



UPDATE

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SRINIVAS SADDA, MD
New President and Chief Scientific Officer

Dr. Srinivas Sadda

A NEW LEADER ARTICULATES HIS VISION

“ We are in an era of unprecedented growth and of building on the world-class programs we are known for, both internationally and closer to home. ”

Dr. Srinivas Sadda steps in as President and Chief Scientific Officer of the Doheny Eye Institute at a moment of intensified collaborations for Doheny, both globally and closer to home.

On June 1, the Doheny Eye Institute Board of Directors announced Dr. Sadda's appointment, citing his outstanding work focused on retina research and the establishment of the Doheny Image Reading Center. A graduate of the University of Michigan and the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, Dr. Sadda was a fellow in neuro-ophthalmology and medical retina at Johns Hopkins' Wilmer Eye Institute.

He serves on the editorial boards of the publications Ophthalmology, Retina, and OSIRIS Retina and has served on multiple NIH study sections. He has been a member of the Executive committee of the Macula Society and of various committees for the Retina Society and the American Society of Retina Specialists. He is also the Section Head for Retina for the American Academy of Ophthalmology O.N.E. Network. Dr. Sadda is the cofounder of the Pacific Retina Club, the largest retina organization on the West Coast. As he assumes his new role at Doheny, Dr. Sadda becomes the first holder of the Stephen J. Ryan-Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation Endowed Presidential Chair. Dr. Sadda lives in Pasadena, California, with his wife and two children.

Update's Jody Becker asked Dr. Sadda to talk about his vision for Doheny in the 21st century.

Q. You've said that in the coming years, one of the most exciting challenges will be understanding how to use evolving technologies to bring colleagues around the globe closer together. Can you talk about that work?

At this moment, one of the greatest assets Doheny enjoys is the global nature of our collaborations and the very rapidly



evolving technology around ophthalmic health. Dr. Ryan's legacy leaves us in an excellent position with both. So many Doheny international fellows are now leaders in ophthalmology, working at the cutting edge in countries around the world. Our Doheny Image Reading Center (DIRC) and other research labs are state-of-the-art facilities, and technological advances are being made every day. So through our network of trainees and collaborators and web-based technology that facilitates global collaboration, we are in an excellent position to achieve our goal of bringing eye health care to all who need it by sharing information, research advances and clinical services.

Q. Do you see Doheny's ability to engage with the rapid advances in the field as part of Dr. Ryan's legacy?

Absolutely. We were fortunate to have one of the truly great inspirational pioneers in the history of ophthalmology leading this institution. Doheny has done a lot of ground-breaking research since its early days. One example is the work that Dr. Ryan did in developing a model for wet macular degeneration. He was always looking forward; but the field continues to evolve rapidly. We've been at the cutting edge of diagnostic ophthalmics, and ophthalmology has always been a technology-based field— even more

so in the last decade. But what makes this institution special is the culture of excellence, collaboration, and innovation: it starts here, and it has a real impact around the world. So I am fortunate to start with that great environment that Dr. Ryan built and the world-class faculty that he recruited; and because those core values remain, we are a very attractive place where talented clinician scientists gravitate to. Today, we have the best of both worlds. We have a new affiliation with a top university on the other side of the city; and at the same time, we are an independent and very nimble research institution.

Q. You've been involved in deepening Doheny's expertise and extending the Eye Institute's reach for over a decade. Can you talk about the evolving institution and its new partnership with Jules Stein Eye Institute at UCLA?

We are in an era of unprecedented growth and of building on the world class programs we are known for, both internationally and closer to home. One of the most exciting developments for us has been how our family has grown with the Jules Stein Eye Institute/UCLA alliance. We are now affiliated with one of the top medical schools in the country. That means we now have a whole host of outstanding additional faculty members to work with on collaborative research. One of the core values of Doheny has always been this spirit of collaboration, and the concept that landmark research is best achieved with big teams working together. For example, I now have collaborations with multiple Stein faculty members on the retina research side. At the same time, the glaucoma and uveitis faculty are working on research together and holding joint teaching events. The connection with Stein expands our clinical, research, and educational programs in a synergistic and complementary fashion and, of course, this partnership is great for our patients, creating a seamless patient experience, no matter where you are in the city.

Q. What is happening today with Doheny's international alliances?

I just returned from China, where I visited one of their major hospitals in Qingdao. We've also recently established a collaborative reading center at the Zhongshan Ophthalmic Center in Guangzhou, China, where they are about to open a new 27-story building which will house one of the largest eye hospitals in the world.

These large institutions in China are eager to establish a long-term collaboration with Doheny, providing a path for exchange of innovative ideas and research. They have a real thirst to get to the state of the art, and they serve a huge population.

Q. Beyond China, Doheny has many other international connections, thanks to longstanding relationships. Can you talk about Doheny's reach?

