corneal disease and affects 1 in 400 people worldwide," Dr. Karamichos said. "Despite a significant amount of research, the etiology and onset of the disease remains a puzzle. It is therefore imperative to be able to treat the manifestations of keratoconus. The recent explosion in popularity of 3-D bioprinting is a testament to the promise of our research. If we can print corneas in the lab, that will be a breakthrough that will help not only patients with keratoconus, but also patients with other devastating corneal diseases and dystrophies. Our hypothesis and experimental design will help us bring cutting-edge work out of the lab and into the real world."

In such eye conditions that are inherited – retinitis pigmentosa is another – the genetic mutation may not manifest itself until a person is older, in their 40s or 50s. Researcher Raju V.S. Rajala, PhD, has identified endogenous neuroprotective mechanisms, which normally keep the mutation at bay. However, at some point, they lose their ability to fight off the effects of the mutation. Dr. Rajala is seeking to better understand how these mechanisms work and potential ways to keep them functioning until a person is older.

In the laboratory of Michelle C. Callegan, PhD, the research focuses on better ways to treat



New OU President James "Jim" Gallogly (right) recently toured the Dean McGee Eye Institute with Drs. Gregory Skuta (left) and Robert "Gene" Anderson (center).

infections of the cornea and the interior of the eye. Bacteria can be introduced into the eye from an accidental penetrating injury – such as getting hit by a splinter of wood – and the patient's vision can be in jeopardy within hours.

"When virulent organisms reach the inside of the eye, they multiply and produce toxins that can damage important tissues responsible for vision. This can lead to blindness," Dr. Callegan said. "Our research focuses on why those bacteria behave the way they do – how they grow and move, the toxins they produce, and how we can better treat inflammation, which is also a part of the destruction of the eye. Antibiotics are effective at treating eye infections, but several organisms are resistant to multiple drugs, and

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those are especially dangerous. We try to dissect the different aspects of how infections evolve in order to devise better treatment strategies.”

Another important area of research is led by Darren J. Lee, PhD, who investigates uveitis, or inflammation of the eye from various causes. Dr. Lee is searching for the origins of the inflammation and the chemical reactions that are taking place in the cells and on the cell surface. His aim is to find a way to inhibit the inflammatory response.

In the laboratory of Michael H. Elliott, PhD, a basic science approach is providing crucial information for understanding the biological mechanisms that play a role in disease. One of Dr. Elliott’s projects focuses on the blood-retinal barrier, which is dysfunctional in complex diseases like age-related macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy. His focus is a gene called caveolin-1, which is thought to play a role in inflammation, thereby affecting the integrity of the blood-retinal barrier.

In related research, Dr. Elliott has a new grant that will fund a multi-center, multi-investigator project that is again studying the role of caveolin-1, but in open-angle glaucoma. Human gene studies have already associated caveolin-1 with the risk for developing glaucoma. This project will delve into potential ways the gene is involved in eye pressure regulation, which is important because intraocular pressure is the main risk factor for glaucoma.

While his basic science research is upstream in the investigative process, Dr. Elliott’s work is gratifying because it lays a foundation for potential treatments in the future. “By

understanding biological mechanisms that control disease states, we’re opening a door,” he said. “The specific molecular pathways we’re studying may be targetable by therapeutics. It’s exciting research for the opportunities it presents.”

DMEI also houses a laboratory led not by an ophthalmologist or PhD, but a neonatal physician from The Children’s Hospital. Among the many conditions that threaten the health

of premature infants is retinopathy of prematurity. Faizah Bhatti, MD, researches the basic mechanisms of the condition, looking for ways to manipulate them with the goal of preventing blindness.

Much of the research taking place at DMEI is multidisciplinary and collaborative. That’s important, Dr. Anderson said, because no single

researcher is an expert in all of the areas of an investigation. For example, Dr. Anderson is involved in a collaborative project studying the role of a gene that, in one mutation, causes ataxia (characterized by irregular gait and bodily movement) and, in another mutation, causes vision loss. The investigation includes Dr. Anderson’s skills as a lipid biochemist, along with other scientists with expertise in cell biology, neuroanatomy, aging, molecular biology, and electrophysiology.

“With the rapid development of a variety of molecular biology ‘tools,’ we now have the ability to manipulate the gene to simulate human diseases in animals. We can bring our different areas of expertise to work on these projects,” Dr. Anderson said. “This is an exciting time to be doing this type of research because what we are doing may be beneficial to patients in a relatively short period of time.”

