Welcome to the Power Lists 2018

This is the third time we have tried to map the Top 100 most influential people in the world of ophthalmology. The list includes clinicians, scientists, engineers, CEOs and more, and each one of them has been voted for by you, our readers.

We realize our Power Lists can—and should—never be definitive. But who can argue that the faces within both the 2019 and 2020 editions highlight the talent and diversity found within the field? Accordingly, we bring you 100 reasons to be proud of ophthalmology.

A. John Kanellopoulos

Clinical Professor, LaserVision Eye Institute, Athens, Greece and NYU School of Medicine, New York, NY, USA

Over the last 20 years, John has applied and described innovative laser approaches in the management of cataract and, in particular, irregular corneas such as keratoconus. His work with CXL has provided many of the techniques’ evolutions: higher fluence, new protocols (such as myopic remodeling and when needed even in a single refractive procedure) and John has also contributed dozens of reports on more sensitive diagnostics for keratoconus and ectasia, and in the last few years, he has described “topography-modified refraction” as a potentially more accurate target for topography-guided laser vision correction.

What have your career highlights?

“I have been fortunate to have practiced in both the US and Europe, I have been fortunate to have trained with amazing mentors and have collaborated with excellent peers throughout the years. I consider the most fortunate aspect of my personal professional career the ability through a busy clinical practice to research and investigate innovative solutions for everyday issues. I was able to break a 20-year barrier in cataract surgery back in 1999, at a time when phaco was used higher power and was considered faster. That achievement has stood the test of time and has become prevalent—although still in development as the nanosecond laser it was able to “push” further energy phakia that is a clinical reality with all platforms today. This means, less energy, less endothelial cell loss, fewer transplant following cataract surgery! Having moved the greater part of my practice in Europe, I was exposed to many advancements in anterior segment surgery, earlier topography-guided treatments and CXL was the most important of all. I have practiced, invented and introduced several techniques in both— and even combined them. At the second team we have a very important group involved with CXL, we quickly recognized the limitations of the Dresden 30-300 protocol and introduced intrastromal CXL, higher fluence, designed with better topograms and constant phototherapeutic and topography-guided customization (The Athens Protocol) and refractive CXL treatments using variable fluence pattern CXL. All this investigative work has allowed me to publish over 100 peer-reviewed papers, present over 1000 original papers at the major eye meetings (AAO, ARVO, ASCRS, and AAO), in a process that has introduced me personally to all the opinion leaders in the ophthalmic community, a tremendous learning experience!”

What are your goals for the future?

“Remain committed to clinical excellence and continued research. I hope I can maintain a healthy practice that has helped me sponsor on my own most of our research over the last 20 years, making it sensible and with very little bias.”

What has been your most successful collaboration?

“This is a difficult question for me because I think the list of people and collaborations that have significantly influenced my career is very long. Working hand-in-hand with the two professors that have shaped me: Drs. Busin and Oestreicher, and the building of a strong, forward-looking group of a better surgeon, clinician, and researcher. It has allowed me to meet passionate and skilled peers, which has been a great motivator and inspiration for most of the work I have done the last 15 years. Some of our research work has been sponsored by Alcon allowing us to chase our investigative dream, with great results, fortunately.”

What are your plans for the next 10 years?

“I hope I remain healthy and productive to allow myself to pursue my passion: providing the best care for my patients. I hope I can maintain my standards for many years. Only the pollen surgery that is needed and in need and in the need and in the need and in the need and in the need and in the need that cannot afford it. It also continues learning from all my talented peers I meet every year in the major meetings.”

What drives you day-to-day?

“I find my work extremely stimulating; making timely diagnoses, making the surgical procedure enjoyable and enjoying the happiness with which it enriches my patients’ lives is an every-day party for me!”

Who are your mentors?

“Hank Perry, Eric Donnenfeld, Claus Dohlman, Peter Netland, Tom Hutchtison, David Walton and countless peers, technicians, nurses and associates staff; they have gifted me guidance, support and encouragement. They have been role models for me both professionally but also personally as well. I cannot thank them enough for making such a difference in my professional life.”