

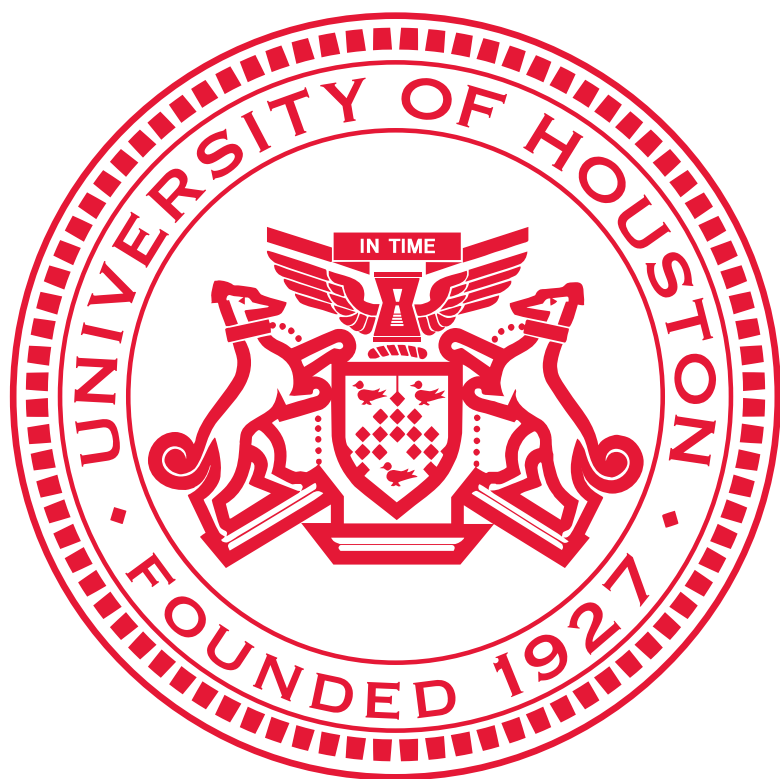


# UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON SPRING 2024 COMMENCEMENT

College of Optometry

Saturday, May 11, 2024 • Cullen Performance Hall







**University of Houston**  
**College of Optometry**

Commencement Ceremony  
Saturday, May 11, 2024, 2:00 p.m.  
Cullen Performance Hall

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### Message from the President

Dear University of Houston Graduates,

Congratulations on receiving your college degree. Today, your longtime dream becomes a reality, and I join your family and friends in celebrating this milestone with you. I am a big believer in the power of dreams and resiliency. To graduate from college, despite the challenges of the past few years, is a testament to your unwavering commitment and ability to dream big.

Whether you're the first in your family to graduate from college or hail from collegiate scholars, your hard work and determination have brought you to this milestone. You are a generation who faced a global pandemic yet stayed focused on your studies and goals. You excelled against the odds, and this adversity has prepared you to face the professional world with more grit than any generation before. I applaud you for all that you have achieved.

Please take time to thank your professors, advisors, family and friends who supported you on this journey. It takes community to accomplish your goals, and I ask that you stay humble and give back to those in need as you go on to even greater heights.

You have received a Tier One education from the University of Houston. This is the home of industry leaders, nationally top-ranked academic programs, world-renowned faculty, the nation's top-ranked basketball program, cutting-edge research and so much more. I know in my heart that you are now ready to compete and become leaders in your chosen careers. Now, work hard, dream big and shine on.

Go Coogs!

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Renu khator'.

Renu Khator  
*President, University of Houston*







### Message from the Provost

Dear Spring Graduates,

You've traveled a long road to reach this moment, but here you are! Congratulations on earning a degree from the University of Houston.

Whether you're the first in your family to graduate from college or perhaps a second-generation Cougar, today's ceremony marks a significant moment in your lives. It's also special for the University of Houston as your success has been our priority since you first stepped foot on campus.

Now, you embark on new journeys. Some of you may be entering the workforce. Others may be headed to graduate school. No matter your destination, please remember those who helped you get to this point.

Stay in touch with peers, professors and staff members and remind them that their guidance supported your academic journeys. Also, thank your spouses, siblings, parents, grandparents and others in attendance today for their daily inspiration.

Of course, be sure to truly recognize the one person responsible for today's celebration—you! You balanced classes, work, family and other obligations. It wasn't easy, but you did it. Now, you are poised to reap the rewards of a degree from UH.

Although you are leaving this wonderful campus, you will remain a member of our University family. You now carry the proud tradition of past UH graduates and will represent our institution in your professional endeavors. Be proud of your time here, and let others know that you are now and forever a Cougar.

Once again, congratulations!

Sincerely,

Diane Z. Chase

*Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, University of Houston*

## University of Houston

Commencement Ceremony

## University of Houston System

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### BOARD OF REGENTS

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Alonzo Cantu, *Vice Chairman*  
John A. McCall Jr., *Secretary*  
Durga D. Agrawal  
Gregory C. King  
Beth Madison  
Jack B. Moore  
Tammy D. Murphy  
Ricky Raven  
Mielad Ziaee

## University of Houston

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### PRESIDENT

Renu Khator

### PRESIDENT'S CABINET

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*Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost*

Raymond S. Bartlett  
*Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance*

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Michael Johnson  
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Claudia Neuhauser  
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Chris Pezman  
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Jason Smith  
*Vice President for Government and Community Relations*

Stephen J. Spann  
*Vice President for Medical Affairs and  
Founding Dean, Tilman J. Fertitta Family College of Medicine*

## University of Houston Deans

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*Dean*  
THE HONORS COLLEGE

Leonard M. Baynes  
*Dean*  
*Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen*  
*Distinguished Chair, and Professor of Law*  
UH LAW CENTER

Andrew Davis  
*Founding Dean*  
*Cullen Foundation Endowed Dean's Chair*  
KATHRINE G. MCGOVERN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

Christina H. Gola  
*Interim Dean*  
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON LIBRARIES

Jim Granato  
*Dean*  
HOBBY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Catherine Horn  
*Dean*  
*Elizabeth D. Rockwell Chair*  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Sarah C. Larsen  
*Dean*  
GRADUATE SCHOOL  
*Interim Dean*  
GRADUATE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

Teri Elkins Longacre  
*Dean*  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT SUCCESS – INTEGRATED STUDIES

Daniel P. O'Connor  
*Dean*  
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Patricia Belton Oliver  
*Dean*  
*ACSA Distinguished Professor*  
GERALD D. HINES COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

Paul A. Pavlou  
*Dean*  
*Cullen Distinguished Chair*  
C. T. BAUER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

F. Lamar Pritchard  
*Humana Endowed Dean's Chair in Pharmacy*  
COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

Dennis Reynolds  
*Dean*  
*Barron Hilton Distinguished Chair*  
CONRAD N. HILTON COLLEGE OF  
GLOBAL HOSPITALITY LEADERSHIP

Pradeep Sharma  
*Interim Dean*  
*Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen*  
*Distinguished University Professor*  
CULLEN COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Stephen J. Spann  
*Founding Dean*  
TILMAN J. FERTITTA FAMILY COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

Kathryn M. Tart  
*Founding Dean*  
*Humana Endowed Dean's Chair in Nursing*  
ANDY AND BARBARA GESSNER COLLEGE OF NURSING

Michael Twa  
*Humana Endowed Dean's Chair in Optometry*  
COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

Dan E. Wells  
*Dean*  
*Distinguished Professor of Science*  
COLLEGE OF NATURAL SCIENCES AND MATHEMATICS

## University of Houston

### Commencement Ceremony

## University of Houston History

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The University of Houston was established as the Houston Junior College in 1927. As the college grew, it prospered and officially became the four-year University of Houston in 1934. Two years later, the college attained land for a permanent campus, and in 1939 it constructed its first building, the Roy G. Cullen Building. The University became a state institution in 1963.

The University includes 14 academic colleges, one school, and the multidisciplinary Honors College that teach a wide array of subjects – from math, arts and engineering to law, pharmacy and business. What started as a campus with a single building has grown into a world-class university, offering more than 270 undergraduate and graduate programs to more than 46,000 students annually.

UH is a Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university, and its public service and community activities, such as cultural offerings, clinical services, policy studies and small business initiatives, serve a diverse metropolitan population. Likewise, the resources of the Gulf Coast Region complement and enrich the University's academic programs, providing students with professional expertise, practical experience and career opportunities.

In keeping with the University's commitment to excellence, UH raised the benchmark of academic achievement when Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's oldest and most prestigious academic honor society, awarded UH the approval to start a chapter in 2015. This designation welcomed UH to an elite group of the nation's most esteemed colleges and universities.

## Commencement Traditions

Academic costumes of today have a history of nearly eight centuries. In medieval Europe, all townspeople wore long flowing robes and gowns. The materials and colors were governed by royal decree. Gradually, distinctive gowns were developed for the various professions, trades and guilds. Scholars wore robes and hoods to protect their shaved heads. Later, skullcaps were worn on the head, and the hoods became a cape that could be pulled over the head during unpleasant weather.

As additional universities were founded, distinctive forms of the gown and hood were adapted by their faculties for bachelor's (apprentices of the arts), master's (teachers) and doctoral (teachers who had completed postgraduate studies). When caps and hats came into fashion in the 15th century, the hoods became ornamental, draped over the shoulders and down the back.

The academic hat was first worn as a symbol of the master's degree and existed in various forms. The mortarboard style comes to us from Oxford University. When academic costumes came to America in 1754, styles were quite varied. In Europe, they still are; however, in our country, usage has been standardized by the Intercollegiate Code of Academic Costume.

