



Department of Ophthalmology Quarterly Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2023

We have had many exciting developments in the department over the last 4 months, and I will highlight the key events in this 2023 Winter issue. First of all, we recruited 5 new faculty, including Deepak Edward, MD, FACS who will generously provide needed glaucoma services until Ayesha Badar, MD our new full time glaucoma attending from Indiana University starts in September. We also recruited a 4th full time cornea specialist trained at Baylor College, Christina Mamalis, (the daughter of alumni, Nick Mamalis) who will start in August, 1 month after her husband starts a 2-year CV surgery fellowship at Loyola. We also hired Dana Darwish from Cook County that will provide comprehensive/cataract services primarily at the Hickory Hills office. She will also serve as Clinical Director of that site managing the large number of ophthalmology referrals from the Loyola Primary Care offices at Tinly Park, Homer Glen, and Orland Park. Finally, Jhansi Raju, VA Section Chief, recruited Douglas Sigford, a mid-career Retina specialist to work full time at the HVA. This will bring the number of full time Retina faculty to 3 with 5 additional part time retina faculty at the HVA and 1 PT at Loyola.

Chairman's Corner



Members of the Department are also actively engaged leadership roles in the COS, AUPO, Women in Ophthalmology and Optometric Programs.

Our DEI Programs have also grown with 2 Guest Speakers per year and a notable Diverse Faculty-Alumni Day Program.

Our research programs have expanded with 7 vision research labs mentoring multiple technicians, medical students, graduate students, and post-docs, making our Research Programs almost double in size and productivity over last 5 years.

We also established an Annual Vision Research Day this 2023 year, which will set the direction for our future.

Clinical Faculty: Recruitment



Deepak P. Edward, MD, FACS, FARVO, is Professor of Ophthalmology and Vice-Chair for Education at the University of Illinois Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences. He joined the Department of Ophthalmology at Loyola in January 2023 as a part time Glaucoma consultant. Deepak will be seeing patients at the Burr Ridge Satellite office through July 2023. Deepak also provides monthly Ophthalmic Pathology lectures to the residents.



Douglas Sigford, MD will be joining the HVA in May 2023 as a full-time retina surgeon. Doug received his MD from University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, and then completed his residency and fellowship training at University of Louisville. His current research focus is on retinal imaging where he is particularly interested in the wealth of information available with modern optical coherence tomographic imaging, investigating both traditional and automated ways of collecting and interpreting that information. He currently serves as the Program Director at the Kentucky VA .



Ayesha Badar, MD will join our department in September 2023, as our second full time glaucoma specialist. She will see patients at Loyola and HVA. Ayesha graduated summa cum laude from Benedictine University and then went on to obtain her MD degree from University of Illinois where she graduated AOA. Her residency training was at Indiana University where she stayed on to complete her Glaucoma Fellowship. She enjoys resident clinical and surgical teaching, has a wide variety of research interests with 20 publications and presentations. She plans to settle in the western Chicago suburbs, and we look forward to the expertise and passion that Ayesha will bring to the department.



Christina "Tina" Mamalis, MD will join our department in August, 2023, as a Cornea Fellowship trained Comprehensive Ophthalmologist. She will see patients at Loyola and HVA. Tina graduated from Northwestern University with a minor in Global Health Studies and will help lead our Global Health Programs. She obtained her MD degree and Residency Training at University of Utah, Moran Eye Center where she served as Chief Resident. In 2022, she completed her Cornea, Anterior Segment and Refractive Surgery Fellowship at Baylor College of Medicine. She currently works as a staff physician at the Ben Taub Hospital, Harris County Health System where she staffs resident clinics and surgery. Tina has outstanding global health experience and clinical research with 13 peer reviewed publications. We look forward to her enthusiastic and broad leadership experience.



Dana Darwish, MD will join our department in September 2023 as a Comprehensive Ophthalmologist where she will serve as the Director of the Hickory Hills Ophthalmology Services. Dana received her undergraduate and medical school training at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She continued to obtain her residency training at Cook County Health and Hospital Systems. Dana has artistic skill in medical illustration, which resulted in her painting 6 cadaver murals in the College of Medicine Edelstone Learning Center. We look forward to her artistic talents in expanding our VR educational programs.

Faculty in the News



Taylor Starnes and Connor Baharozian (PGY4) became new fathers the same week! Paul Chiranand and Negar Mirsattari with their new baby Luca and Sarah Griffin (PGY4) and new baby George.

