Dear Colleague,

I'm excited to bring you another issue of our newsletter with the latest information about our department.

In this month's issue, we welcome back Jennifer Cao, M.D., a highly regarded uveitis and ocular immunology specialist who will be a fantastic addition to our adult and pediatric practice (page 2).

We pay tribute to Preston Blomquist, M.D., who recently stepped down after 20 years as director of the largest residency program in the country. Dr. Blomquist and his successor, Richard Hession, M.D., reflect on the legacy and future of our esteemed residency program on page 3. And we our class of 2026 residents on page 7.

We also profile Zachary Robertson, M.D, the department's first Director of Diversity (page 4).

Finally, I hope you'll considering attending our upcoming CME activities as detailed on page 10. I'm delighted to report they are scheduled to be in-person. I look forward to seeing you at these events!

J. William Harbour, M.D.
Welcome new faculty: Jennifer H. Cao, M.D.

Adding depth to the department’s uveitis practice

Jennifer H. Cao, M.D., Assistant Professor, joined the department in May. Dr. Cao has a rare and special interest in uveitis and ocular immunologic disease involving both the front and back of the eye and will be accepting adult patients at the Aston clinic and children at Children’s Medical Center of Dallas.

A native Texan, Dr. Cao received her B.S. from Harvard University, where she graduated cum laude. She received her M.D. from Baylor College of Medicine in Houston and completed an internship in internal medicine at Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte, NC, followed by her residency at the University of Colorado in Denver. Dr. Cao went on to become a co-chief clinical fellow in ocular immunology and uveitis at the Massachusetts Eye Research and Surgery Institution/Ocular Immunology and Uveitis Foundation in Cambridge, MA, under the tutelage of Dr. Stephen Foster.

From 2015 to 2018, Dr. Cao was with UTSW Ophthalmology; prior to her 2022 return, she served as an attending physician at CMC Dallas and Plano, and Baylor Scott and White Plano.

“We are delighted Jennifer is back with the department,” said Ophthalmology chair J. William Harbour, M.D. “Despite uveitis and other ocular immunological disorders being associated with diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, sarcoidosis, psoriasis, tuberculosis, syphilis and lupus, among many others, there is a global dearth of uveitis experts. Dr. Cao emerged from the world’s premiere organization training the next generation of clinical ocular immunologists specializing in uveitis. This is great news for our patients; she will be an excellent complement to our other clinical subspecialties.”

Recruitment – Faculty job openings

Direct links below, or visit https://bit.ly/3jOwKLP

- Glaucoma and Comprehensive Ophthalmology (Job ID 220000EL)
- Pediatric Ophthalmologist (Job ID 569824)
- Comprehensive Ophthalmologist at Parkland (Job ID 494790)
- Neuro-Ophthalmologist (Job ID 465113)
- Ophthalmology Research Faculty (Job ID 355117)
Change of guard: Residency program gets new director

Leadership transition for largest ophthalmology residency program in U.S.

After leading the UT Southwestern Ophthalmology residency program for 20 years, Preston H. Blomquist, M.D., handed over the reigns in March to his colleague and fellow faculty member, Richard Hession, M.D.

Ophthalmology News sat down with Drs. Blomquist and Hession to get their thoughts on the legacy and future of the residency program.

ON: Dr. Blomquist, managing the largest Ophthalmology residency program in the country is no easy task. How did the department grow the program, especially in a time before social media and the internet?

PB: Unlike many major metropolitan centers that have multiple medical schools, we are North Texas’ only ophthalmology residency training program. We are able to support the nation’s largest program because of our area’s diverse population, and caring for the region’s eye health is a responsibility we have always taken quite seriously.

Under the previous chair, Dr. McCulley, the department placed ever greater emphasis on education, not only of residents and fellows, but also the region’s medical community. As a result, our Education Office expanded from a two-person operation to a bustling workplace with seven staff supporting two physicians responsible for oversight.

ON: Dr. Hession, as we’ve heard, this program is solid and established. How do you plan to build upon its success?

RH: The program’s strengths lie in the faculty, residents, staff, administrators and, most importantly, the patients we serve. As I look to build upon past successes, it is critical to seek input from all corners of our department. Great ideas can come from anywhere if you’re committed to listening carefully.

It’s also important that the department put its weight behind intentional recruitment and retention of diverse trainees. I’m excited to work with my colleague Dr. Zachary Robertson, the department’s Director of Diversity, on UT Southwestern’s overall diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. I’ve also committed to representing our residency program during the 2022 Rabb-Venable “Pathway to Success” Fireside Chat Series this fall. Rabb-Venable supports underrepresented ophthalmology trainees, as well as individuals who want to work in underserved communities.