### GERALD D. HINES COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	<i>Tassel: Violet</i>
<b>Master's Degree</b>	<i>Hood: Violet Tassel: Black</i>

### KATHRINE G. MCGOVERN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	<i>Tassel: Brown</i>
<b>Master's Degree</b>	<i>Hood: Brown Hood (Music): Pink Tassel: Black</i>
<b>Doctoral Degree</b>	<i>Hood: Pink Tassel: Red</i>

### C. T. BAUER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	<i>Tassel: Dark Blue</i>
<b>Master's Degree</b>	<i>Hood: Drab Tassel: Black</i>
<b>Doctoral Degree</b>	<i>Hood: Dark Blue Tassel: Red</i>

### COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	<i>Tassel: Light Blue</i>
<b>Master's Degree</b>	<i>Hood: Light Blue Tassel: Black</i>
<b>Doctoral Degree</b>	<i>Hood (Ed.D.): Light Blue Hood (Ph.D.): Dark Blue Tassel: Red</i>

### CULLEN COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	<i>Tassel: Orange</i>
<b>Master's Degree</b>	<i>Hood: Orange Tassel: Black</i>
<b>Doctoral Degree</b>	<i>Hood: Dark Blue Tassel: Red</i>

### CONRAD N. HILTON COLLEGE OF GLOBAL HOSPITALITY LEADERSHIP

<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	<i>Tassel: Navy</i>
<b>Master's Degree</b>	<i>Hood: Navy, Red and White Tassel: Black</i>
<b>Doctoral Degree</b>	<i>Hood: Dark Blue Tassel: Red</i>

### **UH LAW CENTER**

**Master's Degree**      *Hood: Purple*  
                                 *Tassel: Black*

**Doctoral Degree**      *Hood: Purple*  
                                 *Tassel: Red*

### **COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**Bachelor's Degree**      *Tassel: Citron*

**Master's Degree**      *Hood: Citron*  
                                 *Tassel: Black*

**Doctoral Degree**      *Hood: Dark Blue*  
                                 *Tassel: Red*

### **TILMAN J. FERTITTA FAMILY COLLEGE OF MEDICINE**

**Doctor of Medicine Degree**  
                                 *Hood: Kelly Green*  
                                 *Tassel: Red*

### **COLLEGE OF NATURAL SCIENCES AND MATHEMATICS**

**Bachelor's Degree**      *Tassel: Golden Yellow*

**Master's Degree**      *Hood: Golden Yellow*  
                                 *Tassel: Black*

**Doctoral Degree**      *Hood: Dark Blue*  
                                 *Tassel: Red*

### **ANDY AND BARBARA GESSNER COLLEGE OF NURSING**

**Bachelor's Degree**      *Tassel: Apricot*

**Master's Degree**      *Hood: Apricot*  
                                 *Tassel: Black*

**Doctoral Degree**      *Hood: Apricot*  
                                 *Tassel: Red*

### **COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY**

**Master's Degree**      *Hood: Gold*  
                                 *Tassel: Black*

**Doctor of Philosophy Degree**  
                                 *Hood: Royal Blue*  
                                 *Tassel: Red*

**Doctor of Optometry Degree**  
                                 *Hood: Seafoam Green*  
                                 *Tassel: Red*

### **COLLEGE OF PHARMACY**

**Bachelor's Degree**      *Tassel: Olive*

**Master's Degree**      *Hood: Olive*  
                                 *Tassel: Black*

**Doctor of Philosophy Degree**  
                                 *Hood: Royal Blue*  
                                 *Tassel: Red*

**Doctor of Pharmacy Degree**  
                                 *Hood: Olive*  
                                 *Tassel: Red*

### **GRADUATE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

**Master's Degree**      *Hood: Citron*  
                                 *Tassel: Black*

**Doctoral Degree**      *Hood: Citron*  
                                 *Tassel: Red*

### **HOBBY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

**Bachelor's Degree**      *Tassel: Peacock Blue*

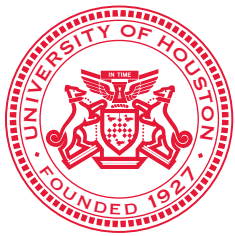
**Master's Degree**      *Hood: Peacock Blue*  
                                 *Tassel: Black*

### **UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT SUCCESS – INTEGRATED STUDIES**

**Bachelor's Degree**      *Tassel: White*

## Ceremonial Symbols

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### THE SEAL

Throughout history, seals have been used to authenticate official documents. The University of Houston and UH System seals both bear the Official Seal of Arms of General Sam Houston, as handed down to him from his noble ancestors. It includes the escutcheon in the center of the seal — consisting of checkered chevrons denoting nobility — and three martlets, gentle lowland birds that symbolize peace and deliverance. A winged hourglass is placed above the shield. Surmounting this is the motto “In Tempore,” meaning “In Time.” The greyhounds indicate speed of giving aid. The UH seal was first adopted in 1938 as the present campus was established. Although the look of the seal has evolved over the years, the first version was etched into the floor of the Roy G. Cullen Building.



### UNIVERSITY MACE

The University Mace, which is carried in academic processions, is a staff symbolizing the University’s authority and unity. The tradition of the academic mace began in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century when two ancient instruments, the royal scepter and the battle mace, were combined to form a university president’s symbol of authority.

### THE ALMA MATER

All hail to thee,  
Our Houston University.  
Our hearts fill with gladness  
When we think of thee.  
We’ll always adore thee  
Dear old varsity.  
And to thy memory cherished,  
True we’ll ever be.

*Words and music by Harmony Class of 1942*



## Honorary Degree

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### DOMINIC NG

#### Chairman and CEO, East West Bank

A distinguished alumnus and longtime supporter of the University of Houston, Dominic Ng is Chairman and CEO of East West Bank, the largest publicly listed independent bank headquartered in Southern California. Since joining East West in 1991, Ng has transformed the bank from a small savings and loan association with \$600 million in assets into a global full-service commercial bank with over \$70 billion

in assets. Under his leadership, the financial powerhouse was ranked as the No. 1 performing bank in 2023 by S&P Global Market Intelligence and Bank Director.

An influential voice in finance, Ng advises heads of state and government on economic growth as chair of the 2023 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Business Advisory Council. He is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and serves on the governing boards of Mattel, Inc., the University of Southern California and the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures.

A thought leader, Ng has been published in *Forbes*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Nikkei Asia*, and the *South China Morning Post*, among others. He's earned numerous honors for his business and philanthropic contributions, including the Alexis de Tocqueville Award — United Way Worldwide's highest distinction — Banker of the Year by *American Banker*, Businessperson of the Year by the *Los Angeles Business Journal* and *Forbes'* 25 Most Notable Chinese Americans.

Ng graduated magna cum laude from the University of Houston in 1980 with a bachelor's degree in accounting. He and his wife, fellow UH alumna Ellen Wong, have been financially supportive of UH since 1990. Generous with their time and resources, the two hosted multiple events in the Los Angeles area in support of the University's historic "Here, We Go" campaign.

Ng supported himself through UH by tutoring student-athletes, including football players during the glory days of Coach Bill Yeoman. Holding fast to his love for UH and connection to student-athletes, Ng and Wong made a major gift to establish the Dominic and Ellen Ng Academic Center for Excellence inside the UH Athletics/Alumni Center. The 9,000 square-foot academic-support space, which opened in 2018, fosters collegiate excellence with dedicated areas for tutoring and group study, redesigned classrooms, and technology-driven amenities.

The Center's presence has left an indelible mark on UH's student-athletes, helping propel their academic and future success.

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The Doctor of Humane Letters degrees, honoris causa, given for exemplary service to the University of Houston or society at large, is the highest honor UH can bestow.



# TDECU

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YOUR CREDIT UNION

## President's Medallion

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### TDECU

TDECU is the largest credit union in Houston and the fourth largest in Texas, providing a full range of financial services to its more than 370,000 members. Established in 1955 to provide financial help to the hourly worker, today, its original \$35 loan has turned into over \$4.7 billion in assets. Moreover, TDECU provides philanthropic support to help its local communities thrive through a focus on educational, health and economic development.

Since 2008, TDECU has generously supported the University of Houston, contributing more than \$30 million to empower its students, employees and alumni through a broad range of impactful initiatives.

In 2014, when TDECU purchased naming rights to UH's football stadium for \$15 million, it made history with the largest-ever naming rights deal for a college football stadium at that time — elevating the football program and University. Concurrently, TDECU became a sponsor of the University of Houston's Alumni Association's (UHAA) annual Cougar 100 event, which recognizes and celebrates the 100 most successful Cougar-owned or led companies. In that same year, it also opened a branch in the UH Student Center, making its financial services easily accessible to UH students, employees and the local community.

Committed to student enrichment, for years, the credit union has worked closely with the C. T. Bauer College of Business on student-led strategic research and recruited student interns from its A.R. "Tony" and Maria J. Sanchez Program for Excellence in Selling, many of whom became permanent employees.

In 2023, the credit union renewed its football stadium naming rights agreement with a \$20 million partnership, which included an expansion of its support across the University. Its renewal helped to bolster UH's prominence in the Big 12 Conference and its vision to become a top 50 university. TDECU sponsored a new loyalty program to increase fan engagement. It also expanded its support of UHAA, partnering on numerous events and programs, as well as the UH Young Alumni Association. It became a presenting sponsor of the University's Cougar Cupboard food pantry, expanding access to nutritious food, free of charge for students in need. Additionally, it began providing financial literacy workshops for student-athletes covering saving, budgeting, debt management and taxes, among other key topics. TDECU also proudly sponsored UH Athletics' Champions Circle, which connects student-athletes with leading companies that help hone and further develop their professional skills

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The President's Medallion is awarded at the sole discretion of the President to individuals and organizations that have distinguished themselves by their support of the University of Houston and the community.





College of Optometry  
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

### Message from the Dean

Dear Graduate,

Congratulations on your achievement! This is a defining moment in your life, marking your transformation and transition from student to practitioner. We are pleased and proud to celebrate with you as you join the community of practicing Doctors of Optometry and leaders in vision research.

