Stein Eye Institute
50 Years of Vision: Education

With clinical innovation and advanced technology, the Stein Eye Institute trains doctors as a career-long experience—globally advancing sight-saving care.

For 50 years they have come to the UCLA Stein Eye Institute representing every level of knowledge and skill: students at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA experiencing ophthalmology and vision science for the first time; residents beginning their three-year passage to becoming ophthalmologists; clinical fellows seeking subspecialty training; research fellows expanding the frontier of knowledge about the eye; practicing physicians honing their professional skills; and doctors from regions worldwide gaining additional training and bringing sight-saving procedures back to their home countries.

“Education in every subject changes constantly, and even more so in medicine,” says Bartly J. Mondino, MD, director of the Stein Eye Institute and chairman of the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology. “The training, procedures, and tools we use continually evolve as research produces new developments in vision science.”

Education about the eye is a challenging four-part mission at the Institute: teaching the fundamentals of ophthalmology and vision science to UCLA medical students, educating residents, fellowship training in ophthalmic subspecialties, and fine-tuning the skills of practicing physicians.

A continuing theme of training is collaboration—creating partnerships in diagnosis, review of challenging patient problems, and learning new techniques. Exemplifying this synergy, Dr. Federico Velez, Stein Eye Institute faculty member and strabismus specialist, studies a patient’s ultrasound results with his pediatric ophthalmology team prior to surgery.

Left to right: Ultrasound Technician Robert Almanzor, Second-Year Resident Dr. Daniel Su, Dr. Velez, Pediatric Ophthalmology Fellow Dr. Melinda Chang, and Visiting International Professor Dr. Luigi Calandrelli.

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Chairman, UCLA Department of Ophthalmology
Bartly J. Mondino, MD
Sincerely,
...gift of the Stein Eye Institute and for your dedication to...
It is indeed, wonderful to see. To everyone involved in the...
...outstanding quality, the Stein Eye Institute has grown into...
...the Stein Eye Center–Santa Monica and Doheny Eye Center UCLA locations in Arcadia, Orange County, and Pasadena.
...throughout contributions of outstanding faculty and staff—research scientists, clinician-scientists, and specialists of outstanding quality, the Stein Eye Institute has grown into one of the world’s premier facilities for the care of eye disease, vision restoration, and education.
...is no ophthalmologist and sent to us from anywhere in the world for a diagnosis,” says Dr. Arnold.
...team approach is more powerful than teaching hours of facts and figures in a classroom, “ says Dr. Holland. “As a result, UCLA medical students are learning how ophthalmology is part of their basic skills for treating the whole patient.”
...居民 train during three years of training at the Institute? 
...in the broadest terms, the fundamental philosophy of the residency program has remained unchanged for 50 years: a resident’s work represents a progression of responsibility—from initial exposure to ophthalmology with total supervision in the first year, steadily gaining knowledge of the field and becoming more independent in the second year, and finally assuming full clinical responsibility under the constant supervision of an attending ophthalmologist for treating patients in the third year, residents prepare to receive national accreditation...
...New residents learn immediately that their talents as medical students will be challenged—by the intensity and depth of the work: three years of Institute training involves residents studying the full gamut of vision sciences, as well as the range of ophthalmic subspecialties, clinical rotations at the Institute, Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center, and three affiliated medical centers: classroom instruction, surgical training, and involvement in original research projects.
...The resident experience is on-the-job training,” says Anthony C. Arnold, MD, Jerome and Joan Snyder Chair in Ophthalmology and director of the Stein Eye Institute residency program. “When residents are training in a subspecialty they are staffing the...
Sudden Appearance of Floaters and Flashes Can Signal Serious Eye Issues

Floaters are specks or lines that sometimes drift into one’s field of vision. While typically harmless, floaters that occur suddenly are accompanied by flashes of light or impaired vision can signal a potentially serious eye problem, particularly among older adults.

If floaters appear in combination with flashes, it is important to consult with an ophthalmologist in a timely manner to determine if the symptoms are produced by a vitreous detachment, or if they should be treated as a condition, such as a tear or detachment of the retina.

“If the age of Mr. is about 60 percent of the population already has a vitreous detachment. The more nourished the person is, the higher the chance for him to have this condition,” says God Hofeldt, MD, clinical instructor of ophthalmology at Doheny Eye Center UCLA.

As age people, the gel-like substance in the eye, called the vitreous, begins to liquefy and separate from the retina. While this is a natural process, it can create a vitreous detachment, which is harmless and causes no symptoms, explains Edward M. Wong, MD, chief, Division of Ophthalmology, Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. “For some, however, as the vitreous pulls away from the retina, a retinal tear or detachment may occur.”

“It is impossible for a patient to distinguish between a vitreous detachment, which is a common occurrence, and an associated tear or detachment, which can be vision-threatening and requires urgent medical attention,” Dr. Wong says. “That’s why it is so important to see an ophthalmologist and have the symptoms evaluated.”

