focus on patient care:

How DMEI Is Fulfilling Its Mission During a Global Pandemic
Oklahoma Health Center
DMEI Acers and Parke Pavilions
608 Stanton L. Young Blvd. • Oklahoma City, OK 73104

Comprehensive Ophthalmology/Cataract and Ophthalmic Surgery/Premium Cataract Surgery
(405) 271-1090 • (800) 787-9012
John M. Bell, MD*
Cynthia A. Bradford, MD*
Brian K. Firestone, MD*
Layne E. Goetzinger, MD*
David W. Jackson, MD*
Carolyn E. Kloek, MD*
Andrew T. Melson, MD*
Deana S. Watts, MD

Ocular Oncology/Ophthalmic Pathology
(405) 271-7825 • (800) 787-9012
Brian K. Firestone, MD*

Ocular Prosthetics
(405) 271-3391 • (800) 787-9012
Nancy A. Lambert, BCO

Ophthalmic Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery
(405) 271-1096 • (800) 787-9018
Nathan W. Blessing, MD
Annie Moreau, MD, FACS
Jeremy F. Tan, MD

Optical Services
(405) 271-6174 • (800) 787-9012

Contact Lenses
(405) 271-6084 • (800) 787-9012
Rachel M. Caywood, OD, FAAO
Scott Samples, NCLE-AC, CPOT

Cornea (Surgical) and External Disease/Corneal Cross-Linking
(405) 271-1095 • (800) 787-9017
Kamran M. Riaz, MD*
Rhea L. Siatkowski, MD*

Cornea (Medical) and External Disease
(405) 271-1095 • (800) 787-9017
Thomas C. Wolf, MD

Glaucoma
(405) 271-1093 • (800) 787-9015
Andrew K. Bailey, MD*
Ben J. Harvey, MD*
Mahmoud A. Khaimi, MD*
Gregory L. Skuta, MD

LASIK and Refractive Surgery
(405) 271-2500 • (877) 406-4193
David W. Jackson, MD*
Kamran M. Riaz, MD*

(580) 250-5855
Jean R. Hausheer, MD, FACS*

Low Vision Rehabilitation
(405) 271-1793 • (800) 787-9012
Rebecca K. Morgan, MD

Neuro-Ophthalmology/Adult Strabismus
(405) 271-1091 • (800) 787-9013
Andrew T. Melson, MD*
James C. O’Brien, MD
Anil D. Patel, MD, FRCS, FACS

(405) 271-1094 • (800) 787-9016
R. Michael Siatkowski, MD

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

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

Uveitis
(405) 271-1095 • (800) 787-9017
Sam S. Dahr, MD
Jila Noori, MD
Thomas C. Wolf, MD

* DMEI Ophthalmologist Performing Cataract Surgery in Adults
** DMEI Ophthalmologist Performing Cataract Surgery in Children

Dean McGee Eye Institute
Satellite Locations

NORTHWEST OKC
3500 N.W. 56th, #101, Oklahoma City, OK 73112
(405) 271-9500

Comprehensive Ophthalmology/Cataract and Ophthalmic Surgery/Premium Cataract Surgery/Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) Dry Eye Treatment
Ralph B. Hester III, MD*

Ophthalmic Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery
Annie Moreau, MD, FACS

Optometry
Tasha J. Schellenberg, OD

Optical Services
(405) 271-9506

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

Comprehensive Ophthalmology/Cataract and Ophthalmic Surgery
John M. Bell, MD*

Glaucoma/Comprehensive Ophthalmology/Ophthalmic Surgery
Andrew K. Bailey, MD*

Neuro-Ophthalmology/Comprehensive Ophthalmology
Anil D. Patel, MD, FRCS, FACS

Optical Services
Jeremy F. Tan, MD

Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus
Maria E. Lim, MD**

Optical Services
(405) 271-0909

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

Comprehensive Ophthalmology/Cataract and Ophthalmic Surgery/Premium Cataract Surgery
Ann Acers-Warn, MD, MBA*
Jeann R. Hausheer, MD, FACS*

Ophthalmic Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery
Nathan W. Blessing, MD

Optometry
Angela M. Plant, OD, FAAO
Jessica L. Lucas, OD, FAAO

Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus
Maria E. Lim, MD**

Optical Services
(580) 585-5425

McGee Eye Surgery Center (MESC)
Harold Hamm Diabetes Center
1000 N. Lincoln Blvd., Suite 150
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
(405) 271-3363
Medical Director: Robert J. Christensen, MD
IN THIS ISSUE

invisions

2 president’s view

4 news

- Dr. Annie Moreau Receives 2020 Stanton L. Young Master Teacher Award
- 16 DMEI Physicians Listed on Castle Connolly Top Doctors List
- DMEI "Best of the 405" Winner
- Two Appointed to DMEI/OU Clinical Faculty
- Dr. Annie Moreau Succeeds Dr. Reagan Bradford as Medical Staff Service Chief for Ophthalmology

8 faculty & staff

- Dr. R. Michael Siatkowski Is Oklahoma Academy Distinguished Service Awardee
- OKC Thunder Enters Playoffs
- Marissa R. Hundley Receives Employee of the Month Recognition
- Faculty & Staff Awards and Activities
- Dr. Jean R. Hausheer Receives 2020 Ed Calhoon, MD Leadership in Medicine Award
- Scott Samples Earns New Certification

15 philanthropy update

- E.L. & Thelma Gaylord Foundation Awards $1 Million to Create Thelma Gaylord Endowed Chair in Ophthalmology
- Bradley K. Farris, MD Global Eye Care Program Impacts Eswatini
- Mary K. Chapman Foundation & Oklahoma Center for Adult Stem Cell Research Help DMEI Enhance Cellular Immunology Research
- Bank of Oklahoma Giving Campaign Check Presentation
- DMEI Crisis Response Fund Needs Your Help
- 2019 Annual Donors
- 2019 Aces Society
- Make 2020 Your Year to Give

28 education

- Victoria A. Bugg, MD Named New Chief Resident
- Virtual Grand Rounds
- DMEI Distinguished Visiting Lecturers
- U.S. News & World Report and Doximity 2020-2021 Surveys
- OU Department of Ophthalmology Graduates of 2020
- OU Department of Ophthalmology Incoming 2020 Residents & Fellows
- Dr. R. Michael Siatkowski to Receive 2020 Straatsma Award for Excellence in Resident Education
- Resident/Alumni Day Awards
- DMEI Well Represented at 2020 AUPO Annual Meeting
- Dr. John M. Belz Serves as Mentor
- Dr. Austin L. LaGrow Receives 2020 Dean McGee Award in Ophthalmology
- Leadership Transitions for Medical Student Education

research (cont.)

- Robert E. Anderson, MD, PhD, Renowned Vision Scientist, Retires
- Research Faculty—Dept. of Ophthalmology

feature focus

38 How DMEI Is Fulfilling Its Mission During a Global Pandemic

last look

44 Life is so much brighter...

The Preferred Eye Care Provider of the OKC Thunder
All of these and many more adjectives have been used to describe the times in which we live, reminded constantly of COVID-19 and its enormous impact on the daily lives of the world’s citizens. However, one of my colleagues in an email message on March 29 used the word “unimaginable,” which may best capture the essence of our daily existence. If someone had told any of us in October 2019 what we would be experiencing six months later in April 2020, I am certain that the universal response would have been “That just can’t possibly be.”

I boarded my last airplane flights from New York City to Dallas-Fort Worth and then home to Oklahoma City on the evening of March 3 after a grant review meeting, having enjoyed a Broadway play two nights before. It was unimaginable that the vibrant New York City that I had just experienced would soon be totally consumed with COVID-19 and that Broadway would close its doors on March 12. It was also unimaginable that on March 11 with the now infamous OKC Thunder-Utah Jazz NBA game, events in Oklahoma City would signal the shutdown of virtually all sports activities.

As shared in the DMEI InVision feature story on pages 38-43, the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI), along with all of Oklahoma City’s health systems, was engaged in late March and most of April with the largest prolonged reduction in clinical and surgical activity we have ever witnessed. Of all of the specialties in medicine, ophthalmology on a national level was the most impacted. According to Eyewire and Strata Decision Technology, “ophthalmology lost 81% of patient volume year-over-year when comparing 2-week volumes in March and April 2020 versus the same period in 2019. During the same period, it also found a 97% reduction in cataract surgery volume—the largest reduction of any specialty in medicine.
surgical procedure...” Another survey by The Commonwealth Fund revealed a 79% reduction in ophthalmology patient visits. These numbers are particularly painful knowing that the Eye Institute and Department of Ophthalmology were on course for a record year with regard to our services to patients.

