focus on collaboration:
A STRONG SPIRIT OF COLLABORATION LEADS TO IMPORTANT SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES
Oklahoma Health Center
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Cynthia A. Bradford, M.D.
Layne E. Goetzinger, M.D.
David W. Jackson, M.D.
Theresa A. Larson, M.D.
Deana S. Watts, M.D.

Contact Lenses
(405) 271-6084 • (800) 787-9012
Carri L. Ferguson, F.C.L.S.A.
Contact Lens Specialist
Jean Ann Vickery, F.C.L.S.A.
Director, Contact Lens Services

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Rhea L. Siatkowski, M.D.
Donald U. Stone, M.D.

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Steven R. Sarkisian, Jr., M.D.
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Jean R. Hausheer, M.D., F.A.C.S.

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Bradley K. Farris, M.D.
Anil D. Patel, M.D.
(405) 271-1094 • (800) 787-9016
R. Michael Siatkowski, M.D.

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Nancy A. Lambert, B.C.O.

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Annie Moreau, M.D.

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Optometry
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Brandalyn D. Loyko, O.D.
Jessica L. Lucas, O.D.

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R. Michael Siatkowski, M.D.
Tammy L. Yanovitch, M.D., M.H.Sc.

Retina/Vitreous
(405) 271-1092 • (800) 787-9014
Reagan H. Bradford, Jr., M.D.
Stephen R. Fransen, M.D.
Ronald M. Kingsley, M.D.
Robert E. Leonard II, M.D.
Vinay A. Shah, M.D.

Stephenson Laser Center
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Trauma/Emergency
(405) 271-6060 • (800) 787-9012

Uveitis
(405) 271-1090 • (800) 787-9012
Theresa A. Larson, M.D.
(405) 271-1095 • (800) 787-9017
Donald U. Stone, M.D.

Dean McGee Eye Institute Satellite Locations

EDMOND
1005 Medical Park Blvd., 73013
(405) 271-0913

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Comprehensive/Neuro-Ophthalmology
Anil D. Patel, M.D.

Contact Lens Services
Jean Ann Vickery, F.C.L.S.A.

Oculoplastic Ophthalmology
Annie Moreau, M.D.

Optometry
Angela M. Plant, O.D.

Optical Services
(405) 271-0909

NORTHWEST OKC
3500 N.W. 56th, #101, 73112
(405) 942-9545

Comprehensive Ophthalmology/
Ophthalmic Surgery
Ralph B. Hester III, M.D.

Contact Lens Services
Carri L. Ferguson, F.C.L.S.A.

Optometry
Tasha J. Schellenberg, O.D.

Optical Services
(405) 271-9506

LAWTON
3201 W. Gore Blvd., #200, 73505
(580) 250-5855

Comprehensive Ophthalmology/
Ophthalmic Surgery
Jean R. Hausheer, M.D., F.A.C.S.

Optical Services
(580) 585-5425

Oklahoma Health Center
DMei Pavilions A & B • 608 Stanton L. Young Blvd. • Oklahoma City, OK 73104

McGee Eye Surgery Center (MESC)
Harold Hamm Diabetes Center • 1000 N. Lincoln Blvd., Suite 150 • Oklahoma City, OK 73104
(405) 232-8686

Optometry
(405) 271-1090 • (800) 787-9012

Pediatric Ophthalmology/Strabismus
(405) 271-1094 • (800) 787-9016
R. Michael Siatkowski, M.D.
Tammy L. Yanovitch, M.D., M.H.Sc.

Retina/Vitreous
(405) 271-1092 • (800) 787-9014
Reagan H. Bradford, Jr., M.D.
Stephen R. Fransen, M.D.
Ronald M. Kingsley, M.D.
Robert E. Leonard II, M.D.
Vinay A. Shah, M.D.

Stephenson Laser Center
(405) 271-2500 • (877) 406-4193

Trauma/Emergency
(405) 271-6060 • (800) 787-9012

Uveitis
(405) 271-1090 • (800) 787-9012
Theresa A. Larson, M.D.
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Donald U. Stone, M.D.
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THE VALUE OF COLLABORATION

TEAM IS ONE! THIS OKLAHOMA CITY THUNDER SLOGAN RESONATED well with Oklahomans as they proudly cheered the team’s extraordinary rise to a berth in the National Basketball Association (NBA) Finals in only its fourth season in our vibrant city.

