

Wilmer, Bascom pull rank in annual program survey

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By: [Robert A. Nozar](#)

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Rank	School or Institution
1	Wilmer Eye Institute/ Johns Hopkins University
2	Bascom Palmer Eye Institute/ University of Miami
3	University of Iowa
4	University of Wisconsin- Madison (tie) Jules Stein Hospital/UCLA
6	Wills Eye Hospital
7	Doheny Eye Institute/USC (tie) Duke University Eye Center Emory University New York Eye & Ear Infirmary

Excellence in continued development of residents, a commitment to educate patients and the overall community, and dedication from the professional and nonprofessional staff are all key ingredients in maintaining top ophthalmology programs.

And, once again, the best of the very best are the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, and the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute at the University of Miami, Florida.

This is based on results of the 7th annual survey conducted by Ophthalmology Times, which ranks the top ophthalmology programs in the United States. The rankings in four program categories—best overall, best research, best clinical (patient care), and best residency—are compiled from a peer survey of department chairs and directors of residency programs across the country. Wilmer and Bascom Palmer each attained two No. 1 rankings in the categories.

The Wilmer and Bascom Palmer programs have consistently rated at the top of each of the four categories in the annual survey. In fact, this is the seventh consecutive year that Wilmer has been ranked No. 1 in best overall. Wilmer also took the top spot this year for best research; Bascom Palmer was the



leader in best clinical (patient care) and best residency.

Morton Goldberg, MD, chairman of the Wilmer Eye Institute, said the survey's results are gratifying not only because his institution is at the top or second in all categories, but because it is an indication of the strength of ophthalmic care, development, and research across the country.

Morton Goldberg, MD

Value colleagues' opinions"We place a great deal of value on the opinions of our colleagues and we are pleased they rate Wilmer so highly," Dr. Goldberg said. "But we are also pleased that the others ranked in the survey continue in the commitments each has to top-flight programs. The strength of ophthalmology's future and what can be accomplished for patients rely on such dedication."

Dr. Goldberg said many people are required for Wilmer to continue to excel year after year, and that goes far beyond the physicians who are there to teach, work, and learn.



"It takes a lot of people who have specialized skills-nurses, clerical people, budget clerks, financial analysts, clinical technicians, clinical coordinators, secretaries, administrative assistants, angiographic and photographic personnel, laboratory employees, scientists, and administrators," Dr. Goldberg said.

Best Overall Ophthalmology Programs

"They all feel that they are members of a team pulling together," he added.

The top three performers in each category included:

- Best clinical program-Bascom Palmer, Wilmer, and Wills Eye Hospital.
- Best overall program-Wilmer, Bascom Palmer, and University of Iowa.
- Best research program-Wilmer, Jules Stein Hospital/UCLA, and Massachusetts Eye & Ear Infirmary.
- Best residency program-Bascom Palmer, Wilmer, and University of Iowa.



Best Clinical (Patient Care) Programs

Carmen Puliafito, MD, chairman of the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, said he is particularly pleased that its residency program is recognized for excellence. Bas-com Palmer has been ranked No. 1 in this category in 3 of the last 5 years.

"At the core of the vision of the founders of our program [Victor Curtin, MD, and Edward Norton, MD] was an insistence on an outstanding clinical education," Dr. Puliafito said. "They established that tradition and it has continued to this day."

Bascom Palmer was tied for sixth place in the best research category. Joining Wilmer and Bascom Palmer with top 10 placements in all four categories are the University of Iowa, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Jules Stein Hospital/UCLA, and the Doheny Eye Institute/USC. Programs with three top 10 finishes were Wills Eye Hospital and Duke University Eye Center.

Success in residency programDr. Puliafito said the keys to a great residency program are being able to attract intellectually gifted residents, having an out-standing faculty that knows how to help further develop those intellectual gifts, and having adequate patient volume so that all residents can attain the clinical experience needed to become the best each can become as an ophthalmologist.

Typically, Bascom Palmer has seven residents annually, and, Dr. Puliafito said, there is no shortage of strong residency candidates who vie to enter its institution.

"The residents who are chosen know that we have one of the largest full-time clinical faculties," he said. That includes Dr. Curtin, who continues to teach and is still involved in picking residents.



"All of our faculty are outstanding educators who put a high priority in their professional careers on working with residents," Dr. Puliafito said. "Our residents see patients right alongside the faculty and thus they have a wide range of faculty from which to garner knowledge and technique.

Best Research Programs

"We are three to eight people deep [on the faculty] in every aspect of our program."

Dr. Puliafito said Bascom Palmer's top ranking in the best clinical category is partly due to public awareness of the strength of its faculty and residency program. So one top ranking feeds off the other.

"We have a wide range of potential patients from the very richest to those with limited means," Dr. Puliafito said. "Part of our clinical success is because we work hard to help our patients understand what we are doing and how they can contribute to their own care."



Keith Carter, MD, director of resident education at the University of Iowa College of Medicine and the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinic, said a dedicated faculty is what makes Iowa's residency program so strong, and that also explains the strength of the overall program.

Best Residency Programs

"Our strength as a residency program and overall program [also, Iowa is fourth in the clinical rankings and tied for sixth in research] is partly due to our location," Dr. Carter said.

"We are the only major eye center in Iowa and we are fortunate to have a long tradition of excellence in ophthalmology and have that tradition well known among the population. Our reputation is out there."

Dr. Carter said the University of Iowa is most pleased with the work it has been able to accomplish on the part of indigent patients.

"These patients are all seen in faculty clinics and our faculty provides this care for free," he said. "Doing that type of work gives us an opportunity to gather unique knowledge with a unique patient population, and that only serves to make all of our programs stronger."

Dr. Goldberg said the essence of the philosophy of education at Wilmer is for physicians to have strong communicative skills with their colleagues and patients.

"We stress the need to talk with the patients and work closely with colleagues," Dr. Goldberg said. "Strong patient communication improves the chances for the [long-term wellness] of those patients. The strength in communication among our physicians helps them in their research and helps them to discover better ways to train the next generation of ophthalmologists.

"We are dedicated at Wilmer not only to what we are currently achieving, but what we will achieve in the future," he said.

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Best Clinical (Patient Care) Programs

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7	Emory University (tie) University of Wisconsin–Madison
9	Doheny Eye Institute/USC (tie) W.K. Kellogg Eye Center/University of Michigan

Best Research Programs

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1	Wilmer Eye Institute/Johns Hopkins University
2	Jules Stein Hospital/UCLA
3	Massachusetts Eye & Ear Infirmary/Harvard University
4	Scheie Eye Institute/University of Pennsylvania
5	University of Wisconsin-Madison
6	Bascom Palmer Eye Institute/University of Miami (tie) University of Iowa
8	W.K. Kellogg Eye Center/University of Michigan
9	Duke University Eye Center
10	Doheny Eye Institute/USC

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5	Wills Eye Hospital
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8	Cullen Eye Institute/Baylor University Doheny Eye Institute/USC New York Eye & Ear Infirmary

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