



# 25 years

*When Dr. Jeffrey D. Baumann and Dr. Gregory J. Panzo opened MID FLORIDA EYE CENTER in 1987, they had a clear vision of making it a comprehensive multispecialty practice where patients could receive general eye care, surgical eye care and laser eye care under one roof.*

STORY BY JAMES COMBS

**WITH THEIR EYES ALWAYS ON THE FUTURE,** the doctors also vowed to stay abreast of the latest diagnostic and treatment options in the eye care industry in order to continually improve quality of care and deliver excellent outcomes.

As Mid Florida Eye Center celebrates its 25th anniversary this year, it's safe to say Dr. Baumann's and Dr. Panzo's vision has become a reality. These innovative doctors opened the area's first accredited outpatient surgery center specifically for eyes and have conducted thousands upon thousands of sight-restoring eye surgeries — including 135,000 cataract and laser procedures. Additionally, their practice has become a world-class facility for eye-related clinical studies and training of future optometrists.



Director of Human Resources Diana Novak, started with the company when it opened. She has seen Mid Florida Eye Center grow from five employees and 2,000 patients to 150 employees and 200,000 patients. The practice now has four offices, two surgery centers and a team of five ophthalmologists, five optometrists and several licensed opticians. Despite the growth and success, Novak says the doctors have never lost sight of what matters most — patient care.

“They take the time to listen to their patients’ concerns and answer any questions they may have. They also understand that each individual is unique and never take a one-size-fits-all approach. We have many treatment options available and can customize those treatments based on what is best for the individual.”

#### A WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE

Dr. Baumann specializes in cataract surgery and has performed more than 35,000 successful procedures. He became the first ophthalmologist in Central Florida to introduce multi-focal implants that correct for distance and near vision. Dr. Panzo specializes in glaucoma and was the first Central Florida ophthalmologist to reduce inner eye pressure in glaucoma patients by using laser trabeculoplasty (SLT).

Even with their success in treating cataracts and glaucoma, they always dreamed of expanding the practice’s services so they could avoid referring patients out of town for specialized eye care

problems. Throughout the years, they brought in additional board-certified and fellowship-trained eye doctors representing all subspecialties of ophthalmology.

Dr. Keith Charles specializes in cornea surgery and is also a certified international LASIK instructor. Dr. Ray Maizel is a leader in retina surgery and has participated in landmark studies that have revolutionized the way retinal diseases are treated. Finally, Dr. Stacia Goldey is an oculoplastic surgeon who performs eyelid surgeries such as removing wrinkled folds of skin on the upper eyelids or bags under the eyes. She has also trained other Central Florida physicians on BOTOX® techniques.

Because Mid Florida Eye is equipped to treat the entire gamut of eye disease, ophthalmologists and optometrists from Orlando and throughout Central Florida oftentimes refer patients. “Hiring additional ophthalmologists for our practice helped fill a void,” Dr. Panzo says. “We all have a tremendous amount of respect for one another and we are all talented in our areas. By offering all these specialties under one roof, patients can stay close to home for their care.”

#### A HISTORY OF ACHIEVEMENT

Throughout the years, Mid Florida Eye Center has received special recognitions for its service to patients and the community. For instance, the practice was named as the “Best Ophthalmology Group Practice in Central Florida” during the 14th Annual Florida Medical Business Awards.

In addition, the physicians and management team undergo ongoing training through the American Academy of Ophthalmology to stay current with the

latest trends in the eye care industry. This never-ending pursuit of knowledge helps them remain ahead of the curve and offer cutting-edge services to provide patients with the best eye care possible.

“I’ve worked at the company for nearly three years, and during that time our physicians have introduced multiple new surgical techniques,” said Marketing Manager Mandy Richardson. “That in itself shows how fast they jump on the most innovative procedures for all aspects of eye care. They are passionate about changing the lives of their patients, and that passion is felt by the rest of the staff. That’s why many patients have been with our practice since it opened.”

Of course, the physicians do more than merely keep up with eye care advances — they set the pace. The practice is a leading center for clinical research and continually performs clinical investigative studies and trials. For instance, Dr. Baumann is the principal investigator in a clinical trial of a new astigmatism-correcting intraocular lens implant. Mid Florida Eye Center is one of only four eye care practices in the country selected to participate in this particular trial, and Dr. Panzo and Dr. Charles are also contributing to the study. Similarly, Dr. Maizel participated in a Phase III trial of Lucentis, a FDA-approved medication that stabilizes vision for those with the wet form of macular degeneration. Dr. Charles was involved

in an investigative LASIK study for nearsighted patients with or without astigmatism.

The doctors also have the unique opportunity to give lectures throughout Florida as well as teach aspiring optometrists from around the world who complete internships at Mid Florida Eye.

Reflecting back, Dr. Baumann is extremely proud of the practice’s extraordinary accomplishments in the last 25 years. “We have seen 200,000 unique patients at the practice, and for many of those we’ve been able to restore their sight or keep them from losing vision. I’m also proud of our employees, many of whom have been here 20 years or longer. They get to know the patients very well, which creates a family-like atmosphere. Last but not least, I feel fortunate to have developed relationships with many referring doctors — particularly optometrists — throughout Central Florida. They see that their patients come here and

enjoy a favorable experience and excellent results.”

Of course, despite Mid Florida Eye’s unprecedented success, Dr. Baumann and his peers are not content to rest on their laurels. They still have their eyes focused squarely on the future.

“Our goal is to always provide the best possible care in a cost-efficient manner,” Dr. Baumann says. “We’re unique in that we are one of the few eye care centers in the nation to have a large research department. I just finished two intra-ocular implant studies and am getting ready to do a third one. For us, it’s about utilizing not only the latest treatment modalities, but rather the best treatment modalities. To ensure this happens, we work with the top technology companies, extensively research new procedures, and talk with colleagues from around the country.”

*“They are passionate about changing the lives of their patients, and that passion is felt by the rest of the staff. That’s why many patients have been with our practice since it opened.”*

— MANDY RICHARDSON

## SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The practice helped pioneer innovations in small-incision/no-stitch cataract surgery and implant technology that is now the gold standard of eye surgeons around the country.
- Dr. Baumann is a principal investigator in the nationwide clinical trial, for a new astigmatism correcting intraocular lens implant (IOL), which is used in cataract surgery.
- The practice is recognized as an advanced care teaching clinic.
- Mid Florida Eye Center ophthalmologists have participated in The National Eye Care Project, a public-service program that is sponsored by the Knights Templar Eye Foundation.
- Dr. Goldey teaches Botox techniques to other physicians, and as a result the practice has been designated as a National Training Center by BOTOX® manufacturer Allergan.
- Dr. Panzo was specially selected to introduce advanced glaucoma treatments, including Aquaflow, Optanol shunts, ECP (Endoscopic Cyclophotocoagulation).
- Dr. Maizel introduced new diagnostic ICG therapy to detect abnormalities of veins and arteries in the retina.
- The magazine Cataract & Refractive Today spotlighted the practice’s outpatient surgical center as one of the nation’s best.
- The ophthalmologists at Mid Florida Eye Center have participated in clinical trials for treatments of eye conditions such as glaucoma, macular degeneration, and other sight-threatening conditions.