



**VCU**

April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026

To: Society of Heed Fellows (SOHF) Trustees

Re: Du Cheng, MD, PhD

**Virginia Commonwealth University**  
**Department of Ophthalmology**  
830 E. Main St  
Floor 14, Suite 200  
Richmond, Virginia 23298  
Phone: 804 828-9680

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**Mary K. Daly, MD**  
Ragnit and Walter J. Geeraets Professor  
Chair of Ophthalmology  
Virginia Commonwealth University

Dear Society of Heed Fellows Trustees,

On behalf of the Department of Ophthalmology at Virginia Commonwealth University, I am nominating Dr. Cheng for the Heed Ophthalmic Foundation Resident Retreat in 2026. Dr. Cheng is a current PGY-3, in fantastic standing, at the Virginia Commonwealth University Ophthalmology Residency in Richmond, Virginia.

Dr. Cheng embodies the tripartite mission of academic ophthalmology: clinical care, research, and teaching. Patients often comment on his compassionate care, while his attending physicians praise his thoroughness and dedication to his patients. Dr. Cheng is already a prolific researcher, having contributed to over 20 peer-reviewed publications. In both his clinical care, teaching and mentorship are a core of Dr. Cheng's modus operandi. If there is a student in clinic, Dr. Cheng ensures that the student is able to see the pathology and participate in the patient's care. His entrepreneurship focuses on both education (through imaging) and serving under-resourced communities. With his research projects, Dr. Cheng mentors medical students in the art of creating research questions, identifying patients for case reports, and taking projects to completion.

I know Dr. Cheng will contribute to the field of ophthalmology in all aspects: clinical practice, research, and teaching. I offer my highest recommendation without reservation, and hope that you will consider him for the Heed Ophthalmic Foundation Resident Retreat in 2026. I have no doubt that he will be a wonderful addition to the cohort.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

*Mary Daly, MD*

Mary K. Daly, MD  
Ragnit and Walter J. Geeraets Professor  
Chair of Ophthalmology  
Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine  
O: 804-828-9680