ON: How have ophthalmology residency programs evolved over the years?

RH: Change is a constant in ophthalmology, driven by waves of new technology and innovation. The training side of the specialty has been equally innovative. One of the best recent changes has been the addition of our integrated internship.
Zachary M. Robertson, M.D., named department's inaugural Director of Diversity

As part of the UT Southwestern Office of Faculty Diversity & Development initiative to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) across the University, the Department of Ophthalmology has named Zachary M. Robertson, M.D., Director of Diversity.

Dr. Robertson, Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology specializing in vitreo-retinal disease and surgery, is the first faculty member in the department to hold this position, and one of 33 Departmental Diversity Leaders across UTSW. In addition to serving on Ophthalmology’s executive leadership team, Dr. Robertson will meet regularly with other diversity leaders to share ideas and expertise and promote best practices to advance DEI at UTSW, said Quinn Capers IV, M.D., Associate Dean for Faculty Diversity, who will guide the effort.

“The leaders will be the local champions that help diffuse DEI initiatives across campus,” Dr. Capers said. The goal, he continued, is to make UT Southwestern “a national exemplar of diversity, equity, and inclusion” in academic medicine.

“This includes not only enhancing the compositional diversity of the faculty and trainees,” he explained, “but promoting a climate of inclusion, and ensuring that principles of equity are upheld in our clinical, research, and education missions.”

For Dr. Robertson, the initiative goes to the heart of delivering excellent patient care.

“As a clinician, it is important to me that our patients, regardless of their identity or background, can trust that our department understands their needs and is committed to the highest quality of care for them,” he said.

Dr. Robertson will have protected time to work on DEI issues, with dedicated funding set aside by President Daniel K. Podolsky, M.D.; W. P. Andrew Lee, M.D., Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Provost, and Dean of UT Southwestern Medical School; and UT Southwestern departments.

This approach to DEI recognizes that enhancing diversity in medicine and science is an effort that requires strategic planning, cross-departmental engagement, and institutional support to succeed. According to Dr. Capers, research shows that developing DEI competencies improves the quality of health care delivery and science.

“The Director of Diversity is a vitally important role in the Department of Ophthalmology,” said Ophthalmology Chair J. William Harbour, M.D. “Dr. Robertson will help ensure our Department reflects a diversity of talented individuals, including those who have been historically underrepresented in academic medicine.”

 Parts excerpted from “UT Southwestern creates interdepartmental diversity team,” by Carol Marie Cropper, Center Times Plus, March 15, 2022.
Change of guard (cont'd.)

For the first time in this program's history, we have PGY1s among our ranks. Under the previous training paradigm, our interns would spend their first year out of medical school working exclusively in surgery or internal medicine, or a combination of the two. The integrated internship offers them a mix of experience working in the fields closely related to ophthalmology (internal medicine, neurology, emergency medicine, otolaryngology), in addition to spending three months with us building basic skills. The result is that these trainees will enter their PGY2 better prepared to hit the ground running.

**PB:** I would add that the new generation of residents demands more input into how they are trained, accreditation bodies add more bureaucracy and regulations to comply with, and there is always something new and unexpected to deal with, like the pandemic.

**ON:** Dr. Hession, you have a background in educational theory. Can you explain how this will help you in leading the residency program? Are you excited?

**RH:** Ophthalmology is technically a second career for me. After completing my undergraduate degree, I joined the Teach For America (TFA) corps in Houston and taught 8th-grade science for three years prior to med school. During my time teaching, I completed graduate work secondary education, including educational theory. I spent countless weekend hours attending TFA and Houston Independent School District's professional development seminars. After completing med school and residency training, it felt natural to combine my prior interest with a new career in academic ophthalmology.

I'm thrilled to be in this new position. I remember very well the time I spent as a med student at UTSW scrubbing with Dr. Blomquist on his cataract cases. Little did I know that I would have an opportunity to step into his shoes! I suppose I must have done a good job "watering" the cornea during his cases. Either way, I am very grateful for this chance and Dr. Blomquist's willingness to be available for support and continued mentorship as I find my footing in this new role.

**ON:** Dr. Blomquist, Dr. Hession, anything else you'd like to add?

**PB:** The enthusiasm that young learners bring to the profession, their compassion for others, and their drive to help those in need is quite heartening. Not to say that it's always been a walk in the park! Yet my favorite time of year is the Academy meeting when I have a chance to catch up with our graduates and listen to their accomplishments, both professional and personal.

