

DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY / DAVID GEFKEN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AT UCLA
100 Stein Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90095-7003

April 9, 2026

Dear Committee,

It is a privilege to provide this enthusiastic letter of support for Dr. Jessica Tran to be selected for participation in the 2026 Heed Resident Retreat. Dr. Tran is a PGY3 resident in the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology, and she has performed at the highest level throughout her training thus far. **Dr. Tran is a team player with strong research credentials in addition to her top-notch clinical performance, and is well-positioned for a career in academic ophthalmology.** We believe the Heed Resident Retreat would be a great opportunity for Dr. Tran to learn about career paths in academic ophthalmology. **Per our discussion with Heed Ophthalmic Foundation staff, the UCLA Department of Ophthalmology is nominating three individuals for the 2026 Heed Retreat (two current PGY3 residents and one current PGY4 resident who will be our glaucoma fellow). Our department is able to provide retreat attendance funding for two of the three individuals.**

Dr. Tran completed her undergraduate education at Tulane University, where her performance was outstanding. She attended on a full tuition Posse Scholarship and graduated Summa Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa with a degree in Public Health and a minor in Cell and Molecular Biology. Achievements of note include the founding and leadership of an academic mentoring program for socioeconomically disadvantaged students in New Orleans, and completion of neurology research with a first-authored peer-reviewed manuscript on the challenges of caring for neurology patients with language differences. In between college and medical school, Dr. Tran was selected for a prestigious Fulbright scholarship, for which she spent a year in Vietnam teaching medical English and business. Dr. Tran then went to medical school at the prestigious Mount Sinai Icahn School of Medicine where she continued her outstanding performance. Dr. Tran was awarded the prestigious FlexMed Merit Scholarship which provided tuition support for academic excellence and leadership. Under the mentorship of Louis Pasquale, MD, Dr. Tran published multiple first-authored manuscripts in prestigious journals on population-based studies of genetic risk factors for glaucoma. She was also awarded multiple internal research grants for her work in addition to a Knights Templar Foundation Travel Grant from the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO). Outside of research, Dr. Tran was also deeply involved in student-run clinics for ophthalmology and other medical conditions in New York.

We were thrilled when Dr. Tran matched with us for her ophthalmology residency. She has been an outstanding resident across the board during her time in our program thus far. In our internal academic standing evaluation system, Dr. Tran is one of very few residents who achieved “above expectations” levels on multiple domains of academic standing. Clinically, multiple faculty have commented on her exceptional skills in patient care with specific commentary on her organization, efficiency, and effective presentations. At her early level of surgical training, Dr. Tran has already demonstrated adept surgical skills. In the research setting, Dr. Tran has continued her dedication to research with a published manuscript on Vogt-Koyanagi-Harada syndrome and an ARVO abstract on autoimmune disease and age-related macular degeneration. In other extracurricular pursuits, Dr. Tran was selected to participate in the American Academy of Ophthalmology Advocacy Ambassador program in 2025, and has also served as a

member of our Resident Consult Task Force to improve interdepartmental relations in ophthalmology consultations with inpatient services in the hospital.

In summary, **Dr. Tran is an outstanding ophthalmology resident who has all the foundational characteristics for a successful career in academic ophthalmology.** She is an ideal candidate to participate in the Heed Resident Retreat and would benefit immensely from all the opportunities that the retreat offers. We give Dr. Tran our highest recommendation without reservation. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,



Anne L. Coleman, MD, PhD
Chair and Executive Medical Director, Department of Ophthalmology
Director, Jules Stein Eye Institute
Affiliation Chair, Doheny Eye Institute
(310) 825-5298
coleman@jsei.ucla.edu



Victoria L. Tseng, MD, PhD
Jerome and Joan Synder Chair in Ophthalmology
Director, Residency Program
Department of Ophthalmology
UCLA Stein Eye Institute
Doheny Eye Centers UCLA
vtseng@mednet.ucla.edu