David Yoo, MD currently serves as President of the Chicago Ophthalmology Society and Meenakshi Chaku, MD serves as the Quarterly Meeting Director for the 2022-2023 term.

James McDonnell, MD will be speaking at the ISEPS / COS Annual Meeting in February on the Neurophysiology of Light Exposure and will be Visiting Professor in March at the Beaumont Eye Institute in Royal Oak, Michigan where he will speak on the critical role light plays in health and disease.

Charles Bouchard, MD, MA was recently accepted as a full member of the Cornea Society with Thesis Category.

Meenakshi Chaku, MD became an organizing officer of the Chicago Glaucoma Society (CGS)

Anuradha Khanna, MD was invited to present at the NextMed Health Innovation Lab in March 2023.

Glaucoma Service (Loyola and Hines VA) expands its Faculty to 6 with the recruitment of Deepak Edward, MD, FACS who started in January 2023, and Ayesha Badar, to start in September. They will join Meenakshi Chaku, MD, Azizur Rahman, MD, Rick Quinones, MD, Varun Malhotra, MD.



Omer Iqbal, MD., has research interests in the areas of pathogenesis of Stevens Johnson Syndrome/Toxic Epidermal Necrolysis (SJS/TEN), Keratoconus and Age-related macular degeneration. He was an invited speaker at the recently held 6th International Conference on Wound Care, Dermatology and Orthopedics, in Dubai, UAE during December 5-6, 2022. He spoke on “Immune-mediated pathogenesis of SJS/TEN – An imminent need for more stricter and more effective pharmacovigilance strategies”. Given his wide range of research interests, he was also an invited speaker at the concurrently held 26th International Conference on Advanced Nanoscience and Nanotechnology in Dubai, UAE., and spoke on “Nanotechnology and Cardiovascular Diseases”.

Residency Program

Residents gathered in Gary, IN for a retreat weekend after the first rotation of the year. They greatly appreciated the chance to decompress and process the first rotation together, as well as time for Spikeball and yoga on the beach.



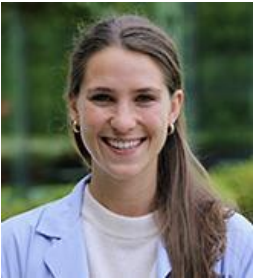
Residents learn new surgical techniques at the Fall Glaucoma Cataract Symposium Wet Lab:



Deepak Edward, MD, now provides monthly Ophthalmic Pathology Wet labs



Fellowship Match



Sarah Griffin, MD

Undergraduate: University of Alabama
Medical School: Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine
Hometown: Pinehurst, NC
Interests: Impromptu dinners with friends, trying new restaurants, being outside with my golden retrievers and Alabama football games

Future Career: Cornea Fellowship, Wake Forest University School of Medicine



Nolan Adams, MD

Undergraduate: Northwestern University
Medical School: Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine
Hometown: Rockford, IL
Interests: Spending time with my wife, playing with my twins and son, and marveling as they grow

Future Career: University of New Mexico, The Southwest Cornea and Glaucoma/Anterior Segment fellowship.

Alumni News



Chris Wood, (1998), (not shown) and Troy Close (2002, pictured on the right) attended the F.O.C.U.S Fundraiser Gala at Barrington White House in December 2022 along with residents Briggs Hoyt and Elizabeth Sledz and Andrea Honigsblum (Hines VA Comprehensive Ophthalmologist).



In October, alumni from throughout the years gathered at Loyola's Beane Hall to reconnect over AAO weekend. It was great to see so many familiar







AUPO Annual Meeting

Rukhsana Mirza presenting summary of AUPO Fellowship Committee January 2023, with AUPO Leadership: Michael Chang, Director of NEI, Steven McLeod, President AAO, Andreas Lauer, Chair of ABO, Brian Hofland, President RPB.



CME Programs

Glaucoma & Cataract Surgical Summit Saturday October 22nd, 2022

Our 5th Annual Glaucoma Cataract Surgical Summit & Wet Lab was a huge success with outstanding keynote speakers: Dr. Leon Herndon from Duke Eye and Dr. Nicole Fram from Advanced Vision Care and Chicago Expert Panelists, Dr. Ahmad Ared from University of Illinois, Dr. Mary Qui from University of Chicago, Dr. Charles Bouchard and Dr. Taylor Starnes from Loyola University, and Dr. Lisa Njim from Warrenville Eyecare & LASIK. Our microsurgical wet lab featured faculty from all around Chicagoland and all 6 Chicago Ophthalmology residency programs. The residents were able to practice so many advanced cataract and glaucoma MIGS techniques during the wet lab with the support of all our industry partners to make it happen: Allergan, Alcon, Bausch & Lomb, Centricity Vision, Glaukos, Iridex, Katena, MST, New World Medical, Ocular Therapeutix, Sight Sciences and Zeiss. Such a great Day of learning organized by our course directors, Dr. Meenakshi Chaku and Dr. Roshni Vasaiwala.