For those of you receiving the Doctor of Optometry degree, your lifelong commitment as healthcare providers begins a new phase of independence and responsibility. You will use the knowledge and many talents from your training to care independently for others, to shape the future direction of healthcare, and advance the profession of optometry. As a University of Houston graduate, your decisions, your actions, and your character will not only define your reputation but will now also be linked to a larger community of graduates from this college and this university. Be mindful of the responsibilities you now bear and aspire to be true to the core values of your college – growth and learning, integrity, reason, and humanity. These values can sustain you and will always point you in the right direction.

For those of you receiving a Master of Science or Doctor of Philosophy degree, congratulations on your achievements. Your training reflects your persistence and dedication to a noble purpose – the pursuit of knowledge and scientific discovery. I urge you to remember that your degrees reflect not only your achievements, but also innumerable investments by others who inspired your curiosity, nurtured your talents, and advocated for you along your journey. As you now take the lead, be generous in your recognition and gratitude towards others and seek opportunities to give back through teaching and encouragement to those around you. The need for knowledge and scientific integrity has never been greater. We look to you as future leaders who will bring forth new knowledge and scientific discoveries that will benefit our world – aim high!

Know that the faculty and I feel proud, hopeful, and expectant. We have shared our training, experience, insights, and knowledge as best we can. Step forward with confidence and know that you are well prepared to embark on your journey wherever it may lead.

On behalf of the faculty, staff, and administration, we wish you the best in your endeavors. Remember you always have a home at the University of Houston College of Optometry, and we will always welcome you back with open arms. Again, congratulations on your academic success.

Sincerely,

Michael D. Twa, O.D., Ph.D., F.A.A.O.  
*Dean and Professor*  
*Humana Endowed Dean's Chair in Optometry*



### **Congratulatory message from FERV**

Congratulations to our 2024 graduates – our new optometric colleagues! Since 1955, the college of optometry’s foundation, the Foundation for Education and Research in Vision (FERV) has been a part of your journey since the very first day of your optometric career by providing scholarships, emergency loans, educational events, student research support, awards, recognitions, and more.

The college’s foundation works with alumni, friends, and donors to establish and grow scholarships for our students while also enhancing research and innovation at the college through financial support. The foundation is dedicated to improving the quality of life for the communities we serve by providing vital funds that support community health initiatives and other health programs that directly impact students and their education.

Our journey will continue together as you embark on life-long learning through UHCO’s continuing education and alumni social events. We know as you become successful practitioners you will help future students through your contributions to our foundation, FERV.

We encourage you to support the College of Optometry’s foundation and your optometric profession just as the profession has supported you.

Tom Annunziato, O.D. '86  
*Treasurer*  
*Foundation for Education and Research in Vision*



## 2024 Distinguished Alumnus

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### **Earl L. Smith, III, O.D. '72, Ph.D. '78**

PROFESSOR SMITH received his O.D. (1972) and Ph.D. (1978) from the University of Houston and subsequently joined the faculty of the UH College of Optometry. During his tenure in the College of Optometry, he held the Greeman-Petty Professorship in Vision Development and served as the Chair of the Basic Sciences Department, the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research, the Dean of the College of Optometry, and as the Interim Chief Health Officer of the University of Houston. Dr. Smith currently holds the position of Professor Emeritus.

Professor Smith's research interests are focused on the optics of the eye. For his research on the role of vision in regulating refractive development, he received the Glenn Fry Award (1996) and the Prentice Medal (2010) from the American Academy of Optometry, the Korb Award for Excellence from the Contact Lens and Cornea Section of the American Optometric Association (2011) and was recognized as a Distinguished Scholar by the National Academy of Practice in Optometry (2012). Professor Smith has published over 200 refereed papers and received 38 years of research funding from the National Institute of Health's (NIH) National Eye Institute (NEI). He is also an accomplished lecturer, having

received teaching awards at the department, college, and university levels. In 2021, Professor Smith received the Farfel Award from the University of Houston, the highest honor awarded to a UH faculty member.

Professor Smith has been an active member of the vision science community. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry, a past ARVO Fellow (inaugural class), a past President of the American Optometric Foundation (2002), a past President of the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (2010), a past Member and Chair of NIH NEI's Central Visual Processing Study Section (1998-2003), a past member of NIH's National Advisory Eye Council (2005-2008), and a past Director on the Boards of the National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research and the Alliance for Eye and Vision Research.

For his accomplishments in teaching and his impact on the profession of optometry, the Texas Optometric Association presented Professor Smith with the Educator of the Year (2003) and Optometrist of the Year (2009) awards, the American Optometric Association inducted him into National Optometry Hall of Fame (2015) and was admitted to the Leadership & Legacy Society of the American Academy of Optometry (2022).



**Commencement Speaker**

**John Coble, O.D. '86**

Dr. John Coble is the President of the Foundation for Education and Research in Vision. Dr. Coble is a Fellow in the American Academy of Optometry, a Past President of the Texas Optometric Association, former Chairman of the Texas Optometry Board, past Chair of the American Optometric Association Meeting Center Executive Committee, and presently serving as American Optometric Association Federal Advocacy Representative. Dr. Coble has been Texas Optometric Association and American Optometric Association Optometrist of the Year, as well as UHCO Distinguished Alumnus. Dr. Coble is in private practice in Greenville, Texas, where he has taught externs for over 20 years.

## Golden Reunion Class of 1974

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The University of Houston College of Optometry's faculty, staff, and students salute the Class of 1974 on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of their Commencement.

Wanda Abel, O.D.  
Larry Abernathy, O.D.  
Dan Adams, O.D.  
Bill Anthamatten, O.D.  
Dan Bailey, O.D.  
Joe Bailey, O.D.  
Bronte Baker, O.D.\*  
Gary Bonnin, O.D.  
Virginia Bougher, O.D.  
Steve Christy, O.D.  
Ralph Cockrell, O.D.  
Bob Consor, O.D.  
Billy Cook, O.D.  
Steve Cowan, O.D.  
Ira Diskin, O.D.  
Don Duhon, O.D.  
Roland Giroux, O.D.  
Phil Glanville, O.D.  
Don Gauman, O.D.  
Tresy Greeman, O.D.

Richard Green, O.D.  
Steve Gustafson, O.D.  
John Gutfleisch, O.D.  
Diana Hamm, O.D.  
Ken Hansen, O.D.  
Tom Harbour, O.D.\*  
Terry Hawks, O.D.  
Harold Held, O.D.\*  
Mike Herr, O.D.  
Roy Hiskett, O.D.  
Bruce Hoff, O.D.  
Kirk Hoyster, O.D.  
Everett Hyman, O.D.  
Rocky Kaplan, O.D.  
Joby Kaufman, O.D.  
Steve Kaye, O.D.\*  
Ronald King, O.D.  
Pat McFadden, O.D.  
John McGuire, O.D.  
Larry Moore, O.D.\*

John Murphy, O.D.\*  
Charles Pappas, O.D.  
B.J. Pittman, O.D.  
Aurea Rivera, O.D.  
John Ryan, O.D.  
Joe Sabetti, O.D.  
Don Semler, O.D.\*  
Roger Shaw, O.D.  
Ronald Smith, O.D.  
Ed Spicer, O.D.  
George Steed, O.D.  
Doug Steger, O.D.  
Charles Stockwell, O.D.  
Bill Vietti, O.D.  
Steve Virgilio, O.D.  
Ronald Wagner, O.D.  
Fred Waldman, O.D.  
Daniel Weber, O.D.  
Roger Weikum, O.D.

\* *Deceased*

**University of Houston**  
**College of Optometry**

Commencement Ceremony  
Saturday, May 11, 2024, 2:00 p.m.  
Cullen Performance Hall

<b>PRELUDE</b>	Classical Arrangement
<b>PROCESSIONAL</b>	“Pomp and Circumstance” <i>By Sir Edward Elgar</i>
<b>HONORARY MACE BEARER</b>	Lucy Kehinde Darnell <i>Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and Clinical Associate Professor</i>
<b>HONORARY BANNER BEARER</b>	Moriah Chandler <i>Clinical Assistant Professor</i>
<b>PRESENTATION OF COLORS</b>	Houston Battalion ROTC Color Guard
<b>NATIONAL ANTHEM</b>	Moores School of Music
<b>WELCOME AND RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL GUESTS</b>	Michael D. Twa <i>Dean and Professor</i> <i>Humana Endowed Dean’s Chair in Optometry</i>
<b>GREETINGS FROM UH SYSTEM BOARD OF REGENTS</b>	The Honorable John A. McCall, Jr. <i>Secretary</i>
<b>GREETINGS</b>	Diane Z. Chase <i>Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost</i>
<b>DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS AWARD</b>	Distinguished Alumnus Award for 2024 presented to Earl L. Smith, III, O.D. ’72, Ph.D. ’78 Dean Twa
<b>STUDENT ADDRESS</b>	Zachary David Ney
<b>COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS</b>	John Coble, O.D. ’86 <i>President, Foundation for Education and Research in Vision</i>
<b>RECOGNITION OF GRADUATES</b>	
<b>Summa Cum Laude</b>	Anita Ticak <i>Interim Associate Dean for Professional Studies and Clinical Associate Professor</i>
<b>Magna Cum Laude</b>	
<b>Gold Key International Memberships</b>	Ralph Herring <i>Assistant Dean for Professional Studies and Clinical Professor</i>
<b>BETA SIGMA KAPPA BSK SILVER MEDAL AWARD</b>	Assistant Professor Chandler
<b>PRESENTATION AND HOODING OF THE CANDIDATES</b>	Dean Twa



Commencement Ceremony  
Saturday, May 11, 2024, 2:00 p.m.  
Cullen Performance Hall

