

# Images

Stopping Disease  
in its Tracks

Helping our  
Children See

Bascom Palmer  
Ranked No. 1  
in USA Again

Bascom Palmer Eye Institute's mission is to enhance the quality of life by improving sight, preventing blindness, and advancing ophthalmic knowledge through compassionate patient care and innovative vision research.



**FEATURE**

# Transforming the Future 2

**World's first orbital vision center opens**

**RESEARCH**

**Children with Glaucoma have New Hope 8**

**Eye Bank Saving Sight with Bascom Palmer 14**

**BASCOM PALMER EXCELLENCE**

**Ultimate Tribute for Professors 16**

**Awards and Honors 18**

**Welcome New Faculty 20**

**Profiles in Philanthropy 22**



Rank	Hospital	Reputation (%)
1	Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, Miami	62.8
2	Wills Eye Hospital, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia	51.8
3	Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore	50.1
4	Mass. Eye and Ear Infirmary, Massachusetts Gen. Hosp., Boston	33.2
5	UCLA Medical Center, Los Angeles	26.8
6	Duke University Medical Center, Durham	13.5
7	University of Iowa Hospital and Clinic, Iowa City	11.7
8	Cleveland Clinic, Cleveland	8.8
9	W.K. Kellogg Eye Center, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor	8.3
10	New York Eye and Ear Infirmary, New York	6.7
11	USC Eye Institute - Keck Medical Center of USC, Los Angeles	6.3

Ranked by U.S. News & World Report 2016-2017



**On the cover:**  
Immunofluorescent image for beta-3 Tubulin in mouse retinal ganglion cells following a novel treatment, developed in Dr. Daniel Pelaez's laboratory, that antagonizes dendritic repulsive signaling.  
*Photo credits: Daniel Pelaez, Galina Dvorianchikova*

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

For decades, Bascom Palmer Eye Institute clinicians and researchers have tackled the world's most challenging vision diseases and disorders. Our dedicated professionals have made game-changing discoveries in glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration, corneal disease, cancers of the eye and many other fields. Now, we are continuing to advance the frontiers of ophthalmology, thanks to the generous support of our donors around the world.



One of the features in this issue of *Images* focuses on our new Dr. Nasser Al-Rashid Orbital Vision Research Center, led by David T. Tse, M.D., who holds the Dr. Nasser Ibrahim Al-Rashid Chair in Ophthalmic Plastic, Orbital Surgery, and Oncology. Our ambitious goals include developing more effective treatments for deadly cancers, preserving and repairing damaged optic nerves, using stem cells to regenerate soft tissues, and implanting biomaterial constructs to improve chronic eye problems.

Bascom Palmer is also leading the worldwide fight against pediatric glaucoma – a condition that can be corrected with prompt diagnosis and surgical treatment. We recently opened the Samuel & Ethel Balkan International Pediatric Glaucoma Center, the world's first integrated services center dedicated to helping infants and children with glaucoma – made possible by the support of Donna Mae Balkan Litowitz, with her husband Bob, in honor of her parents, Samuel and Ethel Balkan.

Under the direction of Alana Grajewski, M.D., professor of clinical ophthalmology, our new center will be a focal point for medical education, as well as research and clinical care for young patients.

Another *Images* feature highlights the sight-saving work of the Florida Lions Eye Bank. This vital non-profit organization has been providing donor corneas and other eye tissues to patients who need surgery, and helping ophthalmologists diagnose a wide range of vision conditions since opening at Bascom Palmer in 1962.

As we celebrate the New Year, rest assured that Bascom Palmer will continue to seek out new solutions for preventing blindness, improving eyesight and restoring lost vision. On behalf of our worldwide community of patients, I thank you for your support.

May 2017 be a year filled with good health and happiness for you and your loved ones.

Eduardo C. Alfonso, M.D.  
Kathleen and Stanley J. Glaser Chair in Ophthalmology  
Chairman, Bascom Palmer Eye Institute

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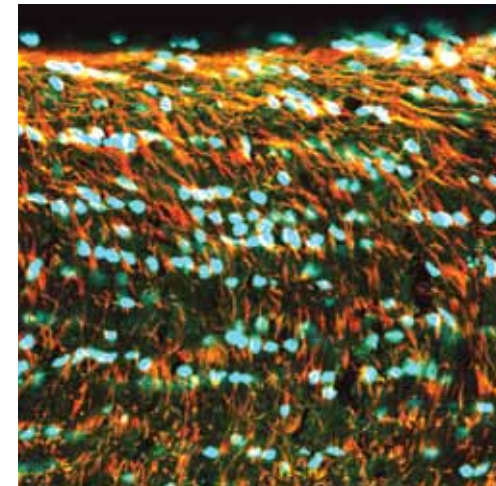
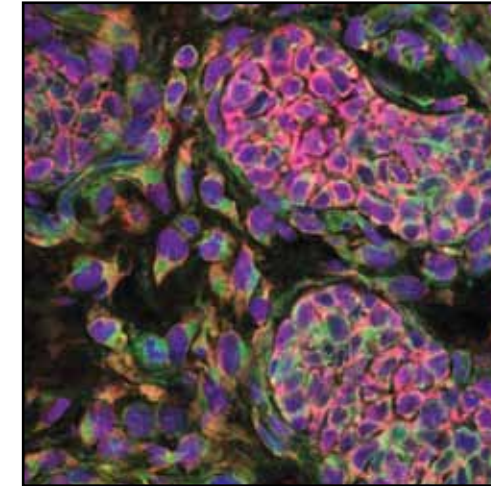
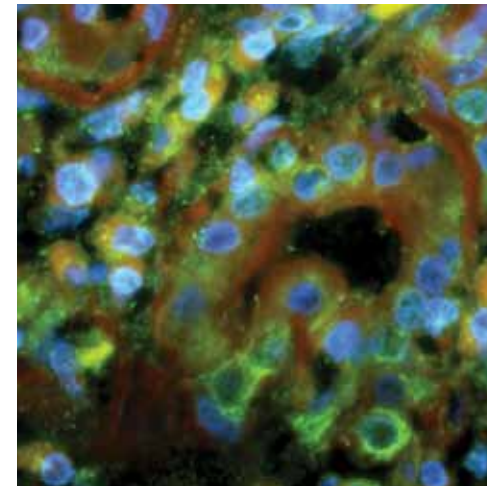
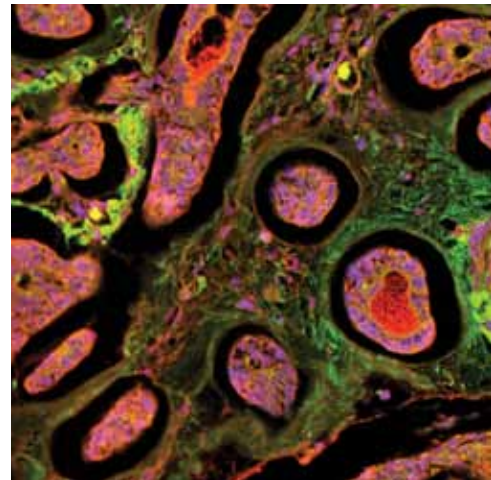
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Launching the World's First

# Orbital Vision Research Center



## Bascom Palmer Scientists Aim to Find Cures for Highly Challenging Disorders



David T. Tse, M.D., and Daniel Pelaez, Ph.D., share ambitious goals for the new Dr. Nasser Ibrahim Al-Rashid Orbital Vision Research Center at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute. As clinicians and scientists, they are dedicated to applying the leading-edge resources of the world's first orbital research center to advance the frontiers of ophthalmic medicine in four challenging fields:

- Finding cures for deadly cancers of the lacrimal (tear) gland, the eyelid and other areas of the orbit – the bony socket and tissues in the cavity that surrounds the eye
- Preserving and repairing damaged optic nerves
- Using stem cells to regenerate soft tissues and restore lost vision
- Implanting novel biomaterial constructs, such as bioengineered tear glands or eye muscle scaffolds, to improve chronic eye problems

“Our mission at the Dr. Nasser Ibrahim Al-Rashid Orbital Vision Research Center is to find novel treatments for orbital disease with significant morbidity and mortality in which effective therapy remains elusive,” says Tse, known worldwide for his extensive knowledge, experience and innovative approaches to orbital cancers and ophthalmic reconstructive surgeries. Tse is director of the new center and holder of the Dr. Nasser Ibrahim Al-Rashid Chair in Ophthalmic Plastic, Orbital Surgery, and Oncology.

Pelaez joined Bascom Palmer's research team in 2014, bringing training and experience in stem cell biology, tissue engineering, biomaterials and regenerative medicine – fields that complement Tse's expertise.

“With our regenerative ophthalmology program, we are looking beyond stopping disease progression,” says Pelaez, assistant research professor of ophthalmology and biomedical engineering, and scientific director of the Al-Rashid Center. “We

are evaluating strategies to restore vision, regain function, and rebuild the tissues that have been lost to disease or trauma.”

