

Victor Sanchez

Personal Statement

My career goals in ophthalmology have developed through experiences in both patient care with diverse populations and research. I feel fortunate to be training in a field defined by meaningful interventions, rapid innovation, and a culture that values collaboration. Looking ahead, I hope to build a career that integrates clinical practice with research and mentorship.

I became interested in ophthalmology through undergraduate research at the University of Florida, where I helped pilot a smartphone-based ophthalmoscopy program aimed at improving access to eye care for underserved patient populations. This early experience continues to shape my interest in developing research questions and using scientific inquiry to improve patient care. Throughout medical school, I benefited from the mentorship of clinician-scientists who exemplified many of the values I hope to carry forward in my own career. I had the opportunity to study ocular surface pain in a veteran population, conduct cost-effectiveness research in glaucoma interventions, and contribute to the development of ophthalmology learning activities for medical students. Together, these experiences demonstrated the breadth of opportunities available within academic medicine and inspired me to seek opportunities to support other trainees. I next served as Research Chair for the Latino Medical Student Association Northeast Regional Conference, where I organized a research symposium that provided undergraduate and medical students a platform to present their work and engage with faculty and peers in an academic setting.

Now, as a resident at the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute I have the privilege of caring for many of the most vulnerable patients and complex clinical cases in South Florida. I have seen firsthand the important role that tertiary referral centers play in caring for patients who often present with advanced disease after facing barriers to care. I continue to engage with research through mentors within the Department of Retina and Vitreous Diseases to study diabetic retinopathy, retinal tear progressions, and endophthalmitis using large-scale databases such as Epic Cosmos and TriNetX. I am particularly interested in how socioeconomic variables and neighborhood-level disadvantages contribute to differences in disease presentation and outcomes.

I am interested in pursuing a career in retina, drawn by the rapid evolutions of therapeutics for vision-threatening disease and potential to improve access to existing therapies for at-risk patients. I hope to build a practice grounded in the service of others, caring for patients, while collaborating with colleagues and building up future physicians. The Heed Resident Retreat would provide an invaluable opportunity to learn from leaders in academic ophthalmology and how to best integrate and balance clinical work with finding solutions to the challenges facing our patients.