<b>PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES FOR MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PHYSIOLOGICAL OPTICS DEGREE</b>	Laura Frishman <i>Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research John and Rebecca Moores Professor</i>
<b>PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES FOR DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN PHYSIOLOGICAL OPTICS DEGREE</b>	Associate Dean Frishman
<b>PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES FOR DOCTOR OF OPTOMETRY DEGREE</b>	Jason Porter <i>Chair of the Faculty and Associate Professor</i>
<b>ANNOUNCEMENT OF CANDIDATES FOR DOCTOR OF OPTOMETRY DEGREE</b>	Anita Ticak <i>Interim Associate Dean for Professional Studies and Clinical Associate Professor</i>
<b>HOODING OF CANDIDATES</b>	Beth Harper <i>Clinical Associate Professor</i>
	Danica Marrelli <i>Assistant Dean for Clinical Education and Clinical Professor North Texas Study Group Endowed Professor</i>
	Swati Modi <i>Clinical Associate Professor</i>
	Ralph Herring <i>Assistant Dean for Professional Studies</i>
<b>PRESENTATION OF DIPLOMAS</b>	Dean Twa
	David Berntsen <i>Chair of Clinical Sciences and Associate Professor Golden-Golden Professor of Optometry</i>
<b>CONFERRAL OF DEGREES</b>	Provost Chase
<b>ADMINISTRATION OF THE OPTOMETRIC OATH</b>	Beth Robinson, O.D. '12 <i>President-Elect, Texas Optometric Association</i>
<b>CLOSING REMARKS</b>	Dean Twa
<b>PLATFORM PARTY RECESSIONAL</b>	"War March of the Priests" <i>By Felix Mendelssohn</i>
<b>RECEPTION TO FOLLOW</b>	Health I Building Doctors of Texas State Optical Alumni Education Center

## College of Optometry Commencement Committee

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Renee Armacost  
Carlos Cole  
Jacquelyn Conde  
Lee Dempsey

Wendy Evans  
KaDarrius James  
Amanda Johnson  
Cristian Loayza

Michele Luman  
Lorellye Macomber  
Janae Pierre  
Lyle Tate

## Doctors of Optometry are:

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Doctors of optometry are the frontline healthcare profession in the defense against vision loss and blindness in the United States. Today, there are more than 30,000 licensed doctors of optometry nationwide and more than 5,000 in the state of Texas. Optometry's essential role in healthcare continues to grow. In 1987, doctors of optometry were recognized as physicians under Medicare. Since then, optometric scope of practice has grown to include diagnosing and treating many of the most common health conditions affecting the eye, vision, and neurological system. Optometrists are licensed to prescribe medications to treat eye diseases including infections, glaucoma, dry eyes, and other conditions. In more than a dozen states, doctors of optometry are now licensed to perform surgical procedures for the eye and surrounding tissues. While optometrists continue to be the primary providers of vision care, including glasses and contact lenses, many also pursue post-graduate residency training to provide specialty services in low vision rehabilitation, vision therapy, pediatrics and more. Optometrists continue to be an essential part of our health care system and frequently work closely with family practitioners, internists, pediatricians, neurologists, diabetic care teams, and other health professionals to coordinate patient care across the health system.

## Optometry at the University of Houston:

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Our graduates have completed a 4-year undergraduate degree prior to admission to the college of optometry. They are trained for an additional four years (3,216 hours of lectures and laboratories) in applied biomedical sciences, optics, social sciences, public health, advanced human anatomy, physiology, neurosciences, systemic and ocular pathology, general and ocular pharmacology, injections, suturing, ocular laser procedures, and clinical care.

Our students have completed more than 500 eye and health examinations in general eye and vision care clinics at the University of Houston Eye Institute and in specialty clinics including: perioperative services, pediatrics, low vision, contact lenses, and community health services.

Graduates complete approximately 1,200 additional eye and vision care experiences during two 16-week externship rotations at vision and health care centers nationwide. These external training centers include private practices, military hospitals, Indian Health Hospitals, community health centers, surgical centers, Veterans Administration Hospitals, and multidisciplinary vision care centers located around the country.

## Spring 2024 – Candidates for Graduation

Candidates' names are followed by their hometowns; undergraduate institutions and, if applicable, graduate institutions.

### MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PHYSIOLOGICAL OPTICS

Kelly Kwon Bisignano

HOUSTON, TX

B.S., Brigham Young University

**THESIS:** Variations in Retinal Oxygen Saturation in a Diverse Healthy Population

Anushka Lewkebandara

WEBSTER, TX

B.S., University of Houston

**THESIS:** Anisotropy of the Human Cornea

Mitchell William Sullivan

CARROLLTON, TX

B.S., Oklahoma State University

**THESIS:** Quantification of Regional Circumpapillary Retinal Ganglion Cell Axon Characteristics and Changes Due to Glaucoma in Non-Human Primates

Lien Tuyet Vu

WICHITA, KS

B.S., University of Houston

**THESIS:** Evaluation of the SpotChecks Contrast Sensitivity Test in Healthy Adults

### DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN PHYSIOLOGICAL OPTICS

Pratik Chettry

DHANGADHI, NEPAL

B. Optom, Tribhuvan University, Nepal

**DISSERTATION:** Volumetric Analysis of Perfused Vasculature in the Non-Human Primate Retina Imaged using OCTA

Ashutosh Jnawali

KATHMANDU, NEPAL

B. Optom, Tribhuvan University, Nepal

**DISSERTATION:** Visual Function and Retinal Structure with Ganglion Cell Ablation and in Myopia

Isabel Moreno

SAN DIEGO, CA

B.S., San Diego State University

**DISSERTATION:** The Role of Hyaluronan in Ocular Surface Homeostasis

Jennyffer Delores Bantu Smith

MEMPHIS, TN

B.S., University of Memphis

M.B.A., Christian Brothers University

O.D., Southern College of Optometry

**DISSERTATION:** Early Detection of Subclinical Biomarkers in Diabetic Eye Disease

## Residents

Candidates' names are followed by their graduate institutions and University of Houston College of Optometry residency program information.

Justin Alexander, O.D.

O.D., MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY CHICAGO COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

**RESIDENCY:** OMNI Eye Specialists of Colorado, Residency in Ocular Disease/Refractive and Ocular Surgery

Karsen Hise, O.D.

O.D., UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

**RESIDENCY:** Pediatrics at the University Eye Institute

Batool Kazimi, O.D.

O.D., UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

**RESIDENCY:** Ocular Disease at the Cedar Springs Eye Clinic

Janna Pham, O.D.

O.D., UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

**RESIDENCY:** Cornea and Contact Lens at the University Eye Institute

Jasmine Rodriguez, O.D.

O.D., MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND HEALTH SCIENCES SCHOOL OF OPTOMETRY

**RESIDENCY:** Primary Care Optometry at the University Eye Institute

Shin (Elsie) Sawai, O.D.

O.D., UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BERKELEY SCHOOL OF OPTOMETRY

**RESIDENCY:** Brain Injury Vision Rehabilitation at the University Eye Institute

Barbara Hyler Stivala, O.D.

O.D., UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

**RESIDENCY:** Ocular Disease at the Community Eye Clinic Fort Worth

Der Vang, O.D.

O.D., MIDWESTERN COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

**RESIDENCY:** The Vision Center of West Phoenix, Residency in Primary Care/Ocular Disease

Richard Christian White, O.D.

O.D., UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

**RESIDENCY:** Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center, Residency in Primary Care/Ocular Disease

## Postdoctoral Clinical Fellows

Candidates' names are followed by their graduate institutions and fellowship information.

Brandon Le, O.D.  
O.D., UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY  
**FELLOWSHIP:** Community Based Optometry at the UH Eye Center in the Heights

Kishan Patel, O.D.  
O.D., THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY  
**FELLOWSHIP:** Corneal and Contact Lens Fellowship at The Eye Research and Technology Center (TERTC)

## Doctor of Optometry

Candidates' names are followed by academic honors if applicable; their hometowns, undergraduate institutions and, graduate institutions; and fourth-year clinical externship locations.

Nikkie Ahmad Keeya  
SUGAR LAND, TX  
B.S., Texas A&M University  
UH Eye Center - Heights, Houston, Texas  
Clear Lake Eye Center, Webster, Texas

Colt Ace Akin  
CYPRESS, TX  
B.S., University of Houston – Downtown  
MyEyeDr, Spring, Texas  
UH Eye Center - Heights, Houston, Texas

Rama Aldarkazanly  
ARLINGTON, TX  
B.S., University of North Texas at Dallas  
Community Eye Clinic, Fort Worth, Texas  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

Easy Anyama  
STAFFORD, TX  
B.S., Texas State University  
Sharp Eye Consultants, San Antonio, Texas

Shabistan Asrar  
*Summa Cum Laude*  
Katy, TX  
B.S., Texas A&M University  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas  
Community Eye Clinic, Fort Worth, Texas

Nadeen Awad  
DALLAS, TX  
B.A., University of Texas at Dallas  
Plaza Vision Center, Dallas, Texas  
Community Eye Clinic, Fort Worth, Texas

Alyssa Malandris Banda  
EL PASO, TX  
B.S., University of Texas at San Antonio  
UH Eye Center - Heights, Houston, Texas  
Diagnostic Eye Center, Houston, Texas

Kelly Kwon Bisignano  
*Magna Cum Laude*  
HOUSTON, TX  
B.S., Brigham Young University  
NSU Oklahoma College of Optometry,  
Tahlequah, Oklahoma  
Bellaire Family Eye Care, Houston, Texas

Gabrielle Paige Brending  
SEABROOK, TX  
B.S., Texas A&M University  
M.S., Texas A&M University  
NSU Oklahoma College of Optometry,  
Tahlequah, Oklahoma  
Mission Vision, San Antonio, Texas

Linda Kim Bui  
HOUSTON, TX  
B.S.A., University of Texas at Austin  
Indian Health Service, Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Lakeline Vision Source, Cedar Park, Texas

Jakob Byrnes  
ROCKWALL, TX  
B.S., Stephen F. Austin State University  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas  
Eye Care of Greenville, Greenville, Texas