Fortunately, even with multiple precautions in place as outlined in the feature story, clinical and surgical volumes increased considerably in May. By early to mid-June, DMEI’s volumes had returned to our busy baseline, an experience mirrored by other health care providers in the Oklahoma City metropolitan area. At the time of my writing these words in mid-July, our numbers remained strong. However, the marked rises in COVID-19-positive patients and hospitalizations in Oklahoma now compared to late May and early June serve as reminders of the ferocity of this viral menace and the uncertainties that currently exist and will continue for an unknown period of time as we labor to “bend the curve.”

Through our shared challenges, I have remained incredibly proud of the heroic and unwavering commitment by our clinicians, surgeons, scientists, residents, fellows, and staff...

This edition of DMEI InVision clearly demonstrates this organization’s continuing devotion to its sense of purpose, steadfast resolve, and the fundamental principles that drive all that we do, even in the midst of a once-in-a-century (we hope) pandemic.

While serving our patients and their ophthalmic and medical needs, our efforts to also to protect them as well as ourselves, our families, and our communities will not abate. I am confident that we will persevere.

Through our shared challenges, I have remained incredibly proud of the heroic and unwavering commitment by our clinicians, surgeons, scientists, residents, fellows, and staff to our patients as well as our educational and research missions. The depth of that commitment is further reflected in the major awards received by members of our faculty over the past several months (see pages 4-5, 8-9, 14, 25, and 32-33).

Gregory L. Skuta, MD
President and Chief Executive Officer
Dean McGee Eye Institute
Edward L. Gaylord Professor and Chair
Regents’ Professor
Department of Ophthalmology
University of Oklahoma College of Medicine
Annie Moreau, MD, FACS Receives 2020 Stanton L. Young Master Teacher Award

Annie Moreau, MD, FACS
Associate Professor

ANNIE MOREAU, MD, FACS, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA (OU) DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY and a revered and beloved Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI) colleague, is the recipient of the 2020 Stanton L. Young Master Teacher Award! This is the most prestigious teaching award in the OU College of Medicine, and Dr. Moreau is the 37th faculty member and first ophthalmologist to receive this award.

The nomination process is led by the presidents of the junior and senior medical school classes, Medical Student Council, and Oklahoma chapter of the Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA) Honor Medical Society. The recipient must be “a truly inspiring teacher, one who goes beyond excellence in conveying knowledge, touching lives, and changing attitudes.”

Originally from Montreal and educated in Quebec, Canada, Dr. Moreau was first an optometrist in Quebec, then for the US Indian Health Service in Ada, Oklahoma, and then at the Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center in Oklahoma City. In 2006, she graduated from the OU College of Medicine, where she was inducted into AOA and received the Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Award. Dr. Moreau then completed a year of general surgery before entering an ophthalmology residency at DMEI/OU, where she was the co-recipient of the Acers Resident Honor Award in 2009 and subsequently completed a fellowship in ophthalmic plastic and reconstructive surgery/neuro-ophthalmology. After one year on the faculty at Boston University and as an attending ophthalmologist in the Boston VA Health System, Dr. Moreau returned to DMEI/OU in 2012 as an assistant professor of ophthalmology and rose to the rank of associate professor in 2017.

In addition to being a superb surgeon (she was inducted into the American Society of Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery in 2019), Dr. Moreau is an extraordinary educator for whom the Annie Moreau, MD Fellow Teaching Award was established in 2011 to honor her as the inaugural recipient and later recognize DMEI fellows for excellence in resident education. Since joining the DMEI/OU faculty in 2012, she has received the Excellence in Attending at VA Award (2014); M. Dewayne Andrews, MD Excellence in Teaching Awards in Graduate Medical Education (2014) and in Preclinical Education (2018) from the Academy
of Teaching Scholars; E.L. and Thelma Gaylord Faculty Honor Award (2015); and Regents’ Award for Superior Teaching (2018, the second highest teaching award at the OU Health Sciences Center - OUHSC).

The highlights of Dr. Moreau’s numerous leadership roles at DMEI/OU include service on the DMEI Executive Committee (2015-2019), as a member of the OUHSC Faculty Senate (2015-2021), as chair of the Medical Student Promotion Committee (2018-present), as Councilor for the OU College of Medicine’s AOA chapter (2019-present), as a member of the University Council on Faculty Awards and Honors (2019-present), and as a member of the Admissions Board for the OU College of Medicine (2019-present). She has conducted multiple medical mission trips with a focus on Haiti; has been recognized among Best Doctors in America and Castle Connolly Top Doctors; and is an accomplished concert pianist who has helped benefit such causes as Prevent Blindness Oklahoma and residency education.

It seems very appropriate that an ophthalmologist should receive the Stanton L. Young Master Teacher Award in the year 2020! Congratulations, Dr. Moreau! Toutes nos felicitations!

In the June 2020 edition of Oklahoma Magazine featuring Castle Connolly Top Doctors, the complete list included 16 ophthalmologists from the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI)! Approximately two-thirds (22) of DMEI’s ophthalmologists (and all of those recruited before 2017) are listed among Castle Connolly Top Doctors, Best Doctors in America, or by both.

Ann Acers-Warn, MD, MBA
John M. Bell, MD
Cynthia A. Bradford, MD
Reagan H. Bradford Jr., MD
Layne E. Goetzinger, MD
Jean R. Hausheer, MD, FACS
David W. Jackson, MD
Mahmoud A. Khaimi, MD
Annie Moreau, MD, FACS
Rebecca K. Morgan, MD
Anil D. Patel, MD, FRCS, FACS
R. Michael Siatkowski, MD
Rhea L. Siatkowski, MD
Gregory L. Skuta, MD
Deana S. Watts, MD
Tammy L. Yanovitch, MD, MHSc

IN JANUARY, the 405 Magazine staff created 109 different award categories in its 2020 “Best of the 405” competition. With nearly 180,000 votes tallied, the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI) was honored in May in two categories: “Best Optometrist” and “Best Eyewear” of the 405! All of us at DMEI are grateful for this recognition of DMEI excellence!
Dr. Noori completed her uveitis and medical retina fellowships at the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute/University of Miami (Florida). Although her clinical focus will be on adult and pediatric patients with anterior and posterior uveitis (inflammatory eye disease), Dr. Noori also will provide care for macular and retinal vascular disease.

A native of Iran, Dr. Noori earned her medical degree and completed her ophthalmology residency and a vitreoretinal fellowship at the Tehran (Iran) University of Medical Sciences. She practiced in Iran as a comprehensive ophthalmologist between her residency and fellowship. After fellowship, she served for two years on the retina faculty at Farabi Eye Hospital at the Tehran University of Medical Sciences. From 2014 to 2017, she was a retina research fellow at the University of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Noori’s three siblings are physicians in either practice or training in New York City, Los Angeles, and Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

We welcome Drs. Caywood and Noori to the Dean McGee Eye Institute and University of Oklahoma!
ON APRIL 1, ANNIE MOREAU, MD, FACS succeeded Reagan H. Bradford Jr., MD as Medical Staff Service Chief for Ophthalmology at the University of Oklahoma (OU) Medical Center. Dr. Moreau is an ophthalmic plastic and reconstructive surgeon at the Dean McGee Eye Institute whose background and training are highlighted on pages 4-5. She had previously been Medical Staff Service Vice Chief for Ophthalmology.

Dr. Bradford had served in this role since 1998 and led the OU Medical Center’s Ophthalmology Service well during an eventful period spanning more than 20 years. An accomplished vitreoretinal surgeon, Dr. Bradford is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of OU-Norman and received his medical degree from the OU College of Medicine. After an internship at Baptist Medical Center in Oklahoma City, he completed his residency at DMEI followed by a vitreoretinal surgery fellowship at the esteemed Bascom Palmer Eye Institute in Miami.

Dr. Bradford joined the DMEI retina faculty in 1985 and has been a clinical professor since 2004. He also served as an advisory member on the DMEI Board of Directors from 1998 to 2018. Dr. Bradford has participated in numerous clinical trials and has many published articles. He is a past recipient of the Edward and Thelma Gaylord Faculty Honor Award and was a Guest of Honor at the American Academy of Ophthalmology Annual Meeting in 2017.

We thank Dr. Bradford for his more than 20 years of service in this key leadership position and are grateful to Dr. Moreau for assuming these important responsibilities!
R. Michael Siatkowski, MD, is the David W. Parke II, MD Professor of Ophthalmology, David Ross Boyd Professor, Vice Chair for Academic Affairs, and Residency Program Director at the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI)/University of Oklahoma (OU) Department of Ophthalmology. He held an OU Presidential Professorship from 2008 to 2012.

A native of Pennsylvania, Dr. Siatkowski completed his undergraduate and medical degrees, internship, and ophthalmology residency in his home state. He has served on the DMEI/OU faculty since 1999 and was previously on the faculty of the University of Miami’s Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, where he completed fellowship training in neuro-ophthalmology and pediatric ophthalmology/strabismus. He has over 180 publications and book chapters and has lectured widely throughout the world.