CME Programs (cont'd)



Global Health Symposium. Date: Wednesday, February 15th, 2023
Hunter Cherwek, MD is the Vice President, Clinical Services International Orbis International. Dr. Cherwek went to Duke University and completed his residency at Emory University School of Medicine. Upon finishing his ophthalmology residency at Emory, Dr. Cherwek immediately started a position with Orbis International as a staff ophthalmologist to medical director and, more recently, as the vice president for clinical services. He has worked on every level of program development, from clinical care, working with the ministry of health and dealing with every back-end issue needed to developing new programs.



DEI Lecture Series
Time 4:00-5:00

Date: Wednesday, April 5
Location: Virtual

As we continue to make efforts to grow our department's diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, we have made ourselves more visible and accountable by hosting 2 DEI speakers per year, participating in the Rabb-Venable Fireside chats for potential ophthalmology resident candidates and actively recruiting URiM residents and faculty. We are looking forward to our spring speaker, Fasika A. Woreta, M.D., M.P.H. who is cornea and cataract specialist and the Eugene de Juan, M.D. Professor of Ophthalmic Education at Wilmer Eye Institute's Baltimore and Columbia locations. Her expertise is in corneal and external eye diseases, including complex cataracts and anterior segment reconstruction following trauma.



Arsham Sheybani, MD



Uday Devgan MD, FACS

Glaucoma & Cataract Surgical Summit Saturday September 23rd 2023

Join us next year to hear from our keynote speakers: **Dr. Arsham Sheybani** from Washington University and Dr. Uday Devgan (Cataract Coach!) from Devgan Eye Surgery! Should be a fantastic program!

Vision Research Day: Wednesday May 17
Time: 3:00-7:00 Location: Loyola SSOM



Abe Clark, PhD

Abe Clark's major research focus is to discover the molecular mechanisms involved in ocular diseases, particularly glaucoma, to develop disease modifying therapies for better management of ocular diseases. Glaucoma is the leading cause of irreversible vision loss and blindness in the world and is also the leading neurodegenerative disease, affecting both the eye and brain. Dr. Clark's research includes molecular genetics, molecular biology, cell biology, physiology, pathology, and mouse models of glaucoma. A main goal in this lab is to perform translational research that eventually will help patients with glaucoma. In addition to research, he trains and mentors graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and medical students. He also is very active in community-based vision screening events.



Joseph Arboleda-Velasquez, MD, PhD

Dr. Arboleda-Velasquez's research is focused on the genetics and pathophysiology of neurodegenerative disease of the brain and retina. He began his career studying brain and retinal small vessel disease (SVD) during his PhD training at Harvard Medical School and post-doctoral fellowship at Mass Eye and Ear, and recently expanded his research to include mechanisms of Alzheimer's disease. Dr. Arboleda-Velasquez's most significant achievements to date include showing that pericytes (multifunctional, fibroblast like cells found in the walls of CNS capillaries) help maintain retinal microvascular stability in adults, a finding relevant to a retinal SVD called diabetic retinal microangiopathy.



Dimitra Skondra, MD, PhD

In addition to her clinical expertise, Dr. Skondra is an active researcher. As a physician-scientist, she is dedicated to investigating methods to improve treatment strategies for retinal conditions. Dr. Skondra is currently engaged in clinical and translational research in diabetes and other retinal diseases. Her research in retinal imaging aims to provide a better understanding of the pathogenesis, early detection and identification of prognostic information for to enable more targeted intervention and treatment. Dr. Skondra has been published in numerous peer-reviewed journals, presented her work in multiple national and international meetings, and serves as scientific reviewer for ophthalmology journals. Throughout her career, Dr. Skondra has received several prestigious awards, including the Retina Society Raymond Margherio Award, Harvard /Alcon Clinical Scholar Award, AUPO Research Award, ARVO/Alcon Early Career Clinician Scientist Award, Joslin-Tonseth Research Fellowship Award and the Knights Templar Award.