The concept of team has been inherent in the pioneer spirit of Oklahoma. It also has been critical to the success of the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI) and its patient care, vision research, and educational programs over the past 37 years. Thanks to the hundreds of “team members” who contributed to our recent Capital Campaign, we were able to complete construction of our new Pavilion and Inasmuch Foundation Atrium as well as renovations of our original building.

This desire to help each other in a spirit of collaboration also translates into the Eye Institute’s and the University of Oklahoma (OU) Department of Ophthalmology’s relationships with other departments and colleges at the OU Health Sciences Center (OUHSC) and organizations located in the Oklahoma Health Center. A great amount of vision research is conducted within the laboratories of the Dean McGee Eye Institute, which is why our Department is among the nation’s leaders in National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB) funding. However,
research related to the eye also is underway in the Departments of Cell Biology, Internal Medicine, Microbiology and Immunology, and Physiology, and in the College of Pharmacy. In fact, almost 25% of all of the R01 grants (the most common major NIH grants for individual scientific investigators) awarded on this campus are devoted to vision research, and in 2010, more grants at OUHSC were funded by the National Eye Institute than any other Institute from the NIH.

This culture of collaboration is the focus of this edition of InVision’s feature story. You are invited to learn more about our joint efforts with the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation (OMRF), the Harold Hamm Diabetes Center (HHDC), and others. In working with the Diabetes Center, one of our collaborative goals includes the recruitment of world-class researchers committed to better understanding and ultimately eliminating blindness that can result from advanced diabetic retinopathy. Such bold objectives cannot be accomplished in academic silos, but must engage basic scientists and clinicians from across and even beyond this campus working together with vigor, innovation, and imagination.

In reaching beyond OUHSC, Dr. Robert “Gene” Anderson, our Director of Vision Research and one of the premier vision scientists in the world, and other members of our faculty have established professional and personal relationships that span this continent and the globe with the hope of reducing the risk of visual loss from retinal degenerative disease, infectious and inflammatory processes in the eye, and other conditions. Every year at the annual meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO), the largest ophthalmic research organization in the world, a gathering hosted by DMEI is attended by numerous other national and international leaders in vision research because these scientists understand and embrace the importance of collaboration.

Although the feature story focuses on vision research, a spirit of collaboration also has been and will continue to be a key element of our educational and clinical culture as we train future leaders and seek better diagnostic and therapeutic modalities and even cures for potentially blinding diseases. With that culture secure and growing, we can hardly wait to discover the wonderful possibilities that lie ahead!

Gregory L. Skuta, M.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer
Dean McGee Eye Institute
Edward L. Gaylord Professor and Chair
Department of Ophthalmology
University of Oklahoma College of Medicine
Lieutenant Governor Todd Lamb (right) listens as Matthew D. Bown, DMEI Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, explains the new building construction project.

On March 29, Oklahoma House Representative T.W. Shannon, who is the House Speaker-Designate, took time to tour the Eye Institute. Pictured left to right are: Gregory L. Skuta, M.D., DMEI President & CEO, Representative T.W. Shannon, Dianne Rasmussen, LLC, and Matthew D. Bown, DMEI Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer.

Those in attendance to visit with Lieutenant Governor Lamb during his May 21 tour included left to right: Matthew D. Bown, DMEI Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Cynthia A. Bradford, M.D., Ralph B. Hester III, M.D., Lieutenant Governor Todd Lamb, Gregory L. Skuta, M.D., DMEI President & CEO, and Lana G. Ivy, DMEI VP of Development (not pictured).
STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS FROM ACROSS OKLAHOMA TOUR the Eye Institute to learn more about the anatomy of the eye while observing the dissection of a pig’s eye, the various diseases that affect the eye, procedures such as LASIK, the creation and fitting of prosthetic eyes, and the specialized contact lens care provided for patients with complex eye conditions. The tours generally take two hours to complete.

