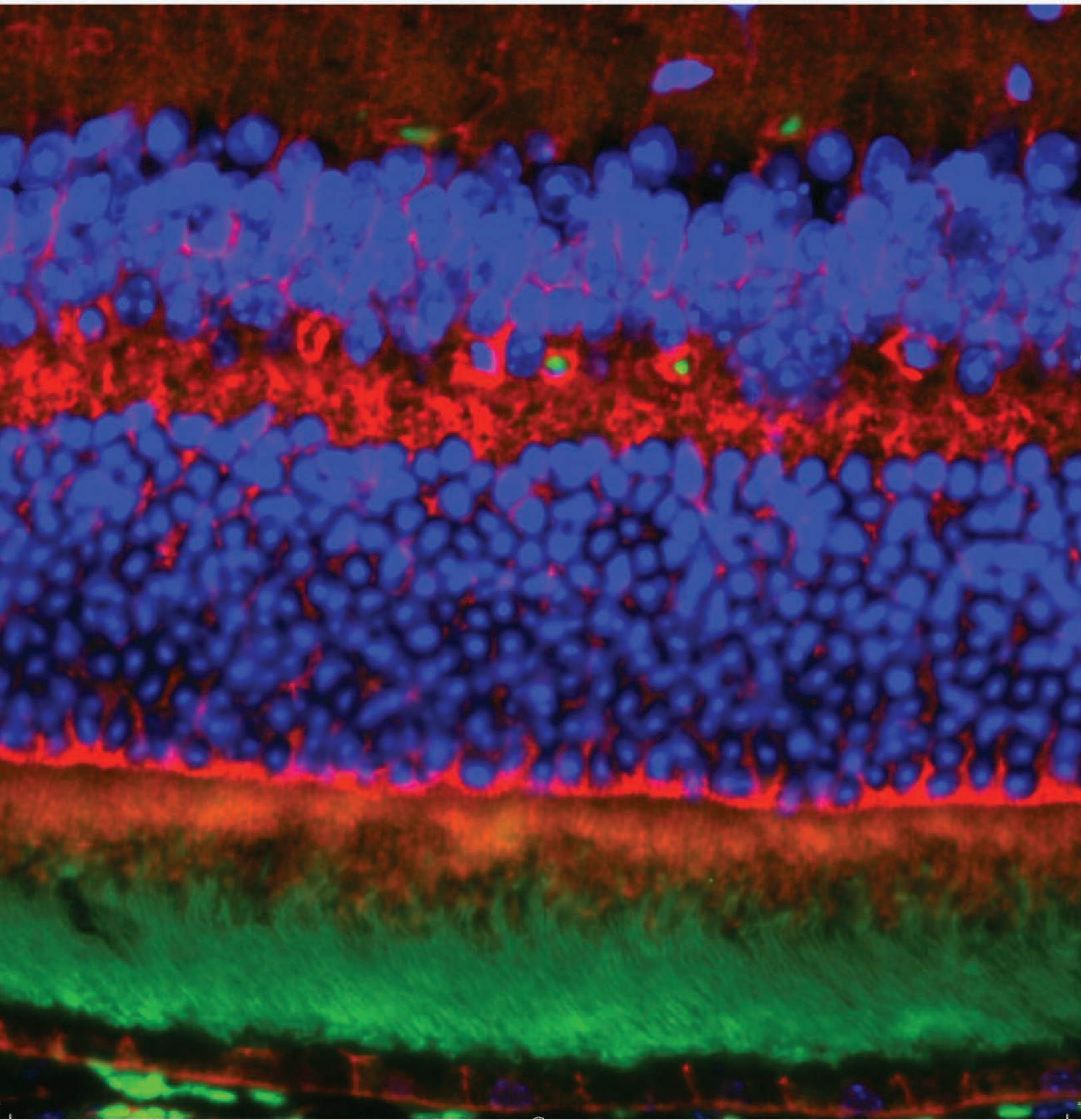
SCHEIE
EYE
INSTITUTE

summer 2016

scheie vision

Raymond and Ruth Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania



IN THIS ISSUE

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to *Scheie Vision's* first magazine format edition! We have transitioned from the previous newsletter style to further engage our readers in the stories we tell. Our ultimate focus is to showcase Scheie faculty and staff and the impact of their teaching, clinical care, and research.

This issue's cover photo, for example, is an image taken in Dr. Josh Dunaief's lab of a retina labeled with antibodies to indicate the location of an iron transporter protein. Dr. Dunaief's research on iron overload in age-related macular degeneration (AMD) has opened the door to novel treatment approaches and was recently featured in *FASEB*. This edition of *Scheie Vision* also highlights a $2 billion partnership with Biogen to expand gene therapy technologies, as well as the Retinopathy in Chronic Renal Insufficiency Cohort (RCRIC), one of the first studies to demonstrate a positive association between retinopathy and decreased kidney function.

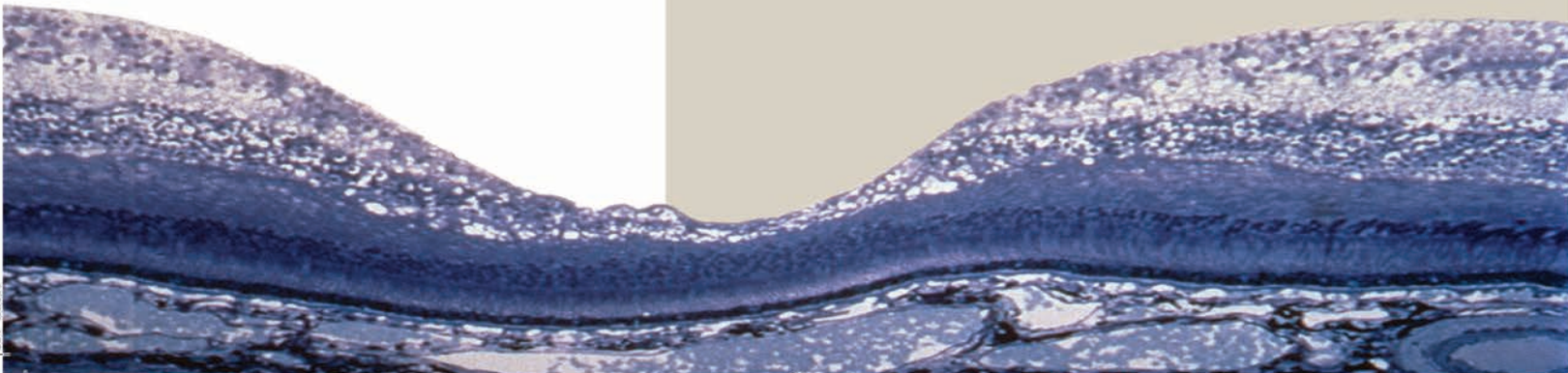
These research initiatives are only a few of many groundbreaking studies taking place at the Scheie Eye Institute. The innovative and collaborative focus of our faculty has led Scheie to rank number #1 in National Eye Institute funding for the past two years.

