



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 24, 2024

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Raquel Goldhardt, MD, FACS, Elected as President of Florida Society of Ophthalmology

Drs. Correa, Singh, Bovee, Mahootchi, and Gibbons Round Out Executive Leadership Team

JACKSONVILLE, FL. – (June 24, 2024) – Raquel Goldhardt, MD, FACS, renowned for her expertise in cataract surgery, uveitis, and retina care, has assumed the presidency of the Florida Society of Ophthalmology (FSO). The appointment came following elections held during the FSO's Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, June 22, in Orlando.



Dr. Goldhardt brings a wealth of experience to her new role, with a focus on intricate cataract surgeries and the management of various retinal conditions such as macular degeneration, vein occlusions, and diabetic retinopathy. Her research endeavors encompass innovative imaging techniques for retinal diseases, corneal nerve analysis in patients undergoing anti-VEGF injections, and exploring the quality-of-life post-cataract extraction in AMD patients, among others. Notably, she was the first to document posterior subhyaloid precipitates in patients with cytomegalovirus retinitis.

Beyond her clinical and research contributions, Dr. Goldhardt is dedicated to promoting inclusivity and diversity in the field of ophthalmology. She actively champions these values as the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute's advocate for inclusion and diversity and has held significant roles in admission and promotions and professionalism committees at the University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine.

Dr. Goldhardt's impact extends globally through her involvement in mission trips and vision screenings, both locally in Florida and abroad in underserved regions of China, South America (including the Galapagos with the Darwin Project), and Mexico. She co-directs the International Physician Global Outreach program at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute.

Prior to her presidency with the FSO, Dr. Goldhardt served as President of the Miami Ophthalmological Society in 2017, and currently, Dr. Raquel Goldhardt serves as the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology's representative (PAAO) to the American Academy of Ophthalmology's (AAO) Board of Councilors. She has been a longstanding member of the FSO



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Board of Directors, previously holding positions as Vice-President of Outreach and Vice-President of Education since 2020.

The FSO also announced the elections of **Zelia M. Correa, MD** as president-elect, **Rishi P. Singh, MD** as vice president of advocacy, **Courtney Bovee, MD** as vice president of education, and **Ahad Mahootchi, MD** as vice president of outreach and **Allister Gibbons, MD** as secretary/treasurer.

David A. Eichenbaum, MD who preceded Dr. Goldhardt as president, will assume the role of immediate past president, and **Joseph T. Nezgoda, MD, MBA** will transition into the role of past president.



Zelia M. Correa, MD, PhD was installed as president-elect of the FSO at the Annual Business Meeting held during the Masters in Ophthalmology 2024 meeting on Saturday, June 22.

Dr. Correa is a Professor of Ophthalmology at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, University of Miami School of Medicine, and the Director of Ocular Oncology and Echography at the same institution. Dr. Correa specializes in ocular oncology and vitreoretinal surgery. Prior to her current position at Bascom Palmer, she was the Tom Clancy Chair of Ophthalmology (2008-2020) and the Mary Knight Asbury Endowed Chair of Ocular Oncology and Ocular Pathology (2006-2007). She is involved with professional organizations such as the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO), the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology (PAAO), Women in Retina, and the Maryland Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (MSEPS). During her term with MSEPS, she served as Scientific Chair (2019-2021) and Program Chair for the State Society Annual Meeting in 2021.

Throughout her career, Dr. Correa has been recognized for her clinical expertise, academics, and leadership. More recently she received the Senior Achievement Award by the American Academy



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of Ophthalmology and the Benjamin Boyd Humanitarian Award and the Ambassador for Education by the Pan American Association of Ophthalmology. She also serves on the Editorial Board of JAMA Ophthalmology, TVST, Brazilian Archives of Ophthalmology (Arquivos Brasileiros de Oftalmologia), EyeNet magazine, and Retina Times. Dr. Correa's focus is on clinical and translational research in uveal melanoma and retinoblastoma.