Valerie Mariko Campbell  
SAN ANTONIO, TX  
B.A., University of Texas at San Antonio  
M.S.B., University of Texas at San Antonio  
Northside Community Health Center,  
Fort Worth, Texas  
South Texas Veterans Health Care System,  
San Antonio, Texas

Adrian Chang  
HOUSTON, TX  
B.S., University of Houston  
Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

Angela Ann-Ning Chin  
*Summa Cum Laude*  
HOUSTON, TX  
B.A., Rice University  
Northside Community Health Center,  
Fort Worth, Texas  
Bellaire Family Eye Care, Bellaire, Texas

Paisley Nicole Cornett  
LINDSAY, TX  
B.S., Texas A&M University  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas  
MyEyeDr, Spring, Texas

Skylar Jenae Courville  
SCOTT, LA  
B.S., University of Louisiana at Lafayette  
Acadian Vision Associates, Lafayette, Louisiana  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

Donna Daneshpajoo  
HOUSTON, TX  
B.S., Baylor University  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas  
Clear Lake Eye Center, Webster, Texas

My-Lynn Dang  
*Magna Cum Laude*  
HOUSTON, TX  
B.S., Texas A&M University  
Community Eye Clinic, Fort Worth, Texas  
Lakeline Vision Source, Cedar Park, Texas

Commencement Ceremony

Timothy Jordan Davis  
*Magna Cum Laude*  
COLUMBUS, OH  
B.S., University of Cincinnati  
Diagnostic Eye Center, Houston, Texas  
Clear Lake Eye Center, Webster, Texas

Linsey Del Valle-King  
PFLUGERVILLE, TX  
B.S., University of Houston  
Texas Children's Hospital, Houston, Texas  
Houston Eye Associates, Houston, Texas

Kyle J. Delk  
PORT NECHES, TX  
B.S., Lamar University  
Vision Source Mission Bend, Houston,  
Texas  
UH Eye Center - Heights, Houston, Texas

Katherine Reed Everett  
NEW BRAUNFELS, TX  
B.S., University of Houston  
NSU Oklahoma College of Optometry,  
Tahlequah, Oklahoma  
Prairie Eye Clinic, Vermillion,  
South Dakota

Austin R. Franco  
ALLEN, TX  
B.S.A., University of Texas at Austin  
South Texas Veterans Health Care System,  
San Antonio, Texas  
Community Eye Clinic, Fort Worth, Texas

Emmanuel Timilehin Gbolabo  
ARLINGTON, TX  
B.S., Texas A&M University  
Louisiana Eye and Laser Center, Pineville,  
Louisiana  
Indian Health Services, Albuquerque,  
New Mexico

Emily Palmer Goodheart  
*Summa Cum Laude*  
FAYETTEVILLE, GA  
B.S., University of South Florida  
Bellaire Family Eye Care, Bellaire, Texas  
Diagnostic Eye Center, Houston, Texas

Marissa Erin Gray  
ORANGE, TX  
B.S., Texas A&M University  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas  
Santa Fe Indian Health Center, Santa Fe,  
New Mexico

Taylor Jon Gray  
*Magna Cum Laude*  
AMARILLO, TX  
B.S., West Texas A&M University  
El Paso Eye Surgeons, El Paso, Texas  
Richmond Veterans Affairs Hospital,  
Houston, Texas

Katia Yulissa Guzman  
PEARLAND, TX  
B.S., University of Dallas  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas  
Diagnostic Eye Center, Houston, Texas

Mitchell Haley  
NACOGDOCHES, TX  
B.S., University of Texas at Austin  
UH Eye Center - Heights, Houston, Texas  
Golden Eye Clinic, Center, Texas

Lianna X. Hall  
CELINA, TX  
B.S., Sam Houston State University  
UH Eye Center - Heights, Houston, Texas  
Today's Vision, Bellaire, Texas

Jacqueline Brooke Hardin  
*Magna Cum Laude*  
WHITE OAK, TX  
B.S., University of North Texas  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas  
Sitterle Vision Source, San Antonio, Texas

Melissa Kim Hoang  
AMARILLO, TX  
B.S., University of Houston  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas  
Community Eye Clinic, Fort Worth, Texas

Anna Hulsey  
*Magna Cum Laude*  
KNOXVILLE, TN  
B.I.S., University of Tennessee at  
Chattanooga  
Community Eye Clinic, Fort Worth, Texas  
Bellaire Family Eye Care, Bellaire, Texas

Vivian Huynh  
FORT WORTH, TX  
B.S.A., University of Texas at Austin  
Naval Medical Center, San Diego,  
California  
Northside Community Health Center,  
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Emily Claire Janak  
*Magna Cum Laude*  
CEDAR PARK, TX  
B.S., Texas A&M University  
Lakeline Vision Source, Cedar Park, Texas  
McCormick Vision Source, Austin, Texas

Zain Shabir Jessa  
SUGAR LAND, TX  
B.S., Texas A&M University  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas  
TSO Dowlen, Beaumont, Texas

Justin Michael Joyce  
*Summa Cum Laude*  
VEGA, TX  
B.S., Texas Tech University  
Bellaire Family Eye Care, Bellaire, Texas  
Amarillo VA, Amarillo, Texas

Basel Kesbeh  
KILLEEN, TX  
B.S., Texas A&M University  
Lakeline Vision Source, Cedar Park, Texas  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

Catherine Mazin Khalaf  
RAMALLAH, PALESTINE  
B.S., University of Houston  
McCormick Vision Source, Austin, Texas

Jenny Yoojin Kim  
LEWISVILLE, TX  
B.S., University of Texas at Austin  
Naval Medical Center, San Diego,  
California  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

Melissa Kontos  
*Summa Cum Laude*  
MIAMI, FL  
B.S., University of South Florida  
Houston Eye Associates, Houston, Texas  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

Cindy Linh Lam  
ROUND ROCK, TX  
B.S., Texas A&M University  
Indian Health Services, Albuquerque,  
New Mexico  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

**University of Houston**  
**College of Optometry**

**Commencement Ceremony**

Aileen M. Lehmann

BILOXI, MS  
B.S., University of Mississippi  
M.S., University of Mississippi Medical Center  
Golden Eye Clinic, Center, Texas  
Pineywoods Eye Associates,  
Nacogdoches, Texas

Anushka Lewkebandara

WEBSTER, TX  
B.S., University of Houston  
Lakeline Vision Source, Cedar Park, Texas  
NSU Oklahoma College of Optometry,  
Tahlequah, Oklahoma

Jonathan T. Lowery

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DOUGLASS, TX  
B.S., Stephen F. Austin State University  
Golden Eye Clinic, Center, Texas

Tiffany Carrie Lu

DALLAS, TX  
B.S., Baylor University  
Plaza Vision Center, Dallas, Texas  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

Samuel Mascardo

HOUSTON, TX  
B.S., University of Houston  
Northside Community Health Center,  
Fort Worth, Texas  
Vision Source Mission Bend, Houston, Texas

Caroline Elizabeth McGahan

*Magna Cum Laude*  
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Lakeline Vision Source, Cedar Park, Texas  
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Grant Means

NEW WAVERLY, TX  
B.S., Sam Houston State University  
NSU Oklahoma College of Optometry,  
Tahlequah, Oklahoma  
Community Eye Clinic, Fort Worth, Texas

Jasmine Carline Mitchell

*Magna Cum Laude*  
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Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

Jordan Emma Moczygamba

*Magna Cum Laude*  
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Community Eye Clinic, Fort Worth, Texas

Zachary David Ney

*Summa Cum Laude*  
PRIMGHAR, IA  
B.S., Loras College  
B.A., Loras College  
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NSU Oklahoma College of Optometry,  
Tahlequah, Oklahoma

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Northside Community Health Center,  
Fort Worth, Texas

Tiffany Yenchu Nguyen

NEW ORLEANS, LA  
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Signature Eye Care, Austin, Texas

Kushufnoor K. Niazi

*Magna Cum Laude*  
KATY, TX  
B.S., University of Houston  
Richmond VAMC, Richmond, Texas  
Diagnostic Eye Center, Houston, Texas

Chukwunonso Nwankwo

DALLAS, TX  
B.S., University of Houston  
Northside Community Health Center,  
Fort Worth, Texas  
Mission Vision, San Antonio, Texas

Kyle O'Connor

TOMBALL, TX  
B.S., Baylor University  
MyEyeDr, Spring, Texas  
Vision Source Mission Bend, Houston, Texas

Donna Pham

*Magna Cum Laude*  
STAFFORD, TX  
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Fort Worth, Texas  
Lakeline Vision Source, Cedar Park, Texas

Rebeca Pham

HOUSTON, TX  
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UH Eye Center - Heights, Houston, Texas

Lydia Philip

*Magna Cum Laude*  
SUNNYVALE, TX  
B.S.A., University of Texas at Austin  
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Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

Xochitl Aleydis Quiñones

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B.S., Baylor University  
M.S., Mississippi College  
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Hope Clinic, Houston, Texas

Taylor Nicole Rains

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NSU Oklahoma College of Optometry,  
Tahlequah, Oklahoma  
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Eurika Rajbanshi

FRISCO, TX  
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Neuro-Vision Associates of North Texas,  
Plano, Texas  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

David Ramirez

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South Texas Veterans Health Care System,  
San Antonio, Texas  
Sharp Eye Consultants, San Antonio,  
Texas

Jacob Rodriguez

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UH Eye Center - Heights, Houston, Texas  
Diagnostic Eye Center, Houston, Texas

Chad Said

AUSTIN, TX  
B.Sc., University of Alberta  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas  
McCormick Vision Source, Austin, Texas

Commencement Ceremony

Abigail Ahyeon Song  
HOUSTON, TX  
B.S., Texas A&M University  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas  
Vision Source Mission Bend, Houston, Texas

Neha Srinivasan  
*Magna Cum Laude*  
RICHARDSON, TX  
B.S., University of Texas at Dallas  
Walter Reed National Military Medical  
Center, Bethesda, Maryland  
NSU Oklahoma College of Optometry,  
Tahlequah, Oklahoma

