



THE UNIVERSITY OF
CHICAGO

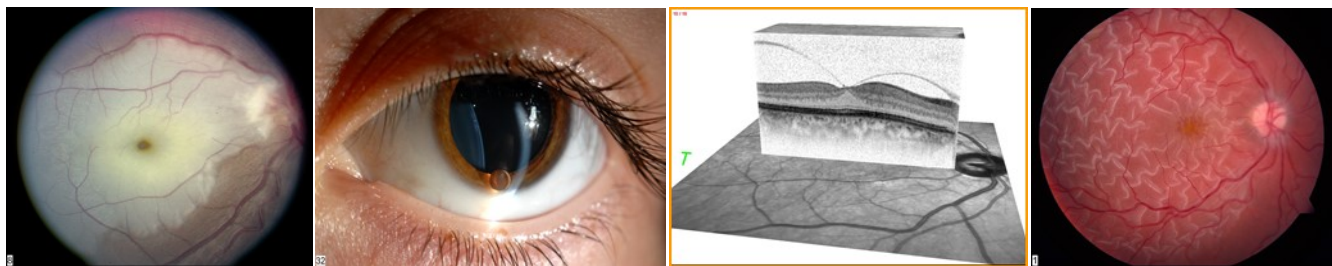
UChicago Medicine

Department of
Ophthalmology
and Visual Science

The University of Chicago Vitreoretinal Service
Fellowship in the Diseases and Surgery of the Retina, Macula and Vitreous



Fellowship in the Diseases and Surgery of the Retina, Macula, and Vitreous



It is with great pleasure that my partners and I welcome you to the University of Chicago's Retina Service. Since 2005, we have been training exceptionally skilled vitreoretinal surgeons. Our Vitreoretinal Service has a long track record of offering state of the art vitreoretinal surgery, providing exceptional patient care, and conducting clinical research. Furthermore, we are involved in numerous educational efforts at the local and national level.

We are very passionate about training the future generation of vitreoretinal fellows. All of our attending physicians bring with them years of experience, allowing them to pass skills and techniques onto our fellows each year. The diversity of training includes both university and private practice settings in three locations. This varied exposure leads to an educational, fulfilling experience for the fellows. Along with obtaining excellent clinical and surgical skills, our fellows learn how to balance a busy clinic and OR schedule in an efficient and economically sensible fashion. Furthermore, our Service strongly encourages fellow participation in clinical research and FDA registration trials.

We are also proud of the AUPO and ASRS accreditation of our vitreoretinal fellowship program.

My partners and I are committed to fellowship training and will continue to strive to make our fellowship a great experience that yields excellent vitreoretinal surgeons for years to come.



Seenu M. Hariprasad, MD

Shui-Chin Lee Professor of Ophthalmology and Visual Science
Chief, Vitreoretinal Service
Director, Clinical Research
Director, Fellowship in Diseases and Surgery of the Retina, Macula and Vitreous

Benefactors



John Snyder

The Snyder Family Fellowship Endowment Fund

Established in 2014, the Snyder Family Fellowship Fund was used by the University to establish and endow the *Snyder Family Fellowship in the Diseases, and Surgery of the Retina, Macula and Vitreous*. This Fellowship supports postgraduate Fellows undergoing specialized training in Vitreoretinal Surgery in the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Science under the direction of Seenu M. Hariprasad, MD.

Mr. John Snyder’s desire to give to the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Science stems from personal experience; his father and uncle lost their eyesight from macular degeneration. “When people begin losing their eyesight at an advanced age, it is harder for them to adapt through learning Braille or using assistive technologies,” Snyder notes.

"My father started losing his ability to read, and since he was a lawyer, books were his life," Snyder says. "He eventually had to use a magnifying glass and was hardly able to see the television. It affected his mental outlook, and he declined very rapidly."

Snyder wants to help other future patients – including his children, who are genetically predisposed to macular degeneration – to avoid his father’s fate. Snyder is optimistic that Dr. Hariprasad and the University of Chicago medicine’s vitreoretinal service, with assistance from generous donations, will be able to train more doctors and scholars on how to better prevent and treat diseases of the retina.

