



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 12, 2021

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Javier Perez, MD, Elected as President of Florida Society of Ophthalmology

*Drs. Nezgoda, Mahootchi, Goldhardt, Shah and Bovee Round Out
Executive Leadership Team*



JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – (July 12, 2021) – Glaucoma and cataract specialist **Javier Perez, MD**, was installed as president of the Florida Society of Ophthalmology (FSO). Elections were held during the FSO Annual Business Meeting, which took place in Palm Beach on Saturday, July 10.

As FSO president, Dr. Perez will guide the nonprofit association, which represents more than 500 medical doctors focused on preserving the medical and surgical specialty of ophthalmology. In addition to active participation in legislative advocacy and the dissemination of responsible information to physicians and patients throughout the state, the FSO also provides continuing medical education opportunities.

The FSO also announced the elections of **Joseph Nezgoda, MD** as president-elect, **Ahad Mahootchi, MD**, as vice president of advocacy, **Raquel Goldhardt, MD**, as vice president of education, and **Ankit Shah, MD**, as vice president of outreach and **Courtney Bovee, MD**, as secretary/treasurer.

Sarah Wellik, MD, who preceded Dr. Perez as president, will assume the role of immediate past president, and **Darby Miller, MD**, will transition into the role of past president.

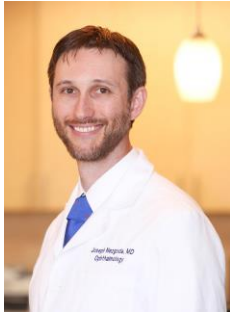
Board-certified and fellowship-trained, Dr. Perez began his medical education at the University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine. Following graduation, he served in the U.S. Navy as a Diving Medical Officer for 4 years. He subsequently completed his residency at University of Florida and his Glaucoma Fellowship at Emory University. Today, he treats patients at his private practice in Orlando, FL.

An outdoor enthusiast, Dr. Perez enjoys skiing and scuba diving with his twin boys and wife, Dr. Lindsey Koss.



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Joseph Nezgoda, MD was installed as the president-elect of FSO during the Masters in Ophthalmology 2021 meeting.

Dr. Nezgoda is a fellowship-trained, board-certified retina disease and surgery specialist practicing in West Palm Beach and Boca Raton, Fla. A former researcher at the world-renowned National Institutes of Health, Nezgoda graduated with honors from Georgetown University and attended medical school at Rutgers (UMDNJ)-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School where he received the Excellence in Teaching and Gold Humanism Awards. He trained at Mount Sinai (NY), Einstein Medical Center, The Cleveland Medical Center and The University of California. His focus is on macular degeneration, diabetic eye disease, and other serious blinding eye diseases.

Dr. Nezgoda's humanitarian and research efforts have earned him recognitions, including the esteemed Leadership in Medicine Award from the AMA and the Achievement Award of the American Academy of Ophthalmology. In 2019, Dr. Nezgoda received the Florida Society of Ophthalmology's Michael R. Redmond, MD, Outstanding Young Ophthalmologist Award and at this year's FSO annual business meeting he received the John R. Brayton, Jr., MD Leadership Award that recognizes a Florida-based ophthalmologist who exemplifies leadership and dedication to the profession.



Ahad Mahootchi, MD was installed as the vice president of advocacy of FSO during the Masters in Ophthalmology 2021 meeting.

Dr. Mahootchi has more than 25 years of experience in complex and cutting-edge treatments in cataract, glaucoma, retina, cornea, and oculoplastics. After obtaining his B.S. in biochemistry at Rhodes College in Memphis, he completed his medical education at Nashville's Vanderbilt University School of Medicine. In 2001, he founded The Eye Clinic of Florida and continues to serve the Tampa Bay area there today.

In addition to his service to the FSO, Dr. Mahootchi lends his time to several organizations, including the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgeons and the executive committee of Cataract Surgeons for Improved Eyecare.