Over the last six months, DMEI has hosted over 172 students and educators from Tri-City Home Educators, Northwestern Oklahoma State University Rural Health Projects, University of Oklahoma Prospective Students, and East Central University Upward Bound (Ada, Oklahoma). “The completion of the new building has allowed us to resume this service to the public, and we are delighted that interest continues among students and teachers to learn more about us,” says Melody Marcum, DMEI Director of External Relations and Development.
DMEI Selects ifa EHR Software

LEADERS, FACULTY, AND STAFF of the Dean McGee Eye Institute have selected ifa Systems as their Electronic Health Record (EHR) software after a comprehensive 24-month market analysis. The implementation is being led by P. Lloyd Hildebrand, M.D.

“The Board and the entire team at ifa united i-tech are honored by the decision of the Dean McGee Eye Institute to choose ifa Systems as its EMR application,” said Rainer Waedlich, Chairman of ifa Systems AG. “We are committed to the project and will establish, together with the DMEI team, a ‘Center of Excellence’ for Health IT in Ophthalmology.”

The ifa Group of Companies is a professional Health IT provider dedicated to ophthalmology. With more than 10,000 user licenses worldwide, ifa is a leading provider for Electronic Medical Record (EMR) systems for eye care professionals. The United States represents the most rapidly growing market for Electronic Health Records due to the recent government stimulus incentives.
**DR. R. MICHAEL SIATKOWSKI**, the James P. Luton Professor, Vice Chair for Academic Affairs and Residency Program Director in the University of Oklahoma (OU) Department of Ophthalmology, was named a recipient of the Regents’ Award for Superior Teaching at this year’s OU Health Sciences Center faculty award presentations in April. The awards were presented by Dr. Leslie Rainbolt-Forbes, current chair of the OU Board of Regents and a member of the family after whom the DMEI’s Rainbolt Family Center for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus is named.

Dr. Siatkowski has mentored medical students, residents and fellows in the College of Medicine for 13 years. He is a Director of the American Board of Ophthalmology, serves as Vice Chair of the Residency Review Committee for Ophthalmology, and received the Edward and Thelma Gaylord Faculty Honor Award in 2001, 2006, 2010, and 2011. Dr. Siatkowski is a member of the American Ophthalmological Society, a leader in the American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus, and active in programs of the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

Drs. Cynthia Bradford and Bradley Farris, also Professors in the Department of Ophthalmology, received Regents’ Awards for Superior Teaching in 2011.

**MARTIN–PAUL AGBAGA, PhD**, was promoted to Assistant Professor of Research in the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine’s Department of Ophthalmology. In 2012, Dr. Agbaga has published a scientific paper in the *Journal of Lipid Research*.

**ROBERT E. ANDERSON, MD, PhD**, was the recipient of the 2012 Paul Kayser International Award in Retina Research in July. See page 11 to learn more. In 2012, Dr. Anderson has published scientific papers in the *Journal of Lipid Research*, *PLOS ONE*, *Advances in Experimental Medicine and Biology*, and *Molecular Vision*.

**MICHELLE C. CALLEGAN, PhD**, was promoted to Professor in the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine’s Department of Ophthalmology. In 2012, Dr. Callegan has published scientific papers in the *International Journal of Inflammation*, *Ophthalmology*, *InTech Open Access*, and *Investigative Ophthalmology & Visual Science*.

**DANIEL J.J. CARR, PhD**, will serve on the IM (Immunology/Microbiology) section for the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology’s Program Committee for the next three years. In 2012, Dr. Carr has published scientific papers in *Mucosal Immunology*, *Clinical and Developmental Immunology*, *Journal of Virology*, and the *Journal of Immunology*. 
MICHAEL H. ELLIOTT, PhD, co-published an article in the *Journal of Biological Chemistry* in March, 2012. The publication provides key evidence that caveolin-1 plays a vital role in healthy eye function, especially in the blood-retinal barrier. Additionally, in 2012, Dr. Elliott published a scientific paper in *Investigative Ophthalmology & Visual Science*.

CARRI L. FERGUSON, FCLSA, is the current President-Elect of the Contact Lens Society of America (CLSA) and will become President of CLSA in April, 2013.

JEAN R. HAUSHEER, MD, FACS, served as an oral examiner for the American Board of Ophthalmology in June, 2012 in San Francisco. She is now the Secretary-Treasurer for the Oklahoma Academy of Ophthalmology.