Rishi P. Singh, MD was installed as the Vice President of Advocacy of the FSO at the Annual Business Meeting held at the Masters in Ophthalmology 2024 meeting on Saturday, June 22.

Dr. Singh is a staff surgeon, vice president, and chief medical officer at the Cleveland Clinic, Martin Health and Professor of Ophthalmology at the Lerner College of Medicine in Cleveland, Ohio. He received his bachelor and medical degrees from Boston University and completed his residency at the Massachusetts Eye and Infirmary Harvard Combined Program in Boston, Massachusetts. Dr. Singh then completed a medical and surgical fellowship at the Cole Eye Institute in Cleveland, Ohio. He specializes in the treatment of medical and surgical retinal disease such as diabetic retinopathy, retinal detachment, and age-related macular degeneration. Dr. Singh has authored more than 300 peer reviewed publications, books, and book chapters and serves as the principal investigator of numerous national clinical trials advancing the treatment of retinal disease. Dr. Singh is the founder and former president on the Retina World Congress and serves as the chair of many continuing educational programs. Dr. Singh has been honored with several research recognitions such as the Alpha Omega Alpha Research Award and American Society of Retina Specialists Senior Honor Award.



Courtney Bovee, MD was installed as the vice president of education of the FSO at the Annual Business Meeting held at the Masters in Ophthalmology 2024 meeting on Saturday, June 22.



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Dr. Bovee is a Harvard fellowship trained glaucoma specialist and cataract surgeon in Tampa Bay, Florida. She received her medical degree from the University of South Florida and completed her Residency at UCLA and Eastern Virginia Medical School. She is actively involved in education, medical devices, pharmaceutical development and clinical research. In addition to her clinical work, Dr. Bovee is a leader in organized medicine in numerous local, state, and national societies.

Dr. Bovee has been honored by "The Ophthalmologist" as one of the top 100 most influential people in the world of ophthalmology by being selected to be on the Power 2022 List. She was awarded the Harvard Department of Ophthalmology Richard and Ruthanne Simmons Fellowship Award. As a medical student she was awarded the prestigious AMA Foundation's Excellence in Medicine Leadership Award. Other notable awards include the American Business Journal's Rising Star Award, The Michael R. Redmond Outstanding Young Ophthalmologist Award, the Kenneth Tuck Advocacy Award, The Orlando Business Journal's 40 Under 40 Award, the American Business Influencers Award, University of Florida's 40 Under 40 Award, and the New England Society of Ophthalmology Clinical Research Award.



Ahad Mahootchi, MD, was installed as the vice president of outreach of FSO at the Annual Business Meeting held at the Masters in Ophthalmology 2024 meeting on Saturday, June 22.

Dr. Mahootchi has been in private practice for the last 26 years in the Tampa Bay area. He trained at Vanderbilt University for medical school and residency. He founded The Eye Clinic of Florida in Zephyrhills and has been active in FSO for the last several years.



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Allister Gibbons, MD was installed as the secretary/treasurer of the FSO at the Annual Business Meeting held at the Masters in Ophthalmology 2024 meeting on Saturday, June 22.

Dr. Gibbons is an associate professor of Clinical Ophthalmology at the University of Miami. He specializes in cataracts, corneal transplants, intraocular lens surgery, dry eye and ocular surface. He completed medical school at Los Andes University in Chile, and fellowship at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute. Dry Eye, Ocular Surface Disease and Keratoprosthesis are his research interests, which he investigates at the Ocular Surface Center at Bascom Palmer.

ABOUT THE FLORIDA SOCIETY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY (FSO)

The Florida Society of Ophthalmology is the state's leading advocate for providing Floridians with the highest standard of eye care. The FSO's mission is to promote and protect the medical specialty of ophthalmology through active participation in legislative advocacy and providing continuing medical education and responsible information to its members, physicians and the citizens of Florida. Please visit www.mdeye.org for more information.

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