

MARYAM GHIASSI, MD, MHS

ADVANCED VITREORETINAL RETINAL SURGEON & TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH LEADER

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CAREER SUMMARY

ADVANCED VITREORETINAL RETINAL SURGEON & TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH LEADER

- Board-Certified Ophthalmologist and Vitreoretinal Surgeon with deep expertise in retinal disease management, including macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, uveitis, and retinopathy of prematurity.
- Sub-investigator overseeing 40+ Phase I–III clinical trials; deliver high-quality patient care while ensuring protocol adherence, safety oversight, and data integrity.
- Clinical research strategist partnering with biostatistics, operations, regulatory, and sponsor teams to design and execute multicenter trials, accelerating translation of novel retinal therapeutics into practice.
- Published translational and clinical research in top journals (JAMA Ophthalmology, IOVS, Communications Biology, Biomaterials, Journal of Virology), spanning stem cell therapy, retinal disease mechanisms, and clinical innovation. Proven people leader and mentor; restructured clinical education workflows and implemented safety/efficiency improvements that strengthened care delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Trusted advisor and advocate within professional societies, including leadership and service through the New York State Ophthalmological Society; committed mentor to underrepresented communities.
- Recipient of multiple competitive honors, including the Japanese Government Scholarship (Monbukagakushō); bring a global perspective with professional Japanese proficiency and fluency in English and Persian.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Clinical Excellence & Surgical Expertise: Advanced Vitreoretinal Surgery | Medical Retina Specialization | Complex Surgical Case Management | Patient Safety & Quality Improvement
- Clinical Research & Development Leadership: 40+ Phase I-III Clinical Trials | Clinical Trial Compliance & Execution | Research Protocol Development | Strategic Study Design & Implementation | Translational Research (Stem Cell Therapy, Gene Therapy, Retinal Regeneration)
- Operational & Strategic Leadership: Strategic Clinical Planning & Process Optimization | Multi-Location Clinical Operations | Cross-Functional Team Leadership | Crisis & Change Management | Healthcare Innovation & Workflow Transformation | Strategic Partnerships
- Academic & Scientific Contributions: Ophthalmic Clinical Research & Protocol Development | Peer-Reviewed Publications & Scientific Medical Writing | Clinical Instruction & Medical Education Innovation | Evidence-Based Medicine

PROFESSIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

RETINAL CONSULTANTS MEDICAL GROUP - SACRAMENTO, CA

October 2023 - Present

Physician, Medical Retina and Vitreoretinal Surgeon

- Provide comprehensive medical and surgical care for retinal diseases, including macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, retinal detachment, and uveitis.
- Perform advanced vitreoretinal surgical procedures at affiliated centers, including Northern California Advanced Surgery Center.
- Manage a patient-care team across multiple clinic locations to optimize care and streamline treatment pathways. Serve as sub-investigator on multiple Phase I–III industry-sponsored clinical trials, supporting enrollment and data integrity while ensuring regulatory and protocol adherence.
- Deliver patient education and counseling to improve adherence and outcomes in complex retinal conditions.

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO SCHOOL OF MEDICINE – AURORA, CO **July 2021 - June 2023**
Vitreoretinal Surgical Fellow, Clinical Instructor, SUE ANSCHUTZ-RODGERS EYE CENTER

- Completed advanced fellowship training in vitreoretinal surgery, performing complex procedures for macular holes, retinal detachments, proliferative diabetic retinopathy, and ocular trauma.
- Served as Clinical Instructor, providing didactic teaching to residents and medical students.
- Participated as sub-investigator in multicenter clinical trials for AMD, diabetic macular edema, and uveitis, contributing to patient enrollment and data integrity.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER – NEW YORK, NY **July 2018 – June 2021**
Resident Physician, EDWARD S. HARKNESS EYE INSTITUTE

- Diagnosed and managed a wide spectrum of ophthalmic conditions across comprehensive and subspecialty clinics.
- Performed cataract and vitreoretinal surgeries under supervision, achieving competency in advanced surgical techniques.
- Chief Resident (2020–2021): reorganized academic and surgical schedules during COVID-19, improving resident training opportunities and patient safety.
- Led quality improvement initiatives to streamline clinic flow and maximize surgical volume while enhancing patient care.

MEMORIAL SLOAN KETTERING CANCER CENTER – NEW YORK, NY **July 2017 – June 2018**
Transitional Year Intern, Department of Medicine

- Completed a transitional medicine internship with rotations across oncology, critical care, and general medicine.
- Managed inpatient care for complex cancer patients, coordinating multidisciplinary teams to optimize outcomes.
- Developed a strong foundation in systemic disease management relevant to ophthalmic care.

