

Academy Notebook

NEWS • TIPS • RESOURCES

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Dr. Trese Is the 2021 Academy Laureate

The Laureate Recognition Award is the Academy's highest honor, celebrating an individual who has made an extraordinary and lasting contribution to the profession of ophthalmology. This year's recipient, Michael T. Trese, MD, is a preeminent practicing pediatric vitreoretinal surgeon.

Dr. Trese revolutionized his field in the late 1980s with the concept of lens-sparing vitrectomy. He's also a dedicated educator who has shared his surgical skills with a generation of fellows and colleagues. And the techniques he developed are now performed around the globe and have restored sight to untold thousands of children.

Dr. Trese has also changed the face of telemedicine. Recognizing the difficulties in providing timely screening of babies for retinopathy of prematurity (ROP), he spearheaded the development of photographic screening protocols used worldwide. Last but not least, he has investigated numerous pathways in the pathogenesis of retinal disease. Most recently, he and his colleagues have explored the application of regenerative medicine to cellular signaling pathways in the retina—a possible



MICHAEL T. TRESE, MD. *The Laureate Recognition Award honors physicians who have made the most significant contributions to ophthalmology leading to the prevention of blindness and restoration of sight worldwide. Dr. Trese is the 2021 Laureate Award honoree.*

game-changer for preventing visual loss and restoring sight.

Starting point. Dr. Trese's path to ophthalmology was circuitous. He originally attended the University of Michigan with the intent of playing professional football. The university set up each player on the team with part-time jobs during the season to make a little money. Through this program, Dr. Trese became a scrub tech at St. Joe's Hospital in Ann Arbor. He noticed that the only surgeons who seemed happy each day were the eye doctors. So when a knee injury ended his brief football career, Dr. Trese studied optometry at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry and finally ophthalmology at the Georgetown University School of Medicine.

Career. Dr. Trese served as Director

of Vitreoretinal Surgery at the University of Kansas prior to joining Associated Retinal Consultants in 1982. He is a Clinical Professor of Biomedical Sciences at The Eye Research Institute of Oakland University, Clinical Associate Professor at Wayne State University School of Medicine, and Chief of Pediatric and Adult Vitreoretinal Surgery at William Beaumont Hospital.

EyeCare America Makes AARP's List

The Academy's EyeCare America program, which provides medical eye exams that are often at no out-of-pocket cost for the patient, once again made AARP's annual "99 Great Ways to Save" list. In the two weeks after its publication, the article generated more than 1,000 referrals, which will help provide valuable eye care to patients in need.

See number 72 on the list at www.aarp.org/money/budgeting-saving/info-2021/99-great-ways-to-save.html.

Mentoring Program Doubles Its Class Size

The Minority Ophthalmology Mentoring program doubled its reach in 2020, accepting 50 students into the program that helps qualified students from underrepresented groups become competitive ophthalmology residency applicants.

In addition to receiving one-on-one mentorship, medical career planning guidance, networking opportunities, and access to a variety of educational resources, all students in 2020 were invited to monthly Zoom sessions



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presented and facilitated by ophthalmologists. Sessions addressed relevant topics such as preparing for residency, ethics in patient care, and practice type profiles.

“It was an amazing experience, and I am so thankful to have been a part of it,” said Norma Del Risco, a student at the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Chicago and a member of the Class of 2020. “It was empowering to see such diverse physicians make it to their dream field. I am inspired to continue striving toward my academic goals.”

Now in its fourth official year, the Minority Ophthalmology Mentoring program will again double its class size, admitting 100 students for the class of 2021, which will meet at AAO 2021 in New Orleans. Surveys show that 83% of program students are the first person in their immediate family to attend medical school. Almost 90% of students report increased interest or the same level of interest in ophthalmology after enrolling in the program.

The program is a partnership between the Academy and the Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology (AUPO).

Read more in the 2020 annual report at aao.info/2020mentoringreport.

Four Researchers Win IRIS Registry Research Grants

In August, Research to Prevent Blindness and the Academy announced the recipients of the Award for IRIS Registry Research. Each awardee receives a grant to conduct population-based studies in ophthalmology and blindness prevention, using the IRIS Registry.