The Shui-Chin Lee Fellowship Endowment Fund



李水清
Shui-Chin Lee

Established in 2014, the Shui-Chin Lee Fellowship Endowment Fund was used by the University to establish and endow the *Shui-Chin Lee Fellowship in the Diseases and Surgery of the Retina, Macula, and Vitreous*. The Fellowship supports postgraduate Fellows undergoing specialized training in Vitreoretinal Surgery in the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Science under the direction of Seenu M. Hariprasad, MD.

Perhaps the most important idea that Mr. Shui-Chin Lee taught his children was that while acquiring knowledge was imperative, the way knowledge and information were internally processed and organized mattered more. To that end, he encouraged them to immerse themselves in math, science and technology. This allowed his children to cultivate their ability in dialectic analysis, a philosophical tool that emphasizes reason and deduction in order to verify and probe for the highest of all concepts: truth. It is the pursuit of this truth that ultimately drives academics and its sciences; it is the impetus of the research we perform in our Vitreoretinal Service, to seek answers to questions that impact vision and, therefore, human life.

Non-endowment Fellowship Support

Several, generous philanthropic donors have provided the additional, ongoing, annual support necessary for sustaining our fellowship training program.

Mr. Stephen Brenner

Mrs. Kathryn Earley and Mr. Robert Earley

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hill

Mrs. Rosa O’Connor

Mr. and Mrs. John Paleczny

Dr. Robert W. Ridley

Mr. George R. and Mrs. Sally Rieger

Mrs. Ruth Ultmann

Mr. Ray A. Wiora

Dr. Daniel Kiernan and Mrs. Kristi Carpenter-Kiernan

Drs. Veeral and Monica Sheth

Mrs. Michele and Mr. Noel Moore

Mrs. Cindy and Mr. Richard Strup

Mr. Greg Boecker

Ms. Helen Oros

Mrs. Mignon and Mr. John Snyder, Jr.

Vitreoretinal Fellowship

The Department of Ophthalmology offers a two-year vitreoretinal fellowship that is both AUPO and ASRS compliant. The focus of this fellowship is to evaluate, diagnose, and medically or surgically manage vitreoretinal diseases. The retina fellows work very closely with the retina faculty and retina resident as part of the “retina team” to run the Service.

The First Year:

The first year of the fellowship is primarily devoted to the diagnosis and treatment of vitreoretinal disease and ROP. The first year fellow gets extensive hands-on experience in the operating room. Rotations in this year consist of retina clinics at the University of Chicago along with the private practice retina service at Mercy Hospital and Medical Center headed by Dr. Shaun Ittiara. Additionally, the first year fellow spends time under the tutelage of Dr. Michael Blair and Dr. Sarah Rodriguez, learning the diagnosis and management of complex pediatric vitreoretinal pathology such as ROP.

During the first year, the fellow is expected to become facile with retina laser treatment for a wide breadth of vitreoretinal pathology. Intravitreal injections, cryopexy of peripheral retinal pathology and other basic procedures are mastered. Additionally, the first year fellow will have ample opportunity to learn vitrectomy, endolaser, and retinal detachment repair techniques. Diagnostic and treatment modalities available include fundus photography, fluorescein angiography, new generation OCT (OCT-A and intraoperative OCT), ICG, A-and B-scan ultrasonography, electrophysiological testing, PASCAL, and micropulse lasers. Opportunities are provided for ample experience in each of these areas.

The first year fellow is strongly encouraged to spend time in clinical research. Friday morning is fellow block research time. Opportunities exist for involvement in clinical research projects and travel to national meetings. Fellows are encouraged to produce several manuscripts during each year of the fellowship; additionally, fellows are listed as sub-investigators on clinical trials.

The Second Year:

During the second year of the fellowship, in addition to the activities outlined above, the fellow has the opportunity to assume primary responsibility for the management and treatment of complex vitreoretinal pathology in the clinic and OR. The fellows are expected to continue research started during the first year, present data at national meetings, and submit research for publication.

We Asked Current and Graduated Fellows:

“What are 15 Vitreoretinal Fellowship Attraction Points?”

