

Miami VA Medical Center
Residency in Primary Care with emphasis in Ocular Disease
Program Coordinator:
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Mission:

The mission of the Miami VAMC Optometry Residency program is to provide advanced didactic and clinical training that will enable the resident to develop his or her skills in primary eye care in a challenging and diverse clinic environment. High quality eye care will be provided to all of our nation's veterans as the primary goal. The program will provide the learning resources for the resident to expand upon their didactic knowledge base and apply this knowledge in an effort to develop advanced competency in eye, vision, and health care.

Goals:

1. To enhance the residents' proficiency and develop advanced competency in providing high quality primary eye/vision care for the patients of the Miami VA Medical Center.
2. To enhance the residents' scholarly development and expand on their existing knowledge base in clinical eye care.
3. To develop and enhance the residents' ability to function as a member of the health care team through participation in a multidisciplinary health care system.
4. To develop and enhance the residents' advanced diagnostic skills through the use of gonioscopy, automated and Goldmann perimetry, scleral depression, ocular photography, corneal pachymetry, ultrasonography, fluorescein angiography, ocular coherence tomography and other diagnostic instrumentation.

Staff and Facility:

The Miami VA Medical Center is located within the Jackson Memorial Medical Center and University of Miami Medical Campus in the heart of Miami, Florida. It serves approximately 285,000 veteran patients throughout south Florida and is one of seven members of VISN 8 Healthcare System. The Miami VAMC Hospital is a tertiary care and referral center encompassing all sub-specialty medical and surgical fields and is state of the art and progressive with both its facilities and attending staff.

The Miami VAMC Eye Clinic has 3 full time optometrists on staff providing a well-rounded array of expertise. Dr. Kasey Zann graduated optometry school at Nova Southeastern University in 2007 where she earned her doctorate in optometry with honors as well as obtaining various awards such as Clinician of the Year, Student of the Year, and the Chancellor's Award for Excellence. After finishing optometry school, she went on to complete a residency at the Jesse Brown/Hines VA Hospital in Chicago to specialize in the care of ocular disease and low vision rehabilitation. Dr. Zann has been working at the Miami Veteran's Hospital since October 2008, working in both primary care and low vision clinic caring for both legally blind and visually impaired veterans.

Dr. James Fabian graduated from the New England College of Optometry in 2005 and subsequently completed a one year ocular disease residency at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute where he pursued retinal nerve fiber glaucoma

research collecting a normative database for GDxvcc. Soon after Dr. Fabian started his career at the Miami VAMC, he became the Regional Clinical lead for the Diabetic Tele-Retinal Program. He is also the Specialty Fit Contact Lens expert for eye services.

Dr. Samantha Fernandez graduated optometry school at Nova Southeastern University in 2018. She then completed her residency in primary care with emphasis in ocular disease here at the Miami VA in 2019. She went on to work at Aran Eye Associated until 2022 when she started back at the Miami VA. She has been working here since and is currently coordinator for our Berkeley student program. She is also serving as secretary at Miami-Dade optometric association.

The Miami VAMC Eye Clinic has an ophthalmology attending staff that covers every area of ocular subspecialty, including retina, cornea, cataracts, uveitis, glaucoma, oculo-plastics and neuro-ophthalmology. The ophthalmologists supervise the ophthalmology residents as well as perform advanced surgical procedures. Technical staff is assigned daily to assist with all anterior and posterior photos, OCT, visual fields, and corneal topography. The technical staff helps with preliminary patient work ups and assists in maintaining smooth patient flow through the general and sub-specialty clinics.

The Miami VAMC Eye Clinic also has a teaching program involving fourth year optometry students from the University of California, Berkeley college of Optometry and the NOVA Southeastern College of Optometry. Our primary goal is to provide quality eye care to our nation's veterans. Another goal we have is to provide a quality learning experience for optometry students and residents. We hope that the skills and clinical information that you learn here can be used for many years to come in whatever mode of practice you end up choosing. One of the best ways to do this is by allowing the resident to obtain as many patient encounters as possible. However, we recognize that sheer volume does not equate to an education. Therefore, the workload will be increased or decreased based upon each resident's progress and motivation to learn. Additional reading assignments may be assigned in order to enhance the educational experience based on identified deficiencies in either clinical skills or knowledge base.