“Mike’s dedication to protecting vision in our state’s pediatric population is unparalleled,” said Dr. Ben J. Harvey, DMEI glaucoma specialist, OAO president, and a member of Oklahoma Magazine’s “40 Under 40” Class of 2020 in April. “His training and accolades are peerless;

As this issue of DMEI InVision goes to press, the Oklahoma City Thunder is headed into the first round of the National Basketball Association playoffs. We are excited for our city and enthusiastically say, “Thunder Up!”
however, Mike’s dedication to preserving vision surpasses these achievements and truly serves as a beacon of light for our state and our profession. In addition to Dr. Siatkowski’s many roles, he also serves on Oklahoma's Infant and Children’s Health Advisory Council, an advisory board to the Oklahoma State Department of Health and State Board of Health, providing recommendations regarding health care for infants and children. It is clear by his actions that to serve others is ingrained in his beliefs, and the Oklahoma Academy of Ophthalmology is honored to have R. Michael Siatkowski, MD receive the 2020 Distinguished Service Award.”

His wife Rhea L. Siatkowski, MD is a cornea and anterior segment surgeon at DMEI. They have three children, Abigail, Elizabeth, and Joshua. Dr. Siatkowski is also an experienced classical pianist and has performed in multiple venues, including charitable events.

Past Recipients:
2019 - John M. Bell, MD*
2018 - Ann Acers-Warn, MD, MBA*
2017 - Amalia M. Miranda, MD
2016 – James B. Wise, MD
2015 – Cynthia A. Bradford, MD*
2014 – James L. Dunagin Jr., MD
2013 – W. Stanley Muenzler, MD
2012 – John A. Robinson, MD
2011 – Sterling S. Baker, MD
2010 – Roland A. Walters, MD
2009 – Lee E. Schoeffler, MD
*current DMEI/OU faculty member

IN MAY, THE RESIDENT COUNCIL COMMITTEE at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (OUHSC) recognized Marissa R. Hundley, patient appointment coordinator at the Dean McGee Eye Institute, as its Employee of the Month for her outstanding service to the OU ophthalmology residents. Hundley lives in Oklahoma City, is a 2019 graduate of the University of Central Oklahoma with a bachelor’s degree in organizational leadership, and has worked at the Eye Institute since October 2018.

Due to current events and the need for social distancing, Hundley will receive her recognition at a future Resident Council Committee meeting. Congratulations, Marissa!


CYNTHIA A. BRADFORD, MD, serves on the Promotion and Tenure Committee for the University of Oklahoma (OU) College of Medicine. Effective June 30, 2020, she completed more than 25 years of service overseeing medical student education activities for the OU Department of Ophthalmology and Dean McGee Eye Institute (see page 37).

MICHELLE C. CALLEGAN, PhD, is a member of the Promotion and Tenure Committee of the OU College of Medicine.

SAM. S. DAHR, MD, will receive an American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) Achievement Award in 2020 for his service to the Academy.

JEAN R. HAUSHEER, MD, FACS, will receive a Secretariat Award from the AAO in 2020 for her contributions to the Academy’s Clinical Education Secretariat. In April 2020, she received the Ed Calhoon, MD Leadership in Medicine Award from the Oklahoma State Medical Association (see page 14).


ANNIE MOREAU, MD, FACS, received the 2020 Stanton L. Young Master Teacher Award, Apr. 2020 (see pages 4-5); serves as the chair of the Student Promotions Committee for the OU College of Medicine; and was a guest speaker at the North American Skull Base Society Annual Meeting in San Antonio, TX, where she presented: “Management of Ophthalmic Complications Following Cavernous Sinus Meningioma Surgery,” Feb. 2020.

VINAY A. SHAH, MD, was interviewed for an AAO EyeNet magazine article, “Practice Management Apps for Ophthalmology: How to Get Started,” Apr. 2020.


GREGORY L. SKUTA, MD, co-presented “Development and Fundraising” at the AUPO Annual Meeting in Rancho Mirage, CA, Jan. 2020 (see pages 34–35). On August 29–30, 2020, he will serve as a panel leader for administration of the virtual oral examination for the American Board of Ophthalmology (ABO). (He is an emeritus director of the ABO). Dr. Skuta will deliver the Wolfe Foundation Lecture at the Iowa Eye Annual Meeting in 2021.

MISTIE D. WINTERS, in July became a certified ophthalmic assistant (COA).
Jean R. Hausheer, MD, FACS
Clinical Professor

IN APRIL, JEAN R. HAUSHEER, MD, FACS, clinical professor at the Dean McGee Eye Institute (Lawton), received the Oklahoma State Medical Association’s (OSMA’s) Ed Calhoon, MD Leadership in Medicine Award for 2020. This award was established by the OSMA Board of Trustees in 2001 and is presented to an OSMA member physician in recognition of his or her distinguished leadership and service to organized medicine at the county, state, or national level.

Dr. Hausheer served as OSMA president in 2018-2019 and as president of the Oklahoma Academy of Ophthalmology from 2014-2017. Currently, she is vice president of the Christian Ophthalmology Society and a member of the Oklahoma Health Care Authority Board, which administers the state’s Medicaid program. She was among The Journal Record’s “50 Making a Difference” in 2019.

Scott Samples, NCLE-AC, CPOT

SCOTT SAMPLES, NCLE-AC, CPOT earned the National Contact Lens Examiners Advanced Certification (NCLE-AC) in March. Samples provides contact lens services at the Dean McGee Eye Institute and moved here from Columbus, Georgia in 2019.

This Advanced Certification designation, NCLE-AC, is earned only after a practitioner has attained several years of experience, completes a prescribed curriculum of advanced education, and achieves a passing score on the rigorous examinations. Professionals with advanced certification credentials are equipped to work in a variety of practice settings, such as: ophthalmology practices, university hospitals, commercial offices, HMO/managed care offices, optometric offices, large clinics, and as independent opticians or optical product manufacturers.
E.L. and Thelma Gaylord Foundation Awards $1 Million to Create Thelma Gaylord Endowed Chair in Ophthalmology at Dean McGee Eye Institute

THE E.L. AND THELMA GAYLORD FOUNDATION CONTINUED ITS LONGSTANDING SUPPORT of the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI) and the DMEI Foundation with the announcement of a $1 million grant to fund the creation of the Thelma Gaylord Endowed Chair in Ophthalmology at DMEI.

“In recent years, with the help of generous donors such as the E.L. and Thelma Gaylord Foundation, DMEI has invested heavily in the recruitment of clinical, surgical, and scientific talent,” states Gregory L. Skuta, MD, DMEI’s president and chief executive officer (CEO). “The Institute desires to do all that it can to support the new talent it has recently recruited as well as the talent it has nurtured over the years. Within a high-profile setting like DMEI, endowed chairs are important tools for sustaining the academic efforts of top-quality faculty. Furthermore, endowed chairs help advance the quality of DMEI’s programs and demonstrate its commitment to its faculty and the academic mission. We are deeply grateful to the Gaylord Foundation for providing this strategic support that continues to propel the Institute forward.”

Dr. Skuta occupies the Edward L. Gaylord Endowed Chair in Ophthalmology, which is held in the University of Oklahoma (OU) Foundation and is awarded to the chairperson of the OU Department of Ophthalmology. Four other endowed chairs in ophthalmology are held in the OU Foundation.

During Dr. Skuta’s tenure as president/CEO/chair, four endowed positions have now been established within the DMEI Foundation to create a total of nine for the Institute/Department. “Our goal is for the Institute and Department to establish several more endowed positions to help support the incredible ophthalmologists and vision scientists who conduct their great work every day at the Dean McGee Eye Institute.”
THE BRADLEY K. FARRIS, MD GLOBAL EYE CARE PROGRAM is a program supported by the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI) to deliver excellence in eye care, education, and vision research to underserved regions of the world. Gifts from generous donors to the Farris Global Eye Care Program help offset costs of the medical trips to both Eswatini, Africa and the Sichuan Province of China. In February 2020, four ophthalmologists from DMEI [Drs. Nathan Blessing (and his wife Dr. Tracy Blessing, a restorative dentist), David Griffin, Brett Gudgel, and Andrew Melson (and his wife Danielle Melson, who is a physical therapist)], and one former DMEI ophthalmologist, Dr. Garett Frank, traveled along with Dr. Farris to Eswatini (formerly known as Swaziland) to provide training and eye care to the people of the region.

A note from David R. Griffin, MD (Residency Class of 2020)...

Visiting Eswatini was deeply impactful and will be an experience I never forget. The need for medical care was overwhelming, and the scope of pathology encountered was genuinely unbelievable. I’ve always had an interest in international outreach, and this trip has solidified my resolve to participate in lifelong service abroad. You (donors) helped make this dream a reality, and I am forever grateful for your kindness and philanthropy. The lives of our medical team and hundreds of patients have been touched by your (donors’) generosity.
A note from Brett M. Gudgel, MD (Immediate Past Chief Resident, Residency Class of 2020)...