Pelaez focuses his research on neuro-regenerative therapies in the optic nerve and retina, molecular biology of ocular tumors, and bioengineered organs for transplantation. In 2015, he was selected as an “Emerging Vision Scientist” by the National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research for his novel work on stem cells and retinal regeneration. Along with 21 other U.S. scientists, he presented his innovative work to members of Congress at the “Decade of Vision 2010-2020” event in Washington, D.C.

“Daniel Pelaez is an exceptional vision scientist who has a constant and valued presence in the research laboratories at Bascom Palmer,” says Vittorio Porciatti, D.Sc., director and vice chairman of research. “I am confident he will be at the forefront of advances in vision research for many years to come.”

### Building a new center

Pelaez and Tse lead a growing team of scientists, doctoral students and clinical researchers who are putting the state-of-the-art technology of the orbital vision research center to good use.

Located on the eighth floor of Bascom Palmer's Evelyn F. and William L. McKnight Vision Research Center, the Al-Rashid Center's sophisticated laboratory includes powerful microscopes, computer-assisted imaging tools, an orbital dissection wet laboratory, vivarium and an endoscopy instructional resources center for medical education.

“The Al-Rashid Center has been carefully designed for studies that go from very basic molecular understanding of disease all the way through preclinical testing of new therapies, including cell culture, basic proteomics (protein analysis) and experimental studies,” Pelaez says. “Having those research capabilities in one center accelerates the process of finding new options for treating highly challenging conditions.”

“With our regenerative ophthalmology program, we are looking beyond stopping disease progression. We are evaluating strategies to restore vision, regain function, and rebuild the tissues that have been lost to disease or trauma.”

– Daniel Pelaez, Ph.D.



“This is the place from where the treatments that don’t exist yet will emanate.” – Nasser Ibrahim Al-Rashid, Ph.D.

Daniel Pelaez, Ph.D.

The orbital vision research center was made possible by a \$12.5 million gift from Dr. Nasser Al-Rashid – a longtime friend of Tse. “Dr. Al-Rashid’s investment in Bascom Palmer has made it possible for us to open this cure-based research laboratory and bring together specialists in different disciplines to find answers to some of the intractable issues in oculoplastic and orbital diseases,” Tse says.

Last March, Al-Rashid came from Dubai to join two of his sons, Fahad and Ibrahim, for the official dedication of the eponymous center. “This is the place from where the treatments that don’t exist yet will emanate,” said Al-Rashid. “It is my dream to see this happen and for the center to succeed.”

At the opening ceremony, University of Miami (UM) President Julio Frenk, M.D., Ph.D., said Al-Rashid’s vision is helping transform the future of education, discovery and health care at UM. “Dr. Al-Rashid’s generous gift provided funds for bricks and mortar, and also established two endowed research funds,” Frenk added. “Endowment allows the work of universities to continue in perpetuity. It is the most fundamental way of establishing a long-lasting legacy and enables the growth of our physicians here at Bascom Palmer.”

Thanking Dr. Al-Rashid and his family for their ongoing support, Bascom Palmer Chairman Eduardo C. Alfonso, M.D., the Kathleen and Stanley J. Glaser Chair in Ophthalmology, said, “A vision alone cannot change the world. It takes financial resources to fuel the research engine. On behalf of Bascom Palmer Eye

Institute and the numerous patients who will benefit from the work achieved in this remarkable center, it is with a deep sense of gratitude that I thank the Al-Rashid family for this extraordinary gift.”

### Combating deadly cancers

One of the Al-Rashid Center’s primary goals is the investigation of the molecular underpinnings of a broad spectrum of orbital diseases in which effective therapy remains elusive.

“Adenoid cystic carcinoma (AdCC) is one of the most lethal cancers among orbital malignancies,” says Tse. “Despite the most aggressive types of radiation and surgical treatment, the 10-year survival rate historically has been around 20 percent.” Tse and the Bascom Palmer clinical team have pioneered the use of targeted chemotherapy and surgery for this devastating malignancy and improved the AdCC cancer survival rate significantly. However, saving a life carries a high price, because the patient’s eye must be removed along with the lacrimal gland. Now, the Al-Rashid Center team is studying the molecular drivers of AdCC to find a pinpoint treatment without collateral damage to the eye or the need to remove the eye.

“We have identified several genetic mutations in AdCC, and have developed AdCC cell lines that enable us to advance the screening of potential drugs,” Pelaez says. “In our laboratory, we have also studied how the cancer tries to adapt to current treatment, giving us insights into the precise molecular targets we need to block in order to enhance the therapeutic effects of Dr. Tse’s clinical management.”

Tse and Pelaez are also seeking a cure for sebaceous cell carcinoma, an aggressive cancer of the oily glands on the eyelid that tends to spread to the ocular surface and be carried through the lymph nodes to other parts of the body. “Our goal is to understand the aggressive behavior of the tumor using genomic, proteomic and molecular studies,” adds Pelaez.

Pelaez’s work on orbital tumors also includes identification of biomarkers, potential therapeutic targets for optic nerve glioma, and other orbital neoplasms. “Our multidisciplinary array of research scientists collabo-

rate with our colleagues at the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center to discover new potential avenues for treating these lethal orbital cancers,” he says.

### Addressing traumatic vision loss

A second aspect of the center’s mission is finding a way to restore vision in patients suffering from traumatic optic neuropathy – severe damage to the optic nerve connecting the eye to the brain – which can lead to immediate and irreversible vision loss.

“A head injury due to a fall, car accident or other trauma can result in blindness, even if there are no visible cuts or injuries,” Tse says. “What happens is the pressure waves on the skull move into the bony eye socket and injure the optic nerve in its canal.”

Tse has been treating injured children, adolescents and adults throughout his career. He has also been studying this challenging vision problem for more than a decade, using funding from the U.S. Department of Defense to develop a model to test innovative treatment strategies. Traumatic damage to the optic nerve was a serious problem for U.S. military personnel during the Iraq war when armored personnel carriers would trigger explosive devices whose blast waves would travel throughout the vehicle, causing traumatic blindness.

“We don’t yet understand why the vision loss is irreversible,” Tse says. “But there are parallels with spinal cord injuries when the bone snaps and compresses the nerve cord, resulting in paralysis.”

Tse adds that The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis has found that rapid hypothermia – cooling of the damaged spinal area – can have a beneficial effect on injured patients who have access to immediate care. “If you subject the spinal cord to low temperature and drop the core temperature of the body by 2-3 degrees, you can create a protective effect on the spinal cord, lessening the damage,” says Tse, citing the example of Buffalo Bills tight end Kevin Everett, who suffered a spinal cord injury on the field during a 2007 football game.

The team’s orthopedic surgeon, Andrew Cappuccino, M.D., had attended a training session on hypother-



Nasser Ibrahim Al-Rashid, Ph.D., with Dr. David Tse

mia given by UM neurosurgeon Barth Green, M.D., chairman of the Miami Project. Acting quickly after the injury, Cappuccino put ice on Everett’s armpits, back and neck while transporting the player to the hospital. “That early hypothermia treatment conferred a protective effect of the injured spinal cord, and he was able to walk out of the hospital after a period of rehabilitation,” Tse says.

A similar hypothermia strategy could also be beneficial in limiting damage to a traumatized optic nerve, Tse adds. Using a novel laboratory model for traumatic optic neuropathy developed by the Al-Rashid Center team, scientists have begun to elucidate the early molecular events that lead to loss of vision. These findings have led the team to evaluate targeted therapies that have the potential to avert the deleterious effects of trauma on visual function.

Scientists at the Al-Rashid Center are looking at other neuroprotective strategies as well. “Stem cell therapies may eventually offer a way to rebuild the retinal ganglion (nerve) cells following a traumatic event to the optic nerve,” says Pelaez. “We are now testing technologies that are designed to help regenerate the optic nerve and restore its ability to transmit visual signals to the brain.” Tse adds, “Our immediate focus is to develop an emergency 911 optic nerve rescue treatment package to be delivered at the time of injury.”



Daniel Pelaez (right) and postdoctoral fellows, Ravi Doddapaneni (left) and Wensi Tao (middle) discuss axonal guidance modulation strategies to promote optic nerve regeneration.

“Our clinicians and scientists are working together to take these new regenerative medicine therapies from the laboratory bench to the patient’s bedside as quickly as possible.” – David Tse, M.D.

### Exploring restorative therapies

Stem cells have many other potential applications in ophthalmology, according to Tse and Pelaez, who are exploring new avenues in regenerative medicine. “Stem cell transplantation combined with tissue engineering may lead to new treatments for many disorders,” says Tse.

Teaming with researchers from the Miami Project, Pelaez has been able to implant stem cells in the retina, where they develop into new ganglial (nerve) cells that sprout axons and interact with surrounding cells. “The biggest challenge is how to guide those new cells to grow their axons in a coordinated fashion and transmit signals to specific locations in the brain so they can be decoded and processed as vision,” he says.

“Our work in this field may be applicable to other types of vision loss, such as glaucoma, where dysfunction of the optic nerve-forming cells leads to a loss in the signaling between the eye and the brain,” Pelaez says. “Stem cell therapies for other retinal structures may also be able to regenerate the central vision of a patient with age-related macular degeneration or other disorders.”