YALE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE – NEW HAVEN, CT **June 2008 – July 2016**
Graduate Research Assistant

- Conducted stem cell research in the Lawrence Rizzolo Laboratory (Department of Surgery) on differentiation of embryonic stem cells into retinal progenitor cells and developed biodegradable scaffold models for retinal pigment epithelium transplantation, advancing potential cell-based retinal therapies
- Investigated synthetic lethality in BRCA2-deficient cancer cell lines in the Peter Glazer Laboratory (Department of Therapeutic Radiology), testing novel compounds targeting DNA repair mechanisms and cancer cell viability Conducted structural biology research in the Thomas Steitz Laboratory (Department of Molecular Biophysics & Biochemistry, Nobel Laureate) studying viral lytic cycle initiation, oncogenesis, ribosomal interactions, and tunnel interactions with nascent peptide chains using Cryo-EM
- Completed STARS fellowship in the Lynn Cooley Laboratory (Department of Genetics) investigating *Drosophila* oocyte development and protein localization in germ-line ring canal structures

EDUCATION

Yale University School of Medicine – New Haven, CT – Doctor of Medicine (MD)
Yale University School of Medicine – New Haven, CT – Master of Health Sciences (MHS)
Yale University – New Haven, CT – Bachelor of Science (BS), Biophysics & Biochemistry
Tokyo University of Foreign Studies – Tokyo, Japan – Japanese Government Scholar

CERTIFICATIONS & LICENSURE

American Board of Ophthalmology – Board Certified (2022–2032)
California State Medical License – Active (2025–2027)
Colorado State Medical License – Active (2025–2027)

New York State Medical License - Active (2025–2027)
DEA Registration – Active

LEADERSHIP & PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

RETINAL CONSULTANTS OF AMERICA

February 2025 – Present

Associate Representative, Leadership Board

- Elected to represent associate physicians on the RCA national medical leadership board, advocating for early-career interests and contributing to organizational policy development.
- Shape strategic initiatives focused on career growth pathways and long-term physician retention.

CALIFORNIA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION - Representative

February 2025 – Present

- Represent physician members at annual legislative meetings and policy forums, reviewing and debating healthcare policies impacting California physicians and patient care.

OPHTHO RECRUITS - Co-Founder

May 2024 – Present

- Founded comprehensive consulting platform supporting vitreoretinal surgery fellows in career navigation and professional development.
- Launched Retina Fellows Business Academy with robust industry sponsorship and strong fellow engagement.

ALTA OPHTHALMOLOGY SOCIETY - President

Dec 2023 – Present

- Lead regional ophthalmology society serving Northern California physician community, overseeing educational programs and facilitating professional collaboration among expert speakers.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER - NYC

May 2020 - June 2021

Chief Resident, Ophthalmology Edward S. Harkness Eye Institute

- Reorganized clinical schedules and operations during COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring training continuity and patient safety while implementing team-based workflow models that increased surgical volume and enhanced patient outcomes.

Clinical Protocol Development Leader, Idiopathic Intracranial Hypertension Task Force May 2022

- Led multidisciplinary team in developing standardized surgical protocols for Fulminant IIH, creating evidence-based treatment guidelines to prevent irreversible vision loss in acute cases.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Chen H, Strong Caldwell A, Patnaik JL, Feinstein EG, **Ghiassi M**, Mathias MT, Oliver SCN. Long-term functional and clinical outcomes in familial exudative vitreoretinopathy. *Retina*. 2025;45(5):908–914. doi:10.1097/IAE.0000000000004372. PMID: 39715563.

Ghiassi M, Wagner BD, Palestine A, Mandava N, Lynch AM. TNF α and other cytokines in patients with intermediate AMD. *Invest Ophthalmol Vis Sci*. 2022;63(7):355–F0186.

Krawitz BD, Sirinek P, Doobin D, Nanda T, **Ghiassi M**, Horowitz JD, Liebmann JM, De Moraes CG. The challenge of managing bilateral acute angle-closure glaucoma in the presence of active SARS-CoV-2 infection. *J Glaucoma*. 2021;30(3):e50–e53. doi:10.1097/IJG.0000000000001763. PMID: 33337718.

Singh D, Chen X, Xia T, **Ghiassi-Nejad M**, Tainsh L, Adelman RA, Rizzolo LJ. Partially differentiated neuroretinal cells promote maturation of the retinal pigment epithelium. *Invest Ophthalmol Vis Sci*. 2020;61(13):9. doi:10.1167/iov.61.13.9. PMID: 33151282.

Singh D, Chen X, Xia T, **Ghiassi-Nejad M**, Tainsh L, Adelman RA, Rizzolo LJ. Co-culture of RPE with retinal progenitor cells advances the maturation of each tissue. *Invest Ophthalmol Vis Sci*. 2020 (conference proceedings). Karani R, **Ghiassi M**, et al. Review of “Effect of Full-Time vs. Volunteer Faculty on Resident Cataract Surgery Complications”. *EyeWorld Magazine*. 2020.

Ghiassi M. Your Only Option Is to Stay Home. *KevinMD.com*. March 2020.

Ghiassi M, Langevin S, Marr B. Evaluation of intraorbital lymphoma response to different treatment modalities, recurrence rate, and survival curve. *Invest Ophthalmol Vis Sci*. 2020;61(7):4678.

Ghiassi M. Sudden Onset Nyctalopia. 2nd Annual NYC Retina & Uveitis Symposium, New York, NY, 2019. **Ghiassi M**, Hussain A, Tezel T. Solar Retinopathy Caused by Indirect Viewing of the Solar Eclipse Using the iPhone Selfie Mode. *Women in Ophthalmology Conference*, Idaho, 2019.