On a clinical level, our team and I were able to provide high-level, hands-on clinical and surgical care. In clinic, we were able to use our team of subspecialists to provide care that is not typically available in Eswatini. Many patients had waited months to see our Dean McGee specialists, and thankfully we were able to provide the necessary care for many of these patients. In the operating room (or “theatre” as they say in Eswatini), our subspecialists were equally impactful. As a resident, I had the opportunity to learn and assist in a special kind of cataract surgery called Manual Small Incision Cataract Surgery (MSICS). This technique for cataract removal is low-cost, high-quality, and not regularly done in the United States. This was an experience I would not have received elsewhere in my residency training and will be invaluable as I pursue future international ophthalmology opportunities.
CONDITIONS SUCH AS BLINDNESS, CANCER, DIABETES, AND AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE are linked to the dysfunction of rare cell populations. The challenge is detecting these cells at the single-cell level. The current flow cytometers available on the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (OUHSC) campus only allow for identification of 9 to 12 different multicellular groups. However, a $100,000 grant from The Mary K. Chapman Foundation and a $146,650 grant from the Oklahoma Center for Adult Stem Cell Research (OCASCR—a program of the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust) will enable the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI) and University of Oklahoma (OU) Department of Ophthalmology to acquire an advanced multispectrum imaging flow cytometer. The balance of funds for acquisition and placement of this sophisticated device (approximately $45,000) will come from an unrestricted grant from Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB).

This equipment will allow researchers to identify up to 48 different single-cell populations and monitor the effectiveness of novel treatments at the cellular level. This will be the first such device on the OUHSC campus and will be the centerpiece of the Department of Ophthalmology’s Ocular Immunobiology Core Facility. In addition, it will be available to investigators from across the campus, thus helping keep OUHSC scientists at the forefront of research. Darren J. Lee, PhD, an assistant professor in the Department of Ophthalmology, prepared the successful OCASCR grant application.

“We are very thankful to The Mary K. Chapman Foundation, OCASCR, and RPB for providing the funds needed to acquire this advanced cellular imaging device,” says Gregory L. Skuta, MD, DMEI’s president and chief executive officer and Edward L. Gaylord professor and chair of the OU Department of Ophthalmology. “Such support is vital to scientific progress, and it will allow investigators at DMEI/OU to continue to undertake cutting-edge research to find new treatments for vision loss and blindness.”

If you are interested in supporting DMEI/OU’s vision research efforts, please donate online at www.dmei.org/donate-now or enclose a check in the reply envelope included in this magazine. Together we can give the gift of sight to future generations!
Nimeh Farhan (left), Bank of Oklahoma employee, and Jim Durbin (right), DMEI’s executive director of development, pose with a presentation check given on behalf of Bank of Oklahoma through its employee giving campaign called “Together We Give”.

LIKE ORGANIZATIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY, the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI) has been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. We experienced a severe decline in revenue as non-essential appointments and surgeries were postponed; however, as we increase elective clinical and surgical activity and continue to care for those whose vision is threatened, you can help.

Your donation to our Crisis Response Fund can help us continue to provide care for patients threatened with vision loss. Funds are needed to help acquire personal protective equipment, maintain needed staffing, and cover other basic operating expenses so that DMEI can continue to serve those who need us during this challenging time.

Please donate online today! Thank you! https://dmei.org/giving/
The following names reflect gifts received by the Dean McGee Eye Institute and/or Dean McGee Eye Institute Foundation from January 1 through December 31, 2019. They include gifts and pledges as well as payments on previous pledges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Range</th>
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<td>$250,000 - $499,999</td>
<td>Anonymous&lt;br&gt;The Chickasaw Nation&lt;br&gt;Mr. and Mrs. J. Larry Nichols&lt;br&gt;Ms. David and Julie Parke&lt;br&gt;Dr. and Mrs. Richard H. Parry&lt;br&gt;Dr. and Mrs. Walter J. Stark Jr.</td>
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<td>Jack Jacobs&lt;br&gt;The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation, Inc.&lt;br&gt;Mr. and Mrs. David E. Rainbolt&lt;br&gt;Mr. and Mrs. Lee W. Young&lt;br&gt;Mr. and Mrs. James R. Tolbert III&lt;br&gt;Paul S. Tlucek, MD&lt;br&gt;Dr. Gregory L. and Anne M. Skuta&lt;br&gt;Nancy and George Records&lt;br&gt;G. Jeffrey Records Jr.&lt;br&gt;Drs. R. Michael and Kay and John Shenk&lt;br&gt;Drs. R. Michael and Kay and John Shenk&lt;br&gt;Allyson Doiron Schmitt, MD&lt;br&gt;Steven R. Sarkisian Jr., MD&lt;br&gt;Jaime Rodriguez&lt;br&gt;Mr. and Mrs. Gerald L. Gamble</td>
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<td>American Fidelity Group&lt;br&gt;Robert E. Anderson, MD, PhD&lt;br&gt;Jimmie Lynn &amp; Blythe Austin Foundation&lt;br&gt;Stephen R. Fransen, MD&lt;br&gt;Chick and Yvonne Hilgenberg Charitable Trust&lt;br&gt;Kirschner Grant Fund&lt;br&gt;Koda Operating, LLC&lt;br&gt;Patricia McGee Maino&lt;br&gt;Rebecca K. Morgan, MD&lt;br&gt;NFG Foundation, Inc.&lt;br&gt;Mr. and Mrs. James R. Tolbert III&lt;br&gt;Barbara and Stanton L. Young&lt;br&gt;Mr. and Mrs. Lee W. Young&lt;br&gt;Maxine and Jack Zarrow Family Foundation&lt;br&gt;Mr. and Mrs. G. Rainey Williams Jr.</td>
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<td>Ann Acres-Warn, MD, MBA&lt;br&gt;Richard Alvarez, MBA&lt;br&gt;Gov. Bill Anoatubby&lt;br&gt;Andrew K. Bailey, MD&lt;br&gt;Lea D. Bennett, PhD&lt;br&gt;Joe Besharse, PhD&lt;br&gt;Sharon and John R. Bozalis, MD&lt;br&gt;Robert H. Bullington Jr., MD&lt;br&gt;Dr. and Mrs. Daniel J.J. Carr&lt;br&gt;Michael A. Cawley&lt;br&gt;R. Jay Christensen, MD&lt;br&gt;William S. Clifford, MD, MBA&lt;br&gt;Cynthia A. and Tad Davis&lt;br&gt;Mrs. W.D. Eggers&lt;br&gt;Eugene Eng, MD&lt;br&gt;Jin and Wanda Feerer&lt;br&gt;Ernest E. Fellers Trust&lt;br&gt;Marti and Joseph J. Ferretti, PhD&lt;br&gt;Gary G. Geist&lt;br&gt;Jeffrey W. Grisham, MD&lt;br&gt;Scott M. Guess, MD&lt;br&gt;Eric S. Guglielmo, MD&lt;br&gt;Jean R. Hausheer, MD, FACS&lt;br&gt;Kimberly A. Howard&lt;br&gt;Inasmuch Foundation&lt;br&gt;Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Ingle&lt;br&gt;David W. Jackson, MD&lt;br&gt;Kevin A. Kerr, MD&lt;br&gt;Linda Lantrip, DO&lt;br&gt;Sun Young Lee, MD, PhD&lt;br&gt;Herb Leonard&lt;br&gt;Laura S. Miles, MD&lt;br&gt;Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Milsten&lt;br&gt;Amalia M. Miranda, MD&lt;br&gt;Danette Mondalek&lt;br&gt;Annie Moreau, MD, FACS&lt;br&gt;Scott A. Murphy, MD&lt;br&gt;Annie Moreau, MD, FACS&lt;br&gt;Scott A. Murphy, MD&lt;br&gt;Annie Moreau, MD, FACS&lt;br&gt;Scott A. Murphy, MD&lt;br&gt;Shelley Lambert&lt;br&gt;Mr. and Mrs. Don McCombs&lt;br&gt;Steven N. Montgomery, MD&lt;br&gt;John A. Robinson, MD&lt;br&gt;Jaime Rodriguez&lt;br&gt;Steven R. Sarkisian Jr., MD&lt;br&gt;Allyson Doiron Schmitt, MD&lt;br&gt;Kay and John Shenk&lt;br&gt;Dr. and Mrs. Ray Potts&lt;br&gt;Mr. and Mrs. Dale Proctor&lt;br&gt;Joseph A. Reichert, OD&lt;br&gt;Judy W. Renick&lt;br&gt;Kamran M. Riaz, MD&lt;br&gt;Mark E. Robinson, MD, MPH&lt;br&gt;James F. Ronk, MD&lt;br&gt;Mr. and Mrs. Don McCombs&lt;br&gt;Steven N. Montgomery, MD&lt;br&gt;John A. Robinson, MD&lt;br&gt;Jaime Rodriguez&lt;br&gt;Steven R. Sarkisian Jr., MD&lt;br&gt;Allyson Doiron Schmitt, MD&lt;br&gt;Kay and John Shenk&lt;br&gt;Drs. R. Michael and Rhea Siatkowski&lt;br&gt;The Honorable and Mrs. Ralph G. Thompson&lt;br&gt;Lana Tolaymat, PhD and&lt;br&gt;Sam S. Dahr, MD&lt;br&gt;Jonathan Walgama, MD&lt;br&gt;Dr. and Mrs. C.P. Wilkinson&lt;br&gt;Mr. and Mrs. Tom Wilkinson&lt;br&gt;Mark Wyckoff&lt;br&gt;Betty Jean and Robert P. Yuyuenyongwatana, MD</td>
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2019 Acers Society
HONORING DR. THOMAS E. ACERS, BENEFITING OPHTALMOLOGY RESIDENT & FELLOW EDUCATION