In the spirit of honoring Scheie faculty achievements and contributions to the field of ophthalmology, the Department will be publishing its first Annual Report in December. This magazine will highlight the impactful advancements and events occurring at Scheie over the course of 2016.

Finally, on behalf of the Scheie community, I would like to extend a warm welcome to our new faculty members, Dr. Cesar Briceño (Oculoplastics) and Dr. Nirali Bhatt (Uveitis), as well as our incoming residents and fellows. We look forward to working with you!

To all our readers, we hope you enjoy *Scheie Vision's* 2016 summer edition.

Joan O'Brien, MD
Chairman, Department of Ophthalmology



UPENN AND BIOGEN STRIKE $2 BILLION DEAL FOR GENE THERAPY PROGRAMS

By Rebecca Salowe

The University of Pennsylvania recently announced a $2 billion collaborative deal with Biogen to advance gene therapy and gene editing technologies. This collaboration will support the research of Dr. Jean Bennett (Director of the Center for Retinal and Ocular Therapeutics) and Dr. James Wilson (Director of Penn's Gene Therapy Program).

Biogen, a biotechnology company that develops therapies for neurological, autoimmune, and rare diseases, recently shifted focus to gene therapy programs. Ten months ago, the company signed a $1 billion-plus deal with the Applied Genetics Technologies Corporation (AGTC) to develop gene therapy programs for rare eye diseases.

The UPenn-Biogen collaboration has a broader focus, seeking to develop therapeutic approaches that target the eye, skeletal muscle, and central nervous system. These therapies will use existing and newly developed adeno-associated virus (AAV) vectors for gene transfer. Clinical testing on newly developed gene therapies could begin in as early as two years.

Additionally, the collaboration seeks to develop new manufacturing approaches to commercialize gene therapy products. There are currently no approved gene therapies in the United States, although two products are approved in Europe (glybera for lipoprotein lipase deficiency and strimvelis for severe combined immunodeficiency).

"We believe that this exciting collaboration with Biogen will further fuel our collective ability to translate our research into viable gene therapies," said Dr. Bennett.

Dr. Bennett and Dr. Wilson hope to expand their research, moving beyond disorders caused by single gene mutations to a spectrum of more complex diseases, such as multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's, and age-related macular degeneration.

The collaboration also may lead to exploration of gene editing technology as a potential therapeutic platform.

"Biogen views the development of gene editing technology as a natural extension of its current efforts to develop gene therapies employing viral and non-viral vectors," stated Dr. Oliver Davos, Senior Vice President of Biogen.

The deal may total up to $2 billion in research funding and milestone payments, beginning with $20 million upfront. Biogen has also committed $62.5 million to research and development costs in seven distinct research programs conducted by Drs. Bennett and Wilson over the next three to five years. Each program can trigger milestones ranging from $77.5 to $137.5 million per product. This collaboration has the potential to transform the field of gene therapy into one of the most promising therapeutic platforms available for treating diseases.

Jean Bennet (Daniel Burke Photography)

Biogen Headquarters (Image courtesy of Jesse Costa)

Thirteen-Year-Old Partners with Scheie for Community Service Event

By Ava Kikut

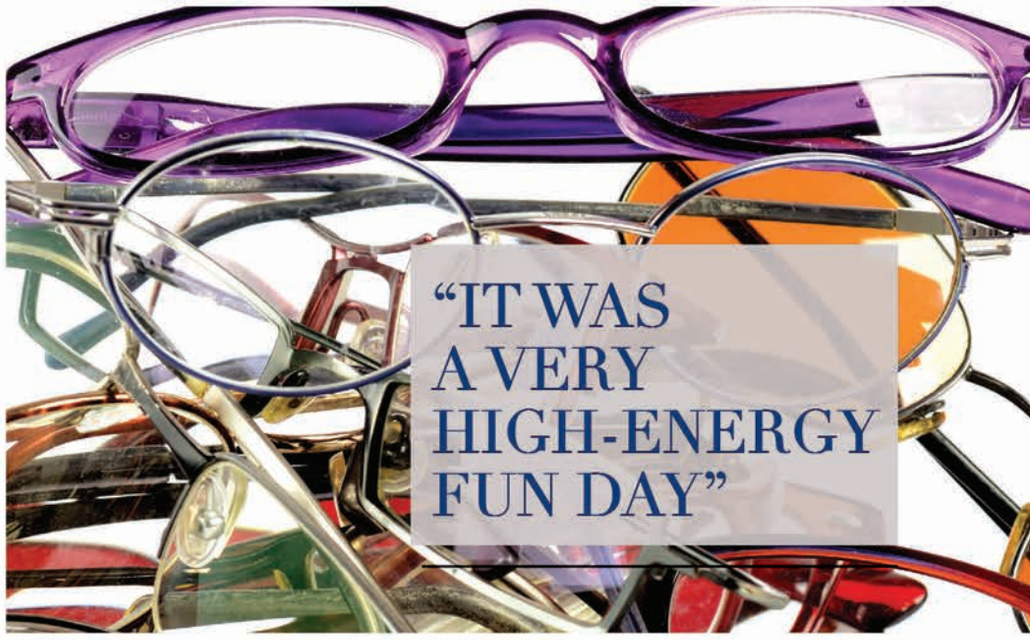
On April 2nd 2016, Scheie hosted its first "Eyeglass Giveaway," offering free optometry exams and prescription glasses to members of the Philadelphia community. The idea and funding for the event came from James Aschkenasy, a thirteen-year-old from Haverford, PA. James' interest in making glasses accessible to underprivileged communities began three years ago.

