

# VISIONARIES BEYOND THE OR

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The specialty of ophthalmology is unique and fundamentally distinct from other fields of medicine on many levels. Within ophthalmology, the subspecialty of cataract and refractive surgery is its own microcosm with a distinct subculture and nuances. It is not surprising that the subspecialty attracts some of the most brilliant, creative, innovative, and unconventional individuals in medicine who are driven by a collective desire for accuracy and successful patient outcomes.

For many of us, the role of surgeon and patient care provider is just one of many hats we wear. The passion that drives us to give patients perfect vision manifests itself in other aspects of our lives, such as our families, hobbies, and various business interests. It makes sense that so many ophthalmologists have become experts in diverse fields, including sports, music, technological innovation, business, and myriad other activities that are as individualized as the tissue differentiation within the eye.

This issue of *CRST* highlights the accomplishments and extraordinary pursuits of some of our colleagues who have ventured beyond the OR to embrace their entrepreneurial spirit and personal passions. The physician-entrepreneurs showcased here have not only expanded the horizons of ophthalmology but also made significant contributions to various industries outside of medicine. Their roles range from inventors, entrepreneurs, and CEOs within the eye care space to business owners in areas outside of medicine. Through in-depth interviews with *CRST*, 13 anterior segment surgeons share their thoughts on the hallmarks of successful

entrepreneurship, the importance of collaboration, and the challenges of competing priorities.

Balancing clinical work and business endeavors requires immense dedication, a varied skill set, and a willingness to collaborate. Many of the physician-entrepreneurs featured in this issue have formed partnerships with other physicians, leaders, and entrepreneurs across business sectors to achieve their goals. Their stories highlight the importance of leveraging the strengths and expertise of others to create innovative solutions and drive progress.

Embracing a growth mindset and fostering an environment of collaboration can lead to breakthroughs in patient care and advances in our field. The collective wisdom and experiences of physician-entrepreneurs can inspire us to think differently, encourage us to challenge the status quo, and explore the full potential of our other skills and talents.

The same qualities that drew us to cataract and refractive surgery can propel us to success in other aspects of our lives and personal aspirations. The surgeons featured in this issue represent only a fraction of the incredible, innovative, and unique individuals in our field. I hope their stories inspire you to pursue your own dreams and creative aspirations.

We are fortunate to work in a field of medicine that mandates perfection and attention to detail. This mindset sets us on a trajectory for success. I encourage you to share your stories and unique entrepreneurial journeys because they can serve as sources of motivation and energy to others on their own odysseys. ■