LIFETIME MEMBERS
Jackie Acers*
Ann Acers-Warn, MD, MBA
Evan J. Allan, MD
Francis “Ted” Applegate, MD
Andrew K. Bailey, MD
Sterling S. Baker, MD
Ray M. Balyeat, MD
Donald E. Beahm, MD
David A. Bernitsky, MD
Charles P. Bogie III, MD, PhD
Matthew D. Bown
D. Randolph Brown Jr., MD
Robert H. Bullington Jr., MD
Adam A. Carver, MD
William S. Clifford, MD, MBA
Russell D. Crain, MD
Sam S. Dahr, MD
James L. Dunagan Jr., MD
Bradley K. Farris, MD
William J. Faulkner, MD
Stephen R. Fransen, MD
Luther L. Fry, MD
John M. Garber, OD
Garyl G. Geist, MAcc
Robert D. Gourley, MD
Jeffrey W. Grisham, MD
Scott M. Guess, MD
Ben J. Harvey, MD
Jean R. Haasheer, MD, FACS
Joshua F. Hendrix, MD
John J. Herlihy, MD*
F. Lloyd Hildebrand, MD, FACS
Kimberly A. Howard
Rick D. Jernihagen, MD
David W. Jackson, MD
Alison Acers Jetton
Kevin A. Kerr, MD
Mahmoud A. Khaimi, MD
Robert T. Lee, MD
James H. Little, MD
Amalia M. Miranda, MD
Steven N. Montgomery, MD
Annie Moreau, MD, FACS
Robert M. Muenzler, MD*
Jacquelyn A. Jetton O’Banion, MD
David W. Parke II, MD
Anil D. Patel, MD, FRCSC, FACS
Helga Fuenhausen Pizio, MD
John A. Robinson, MD
Nelson R. Sabates, MD
Siv Brit Saetre, MD
Steven R. Sarkisian Jr., MD
Lee E. Schoeffler, MD
David L. Schwartz, MD
Mark H. Scott, MD
Gregory L. Skuta, MD
Michael L. Soper, MD
Donald U. Stone, MD
Scot A. Sullivan, MD
Paul S. Tluczek, MD
Matthew P. Traynor, MD
Roland A. Walters, MD
Deana S. Watts, MD
G. Rainey Williams Jr.
James B. Wise, MD
Tammy L. Yanovitch, MD, MHIsc
David E. Zuech, MD

ANNUAL MEMBERS
Lee S. Anderson, MD
Cynthia A. Bradford, MD
Reagan H. Bradford Jr., MD
Daniel R. Brooks, MD
Denise R. Chamblee, MD
Joshua R. Fullmer, MD
Ronald M. Kingsley, MD
Ensa K. Pillow, MD
Ronald J. Pinkenburg, MD
Andrew L. Rodenburg, MD
Allyson Duiton Schmitt, MD
Jonathan P. Walgama, MD
Kurt D. Weir, MD
Thomas C. Wolf, MD

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

Chair: William S. Clifford, MD, MBA, Garden City, Kansas
Committee Members: Ann Acers-Warn, MD, MBA, Lawton, Oklahoma
                       Donald E. Beahm, MD, Great Bend, Kansas
                       P. Lloyd Hildebrand, MD, FACS, Las Vegas, Nevada
                       James H. Little, MD, Norman, Oklahoma
                       Annie Moreau, MD, FACS, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
                       Roland A. Walters, MD, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Ex-Officio: R. Michael Siatkowski, MD, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

*Deceased
THE CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF, AND ECONOMIC SECURITY (CARES) ACT contains enhanced charitable giving incentives, for both itemizers and non-itemizers alike, that can benefit you and the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI).

In particular, the CARES Act provides the following incentives:

> **Cash contributions made in the year 2020 are fully deductible up to 100% of adjusted gross income for those who itemize their deductions.** This replaces the typical 60% limit and allows you to contribute more while reducing your tax liability. Gifts must be made to an eligible non-profit organization like the DMEI Foundation.

> **There is a temporary universal charitable deduction of up to $300 for cash gifts made in 2020 by those who do not itemize their deductions.** If you do not itemize deductions on your tax return, this is an opportunity typically not available to you to reduce your taxable income while supporting a charity of your choice such as the DMEI Foundation.

> **Corporations may deduct up to 25% of taxable income for charitable gifts made in 2020.** Typically, the cap on corporate deductions is 10%, so if you own a business, you can reduce your taxable income to a greater degree and support the DMEI Foundation.

If you are in a position to contribute to the DMEI Foundation in support of the missions of the Eye Institute, 2020 may be an ideal year to do so. Gifts can be made online at [www.dmei.org/donate-now](http://www.dmei.org/donate-now) or by check in the reply envelope provided in this magazine.

We thank you for your consideration.
Martin-Paul Agbaga, PhD
Named to ISSFAL Board of Directors

MARTIN-PAUL AGBAGA, PHD HAS BEEN NAMED to the Board of Directors of the International Society for the Study of Fatty Acids and Lipids (ISSFAL) and will serve a four-year term. ISSFAL is the leading organization in the world devoted to the study of fatty acids and their effects on human health and disease.

Dr. Agbaga is an assistant professor of cell biology and ophthalmology whose laboratory is located in the Dean McGee Eye Institute. He was nominated for the ISSFAL Board by Nicolas G. Bazan, MD, PhD (LSU Health-New Orleans School of Medicine), Michael A. Crawford, PhD, FSB, FRCPATH (Imperial College London), and Robert E. Anderson, MD, PhD (Dean McGee Eye Institute/OU Department of Ophthalmology).

RESEARCH RANKING NEWS

IN 2019, THE DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (OUHSC) was ranked among the nation’s top 20 (#19) in National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding with $6.4 million in NIH research grants. It was in the top 10 among public universities. With respect to its $6.0 million in cumulative funding from Research to Prevent Blindness, the Department was ranked 14th in the country and eighth among public universities.
Dr. Rajala Receives Amalia M. Miranda, MD Special Recognition Award

IN JUNE, IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT RAJU V.S. RAJALA, PHD was the recipient of the second annual Amalia M. Miranda, MD Special Recognition Award. Dr. Rajala’s current titles at the University of Oklahoma (OU) are shared in the caption with his photograph.

This award is supported by a gift from Paul Silverstein, MD in honor of his wife Amalia M. Miranda, MD. Dr. Miranda is a highly respected Oklahoma City comprehensive ophthalmologist who is a past president of the Oklahoma Academy of Ophthalmology (OA0), a recent Oklahoma Councilor to the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO), an AAO Guest of Honor in 2017, and the recipient of the OAO Distinguished Service Award in 2017.

The Amalia M. Miranda, MD Special Recognition Award honors an individual associated with the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI) and OU Department of Ophthalmology who, like Dr. Miranda, received his/her undergraduate, graduate, and/or postgraduate education/training outside of the United States or Canada and who has made important contributions to patient care and/or vision research. Dr. Miranda is a native of Seville, Spain, and completed her undergraduate and medical degrees and ophthalmology residency at the University of Seville. She served on the DMEI medical staff from 1983 to 1993.

A native of India, Dr. Rajala received his master’s degree and PhD in biochemistry from India’s Andhra University, completed a postdoctoral fellowship in molecular biology at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada, and, in 2000, joined the laboratory of Dr. Robert E. “Gene” Anderson at the OU Health Sciences Center as an assistant professor of research. He was promoted to tenure-track assistant professor in 2003, associate professor in 2008, and professor in 2013, achieving tenure in 2010. Among his many scientific achievements, Dr. Rajala made the groundbreaking discovery that the insulin receptor was present in retinal photoreceptor membranes and could be activated by light, subsequently producing activation of a phosphoinositide signaling pathway known to be neuroprotective in other tissues.

The principal thrust of Dr. Rajala’s current research is to redefine the understanding of neurodegenerative diseases of the retina. His research is supported by two R01 grants from the National Institutes of Health/National Eye Institute, for which he serves as a permanent member of the Biology of the Visual System Study Section. He also holds an active grant from the BrightFocus Foundation.

