



ONE TO WATCH

NABILA GOMEZ, OD, FAAO

Please share with us your background.

I grew up in Guayaquil, Ecuador, and relocated to Miami, Florida, with my family when I was a teenager. As a child, I always participated in sports, which helped me recognize the important roles that nutrition and exercise play in supporting both physical and emotional well-being.

I graduated with a degree in Food Science and Human Nutrition from the University of Florida. The summer before my junior year, I volunteered at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, where I shadowed both ophthalmologists and optometrists. I found that optometry perfectly aligned with my interests and values. I attended Nova Southeastern College of Optometry and completed an ocular disease residency at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute.

Describe your current position.

After completing my residency, I joined Dell Laser Consultants, a premier cataract and refractive surgery center in Austin, Texas, where I conduct consultations for refractive surgery and provide personalized recommendations on the best procedures and lenses for each patient. I also manage comprehensive pre- and postoperative care, ocular surface disease, and glaucoma. Our practice offers a range of innovative treatments, including intense-pulsed light therapy, in-office heating treatments, blepharoxfoliation, collagen crosslinking, amniotic membranes, and microinvasive glaucoma surgeries. We are also actively involved in clinical trials.

Who are your mentors?

Mark Dunbar, OD, and Natalie Townsend, OD, were influential during my residency, consistently challenging me to push beyond my comfort zone to improve my clinical acumen. Steven Gedde, MD, and Karol Karp, MD, contributed to my training with their genuinely compassionate approach to patient care.

After residency, Steven Dell, MD, and Derek Cunningham, OD, helped shape my clinical approach to complex refractive and ocular surface disease cases. Finally, my husband, Ryan Young, MD, is the hardest working physician I know and continues to inspire me every day.

What has been the most memorable experience of your career thus far?

I once treated a patient who wanted to have her cataracts removed and had low postoperative visual expectations. After a successful cataract surgery with a light-adjustable lens, I treated her ocular surface and conducted meticulous refractions and light-adjustable lens treatments. The moment she realized her new vision was 20/25 was unforgettable.

What are some new technological advances you find particularly exciting? Which advances in the pipeline are you most enthusiastic or curious about?

I'm excited about our most recent clinical trial on epithelium-on corneal crosslinking for keratoconus, which aims to halt progression while simplifying

the procedure and reducing healing time. Advances in IOL technology and emerging pharmaceutical treatments for dry eye are also promising.

Describe a typical day in your life.

I wake up early to get my kids and myself ready to start the day. After dropping the kids off at school, I head to the clinic, where I see patients throughout the day. My afternoon is spent with my kids, and I try to fit in a game of tennis as well, which allows me to stay active, socialize, and unwind.

After the kids are asleep, I enjoy relaxing with my husband, talking about our days, and watching television. I also dedicate time to working on professional projects, researching various topics, and writing articles.

What advice can you offer to individuals who are just now choosing their career paths after finishing optometry school or a residency?

Residency offers invaluable exposure to specialized practice areas and fosters professional development through mentorship and collaboration. I also recommend attending conferences to meet colleagues and expand your network. Staying curious and proactive about your education will keep your skills sharp! ■

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