The winners are **Ta Chen Peter Chang, MD**, Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, who will research childhood glaucoma surgery; **Jennifer Patnaik, PhD**, University of Colorado, who will research *Acanthamoeba* keratitis; **Andrew Williams, MD**, University of Pittsburgh, who will research loss of follow-up among glaucoma patients; and **Nakul Shekhawat, MD, MPH**, Johns Hopkins University, who will research herpes zoster ophthalmicus.

“Quality eye care begins with quality

science,” said Academy CEO David W. Parke II, MD. “The IRIS Registry is a powerful tool for uncovering better approaches to preventing and treating eye diseases. This year’s recipients show great promise for advancing patient care. We greatly appreciate Research to Prevent Blindness’ support for this award opportunity.”

Four more grants will be awarded in 2022. The application process will open in November 2021.

For more information, visit aao.org/rpb-grants.

FOR THE RECORD

The Annual Business Meeting Is on Friday, Nov. 12

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Business Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology will be held Friday, Nov. 12, 2021, in The Great Hall at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans as part of AAO 2021’s Opening Session (5:00-6:30 p.m.). Candidates for Academy membership will be approved during this meeting. Following the Annual Business Meeting, election ballots for open board positions and the proposed amendments to the Code of Ethics will be sent to voting fellows and members.

For more information and to see the full order of business, go to aao.org/businessmeeting.

Proposed Amendments to the Code of Ethics

The Board of Trustees recommends amendments to the Academy’s Code of Ethics for consideration and adoption by members. The amendments will be implemented by a majority vote via the Academy’s election.

To view the proposed Amendments to the Code of Ethics, visit aao.org/about/governance/academy-blog/post/code-of-ethics-amendments.

CANDIDATES’ VIEWS

DANIEL J. BRICELAND, MD

Candidate for President-Elect

Career. Comprehensive solo ophthalmologist, Phoenix; Medical Director, ASC; Clinical Assistant Professor,

University of Arizona College of Medicine, Phoenix; Arizona Ophthalmology Society (President, Legislative and PAC member); Arizona Mobile



Eye Unit volunteer; Arizona Medical Association (Board, PAC, and Legislative member). Ophthalmic Mutual Insurance Company (Claims Chair and Chairman of the Board);

PAAO (past Board member); Academy spokesperson, Senior Achievement Award, Secretariat Award (Communications).

Academy service. Senior Secretary for Advocacy; Secretary for State Affairs; Board of Trustees; Executive Committee; Director, Leadership Development Program; Nominating Committee; Membership Committee; Committee on Aging; Academy member of AMA SOPP Committee.

Goal. Preserve and promote high-quality, safe eye care by encouraging all members to advocate for our patients at the state and federal levels while furthering the Academy’s mission of protecting sight and empowering lives.

CHRISTOPHER J. RAPUANO, MD

Candidate for Senior Secretary for Clinical Education

Career. Cornea and refractive surgery specialist at Wills Eye Hospital my entire career—currently Chief of the



Cornea Service. I teach residents and fellows in clinic and the OR every day.

Academy service. Senior Secretary for Clinical Education for the past three years overseeing

all clinical education at the Academy, including online education, *EyeNet*, and the *Ophthalmology* family of journals. Secretary for Lifelong Learning and Assessment for six years overseeing many of the Academy’s education committees, including the BCSC, Resident Education, and OKAP; Chair, PPP Panel for

Cornea; Chair, entire PPP Committee; Chair, BCSC for Refractive Surgery; Annual Meeting Program Committee for Cornea.

Goal. While the Academy performs a wide variety of extremely valuable functions, I feel strongly that the backbone of the organization is education. My goal is for the Academy to continue to provide the best ophthalmic education in the United States and around the world.

PURNIMA S. PATEL, MD

Candidate for Trustee-at-Large

Career. Medical Retina, Uveitis, and Cataract Specialist since 2010; Vanderbilt Undergraduate and Medical School; Emory Residency; University of Southern California Fellowship; Associate Professor of Ophthalmology at Emory and Atlanta VA, 2010-2021.



Started the Women in Ophthalmology at Emory, Women in Medicine & Science at Emory, and the DEI committee for Emory Eye; WIO (Program Chair, Board, and Finance Chair);

GSO (YO Committee Chair, CME Chair, and Vice-President). Started my own practice, Ophthalmology & Retina Associates of Georgia, in 2021.