As an esteemed leader in vision research, Dr. Rajala serves as associate editor of the Biomed Central UK Ophthalmology Journal and is on the editorial board for several other scientific journals. He is also a past recipient of a Career Development Award from Research to Prevent Blindness and has approximately 130 peer-reviewed publications and book chapters.
Robert E. Anderson, MD, PhD Retires
A Leader Among Leaders and the Best of the Best

In a message shared on June 30, Gregory L. Skuta, MD, DMEI’s president and chief executive officer and Edward L. Gaylord professor and chair of the OU Department of Ophthalmology, said, “Gene Anderson’s enormous contributions and achievements as one of the world’s leading vision scientists have been truly monumental at every conceivable level. Although he has been a transformational physician scientist and national and international leader in the field of biomedical and vision research, we have been most impressed by his warm personal touch, extraordinary skills as a teacher, and phenomenal and enduring record of personal and professional mentorship.”

Dr. Anderson has assembled more than $62 million of NIH grant funding since arriving at DMEI/OUHSC. Thanks to his own success, his ability to inspire others, and his broad reach...
and influence, he transformed a Department of Ophthalmology with no basic science research support from the NIH before his arrival to a nationally respected vision research program ranked among the top in the country in NIH support and cumulative funding from Research to Prevent Blindness. He also made vision research a major focus of this campus.

“Gene’s collection of life achievement awards is truly impressive,” Dr. Skuta continued. “However, the greatest elements of Gene’s legacy are the unmatched loyalty, love, and admiration toward him that we all have witnessed time and time again that further confirm the singularity of his seemingly infinite sphere of influence, which has only broadened his scientific impact.”

“At the Dedication Ceremony for what is now DMEI's David W. Parke II, MD Pavilion on September 30, 2011, the fact that Dr. Paul Sieving as the Director of the National Eye Institute could describe the Dean McGee Eye Institute as a ‘national treasure’ is quite simply the result of Gene’s talents and his longstanding and continuing commitment to promoting biomedical research. Gene too is a ‘national treasure,’ and we are all very proud to be among his colleagues and friends.”

“The magnitude of Dr. Robert Eugene Anderson’s achievements, integrity, sustained and exceptional enthusiasm for advancing vision science, and attributes as a role model for a multitude of young scientists is truly extraordinary,” Dr. Skuta concluded. “He is very deserving of all of the accolades bestowed upon him. Although current circumstances will require a delay in a large public gathering to honor Gene’s retirement, all of us at DMEI/OUHSC wish him, his wife Gloria, and their beautiful family the very, very best in the months and years ahead. In the meantime, we look forward to our continuing friendships and are certain that, even in retirement, Gene will continue to bring great honor to the Dean McGee Eye Institute and the University of Oklahoma.”

On display in the Dean McGee Eye Institute’s Inasmuch Foundation Atrium are (left to right) Dr. Robert Eugene Anderson’s 2011 Proctor Medal from the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology; the 2011 Llura Liggett Gund Award from the Foundation Fighting Blindness; and the 2020 OU College of Medicine Alumni Association’s Dean’s Award for Distinguished Medical Service. Photo Credit: Matt Skuta

RESEARCH FACULTY—DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

Martin-Paul Agbaga, PhD
Lea D. Bennett, PhD
Richard S. Brush, BS
Michelle C. Callegan, PhD, FARVO
Daniel J.J. Carr, PhD, FARVO
Yan Chen, PhD
Phillip S. Coburn, PhD
Michael H. Elliott, PhD, FARVO
Kevin K. Fuller, PhD
Darren J. Lee, PhD
Sun Young Lee, MD, PhD
Feng Li, MD, MPH, MS
Raju V.S. Rajala, PhD
Victoria A. Bugg, MD Named New Chief Resident

DR. VICTORIA A. BUGG HAS BEEN SELECTED AS CHIEF RESIDENT for the 2020-2021 academic year, which started on July 1. Dr. Bugg grew up in Norman, Oklahoma, where she attended the University of Oklahoma (OU) and graduated with special distinction with a bachelor of science degree in chemical engineering. She then completed medical school at the OU College of Medicine, where she was elected to the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society. Dr. Bugg also completed her internship year in internal medicine at OU. She most enjoys spending time with her husband, Blake, who is an attorney landman in Oklahoma City, and their son, Blake Jr. During her free time, she also enjoys yoga, baking cookies, and spending time with her family.

Dr. Bugg’s predecessor as chief resident, Brett M. Gudgel, MD, will be continuing his training as a cornea fellow at the Moran Eye Center/University of Utah in Salt Lake City.

Virtual Grand Rounds

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY INVITES all Oklahoma ophthalmologists and alumni to join via Zoom for the Dean McGee Eye Institute/University of Oklahoma weekly virtual grand rounds held each Monday morning at 8 am.

Currently, around 10 to 15 ophthalmologists from outside the Institute/Department join virtually, and one alumnus in Texas invites his colleagues.

For more information, please contact Helen Howell, Helen-Howell@dmei.org.
DMEI Distinguished Visiting Lecturers

FEBRUARY 10, 2020
BR Daubman, MD and Alice Lorch, MD, MPH
(front, third and second from right)
Harvard University / Massachusetts Eye and Ear / Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts
Focus on Ethics, Professionalism, and Communication
Topic: “Breaking Bad News to Patients”

MARCH 9, 2020
Leon W. Herndon Jr., MD (back, center)
Professor of Ophthalmology
Chief of Glaucoma Division
Duke University Eye Center
Durham, North Carolina
Topic: “Far Advanced Glaucoma. One Patient’s Perspective: Are We Making a Difference?”

THE DEAN MCGEE EYE INSTITUTE WAS RANKED 7TH in the nation among academic eye centers affiliated with a public university and 20th overall by U.S. News & World Report. In the Doximity survey of ophthalmology residency programs, DMEI was ranked 8th among public institutions and 19th overall.
DAVID R. GRIFFIN, MD, has completed three years of residency training and will enter private practice as a comprehensive ophthalmologist in Pleasant Grove, Utah.

BRETT M. GUDGEL, MD, has completed three years of residency training and will be continuing his training as a cornea fellow at the Moran Eye Center/University of Utah in Salt Lake City.

FINNY T. JOHN, MD, has completed three years of residency training and will be staying at the Dean McGee Eye Institute/University of Oklahoma for an additional year of training as a glaucoma fellow.

GERTA MANE, MD, has completed three years of residency training and will be joining the Cataract and Laser Institute in Toledo, Ohio.

LEE E. MOORE, MD, has completed a one-year cornea fellowship and will enter private practice in Madison, Mississippi.

STANLEY S.K. PARK, MD, has completed a two-year vitreoretinal surgery fellowship and will be joining Kaiser Permanente in Northern California.

SAMUEL L. THOMSEN, MD, has completed a one-year glaucoma fellowship and will be joining Eye Surgical Associates in Lincoln, Nebraska.
INCOMING 2020 RESIDENTS

Brayden R. Barrientez, MD
College: Oklahoma Christian University
Medical School: University of Oklahoma
Interim Year: University of Oklahoma

Tyler C. Friske, MD
College: Southern Methodist University
Medical School: Baylor College of Medicine
Interim Year: Presbyterian St. Luke’s Medical Center (Denver)

Christian A. Leal, MD
College: Stanford University
Medical School: University of Texas Southwestern
Interim Year: University of Texas Southwestern

Cynthia K. McClard, MD, PhD
College: University of Texas, Austin
Medical School: Baylor College of Medicine (MD, PhD)
Interim Year: University of Pittsburgh Medical Center

Rupin N. Parikh, MD
College: Northwestern University
Medical School: Albany (NY) Medical College
Interim Year: Columbia-Bassett Medical Center (Cooperstown, NY)

INCOMING 2020 FELLOWS

Andrew C. Hou, MD
Cornea Fellow
College: City College of New York, New York, NY
Medical School: State University of New York (SUNY) Downstate, Brooklyn, NY
Residency: Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit, MI

Oliver G. Fischer, MD, MSc
Retina Fellow
College: SUNY at Binghamton, NY
Master of Science: Georgetown University, Washington, DC
Medical School: Rush Medical College, Chicago, IL
Residency: Bronx Care Ophthalmology, The Bronx, NY

Finny T. John, MD
Glaucoma Fellow
College: Cornell University, Ithaca, NY
Medical School: SUNY Upstate Medical University, Syracuse, NY
Residency: Dean McGee Eye Institute/University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma City, OK

Jorge L. Malouf, DO
Global Eye Care Fellow
College: Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD
Medical School: Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine, Athens, OH
Residency: Larkin Community Hospital, South Miami, FL
R. Michael Siatkowski, MD to Receive 2020 Straatsma Award for Excellence in Resident Education

DURING THE VIRTUAL RESIDENT/ALUMNI DAY AWARD AND RECOGNITION EVENT ON JUNE 6, Dr. Brett M. Gudgel, the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI) and University of Oklahoma (OU) Department of Ophthalmology’s outgoing chief resident, said, “I truly believe that we are fortunate to have the best (residency) program director in the country.” The Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology (AUPO) and American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) agree with this statement, as R. Michael Siatkowski, MD, the ophthalmology residency program director at DMEI/OU since 2011, is the recipient of the highly prestigious 2020 Straatsma Award for Excellence in Resident Education.