“We can bring our different areas of expertise to work on these projects.”

The research enterprise at DMEI is still growing, focusing on enhancing development of translational programs that will facilitate the “bench to bedside” transfer of information for the benefit of patients. A new researcher, Kevin K. Fuller, PhD, studies corneal ulcers caused by fungi. The Institute will soon welcome two additional scientists with expertise in applying gene therapy to the treatment of inherited retinal degenerations. One, Lea Bennett, PhD, is an expert in mapping gene defects in patients, and the other, Sun Young Lee, MD, PhD, is a clinician-scientist who specializes in vitreoretinal surgery but is also very active as a researcher.

A core grant from the National Eye Institute (NEI), called a P30 award, funds DMEI’s three basic science cores – molecular biology, live animal imaging and cellular imaging. A group of skilled, dedicated staff members keep each core running at peak function, which is crucial for the outcomes of research projects.

Even though researchers don’t see patients as their clinical counterparts do, they work in the same building, which isn’t often the case in medicine. Researchers and physicians see each other regularly, sometimes attend the same lectures and frequently ask each other questions from their individual vantage points.

“It’s invaluable to have researchers and clinicians in the same building,” Dr. Anderson said. “Together, we are able to translate research more quickly into treatments that will help our patients.” ■

RESEARCHERS AT THE DEAN MCGEE EYE INSTITUTE (DMEI) ARE INVOLVED IN THE MISSION OF ACADEMIC MEDICINE IN MANY WAYS OUTSIDE THEIR LABORATORIES

Eight tenured and tenure-eligible researchers in the Department of Ophthalmology hold an additional faculty appointment in a basic science department (e.g., Cell Biology, Microbiology/Immunology, or Physiology) in the OU College of Medicine, which takes them across the OU Health Sciences Center (OUHSC) to interact with other colleagues and graduate students.

DMEI researchers are actively involved with an OUHSC Graduate College program, the Graduate Program in Biomedical Sciences (GPiBS), training the next generation of researchers. Similarly, many researchers are involved in the Oklahoma Center for Neuroscience, a multidisciplinary group on campus.

“We are not isolated; we are heavily involved in campus activities,” said Robert E. “Gene” Anderson, MD, PhD, Director of Vision Research at DMEI and for the Department of Ophthalmology.

Five research faculty members hold endowed chairs or professorships with the Department of Ophthalmology, a strong testament to their work and achievements. Endowed positions and other professorships provide funding that greatly benefits each researcher’s work. Faculty members and their professorships are:

- **Robert E. “Gene” Anderson**—Dean A. McGee Professor of Ophthalmology and George Lynn Cross Research Professor
- **Michelle C. Callegan, PhD**—James P. Luton Professor of Ophthalmology, Edith Kinney Gaylord Presidential Professor, and George Lynn Cross Research Professor
- **Daniel J.J. Carr, PhD**—Stanton L. Young Professor of Ophthalmology and George Lynn Cross Research Professor; prior Presbyterian Health Foundation Presidential Professor
- **Dimitrios Karamichos, PhD**—W. Stanley Muenzler, MD Professorship in Corneal Disease
- **Raju V.S. Rajala, PhD**—M.G. McCool Professor of Ophthalmology

DMEI researchers also are active at the national level. One of the highest honors for a scientist is to be invited to join a study section, which is a peer review group composed of the top experts in many disciplines. Several DMEI researchers are long-term members of study sections, and all have served on the editorial boards of scientific journals.

In addition, Drs. Anderson, Callegan, and Elliott have earned recognition from the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO). Dr. Anderson was in the inaugural class of ARVO Gold Fellows, Dr. Callegan is now an ARVO Gold Fellow, and Dr. Michael Elliott is an ARVO Silver Fellow. The honor recognizes ARVO members for their individual accomplishments, leadership and contributions to the association.

Dr. Anderson was awarded ARVO’s 2011 Proctor Medal, named for Dr. Francis I. Proctor, an ophthalmologist who conducted extensive research on the etiology and treatment of trachoma. The medal honors outstanding research in the basic or clinical sciences in ophthalmology and is the highest award given by ARVO.

“The eye of a human being is a microscope, which makes the world seem bigger than it really is.

– Khalil Gibran”





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inside this issue:

Dr. Hausheer Inaugurated as President of Oklahoma
State Medical Association p. 8

Five Ophthalmologists Appointed to DMEI/OU Clinical Faculty p. 20

Additional Clinical Space Opens in August p. 32

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