Anne Marie Stiles  
PROSPER, TX  
B.B.A., University of Arkansas – Fort Smith  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas  
Gee Eye Care, Missouri City, Texas

Emily Diane Studebaker  
GEORGETOWN, TX  
B.S., Texas A&M University  
Clear Lake Eye Center, Webster, Texas  
Northside Community Health Center,  
Fort Worth, Texas

Christina M. Su  
*Summa Cum Laude*  
ROUND ROCK, TX  
B.S.A., The University of Texas at Austin  
Northside Community Health Center,  
Fort Worth, Texas  
Lakeline Vision Source, Cedar Park, Texas

Mitchell William Sullivan  
*Magna Cum Laude*  
CARROLLTON, TX  
B.S., Oklahoma State University  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas  
Louisiana Eye and Laser Center, Pineville,  
Louisiana

Julyanna H. Tao  
GRAND PRAIRIE, TX  
B.S., University of Texas at Arlington  
Diagnostic Eye Center, Houston, Texas  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

Jeremy Yuvi Tee  
*Magna Cum Laude*  
SPRINGFIELD, MO  
B.S., Missouri State University  
UH Eye Center - Heights, Houston, Texas  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

Jean Marie Thomson  
*Summa Cum Laude*  
HOUSTON, TX  
B.S.N., University of St. Thomas  
Bellaire Family Eye Care, Bellaire, Texas  
UH Eye Center - Heights, Houston, Texas

Dinh Le Thuy Anh  
HOUSTON, TX  
B.S., University of Houston  
Signature Eye Care, Austin, Texas  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

Joshua L. Tran  
STAFFORD, TX  
B.S.A., University of Texas at Austin  
NSU Oklahoma College of Optometry,  
Tahlequah, Oklahoma  
Oakhill Eye Care, Austin, Texas

Hannah Trinh  
*Magna Cum Laude*  
CYPRESS, TX  
B.S., University of Texas at Austin  
Family Vision Solutions, Spring, Texas  
Northside Community Health Center,  
Fort Worth, Texas

Pooja Tunikipati  
BOSTON, MA  
B.S., University of Texas at Austin  
Santa Fe Indian Health Center, Santa Fe,  
New Mexico  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

Jin Arthur Uehara  
HOUSTON, TX  
B.S.A., University of Texas at Austin  
Santa Fe Indian Health Center, Santa Fe,  
New Mexico  
Vision Source Mission Bend, Houston,  
Texas

Adrian Andres Velasco  
CONROE, TX  
B.S., University of Houston  
UH Eye Center - Heights, Houston, Texas  
Clear Lake Eye Center, Webster, Texas

Heather Vigo-Sanchez  
EL PASO, TX  
B.S., University of Houston  
Raymond G. Murphy Department of  
VAMC, Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Indian Health Service, Albuquerque,  
New Mexico

Pia Vo  
AUSTIN, TX  
B.S., University of Texas at Austin  
Oakhill Eye Care, Austin, Texas  
UH Eye Center - Heights, Houston, Texas

Lien Tuyet Vu  
*Magna Cum Laude*  
WICHITA, KS  
B.S., University of Houston  
Lakeline Vision Source, Cedar Park, Texas  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

Quang Vu  
SEABROOK, TX  
B.S.A., University of Texas at Austin  
Lakeline Vision Source, Cedar Park, Texas  
West Texas Eyecare, Fort Stockton, Texas

Lauren Tran Vuong  
*Magna Cum Laude*  
PLANO, TX  
B.S., University of North Texas  
Lakeline Vision Source, Cedar Park, Texas  
Northside Community Health Center,  
Fort Worth, Texas

Luc Tadeusz Waked  
NAPERVILLE, IL  
B.S., The Ohio State University  
New Mexico VA Health Care System,  
Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Plaza Vision Center, Dallas, Texas

Jessica Clemencia Watson  
CONROE, TX  
B.A., Baylor University  
Northside Community Health Center,  
Fort Worth, Texas  
Oakhill Eye Care, Austin, Texas

Ashleigh Chase Young  
PLANO, TX  
B.S., University of Missouri  
Plano Eye Associates, Plano, Texas  
Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas

## The Optometric Oath

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With full deliberation, I freely and solemnly pledge that:

- I **affirm** that the health of my patient will be my first consideration.
- I **will** practice the art and science of optometry faithfully and conscientiously, and to the fullest scope of my competence.
- I **will** uphold and honorably promote by example and action the highest standards, ethics and ideals of my chosen profession and the honor of the degree, Doctor of Optometry, which has been granted me.
- I **will** provide professional care for the diverse populations who seek my services, with concern, with compassion and with due regard for their human rights and dignity.
- I **will** work to expand access to quality care and improve health equity for all communities.
- I **will** place the treatment of those who seek my care above personal gain and strive to see that none shall lack for proper care.
- I **will** hold as privileged and inviolable all information entrusted to me in confidence by my patients.
- I **will** advise my patients fully and honestly of all which may serve to restore, maintain or enhance their vision and general health.
- I **will** strive continuously to broaden my knowledge and skills so that my patients may benefit from all new and efficacious means to enhance the care of human vision.
- I **will** share information cordially and unselfishly with my fellow doctors of optometry and other professionals for the benefit of patients and the advancement of human knowledge and welfare.
- I **will** do my utmost to serve my community, my country and humankind as a citizen as well as a doctor of optometry.
- I **hereby** commit myself to be steadfast in the performance of this my solemn oath and obligation.



## Recognition and Awards

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### DOCTORAL STUDENTS WHO DEMONSTRATED LEADERSHIP SKILLS BY HOLDING OFFICE IN ONE OR MORE STATE LEVEL OPTOMETRIC STUDENT ORGANIZATION.

Easy Anyama, *AOSA Trustee 2020-2021, 2021-2022*  
Gabrielle Paige Brending, *STOA Treasurer 2020-2021, Secretary/Treasurer 2021-2022*  
Timothy Jordan Davis, *OSA Event Chair 2022-2023*  
Kyle J. Delk, *STOA President 2022-2023*  
Mitchell William Sullivan, *STOA Secretary/Treasurer 2022-2023*  
Adrian Andres Velasco, *OSA Secretary 2020-2021, 2021-2022, Treasurer 2022-2023*

### ACADEMIC HONORS

Doctoral students who complete their degree requirements will graduate with the stated academic honors if they achieve the corresponding grade point averages earned in the Doctor of Optometry program at the University of Houston.

#### ***SUMMA CUM LAUDE – 3.75 TO 4.0***

Shabistan Asrar  
Angela Ann-Ning Chin  
Emily Palmer Goodheart  
Justin Michael Joyce  
Melissa Kontos

Zachary David Ney  
Taylor Nicole Rains  
Christina M. Su  
Jean Marie Thomson

#### ***MAGNA CUM LAUDE – 3.50 TO 3.74***

Kelly Kwon Bisignano  
My-Lynn Dang  
Timothy Jordan Davis  
Taylor Jon Gray  
Jacqueline Brooke Hardin  
Anna Hulsey  
Emily Claire Janak  
Jonathan T. Lowery  
Caroline Elizabeth McGahan  
Jasmine Carline Mitchell

Jordan Emma Moczygemba  
Kushufnoor K. Niazi  
Donna Pham  
Lydia Philip  
Neha Srinivasan  
Mitchell William Sullivan  
Jeremy Yuvi Tee  
Hannah Trinh  
Lien Tuyet Vu  
Lauren Tran Vuong

**2024 GOLD KEY INTERNATIONAL  
OPTOMETRIC HONOR SOCIETY**

*Gold Key International Optometric Honor Society recognizes graduating students who have demonstrated outstanding professional and ethical attitudes through leadership and service to their class, college, and profession. Membership is limited to no more than 10 percent of the graduating class. The University of Houston College of Optometry chapter of Gold Key was created in 1974.*

Kelly Kwon Bisignano  
Anushka Lewkebandara  
Tiffany Carrie Lu

Zachary David Ney  
Chad Said  
Jeremy Yuvi Tee

Dinh Le Thuy Anh  
Adrian Andres Velasco

**BETA SIGMA KAPPA INTERNATIONAL OPTOMETRIC  
HONOR SOCIETY GRADUATES**

*Beta Sigma Kappa recognizes students who stimulate scientific attainment, academic excellence, and the ethical practice of optometry. Membership is awarded based on scholastic excellence and is calculated per semester. The asterisk denotes membership since Fall 2021.*

Shabistan Asrar\*  
Kelly Kwon Bisignano\*  
Angela Ann-Ning Chin\*  
My-Lynn Dang\*  
Emily Palmer Goodheart\*  
Taylor Jon Gray\*  
Jacqueline Brooke Hardin  
Anna Hulsey

Justin Michael Joyce\*  
Melissa Kontos\*  
Jonathan T. Lowery\*  
Caroline Elizabeth McGahan\*  
Jasmine Carline Mitchell\*  
Zachary David Ney\*  
Lydia Philip\*  
Taylor Nicole Rains\*

Neha Srinivasan\*  
Christina M. Su  
Mitchell William Sullivan\*  
Jeremy Yuvi Tee  
Jean Marie Thomson\*  
Hannah Trinh\*

## Outstanding Grand Rounds Presentation Award

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Julyanna H. Tao

## Clinical Excellence Specialty Awards

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### **CORNEA AND CONTACT LENS**

Melissa Kontos

### **DRY EYE CENTER**

Mitchell William Sullivan

### **PEDIATRIC OPTOMETRY**

Melissa Kontos

### **LOW VISION**

Nikkie Ahmed Keeya

### **MEDICAL EYE SERVICE**

Anna Hulsey

## Fourth Year Professional Awards

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### **COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS IN VISION DEVELOPMENT EXCELLENCE IN VISION THERAPY AWARD**

Rama Aldarkazanly

### **COOPER VISION**

Taylor Nicole Rains

### **ESCHENBACH LOW VISION AWARD**

Anushka Lewkebandara

### **EXCELLENCE IN OPTICS AWARD**

Angela Ann-Ning Chin

### **WILLIAM FEINBLOOM LOW VISION AWARD**

Anna Hulsey

### **GP LENS INSTITUTE CLINICAL EXCELLENCE AWARD**

Tiffany Carrie Lu

### **AAOF AWARD OF EXCELLENCE IN CONTACT LENS PATIENT CARE**

Lien Tuyet Vu

### **METRO OPTICS EXCELLENCE AWARD**

Taylor Jon Gray

### **OCULAR INSTRUMENTS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE**

Zachary David Ney

### **OPTELEC LOW VISION AWARD**

Taylor Jon Gray

### **OUTSTANDING TEACHING ASSISTANT AWARD**

Emily Diane Studebaker

### **VSP/AAOF PRACTICE EXCELLENCE AWARD**

Zachary David Ney

Adrian Andres Velasco

### **ALCON 4TH-YEAR OPTOMETRY STUDENT 2024 CASE REPORT AWARD**

Emily Palmer Goodheart

## College Administration

Michael Twa, O.D., Ph.D.