Dr. Siatkowski is the 18th individual to receive this award, which was established in 2003 to “recognize and celebrate an outstanding program director in ophthalmology.” It is the highest national honor that can be bestowed on an ophthalmology residency program director. Bradley R. Straatsma, MD, JD, for whom the award is named, is the former chair of the Department of Ophthalmology at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and former director of UCLA’s Jules Stein Eye Institute.

Dr. Siatkowski is also the vice chair for academic affairs for the Institute/Department, holds the David W. Parke II, MD Endowed Chair in Ophthalmology, and is the only ophthalmologist to have been named a David Ross Boyd Professor at OU. In 2018-2019, he served as president of the AUPO’s Program Directors Council and as president of the American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus. Dr. Siatkowski is a past director of the American Board of Ophthalmology, former president of the Christian Ophthalmology Society, and past vice chair of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education’s Residency Review Committee for Ophthalmology. He currently serves as Associate Secretary for Subspecialty Day for the AAO and has received a Life Achievement Honor Award and three Secretariat Awards from the Academy. Dr. Siatkowski is also the recipient of the 2020 Oklahoma Academy of Ophthalmology Distinguished Service Award (see pages 8-9). His numerous teaching awards include four Gaylord Faculty Honor Awards at DMEI, an OU Regents’ Award for Superior Teaching, and an M. Dewayne Andrews, MD Excellence in Teaching Award in Graduate Medical Education.

Dr. Siatkowski will be recognized as this year’s Straatsma Awardee during the virtual Opening Session of AAO2020 and also at the 2021 AUPO Annual Meeting in Austin, Texas. He will deliver a special presentation at the AUPO meeting.
Resident/Alumni Day Awards

AS PART OF THIS YEAR’S ABBREVIATED (Friday afternoon only) and virtual 44th Annual Resident/Alumni Day, the recipients of a number of awards were announced at the Zoom recognition and awards event on the evening of Saturday, June 6:

E.L. and Thelma Gaylord Faculty Honor Award: Carolyn E. Kloek, MD

E. L. and Thelma Gaylord Faculty Honor Award: Carolyn E. Kloek, MD

Excellence in Attending at VA Award: Andrew K. Bailey, MD (also in 2015, 2018, and 2019)

Amalia M. Miranda, MD

Oklahoma Academy of Ophthalmology Distinguished Service Award: R. Michael Siatkowski, MD

Fellow Teaching Award: Stanley S.K. Park, MD

Dr. & Mrs. Thomas E. Acers Resident Honor Award: David R. Griffin, MD

Robert G. Small, MD

Annie Moreau, MD

Award for Medical Student Education: Brett M. Gudgel, MD (also 2019)

Resident Outstanding DMEI Staff Award: Marissa R. Hundley

Resident Outstanding VA Staff Award: Melissa Greene

The Dean McGee Eye Institute/University of Oklahoma Department of Ophthalmology’s beloved residency program coordinator, Helen Howell (left), also was recognized with the gift of a trip for her and her husband, John, to visit Disney World (when world conditions are more conducive). We are grateful for Helen’s extraordinary impact on resident education and to the 37 individuals who contributed to this gift!
THE MISSION OF THE ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS OF OPHTHALMOLOGY (AUPO) is to serve, strengthen, and represent departments of ophthalmology; to provide support, information, and leadership opportunities to department chairs, program directors, and other faculty members; to promote excellence in ophthalmic education; to foster vision research; and to promote ethical practice and excellence in eye care to ensure the best possible vision for the public.

Five representatives from Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI)/University of Oklahoma (OU) presented during the 54th AUPO Annual Meeting held in Rancho Mirage, California from January 29 to February 1, 2020. This meeting was attended by approximately 500 academic leaders from throughout the country, including DMEI/OU’s Gregory L. Skuta, MD (department chair), R. Michael Siatkowski, MD (residency program director), Helen Howell (residency program coordinator), Cynthia A. Bradford, MD (medical student educator), Garyl G. Geist (administrator), Carolyn E. Kloek, MD (member of the American Academy of Ophthalmology’s Committee for Resident Education), and Brett M. Gudgel, MD (chief resident). Dr. Kloek also is the former residency program director at Massachusetts Eye and Ear/Harvard Medical School in Boston.

In keeping with DMEI’s legacy of leadership and service, Drs. Thomas E. Acers and David W. Parke II, MD, DMEI’s first two presidents, served as AUPO president in 1984-1985 and 2001-2002 respectively. In 2018-2019, the Institute’s R. Michael Siatkowski, MD served as president of the AUPO’s Program Directors Council. Garyl G. Geist, DMEI’s executive vice president and chief operating officer, currently serves as a trustee-at-large on the AUPO Administrator Council, and Helen F. Howell, DMEI’s residency program coordinator, is a member of the Program Coordinators Planning Committee and chaired this committee for the 2020 annual meeting.
Helen Howell (far right, pictured with DMEI’s 14 residents and Dr. R. Michael Siatkowski, front center), residency program coordinator at DMEI/OU, presented “What Has Development Got to Do with It?” during the Coordinator Program session on January 31. She also served as chairperson of the 2020 AUPO Program Coordinators Planning Committee.

DMEI WELL REPRESENTED AT ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS OF OPHTHALMOLOGY 2020 ANNUAL MEETING

Gregory L. Skuta, MD, DMEI president and chief executive officer and chair of the OU Department of Ophthalmology, presented “Development and Fundraising” during the Administrator Program session on January 31 along with Garyl G. Geist, MAcc.

R. Michael Siatkowski, MD, DMEI/OU’s residency program director and vice chair for academic affairs, presented “Corrective Action Plans for Struggling Residents” during the AUPO Annual Meeting’s “Breakfast with Colleagues” roundtables session on January 31. He also presented “The Residency CREW: Communication, Resilience, Efficiency, and Wellness” during the Coordinator Program session on January 31. Dr. Siatkowski is a past president of the AUPO’s Program Directors Council.

Drs. Brett M. Gudgel (chief resident at DMEI in 2019-2020) and R. Michael Siatkowski presented “Predictors of a Successful Ophthalmology Resident” as a poster at the Educating the Educators session on January 29. Dr. Gudgel also served as the resident representative to the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education’s (ACGME’s) Ophthalmology Review Committee (RC) from 2018 to 2020 and participated in a panel discussion providing an “ACGME Ophthalmology RC Update” for the Coordinator Program on January 31.

Garyl G. Geist, MAcc, DMEI’s executive vice president and chief operating officer, presented “Development and Fundraising” along with Gregory L. Skuta, MD during the Administrator Program session on January 31. As part of the AUPO Annual Meeting workshops on February 1, he also presented “ODs, PAs, NPs and Your Department: The Oklahoma Experience.” Geist serves as a trustee-at-large on the AUPO’s Administrator Council.

Garyl G. Geist, MAcc, DMEI’s executive vice president and chief operating officer, presented “Development and Fundraising” along with Gregory L. Skuta, MD during the Administrator Program session on January 31. As part of the AUPO Annual Meeting workshops on February 1, he also presented “ODs, PAs, NPs and Your Department: The Oklahoma Experience.” Geist serves as a trustee-at-large on the AUPO’s Administrator Council.
MEAGAN JOSEPHS SHADOWED DR. JOHN M. BELL, a comprehensive ophthalmologist and clinical associate professor at the Dean McGee Eye Institute, in clinic and at the McGee Eye Surgery Center in March 2020. Josephs has been pursuing a career in health care for some time, and even worked in an emergency department, but she wanted to acquire more clinical experience. Josephs reached out to shadow Dr. Bell because family members in Norman had praised his intelligence and commitment to teaching. During her short time of shadowing, Josephs had the opportunity to learn much from Dr. Bell, who was both patient and receptive to her questions. Josephs enjoyed her time in the operating room, but the highlight of her shadowing experience was looking through a slit lamp and seeing white blood cells in the eye of a post-surgical patient. Josephs stated, “None of the textbooks I have read provided me such an immediate glimpse into the body’s immune response.”

In identifying Dr. Bell as a mentor, Josephs chose well as Dr. Bell is the past president of the Oklahoma City Clinic, past chair of the University of Oklahoma Board of Regents, past president of the Oklahoma Academy of Ophthalmology (OAO) and the recipient of the OAO’s 2019 Distinguished Service Award, and the OU College of Medicine Alumni Association’s 2017 Physician of the Year – Private Practice (while still at the Oklahoma City Clinic).