Academy service. YO Committee (Member, 2012-2014; Chair, 2015-2018); ONE Network (Retina Section, 2014-2016; Patient Safety and Webinar Planning, 2016-2018; Deputy EIC, 2018-2020; EIC, 2021).

Goal. My goals are 1) serve our members in their mission to protect sight and empower lives; 2) employ my leadership experience to strongly position our specialty for the future; and 3) listen to all stakeholders to best represent their perspectives, concerns, and goals.

THOMAS A. GRAUL, MD

Candidate for Council Chair

Career. Glaucoma specialist, private practice. Graduate, University of Nebraska College of Medicine; residency, Medical College Wisconsin; glaucoma

fellowship, University of Iowa. Adjunct Associate Professor of Ophthalmology, University of Nebraska; Clinical Assistant Professor, Medical College Wisconsin. Active teaching ophthalmology residents. Past President, Nebraska Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons; Program Director, Executive Committee member since 2002. Exam-

iner, American Board of Ophthalmology. Chair, Nebraska Medical Education Trust.

Academy service. Current Council Vice-Chair; past Councilor (Nebraska) and Deputy State Section Leader. Current member OphthPAC and Product Advisory Committees. Past member and Chair of Surgical Scope

D.C. REPORT

Congress Must Act Now to Stop Medicare Cuts and Put Patients First

In July, CMS released its proposed Medicare Physician Fee Schedule for 2022. Ophthalmology and other surgical specialties are yet again facing significant payment cuts. Unless Congress acts, these cuts would harm physicians' ability to provide quality health care. The Surgical Care Coalition, which the Academy helped found, is educating members of Congress and asking them to take immediate action.

New cuts that could affect ophthalmologists starting in 2022. According to the Academy's analysis, the proposed 2022 fee schedule is estimated to reduce reimbursements by 3.75% in ophthalmology and other specialties in part because a one-year boost that Congress provided for 2021 is set to expire. It also includes a negative budget neutrality adjustment of 0.14%.

On top of that, physicians face the resumption of the 2% Medicare sequestration cuts, paused by Congress during a series of pandemic-related moratoriums.

Also, because Congress enacted the 2021 COVID-19 relief package, it triggered another 4% cut to Medicare spending under balanced-budget rules known as "PAYGO," which is the Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 enacted to help curb government spending. Congress can avert this new 4% cut by waiving the PAYGO requirements before the end of the year.

Academy action. As a part of 100 physician and provider organizations, including the Surgical Care Coalition, the Academy reached out to congressional leaders following the proposed fee schedule's release. In a July letter, the Academy specifically asked Congress to stop the 3.75% cut, extending the boost for at least two more years—through 2022 and 2023.

Previous cuts that Congress failed to redress. CMS' proposed 2022 fee schedule failed—once again—to address payment equity for postoperative visits that are included in the global surgical payment. Ever since CMS announced the changes to evaluation and management (E/M) services in 2019, the Academy and many other surgical societies have objected.

In its efforts to overturn this decision, the broader Surgical Care Coalition continues to press CMS to increase global surgical payments to ensure that ophthalmologists' and other surgeons' pay is equitable with other physicians' pay.

How you can help. Academy member involvement is vital to the Surgical Care Coalition's success. You can help amplify physician voices in the halls of Congress by sending your stories about how you have helped your vulnerable patients. The Surgical Care Coalition can use these letters to illustrate the value of ophthalmic care. Send your email to the Academy's Washington, D.C., office at politicalaffairs@aao.org.

Fund Committee and past member and Chair of Practicing Ophthalmologists Curriculum Glaucoma Panel. Graduate, Academy Leadership Development Program. Recipient, Academy Secretariat, Senior Achievement, and Achievement Awards.



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Goal. I hope to improve involvement by encouraging networking between Councilors and increasing the number of CARs

submitted. I also hope to increase participation in advocacy and represent Councilors and Academy members faithfully as a member of the Board of Trustees.

PREM SUBRAMANIAN, MD, PHD **Candidate for Council Vice Chair**

Career. Residency at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, neuro-ophthalmology fellowship. Entered academic neuro-ophthalmology and orbital/strabismus surgical practice after completing my military service. Currently the Vice



Chair for Academic Affairs at the Sue Anschutz-Rodgers University of Colorado Eye Center, planning and executing professional development programs for over 40 full-time faculty

members. Leadership of North American Neuro-Ophthalmology Society since 2012 (now President-Elect), with patient advocacy through NANOS as well as state societies including publication of scientific articles highlighting the challenges faced by physicians caring for patients with complex eye disease.

