

Neuro-ophthalmology is an extremely rewarding specialty with great opportunities for a person considering a career in academic medicine. For most academic neuro-ophthalmologists, clinical expertise and research interests are closely interwoven. In clinical practice, a neuro-ophthalmologist is often called upon to perform a nuanced examination that helps in the diagnosis and management of patients with complex visual problems. These careful observational skills often carry over into the academic neuro-ophthalmologist's ability to produce cutting-edge, clinically relevant science. There is often rich, dynamic interaction between clinical work and science—a question that originates in the clinic can stimulate a research project, and novel research findings can then impact the type of observations made in the clinic. This type of work can be extremely fertile, allowing a young investigator many opportunities to impact the field. For example, in the past several years alone a number of young neuro-ophthalmologists have made the following important contributions:

- Establishment of normal values for CSF opening pressure in the pediatric population
- Characterization of biomolecular impairments in inherited mitochondrial disorders producing visual deficits
- Evaluation of modern fundus photography methods as a convenient diagnostic tool in the emergency department
- Characterization of cortical plasticity measured by functional MRI in patients with congenital blindness
- Evaluation of clinical factors associated with relapse in patients with pseudotumor cerebri
- Assessment of afferent visual deficits in patients with ALS
- Assessment of clinical outcomes in patients surgically treated for adult strabismus
- Evaluation of OCT measures as a useful biomarker to assess progression in childhood optic pathway gliomas

- Evaluation of unique photosensitive ganglion cells that are relatively spared in Leber's hereditary optic neuropathy

These studies, and many more not listed here, were successful because the field of neuro-ophthalmology remains ripe with important unanswered questions. A variety of modern research tools, encompassing both clinical and basic science, will equip the young clinician-investigator to be at the forefront of important discoveries that shape the future of our field. Without a doubt, this is a very exciting time to enter the field of academic neuro-ophthalmology.