- Dr. Hariprasad – The program director’s training at Wash U / Barnes and teaching fellows the "Barnes way".
- Exposure to cutting-edge diagnostic technologies such as OCT-A and intraoperative OCT.
- High volume of vitreoretinal procedures and cases.
- Top notch surgical equipment (Constellation Vitrectomy System + New Leica Microscope w/ HD Video and Monitors + True Vision 3D System).
- Strong emphasis on learning the business aspects of retina and how to efficiently run a retina clinic and OR.
- ROP and pediatric retina experience with Dr. Blair and Dr. Rodriguez.
- Exposure to different Chicago hospital systems.
- Fellows are sub-investigators on all clinical trials, which is of tremendous value after graduation since the trials may be brought to the fellows’ respective practices/institutions.
- The U of C network of fellows, which continues to grow and spans the entire country geographically (New York to California). EXCELLENT job placement after graduation (both academic and private institutions) with tremendous faculty support to get your dream job.
- Clinical research - Fellows are exposed to and take part in several studies. Also, the program provides several individual research opportunities. Fellows are encouraged to apply for various research awards.
- The opportunity to attend major retina meetings and investigator meetings for clinical trials (ASRS, Retina Society, ARVO, etc.).
- Very reasonable call schedule - Able to enjoy weekends without excessive calls. Much resident support for call coverage.
- Camaraderie of the fellowship program – The program director and other attending's treat fellows like family. The program also fosters much camaraderie among fellows, residents, and medical students.
- Reputation of the University of Chicago as well as excellent support staff, facilities, and happy work environment.
- The city of Chicago is the “FOVEA of the United States” – Given citywide Rabb Retina Society Meetings, internationally recognized retina faculty throughout the city, AVTT Retina Fellows’ Meeting, Retina Fellows’ Mid-Year Forum, Chicagoland Retinal Update Meeting, AAO, quarterly dinner events for Chicago retina fellows, etc.

Meet the Faculty

SEENU M. HARIPRASAD, MD

Shui-Chin Lee Professor in Ophthalmology & Visual Science

Chief, Vitreoretinal Service

Director, Clinical Research

Director, Fellowship in the Diseases, and Surgery of the Retina, Macula and Vitreous

Dr. Seenu M. Hariprasad, MD, Professor in the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Science at the University of Chicago, has been named the department's first Shui-Chin Lee Professor in Ophthalmology and Visual Science.

Dr. Hariprasad is an internationally recognized expert in the diseases and surgery of the retina, vitreous, and macula. He is an active leader in the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Science, serving as Chief of the Vitreoretinal Service, Director of Clinical Research, and Director of the Fellowship in Vitreoretinal Diseases and Surgery.

Since joining the University of Chicago in 2005, Dr. Hariprasad has gained a reputation as a leading specialist in various vitreoretinal disorders, including AMD, diabetic eye disease, intraocular infection, and RVO. He has been recognized for bringing more effective and efficient sutureless microincisional vitrectomy techniques to the University of Chicago.

Dr. Hariprasad's clinical research has contributed to the understanding and use of new medications to combat a wide variety of vitreoretinal disorders. He has served as principal or sub-investigator in more than 45 national and international clinical trials evaluating various medications, sustained drug-delivery devices, and surgical innovations to treat a variety of diseases such as AMD, diabetic retinopathy, and RVO.

His work has led to over 300 peer-reviewed publications, meeting abstracts and textbook chapters. He has presented more than 150 individual lectures in cities around the world. Dr. Hariprasad's published textbook, *Management of Retinal Vein Occlusion: Current Concepts*, is one of only a small number of textbooks dedicated to this disease.

He has also been awarded numerous honors, including the AAO Achievement Award, ASRS Crystal Apple Award, and ASRS Senior Honor Achievement Award. He has been named a top doctor in publications such as *US News & World Report* and *Chicago Magazine*.



Clinical Interests

- Age-related macular degeneration
- Diabetic eye diseases
- Retinal vein occlusions
- Epiretinal membrane
- Endophthalmitis
- Vitreous hemorrhage
- Retinal detachment

Meet the Faculty

DIMITRA SKONDRA, MD, PhD

Associate Professor in Ophthalmology & Visual Science

Director of the Terry Ernest Ocular Imaging Center

Dimitra Skondra MD, PhD is an Associate Professor of Ophthalmology and Visual Science at The University of Chicago and serves as the Director of the Terry Ernest Ocular Imaging Center. Dr. Skondra is a respected board-certified retina specialist who focuses on the medical and surgical treatment of vitreoretinal diseases. She is an expert in delivering care for diabetic eye disease, retinal detachment, age-related macular degeneration, retinal vein occlusions, epiretinal membrane, macular hole, trauma, proliferative vitreoretinopathy, intraocular infection, and macular diseases. She has advanced training and expertise in the surgical repair of complex diabetic retinal detachments.