*Dean*

Andrew M. Archila, O.D.

*Associate Dean for Clinical Operations*

Laura J. Frishman, Ph.D.

*Associate Dean for Graduate Studies  
and Research*

Kimberly Lambreghts, R.N., O.D.

*Associate Dean for Professional Studies*

Ralph Herring, O.D. M.H.A.

*Assistant Dean for Professional Studies*

Lucy Kehinde Darnell, O.D., Ph.D.

*Assistant Dean for Student Services*

Danica Marrelli, O.D.

*Assistant Dean for Clinical Education*

David Berntsen, O.D., Ph.D.

*Chair, Department of Clinical Sciences*

Vallabh Das, Ph.D.

*Chair, Department of Vision Science*

Jason Porter, Ph.D.

*Chair, College Faculty*

LaSaundra Cotright, M.B.A.

*Executive Director, College  
Business Operations*

Amanda Johnson, B.A.

*Executive Director of  
Professional Relations*

Lyle Tate, M.S.

*Director of Student Services*

## College of Optometry Faculty

Andrew M. Archila, O.D.

*Clinical Professor*

Julia Benoit, Ph.D.

*Research Associate Professor*

Jan Bergmanson, O.D., Ph.D.

*Professor*

*Brien A. Holden Professor*

David Berntsen, O.D., Ph.D.

*Associate Professor*

*Golden-Golden Professor in Optometry*

Rudolph Black, O.D.

*Clinical Associate Professor*

Alan Burns, Ph.D.

*Professor*

*Benedict-Pitts Professor in Optometry*

Moriah Chandler, O.D.

*Clinical Assistant Professor*

Han Cheng, O.D., Ph.D.

*Clinical Professor*

Vivien Coulson-Thomas, Ph.D.

*Associate Professor*

Vallabh Das, Ph.D.

*Professor*

*John and Rebecca Moores Professor*

Jennifer Deakins, O.D.

*Clinical Associate Professor*

Luca Della Santina, Ph.D., Pharm.D.

*Assistant Professor*

Tarsis Ferreira, M.Sc., Ph.D.

*Assistant Professor*

Meron Fitta, O.D.

*Clinical Assistant Professor*

Laura Frishman, Ph.D.

*Professor*

*John and Rebecca Moores Professor*

Janet Garza, O.D.

*Clinical Assistant Professor*

Amber Gaume Giannoni, O.D.

*Clinical Professor*

*Kevin McDaid-Vision Source Professor*

Marcus Gonzales, O.D.

*Clinical Associate Professor*

Viviana Gonzalez, O.D.

*Clinical Assistant Professor*

Beth Harper, O.D.

*Clinical Associate Professor*

Wendy Harrison, O.D., Ph.D.

*Associate Professor*

Ralph Herring, O.D., M.H.A.

*Clinical Professor*

Hong Dieu Ho, O.D.

*Clinical Assistant Professor*

Nicole Hooper, O.D.

*Clinical Associate Professor*

Munenori Ishibashi, Ph.D.

*Research Assistant Professor*

Nange Jin, M.D., Ph.D.

*Research Assistant Professor*

Lucy Kehinde Darnell, O.D., Ph.D.

*Clinical Associate Professor*

Andrew Kemp, O.D.

*Clinical Assistant Professor*

Tonya Ketcham, O.D., Ph.D.

*Clinical Assistant Professor*

Kathryn Keyzer, O.D.

*Professor of Practice*

Jung-Sun Kim, O.D., Ph.D.

*Clinical Assistant Professor*

Kimberly Lambreghts, R.N., O.D.

*Clinical Professor*

Anna-Kaye Logan, O.D.

*Clinical Associate Professor*

Ruth Manny, O.D., Ph.D.

*Professor*

*Charles R. Stewart Professor*

Danica Marrelli, O.D.  
*Clinical Professor*  
*North Texas Study Group Professor*

Jason Marsack, Ph.D.  
*Associate Professor*

Muriel Martinez, O.D.  
*Clinical Assistant Professor*

Anna Matynia, Ph.D.  
*Associate Professor*

Kimberly Meier, Ph.D.  
*Assistant Professor*

Swati Modi, O.D.  
*Clinical Associate Professor*

Lan Chi Nguyen, M.B.A., Ed.D.  
*Instructional Assistant Professor*

Amber Nichols, O.D.  
*Clinical Assistant Professor*

Lauri Nurminen, Ph.D.  
*Assistant Professor*

John O'Brien, Ph.D.  
*Professor*  
*Benedict-McFadden*  
*Professor in Optometry*

Lisa Ostrin, O.D., Ph.D.  
*Associate Professor*

Lloyd Pate, O.D.  
*Clinical Associate Professor*

Nimesh Patel, O.D., Ph.D.  
*Associate Professor*

Maureen Plaumann, O.D., Ph.D.  
*Clinical Assistant Professor*

Jason Porter, Ph.D.  
*Associate Professor*

Guoting Qin, Ph.D.  
*Research Associate Professor*

Rachel Redfern, O.D., Ph.D.  
*Associate Professor*

Christophe P. Ribelayga, M.S., Ph.D.  
*Professor*  
*FERV Professor*

Eric Ritchey, O.D., Ph.D.  
*Assistant Professor*

Kaitlyn Sapoznik, O.D., Ph.D.  
*Assistant Professor*

Diane Sayah, O.D., Ph.D.  
*Assistant Professor*

Pat Segu, O.D.  
*Clinical Professor*

Justin Simbulan, O.D.  
*Clinical Assistant Professor*

Scott Stevenson, Ph.D.  
*Associate Professor*

Jennifer Tasca, O.D.  
*Clinical Assistant Professor*

Anita Ticak, O.D., M.S.  
*Clinical Associate Professor*

Michael D. Twa, O.D., Ph.D.  
*Professor*  
*Humana Endowed Dean's*  
*Chair in Optometry*

Anuradha Veerappan, O.D., M.S.  
*Clinical Assistant Professor*

Maria Walker, O.D., M.S., Ph.D.  
*Assistant Professor*

Mary Kate Walters, O.D.  
*Clinical Assistant Professor*

Samantha Wang, O.D.  
*Clinical Assistant Professor*

Joe Wheat, O.D., Ph.D.  
*Clinical Associate Professor*

Geunyoung Yoon, Ph.D.  
*Professor*  
*Irvin M. Borish Chair in Optometry*

Zhijing Zhang, Ph.D.  
*Research Assistant Professor*

## Emeritus Faculty

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Ray Applegate, O.D., Ph.D.  
Harold Bedell, Ph.D.  
Roger L. Boltz, O.D., Ph.D.  
Yuzo Chino, Ph.D.  
Suzanne Ferimer, M. Ed.  
Karen Fern, O.D.  
Troy Fannin, O.D.\*  
Merton Flom, O.D., Ph.D.\*

Ron Harwerth, Ph.D.  
Nicky Holdeman, O.D., M.D.  
Randy Jose, O.D.  
Penelope Kegel-Flom, Ph.D.  
James Koetting, O.D.\*  
Paul Pease, O.D., Ph.D.  
Marcus G. Piccolo, O.D.  
Don Pitts, O.D.\*

Nelson Reber, O.D.\*  
Jerome Rosner, O.D.\*  
Earl L. Smith, III, O.D., Ph.D.  
Charles Stewart, O.D., Ph.D.\*  
Jerald Strickland, O.D., Ph.D.\*