"He wears contact lenses and he thought about what it would be like not to be able to have them," explained his mother Jill. James set up boxes in doctors' offices to collect eyeglass frames, which he then delivered to clinics to be distributed in low income areas. As the project expanded, he decided to focus on providing prescription glasses, which can cost hundreds of dollars per pair.

This year, James raised $25,000 in donations. In addition to fundraising, he wanted to participate in a project that involved working with people directly.

"I really like interacting with people. I like talking, answering questions, and helping patients get the best product they can so they can be happy with what they received," he explained. With the idea of supporting an event that would offer individualized care to members of the local community, James connected with the Scheie Eye Institute.

The eyeglass giveaway was organized by Laura O'Keefe, Clinical Project Manager of a glaucoma genetics study, and attended by a team of Scheie volunteers, including optometrists, opticians, clinical research coordinators,



"IT WAS A VERY HIGH-ENERGY FUN DAY"

Scheie opticians assisted patients with fittings and choosing frames in the Scheie lobby optical shop.

patient service representatives, administrators, and cleaning staff.

"It was a very high-energy fun day," reported Sheara Hollin, Chief Operating Officer of Scheie.

Over 40 patients attended, many of whom brought their families along to enjoy pizza, donuts, and bagels. Scheie optometrists Stacey Cesarano and Alisha Fleming met with patients in shifts, offering refraction tests and prescriptions. At the Scheie lobby optical shop, opticians Dalton Wood and Barry Neverson assisted with fitting and choosing frames.

"They were having fun," Sheara reported. One highlight in particular was when the opticians and other Scheie volunteers helped a couple of high school students find colors to match their prom dresses!

James reflected on his experience meeting patients who received donations. "It was something special I will hardly ever forget," he stated. "We couldn't have been able to do this without the doctors and everyone that helped orchestrate and make it happen. I hope we can do it again in the future."

Scheie faculty and staff also enjoyed the giveaway and are looking forward to planning and participating in similar events to come. "I would do it again in a heartbeat," Sheara stated. "I think everyone would."

DOES EXCESS IRON CONTRIBUTE TO AMD?

By Rebecca Salowe

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the leading cause of vision loss among the elderly in the United States. This condition damages the macula, the sensitive region of the retina that provides sharp central vision. Despite its high prevalence, the pathogenesis of AMD remains poorly understood. Dr. Josh Dunaief, the Adele Niessen Professor of Ophthalmology, believes that iron overload may contribute to this debilitating condition.

Dr. Dunaief received his MD/PhD at Columbia University, where he first began conducting research on aging. He was surprised to learn how many elderly individuals were affected by AMD and had few effective treatment options. He began to research oxidative stress, which occurs when free radicals (such as iron) damage proteins, lipids, and DNA.

"My lab members found that AMD retinas have significantly more iron than age-matched controls without the disease," said Dr. Dunaief. "Excess iron is a major source of oxidative stress."

Additionally, patients with certain forms of hereditary iron overload can develop AMD at an early age. High levels of iron intake through red meat or excessive iron supplementation seem to increase the risk of AMD as well.

Dr. Dunaief hypothesizes that cells affected by AMD may respond to inflammation by holding onto iron, as they would in the case of a true infection. However, unlike the healthy iron bound to proteins throughout the body, this "free" iron can accumulate and damage cells.

A drug that targets and binds excess iron may help to slow or halt the progression of AMD. There is one FDA-approved drug on the market with this function, but it has serious limitations for AMD patients.

"One percent of patients who take this drug have a decrease in their white blood cells," said Dr. Dunaief. "Thus, patients on this drug must have their white blood cell number checked each week. This is unrealistic to ask of AMD patients who have had their disease for decades."

To address the need for a safer drug, Dr. Dunaief and Dr. Benjamin Kim, Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology, launched a clinical trial testing the efficacy of lipoic acid, an anti-oxidant and iron-binding

the GALA STUDY

(Geographic Atrophy Lipoic Acid)

Primary Outcome

Change in the rate of geographic atrophy (GA) growth after 18 months (Study visits will be every 6 months)

Basic Inclusion Criteria

- Age 55-90
- Visual Acuity 20/20 – 20/400 in the study eye
- GA in the study eye from age-related macular degeneration (AMD): 0.5 disc areas to 6 disc areas in size
- Presence of hyperfluorescence at the edge of GA on autofluorescence imaging

Basic Exclusion Criteria

- Evidence of ocular disease other than AMD that may confound the study outcomes
- History of intravitreal injection for choroidal neovascularization in the study eye
- History of laser treatment to the macula for the study eye
- History of prior participation in another therapeutic clinical trial for GA

If interested in referring a patient for this study, please contact **Joan Dupont** (office: **215.662.8038**, **Joan.DuPont@uphs.upenn.edu**) or **Ben Kim** (office: **215.662.8675**, **benjamin.kim@uphs.upen.edu**)

drug. The GALA study (described in table to left) will administer this drug to patients with geographic atrophy, an advanced form of AMD. After 18 months, AMD progression will be compared between treated patients and a control group taking a placebo.

Iron overload may also result from alterations in proteins involved in iron import and export from the retina. For example, Dr. Dunaief recently showed that a mutation in ferroportin, an iron transporter protein, leads to increased iron levels in the retina and retinal degeneration. This research was featured on the cover of *FASEB Journal*.