Drawing on his knowledge of biomedical engineering processes, Pelaez is also designing and testing biomaterial scaffolds to deliver stem cells to the ocular surfaces, including the cornea, conjunctiva and fornix.

Furthermore, Tse believes that stem cells may also be helpful in treating orbital socket contracture, a disfiguring facial condition that can occur after removal of a diseased or cancerous eye. Earlier in his career, Tse developed an orbital tissue expander to treat children born with anophthalmos (absence of one eye) or microphthalmia (abnormally small eye), two conditions relatively common in the Middle East. Tse’s socket expander, which has received approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, stimulates the socket’s growth, and the use of stem cells could enhance contracture therapy.

Gene therapy is another promising approach for treating some types of orbital disorders, says Pelaez. “Our team collaborates with researchers at the UM John P. Hussman Institute for Human Genomics to look at genetic traits that could lead to new treatments in certain diseases,” he adds.

One possibility is using a combination of gene and stem cell therapies to regrow a lacrimal gland damaged by disease or removed by surgeons. “You could potentially take cells from the healthy gland, culture the progenitor cells we have identified, and create a new gland that could be implanted in the affected eye,” Pelaez says.

This therapeutic strategy could also be a major step forward in treating dry eye, a chronic condition caused by lack of tear production. Pelaez also envisions the development of stimulating therapies for

the lacrimal gland stem cell niche to produce tears or even an artificial gland created from other biologically active tissues.

“Our clinicians and scientists are working together to take these new regenerative medicine therapies from the laboratory bench to the patient’s bedside as quickly as possible,” Tse says. “Hopefully, we can make that happen within five years.”

### A new center for medical education

In the past 20 years, Tse has trained more than 45 oculoplastic surgeons from the Middle East and Asia, and participated in academic conferences and symposiums throughout the world. Now, Tse expects the Dr. Nasser Al-Rashid Orbital Vision Research Center to become an “incubator for the next generation of thought leaders in orbital surgery” through training, seminars, conferences and the development of instructional videos for basic oculoplastic surgical techniques.

To further multiply the center’s impact on ophthalmology, Tse and Pelaez have established an annual Dr. Nasser Al-Rashid Orbital Vision Research Colloquium as a scientific catalyst for global research. The center’s team will also offer an annual research prize to encourage global research in this field.

As Tse said at the center’s dedication ceremony, “Dr. Al-Rashid’s commitment to partner with Bascom Palmer on a journey of progress and scientific discovery not only will yield academic excellence and research breakthroughs, but will also have a profound global effect on the quality of life for future generations of patients with orbital diseases.” ■

**Nasser Ibrahim Al-Rashid, Ph.D.**, is the founder of Rashid Engineering in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Appointed by King Khaled as the consulting engineer to the Royal Court, he played a pivotal role in the country’s economic evolution and educational transformation, participating in close to 100 major construction projects in the Kingdom, including that of the largest eye hospital in the Middle East – the King Khaled Eye Specialist Hospital.

Al-Rashid, who lost vision in one eye as a child, first met David Tse 27 years ago, and credits him for preserving the sight in his other eye. Through the years they forged a strong connection, which led to Al-Rashid’s generous philanthropy. “Dr. Al-Rashid is a rare blend of intelligence, experience, imagination and uncommon wisdom,” says Tse. In 2010, Al-Rashid established two endowed chairs at the University of Miami, one to support Tse’s research in ophthalmic plastic, orbital surgery, and ocular oncology at Bascom Palmer; and the other to establish the Dr. Nasser Ibrahim Al-Rashid Chair in the Division of Hepatology and the UM Center for Liver Diseases.

A few years later, the Al-Rashid family made a \$10 million gift to build the Dr. Nasser Ibrahim Al-Rashid Orbital Vision Research Center. The grant enabled the construction of the center, and also the recruitment of leading scientists. That support also established two endowments that will ensure scientific research is funded in perpetuity. Dr. Al-Rashid recently committed an additional \$2.5 million over the next five years to the Al-Rashid Orbital Vision Research Center.

# Helping Our Children See

## Bascom Palmer Opens World's First Center Dedicated to Pediatric Glaucoma

Our new pediatric glaucoma center will serve our youngest patients by incorporating the cornerstones of Bascom Palmer's work, which are clinical care, vision research and education.



Dr. Alana Grajewski

Nicolly Pereira is one of hundreds of children who owe their vision to Alana Grajewski, M.D., and the world-class pediatric glaucoma team at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute. "Glaucoma is often overlooked in children because it is perceived as a condition that only affects the elderly," says Grajewski, a professor of clinical ophthalmology who specializes in treating and studying this rare, blinding disorder. "Unlike adult glaucoma, blindness from pediatric glaucoma can oftentimes be prevented with prompt diagnosis and surgical treatment."

Bascom Palmer is taking a major step forward in the fight against vision loss from pediatric glaucoma with the opening of the Samuel & Ethel Balkan International Pediatric Glaucoma Center. Under Grajewski's leadership as founder and director, this will be the world's first integrated services center dedicated to helping infants and children with glaucoma, a blinding condition associated with high pressure within the eye that damages the optic nerve that carries signals from the eye to the brain.

"Bascom Palmer's researchers and clinicians have been leading the fight against glaucoma for more than 50 years," says Richard K. Parrish, II, M.D., professor and Edward W.D. Norton Chair of Ophthalmology, and director of the glaucoma service at the Institute. "The addition of the Balkan Pediatric Glaucoma Center enhances the Institute's worldwide leadership in the field. The center will serve as the hub for international collaboration on research to find the underlying causes of the disease."

### Saving vision in infants

In the United States, approximately one in 25,000 babies is born with congenital pediatric glaucoma. In addition, about 1 in 5,000 children will develop the blinding condition. "It's a rare disease, but very treatable when caught at an early stage," says Grajewski. "With prompt surgical treatment, about 80 to 90 percent of children with primary congenital glaucoma can have near-normal vision."

Nicolly Pereira is one of those fortunate children. Born two years ago in rural Brazil, Nicolly was diagnosed with pediatric glaucoma shortly after birth. She underwent seven unsuccessful surgeries in Brazil before generous donors – led by the Jackson Health Foundation's International Kids Fund (Wonderfund) and the Kevin Garcia Foundation – covered the costs of her medical trip to Miami.

"Nicolly could not see anything when she arrived at Bascom Palmer, not even a light," says Grajewski. Earlier this year, Grajewski performed a three-hour surgery and reduced the extremely high glaucoma-related pressure on Nicolly's eyes to a normal range. When the surgical eye patches were removed the next day, Nicolly could see her mother for the first time. A wide smile filled Nicolly's face while tears rolled down her mother's.

"The only word that can be used to describe the feeling is 'God,' said Diana Pereira. "My daughter is free now. She now shines more than before. She now becomes a reference for people who didn't believe in miracles."



Nicolly Pereira sees her mother for the first time following surgery at Bascom Palmer.



Dr. Elizabeth Hodapp

### New center opens

To treat other infants and children like Nicolly, Bascom Palmer established the Samuel & Ethel Balkan International Pediatric Glaucoma Center located within Bascom Palmer's flagship hospital in Miami. The center was made possible by the generous donation of Donna Mae Balkan Litowitz, with her husband Bob, in honor of her parents, Samuel and Ethel Balkan.

"Alana is a great inspiration to me," says Donna Litowitz, a longtime friend of Grajewski and her family. "It takes a brave physician to go into an eye, and it requires great skill to restore a child's vision."

The Balkan Center's clinical team includes glaucoma specialist Elizabeth Hodapp, M.D., associate professor of clinical ophthalmology, and Peter Chang, M.D., a pediatric ophthalmologist and assistant professor of clinical ophthalmology. Young patients will have access to Bascom Palmer's leading-edge diagnostic technology and surgical treatments, as well as genetic screening through a partnership with the John P. Hussman Institute for Human Genomics at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine.

"We are building an integrated care model that includes addressing the important quality-of-life issues for families," Grajewski says. "We believe in the 'triple P' concept of parents, patients and providers as our partners."

To help children and families cope more effectively with pediatric glaucoma, the Balkan Center offers MacRuffie's Support Program, named for the Litowitzes' favorite dog. That support includes MacRuffie's Magic™, an educational book series that engages children and caregivers in learning



Dr. Peter Chang

about glaucoma, and McRuffie's Play™, which helps children express their feelings and feel comfortable during their frequent visits.

Another aspect of the center's leading-edge program is the role of a child life specialist who focuses not only on the psychological and social needs of children with visual handicaps, but also their siblings and parents. "Many children with glaucoma worry about what to tell their teachers and friends," Grajewski says. "We'll address their issues, answer their questions and help them stay focused on the future."

With exceptional patient care as the primary mission of the Balkan Center, the pediatric ophthalmic professionals will also provide medical education and training, clinical research, community outreach, and telehealth initiatives. For example, the newly created Hodapp-Cohen Family Scholarship will support an extended visit from Nicolly's skilled ophthalmic surgeon from Brazil, who will receive specialized training in pediatric glaucoma to help patients in his country.