DR. AUSTIN L. LAGROW received the 2020 Dean McGee Award in Ophthalmology as the most outstanding University of Oklahoma (OU) College of Medicine graduating medical student in this specialty area. He will begin his ophthalmology residency at the Dean McGee Eye Institute/OU Department of Ophthalmology in July 2021.
FOR MORE THAN 25 YEARS, DR. CYNTHIA A. BRADFORD OVERSAW MEDICAL STUDENT EDUCATION for the University of Oklahoma (OU) Department of Ophthalmology and the Dean McGee Eye Institute (DMEI). In recognition of her longstanding commitment, Dr. Bradford, who is a Presbyterian Health Foundation Presidential Professor, has received the Gaylord Faculty Honor Award (1992), two Excellence in Attending at VA Awards (2001 and 2006), an OU Regents’ Award for Superior Teaching (2011), and an M. Dewayne Andrews, MD Excellence in Teaching Award in Clinical Education (of medical students) in October 2019. She has served as executive editor of the seventh and eighth editions of the American Academy of Ophthalmology’s (AAO’s) Basic Ophthalmology (for medical students and primary care residents).

Even with her busy clinical and surgical practice and past service in such major leadership positions as president of the Oklahoma Academy of Ophthalmology (AOA), senior secretary for advocacy for the AAO, and AAO president, Dr. Bradford’s devotion to medical student education has been unwavering. For her decades of service to the profession, Dr. Bradford received the OAO’s Distinguished Service Award in 2015 and an AAO Life Achievement Honor Award in 2019.

As the Institute, Department, and College of Medicine approached the 2020–2021 academic year, Dr. Bradford felt that this would be an appropriate time to transition the oversight of medical student education. She and Dr. R. Michael Siatkowski, DMEI’s vice chair for academic affairs, therefore conducted an interview process to identify a worthy successor. Based on the outcome of that process, the DMEI leadership is delighted that Tammy L. Yanovitch, MD, MHSc agreed to accept the role of director of medical student education effective July 1, 2020. A clinical associate professor in the Department of Ophthalmology at DMEI, Dr. Yanovitch is a Phi Beta Kappa/ magna cum laude graduate of the University of Tulsa and earned her medical degree (Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society) from the OU College of Medicine. She completed her ophthalmology residency at DMEI/OU and her fellowship in pediatric ophthalmology and strabismus at Duke University, where she also served on the faculty before joining the DMEI/OU faculty in 2011.

In October 2019, Dr. Yanovitch received an M. Dewayne Andrews, MD Excellence in Teaching Award in Graduate Medical Education. She also has received two Acers Resident Honor Awards and an AAO Achievement Award and AAO Secretariat Award. Dr. Yanovitch serves on the AAO’s Subspecialty Day Planning Committee and is an Oral Board Examiner and member of the Item Writing Committee for the American Board of Ophthalmology.

Countless medical students and all of us at DMEI are grateful to Dr. Cynthia Bradford for her career-long dedication to medical student education and also thank Dr. Tammy Yanovitch for her acceptance of this appointment as the new director of medical student education at DMEI/OU!
HOW DMEI IS FULFILLING ITS MISSION DURING A Global Pandemic
VISUAL REMINDERS ARE EVERYWHERE AS YOU WALK INTO THE DEAN MCGEE EYE INSTITUTE (DMEI) ON THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA (OU) HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER CAMPUS AMID THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

“Please Practice Social Distancing,” the small red signs respectfully ask.

Affixed on the floor every six feet throughout the entryways leading into the building, the reminders urge visitors to keep six feet distance between other people.

When it became clear in late March that most activities at the Health Sciences Center would be dramatically reduced by the pandemic, officials at DMEI, which also houses the OU Department of Ophthalmology, reduced clinical, surgical, and research activities, and implemented measures designed to protect both patients and the staff.

Today, everyone in the building wears a mask (see cover photo), and signage reminds visitors to maintain six feet of space between other individuals. No more than three to four people are allowed on elevators. Water fountains are shut down. More than half of the chairs in waiting areas were removed. Protective “breath shields” (see cover photo) were added to equipment that physicians use in eye exams with patients. Of course, frequent handwashing and disinfection have become part of the “DMEI routine.”
There is more. Adult patients cannot have visitors with them (except under extenuating circumstances), and children can have only one parent. Patients, visitors, doctors, scientists, and staff are screened as they enter the building and their temperatures taken.

“Our patients and staff have been very respectful of the precautions we have taken on their behalf,” said Gregory L. Skuta, MD, president and chief executive officer (CEO) of the Institute and chair of the Department of Ophthalmology.

While the pandemic reduced many of its routine functions for a five-week period (see pages 2-3), the Institute continued to provide medical and surgical care to patients with critical needs.

“The Institute remained open and functioning on all fronts,” said Garyl Geist, the Institute’s executive vice president and chief operating officer. “When the need was there, we were still there to answer it.”

And none of its more than 300 employees were furloughed or laid off, Geist said. Work-from-home orders were in place for many of the Institute’s employees.

“We were still seeing time-sensitive, urgent, and emergent patients during that time,” Dr. Skuta added. “We also were performing surgeries on those patients who had issues such as retinal detachments, tumors, or uncontrolled glaucoma and needed prompt attention.”

Innovative approaches to patient care also were introduced. As one example, some selected...
patients of Dr. Vinay Shah, a busy DMEI retina specialist, were initially screened in their cars or the parking lot just outside DMEI’s Thomas E. Acers, MD Pavilion.

They were then brought inside to specially designated rooms on the first floor of the Acers Pavilion for further evaluation and testing and, if indicated, intraocular injections of medications designed for treatment of their “wet” age-related macular degeneration.

Although ophthalmology visits are less conducive to “virtual telemedicine visits,” it has been possible to conduct some visits (e.g., some “triage” screening visits and postoperative visits in patients who had undergone oculoplastic surgery) in this way.

The Institute, which is celebrating the 45th anniversary of its 1975 dedication in 2020,
employs roughly 40 clinical professionals and surgeons, providing eye care for patients not only on the Health Sciences Center campus but also at satellite locations in Edmond, Northwest Oklahoma City, and Lawton.

DMEI and the Department of Ophthalmology also maintain an ambitious research function with 10 scientists on the faculty. The laboratories were quiet during April.

“We continued very minimal on-site research, addressing only the highest priority needs while the research labs were essentially closed,” said Michelle C. Callegan, PhD, the Institute and Department’s director of vision research.

Finally, the Institute’s physicians and scientists also have teaching appointments in the OU College of Medicine. The Institute/Department has 15 ophthalmology residents (as of July 2020) and three to five post-residency fellows at any one time, as well as graduate students and postdoctoral research fellows. The Institute hosts regular grand rounds for residents, medical students, and faculty and a number of visiting professorships and research-oriented workshops annually.

“Our educational programs have continued but in a different format,” Dr. Skuta said. “Grand rounds and essentially all of our education-related meetings are conducted in a Zoom virtual format. Attendance has been excellent for our virtual grand rounds and other Zoom meetings.”

Perhaps the biggest challenge for the Institute early on was obtaining adequate personal protective equipment (PPE). Anil D. Patel, MD, the Institute’s medical director of clinical operations, found it necessary to obtain PPE from alternative sources beyond the Institute’s regular suppliers.

“We had a limited supply when the pandemic began,” Dr. Patel said. “We were obviously conserving and resterilizing and using all contacts to acquire more.”

The Institute even commissioned some employees to break out their sewing machines for the greater good.

Photo Credit: Matt Skuta
Meanwhile, the reminders remain in place across the Institute’s campus: “Please Practice Social Distancing.”

This feature story is based on a story written by Jim Stafford for the i2E Summer 2020 Magazine, Oklahoma’s bioscience magazine.

“We actually designated two employees and the mother of an employee to make masks from some of the material typically used to wrap surgical instruments,” Dr. Patel said. “That bought us some time, which was fortunate and innovative.”

The Institute finally solved the dilemma by acquiring PPE through some employee contacts with Asian suppliers. Among the individuals who helped acquire PPE were Dr. Maria Lim, a DMEI pediatric ophthalmologist, and her partner Mark Partridge.

DMEI, along with the rest of the Health Sciences Center campus, began a measured resumption of activities by early May, reinstating more routine exams and elective surgeries. All patients undergoing elective surgeries now receive preoperative COVID-19 testing.

But the pandemic will likely have an impact well into the future.

“I believe that the impact of COVID-19 could last from a few to many more months,” Dr. Skuta said. Please see Dr. Skuta’s “President’s View” on pages 2-3 for additional perspectives on DMEI’s COVID-19 experience.
Life is so much brighter when we focus on what truly matters.
The Dean McGee Eye Institute is dedicated to serving all Oklahomans and the global community through excellence and leadership in patient care, education, and vision research.

inside this issue:

Faculty Members Receive Major Awards  pp. 4, 8, 14, 25, 32, 33
Robert E. Anderson, MD, PhD, Retires After 25 Years  p. 26
DMEI Well Represented at 2020 AUPO Annual Meeting  p. 34

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