A tear in the retina can almost always be successfully treated with a laser, the doctor says. The outpatient laser procedure requires only a topical anesthetic and is painless.

Delaying care, however, can permanently affect vision. “About 50 percent of people who delay care end up permanently losing some vision. Half encounter visual field loss, which is a pity,” Dr. Wong says. The outpatient laser procedure requires only a topical anesthetic and is painless. The more nearsighted the person is, the higher the chance for them to experience floaters.

The World Ophthalmology Congress® (WOC) of the International Council of Ophthalmology held February 8-11, 2016, in Guadalajara, Mexico, was a global educational event where the world’s ophthalmologists shared new developments and learned about advancements in eye care.

Stein Eye Institute alumni and faculty were active participants at WOC2016, holding leadership positions and contributing their expertise to an instructive program covering the full range of ophthalmology. Information gained at the Congress serves to advance vision care throughout the world.

The Congress was hosted by the Mexican Society of Ophthalmology, and the Society is supported by its affiliate, Alfonso Barraquer Foundation, over 100 countries. A highlight of the evening included a presentation on the History of Ophthalmology, when Stein Eye Institute Founding Director and UCLA Department of Ophthalmology Professor, Bradley R. Stratus, MD, JD, is recognized for his leadership in the field. To view the WOC2016 scientific program and participants, go to woc2016.org/archives/final_program.pdf. See the History of Ophthalmology video at https://youtu.be/i4DLNvAWBqo.

Stein Eye Vision Scientists Impacting Sight Worldwide

Optometric Symposium on Advances in Eye Care

The Master of Orbital Surgery Symposium

Including Ophthalmology Fellows

We are pleased to introduce the following ophthalmologists entering clinical and international fellowships at the Stein Eye Institute in the 2016–2017 academic year:

Stein Eye Clinical Fellows 2016–2017

Saba Al-Husaini, MD
Cornea
Bora Choe, MD
Medical Retina
Melinda Chang, MD
Neuro-ophthalmology
An Nhooy, MD
Medical Retina
Sathiyaraj "Shiva" Ramesh, MD
Denting Retina
Christian Soltzberg, MD
Retina
Nathaniel Sears, MD
Glaucoma
Santosh Kalai, MD
Glaucoma
David Trung, MD
Cornea
Evan Vickers, MD
Glaucoma
Rui Zhang, MD
Pediatric Ophthalmology

International Retinal Imaging Symposium

The Stein Eye Institute and the Doheny Eye Institute teamed up to sponsor the annual Comprehensive Ophthalmology Review course February 14–21, 2016, in the UCLA Stein Eye Institute. The annual four-day review, which serves ophthalmology training programs in Southern California, was an overwhelming success.

The course co-directors, John A. Irvine, MD, medical director Doheny Eye Center UCLA, and Shervin J. Joonberg, MD, Larian and David Gerber Chair in Ophthalmology, organized a program focused on the applications, clinical presentation, diagnosis, and management of ophthalmological disease.

Save the Date!

Institute News

Stein and Doheny Joint Alumni Reception in Chicago

The Stein Eye Institute is pleased to welcome Michael S. Ip, MD, health science clinical instructor, as a new full-time faculty member of the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology.

Dr. Ip brings renowned credentials and expertise. He is a division builder who has been loyal and respected by his colleagues,” says Barry J. Mondon, MD, director of the Stein Eye Institute and chairman of the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology.

Dr. Ip received his medical degree from New York University School of Medicine in 1991. He completed his ophthalmology residency at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine in 1997, and completed a fellowship in vitreoretinal surgery at UCLA. The Southern California College of Optometry (SCCO) at Ketchum University in Fullerton, California, was host of the January 24, 2016, Master of Orbital Surgery Symposium. The one-day event is an annual collaboration with SCCO, UCLA Stein Eye Institute, and Doheny Eye Institute. The program included lectures by:

SAVE THE DATE!

General Eye Conditions

EYELines

Dr. Robert Goldberg demonstrates transscleral temporal orbital decompression.

Dr. Gregory L. Thomas gives a lecture to the surgeons.

At the inaugural Jack Ruestman Lecture, Dr. Jack Ruestman presented an overview discussion regarding the future of orbital surgery.

Dr. Kelli Hunter demonstrates the vitreous cavity.

Dr. John T. Chung demonstrates transcaruncular medial orbital decompression.

Dr. Graziano discusses the surgical anatomy of transcaruncular orbital decompression.

Dr. J. Bailey Freund demonstrates transcaruncular temporal orbital decompression.

Dr. Paul D. Klemo gives a lecture to the surgeons.

