

April 27, 2026

The Heed Ophthalmic Foundation  
c/o Shirley Chan  
655 Beach Street  
San Francisco, CA 94109

RE: Piero Carletti, MD, Heed Ophthalmic Foundation Resident Retreat Nominee

As Department Chair (EA) and Ophthalmology Residency Program Director (CRA) of the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, it is our privilege to present Piero Carletti, MD, a PGY-3 ophthalmology resident, as an **extraordinary candidate** to represent Bascom Palmer at the Heed Resident Retreat. Dr. Carletti is one of those rare residents who excels in every domain simultaneously: clinical care, surgical development, scholarship, teaching, creativity, leadership, and service. He is a phenomenal young ophthalmologist with the intellect, maturity, curiosity, and humanism to become an exceptional academic physician.

Dr. Carletti immigrated to the United States from Venezuela at the age of 18. He graduated from the University of South Florida with a Bachelor of Science degree in Cell and Molecular Biology and Chemistry, earning magna cum laude honors and distinction within the Cell and Molecular Biology department. He then earned his medical degree from the Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Allopathic Medicine at Nova Southeastern University, where he distinguished himself through scholarship, innovation, and service. His honors have included the Health Professions Division Chancellor's Scholarship, the Health Professions Division Curriculum Development Grant, the Aquifer IAMSE Scholarship, the Bay Area Ophthalmology Course Diversity Scholarship through Stanford's Byers Eye Institute, and the Fostering Careers for Underrepresented Stars Scholarship from the Vit-Buckle Society. Even before residency, Piero had already demonstrated the rare blend of scientific curiosity, educational commitment, technical skill, and personal drive that characterizes the very best future academicians.

Piero's academic story is remarkable in both breadth and depth. His earliest research began in drug discovery and innovation, working to optimize antimicrobial efficacy and delivery through modification of known bioactive compounds. In medical school, he developed a passion for medical education and published on peer-assisted learning and the medical school learning environment. He then completed a dedicated research year at Bascom Palmer, working closely with Dr. Guillermo Amescua and Dr. Audina Berrocal. With Dr. Amescua, he studied complex infectious keratitis, ocular graft-versus-host disease, immunobullous ocular surface diseases, limbal stem cell deficiency, ocular surface burns, and corneal reconstruction. With Dr. Berrocal, he developed deep interests in pediatric retina, novel imaging, inherited retinal disease, and the use of OCT angiography to better understand and manage complex pediatric retinal conditions. He has also contributed to work in uveitis, COVID-associated chorioretinal vasculopathy, diabetic retinal neovascularization, and complex pediatric eyes requiring both scleral buckling and glaucoma drainage devices.

His scholarly productivity is exceptional. Excluding abstracts, presentations, under-review manuscripts, and work pending publication, Dr. Carletti has already published 20 peer-reviewed journal articles, including 3 as first author and 17 as a co-author. In addition, he has authored three first-author chapters in *Decision Making in Ophthalmology*. This level of output would be impressive at any stage of residency; for someone still in training, it is truly extraordinary. Just as important, his work is not confined to a single narrow niche. It spans cornea, external disease, pediatric retina, retina imaging, glaucoma, ocular inflammation, surgical technique, medical education, and global educational resources. This breadth is not superficial. It reflects a genuinely curious mind and a physician who sees ophthalmology as an interconnected field, where careful observation, imaging, surgery, pathology, education, and patient-centered clinical judgment all inform one another.

As a resident, Dr. Carletti has been outstanding. Faculty consistently describe him as prepared, thoughtful, technically gifted, deeply reliable, and unusually polished. He approaches clinical care with a rare combination of intellectual rigor and warmth. He is thorough without being inefficient, confident without being overconfident, and independent while still recognizing the value of thoughtful consultation. He has a gift for taking complex ophthalmic presentations, organizing them clearly, and moving toward a reasoned, patient-centered plan. Whether caring for patients in clinic, presenting at conference, assisting in surgery, or teaching junior trainees, Piero elevates the environment around him.

His procedural and surgical development has been equally impressive. As of April 30, 2026, his case log already included 839 intravitreal injections, 473 panretinal photocoagulation cases, 43 retinal vitreous cases, 37 (!) glaucoma tube shunt/trabeculectomy cases as primary surgeon, 27 YAG capsulotomies, 20 laser iridotomies, 6 laser trabeculoplasty cases, 6 MIGS cases, and early cataract experience. These are extraordinary numbers for this point in training and speak to the tremendous clinical volume and exceptional skill he has in balancing it all. Just as importantly, Piero has distinguished himself technically among his peers. In 2025, he won first place in both the Bascom Palmer Oculoplastics Suturing Recital and the Bascom Palmer Microsuturing Recital, a distinction no other resident has previously achieved. This reflects what our faculty have observed directly: he is deliberate, precise, coachable, and technically superb.

Dr. Carletti has also been a standout presenter and educator. One particularly memorable Bascom Palmer Grand Rounds presentation focused on the long-term management of a cruise ship engine operator who presented to the emergency department after suffering second-degree alkali chemical burns to his face, shoulders, and arms during a ship engine explosion. The patient was followed for 12 years, and Piero used the case to deliver a masterful discussion of the challenges inherent in severe chemical injury-induced limbal stem cell deficiency. His presentation was clinically sophisticated, visually engaging, and deeply patient-centered, moving seamlessly from acute emergency management to the complexity of long-term ocular surface reconstruction and rehabilitation. The presentation can be viewed here: <https://bascompalmerlearn.org/course/view.php?id=1205>. It is exactly the kind of teaching that distinguishes Piero: he takes a complex, longitudinal clinical problem and turns it into a memorable lesson in anatomy, pathophysiology, surgical decision-making, resilience, and patient-centered care. He has also delivered additional Bascom Palmer Grand Rounds presentations on retinal displacement after retinal detachment repair, late post-trabeculectomy complications, acute syphilitic posterior placoid chorioretinitis, and surgical versus medical management of submacular hemorrhages, further demonstrating the impressive breadth of his clinical curiosity and teaching ability.

What makes Piero especially compelling as a Heed Retreat nominee is that he already thinks like an academic ophthalmologist. His future interests in vitreoretinal disease, uveitis, inherited retinal disorders, genetic testing, and emerging gene therapy are thoughtful and forward-looking. He is drawn not only to the technical and therapeutic advances in retina, but also to the larger academic mission: asking meaningful clinical questions,

translating discovery into patient care, mentoring others, and improving vision and quality of life for the communities we serve.

In summary, Dr. Piero Carletti is **a truly exceptional resident and one of the most complete young ophthalmologists we have had the privilege to train.** He is clinically excellent, surgically gifted, academically productive, deeply curious, creative, compassionate, and remarkably mature. He has already demonstrated excellence across the full spectrum of academic ophthalmology, and his potential is unlimited. The Heed Resident Retreat would provide precisely the kind of mentorship, exposure, and professional formation that will help accelerate Piero's trajectory toward a meaningful career in academic medicine. We are proud to nominate him with our strongest possible enthusiasm and cannot imagine a more deserving representative from Bascom Palmer.

Please do not hesitate to contact either of us should you need any further information about this truly remarkable young physician.

\*\*\*If two residents are selected from our program, we would be delighted to sponsor the second resident's attendance at this formative and extremely valuable Heed Resident Retreat. \*\*\*

Sincerely,

Eduardo Alfonso, MD  
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Associate Medical Director University of Miami Hospital and Clinics Anne Bates Leach Eye Center UHealth  
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