Early next year, Grajewski, Hodapp and Chang will showcase the Balkan Center when Bascom Palmer hosts the annual meeting of the United Kingdom Pediatric Glaucoma Society (UKPGS). "We are excited to be bringing these dedicated clinicians and researchers to Miami for UKPGS 2017," Grajewski says. "It's the first time this meeting has been held outside London, and we look forward to sharing our work."

### A deep commitment to children

For more than two decades, Grajewski has been a leader in the international effort to eradicate blindness from pediatric glaucoma. In

addition to treating patients around the world, she has trained many residents and fellows in the nuances of pediatric glaucoma.

In the late 1980s, Grajewski completed a fellowship in glaucoma at Bascom Palmer. While sharpening her skills in adult glaucoma, she also focused on childhood glaucoma with Hodapp and Douglas Anderson, M.D., the Institute's first glaucoma specialist. Anderson has been at the forefront of glaucoma research for more than 50 years. "They supported my passion to take care of children with glaucoma," says Grajewski. During the 1990s, Grajewski and Hodapp teamed up to create a pediatric glaucoma clinic, which soon became a special part of the glaucoma fellowship training program at Bascom Palmer. In fact, earlier this year, they were both recognized by the American Glaucoma Society, which honored them with The President's Award for their efforts.

In 1994, Grajewski established the G.L. Foundation for Children with Glaucoma with the support of Carlos and Nancy Lyra, who donated funds needed to treat young international pa-

tients at the Institute. Grajewski also provided pediatric glaucoma care to children in the Midwest and Native American children from the Dakotas. From 2007 to 2014, she served as director of pediatric glaucoma on the ophthalmology faculty at the University of Minnesota and rejoined Bascom Palmer on a full-time basis in 2014.

Throughout her career, Grajewski has traveled around the world meeting with other ophthalmologists and raising awareness of the importance of immediate specialized surgical treatment for pediatric glaucoma.

"In 1998, I was in Romania, where glaucoma was the leading cause of blindness in children," Grajewski recalls. "As I was operating on young patients at the University of Bucharest, I realized that I could have an even greater impact on this disease by educating other physicians. When I returned to Bascom Palmer that year, I trained an ophthalmic fellow from Romania. When she returned to her country, she dedicated her career to helping children with glaucoma and training others in the field."

"We are building an integrated care model that includes addressing the important quality-of-life issues for families. We believe in the 'triple P' concept of parents, patients and providers as partners."

— Alana Grajewski, M.D.



Samuel and Ethel Balkan



Surrounded by family and friends, Donna May Litowitz and Dr. Alana Grajewski cut the ribbon at the dedication of the Samuel & Ethel Balkan International Pediatric Glaucoma Center.



glaucoma vision (simulated) normal vision

### ABOUT PEDIATRIC GLAUCOMA

Glaucoma is a group of diseases characterized by damage to the optic nerve that often occurs when the eye pressure is too high. This causes optic nerve damage resulting in severe vision loss.

- It is estimated that about 10 percent of pediatric glaucoma cases are inherited. Recent research has identified specific gene mutations linked to this disease.
- The most common symptoms in infants with glaucoma include excessive tearing, light sensitivity, and a large, cloudy cornea that can cause the eye to appear hazy or dull.
- Older children with glaucoma tend to develop damage without any obvious symptoms, similar to adult glaucoma.
- Pediatric glaucoma is treated by lowering the intraocular pressure via medical or surgical means. Most cases of pediatric glaucoma are treated with surgery.
- Many children with pediatric glaucoma develop myopia (nearsightedness) and require glasses. Also, amblyopia (decreased vision) and strabismus (crossing or wandering eye) occur more frequently and may require treatment with patching or surgery.
- If infants born with glaucoma are treated promptly, they often have normal or near normal vision; if not, they are blind.

“Because pediatric glaucoma is a rare disease, most ophthalmologists have limited experience,” Grajewski says. “When I discussed forming an international network of leading clinicians with Donna Litowitz, Donna quoted the French author, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. He said, ‘a goal without a plan is just a wish,’ to which Donna added, ‘let’s make it a reality.’”

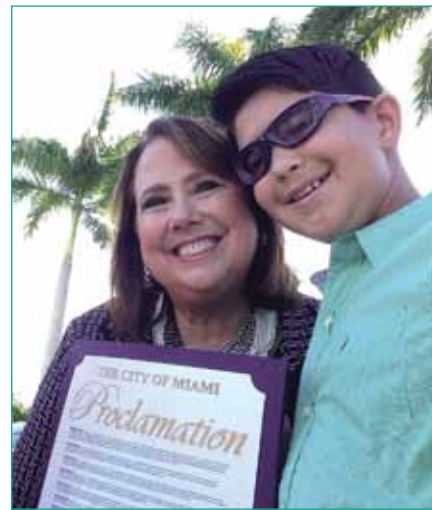
Grajewski’s planning resulted in the formation of the Childhood Glaucoma Research Network (CGRN), a worldwide collaborative network for clinicians and researchers. Initially formed with 25 ophthalmologists, the network has grown to include more than 200 members in 38 countries.

The CGRN connects doctors around the globe, helping them leverage each other’s unique expertise and understanding of pediatric eye disease and glaucoma to advance research and care.

Spurred by the creation of CGRN, pediatric glaucoma specialists in 23 centers recently completed the first-ever International Pilot Survey of Childhood Glaucoma. The data will provide a snapshot of the types of childhood glaucoma, treatments and outcomes at large eye centers worldwide.

Another program at the Balkan Center is the Global Eye SITE, an observership program dedicated to the training of skilled surgeons from underserved countries. The groundbreaking program’s curriculum will include the workup and management of childhood glaucoma, ocular syndromes and ocular genetics.

For Grajewski, one of the most important achievements of CGRN is the first worldwide classification system for pediatric glaucoma. Recently approved at the World Glaucoma Association Consensus Meeting, the new system standardizes the definitions of childhood glaucoma and provides a solid framework for future studies and coding.



Dr. Alana Grajewski and Marcelo Varela at the City of Miami’s “Dr. Alana Grajewski Day”

### Recognized for leadership

Along with her global leadership, Grajewski is well respected in the South Florida community for her contributions to pediatric vision care. The Miami City Commission declared June 23, 2016 as “Dr. Alana Grajewski Day” for her innovative work in treating and preventing glaucoma in children throughout the world. “It’s important to recognize those who every single day work in silence and do the right things for the community,” said Mayor Tomas P. Regalado, who considers Bascom Palmer “one of the jewels of Miami.”

During the event, 12-year-old Marcelo Varela shared his Bascom Palmer story with the community. Grajewski diagnosed Marcelo when he was nine days old and continues to care for him. “Dr. Grajewski has known me all my life,” says Varela. “She saved my life when I needed it the most.”

For her part, Grajewski said the city’s recognition reflects the dedication and hard work of the Institute’s entire team. “It has been my privilege to work among the best and brightest at Bascom Palmer,” she says. “All of my success comes from the garden that I was grown in and from the generosity of others.” ■

To schedule an appointment with a Bascom Palmer specialist, please call 1-888-845-0002 or visit [bascompalmer.org](http://bascompalmer.org)

# Bascom Palmer Ranked No.1 in Ophthalmology Again!

For the 13th consecutive year, Bascom Palmer Eye Institute is ranked the nation’s Best in Ophthalmology by U.S. News & World Report. It is the 15th time that Bascom Palmer has received the No. 1 ranking since the publication began surveying U.S. physicians for its annual rankings 27 years ago.



“Receiving the No. 1 ranking once again is a great testament to the tradition of excellence that drives every aspect of Bascom Palmer’s operation,” says Eduardo C. Alfonso, M.D., chairman of Bascom Palmer. “Drawing on their deep knowledge and experience, our dedicated team of doctors, scientists, nurses, technicians and support staff provide high-quality compassionate eye care to each Bascom Palmer patient.”

For more than 50 years, Bascom Palmer has been a leader in providing clinical care and community service to the dynamic South Florida region, while building a national reputation for excellence. In addition, its medical training and education programs attract ophthalmologists from around the world, multiplying the Institute’s impact on patient care.

OPHTHALMOLOGY		
Rank	Hospital	Reputation (%)
1	Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, Miami	62.8
2	Wills Eye Hospital, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia	51.8
3	Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore	50.1
4	Mass. Eye and Ear Infirmary, Massachusetts Gen. Hosp., Boston	33.2
5	UCLA Medical Center, Los Angeles	26.8
6	Duke University Medical Center, Durham	13.5
7	University of Iowa Hospital and Clinic, Iowa City	11.7
8	Cleveland Clinic, Cleveland	8.8
9	W.K. Kellogg Eye Center, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor	8.3
10	New York Eye and Ear Infirmary, New York	6.7
11	USC Eye Institute - Keck Medical Center of USC, Los Angeles	6.3

Ranked by U.S. News & World Report 2016-2017

Bascom Palmer researchers and clinicians are at the forefront of precision medicine in ophthalmology, translating basic research into their laboratories into individualized diagnostic and treatment methods tailored to each patient. That collaborative approach has resulted in revolutionary advances in the diagnosis and treatment of glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration, retinal diseases, ophthalmic cancers, eye infections, cataracts and diseases of the optic nerve.

“Receiving the No. 1 ranking once again is a great testament to the tradition of excellence that drives every aspect of Bascom Palmer’s operation.”