RALPH B. HESTER III, MD, was promoted to Clinical Assistant Professor in the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine’s Department of Ophthalmology. He also received the Edward and Thelma Gaylord Faculty Honor Award during the 36th Annual OU Resident & Alumni Meeting held in Oklahoma City in June, 2012.

P. LLOYD HILDEBRAND, MD, served as a reviewer from June, 2011 to June, 2012 for the Association of American Medical Colleges in partnership with the American Dental Education Association and the MedEdPORTAL® team. He was named to the Board of Directors for the Oklahoma Bioscience Association (OKBio) in May, 2012.

MAHMOUD A. KHAIMI, MD, was promoted to Clinical Associate Professor in the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine’s Department of Ophthalmology. He serves as an Associate Editor for a new glaucoma book, *Essentials of Glaucoma Surgery*, which was published in June, 2012.

RONALD M. KINGSLEY, MD, made two presentations, “Intravitreal Injections for Diabetic Macular Edema” and “Treatment of Central Serous Chorioretinopathy” at the Sino-American Ophthalmology Congress in Chengdu, China in June, 2012.

NAWAJES A. MANDAL, PhD, was promoted to Assistant Professor in the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine’s Department of Ophthalmology. In 2012, Dr. Mandel published scientific papers in the *Journal of Lipid Research, PLOS ONE, Advances in Experimental Medicine and Biology, Molecular Vision,* and *Mucosal Immunology.*
STEVEN R. SARKISIAN, JR., MD, was an Invited Lecturer at the World Ophthalmology Congress in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, in February, 2012 to speak about his experience using a collagen matrix to modulate wound healing in glaucoma surgery; served as a moderator at the American Glaucoma Society Annual Meeting in New York City in March, 2012; moderated two sessions at the Annual Meeting of the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery in Chicago in April, 2012; and recently published an article about the ExPress Mini Glaucoma Device along with one of DMEI’s past glaucoma fellows in the peer-reviewed journal *Developments in Ophthalmology* 2012;50:90-5, (E-pub 2012 Apr 17).


R. MICHAEL SIATKOWSKI, MD, was elected Vice Chair for the Residency Review Committee for Ophthalmology for the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education; appointed Chair of the Maintenance of Certification Committee for the American Board of Ophthalmology; served as a visiting professor at the University of Michigan and Smith-Kettlewell Eye Research Institute; spoke at the 50th Anniversary Meeting of the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute; received the OU Regents’ Award for Superior Teaching in April, 2012 (see page 7); and co-authored publications in *Survey of Ophthalmology* and *Archives of Ophthalmology*.

GREGORY L. SKUTA, MD, was appointed to serve on the Claims Committee and the Finance Committee for the Ophthalmic Mutual Insurance Company (OMIC); was the featured executive for the Oklahoma Health Center Foundation website in May, 2012; lectured at the SouthEast Eye Regional Meeting in Destin, Florida in July, 2012; will deliver the Raymond Cook Memorial Lecture at the University of Arkansas – Little Rock on November 29, 2012, the Ernst Bodenheimer Lecture at the Wilmer Eye Institute/Johns Hopkins University on December 8, 2012, and the Everett R. Veirs Lecture at Scott and White Clinic/Texas A&M on March 9, 2013; and was recently nominated to serve as President-Elect of the American Academy of Ophthalmology in 2013 and President in 2014 (more to follow in the next edition of *InVision*).

ROBERT G. SMALL, MD, was nominated for the Aesculapian Award by the OU College of Medicine Class of 2012 for *Excellence in Teaching by Volunteer Faculty* in April, 2012.

JEAN ANN VICKERY, FCLSA, received the Ken Swanson Merit Award for her ongoing work within the contact lens industry; co-edited and compiled with Michael Ward, FCLSA, Emory University, a new text entitled *Contact Lens Indications, Fitting and Management in a Medical Environment*; and received acceptance for publication of a clinical paper in *Eye and Contact Lens: Science and Clinical Practice* written by Ore-ofe Adesina, MD, Jean Ann Vickery, FCLSA, Carri L. Ferguson, FCLSA and Donald U. Stone, MD.

ANN A. WARN, MD, was promoted to Clinical Associate Professor in the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine’s Department of Ophthalmology.

TAMMY L. YANOVITCH, MD, MHSc, was appointed as Clinical Assistant Professor in the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine’s Department of Ophthalmology.