"Normally, ferroportin carries excess iron out of cells," explained Dr. Dunaief. "However, cells affected by AMD do not upregulate this protein, so they cannot get rid of excess iron."

A treatment approach that increases ferroportin levels in the retina could be very valuable for these patients. In the future, a library of candidate compounds could be screened to identify a drug candidate that increases ferroportin levels. In addition, gene therapy could be explored to overexpress this protein in the retina. This approach is currently being tested in mice with retinal iron overload in collaboration with the Center for Retinal and Ocular Therapeutics (CAROT).

Research on countering iron overload may have far-reaching consequences for AMD patients. Limiting damage from iron will not bring dead photoreceptors back to life, but it may slow or halt the progression of AMD and other debilitating eye diseases.

FACES OF SCHEIE: SCRIBES

By Ava Kikut

WHAT IS THE SCHEIE SCRIBE PROGRAM?

Scheie scribes increase the efficiency and quality of physician work. By taking notes during appointments, they enable doctors to remain fully attentive while interacting with patients. Scribes may also help with clerical tasks, including Institutional Review Board (IRB) and grant management writing. The scribe program at Scheie is unique in that it not only reduces work for physicians and improves patient experience; it invests in the development of scribes as future clinicians and scientists.

HOW DID THE SCHEIE SCRIBE PROGRAM BEGIN?

A transition to electronic health records (EHRs) in the last decade has increased the demand for medical scribes. Scribes are trained to navigate EHR systems and digitally document clinical encounters so physicians can focus on patient interactions during appointments and perform more efficiently. In 2010, after the University of Pennsylvania Health System shifted to EHRs, Scheie began hiring post-baccalaureate students as paid scribes. The Department now hires about 15-20 scribes a year.

HOW ARE SCHEIE SCRIBES SELECTED?

During the hiring process, program managers seek post-baccalaureate students who are willing to learn, assertive, skilled at multi-tasking, keyboard-savvy, and compatible with a specific physician. After completing a typing test and an initial interview, candidates are matched with doctors based on interests and personality. Each physician interviews and selects a scribe who will work closely with him/her over the course of a year.

"We are really pleased with the team we put together," said Lina Sanchez, Manager of Technicians and Scribes, who coordinates the hiring process along with Michele Sheehan.

HOW ARE SCHEIE SCRIBES FORMALLY TRAINED?

Scribes complete a day-long training course in operating Penn Chart as well as a 125-question examination to earn the Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology (JCAHPO) Ophthalmic Scribe Certification (OSC). The JCAHPO test focuses on five core content areas: History Taking, Ophthalmic Patient Services and Education, Ophthalmic Terminology, Medical Ethics and Legal Issues, and The Medical Note/ Records.

The training process has become increasingly thorough and uniform over the past couple years under Lina's supervision. In order to prepare each scribe for the JCAHPO exam, Lina selects relevant modules on an online tool, the Business Management Consulting (BSM) Connection. She also provides scribes with specific information about the ophthalmic specialty in which they will be working.

HOW ARE SCHEIE SCRIBES PREPARED TO ENGAGE COMFORTABLY WITH PATIENTS?

This year, all of the Scheie scribes will take the My Penn Experience (UPHS Penn Academy) course, which focuses on patient experience.

"[Scheie] is a family environment," explained Lina. "The scribe program fits into our culture of patient care first. We are all working together toward that goal." Lina identifies working with and around patients as one of the most important educational opportunities for scribes. "It gives them training with how to be in a hospital and interact with patients so they are comfortable when they come out of medical school," she explained.

Through active participation in a hospital environment, scribes can apply patient experience training daily.

"Interacting with the physicians and the patients, while being able to observe procedures that are performed on the patients allows for a great learning environment," remarked Scheie scribe Priya Jain.

HOW DOES THE SCRIBE PROGRAM FOSTER MENTORSHIP?

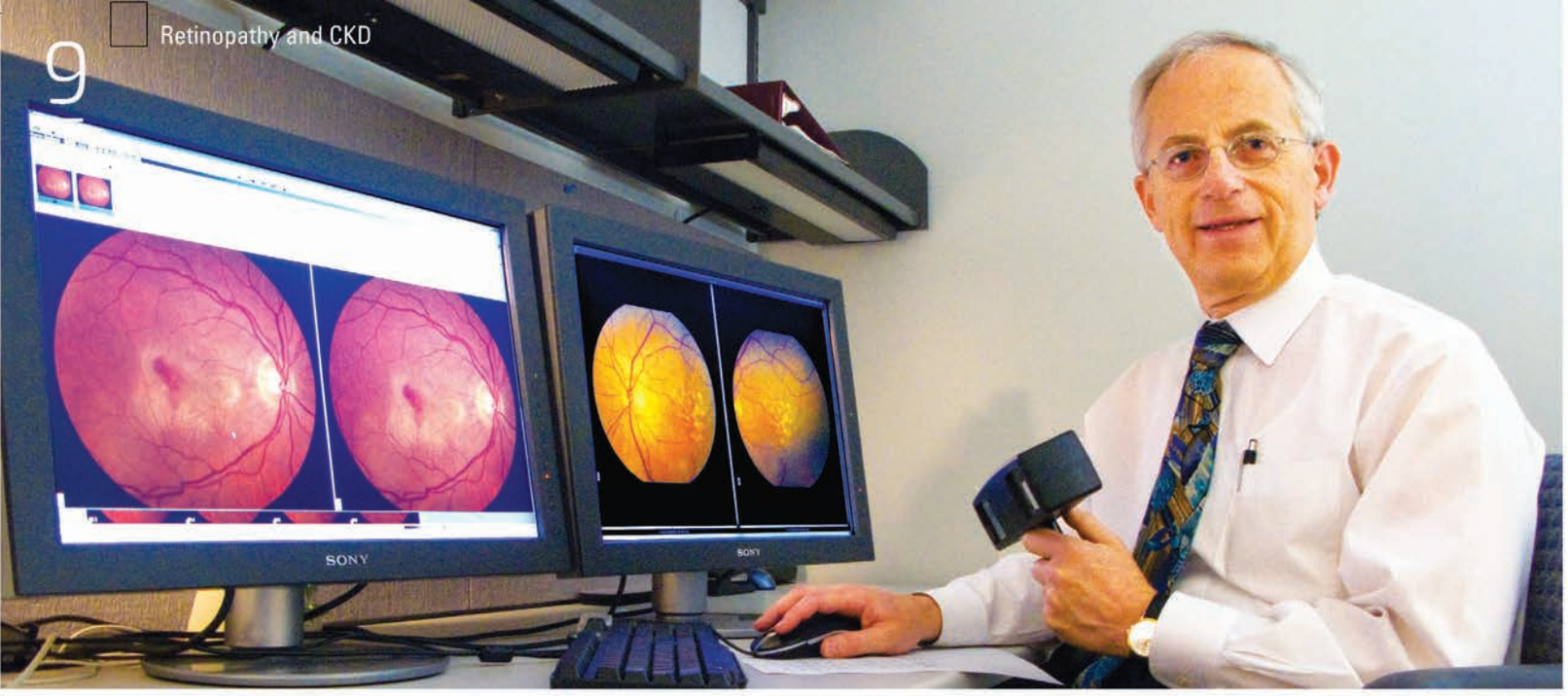
Scheie is dedicated to preparing scribes for careers in medicine. Each scribe is paired with a faculty mentor. Scribes work with these mentors daily, and observe their approaches to handling a vast variety of patient cases.