– Eduardo C. Alfonso, M.D.



In this 1968 photo, an Eastern Airlines flight attendant delivers a Styrofoam cooler containing human eye tissue to a waiting police officer, who transports it to Florida Lions Eye Bank at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute.



## Florida Lions Eye Bank

### Saving Sight Side-by-Side with Bascom Palmer

“Our primary mission is the recovery, processing and distribution of corneal and scleral tissue for sight-saving transplant surgery.”

– Elizabeth Fout-Caraza

A child with hereditary corneal disease, a teenager whose eye was injured in an accident, and an adult undergoing glaucoma surgery are among the thousands of patients who benefit from the Florida Lions Eye Bank each year. Since its inception, the Florida Lions Eye Bank, a nonprofit organization that provides human corneas and other eye tissues to patients in need of transplant surgery, has evolved side-by-side with Bascom Palmer since each opened its doors in 1962.

“Our primary mission is the recovery, processing and distribution of corneal and scleral tissue for sight-saving surgery,” says Elizabeth Fout-Caraza, executive director. “Although our eye bank occupies a small space within Bascom Palmer, we recover tissue throughout South Florida and provide donated corneas to transplant recipients around the world.”

Last year, Florida Lions Eye Bank provided tissue for more than 1,600 surgical procedures in the U.S. and abroad. “To make this happen, we rely upon the selflessness of the individuals and their families who choose to donate their eyes upon death,” Fout-Caraza says. Because human corneas must be transplanted within seven days, the Florida Lions Eye Bank operates 24/7 to recover, evaluate and deliver the sight-saving tissue.

Since its founding, Florida Lions Eye Bank has restored sight to nearly 50,000 cornea transplant recipients. However, providing tissue for transplant is not all it does. Florida Lions Eye Bank also supplies whole eyes for research and physician training at no cost, and operates the

only ocular pathology laboratory in South Florida. In 2015, more than 600 eyes and corneas were distributed for research and education, and nearly 4,000 specimens were examined in the ocular pathology laboratory. Florida Lions Eye Bank also provides hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants for ophthalmic research efforts each year.

For more information about Florida Lions Eye Bank, visit [fleb.org](http://fleb.org). To register as an eye, organ, or tissue donor, visit [donatelifeflorida.org](http://donatelifeflorida.org).

#### A long history of service

Founded in 1917, Lions Clubs International has grown to become the world’s largest service organization, with more than 46,000 clubs and 1.3 million members globally. In 1925, Helen Keller, who overcame blindness and deafness to become a famous educator and author, attended the Lions Clubs International Convention and challenged Lions to become “knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness.” The Lions accepted her challenge, and have since worked tirelessly to support programs aimed at treating and preventing blindness.

In 1943, Bascom Headon Palmer, M.D., the first surgeon in Florida to perform corneal transplants, began developing a plan to establish the first full-service eye hospital in the southeastern United States. Fifteen years later, Edward W.D. Norton, M.D., founding chair of Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, and his colleague, Victor T. Curtin, M.D., were able to put that plan into motion and established the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, named in honor of Dr. Palmer.

Recognizing the need for a local eye bank, Drs. Norton and Curtin asked the local Lions Clubs for financial support. “In 1961, every Lions club member in Florida was asked to donate \$6,” says Fout-Caraza. “This money was used to create our eye bank – the first one in Florida – and the ocular pathology laboratory.”

Shortly after Bascom Palmer Eye Institute opened its doors in 1962, the Florida Lions Eye Bank provided its first cornea for transplant surgery. Under the leadership of Curtin, who served as its medical director for 35 years, Florida Lions Eye Bank continued to supply safe, quality ocular tissue, restoring vision to tens of thousands of patients around the world.

From 1983 to 1986, the Florida Lions raised more than \$150,000, an amount generously matched by the University of Miami’s Department of Ophthalmology. These funds were used to establish the Victor T. Curtin Chair in Pathology, an endowed position intended to secure leadership for the ocular pathology laboratory, and to continue its research into the treatment, cure and prevention of blindness.

By 1990, the value of the endowment grew to \$1 million and in 1991, Curtin was appointed the inaugural holder of the Chair. “I have never worked with a finer person,” said Norton during the presentation ceremony. “Victor Curtin is like the Rock of Gibraltar, someone you can always depend upon.”



Dr. Sander Dubovy, medical director, and Elizabeth Fout-Caraza, executive director of the eye bank

#### An invaluable pathology laboratory

Today, Sander R. Dubovy, M.D., professor of ophthalmology and pathology, and holder of the Victor T. Curtin Chair in Ophthalmology, serves as medical director of both Florida Lions Eye Bank and the ocular pathology laboratory, positions he has held since 2000.

The ocular pathology laboratory is an invaluable resource for tissue evaluation, patient diagnosis, physician training and clinical archiving. When a patient has an eye disease that requires a biopsy, or part or all of the eye to be removed, the tissue may be sent to the pathology laboratory, where it is evaluated by Dubovy and his team. Because ocular tissue is small and very delicate compared to other tissue samples, having a dedicated ocular pathology laboratory is crucial. “In recent years, many U.S. ocular pathology labs have closed due to lack of funding. However, we have been able to continue and even grow the important work of our pathology laboratory,” says Fout-Caraza.

How can you help Florida Lions Eye Bank? “If you’d like to register as a donor, you can sign up today in only a few minutes,” Fout-Caraza says. “Registering as an eye donor is a personal decision, but it’s a selfless act that can help others.” ■



## Professors Honored During Chair Ceremony

At a ceremony, unique in its size and scope, nine Bascom Palmer faculty members were each presented with a traditional “chair” that symbolizes excellence in clinical and scientific research. These physicians and scientists exemplify the unparalleled talent and dedication that exists throughout Bascom Palmer.

**Hilda Capó, M.D.**, professor of clinical ophthalmology and medical director of the pediatric ophthalmology service, was awarded the John T. Flynn Chair in Ophthalmology.

**Janet L. Davis, M.D., M.A.**, retina specialist and professor of ophthalmology, was awarded the Leach Distinguished Chair in Ophthalmology.

**David S. Greenfield, M.D.**, glaucoma specialist and professor of ophthalmology, was awarded the Douglas R. Anderson Chair in Ophthalmology.

**John R. Guy, M.D.**, neuro-ophthalmology specialist and professor of ophthalmology, was awarded the Charlotte B. Rodgers Research Chair in Ophthalmology.

**Carol L. Karp, M.D.**, professor of ophthalmology and corneal and external disease specialist, was awarded the Richard K. Forster Chair in Ophthalmology.

**Byron L. Lam, M.D.**, professor of ophthalmology, medical director of neuro-ophthalmology and scientific co-director of the Adrienne Arsh Hope for Vision Retinal Degeneration Laboratory, was awarded the Robert Z. and Nancy J. Green Chair in Ophthalmology.

**William E. Smiddy, M.D.**, retinal specialist and professor of ophthalmology, was awarded the M. Brenn Green Chair in Ophthalmology.

**Richard K. Parrish, II, M.D.**, professor of ophthalmology, and medical director of the glaucoma service, was awarded the Edward W.D. Norton Chair in Ophthalmology.

**Vittorio Porciatti, D.SC.**, professor of ophthalmology, neuroscience and biomedical engineering, and director and vice chair of research, was awarded the James L. Knight Professorship in Ophthalmology. This professorship is the first in Bascom Palmer’s history.

John G. Clarkson, M.D., professor of ophthalmology, former chair of Bascom Palmer, and Dean Emeritus of the Miller School of Medicine, was in attendance, along with more than 130 family members, friends and colleagues of the recipients. Bascom Palmer now has 20 professors holding chairs or endowed professorships. Two of our newest chairs are Drs. David Greenfield and Carol Karp.

### David S. Greenfield, M.D.

*Douglas R. Anderson Chair in Ophthalmology*



*“There is no greater honor than the privilege to serve the American Glaucoma Society, our profession, patients and the friends and colleagues for whom I have such great professional respect.”*

**DAVID S. GREENFIELD, M.D.**, is an internationally recognized glaucoma scientist, teacher, clinician and surgeon. He serves as president of the American Glaucoma Society (AGS), president of the AGS Foundation, past president and co-founder of the Florida Glaucoma Society, and co-founder of The International Society for Imaging in the Eye. An innovative and prolific researcher, his scientific contributions have impacted all aspects of glaucoma diagnosis, monitoring and treatment.

With formal training not only in glaucoma but in neuro-ophthalmology, he has been at the forefront of developing novel diagnostic imaging techniques of the optic nerve and retinal nerve fiber layer for more than two decades. Greenfield serves as executive editor of the *American Journal of Ophthalmology*, and oversees glaucoma clinical care, research and education at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute at Palm Beach Gardens.

### Carol L. Karp, M.D.

*Richard K. Forster Chair in Ophthalmology*



*“My work on the management of ocular surface tumors of squamous origin has helped to change the standard of care for these cancers. It has also allowed me to combine my dedication to teaching with my interest in international healthcare.”*

**CAROL L. KARP, M.D.**, is an expert in the management of ocular surface tumors and anterior segment surgery. In the late 1990s, she pioneered the use of topical interferon for the treatment of ocular surface squamous neoplasia. She designed protocols to study the drug in patients with ocular surface tumors, curing them of their cancer without surgery. A leader in the area of ocular surface oncology, her research has produced numerous landmark articles on the topic.