Dr. Skondra is an active researcher in addition to her strong clinical retina practice. As a clinician scientist, she is dedicated to investigating methods to improve treatment strategies for retinal conditions, and she is actively engaged in clinical and translational research in diabetes and other retinal diseases. Her research has a strong focus on retinal imaging in order to provide a better understanding of the pathogenesis, earlier detection, identification of predisposing factors, and prognostic information of retinal diseases and guide targeted intervention. Recently her research has delved into the microbiome and its role in eye disease.

Dr. Skondra has received several prestigious awards including the Retina Society Raymond Margherio Award, Harvard Alcon Clinical Scholar Award, AUPO Resident Research Award, ARVO/Alcon Early Career Clinician Scientist Award, Tonseth-Joslin Research Fellowship Award, and the Knights Templar Award. She has published numerous articles, presented her work at multiple national and international meetings, and she serves as a scientific reviewer to major ophthalmology journals.

Dr. Skondra received her medical degree from the University of Crete in Greece summa cum laude, graduating as Valedictorian with the highest grade point average in the history of the school. After being selected as the recipient of the Propontis, Glaxo and Manasaki scholarships for post-graduate studies, she went on to complete her PhD and post-doctoral research fellowship at the world-renowned Angiogenesis Lab at Harvard Medical School at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary. She completed her residency in Ophthalmology at Weill Cornell Medical College-New York Presbyterian Hospital and then returned to Harvard Medical School to complete a two-year fellowship in Vitreoretinal Surgery.

Prior to joining the University of Chicago, Dr. Skondra established and led the vitreoretinal service of Cook County Hospital in Chicago with focus on medical and surgical management of complex diabetic eye disease and retinal detachment and was on faculty at Northwestern University.



Clinical Interests

- Age-related macular degeneration
- Diabetic eye diseases
- Retinal vein occlusions
- Macular hole, trauma
- Epiretinal membrane
- Proliferative vitreoretinopathy
- Complex diabetic retinal detachment
- Intraocular infection
- Microbiome

Meet the Faculty

MICHAEL P. BLAIR, MD

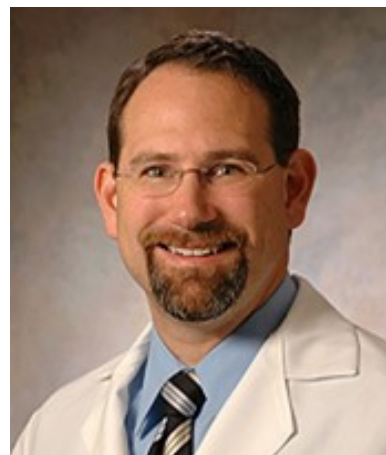
Clinical Associate Professor

Department of Ophthalmology & Visual Science

Practice Locations

University of Chicago Medicine
5758 S. Maryland Avenue
Chicago, IL 60637

Retina Consultants Ltd.
2454 E. Dempster St., Suite 400
Des Plaines, IL 60016



Clinical Interests

- Vitreoretinal Surgery, Trauma
- Pediatric Retina
- Retinopathy of Prematurity

SHAUN ITTIARA, MD

Chair, Department of Ophthalmology

Mercy Hospital

Practice Location

Retinal Vitreal Consultants
Mercy Hospital and Medical Center
2525 S Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60616



Clinical Interests

- Vitreoretinal surgery
- Diabetic retinopathy
- Secondary IOL placement

Meet the Faculty

SARAH RODRIGUEZ, MD, MPH

Assistant Professor, Ophthalmology & Visual Science

Department of Ophthalmology & Visual Science

Practice Locations

University of Chicago Medicine
5758 S. Maryland Avenue
Chicago, IL 60637



Clinical Interests

- Amblyopia
- Pediatric & adult strabismus
- Pediatric cataracts
- Retinopathy of prematurity