Wherever our graduates end up after completing their residency at UT Southwestern, I encourage them to give back to the profession.

**RH:** This program has a rich history of training excellent clinicians. It didn't happen by accident. I'm grateful to faculty, staff and trainees who came before me and made this department what it is today. I am excited to help lead our educational effort on the residency front, under the guidance and mentorship of Dr. Harbour, and with the support of the best education office and ophthalmology residents in the country.
News bites

Residents sweep 1st, 2nd prizes at TOA

It was a UTSW win-win for two PGY4s, who took the top two spots in the Barry Uhr, M.D., Memorial Prize Competition at the Texas Ophthalmological Association annual meeting April 29-30 in Houston. David Fell, M.D., placed first with his presentation “A Comparison of Visual Outcomes in Submacular Hemorrhage,” and Karen Brown, M.D., placed second with her talk “Facial Asymmetry in Unilateral Congenital Ptosis.” Drs. Fell and Brown are pictured at the conference with Drs. Harbour and Blomquist.

Ocular brachytherapy program launches

In February, J. William Harbour, M.D., and a team comprised of members from the Departments of Ophthalmology and Radiation Oncology completed the first ocular brachytherapy case at William P. Clements University Hospital in Dallas.

Often used to treat uveal melanoma, brachytherapy is a type of radiation therapy that can deliver a high dose of radiation to a precise area, destroying the cancer and minimizing damage to nearby healthy tissue.

Above, Dr. Harbour, third from left, is pictured with the team.

Named chair for Petroll

W. Matthew Petroll, Ph.D., Professor of Ophthalmology and Vice Chair of Research, was named the Dr. W. Maxwell Thomas Chair in Ophthalmology. His research interests include cell mechanics, cellular imaging, corneal cell biology, tissue engineering and wound healing.

The Chair namesake Dr. Thomas was a pioneer in corneal transplantation in the 1960s and helped establish UT Southwestern as a regional center for this type of surgery.

Honor Award for Wang

Serena X. Wang, M.D., Professor of Ophthalmology and Pediatrics, received the Honor Award at the annual American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus (AAPOS) annual meeting in March in Scottsdale, AZ.
Welcome class of 2026 residents!

Ashika Angirekula, M.D.
UT Southwestern

Dominick Canady, M.D.
Morehouse SOM
(Atlanta, GA)

Preston Choi, M.D.
U Oklahoma COM
(Oklahoma City, OK)

James Fan, M.D.
UT HSC
(Houston, TX)

Michael Guerra, M.D.
Wayne State U SOM
(Detroit, MI)

Pouriska Kivanany, M.D., Ph.D., M.S.
Texas A&M HSC COM
(Bryan, TX)

Maria Morrow, M.D., M.S.
UT HSC
(San Antonio, TX)

Roma Pradham, M.D.
UT Southwestern

Kaitlin Regan, M.D.
Wayne State U SOM
(Detroit, MI)
Are you registered with Doximity?

Claim your profile to vote in the next "Best Hospitals" survey

World-class patient care is at the core of UT Southwestern Ophthalmology, and it is critical that we make sure this message gets out. You are probably aware that patients are increasingly paying attention to online information, especially hospital rankings, to help them decide where to seek care. One of the most popular rankings is the *U.S. News & World Report* annual "Best Hospitals" list.

For Ophthalmology, the *rankings are based solely on reputation*, and are compiled by polling Board-Certified providers who are members of Doximity, the free online physician network.

It's important to note that unlike previous years, *U.S. News* will no longer send out hard-copy surveys through the mail, so it's imperative that you claim your online profile – physicians who do not use Doximity will no longer have a vote.

To claim your profile and receive a ballot, please visit [doximity.com](http://doximity.com), or download the free app for your Apple or Android device.

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*Thank you to the following Ophthalmology Alumni Association members for their support of the department:*

William Berry, MD (Dallas)  
George Boozalis, MD (Victoria, TX)  
Carol Boren, MD (Brownwood, TX)  
Shashi Dharma, MD (Irving, TX)  
Gary Edd Fish, MD (Dallas)  
John David Jones, MD (Lubbock)  
Matthew Kruger, MD (Denver, CO)  
Mark B. Lindsay, MD (Bryan, TX)  
David Mendelblatt, MD (St. Petersburg, FL)  
Tre Neu, MD (Springfield, MO)  
Hien Nguyen-Ngo, MD (Dallas)  
Anthony Sensoli, MD (Chelsea, MI)  
Frank Terrell, MD (Stephenville, TX)  
Kimberly Warren, MD (Plano, TX)  

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**Alumni Reception at AAO**

Saturday, Oct. 1, 2022  
Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile  
Contact Jennifer Roemer for more information (jennifer.roemer@utsw.edu)
Are you a UTSW Ophthalmology alum?