Her current interests are in the management of ocular surface tumors and ocular surface imaging using the ultra-high resolution OCT. She is a leader in the use of this device as an “optical biopsy” for conjunctival tumors. Karp is devoted to the education of ophthalmologists nationally and internationally, and teaches extensively on tumors and intraocular surgical techniques.

“Honors like these are truly the ultimate tribute in academia. They also provide a tangible result – the resources that allow our world-class scholars to continue their research and teaching programs in perpetuity. Their dedication to the education of the next generation of ophthalmologists, to innovative research, and to excellent clinical care is inspiring.”

– Laurence B. Gardner, M.D., interim dean of the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine

Seated from left: Hilda Capó, M.D.; Janet Davis, M.D., M.A.; David Greenfield, M.D.; John Guy, M.D.; Carol Karp, M.D.; Byron Lam, M.D.; Richard Parrish II, M.D.; William Smiddy, M.D. Standing from left: Laurence Gardner, M.D., Eduardo Alfonso, M.D., John Clarkson, M.D., Vittorio Porciatti, D.SC.



# Awards and Honors

Congratulations to **J. WILLIAM HARBOUR, M.D.**, for receiving a State of Florida and Florida Academic Cancer Center Alliance grant for his research on "Defining and targeting the epigenetic landscape of uveal melanoma." This project is in collaboration with the University of Florida and Moffitt Cancer Center. Harbour was recently named an Alcon Research Institute Awardee for his work in high-risk eye cancers including uveal melanoma and retinoblastoma.



Dr. Luis Vazquez meets with U.S. Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL). Ros-Lehtinen is a co-chair of the Congressional Vision Caucus, a bipartisan coalition of congressional members dedicated to strengthening and stimulating a national dialogue and policy on vision-related problems and disabilities.

**LUIS E. VAZQUEZ, M.D.**, Ph.D., assistant professor of clinical ophthalmology, and **MARCO RUGGERI, PH.D.**, research assistant professor of ophthalmology, were named Emerging Vision Scientists by the National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research. Vazquez was recognized for his innovative glaucoma research that concentrates on the pathophysiology of glaucoma. Ruggeri was selected for his work on developing cutting edge imaging technologies for diagnostic and surgical applications in ophthalmology. These exceptional scientists were selected from across the United States for their innovative vision research. They traveled to Capitol Hill to thank members of Congress for their essential support of the National Institutes of Health and National Eye Institute.



Dr. Marco Ruggeri, (right), meets with Joshua H. Salpeter, D.C. Chief of Staff for U.S. Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen.

(left to right): Sir Knight Brett Gordon, Dr. Darlene Miller, Dr. Kara Cavuoto, Sir Knight Henry Adams and Dr. Vittorio Porciatti

Kudos to **KARA M. CAVUOTO, M.D.**, for receiving a Pediatric Ophthalmology Career Starter Grant from the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. Using established and innovative technologies, the \$60,000 award will support her research on when and how the bacteria of the eye evolves from a few different species without antibiotic resistance in infants to a complex network of antibiotic-resistant species in young adults. Additional kudos to Cavuoto for receiving the Women in Ophthalmology (WIO) Emerging Leader Award during the WIO 2016 Summer Symposium.

Bascom Palmer Eye Institute Chairman, **EDUARDO C. ALFONSO, M.D.**, and **PHILIP J. ROSENFELD, M.D., PH.D.**, were named two of the world's 2016 **100 Most Influential People in Ophthalmology** by *The Ophthalmologist*. Alfonso is known for his clinical expertise and research in eye diseases, corneal surgery, corneal transplantation and ocular microbiology. Rosenfeld is one of the world's leading experts on age-related macular degeneration. The members of the Power List, which include physicians, vision scientists and business leaders, were selected from nominations received from throughout the world.

Congratulations to **JUAN F. BATLLE, M.D.**, (resident, chief resident, 1985) for receiving the distinguished Humanitarian Award from the Duke Medical Alumni Association. Batlle is founder and chief of ophthalmology at the Elias Santana Center, the largest provider of eye care for the poor in the Dominican Republic. Each year, since his training at Bascom Palmer, Batlle has shared his expertise and knowledge at Bascom Palmer's highly esteemed Curso Interamericano, the annual post-graduate course for practicing ophthalmologists in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Congratulations to **ALLISTER G. GIBBONS, M.D.**, for receiving second prize in the video competition at the European Society of Cataract & Refractive Surgeons annual congress in Copenhagen. Gibbons is a cataract, corneal and ocular surface diseases specialist at Bascom Palmer's Naples center.



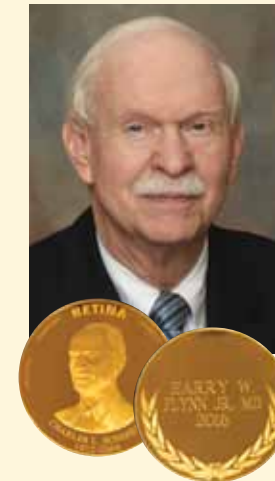
**Images**, Bascom Palmer's semi-annual magazine, has once again received "gold" recognition from the Aster Awards, the nation's most elite competition for outstanding excellence in advertising, marketing and communications. The award was presented for the June

2015 issue **Bascom Palmer Leads Fight Against Glaucoma**. *Images* has received 14 awards for excellence in the past 11 years.

# Bascom Palmer Shines at AAO

Bascom Palmer regards education within the field of ophthalmology as one of its highest priorities. This year, 50 of Bascom Palmer's doctors presented more than 150 named lectures, instructional sessions, scientific posters and papers during the 2016 American Academy of Ophthalmology's (AAO) annual meeting.

Congratulations to **HARRY W. FLYNN, M.D.**, for receiving the prestigious Charles L. Schepens, M.D. Award. The award and gold medal are presented each year to recognize a leader in the field of vitreoretinal surgery. The award includes a personal honorarium and a significant donation for research. As a tribute to the strength of Bascom Palmer's retina service and training programs, since the Schepens Award was first presented in 2008, five of the nine awardees have been from Bascom Palmer. In addition to Flynn, **MARK S. BLUMENKRANZ, M.D.**, (fellow, 1980); **ALAN C. BIRD, M.D.**, (fellow, 1969); **STANLEY CHANG, M.D.**, (fellow, 1979); and **THOMAS A. AABERG, SR., M.D.**, (fellow, 1969) received this prestigious award.



Glaucoma specialist, **STEVEN J. GEDDE, M.D.**, received the celebrated 2016 Straatsma Award for Excellence in Resident Education. During his 17 years as director of Bascom Palmer's residency program, the residency has consistently ranked as the nation's top ophthalmology training program in peer surveys by *Ophthalmology Times* and Doximity. During Gedde's tenure, graduating residents have achieved a pass rate of 100% in the examinations given by the American Board of Ophthalmology, the organization that certifies ophthalmologists in the United States.



Also at the AAO meeting, Bascom Palmer faculty members received these outstanding honors: **TERRENCE P. O'BRIEN, M.D.**, received a Life Achievement Honor Award; **DARLENE MILLER, D.H.SC.**, and **ALANA GRAJEWSKI, M.D.**, received Senior Achievement Awards; and **JAMES T. BANTA, M.D.**, and **DAVID S. GREENFIELD, M.D.**, accepted a Secretariat Award. **CAROL L. KARP, M.D.**, was the program director for Cornea Subspecialty Day; and **SONIA H. YOO, M.D.**, and **KENDALL E. DONALDSON, M.D.**, were named Outstanding Female Leaders in Ophthalmology by MillennialEYE. With an eye toward Mars, **BYRON L. LAM, M.D.**, won the "Best Paper" in neuro-ophthalmology at the AAO for his research on the impact long-term space flights will have on astronauts' vision and ocular changes. Kudos to **VAN C. LANSINGH, M.D.**, voluntary assistant professor of ophthalmology, for receiving the prestigious International Blindness Prevention Award.

# WELCOME NEW FACULTY

Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, part of UHealth – the University of Miami Health System, is pleased to announce the appointment of four new faculty members. Bascom Palmer continues its rich tradition of having the nation's best and brightest ophthalmologists advancing the practice of ophthalmology through innovation in therapeutics, diagnostics, and vision research.

**VICTORIA S. CHANG, M.D.**, a corneal and external disease specialist, joins the faculty as an assistant professor of clinical ophthalmology. She received a bachelor of science and a doctor of medicine degree with research distinction from the University of Miami. She completed a residency in ophthalmology at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, a fellowship in uveitis and ocular immunology at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary of Harvard Medical School, and a fellowship in corneal and refractive surgery at Bascom Palmer. Chang's research interests include dry eye disease, ocular surface diseases and infections, and corneal transplantation. She is available for consultation on corneal and external diseases, including cataracts and intraocular lens, ocular surface diseases, corneal transplants and laser vision correction at Bascom Palmer Naples.



external disease specialist, joins the faculty as an assistant professor of clinical ophthalmology. She received a bachelor of science and a doctor of medicine degree with research distinction from the University of Miami. She completed a

residency in ophthalmology at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, a fellowship in uveitis and ocular immunology at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary of Harvard Medical School, and a fellowship in corneal and refractive surgery at Bascom Palmer. Chang's research interests include dry eye disease, ocular surface diseases and infections, and corneal transplantation. She is available for consultation on corneal and external diseases, including cataracts and intraocular lens, ocular surface diseases, corneal transplants and laser vision correction at Bascom Palmer Naples.