\* Deceased

## 2023-2024 Academic Year Externship Sites include:

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Lieutenant Anthony M. Belekanich, O.D. Naval Medical Center San Diego, San Diego, California	Charity Grannis, M.D., Houston Eye Associates, Houston, Texas	Samir Patel, O.D. Texas State Optical, Beaumont, Texas
Brett Bennett, O.D. Louisiana Eye and Laser Center, Alexandria, Louisiana	Andrew Kemp, O.D. Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas	Kristi Ramirez, O.D. Sharp Eye Consultants, San Antonio, Texas
Jacqueline Brending, O.D. Clear Lake Eye Center, Webster, Texas	Brook Komar, O.D. Texas Children's Hospital Clinic, Houston, Texas	Jackson Robison, O.D. Mission Vision, San Antonio, Texas
Kevin Brown, O.D. Prairie Eye Clinic, Vermillion, South Dakota	Thanh Le, O.D. South Texas Veterans Health Care System, San Antonio, Texas	Mary Kate Sain, O.D. Northside Community Health Center, Fort Worth, Texas
Kim Castleberry, O.D. Plano Eye Associates, Plano, Texas	Michael Leung, O.D. Richmond VA Outpatient Clinic, Richmond, Texas	Charles Shidlofsky, O.D. Neuro-Vision Associates of North Texas, Plano, Texas
Randy Charrier, O.D. Family Vision Solutions, Spring, Texas	Oliver Lou, O.D. Signature Eye Care, Cedar Park, Texas	Laurie Sorrenson, O.D. Lakeline Vision Source, Austin, Texas
Brian Cherry, O.D. West Texas Eyecare, Fort Stockton, Texas	Stephanie Lozano, O.D. Diagnostic Eye Center, Houston, Texas	Anthony Stout, O.D. Indian Health Hospital, Albuquerque, New Mexico
John Coble, O.D. Eyecare of Greenville, Greenville, Texas	Nicole Maldonado, O.D. Sitterle Vision Source, San Antonio, Texas	Megan Stubinski, O.D. Vision Source Mission Bend, Houston, Texas
Jennifer Deakins, O.D. Community Eye Clinic, Fort Worth, Texas	Michael McCormick, O.D. McCormick Vision Center, Austin, Texas	Joanna Tanaka, O.D. Santa Fe Indian Health Center, Santa Fe, New Mexico
David Dinh, O.D. Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas	Earlena McKee, O.D. NSU College of Optometry, Tahlequah, Oklahoma	David Trout, O.D. Amarillo VA, Amarillo, Texas
Janet Garza, O.D. UH Eye Center at Heights, Houston, Texas	Donner Mizelle, O.D. Acadian Vision Associates, Lafayette, Louisiana	David Tybor, O.D. Oak Hill Eye Care, Austin, Texas
Kevin Gee, O.D. Gee Eye Care, Missouri City, Texas	Clarke D. Newman, O.D. Plaza Vision Center, Dallas, Texas	Ann Voss, O.D. Bellaire Family Eye Care, Bellaire, Texas
Geeta Girdher, O.D. Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland	Vu Nguyen, O.D. Today's Vision Meyerland, Houston, Texas	Ashley Wallace-Tucker, O.D. Bellaire Family Eye Care, Bellaire, Texas
Dixon Golden, O.D. Golden Eye Clinic, Center, Texas	Joshua Pass, O.D. West Texas Eyecare, Fort Stockton, Texas	Stacy Washington, O.D. Raymond G. Murphy VA Medical Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico
Marcus Gonzales, O.D. Cedar Springs Eye Clinic, Dallas, Texas	Amita Patel, O.D. Hope Clinic, Houston, Texas	David Way, O.D. MyEyeDr., Spring, Spring, Texas

## UHCO Milestones

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### 1950s

In 1952, the University of Houston College of Optometry officially opens. Charles R. Stewart, O.D., Ph.D., is named first dean of the college.

In 1955, the Foundation for Education and Research in Vision is established to increase and promote awareness of vision and its care.

The College graduates the first class with 11 O.D.s entering the optometric profession in 1955.

Mildred Carlisle, O.D., is the college's first female graduate.

### 1960s

Faculty member Chester H. Pheiffer, O.D., Ph.D., assumes duties as the second dean of the college.

The Texas Commission on Higher Education confirms the offering of optometry at the University of Houston, making the college eligible for state support.

Charles M. Stephens, O.D., becomes the college's 100th graduate.

### 1970s

The graduate program in physiological optics is established with the Master's degree in 1970 and the Doctor of Philosophy degree in 1972. The first Master of Science degree is awarded to Norman E. Leach, O.D., a former University of Houston College of Optometry faculty member. The first Doctor of Philosophy degree is awarded to Pierrette Dahaw-Barker, a former faculty member at Salus University's College of Optometry.

James K. Donovan, O.D., becomes the 500th graduate.

The J. Davis Armistead Building is completed with both state and federal assistance. The state-of-the-art \$9.6 million building is home to the college's expanding clinical training facilities, vision research laboratories, and classrooms.

The college of optometry establishes a formal partnership with the Good Neighbor Healthcare Center and on-site optometric services begin.

William R. Baldwin, O.D., Ph.D., becomes the third dean of the University of Houston College of Optometry.

The University of Houston College of Optometry's Reading Room becomes an official library recognized by the University of Houston.

The Nelson Reber, O.D., Eye Open Golf Tournament is established to raise funds for student scholarships and emergency loans.

### 1980s

Dan Patterson, O.D., becomes the College of Optometry's 1,000th graduate.

The University of Houston, Downtown formally names the vision clinic the Herbert H. Moore Vision Care Clinic, in honor of the popular UHCO professor.

The Texas Optometry Career Opportunities Program (TEXOCOP) is created with grant funds contributed from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service Administration.

### 1990s

Karen M. Conway, O.D., becomes the college's 2,000th graduate.

The Weston A. Pettey Library is dedicated to honor Dr. Pettey's tireless efforts on behalf of the University of Houston College of Optometry and the profession. The Reading Room is named to honor Dr. Irvin M. Borish for his achievements in the profession.

The college building is formally named the J. Davis Armistead Building in recognition of Dr. Armistead's enduring efforts benefitting the college, university, and the profession. Dr. Armistead is known for being the optometrist to singer Buddy Holly and having a hand in selecting the famous black frames.

Jerald W. Strickland, O.D., Ph.D., is named the University of Houston College of Optometry's fourth dean in September 1991.

### 2000s

Seren D. Ngin, O.D., becomes the college's 3,000th graduate in May 2001.

The University of Houston College of Optometry celebrates its 50th Anniversary.

Earl L. Smith III, O.D., Ph.D., is named the fifth dean of the University of Houston College of Optometry in August 2003.

The University of Houston College of Optometry debuts its Mobile Eye Institute, designed to provide eye care throughout the Houston area in support of community care and disaster relief.

### 2010s

The Molly and Doug Barnes Vision Institute within the new Health and Biomedical Sciences Building breaks ground in 2010 and officially opens in November 2012.

In 2012, the college opens the first ambulatory surgical center affiliated with a college of optometry to provide state of the art surgical care and training on site.

## Commencement Ceremony

Bridget Ducote, O.D., becomes the 4,000th UHCO graduate during the May 2012 ceremony.

In November 2013, Earl L. Smith III, O.D., Ph.D., is appointed to serve as the Interim Chief Health Officer for the university, and Roger L. Boltz, O.D., Ph.D., is appointed to serve as the college's Interim Dean.

J. Davis Armistead, O.D., passes away in June 2014. He was the first O.D. to serve on the UH Board of Regents and completed two terms, the longest of any optometrist. He served as an advocate for the college, university, and profession until his death.

The college establishes the Simulation Lab in August 2014 giving students state-of-the-art virtual simulators to help students learn patient examination skills. Later, the college acquires Anatomage Virtual 4D Anatomy Tables designated exclusively for optometry students. The advanced technology allows students to visualize structures in four dimensions.

In August 2015, UHCO establishes eye and vision care services at the Hope Clinic, a Federally Qualified Health Center, located in one of Houston's most racially diverse neighborhoods, providing healthcare services in 14 languages, including Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Korean, Burmese, Arabic, and Spanish.

In October 2016, James H. Dienst, O.D., '89, is promoted to Brigadier General and is the first optometrist to achieve general officer rank in the Air Force. He received the prestigious Air Force Optometrist of the Year Award in 2001.

Suzanne Ferimer, Librarian for UHCO's Weston A. Pettey Library, is presented with the Medical Library Association President's Award in March 2017. This is one of MLA's highest honors and recognizes those that have made outstanding contributions in the field of health sciences librarianship.

UHCO's 100th scholarship endowment is established in March

2018 to provide merit-based awards for optometry students enrolled at UHCO.

Roger Boltz, O.D., '72, Ph.D., '78, is recognized for his 40 years of service to the college. He joined the college's faculty in 1978 as an assistant professor, retiring in May 2018 after 40 years of service. In addition to teaching and working in the cornea and contact lens clinic, he served in a variety of roles including chief financial officer, interim dean, associate dean for finance and administration, and associate dean for professional studies.

In 2019, following a national search, Michael Twa, O.D., Ph.D., is selected as the University of Houston College of Optometry's sixth dean.

### 2020s

In 2020 the world responds to the COVID global pandemic. Teaching activities and patient services are quickly modified to maintain public health and student training progress. Online education and telehealth become urgent priorities.

In 2023 Danica Marrelli, O.D., and Amber Gaume Giannoni, O.D., become the first non-tenure track faculty to hold endowed chairs.

Between 2020 and 2024 the college hires 40 new faculty.

The University of Houston launches 50 in 5 an initiative to increase research funding in 5 years. The college of optometry increases research funding by more than 100% in less than 3 years.

2023—the University of Houston is ranked 27th in the nation in National Eye Institute funding surpassing UC Berkeley and all other Texas Universities except Baylor.

In 2024, Dean Emeritus Earl Smith, III, O.D., Ph.D., becomes the third inductee into the college's Hall of Visionaries.

## Invitation

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At the conclusion of the ceremony, the College of Optometry and the College of Optometry's Foundation for Education and Research in Vision will host a reception celebrating our newest alumni.

We invite all our graduates and guests to join us for light refreshments as we honor the Class of 2024.

**University of Houston**  
**Health 1 Building**  
**The Doctors of Texas State Optical Alumni Education Center**







**Message from the UH Alumni Foundation Board President**

Let me be the first to welcome you to the UH Alumni Association. You are joining a global network of over 305,000 Cougars. With your participation, we can only grow stronger. As you embark on this next chapter, know that your Alumni Association is here to help you stay connected with your beloved alma mater. From volunteering at an event, joining an Association or Network, signing on to UH Link, to becoming a Life Member, the opportunities to engage are endless.

Please click the QR code below to enjoy all the activities that soon await you. In the meantime, savor this moment and continue to soar.

True we'll ever be and Go Coogs!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Michael Sachs'.

Michael Sachs ('97)  
*UH Alumni Association Foundation Board President*

**Have You Completed  
Your Alumni Checklist?**



<https://houstonalumni.com/recent-grads/>





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**HOUSTON**

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Houston, TX 77204-2018

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