"Close interactions with physicians allow for a more personal relationship to be formed between the scribe and the physician," explained Priya.

"I get to work with not only a brilliant, but a very compassionate physician," stated another Scheie scribe, Rupal Patel, when asked her favorite part about working at Scheie. "Dr. Miller is wonderful in handling difficult patients with a smile. She truly is a breath of fresh air in this field... She is always positive. It is a rare and very valuable trait that I deeply admire in her."

In addition to faculty members, scribes regularly interact and learn from medical students, residents, and fellows. These mentors provide guidance during the medical school application process, and throughout scribes' academic and professional careers. Most scribes also have the opportunity to become mentors at the end of their time at Scheie, as they are shadowed by new scribes during the transition process.

By focusing on mentorship and growth, the scribe program is designed to grow future leaders in medicine that could one day join Scheie faculty as colleagues and collaborative partners.



Dr. Grunwald Finds Link between Retinopathy and Kidney Disease

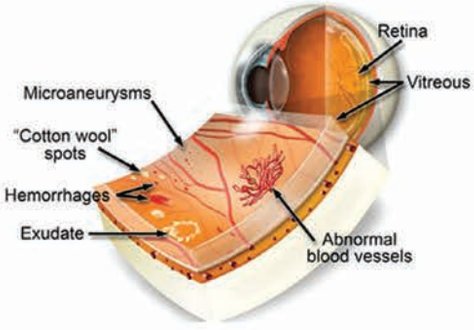
By Marquis Vaughn

Juan Grunwald's research for Penn under the Chronic Renal Insufficiency Cohort (CRIC) has contributed to the understanding of how abnormalities in the retina, which can be examined non-invasively, can reflect broader pathology throughout the body. CRIC is a longitudinal, multicenter study of adults suffering from chronic kidney disease (CKD). CRIC researchers explore risk factors for CKD and other chronic conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, and seek to develop therapies to manage these diseases.

CKD is characterized by the substantial loss of kidney function. The kidneys are responsible for filtering waste and other excess fluids from the blood, which are then flushed out through the urine. As CKD advances, it can prevent the kidneys from excreting these wastes, causing them to build up in the bloodstream. CKD can lead to kidney failure, which ultimately requires dialysis or even a kidney transplant to preserve life. According to the National Kidney Foundation, 26 million people in the United States are diagnosed with some form of CKD, and millions more are at risk of obtaining this disease.

Interestingly, a high percentage of patients enrolled in CRIC (who have been diagnosed with CKD and/or other chronic illnesses) also have eye pathologies. Dr. Grunwald, the Director of the Vivian S. Lasko Retinal Vascular Research Center, developed the Retinopathy in Chronic Renal Insufficiency Cohort (RCRIC) under the umbrella of CRIC, to further study this observation. RCRIC, which was carried out at the Scheie Image Reading Center, investigated the relationship between retinopathy (damage to the retinal vasculature) and kidney and other systemic diseases.

Diabetic Retinopathy



After photographing and examining the retinas of patients enrolled in the CRIC study, Dr. Grunwald and colleagues found a significant association between severe retinopathy and low glomerular filtration rate (a test of kidney function). This correlation was stronger among diabetic patients: 49% of diabetic participants had retinopathy, while only 11% of non-diabetic participants had retinopathy. The presence of retinopathy was also associated with a higher risk of developing end stage renal disease and cardiovascular disease in the future. In fact, participants that had proliferative retinopathy, the more advanced stage of retinopathy, had a nine times higher risk of developing strokes than those that did not have retinopathy. These results point toward a common mechanism underlying the retinal and renal vascular changes.

RCRIC is one of the first studies to show that the presence of retinopathy in patients with kidney disease provides information of prognostic value regarding the future development of kidney and cardiovascular disease. Furthermore, severity of retinopathy can serve as an indicator of severity of CKD, highlighting the need for eye evaluations in patients with CKD.

WELCOME

Scheie Welcomes **Dr. Nirali Bhatt**

By Ava Kikut

The Scheie Eye Institute was pleased to welcome Dr. Nirali Bhatt as an Assistant Professor of Clinical Ophthalmology this past December. Dr. Bhatt specializes in uveitis and medical retina and sees patients at the Perelman Center for Advanced Medicine as well as the Philadelphia VA Medical Center. In addition to her clinical work, Dr. Bhatt is involved in a multicenter study on the comparison of three treatments for macular edema in uveitis patients.

