

AUDINA M. BERROCAL, MD

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO SPECIALIZE IN PEDIATRIC RETINA?

I love surgery. I like to fix things. Tasks that are too repetitive easily bore me. The field of retina, especially pediatric retina, allows me to fix things. I never get bored. The ever-changing technology keeps it fresh. The diagnosis and management are challenging, and kids simply make me happy.

WHO WERE THE MOST INFLUENTIAL MENTORS DURING YOUR RESIDENCY AND FELLOWSHIP?

This is a difficult question to answer because I have learned different things from many different amazing physicians in my retina training. But the reality is, the people who influenced me the most were my father, my mother, my brother, and my sister. From my father, who was also a physician, I learned humility. He treated everyone the same. He loved his patients and the relationships he had with them. From my mother, I learned the importance of resilience. My brother, who passed away too early, taught me to work hard, to believe in myself, and to always do the right thing. My sister—what can I say? She has been my role model, my inspiration, and the person who has shaped me the most as a vitreoretinal specialist.

WHAT ASPECT OF PRACTICING RETINA DO YOU FIND MOST REWARDING?

For me, it is the long-term relationships I develop with my patients, their families, and my residents and fellows. Being part of their lives is a true blessing. Every day I teach about diseases and retina, but each day, through these relationships, I learn more about myself.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR CURRENT RESEARCH.

My research is all clinical and translational. My pediatric service is my laboratory. Pediatric retina is an amazing field. It is the most exciting, in my opinion. Describing new genetic disorders and finding new ways to diagnose and manage pediatric diseases are everyday challenges. Furthermore, with gene therapy, I have been able to see a disease and a patient and family's lives completely transformed.



Audina M. Berrocal, MD (center), joined Camilla Ventura, MD, PhD (left), and Cathy Negron (right) at the Austin Powers theme party during the 8th Meeting of the Vit-Buckle Society in April in Las Vegas.

IF YOU COULD HAVE DINNER WITH ANY PERSON, WHO WOULD IT BE, AND WHY?

I would like to have dinner with Jane Fonda at different crucial moments in her life. She is an insightful, strong, brutally honest woman who has endured many hardships since she was a little girl. Despite all that, she created her own path and was able to live her life with full force. I would love to have met her when she was an activist with Tom Hayden, when she finished "On Golden Pond" with her dad, when she met her third husband, Ted Turner, and again during her last act: divorced from Ted Turner and confidently by herself. Having dinner with her at those different times of her life would be simply priceless. ■

AUDINA M. BERROCAL, MD

- Director, Pediatric Retina, Miami Children's Hospital, Miami
- Professor, Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, Miami
- Editorial Advisory Board Member, *Retina Today*
- aberrocal@med.miami.edu
- Financial disclosure: None acknowledged