Technologies and Patents Issued during FY 2012
The University of Oklahoma Department of Ophthalmology produced three disclosures and was issued two patents from July 1, 2011–June 30, 2012. Congratulations to the following DMEI/OU faculty and research staff involved in these inventions: Martin–Paul Agbaga, PhD, Robert E. Anderson, MD, PhD, Richard S. Brush, Stephen R. Fransen, MD, James F. McGinnis, PhD, Nawajes A. Mandal, PhD, and Lily L. Wong, PhD.
Robert E. “Gene” Anderson, M.D., Ph.D. has been selected as the recipient of the 2012 Paul Kayser International Award in Retina Research. The selection was made by the International Society for Eye Research (ISER), and the award is provided by the Retina Research Foundation. In July 2012, Dr. Anderson presented a lecture and received the award at the ISER Biennial Meeting in Berlin. He is a Professor of Ophthalmology and Cell Biology, holds the Dean A. McGee Chair in Ophthalmology, is a George Lynn Cross Research Professor, and serves as Director of Vision Research for the Dean McGee Eye Institute/OU Department of Ophthalmology. Dr. Anderson also is a past President of ISER and a past Vice-President of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO).
Nawajes A. Mandal, PhD, Awarded NIH RESEARCH PROJECT GRANT

Nawajes A. Mandal, PhD, a DMEI research scientist and an Assistant Professor in the University of Oklahoma (OU) Department of Ophthalmology, was awarded a $1,850,000 RO1 Research Project Grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to advance his research into new therapies for such diseases as retinal and macular degenerations and diabetic retinopathy. The project title for the National Eye Institute (NEI)-sponsored grant is “Sphingolipid Metabolism and Signaling in the Retina”. The grant provides full funding for the maximum of five years.

Dr. Mandal’s special interests include sphingolipid metabolism in the retina, the mechanisms of inherited and light-induced retinal degeneration, and augmentative therapy for age-related macular degeneration using various anti-oxidative and anti-inflammatory compounds. He earned his PhD in Biochemistry from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute in New Delhi, India. Dr. Mandal completed his postdoctoral training in the molecular genetics of inherited retinal/macular degeneration from the University of Michigan - Ann Arbor before coming to the University of Oklahoma in 2006.

Research to Prevent Blindness Grant

Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB) has awarded a grant of $110,000 to the Department of Ophthalmology at the OU Health Sciences Center. The research will be directed by Gregory L. Skuta, MD, Edward L. Gaylord Professor and Chair of the Department of Ophthalmology and President and CEO of the Dean McGee Eye Institute, for the scientific study of retinal degenerations, diabetic eye disease, infections and inflammatory disease, and other conditions that can result in vision loss. RPB is the world’s leading voluntary organization supporting eye research. To date, the organization has awarded grants totaling more than $4.8 million to OU’s Department of Ophthalmology, placing it among the top 10 departments in the nation in cumulative RPB funding.
THE NATIONAL EYE INSTITUTE HAS recognized the potential of Oklahoma City research scientist Dr. James F. McGinnis’ work with nanoparticles on eye disease prevention with a $2.3 million grant to bring a final product to market. He has achieved promising results from testing his Nanoceria nanoparticles in rats and is ready to complete preclinical studies in order to place the compound into human clinical trials in the next 18 to 24 months.

The patents and technology for the manufacture and use of Nanoceria have been exclusively licensed to Nantiox Corp., a biotech startup company based in the Presbyterian Health Foundation’s Research Park in Oklahoma City. McGinnis’ research has focused on how nanoparticles can prevent the growth of abnormal blood vessels in the retina as well as reduce already-existing abnormal vessels in age-related macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy. The ultimate goal is to develop a treatment to protect the health and function of retinal cells and prevent blindness.

DR. MARTIN-PAUL AGBAGA, A POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW, AND SREEMATHI LOGAN, a graduate student, both working in Dr. Robert E. Anderson’s laboratory, were presented awards during the 37th Annual Graduate Research Education and Technology (GREAT) Symposium at the OU Health Sciences Center. Dr. Agbaga, who won Best Postdoctoral Fellow Research and is now an Assistant Professor of Research, will receive a travel award for his research and presentation entitled “Experimental Therapy for Juvenile Autosomal Dominant Macular Dystrophy (STGD3): Allele Specific Silencing of the Mutant ELOVL4 Protein.” The goal of this exciting work is to use molecular biology tools to design gene therapy for treating juvenile blindness by mutations in the Elongation of Very Long Chain Fatty Acids-4 (ELOVL4) gene.