Dr. Bhatt first became interested in ophthalmology during a mission trip in Southeast Asia when she was an undergraduate at the George Washington University. "Ophthalmology provides a good mix of clinical and procedural medicine. It requires thought and precision, which I have always enjoyed," explained Dr. Bhatt.

After earning a B.S. in biological sciences with additional studies in chemistry and political science, she was awarded early selection at the George Washington University School of Medicine, where she became interested in the whole body approaches used to treat and diagnose retinal and inflammatory diseases.

Dr. Bhatt completed her residency at the University of Maryland, where she served as chief resident during her final year. She became a fellow in medical retinal and ocular inflammation at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD, where she was involved in several clinical research trials as well as clinical care. After her fellowship, Dr. Bhatt worked in private practice in Philadelphia before coming to Scheie.

Dr. Bhatt has enjoyed the opportunity to work with complex diagnoses at Scheie. "Scheie has a group of esteemed colleagues with incredible intellectual depth. I am looking forward to using critical thought to cultivate exceptional patient care in this environment," she remarked. In particular, Dr. Bhatt is passionate about pursuing clinical research in uveitis. "Since uveitis is rare compared to many other eye diseases, it is important that trainees learn what is current in the field to be knowledgeable and comprehensive clinicians," she said.

Dr. Bhatt is excited about her teaching and mentoring roles at Scheie. "My mentors shaped my interest in the field, and hopefully being a mentor may spark a similar interest somewhere along the line from me," she remarked.

Scheie is excited to introduce Dr. Bhatt as a new member of our faculty and community. We would also like to express congratulations to Dr. Bhatt and her husband for welcoming their first child in January!

Scheie Welcomes **Dr. César Briceño**

By Marquis Vaughn

The Scheie Eye Institute is pleased to announce the arrival of Dr. César Briceño, who will be joining us this September as an Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology. Dr. Briceño specializes in ophthalmic plastic and reconstructive surgery, particularly thyroid disease, orbital trauma, and facial reconstruction. He also studies surgical and quality life outcomes in oculoplastic and orbital surgery. Dr. Briceño will be working closely with Dr. Sonul Mehta in Scheie's Oculoplastics Department.

Dr. Briceño was born in Santo Domingo, capital of the Dominican Republic. After earning his undergraduate degree in biology at Harvard University, he worked as a management consultant in the pharmaceutical industry in Boston. He attended Johns Hopkins University for medical school, the University of Southern California for his ophthalmology residency, and the University of Michigan Kellogg Eye Center for his oculoplastics fellowship, where he joined the faculty. At Kellogg, in addition to his clinical work and research, Dr. Briceño provided surgical instruction to medical students, residents, and fellows. "I'm interested in developing effective ways to teach surgical skills by using simulations and by developing curricula," he said.

Dr. Briceño has been deeply involved in outreach work in Latin America through the University of Michigan Medical School's (UMMS) Global REACH Program. As the liaison to Latin America for Kellogg, Dr. Briceño participated in a collaborative project to study the effectiveness of telemedicine for the diagnosis of cutaneous eyelid lesions, developed a resident exchange program between Kellogg and Brazilian residents, and formed and expanded educational and research collaborations between the University of Michigan and Brazilian institutions. He has also cultivated relationships in Chile, Colombia, and Peru.

Dr. Briceño is excited to join the Scheie family. He is particularly enthusiastic about potential cross-departmental collaborative opportunities, which he expects will "facilitate the multi-disciplinary care of thyroid eye disease patients."

Outside of work, Dr. Briceño teaches competitive ballroom dancing. He enjoys painting and spending time with his husband, Dr. José Bauermeister, and Beatrice, their adorable black mouth cur. Welcome, Dr. Briceño!

2016-2017 RESIDENTS
AND THEIR FAVORITE DESTINATIONS

FIRST YEAR RESIDENTS

Michael Ammar, MD
Vietnam – I scuba-dived in Nha Trang, white water rafted in Da Lat, and fell in love with the beauty of the country and its people.

Rebecca Bausell, MD
Rehoboth Beach, DE – I spent many vacations here during my childhood, enjoying days on the beach, local seafood, and homemade ice cream.

Lindsay Dawson, MD
Hudson Valley, NY – my hometown, which is beautiful, peaceful, and relaxing, especially during the fall when leaves are changing.

Jaclyn Gurwin, MD
New Zealand and Australia – from parasailing and hiking to biking and kayaking, the outdoor adventures are endless.

SECOND YEAR RESIDENTS

Preema Buch, MD
Ko Samui Island, Thailand – we went inside a tiger pen and rode on elephants.

Iga Gray, MD, PhD
Australia – I fulfilled my lifelong dream of scuba-diving on the Great Barrier Reef.

Christopher Hwang, MD, PhD
Maui, Hawaii – beautiful sunrise at Haleakala, sunset on the water in West Maui, and hiking in beautiful Hana.

Akosua Nti, MD
Capetown – gorgeous scenery.

THIRD YEAR RESIDENTS

Nicole Fuerst, MD
Maui, Hawaii – beautiful beaches and great memories with my family.

Marisa Lau, MD
Japan – wonderful culture, friendly people, beautiful history, vibrant cities, and delicious food.

Christiana Munroe, MD
Heidelberg, Germany – beautiful marketplace and hiking trails, and my mother's family still lives here.

Daniel Sarezky, MD
Yosemite National Park – nothing compares to vertical granite cliffs thousands of feet high rising from the valley floor.

2016-2017 FELLOWS

Anton Kolomeyer MD, PhD
Retina

Ahmara Ross, MD, PhD
Glaucoma

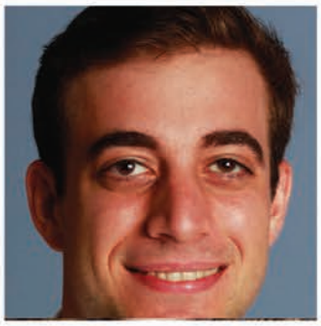
Anita Kohli, MD
Neuro-Opthalmology

Imran Jivraj, MD
Neuro-Opthalmology

Karen Revere, MD
CHOP Plastics

Anastasia Traba
Retina

Coordinated by Aaishah Raquib



Michael Sulewski, MD
Charleston, SC – Southern charm, delicious cooking, and local golf courses.