Selection Procedure and Admission Criteria:

All applicants are considered in a fair manner. No candidate will be discriminated against based upon race, sex, religion, creed, national origin, age, or non-disqualifying physical impairment. Candidates must register with the Optometry Resident Matching Service (ORMS) utilized by submitting a completed application. The following must be received by the program director for consideration as a residency applicant:

1. Name, address, phone number, and email address
2. Curriculum vitae
3. Official transcripts of optometric education
4. NBEO scores
5. Minimum of three letters of recommendation from individuals familiar with the academic and/or clinical abilities of the applicant
6. Brief letter of intent regarding his or her interest in completing this particular residency

Interviews will be requested of specific candidates based upon the quality of their credentials and application information. The minimum specific requirements the applicant must meet for consideration include the following:

1. The applicant must be a United States citizen to be eligible for VA funded position.
2. The applicant will have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or equivalent in Optometry school, exceptions will be made only at the discretion of the residency coordinator at the Miami VA.

3. The applicant must have earned an OD degree or will have earned such a degree from an accredited School or College of Optometry prior to July 1 of the educational year.
4. The applicant must successfully complete Parts I and II of NBEO examinations as well as have passed the TMOD section of Part II of the NBEO examination to be eligible. The applicant must have passed Part III of the NBEO prior to beginning the residency on July 1st.

The selected resident is required to obtain Optometric licensure in any US state. The optometry resident will still be able to begin the program with the expectation that licensure will be completed as soon as possible for the state where licensure is being requested. The unlicensed optometry resident will be allowed to perform ocular examination of patients and formulate diagnosis and treatment plans until licensure is secured. The attending doctor will verify clinical findings by physically examining the same patient and assessing the accuracy of the diagnosis and treatment plan. The unlicensed optometry resident will be allowed to rotate outside of the VA clinic in the external rotation clinics at the discretion of the residency program supervisor.

Length of rotation, hours, pay, medical insurance, vacation, and liability coverage:

1. The residency program formally starts July 1st and ends June 30th of the following year. The incoming resident will receive a one to two-week orientation at the start of the residency on hospital based and JHACO rules and regulations, as well as any mandatory training requirements necessary for external rotation sites. During this orientation, the resident will work closely with the staff optometrists and learn how the clinic, computerized patient record system (CPRS) and equipment function. The resident receives an orientation from Human Resource Management Service to the Medical Center and its policies and procedures at the new Employee Orientation. The resident will receive a copy of the Optometry Resident Handbook from the program supervisor approximately 1 month prior to the start of the residency.
2. Clinic generally begins at 8:00 am and finishes at approximately 5:00 pm. Lectures and grand rounds take place 3 days per week and begin no earlier than 7:30 am and end no later than 6:30 pm. There will be a minimum of an additional 25 mornings that the resident is required to attend ophthalmology lectures at 7:00 am at Bascom Palmer. It is left up to the discretion of the resident to choose which days they attend this extra lecture series. At this time, there are no on-call duties and no weekend hours. However, that is subject to change if the needs of the department morph. At this point in time, the resident will not be assigned on-call responsibilities.
3. The residency stipend is set by the Office of Academic Affairs at VA Headquarters. The current stipend is \$46,796.
4. Residents are entitled to participate in a VA sponsored health insurance plan of their choosing. Health insurance is deducted from the resident's paycheck.
5. The residents can accrue up to 13 days of annual leave (vacation) and sick leave throughout the year. In addition, Federal holidays will be observed with clinic closures. A 45-day advance notice is required in order to use leave.
6. Professional liability protection in the form of the Federal Tort Claims Act is provided to all residents for professional duties performed within the Miami VAMC. Residents are also covered for external rotations under the Federal Employees Liability Reform and Tort Compensation Act.
7. Residents are expected to participate in scheduled activities designed to meet the mission, goals and objectives of the residency program in order to receive a completion certificate.