Sruthi Logan was the recipient of the $1,000 Graduate Student Association Travel Award for a presentation entitled “STGD3 Mutant Suppresses ELOVL4 Enzymatic Activity: Putative Mechanism in STGD3 Pathogenesis.” Her studies have provided important information as to why photoreceptor cells die in this juvenile form of macular degeneration. Understanding the mechanism of cell death is essential for researchers to design drugs to treat these devastating degenerations that rob central vision in children.
THE DEPARTMENT OF
OPHTHALMOLOGY AND
the Dean McGee Eye Institute
welcomed Dr. Stephen C.
Pflugfelder as the 33rd Tullos
O. Coston Lecturer at the
2012 Annual Dean McGee
Eye Institute Ophthalmology
Symposium/Resident Alumni
Meeting on June 9 in Oklahoma City. His lecture
was entitled “Managing the Effects of Tear
Dysfunction and the Cornea.”

Dr. Pflugfelder combines a consultative practice in
cornea and ocular surface disease with teaching
and translational laboratory research. He is
currently Professor of Ophthalmology at the
Cullen Eye Institute/Baylor College of Medicine in
Houston, where he holds the James and Margaret
Elkins Chair. He earned his undergraduate
degree (summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa)
from Colgate University
in Hamilton,
New York and
his medical
degree (Alpha
Omega Alpha
Honor Medical
Society) from the State
University of New York–Upstate
Medical College in Syracuse.
He completed his residency
at the Cullen Eye Institute/
Baylor College of Medicine, and
his fellowship in Cornea and
External Disease at the Bascom
Palmer Eye Institute/University
of Miami, where he then served
on the faculty from 1986 to
2000. He accepted his current
position in 2000.

William Clifford, M.D. (left) presents a bronze
replica of a Frederic Remington sculpture
to Stephen C. Pflugfelder, M.D. (right) in
appreciation of his Tullos O. Coston Lecture.

Enjoying the Acers Society Reception (pictured left to
right) are: W. Stanley Muenzler, M.D., Acers Society
Committee member, C.P. “Pat” Wilkinson, M.D., 9th
Annual Acers Society guest speaker, Matthew Bown,
Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer,
and William Clifford, M.D., Acers Society Chairman.

Pictured left to right: Nathan Radcliffe, M.D., invited guest speaker from Weill Cornell Medical College, accepts a gift from Steven Sarkisian, Jr., M.D., Clinical Associate Professor of Ophthalmology, Glaucoma Fellowship Director, and Program Chair for the June 9 meeting.

John Robinson, M.D., recipient of the 2012 Oklahoma Academy of Ophthalmology Distinguished Service Award, spoke at lunch during the 36th Annual OU Resident & Alumni Meeting.
DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
2012–2013 NEW RESIDENTS & FELLOWS

Derek P. Bitner, M.D.
First-year Resident
College: University of Arizona
Medical School: Baylor College of Medicine

Jared R. Jackson, M.D.
First-year Resident
College: Brigham Young University
Medical School: University of Iowa

Esther Y. Lee, M.D.
First-year Resident
College: California Institute of Technology
Medical School: Jefferson Medical College

Jonathan P. Walgama, M.D.
First-year Resident
College: Austin College
Medical School: Texas A&M Health Science Center

Jacob W. Brubaker, M.D.
Glaucoma Fellow
College: Brigham Young University
Medical School: McGill University
Residency: University of Missouri–Columbia

Adam A. Carver, M.D.
Retina Fellow
College: Hendrix College
Medical School: University of Arkansas
Residency: University of Oklahoma/Dean McGee Eye Institute

Annie Y. Chan, M.D.
Cornea Fellow
College: Stanford University
Medical School: University of Texas, San Antonio
Residency: University of Oklahoma/Dean McGee Eye Institute

Kenneth C. Lao, M.D.
Neuro-Ophthalmology Fellow
College: Emory University
Medical School: University of Alabama
Residency: Hillcrest Medical Center (Family Medicine), Scott & White/Texas A&M (Ophthalmology)

Congratulations to Yasser Elshatory, M.D., Ph.D., PGY-3, who has been awarded an invitation to attend the Heed Foundation Residents’ Retreat this November in Chicago. This retreat is focused on preparing future leaders in academic ophthalmology. Only 50% of qualified applicants are offered an invitation.