Meet the Current Fellows



David Dao, MD
1st Year Vitreoretinal Surgery Fellow
Medical School: Tulane University
Residency: University of Maryland
Uveitis Fellowship: NEI / NIH



Anna Mackin, MD
2nd Year Vitreoretinal Surgery Fellow
Medical School: University of Colorado
Residency: University of Colorado

Meet the Fellowship Alumni



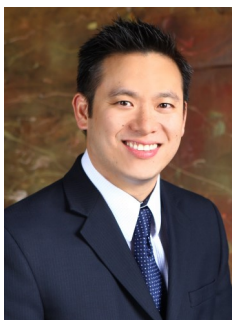
Joseph Benevento, MD (2005-2007)

Oschner Medical Center
New Orleans, LA



Richard Lin, MD (2006-2008)

Scripps Memorial Hospital
La Jolla, CA



Theodore Lin, MD (2007-2009)

Inland Valley Retina, Inc.
Corona, CA



Veeral Sheth, MD, FACS (2008-2010)

Director of Clinical Research
University Retina and Macula Associates
Oak Forest, IL

Clinical Assistant Professor
University of Illinois at Chicago



Paulpoj Chiranand, MD (2009-2011)

Florida Eye Clinic
Kissimmee, FL



Ravi D. Patel, MD (2010-2012)

Keystone Eye Associates
Philadelphia, PA

Meet the Fellowship Alumni (cont.)



Shaun Ittiara, MD (2011-2013)

Chair of Ophthalmology
Mercy Hospital

Practice Owner
Retinal Vitreal Consultants, Ltd.
Chicago, IL



Jose Garcia-Gonzalez, MD (2012-2014)

Retinal Consultants Ltd.
Des Plaines, IL



Shawn Lewis, MD (2013-2015)

Retina Associates of Cleveland
Cleveland, OH



Ankur Shah, MD (2014-2016)

Prairie Eye & LASIK Center
Springfield, IL



Raj N. Patel, MD (2015-2017)

Carolina Ophthalmology, P.A.
Asheville, NC



Liliya Golas, MD (2016-2018)

Martel Eye Medical Group
Sacramento, CA



Sidney Schechet, MD (2017-2019)

Elman Retina Group
Baltimore, MD



Rahul Komati, MD (2018-2020)

Georgia Retina
Atlanta, GA

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO RETINA FELLOW BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Awards & Honors



Dr. Schechet receiving the AAO 2018 YO award for his video on wine glass injury with a "toast"



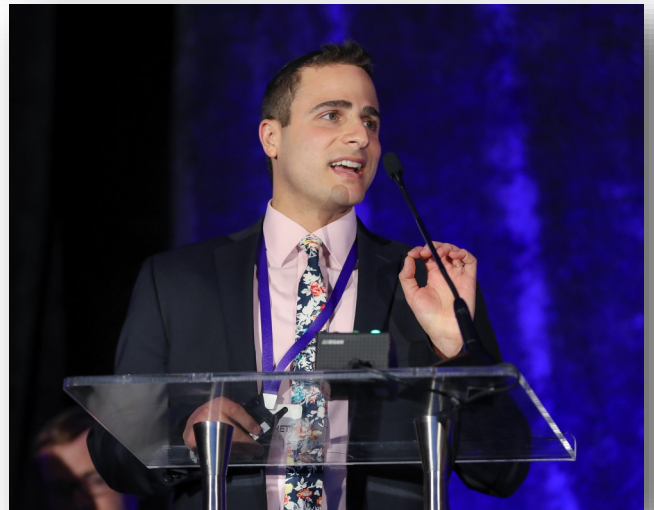
Dr. Mackin presenting her research as a finalist at the 2019 Ophthalmology Times Research Scholar Program



The Crystal Apple award for excellence in teaching and mentorship, presented to Dr. Hariprasad at the ASRS 2019 Meeting



Dr. Hariprasad posing with Dr. Komati and his 1st place "Fellow Games" trophy from the 2020 Retina Fellows Forum



Dr. Schechet presenting his finalist video at the 2019 Vit Buckle Society Fellows Foray



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