Curriculum:

1. DIDACTIC EDUCATION
 - a. Attend weekly Monday afternoon optometry conferences at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute.
 - b. Attend weekly fluorescein conference Tuesday afternoon at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute.
 - c. Attend weekly Thursday morning grand rounds at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute.
 - d. Attend weekly Thursday morning optometry slide quiz at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute.
 - e. Attend a minimum of 25 additional morning ophthalmology lectures at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute (provided M-F from 7-8:00am, resident may select which lectures to attend).
2. CLINICAL EXPERIENCES
 - a. Provide eye care for patients with a wide variety of systemic and ocular diseases including but not limited to: diabetes, hypertension, vascular disease, glaucoma, cataracts, anterior segment disease, age related macular degeneration, and neuro-ophthalmic disease.
 - b. Perform or observe diagnostic testing including: automated perimetry, OCT, corneal pachymetry, B scan ultrasonography, anterior and retinal photography, and corneal topography.
 - c. Enter patient records into Computerized Patient Record System in a systematic and comprehensive fashion.
 - d. Review and triage consults from other members of the professional medical staff (as needed only).
 - e. Order and review laboratory, radiographic and other studies based on ocular signs and symptoms to rule out potential systemic causes of the findings, under the direction of the attending faculty optometrist.
 - f. Coordinate patient care with primary care providers and other sub-specialties as needed to assure comprehensive approach to patient's problems.
 - g. External Rotations. 1 day per week at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute in subspecialty clinics.
3. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES
 - a. Participate in case discussion with the residency supervisor or attending optometric/ophthalmic faculty on interesting or challenging cases that the resident was directly involved in.
 - b. Will present at least 3 lectures within the optometry lecture series program at Miami VA, Bascom Palmer Eye Institute and/or Nova Resident's day on interesting or relevant topics (to be approved by the residency supervisor).
 - c. Will be the lead or co-discussant of at least 3 slide quizzes at the Thursday morning optometry series at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute and/or Miami VA.
 - d. Mandatory completion of the following project prior to June 30th (end of academic year):
 - i. To complete a paper of publishable quality (as determined by the optometry residency supervisor) for original research, literature review or case study. Guidelines for submission based on those required by Optometry: Journal of the American Optometric Association will be given to the resident.
 - e. Licensed optometry Residents may have opportunity to assist in supervision of optometry students during the last 1/3 of the academic year.

MONDAY AFTERNOON OPTOMETRY LECTURE

Every Monday at 5pm the resident will attend a lecture series at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute. The lectures are done by optometry faculty members and residents from both Bascom Palmer and the Miami VAMC for optometry interns and residents, and the resident will be required to prepare and give approximately 3 lectures throughout their year of residency.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON FLUORESCIN LECTURE

Every Tuesday at 5:30 pm the resident will be required to attend the ophthalmology fluorescein/imaging conference at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute. This lecture is presented by retina, glaucoma, and neuro-ophthalmology fellows with attending ophthalmology staff present to educate residents on the art of reading fluorescein imaging, visual fields, OCT, and radiology imaging.

GRAND ROUNDS—THURSDAY MORNING EVERY WEEK

Every Thursday morning from 7:30-9:00 the resident will attend ophthalmology grand rounds at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute. This lecture series consists of ophthalmology residents presenting interesting, unique and challenging cases in front of ophthalmology attending staff with discussion and insight included with each case.

SLIDE QUIZ—THURSDAY AFTER GRAND ROUNDS

The optometry resident will attend and present images for this lecture series throughout the year. Various images, visual fields, OCTs, fluorescein, photos, ect. Will be compiled and presented in a power-point slideshow. The images will be presented in relatively rapid fire format by the optometry resident. Goals of the slid/case review are: Develop Clinical recognition of ocular diseases, develop differential diagnosis, develop advanced diagnostic skills, develop new technology interpretative skills and develop management plans.

ADDITIONAL OPHTHALMOLOGY MORNING LECTURES

Lectures to ophthalmology residents are provided Monday through Friday from 7-8:00am at Bascom Palmer. The resident must attend at least 25 of these throughout the year. The lecture schedule is available on Bascom Palmer's website. The resident may choose which lectures to attend based on his or her interests.

Completion Requirements:

1. Performing adequately on all clinic assignments at the VA and/or external rotation sites.
2. The resident must receive expected levels of performance on all formal evaluations.
3. The resident is required to complete the following project prior to June 30th.
 - a. To complete a paper of sufficient quality (as determined by the optometry residency supervisor) for publication of original research, literature review or case report. Guidelines for submission are based on those required by Optometry: Journal of the American Optometric Association.
4. The resident is required to participate in weekly Miami VAMC Optometry Education Conferences (Lecture, Grand Rounds, Case Review, Slide Quiz, ect) and present information formally upon request of the residency program supervisor or other staff optometrists.
5. The resident is required to present 3 formal lectures and slide quizzes at Bascom Palmer conferences, Miami VA, and/or Nova Southeastern College of Optometry Resident's Day.