

SHINE the LIGHT

IN THIS ISSUE

	Pg
Chair’s message	1
10th anniversary fête	2
Expanding our research	3
Our achievements	4

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

UCI Health Gavin Herbert Eye Institute: A decade of vision excellence

The Gavin Herbert Eye Institute’s recent 10th anniversary celebration was a brilliant reminder of how much we’ve accomplished together. For one special evening, we were joined by donors, community members and university leaders who helped realize the long-held vision to establish a world-renowned eye institute in Orange County.

The Gavin Herbert Eye Institute’s opening in 2013 spurred a decade of growth for vision care and research. This anniversary signifies a new inflection point. We are hiring more clinicians to treat patients and more scientists to discover cures for blinding diseases. We are also expanding our surgical and laboratory spaces, doubling our capacity to treat patients and conduct groundbreaking research.

We recently opened two more operating suites at the eye institute. We also have welcomed new retina, cornea and glaucoma specialists, as well as Orange County’s only ocular oncologist. In the next seven years, we expect to hire 20 more clinicians to provide services at several satellite locations, as well as at the institute in Irvine and the UCI Medical Center campus in Orange.

Our research endeavors are increasing at a breathtaking pace, too. The new Precision Genome Editing program offers the potential to develop new vision treatments and even cures. The program and the UCI Center for Translational Vision Research were awarded 30,000 square feet in the Falling Leaves Foundation Medical Innovation Building, a state-of-the-art facility being built near the eye institute. This space, in what will be among the largest, most advanced medical research complexes on the West Coast when it opens in 2025, will accelerate collaboration and discovery among current and soon-to-be-hired scientists.

Our next decade is full of promise thanks to our visionary campus leaders and donors — large and small. Your support truly lights the way for our transformational journey to preserve sight and bring an end to blindness for people in Orange County and around the world.



Baruch D. Kuppermann, MD, PhD

Director, UCI Health Gavin Herbert Eye Institute
Chair, Department of Ophthalmology,
UCI School of Medicine

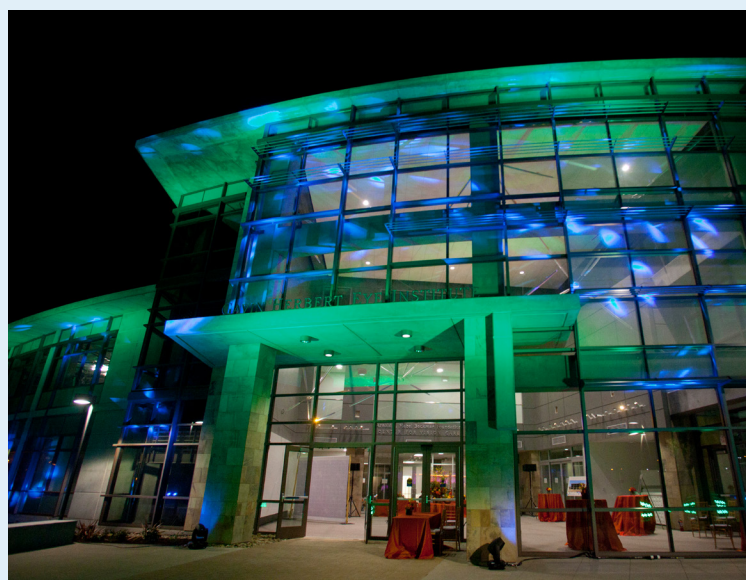


(L-r) Dr. Baruch Kuppermann, director of the Gavin Herbert Eye Institute; Michael V. Drake, president of the University of California; Howard Gilman, chancellor of UC Irvine, and Terry Belmont, former CEO of UCI Health, at the 10th anniversary celebration of the Gavin Herbert Eye Institute in October 2023.



Roger Steinert, MD,
at the institute's
2011 groundbreaking.

"The vision of Gavin Herbert Eye Institute is to advance the global standard for innovative eye care, research and training. It is so much more than just a building — it's the catalyst to help us achieve that vision."



Seeking cures for inherited and acquired eye diseases

At the 2011 groundbreaking for the Gavin Herbert Eye Institute, then-chair of Ophthalmology, Dr. Roger F. Steinert, declared that its vision “is to advance the global standard for innovative eye care, research and training. It is so much more than just a building — it’s the catalyst to help us achieve that vision.”

Today, a new structure rising alongside the eye institute promises to help advance groundbreaking vision and health research in the next decade. Slated to be among the largest, most advanced research facilities in the western United States, the Falling Leaves Foundation Medical Innovation Building will be a place where leading UCI scientists from diverse disciplines will continue their relentless quest to shape the future of health and wellness.

The Center for Translational Vision Research and the Precision Genome Editing programs will be located in the five-story, 200,000-square-foot structure. There, teams of scientists led by world-renowned vision researcher Krzysztof Palczewski, PhD, will pursue trailblazing studies in search of novel treatments for diseases that cause blindness.

This new lab space will spur greater collaboration among geneticists, infectious disease specialists and those developing sight-preserving technologies for macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, corneal disease, cataracts and more. The timing is serendipitous: gene-editing technologies are being approved for studies in humans just as Palczewski’s lab is zeroing in on blindness-causing genes that could be corrected with those techniques.

“Basic scientific research is critical to advancing our understanding of human pathologies and debilitating diseases,” said Palczewski, the Irving H. Leopold Chair of Ophthalmology and Distinguished Professor. “So is educating the next generation of scientists. That is exactly what we do at UCI. But progress toward curing blinding diseases can only be achieved if we, as a society, invest in that research and education.”

It’s the type of investment visionary leaders in Orange County are known for making. “This space for our team will enable us to accomplish our ultimate purpose: to keep UCI and Orange County in the vanguard, providing unparalleled patient care,” said eye institute Director Baruch Kuppermann, MD, PhD.



Ensuring a brilliant future for vision care

We invite you to support vision research in the Falling Leaves Foundation Medical Innovation Building by investing in the UCI Center for Translational Vision Research and the Precision Genome Editing program. With your partnership, our premier vision scientists will work together in state-of-the-art labs to develop cures for inherited blindness within the next decade.

Naming opportunities are available in the center’s new home. This space will enable us to expand our expertise in basic and medical genetics, thus remaining at the forefront of new scientific frontiers. Other philanthropic priorities include endowed academic chairs, research endowments and current-use funding to bring world-class vision scientists to UC Irvine. Your investment in these strategic funding priorities will boost our efforts to lead the gene therapy revolution.

For more information about how to make a gift in support of the UCI Center for Translational Vision Research or the Precision Genome Editing program, please contact **Amber Harness** at aharness@uci.edu or 714-458-2749.

UCI Health Gavin Herbert Eye Institute

850 Health Sciences Road
Irvine, CA 92617

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Santa Ana, CA
Permit No. 1106

CLINIC LOCATIONS

Irvine
850 Health Sciences Road
Irvine, CA 92617

Orange
101 The City Drive South,
Pavilion 2, Building 30A
Orange, CA 92868

To make an appointment, call 949-824-2020

10 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

2013-2023
A DECADE OF
ACHIEVEMENT

celebrating

10
YEARS



Grant Funding

National Institutes of
Health & California Institute
for Regenerative Medicine



NIH Blue Ridge Rankings

A 16-point increase
from 2013 to 2023



Patient Volume

92% increase from
FY2014 to FY2024



Surgical Volume

336% increase from
FY2014 to FY2024

\$76M+ in philanthropy since 2013
from individuals, foundations and corporations