**RANYA G. HABASH, M.D.**, joins the faculty as a voluntary assistant professor of ophthalmology. Specializing in cataracts, intraocular lens and comprehensive ophthalmology, she received a bachelor of science degree in biology from Wake Forest University. She completed a doctor of medicine degree at West Virginia University prior to a residency in ophthalmology at Texas Tech University. Habash's areas of expertise include cataract surgery, premium intraocular lenses, laser vision correction, eyelid surgery and emergency conditions. She is available for consultation in Miami.



as a voluntary assistant professor of ophthalmology. Specializing in cataracts, intraocular lens and comprehensive ophthalmology, she received a bachelor of science degree in biology from Wake Forest University. She completed a doctor of medicine

degree at West Virginia University prior to a residency in ophthalmology at Texas Tech University. Habash's areas of expertise include cataract surgery, premium intraocular lenses, laser vision correction, eyelid surgery and emergency conditions. She is available for consultation in Miami.

**JAYANTH SRIDHAR, M.D.**, joins the faculty as an assistant professor of ophthalmology. Specializing in macular diseases and vitreoretinal diseases and surgery, he received a bachelor of science and a doctor of medicine degree from the University of Miami. He completed a residency in ophthalmology at Bascom Palmer and a fellowship in vitreoretinal surgery at Wills Eye Hospital. His research interests include novel retinal imaging systems, improving quality standards for ophthalmology education, and advances in vitreoretinal surgical instrumentation. He is available for consultation in Miami and at the Lennar Foundation Medical Center in Coral Gables.



joins the faculty as an assistant professor of ophthalmology. Specializing in macular diseases and vitreoretinal diseases and surgery, he received a bachelor of science and a doctor of medicine degree from the University of Miami. He completed a

residency in ophthalmology at Bascom Palmer and a fellowship in vitreoretinal surgery at Wills Eye Hospital. His research interests include novel retinal imaging systems, improving quality standards for ophthalmology education, and advances in vitreoretinal surgical instrumentation. He is available for consultation in Miami and at the Lennar Foundation Medical Center in Coral Gables.

**BRIAN C. TSE, M.D.**, joins the faculty as an assistant professor of clinical ophthalmology as a specialist in oculofacial plastic, reconstructive and orbital surgery. He received a bachelor of arts degree in biophysical chemistry from Dartmouth College and a medical degree with research distinction from the University of Miami. He completed a residency in ophthalmology at the University of Tennessee, a fellowship in ocular oncology at the University of Tennessee and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, and an oculoplastic and reconstructive surgery fellowship at Bascom Palmer. Tse's research interests include traumatic optic neuropathy and orbital tumors. He is available for consultation in Miami, Naples and Plantation.



joins the faculty as an assistant professor of clinical ophthalmology as a specialist in oculofacial plastic, reconstructive and orbital surgery. He received a bachelor of arts degree in biophysical chemistry from Dartmouth College and a medical degree with research

distinction from the University of Miami. He completed a residency in ophthalmology at the University of Tennessee, a fellowship in ocular oncology at the University of Tennessee and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, and an oculoplastic and reconstructive surgery fellowship at Bascom Palmer. Tse's research interests include traumatic optic neuropathy and orbital tumors. He is available for consultation in Miami, Naples and Plantation.

# Expanding to Meet Our Patients' Needs

The Lennar Foundation Medical Center is home to Bascom Palmer's newest South Florida location. Situated on the University of Miami's Coral Gables campus, the 200,000-square-foot LEED-certified ambulatory center will provide easy access to the leading physicians and services available at Bascom Palmer and UHealth, the University of Miami Health System.

The new Coral Gables location will deliver the same compassionate care provided at all Bascom Palmer world-class eye care centers, with full diagnostic services and outpatient surgery. Ophthalmic services available at The Lennar Foundation Medical Center will include cornea, retina, oculoplastic, optometry and comprehensive eye care, pediatric, specialty contact lens, imaging, and LASIK and laser vision correction. The facility will also feature urgent care, outpatient surgery, men's and women's health, sports medicine, physical therapy, oncology, and more than 100 UHealth subspecialties.



Bascom Palmer Naples

**Congratulations to Gresham, Smith and Partners** for taking home the 2016 Best of Healthcare Interiors Award for its design of the new Bascom Palmer Eye Institute Naples. The design's eye-catching aesthetic embraces natural light, glass and excellent views in its patient-centered 21,000-square-foot vision care and ambulatory surgery center.



The Lennar Foundation Medical Center houses Bascom Palmer's newest location.

To schedule an appointment with a Bascom Palmer specialist, please call 1-888-845-0002 or visit [bascompalmer.org](http://bascompalmer.org).

# The Bascom Palmer Society

Honoring the Institute's most generous benefactors whose gifts exceed \$1 million, the Bascom Palmer Society was created in memory of the Institute's namesake, Bascom Headon Palmer, M.D., an ophthalmologist who pioneered eye care in Miami.

Alcon Laboratories	Mark J. Daily, M.D.	William M. Kennedy*	Ophthalmology Research Foundation
Ibrahim N. Al-Rashid	The Faculty of the Department of Ophthalmology of the University of Miami	James L. Knight*	Mr. & Mrs.* Raymond G. Perelman
Mohammad N. Al-Rashid	Miller School of Medicine	Clara Kresge*	William* & Isabel* Collier Read
Dr. Nasser Ibrahim Al-Rashid	The Fanjul Lobby, donated by Florida Crystals Corporation	The Kresge Foundation	Lillian Redlich*
Dr. Nourah Caskey Al-Rashid	Werner F. Farnell*	Hugh & Sally Lalor*	Research to Prevent Blindness
Ramzi Al-Rashid	The Celia Lipton Farris & Victor W. Farris Foundation, Inc.	Anne Bates Leach*	Edith & Earl Retter*
Salman Al-Rashid	Florida Lions Eye Bank	Henri & Flore Lesieur Foundation	Charlotte Breyer Rodgers*
Carl B.* & Iris Apfel	The Foundation Fighting Blindness	Donna Mae Litowitz	George G.* & Estelle Rosenfield
Ms. Adrienne Arshnt/ Hope for Vision	Mr.* & Mrs. Samuel J. Frankino	The Joe & Emily Lowe Foundation, Inc.	Walter G. Ross Foundation
Sadye Barrel*	The Samuel J. & Connie M. Frankino Charitable Foundation	Mr. & Mrs. Milton S. Maltz	Richard D. Siegal*
Bascom Palmer Eye Institute Alumni Association, Inc.	Stanley & Kathleen Glaser*	Maltz Family Foundation	Anne & Matthew Smith Family Endowed Research Fund
John E. Blair	Nancy I. & Robert Z. Greene*	William L. & Evelyn McKnight*	Strobis Glaucoma Foundation
Michele R. Bowman & Col. Joseph E. Underwood	Allyn J. Heath*	McKnight Brain Research Foundation	Elsie & Tolly Vinik*
Braman Family Foundation	Helen Herold*	The Miami Lighthouse for the Blind	Mrs. Caroline Weiss
Ms. Theresa Broeman*	W. Pruett & Audrey M. Hickman*	Ambrose Monell Foundation	Richard G. West*
Mary C. Brosius & George C. Brosius*	Mrs. Lou Higgins*	Dorothy S. Munn*	Morty & Gloria Wolosoff Foundation, Inc.*
Mary J. & George T. Brosius*	William* & Norma Horvitz	The Murray Foundation	Shlomo & Amy Yeminy*
Robert M. & Virginia M. Buck*	W. Starr & Alvira Johnston*	National Philanthropic Trust	Miles Zisson*
Mr.* & Mrs. Willard Butcher		Frederic S. & Christine B. Nusbaum	<i>*In loving memory</i>
Helen & George Clarke*			Donations listed as of May 31, 2016

## Donna Mae Balkan Litowitz: A Donor with a Compassionate Heart

**Donna Mae Balkan Litowitz** has always had an inquisitive mind and a compassionate heart. A native of Chicago, she enjoyed exploring the nearby prairie as a young girl encouraged by her parents, Samuel and Ethel Balkan. "When I was about 5 years old, I remember coming home with a garter snake wrapped around my wrist," she says. "My mother screamed, but my father told me we should take the snake home. We walked back to the field, I put my hand down and the snake wiggled away. My father's words left a lasting impression on me of the importance of nature and caring for other living things."

