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DR. ROHIT VARMA SHARES EYE-DISEASE RESEARCH AT THE 2ND MEXICO-UNITED STATES SYMPOSIUM ON VISION HEALTH

MEXICO CITY, MEXICO – JANUARY 27, 2023 – More than 40 leading ophthalmologists, vision researchers, and public health/policy experts are sharing data and holding discussions on the global burden of diabetes-related eye disease to develop a plan to address this leading cause of blindness at the [2nd Mexico-U.S. Symposium on Vision Health](#).

The Symposium is a partnership between the Government of Mexico and the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#), and [National Eye Institute \(NEI\)](#). It is co-chaired by **Dr. Maria Julia Marinissen**, Health Attaché, U.S. Embassy – Mexico City; Acting Director, U.S. Section – Border Health Commission, HHS; **Dr. Van Charles Lansingh**, Chief Medical Officer, Help Me See; Director of Research, "Instituto Mexicano de Oftalmología (IMO);" Voluntary Associate Professor of Ophthalmology and Department of Public Health Sciences, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine; and **Dr. Gyan "John" Prakash**, Director, Office of International Program Activities, NIH/NEI.

The theme of the Symposium is "Strengthening International Partnerships to Reduce the Impact of Diabetes on Eye Health," which is being held onsite and virtually in Mexico City on January 26 and 27, 2023. Among the presenters are **Dr. Michael F. Chiang**, Director, NIH/NEI and **Dr. Rohit Varma**, Founding Director, [Southern California Eye Institute](#).

An internationally acclaimed clinician and epidemiologist, Dr. Varma is the world's foremost expert on eye disease in Latinos and is the principal investigator for the [Los Angeles Latino Eye Study \(LALES\)](#), the nation's largest and longest epidemiologic study (1998-2014) of eye disease in Latinos funded by the NEI, NIH, and the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities.

LALES has demonstrated that Latinos have higher rates of developing visual impairment, blindness, and diabetic eye disease than non-Hispanic whites. This burden of vision loss and eye disease on the Latino community is increasing as the prevalence of diabetes increases worldwide, and many diabetes related eye diseases become more common.

Given the increasing burden of diabetes and diabetic eye disease the symposium's charge is to develop a plan to address this growing epidemic worldwide.

About Southern California Eye Institute

[Southern California Eye Institute](http://www.sceyes.org) is dedicated to providing the highest level of vision care, using the latest technology and treatments to deliver the best outcome to patients in Los Angeles and from around the world. The institute's expert physician-scientists are advancing innovations in stem cell and regenerative therapies, artificial intelligence and bioelectronic implants to further the prevention, early detection and treatment of eye diseases and conditions. Founded by world-renowned ophthalmologist Rohit Varma, MD, MPH, SCEI is located in Los Angeles at CHA Hollywood Presbyterian Medical Center. For more information, visit www.sceyes.org

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