Congratulations to Jacquelyn Jetton, M.D., PGY-4, who was appointed to serve as our Chief Resident for the 2012–2013 academic year.
2012 REPRESENTED THE TEN-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF the collaboration between the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI), the Sichuan Academy of Medical Sciences, and the Sichuan Provincial People’s Hospital (SPPH) in the People’s Republic of China. The collaboration has resulted in the establishment of 20 Blindness Prevention Centers in the Sichuan Province, the education of hundreds of ophthalmologists and ophthalmic nurses for community hospitals, and the performance of about 10,000 blindness prevention surgeries each year throughout the Province, which have helped thousands of residents regain their sight. In 2007, SPPH and DMEI formally established the Ophthalmology Resident Training Center, the first eye center in China to adopt a U.S. resident training model. Under the leadership of Dr. Bradley Farris, the center has successfully trained and graduated more than 20 ophthalmology residents in the past five years. The training has significantly elevated the overall standard of patient care in the Sichuan Province. Since 2001, over 35 DMEI senior residents, faculty, and alumni have participated in trips to China.*
Reaching Further—The Global Eye Care Program

Swaziland, Africa

BUILDING UPON THE SUCCESS IN the Sichuan Province of China, a Global Eye Care Program has been established to include Africa as part of DMEI’s international outreach efforts. A component of this program is resident education, and this year, partnering with “The Luke Commission” from a church in the Oklahoma City metropolitan area, two senior DMEI residents and two faculty members traveled to Swaziland, Africa, to work with the Good Shepherd Eye Clinic. This clinic is located in the Good Shepherd Hospital near the eastern border of Swaziland. Under the direction of ophthalmologist Dr. Jonathan Pons, the Good Shepherd Eye Clinic works diligently to improve the quality and quantity of eye care in Swaziland and treat and prevent blindness caused by cataracts and glaucoma.

Residents and faculty making their first visit to Swaziland included left to right: Ore-Ofe Adesina, M.D. (PGY-4), Ronald Hobbs, M.D. (PGY-4), Jonathan Pons, M.D., Good Shepherd Eye Clinic, Swaziland, Africa, Bradley Farris, M.D. (DMEI), and P. Lloyd Hildebrand, M.D. (DMEI).

Monday, October 8, 2012
THE 21ST ANNUAL WALTER J. STARK MEMORIAL LECTURESHIP
Tullos O. Coston Lecture Hall

Paul Sternberg, Jr., MD
G.W. Hale Professor and Chair, Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences; Director, Vanderbilt Eye Institute; Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, Nashville, Tennessee; President-Elect, American Academy of Ophthalmology
PHILANTHROPY UPDATE

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THE DEAN MCGEE EYE INSTITUTE’S RESEARCH DIRECTOR, Robert E. “Gene” Anderson, M.D., Ph.D., and biochemist Robert A. Floyd, Ph.D. at the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation (OMRF) became friends over decades of meetings and talking shop about their respective work. Some of those talks centered on Floyd’s discovery in 1988 of a compound called PBN that appeared able to prevent injury to the brain following a stroke.

Although a national trial of a PBN derivative failed to warrant its use in strokes, the way the drug worked in the brain gave Anderson the idea that PBN just might succeed in the eye. Anderson reasoned, seemingly counter-intuitively, that because PBN inhibited an enzyme crucial to the eye’s ability to process light, it might also be able to prevent loss of sight and even reverse some existing forms of blindness by limiting the toxic by-products created in the process of sight.

A collaboration was born, with Floyd providing chemical variations of the drug, Anderson and Nawajes Mandal, Ph.D. testing them at DMEI, and other vision scientists at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, including Gennadiy Moiseyev, Ph.D. and Jian-Xing “Jay” Ma, M.D., Ph.D., discovering the crucial enzyme’s mechanism. Ma is a leading expert on diabetic retinopathy and chair of the Department of Physiology. Anderson’s lab is now determining the most effective way of delivering the drug to the eye.