Keirnan Willett, MD
Northwoods, Minnesota – thousands of beautiful lakes surrounded by pine trees.

Katherine Uyhazi, MD, PhD
Sorrento, Italy – for the views and the gelato!

Trabana, MD

Joseph Griffith, MD
Pediatrics

Grand Rounds Schedule 2016-2017

Join us every Thursday at Grand Rounds for presentations by guest speakers, faculty, and Scheie alumni. Presentations begin at 7:00 AM in the Kozart Auditorium. Coffee and pastries will be provided.

SEPTEMBER 1, 2016
Carol L. Schields, MD
Co-Director of Oncology Service, Wills Eye Hospital; Professor of Ophthalmology, Thomas Jefferson University

SEPTEMBER 8, 2016
Elmer Tu, MD
Professor of Clinical Ophthalmology, University of Illinois; Director of Cornea Service, Illinois Eye and Ear Infirmary

SEPTEMBER 22, 2016
Berger Lecture

OCTOBER 6, 2016
Cindy W. Christian, MD
Pediatrician Specializing in Child Abuse, CHOP

OCTOBER 20, 2016
Maria DeShields, RN, MSN
Director of Risk Management, University of Pennsylvania
Martin Bohnenkamp, MD
Chair of Patient Safety Committee, PPMC; Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine, Perelman School of Medicine

NOVEMBER 3, 2016
Michael T. Mullen, MD, MSCE
Assistant Professor of Neurology Stroke Division, Perelman School of Medicine

NOVEMBER 10, 2016
Edward J. Wladis, MD
Professor of Clinical Ophthalmology, University of Illinois; Director of Cornea Service, Illinois Eye and Ear Infirmary

NOVEMBER 17, 2016
Delu Song, MD, PhD
Research Associate, F.M. Kirby Center for Molecular Ophthalmology, Perelman School of Medicine

DECEMBER 1, 2017
Geoffrey K. Aguirre, MD, PhD
Associate Professor of Neurology, Perelman School of Medicine

JANUARY 5, 2017
M. Sean Grady, MD
Chairman, Department of Neurosurgery; Charles Harrison Frazier Professor of Neurosurgery, Perelman School of Medicine

FEBUARY 9, 2017
David G. Hunter, MD, PhD
Richard M. Robb Chair of Ophthalmology, Children's Hospital Boston; Professor and Vice Chair Ophthalmology at Harvard Medical School

MARCH 9, 2017
Lee M. Jampol, MD
Professor of Ophthalmology, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine

APRIL 6, 2017
Emily Chew, MD
Deputy Director of Epidemiology and Clinical Applications Division and Deputy Clinical Director, National Eye Institute

June 1, 2017
Anne Norris, MD
Chief Medical Officer, Penn Home Care and Home Infusion Therapy; Medical Director, Penn Presbyterian Medical Center Infectious Diseases Specialty Clinic; Associate Professor of Clinical Medicine, Perelman School of Medicine

If you would like to add/remove your name from this mailing list, or have any questions or comments, please email **Rebecca.Salowe@uphs.upenn.edu** or call **215.662.8015**

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Alumni President Column

It seems like yesterday that I was walking the halls of the Scheie Eye Institute as a medical student, resident, fellow and young attending. However, with the blink of an eye, my generation of residents from the mid to late 1990s are about halfway through our career, as a new generation of young doctors start their journey.

Time does provide perspective. I am sure most young ophthalmologists have never prescribed Phospholine Iodide or used a CryoProbe. Twenty years ago, OCT was limited to research on the sixth floor and intravitreal injections were limited to antibiotics for endophthalmitis. Ophthalmology has made huge strides in care in the past two decades across every specialty since I started my training.

No matter what the standard of care was when you trained, we all share a wonderful link to the past and future through the Scheie Eye Institute. The Annual Alumni Meeting held each spring in Philadelphia is a wonderful reminder of our heritage and a great chance to catch up with colleagues. Dr. Jane Portnoy's talk this year on a history of ophthalmic instruments and Dr. Dan Gombos' talk on the history of ocular oncology were just two examples of looking back. And there were a myriad of talks pointing the way forward. As always, I encourage everyone to stay engaged with our beloved institute and to attend our Annual Alumni Meeting.

Scott M. Goldstein, MD
Alumni President

Annual Meeting Celebrates 142 Years of Ophthalmology at Penn

By Marquis Vaughn

Sep Rousta '97, Dan Gombos '98, Scott Goldstein '00, Mina Massaro '98 and Bill Trattler '96

The Scheie Eye Institute celebrated its 142nd Anniversary at the Scheie Alumni Meeting this past April. It was a welcome opportunity for alumni to reconnect with old friends, share memories, and discuss the many advances in ophthalmology research. The alumni enjoyed two days of scientific and clinical case studies from each subspecialty. Dr. Daniel Gombos delivered the 2nd Honored Alumni Lecturer and Dr. James Tsai gave the 11th David M. Kozart Memorial Lecture.

The Department continued its tradition of hosting a celebratory dinner at the Rittenhouse Hotel on Friday evening. The evening was filled with conversation and laughter with old friends – as well as a very lively dance floor! There was a very positive feeling unique to our Department.

This year, the Department hosted its first dinner honoring the resident alumni celebrating their 50th anniversary of graduation from Scheie. The dinner took place at the historic Union League of Philadelphia. Alumni from all over the country came to celebrate this milestone with Scheie's current residents and faculty.