Academy service. Committees (Digital Media, Self-Assessment, BCSC 5, Council Subspecialty Section Nominating Committee); educational activities (codirector of Neuro-Ophthalmology Subspecialty Day since 2015; organizer of Annual Meeting Symposia since 2013); Academy Council (NANOS representative).

Goals. To ensure the priorities of state and subspecialty societies that comprise the Council are represented and executed at the Board of Trustees level.

TAKE NOTICE

MIPS Alert! Don't Miss These October Deadlines

If you are participating in the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS), note two upcoming deadlines.

By Oct. 3, start your 90-day performance period. You must perform improvement activities and promoting interoperability measures for at least 90 consecutive days. (The performance period for quality measures and cost measures is the full calendar year.)

Reading this after Oct. 3? There are some improvement activities that your practice may have been performing and documenting as a matter of course. To review the improvement activities that are most relevant to ophthalmology, visit aao.org/medicare/improvement-activities.

By Oct. 31, sign up to use the IRIS Registry for MIPS reporting via manual data entry. If you were signed up for IRIS Registry manual reporting in 2020 and are still in the same practice, there is no need to register again for 2021. Similarly, if you signed up to integrate your electronic health record (EHR) with the IRIS Registry, you don't have to sign up separately for manual reporting. (Note: Although quality measures can be reported via IRIS Registry-EHR integration, you must report improvement activities and promoting interoperability measures manually.)

Not sure how to access the IRIS Registry? To learn about the application process, visit aao.org/iris-registry/application-process. If you are already registered, email irisregistry@aao.org.

Read the 2021 Foundation Annual Report

It's been a challenging year, but the Academy's loyal donors still came through with generous support that shapes the success of Academy programs. Member gifts are supporting new educational resources, and the

first virtual Orbital Gala exceeded goals toward opening the new Truhlsen-Marmor Museum of the Eye.

Read the report at aao.org/annual-report.

Seeking Outstanding Ophthalmologists

Would you like to nominate a colleague for next year's Outstanding Humanitarian Service Award? Submit your nomination by March 11, 2022.

This award recognizes Academy fellows and members for outstanding contributions to humanitarian efforts, such as participation in charitable activities, care of the indigent, and community service. It acknowledges those who have performed above and beyond the normal duties of an ophthalmologist.

To obtain a nomination form, please contact Member Services by phone, 866-561-8558 (toll-free) or 415-561-8581; by fax, 415-561-8575; or by e-mail, member_services@aao.org. You can also complete a nomination form online at aao.org/about/awards/humanitarian.

ACADEMY RESOURCES

Order Your Updated 2022 Coding Books Today

Prepare to avoid costly claim denials in the new year. *ICD-10-CM for Ophthalmology* is shipping now and includes important updates for cornea. Preorder the essential *Ophthalmic Coding Coach* and *Fundamentals of Ophthalmic Coding* references, the *Coding Assistant* series covering subspecialties, and more Academy-developed references for retina coding and CPT.

Learn more at aao.org/codingtools.

Wellness: Music Therapy

Sometimes, attending to your wellness can be as simple as turning on some tunes. Music can influence health factors like appetite and memory. Learn more about it on the Academy's wellness page. You'll see how your fellow ophthalmologists harness its power and how you can, too.

For wellness information and resources, visit aao.org/wellness.

Earn CME Points by Attending the Academy's Free October Webinars

Attend one of the Academy's webinars this fall to earn self-assessment CMEs.

- **Double Vision: What Next? A Neuro-Ophthalmology Perspective**, on Thursday, Oct. 14, 8:00-9:30 p.m. EST;
- **Core Ophthalmic Knowledge for Oculoplastics**, on Wednesday, Oct. 20, 8:00-10:00 p.m. EST; and
- **Diagnose This Live!** on Wednesday, Oct. 27, 8:30-9:30 p.m. EST.

Learn more and sign up at aao.org/clinical-webinar.

NEW: Study With the Resident Knowledge Exchange

The Resident Knowledge Exchange is an online community that provides residents with study materials and learning tools as they advance through their ophthalmic residency training. Residents, faculty, and program directors are encouraged to use this site to view and share study materials for residents (such as flashcards, mnemonics/picmonics, presentations, and videos) and engage in discussions with peers about resident education.