The course co-directors, John A. Irvine, MD, medical director Doheny Eye Center UCLA, and Shervin J. Joonberg, MD, Larian and David Gerber Chair in Ophthalmology, organized a program focused on the applications, clinical presentation, diagnosis, and management of ophthalmological disease.

Dr. Reed presents the featured speaker at the Master of Orbital Surgery Symposium.

Dr. Michael K. Shen demonstrates transcaruncular temporal orbital decompression.

Dr. Michael Di Russo demonstrates transcaruncular temporal orbital decompression.

Dr. Robert Goldberg demonstrates transcaruncular temporal orbital decompression.

Dr. Gregory L. Thomas gives a lecture to the surgeons.

At the inaugural Jack Ruestman Lecture, Dr. Jack Ruestman presented an overview discussion regarding the future of orbital surgery.

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Dr. Robert Goldberg demonstrates transscleral temporal orbital decompression.
Gabriel H. Travis, MD
Charles Kenneth Feldman Chair in Ophthalmology
Professor of Ophthalmology and Biological Chemistry
Co-Chief of the Vision Science Division
Associate Director of the Stein Eye Institute

A native Californian, Dr. Gabriel Travis is a proud alumnus of UCLA. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry from UCLA in 1972; his medical degree from UCLA in 1977; and he conducted his first postdoctoral fellowship at the UCLA Molecular Biology Institute. It was during his neurology residency that he realized he had little interest in pursuing a career as a physician and instead followed his burgeoning fascination in the genetics of neurologic diseases, becoming an associate professor at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center Center for Basic Neuroscience. Dr. Travis returned to UCLA in 2001, where his laboratory uses biochemical and genetic approaches to study the visual cycle and its role in retinal and macular degenerations.

What sparked your interest in science?
My uncle, Dr. Norman Kroll, was a particle physicist and professor at UCSD. When I was a child, Norman and I would talk for hours about physics and the natural world. He told me how people often thought they understood a physical phenomenon until someone came along and made an observation that didn’t fit with the understanding. I learned that no hypothesis could ever be proven experimentally; it could only be disproven. I loved the interplay between the dreamy speculations that led one to formulate a hypothesis and the intellectual rigor required to design and perform an experiment that tested it. I also admired the ruthless honesty required to abandon a favored hypothesis after it had been disproven experimentally. Norman brought the scientific method to life for me before I even knew what it was called. I could not imagine a more satisfying life than to be a scientist like him.

What drew you to the study of vision science?
My interest was in the genetics of neurologic diseases. I began a second postdoctoral fellowship at Scripps Research Institute in 1984—a time when molecular biology was starting to be used to study neurodegeneration. I developed a molecular technique that allowed us to clone mRNAs expressed in one time but not in another. That led me to identify that the molecular defect in several mouse lines with spontaneous mutations causing neurologic phenotypes. One of these mutants was the retinal degenerative slow (rds) mouse, which had the phenotype of absent photoreceptor outer segments and slow photoreceptor degeneration. Rds was the first gene I identified, and my work was published in the journal Nature. Ever since that discovery in 1984, I have been working in vision science.

How did you come to the Stein Eye Institute?
Professor Wiene Hubbell at the Stein Eye Institute invited me to consider a faculty position here. After visiting UCLA, I realized how valuable it would be to have colleagues who understood my research and were available for collaboration.

What have been some of your most important findings?
First, I identified the molecular defect in the rds mutant mouse. Currently over 90 mutations in the rds gene have been shown to cause a range of retinal and macular degenerations in humans. Second, my laboratory determined the function of a subset of proteins. The likely mechanism of photoreceptor degeneration in Drusenoid macular degeneration, which explains multiple clinical features of the disease. Third, we discovered a new enzyme of this pathway. Knowledge of Müller cell function and responses serves to define new therapeutic strategies for retinal and macular degenerations. Fourth, we identified the mutated enzymes in RPE cells as RPE65, which is now known to be the enzyme responsible for sterol synthesis in the retina.

What do you enjoy most about your profession?
I enjoy spending time with my wife Robyn and my daughter Chloe. I am an endurance road cyclist and ride several times a week. I also fly high-performance radio-controlled subsonics.

What do you do when you’re not working?
I am continuously challenged by the inherent difficulties of the scientific problems I am trying to solve. My greatest enjoyment comes from making new discoveries in our research, and I feel fortunate to have such strong colleagues and collaborators at the Stein Eye Institute.

More than 20 years ago, Bert Levy was referred to Anthony C. Arnold, MD, Jerome and Joan Snyder Chair in Ophthalmology, and chief of the Neuro-Ophthalmology Division at UCLA Stein Eye Institute, for ischemic optic neuropathy, a serious blinding eye condition that affects 1 in 6,000 people. Dr. Arnold took control, and today at 86 years old, Mr. Levy has near perfect vision in his good eye.