Currently, we have ten international fellows in the reading center alone. Every year, Doheny fellows go back to their own countries, where they become real leaders in ophthalmology. Today, many Doheny alumni are chairmen or leaders of institutions around the world. After they go back we continue to collaborate. This constant exchange of ideas and faculty means we really are very global in our thinking. There are now Doheny-trained experts all over the world -- throughout Europe, China, and India. There are also Doheny alums in Central and South America, including Brazil and Costa Rica. Former Doheny fellows are also working in both Canada and Mexico. Even in Egypt. And there are more. The only continent where we don't have collaborators right now is Antarctica.

Q. What are some of the advances in the lab that you are most excited about?

At Doheny we have three aims: to conserve, improve and restore eyesight. To actually restore eyesight in many cases, at least in the world of retina, means addressing loss of light-sensitive tissue. One of the most exciting technologies

that we are very much involved in at Doheny is in stem cell research. At the Reading Center we have two ongoing trials where we are evaluating the effects of implanting these stem cells into the eyes of patients with blinding retinal diseases. We are also growing these cells in the lab and studying their function both before and after transplantation. There are many basic science questions—for example, depending on what type of cell you are trying to transplant—it's not always just a matter of putting the cells back in, but of having them connect back up and re-wire properly; that is a bit of an unknown. But we believe it's achievable, and it's an area of great research focus.

Q. You've been involved with the Doheny Image Reading Center (DIRC) since its inception. Can you talk a bit about the impact it is having?

Rather than simply providing the interpretations of images required for a particular study, the DIRC is known for going above-and-beyond to extract as much information as possible from images using innovative software algorithms in order to answer important research questions. Because of this innovative and research-oriented approach, the DIRC has been very productive generating many important publications in the field. The center also provides an infrastructure to support research for several faculty members. We now have 75 employees in the Reading Center, and the center and its associated research programs continue to grow. Because of the global reach of reading center and the need to incorporate the latest imaging technologies into clinical trials, the DIRC has had access to cutting-edge diagnostics. This has made Doheny an international center for excellence in ophthalmic imaging.

Q. What are some interesting tech developments you see in the field evolving to impact eye patient care with bio sensors?

If the doctor can closely monitor his patients at home, using sensors and automated data analysis, that could certainly have a dramatic effect on eye care in the future.

Patients who need to come in for wet macular degeneration treatments, for example, could benefit enormously from this kind of home monitoring, as could patients with diabetic retinopathy. Or glaucoma patients who sometimes come into the office and everything looks fine, but their doctor suspects there may have been a spike in their intraocular pressure overnight; the ability to monitor that pressure with continuous data would be very useful.

Q. You travel frequently on behalf of Doheny. Can you talk a bit about your goals with your global itinerary?

My extensive travel is really because of my belief -- one that I got from Dr. Ryan-- that ophthalmology is global. At Doheny we are fortunate to work with scientists around the world. We have wonderful research collaborations with people who are really good friends now. For example, I just came back from a meeting in Italy where we were tackling many of the unsolved questions in dry macular degeneration. It required that people sit in a think tank and review all the data and come up with ideas on how to push the field forward.

People are sometimes amused that I will go somewhere for just a few hours, because I think it's important, and then quickly leave. But traveling for me is all about those relationships with friends and colleagues around the world. I have trouble saying no because I love to teach and love to collaborate. ■



Jody Becker, based in Santa Monica, is an award-winning journalist and on-air personality for NPR. Ms. Becker is a graduate of Yale Law School, Columbia

University Graduate School of Journalism and the University of Michigan.

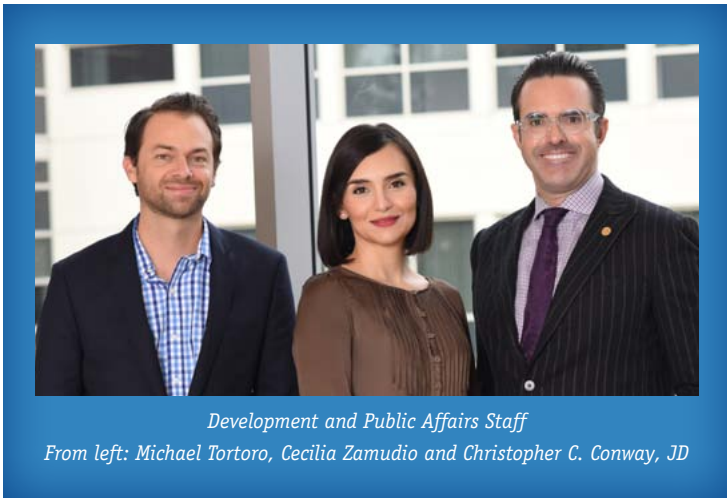


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For information about upcoming events welcoming Dr. Satta in his new role as President and Chief Scientific Officer, please contact Development and Public Affairs at (323) 442-7101 or EVENTS@DOHENY.ORG

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