Visit the new exchange at resident-exchange.aao.org.

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Dr. Bartley Earns the Budd Appleton Award

On May 7, the Minnesota Academy of Ophthalmology (MAO) held its 24th annual (and second virtual) EyeBall to raise funds for its Foundation. Fifty MAO members registered for the event, which raised close to \$10,000. Joshua H. Olson, MD, created an official cocktail called "Hindsight's 2020" for the event. Members honored both the outgoing MAO president, David Wilkin ("Will") Parke III, MD, and MAO's 2021 Budd Appleton Award for Service to Ophthalmology recipient, George B. Bartley, MD.

The Budd Appleton, MD, Award for Service to Ophthalmology is bestowed annually on a MAO member who has "performed the greatest service to the field of ophthalmology through patient care, public education, and political

advocacy." Following a description of Dr. Bartley's impressive work in ophthalmology, the EyeBall program noted



that "Dr. Bartley is also humble, approachable, committed, professional, meticulous, creative, and the consummate gentleman. He is a lover of strange words. He is an Eagle Scout. He leads through example and is motivated by principles. He is completely committed to his patients, colleagues, science, and the profession."

His fellow logophile and Academy CEO, David W. Parke II, MD, toasted his colleague: "The Minnesota Academy of Ophthalmology is privileged to honor Dr. George Bartley who, despite his incomparable erudition, is the absolute anti-cockalorum.¹ He is wickedly funny in a Dick Cavett-esque sort of fashion. For example, although initially gobsmacked by the tenets of frisbeetarianism,² George determined it was incompatible with a Minnesota winter."

1 cockalorum (n), a little man with an unduly high opinion of himself

2 frisbeetarianism (n), the belief that when you die, your soul flies to the roof and gets stuck

Father and Son Win Resident Teaching Awards

Michael E. Sulewski Sr., MD, and his son, Michael E. Sulewski Jr., MD, both won the Resident Surgical Teaching Award at their respective institutions this year. The more senior Dr. Sulewski was honored at Scheie Eye Institute, University of Pennsylvania (Penn), where he has been working in cornea and anterior segment for the past 30 years. His son, the younger Dr. Sulewski, did his residency at Scheie while being mentored by his father and the rest of

the Penn faculty, then went on to his cornea fellowship at Wills Eye Hospital. Dr. Sulewski Jr. joined the Wilmer faculty at Johns Hopkins in July 2020 and, after his first year of teaching, won the Resident Surgical Teaching Award. The awards were presented at the respective resident graduation ceremonies.

This may be the first time a parent and child won resident teaching awards at different major institutions in the same year. And even more unlikely, Dr. Sulewski Sr. trained at Wilmer and went to Scheie to be on faculty and Dr. Sulewski Jr. trained at Scheie and joined the faculty at Wilmer.

PASSAGES

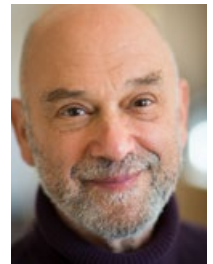
Dr. Lieberman Dies at 72

Marc F. Lieberman, MD, proud "Jewish Buddhist" and respected ophthalmologist, died Aug. 2. He was 72.

Dr. Lieberman went to medical school and completed his residency at Johns Hopkins University before doing the Shaffer Glaucoma Fellowship at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). He ran a private practice in San Francisco, which eventually expanded to three glaucoma offices in the Bay Area. He was also a clinical professor at UCSF and coauthored both the 7th and 8th editions of the renowned *Becker-Shaffer's Diagnosis & Therapy of the Glaucomas* textbook.

In 1995, Dr. Lieberman founded the Tibet Vision Project. Over the next 20 years, he trained Tibetan doctors in cataract surgery, saving the sight of more than 5,000 people.

A man of two faiths, Dr. Lieberman also worked to bring Jews and Buddhists together, including organizing meetings between Jewish scholars and the Dalai Lama. He is survived by his son, Michael Lieberman, and two grandchildren.



DRS. SULEWSKI. Here, at his residency graduation, Dr. Sulewski Jr. (left) is pictured with his father, Dr. Sulewski Sr. (right). Both cornea specialists won Resident Teaching Awards this year.