“This campus really does function as a team,” said Gregory Skuta, M.D., president and...
chief executive officer of DMEI and chair of the OU College of Medicine’s Department of Ophthalmology. “I have never witnessed a place quite like Oklahoma with respect to how willing people are to help each other and move the entire organization forward for the good of the university and the community.”

Of course, not every collaboration involving Dean McGee scientists can come from a longstanding friendship. Instead, most bubble up from the research seminars and conferences held on campus where inspiration is encouraged for later nurturing in collaborating laboratories.

“If you have common areas of interest and you bring together groups of highly skilled researchers with complementary effects on each other, you multiply the productivity and the quality of the ideas that people have by bouncing ideas off one another,” said physician-scientist Timothy J. Lyons, M.D., founding director of the Harold Hamm Diabetes Center and a collaborator with DMEI investigators Anderson and Michael Elliott, Ph.D.

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Stephen M. Prescott, M.D., president of OMRF, agrees: “Most important research topics require input from individuals with a wide range of skill sets and highly specialized equipment. Scientists can learn more, faster, when we pool resources and draw on one another’s talents. If you add Dean McGee’s strength in clinical trials and vision research to OMRF’s expertise in the laboratory, we make a powerful team.”

“The partnership between the Dean McGee Eye Institute and both the OU Health Sciences Center and Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation is responsible for creating a true national Center of Excellence,” said OU President David L. Boren. “For example, without the university's collaboration with the Institute, the progress which we are making in the area of diabetic retinopathy would have been impossible. I am deeply grateful to Dr. Skuta and the entire team for thoroughly embracing the spirit of collaboration.”

The monetary effect of the resulting collaborations is impressive. Almost one-fourth of the hard-to-get federal research dollars received on the OU Health Sciences Center campus alone, which includes DMEI and the Diabetes Center, are for vision research. In 2010, vision researchers held approximately 20 of the 80 research grants awarded by the National Institutes of Health to OU Health Sciences Center scientists.

There also is an obvious practical side to collaborations as well. As Anderson points out, “Nobody in today’s world can be an expert at everything. We have to depend on people who do things we don’t do to collaborate with us and carry out their part of the experiment.”
Some collaborations are based on the availability of certain pieces of sophisticated equipment, Anderson added. For example, OMRF has an Advanced Magnetic Resonance Center under the direction of Rheal Towner, Ph.D., who collaborates with Lyons and Elliott by making precise measurements of blood flow in mice models.

By the same token, “working with Dean McGee has enabled us to do work we couldn’t otherwise have done,” Lyons said. An example is sophisticated equipment at DMEI that detects electrical activity in the retina after it’s exposed to a flash of light, and provides scientists with a functional measurement of how well the retina is working in terms of processing light information.

Noting that the sharing of equipment, techniques and skills “cuts both ways” between collaborators, Lyons cited his own practice of providing isolated human lipoproteins to DMEI researchers for use in their studies of diabetic retinopathy.

Lyons said the level of collaboration is unusually high on this campus, an observation echoed by DMEI investigator Elliott, who said he immediately noticed the collegiality among investigators from various academic departments and institutes when he came from Kansas for his postdoctoral vision studies into the causes of eye disease. Of significant benefit to Elliott’s work has been the collaboration with Towner at OMRF and Towner’s special MRI.

Access to high-tech equipment is also important to DMEI researcher James McGinnis, Ph.D., who has discovered that when cerium oxide nanoparticles are placed in the eye, they destroy toxic molecules that cause vision loss when overproduced. At only 3 to 5 nanometers in diameter, McGinnis’ particles are about 1/20,000th the width of a human hair. Collaborator David Sherry, Ph.D., a researcher in OU’s Department of Cell Biology, uses an ion transmission electron microscope on the Norman campus to discover where in the eye these tiny particles park themselves.

McGinnis also collaborated closer to home with DMEI ophthalmologist P. Lloyd Hildebrand, M.D. in establishing a company called Nantiox at the Presbyterian Health Foundation Research Park. Nantiox will market the broad-spectrum antioxidant McGinnis has discovered if clinical trials prove its effectiveness in humans. Such human clinical applications represent our ultimate goal.
“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

—Helen Keller
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