She also learned a lifelong lesson in the importance of charity as she watched her mother help a stranger who had stumbled in the street and broken her glasses. Because the woman was unable to see, Donna's mother went out of her way to walk the distraught woman to a doctor. After learning that replacing the glasses would be a hardship for the woman, Ethel



(left to right) Robert Litowitz, Dr. Richard Parrish, Donna Litowitz, Dr. Harry Flynn, Dr. Alana Grajewski

Balkan volunteered to have the glasses repaired or replaced.

Decades ago, Donna came to Miami as a student, and the city soon became home. She and her husband, Bob, raised three children, Arthur, Bud and Susan, have four grandchildren and one great-grandchild. "We are very fortunate to have Bascom Palmer Eye Institute in our community," she says. "It's been a pleasure watching this great institute grow through the years, just like our city."

Litowitz has never forgotten her mother's generosity or the importance of vision. It is in this spirit that Litowitz has given a generous gift in honor of her parents to save vision in the most vulnerable: infants and children. "This Center has been a dream team effort. Dr. Alana Grajewski and Dr. Harry Flynn and all the doctors at Bascom Palmer have always gone the extra mile to help me and all of their patients."

# The Norton Society

Members of the Norton Society have generously supported Bascom Palmer with gifts totaling \$500,000 – \$999,999. This society honors the vision and leadership of Edward W.D. Norton, M.D., the Institute's founding chairman.

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## The Finker-Frenkel Legacy Foundation

supports Bascom Palmer's innovative vision research. Using sophisticated ophthalmic imaging, early detection and population screening, Bascom Palmer's researchers are analyzing distinctive eye-brain signatures of the retina, a thin layer of tissue that lines the back of the eye near the optic nerve. Using this scientific data, researchers are hoping to facilitate development of a rapid, low-cost, non-invasive method that may detect Alzheimer's disease years before clinical diagnosis.

"We are proud to partner with Bascom Palmer," says Eugene Frenkel. "Our family-run legacy is committed to funding the research, treatment and eventual eradication of neurological diseases. What better way to accomplish our family's mission than to help give the gift of sight?"



University of Miami President Julio Frenk with Eugene Frenkel

## Giving the Hope of Sight

There is a broad range of philanthropic giving societies available at Bascom Palmer. Please contact the development office at 305-326-6190 for additional information.

Thank You

# The Luminary Society

The Luminary Society recognizes individuals who are beacons for progress in vision research, clinical care and education. Generous donors have contributed gifts totaling \$100,000 - \$499,999.

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			<i>*In loving memory</i>
			Donations listed as of May 31, 2016

# The Founder Society

The Founder Society honors donors who have supported Bascom Palmer's mission with gifts totaling \$50,000 - \$99,999 that enable the Institute's physicians and researchers to combat blinding eye disease.

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**PALM BEACH MEDICAL FORUM AND LUNCHEON**  
 January 13, 2017, 11:30 a.m.  
 The Mar-a-Lago Club, Palm Beach  
 Chairs: Robin and Irvin Saltzman  
 Speakers: Drs. J. William Harbour, Ellen Koo and Bradford Lee  
*For information, please call 561-515-1527*

**EVENING OF VISION UNDER THE STARS GALA IN NAPLES EYEING THE FUTURE WITH U**  
 Friday, February 10, 2017, 6:00 p.m.  
 Bascom Palmer Eye Institute at Naples  
 Chairs: Hanna and Andrew Cummins  
*For information, please call 239-659-3986*

**EVENING OF VISION GALA IN PALM BEACH**  
 Saturday, March 4, 2017, 6:30 p.m.  
 The Mar-a-Lago Club  
 Chairs: Nancy and William Rollnick  
*For information, please call 561-515-1527*

# The Vision Society

Donors whose gifts total \$10,000 – \$49,999 are recognized in the Vision Society, honoring their vision for a world free of blindness.

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**Hanna and Andrew Cummins** are passionate advocates for Bascom Palmer Eye Institute. As longtime supporters of the Institute, they are enthusiastic voices for Bascom Palmer and the University of Miami. "We are thrilled to be chairing the 2017 Naples gala, *Eyering the Future with U*.

We share Bascom Palmer's pride in being the No. 1 eye hospital in the country. We want to highlight the Institute's focus on patient care and leading-edge technology so that it continues to lead the field of ophthalmology for many years to come."

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## Save The Eye: A Thank You to Bascom Palmer

Dear Bascom Palmer,

I owe my life to the doctors who have given me the opportunity to fight this fight. In particular, Dr. David Tse – the doctor from Bascom Palmer Eye Institute who removed my eye.

I wear a patch over my left eye. For a long time, it was a reminder of what I had been through. Now, it's a reminder of what I can accomplish – and what I want my legacy to be.

Eleven years ago, my family and friends knew that something wasn't right. My left eye was drooping. If it wasn't for them forcing me to see a doctor, I wouldn't be here today.

I was diagnosed with a very rare form of cancer called lacrimal gland adenoid cystic carcinoma. I was lucky enough to become a patient of Dr. David Tse and Dr. Pasquale Benedetto at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine in Miami, Florida. I was only the 14th patient they had encountered with this type of cancer, and was told that in order to survive, my eye would have to be removed. It was shocking.

The truth is ... I was really lost. But you learn that you have to make the best of what you're given. Losing the eye saved me from death. When I realized that – and it took me a long time to realize how blessed and fortunate I was – that's when it became part of my normal life. I got to live again. If I didn't have it removed, I would have been dead in about two years. There was no other option.

Earlier this year, Dr. Tse told me his dream is to make realistic and affordable prostheses through the use of a 3D printer. This printer could be used all over the world for people who could not afford a prosthetic eye, or for people who don't have insurance to cover this type of expense.

I knew I had to thank him for saving my life, and I came up with the idea of "Save The Eye (STE)," which uses the three letters of his last name. Now, it's playing out – and it's how I envisioned it.

My dream is to get 50,000 people to give \$10 each to cover the cost of the printer and also the staff to operate it. I want my legacy to be to fulfill Dr. Tse's dream – which is now my dream – and help people all over the world who probably would never get this opportunity. That would mean so much to me.

I've learned that this is what it's all about; to give back, it feels so cool. It's the coolest thing I've ever experienced.

This is a labor of love for me. I'm truly blessed to still be around.

– Rick Arkush, Miami, Florida



**If you would like to support the "Save the Eye Project," please contact the development office at (305) 326-6190 or visit [bascompalmer.org/giving](http://bascompalmer.org/giving)**

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Mr. & Mrs. Jack Wiadro  
Wiseheart Foundation, Inc.  
Dr. & Mrs. M. Worman  
Xcovery Vision Tyrogenex, Inc

*\*In loving memory*

# The Society for Encouraging Endowment

This society recognizes those individuals who ensure Bascom Palmer Eye Institute's legacy by making the Institute a beneficiary of their estate or financial plans. Please let us know if you have included Bascom Palmer in your estate plans so we may recognize your investment in our future.

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 Mr. Edward Wilcox  
 Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Winter  
 Mr. & Mrs. Fred Zorovich

*\*In loving memory*



Dr. Eduardo Alfonso with Iris and Carl Apfel at Bascom Palmer's Evening of Vision Gala, 2013.

**Iris Apfel** may have just celebrated her 95th birthday, but the style icon shows no sign of slowing down. Whether it's the recent launch of a new fashion line, starring in a documentary, or designing a unique line of eye frames, Iris is a force to be reckoned with. Along with the tremendous impact she has made in the fashion industry, Iris is also a champion for philanthropy. Iris and her late husband, Carl, along with Iris's late mother, Sadye Barrel, have been supporters and special friends of Bascom Palmer Eye Institute for more than four decades. In 1993, the family established The Barrel/Apfel Annuity Trust Fund to benefit Bascom Palmer Eye Institute.

The generosity of Iris Apfel enables Bascom Palmer physicians and scientists to continue their work in assuring that more people continue to see and witness the beauty around them. Her support is a tribute to her family's lifelong work in the appreciation of beauty and a shining example of their generous wish to share it with others.



**The Votes are in. Bascom Palmer Ranked #1 for the 15th time.**



In their annual survey ranking America's best hospitals, *U.S. News & World Report* once again ranked Bascom Palmer Eye Institute the nation's best in ophthalmology. It's the 15th time America's leading ophthalmologists have recognized Bascom Palmer, part of UHealth, the University of Miami Health System as the best in the country for eye research, education and patient care. To us, there's no greater testament to our talented doctors, researchers and dedicated staff. To schedule an appointment or learn more, please call 1-800-329-7000.



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<b>Miami</b> <b>Anne Bates Leach Eye Hospital</b> 900 NW 17 Street Miami, Florida 33136 305-326-6000 Patient Appointments 305-243-2020 Toll free in USA 800-329-7000 <b>bascompalmer.org</b>	<b>Palm Beach Gardens</b> 7101 Fairway Drive Palm Beach Gardens Florida 33418 561-515-1500	<b>Naples</b> 3880 Tamiami Trail North Naples, Florida 34103 239-659-3937	<b>Plantation</b> 8100 SW 10 Street Plantation, Florida 33324 954-465-2700	<b>Coral Gables</b> The Lennar Foundation Medical Center 5555 Ponce de Leon Blvd. Coral Gables, Florida 33146 305-689-0416
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Children with glaucoma have new hope. [Story page 8](#)