NEW! To join and pay online, visit https://bit.ly/3xw46ra

2022-2023
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Membership benefits

- Acknowledgement in the next issue of the AlumnEye News and at Alumni Day
- Reduced cost for your dinner on Alumni Day
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Graduation year: __________________________________________________

Practice name: _____________________________________________________

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Dues: $100

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Please make check payable to UT Southwestern Ophthalmology AlumnEye Association

Mail form and check to:
Ryan Myers
UT Southwestern Medical Center
Department of Ophthalmology
5323 Harry Hines Blvd.
Dallas, TX 75390-9057 [please include '+4' zip code]
Upcoming CME events

For more information, including how to register, contact Nichole Reichert (Nichole.Reichert@utsouthwestern.edu; 214-648-3830)

42nd Annual Resident & Alumni Day (In-person)
June 11 | 7:30am - 4:15pm

Distinguished Guest Speaker
Kathryn A. Colby, M.D., Ph.D.
Elisabeth J. Cohen Professor of Ophthalmology
Chair, Department of Ophthalmology
NYU Grossman School of Medicine (New York, NY)

Distinguished Alumnus
Rajendra S. Apte, M.D., Ph.D. (Residency 2001)
Paul A. Cibis Distinguished Professor of Ophthalmology & Visual Sciences
Vice Chair for Innovation and Translation
J. F. Hardesty, M.D. Department of Ophthalmology & Visual Sciences
Washington University School of Medicine (St. Louis, MO)

Carol F. Zimmerman, M.D. Lectureship in Neuro-Ophthalmology (In-person)
October 22 | 8:30am - 12:00pm

Distinguished Guest Speaker
Jeffrey G. Odel, M.D.
Professor of Ophthalmology
Columbia University Irving Medical Center (New York, NY)

Ophthalmology at the Crossroads (In-person)
December 3 | 7:30am - 4:30pm
Recent peer-reviewed publications


Repka MX, Dean TW, Kraker RT, Li Z, Yen KG, de Alba Campomanes AG, Young MP, Rahmani B, Haider KM, Whitehead GF, Lambert SR, Kurup SP, Kraus CL, Cotter SA, Holmes JM; Pediatric Eye Disease Investigator Group: Visual Acuity and Ophthalmic Outcomes 5 Years After Cataract Surgery Among Children Younger Than 13 Years. JAMA Ophthalmol 2022 Mar 1;140(3):269-276. [Wang, S.]


Clinic Locations

DALLAS
Ophthalmology Clinic
Aston Ambulatory Care Center, 6th Fl.
5303 Harry Hines Blvd.
Dallas, TX 75390-8866
Appts./Referrals: 214-645-2020
Fax: 214-645-2011

Children’s Health
Specialty Center Dallas Campus
2350 Stemmons Freeway (I-35)
Ophthalmology Clinic, 6th Fl.
Dallas, TX 75207
Appts./Referrals: 214-456-7947
Fax: 214-456-7671

North Dallas Office
Northpoint Medical Arts
12606 Greenville Ave., Suite 180
Dallas, TX 75243
Appts./Referrals: 214-645-0950
Fax: 972-669-4298

Laser Center for Vision Care
Outpatient Building, 5th Fl.
1801 Inwood Road
Dallas, TX 75390-8895
Appts./Referrals: 888-663-2020
Fax: 214-645-2036
LaserVision@utsouthwestern.edu
utswlasik.com

FORT WORTH
Monty & Tex Moncrief Medical Center
at Fort Worth
600 South Main Street, Suite 1.500
Fort Worth, TX 76104
Appts./Referrals: 817-429-3050
Fax: 817-810-9611

FRISCO
UT Southwestern Medical Center at Frisco
Ophthalmology Clinic, 2nd Fl.
12500 Dallas Parkway
Frisco, TX 75033
Appts./Referrals: 469-604-9000
Fax: 469-604-9061

PLANO
UT Southwestern Pediatric Group at Plano
Ophthalmology Clinic
7609 Preston Road, #P-2200
Plano, TX 75204
Appts./Referrals: 469-497-2503
Fax: 469-497-2509