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Raquel Goldhardt, MD was installed as the vice president of education of FSO during the Masters in Ophthalmology 2021 meeting.

Dr. Goldhardt is an associate professor at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, as well as a cataract, retina and uveitis specialist with the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute and the Miami Veterans Affairs Healthcare Center. She received her medical degree from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil. She completed ophthalmology residency at Santa Casa Hospital, Brazil. She then completed a clinical fellowship in Uveitis and AIDS at the Paulista School of Medicine at Federal University of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Her research focuses on novel imaging techniques for macular degeneration, Stargardt's disease, corneal nerves analysis after anti-VEGF injections, quality of life following cataract extraction in AMD patients, biomarkers of ocular Gulf War illness, and was the first to describe posterior subhyaloid precipitates associated with cytomegalovirus retinitis. Dr. Goldhardt has been a critical figure in the national and international physician education while playing an active role in the inclusion and diversity, admission, and executive committees for the University of Miami and leading mission trips to South America, Mexico, and China.



Ankit Shah, MD was installed as the vice president of outreach of FSO during the Masters in Ophthalmology 2021 meeting.

Dr. Shah has long been immersed in the Florida community. After receiving his medical degree from the University of South Florida Morsani College of Medicine, he completed his ophthalmology residency at the University of South Florida Eye Institute in Tampa, Fla.

At his current practice, he focuses on the management of diseases and conditions of the anterior segment including infections, ectasia, dystrophy, trauma, and cataracts. As an assistant professor in the department of ophthalmology at a quaternary referral center, Dr Shah specializes in complex and routine cataract surgery, corneal transplantation (PKP, DSAEK, DMEK), ocular surface surgery, and anterior segment reconstruction.

When not treating patients, Dr. Shah enjoys time with family, whether it is hiking or cheering on the Gators, Buccaneers, and Tampa Bay Lightning.



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Courtney Bovee, MD was installed as the secretary/treasurer of FSO during the Masters in Ophthalmology 2021 meeting.

Dr. Bovee earned her medical degree from the University of South Florida and completed residency training at UCLA Harbor in Los Angeles and Eastern Virginia Medical School – Ophthalmology in Norfolk, Va. She completed glaucoma fellowship training at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, a division of the Harvard Medical School Department of Ophthalmology, where she was named the 2015-2016 Ruthanne and Richard Simmons Glaucoma Fellow by the Harvard Medical School Department of Ophthalmology.

Dr. Bovee is currently a glaucoma surgeon at the Newsome Eye Center in Tampa. In addition to being actively involved in education, research and organizational leadership, she is also active with numerous professional and medical societies, including the Young Ophthalmologist Advocacy Subcommittee of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the Florida Medical Association Board of Governors. She serves as a Key Opinion Leader and medical consultant/speaker for numerous pharmaceutical and medical device companies.

During residency, Dr. Bovee was awarded the Kenneth Tuck Resident Advocate Award for her commitment to advocacy. She also has been the recipient of the Pfizer/AMA Foundation Excellence in Medicine Leadership Award from the American Medical Association Foundation. She is the recipient of University of Florida's Distinguished Young Alumni Award and given the honor of 40 Under 40 by the Orlando Business Journal. Dr. Bovee was identified as a "Rising Star" by the American City Business Journal in and awarded the "Executive Leadership Award." In September 2020, she received the Michael R. Redmond, MD, Outstanding Young Ophthalmologist Award, which was established in honor of Michael R. Redmond, MD, and recognizes a Florida-based ophthalmologist who has demonstrated organizational leadership, service, competence and devotion to the high ethical and professional standards of the FSO.

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ABOUT THE FLORIDA SOCIETY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY (FSO)

The Florida Society of Ophthalmology (FSO) has a rich history of serving patients since its founding in 1939 as the Florida Society of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology. Today, the organization represents more than 500 physician members throughout the state and is focused on advancing patient care and protecting the medical specialty of ophthalmology. For more information, please visit the FSO website at www.mdeye.org.