

Dr. Robert Ritch holds the Shelley and Steven Einhorn Distinguished Chair in Ophthalmology and is Surgeon Director Emeritus and Chief of Glaucoma Services Emeritus at the New York Eye & Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai, New York City and Professor of Ophthalmology. He has devoted his career to broadening our understanding of the underlying etiologies and mechanisms of glaucoma and innovation in its medical, laser, and surgical treatment. When still a fellow in 1978, he performed the first laser iridotomy in New York and initiated the first course on laser treatment of glaucoma at the American Academy of Ophthalmology. He developed argon laser peripheral iridoplasty for the treatment of angle closure more complicated than pupillary block, which was instrumental in dealing with angle closure in East Asia and taught on the diagnosis and treatment of angle closure around the world. His other major interests throughout his career have been pigment dispersion syndrome, exfoliation syndrome, and normal-tension glaucoma, to which he has made seminal contributions. He is a world leader in exfoliation syndrome, which affects 80 million people, and has started a global consortium to work on preventing, reversing, and even curing this disease.

Dr. Ritch has co-authored or edited nine textbooks and over 2000 medical and scientific papers, book chapters, articles and abstracts. He has presented over 750 lectures worldwide, including 50 named lectures and has received over 60 national and international awards and medals.

Dr. Ritch has been President of the Ophthalmic Laser Surgical Society, the New York Glaucoma Society, the Section on Ophthalmology of the New York Academy of Medicine, and the New York Society for Clinical Ophthalmology. He has served on numerous medical and scientific advisory, editorial, and organizational boards including the Helen Keller Foundation, the World Glaucoma Association, and the Board of Directors of the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology. He was elected to the American Ophthalmological Society, Glaucoma Research Society and Academia Ophthalmologica Internationalis. His appointments include Adjunct Senior Principal Research Scientist at the Singapore Eye Research Institute.

Dr. Ritch received the Heed Ophthalmic Foundation Ophthalmologist of the Year award (1996), the Gold Medal of Merit and Honor (Greece), the Ophthalmology Times Achievement in Ophthalmology Award (1998), the Louis Rudin Award for

research in ophthalmology (1999), and the Jesse H. Neal Award for Editorial Achievement (2000). In 2002, he was appointed to the Advisory Committee to the Board of Directors of the International Council of Ophthalmology and was elected Chairman of the Committee in 2009 and appointed to the Board of Directors of the International Council. He was elected to the Board of Trustees of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology and served as Vice-President in 2006-2007. His awards since 2006 include the Albion O. Bernstein, MD Award of the Medical Society of the State of New York for outstanding contributions to medicine, the American Academy of Ophthalmology Lifetime Achievement Honor Award, the Leadership in Education in Ophthalmology (LEO) Award, the Dean's Distinguished Research Award from the New York Medical College, The Glaucoma Foundation Award for Innovation and Excellence in Glaucoma, the TKC Liu Memorial Award for Leadership in Ophthalmology, the Ronald F. Lowe Gold Medal of the Australia-New Zealand Ophthalmology Society, the Dominick Purpura Distinguished Alumnus Annual Award from Albert Einstein College of Medicine, the ARVO Distinguished Service Award, ARVO Gold Fellowship, the HRH Prince Abdulaziz Al-Saud Prevention of Blindness Award, the Ahti Tarkkanen Medal (Finland), the Jose Rizal International Medal, the El-Maghraby International Achievement Award, the inaugural Asia-Pacific Glaucoma Society International Achievement Award, the World Glaucoma Association Recognition Award, the Moacyr Alvaro Gold Medal (Brazil) and the Joanne Angle ARVO Service Award (2017). He was Guest of Honor of the American Glaucoma Society (2013) the Asia-Pacific Glaucoma Congress (2014), and the Italian Ophthalmological Society (2017).

In 1985, he founded the Glaucoma Foundation and has served as Secretary, Medical Director, and Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Board. In 1994, he initiated the annual Optic Nerve Rescue and Regeneration Think Tank, which has attracted numerous successful researchers from other fields into glaucoma research. He also co-founded the New York Glaucoma Research Institute, a not-for-profit foundation to sponsor clinical research in glaucoma, the alt.support.glaucoma Internet newsgroup, the New York Glaucoma Support and Education Group, and the World Glaucoma Patient Association. He was one of the three organizers of the first annual World Glaucoma Day in 2008. He was co-founder of the Ophthalmic Laser

Surgical Society, the New York Glaucoma Society, and the Lindberg Society, an international organization dedicated to the eradication of exfoliation syndrome; the ARVO Host-a-Research Program, the ARVO U.S.-Russia Ophthalmology Task Force, the Von Graefe Society, an international organization dedicated to the study of risk factors for glaucoma other than intraocular pressure.

Dr. Ritch has trained over 150 clinical and research fellows, many of whom occupy academic positions worldwide. The international training program that he established at the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary has hosted over 100 International Council of Ophthalmology fellows and more than 140 observers from over 50 countries. He has worked and lectured extensively at the international level throughout his career and has organized many symposia and conferences both in the United States and abroad. He has been organizing chairman, coordinator, or convener for nearly 100 meetings and has served as Convener for the Asia-Pacific Academy of Ophthalmology and the World Ophthalmology Congress several times. He has trained over 80 fellows, ICO fellows, and observers from Asia, helped to establish residency and teaching programs and has made fundamental contributions to the modernization of ophthalmology in Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Laos, Myanmar and other countries in Asia, and in Latin America. There are Asian, Brazilian, Thai, and International Ritch Fellows Societies.