“I owe my life and my sight to UCLA.” To begin his legacy and enduring philanthropy from a grateful patient whose words echo in the halls of the Stein Eye Institute. In 1985, Mr. Levy began what was to become a lifetime of giving to Stein Eye, enhancing the educational opportunities of the Institute’s vision-science scholars and advancing global research in neuro-ophthalmology. Three years ago, an aggressive, life-threatening cancer was discovered in Mr. Levy’s left eye. Under the strict diagnostic watch and strict care of Anthony J. Aldave, MD, Walton Li Chair in Cornea and Uveitis, and chief of the Cornea and Uveitis Division, Mr. Levy was cancer free within six months of treatment and delivered a clean bill of health. It was at this time that Mr. Levy extended his philanthropic reach at Stein Eye by using charitable gift annuities as a vehicle for his gratitude and impact. Concurrently, Mr. Levy also began supporting the Optical and Ophthalmic Plastic Surgery Division in tribute of Division Chief Robert Alan Goldberg, MD. Karen and Frank Dubly Endowed Chair in Ophthalmology, and his team.

To date, Mr. Levy has gifted in excess of 17 charitable gift annuities that serve to extend, support, and recognize the transformative work of Drs. Aldave, Akarsu, and Goldberg. It is Mr. Levy’s ultimate wish to acknowledge his doctors with the highest of academic and philanthropic accolades: endowed chairs, which will carry out Mr. Levy’s targeted giving, each one perpetuating along with the promise of transforming even more lives along the way.

Mr. Levy’s charitable mindset was cultivated by his Depression Era father who took his time off from school to downtown Philadelphia to see where the homeless lived and struggled to survive. “No matter what we have, we have to work together,” he always said. And it was with those words, utilized as both a personal and professional roadmap, that Bert Levy embarked upon a lifetime of giving.

By age 40, Mr. Levy had retired from a profitable East Coast banking career and settled in Los Angeles. He was bed-started, and moved with his late wife and two children to settle on the West Coast. After 20 years of treatment ultimately lost in allure due to a small part to the morbid nature of the man himself and his natural quest for learning. Mr. Levy then reinvented himself as a mediator, pioneering securities mediations throughout the United States—all the while guided by the same ethos of giving handed down by his father so many years ago.

The Stein Eye Institute benefits from Mr. Levy’s philanthropy of philanthropy to this day. Through his generous giving, others may too echo Mr. Levy’s words: “I owe my life and my sight to UCLA.”

If you would like to learn more about how to include the UCLA Stein Eye Institute in your estate plans, please call the Development Office at (310) 206-6035.

In Memoriam
Ruth Straatsma
July 17, 1928—January 21, 2016

Ruth Straatsma, BM, MM, co-founder of the JSEI Affiliates, passed away at her home on January 21, 2016, following an extended illness. Ruth received both her Bachelor and Master of Music degrees at the University of Michigan, and it was there that she met her future husband, Bradley R. Straatsma, MD, JD, then a pre-med student. In 1959 the couple moved to Los Angeles, where Dr. Straatsma commenced appointment as chief of the UCLA Division of Ophthalmology and was later appointed as the founding director of the Jules Stein Eye Institute (JSEI). Ruth was the devoted mother of three children, active in the community, and an enthusiastic supporter of JSEI. She co-founded the Institute’s volunteer arm, the JSEI Affiliates, serving as its president from 1990 to 1995, and was an active member of the Advisory Board from 1995 to 2016. During Ruth’s tenure, vital community outreach programs were established, providing education and vision-screening services to children.

Reflecting her love of music, Ruth sang in the choir and directed the children’s choir at Bel Air Church for many years. She was president of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Committee, president of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Encore Society, and a long-term advocate of the Philharmonic’s “Symphonies for Youth.”

An accomplished artist, Ruth also enjoyed travel, retouching, and scuba diving. She was married to her husband of 85 years, Allen, and was predeceased by two grandchildren, Carson and Cola Strang. Ruth will be remembered for her warmth, wisdom, and kindness, all of which she shared with abundance.

The Stein Eye Institute is dedicated to advancing innovative and groundbreaking research, delivering cutting-edge patient care, key community engagement, and providing the education necessary to diagnose and treat eye disease.

Charitable gifts made through your estate are a wonderful way to provide lasting support for Stein Eye.
If you are interested in learning more ways to include the Stein Eye Institute in your will or living trust, or if you have already included Stein Eye in your estate plans, please let us know so we can ensure your wishes are clearly understood.

We would love to hear from you!
And best of all, you know that you are helping to ensure that the Stein Eye Institute can uphold its mission to preserve sight and restore vision for generations to come.
For more information on estate gifts, bequests, charitable gift annuities, and other philanthropic strategies, please visit UCLA’s Planned Giving website at: www.legacy.ucla.edu, or contact Stein Eye’s Development team at:
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All inquiries are confidential and without obligation.