Dr. Joan O'Brien, Chairman of the Ophthalmology Department, praised this new anniversary tradition:

> The reunion of the 50th year residency class is modeled after the tradition at the University of Pennsylvania Graduation of the 50 year alumni imparting their wisdom and extending hands to the graduating class. In this process, they recognize and recall knowledge that was given to them when they were sitting in those seats as graduates. So, really, the wisdom that is being passed down is 100 years of physician wisdom to the new class. This kind of tradition deserves to be distinguished by our Department, and that is our goal behind the '50 Year Residency Dinner.'

Please mark your calendars and save the dates of April 21st and 22nd for the 2017 Scheie Alumni Weekend.

Many thanks to Course Director Dr. Stephen Orlin and Course Co-Directors Drs. Alexander Brucker and Joan O'Brien, as well as Lea Bramnick and Karen Cope-Scarfo.

Alumni Spotlight: Sepideh Tara Rousta, MD

By Aaishah Raquib

Dr. Rousta was always drawn to healthcare. Growing up, she was inspired by her father's work as a surgeon and the esteem and gratitude he received from his patients. During her second year of medical school at Stony Brook University School of Medicine, she was inspired by a lecture about the retina, which sparked her interest in ophthalmology. "I found it fascinating," Dr. Rousta recalled. "Ophthalmology is a field that combines clinical continuity of patient care along with surgical procedures, and that really appealed to me then as it does now."

As a Scheie resident, Dr. Rousta spent 20 weeks at CHOP, where she was first exposed to pediatric ophthalmology and adult strabismus surgery. "With the help of amazing instructors like Dr. Graham Quinn and Dr. Richard Hertle, I became inspired to consider a future in pediatric ophthalmology," she said.

Dr. Rousta is now a pediatric ophthalmologist at the University Children's Eye Center, a private practice in East Brunswick, NJ. She treats a wide age range of patients with strabismus (from infants to adults) and also works with rheumatologists in New Jersey and New York City to co-manage difficult cases of pediatric uveitis.

Pediatric ophthalmology gives Dr. Rousta an opportunity to make a significant impact on children's futures by catching and treating problems during their beginning stages. She feels it is a tremendous responsibility, which motivates her to stay current with new developments.

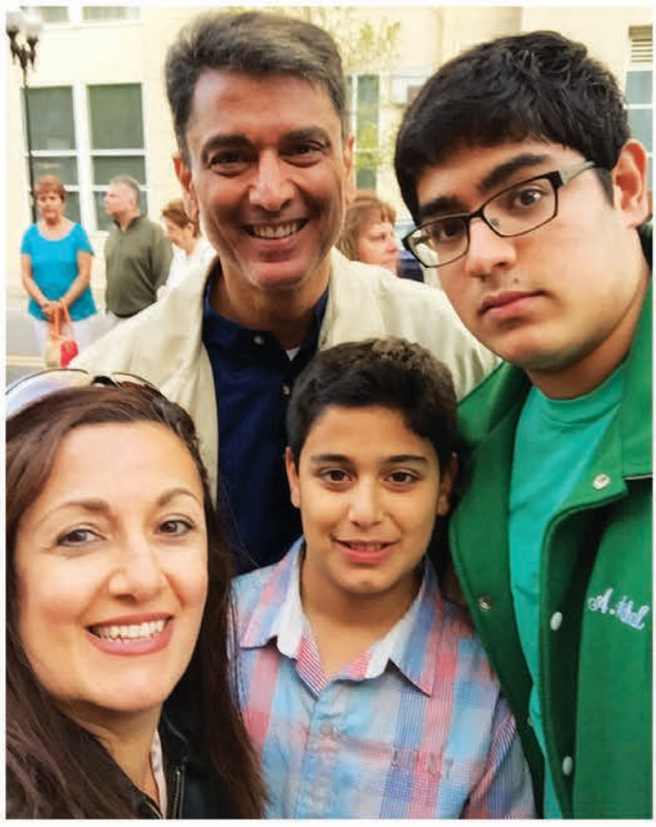
"A good pediatric ophthalmologist should have a focused center of playfulness and poise," she said. "Our field requires patience and problem-solving skills, which remain unwavering despite the frequent turmoil of dealing with young children and nervous families. Working with children brings out the best in me."

Dr. Rousta also teaches residents and pediatric ophthalmology fellows at Wills Eye Hospital, where she presides over a pediatric and adult strabismus clinic in the morning and operates in the afternoon.

Dr. Rousta noted that the mentorship she received herself, as a resident at Scheie, profoundly influenced her career. "Dr. Stephen Orlin taught me that cataract and corneal surgery can be done flawlessly, and Dr. Sandy Brucker gave amazing encouragement and support," she said. "Dr. Kozart…taught me to always listen to the patient, because the clues are in the history – and always take time with the clinical findings because therein lie your answers."

One of Dr. Rousta's fondest memories was her first cataract surgery with Dr. Volpe. "He was unbelievably patient despite my lack of experience. He taught me by allowing me to do the steps myself while he confidently talked me through them," she remembered.

In addition to her mentors, Dr. Rousta is thankful for the lifelong friends she made at Scheie, including Drs. Nancy Benegas, Andy Hall, Layla Kamoun, and Dan Tran. "I was also lucky to meet my dear and brilliant friend, Dr. Mina Massaro!" Dr. Rousta exclaimed. "We had some crazy calls together, but would end up making each other laugh a lot and learn a lot, which we still do today at AAO and Alumni Day!"



Dr. Rousta is married with two sons in New Jersey. Her older son Alex is a rising senior in high school and her younger son, Cameron, is starting seventh grade. "Neither one has expressed an interest in medicine (yet!). It may sound trite, but I tell them what a privilege it is to be able to do something each day that makes an improvement in someone else's life."

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The Scheie Eye Institute is the Department of Ophthalmology at the University of Pennsylvania. Scheie has been a leader in the field of ophthalmic research, education, and patient care for 142 years. Many of our greatest advancements in vision saving therapy have been made possible by donations from individuals and organizations.

Will you join the Scheie Eye Institute?

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