

STUDENT OUTREACH AND RESEARCH (SOAR) FELLOWSHIP IN OPHTHALMOLOGY

COURSE CODE:	MDR 987
PROGRAM DIRECTOR:	Eleonore Savatovsky, MD, PhD
PROGRAM CO-DIRECTOR:	Luke van Leeuwen
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PREREQUISITE:	Submit materials via InfoReady or email co-director
LENGTH OF PROGRAM:	1 year
COURSE DATES:	Beginning January for NextGenMD students and June for legacy curriculum students
U.S VISITING STUDENTS:	Yes
INTERVIEWING TIME:	December for NextGenMD students and May for legacy curriculum students
TYPE:	Research, Non-Credit

Description:

ATTENTION MS2 and MS3 STUDENTS: The SOAR Fellowship is a donor-funded educational program of the Balkan International Pediatric Glaucoma Center at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute. This highly competitive program allows medical students and early-career ophthalmologists with interests in **pediatric eye disease** to gain additional research experience. This full-time program provides a year of focused research experience complementing a world class medical education training.

The program focuses on principles of research from exposure to international programs for blindness prevention, ocular genetics, community outreach, and gaining knowledge in biostatistics and manuscript writing. This offers a chance to **complete multiple hands-on research projects from start to finish, present at conferences, and submit multiple abstracts** under the guidance and supervision of The Balkan Team and our well-established programs and initiatives.

National and **international conferences** will help develop soft skills in networking and communication. Internal meetings will allow SOAR Fellows to gain project management experience as coordinators of their projects, with guidance every step of the way. A **stipend is offered** to offset living expenses.

This **one-year, full-time research fellowship** will begin after Phase 2 of the NextGen MD curriculum. SOAR Fellows will break for one year and rejoin the medical curriculum for Phase 3.

Program Duration and Start Date:

- One-year, full-time research
- Start after Phase 2 (January of MS3) for students in NextGen MD curriculum, or at the end of year 3 (June of MS3) for students in legacy MD curriculum

Participating Faculty:

- Alana Grajewski, MD
- Eleonore Savatovsky, MD, PhD
- Ta Chen Peter Chang, MD
- Elena Bitrian, MD
- Angela Zhu, MD
- Elizabeth Hodapp, MD

SOAR Course Design:

SOAR Fellows will retain student status and register for a non-credit SOAR Fellowship at The Balkan Center. They are given direct access to The Balkan Center leadership and physicians for mentoring, as well as the opportunity to participate in all educational programs at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute.

SOAR Professional Advancement:

- **Monthly Balkan Research Meeting** – Fellows are included on monthly team meetings. New projects are presented, roadblocks are identified, and action items are assigned.
- **Bascom Palmer Eye Institute Grand Rounds** – Weekly clinical presentations and review of the literature at BPEI.
- **Glaucoma Journal Club** – Weekly analysis of glaucoma related articles in peer review journal presented by a Clinical Glaucoma Fellow. Discussion includes analysis of the study design, statistical methods applied, and the validity of the author's conclusions.
- **Pediatric Glaucoma Journal Club** – Quarterly presentation of a Pediatric Glaucoma publication in peer review journal by the Clinical Glaucoma Fellow on the Pediatric Glaucoma rotation.
- **Lunch with Liz** – Director of Biostatistics at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, Liz Vanner, PhD, hosts a monthly luncheon answering technical questions and exploring statistical applications.
- **SOAR Fellowship Seminar Series** – Invited guests and experts provide one-on-one relevant instruction in clinical research.
- **Professional Conferences and Meeting Attendance** – Fellows will be funded to attend the AAO Annual Conference as well as other conferences at which they have accepted presentations. SOAR Fellows are also invited to attend all BPEI educational programs without registration cost.

Expectations:

- Satisfactory completion of the curriculum as set forth by the Directors of The Balkan Center
- Quarterly evaluations with mentors and program manager
- Regular attendance at specified seminars, professional development, and informational sessions
- Publication of at least one research document

Student Evaluation and Grading:

- Upon completion of the SOAR Fellowship, scholars will receive a Director's Certificate of Distinction

Program Oversight and Coordination:

- The Samuel and Ethel Balkan International Pediatric Glaucoma Center provides funding, oversight, and administrative support of the SOAR Fellowship program

