

## **Mark Pennesi, MD, PhD**

Dr. Mark Pennesi is an Assistant Professor in Ophthalmic Genetics at Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) - Casey Eye Institute. Dr. Pennesi attended the University of Pennsylvania for his undergraduate studies. There he graduated Summa Cum Laude with a bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering and was awarded the Herman P. Schwann award in bioengineering for exemplary scholarship. Dr. Pennesi's interest in degenerative retinal disorders began shortly after his first year in college, when he spent a summer working at the Retina Foundation of the Southwest. There he worked under the supervision of Dr. David Birch and saw patients with retinal degenerations such as retinitis pigmentosa as well as studying animal models of this disease.

Dr. Pennesi pursued a combined MD/PhD at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas. He received numerous awards while in graduate school including the John J. Trentin Award for earning the highest GPA in his class and the BRASS scholarship for playing an active role in community service. This was followed by a residency in Ophthalmology at University of California – San Francisco, where he was awarded the Hogan-Garcia Award for having the best resident research project. In 2011 Dr. Pennesi received the ARVO/Alcon Early Career Clinician-Scientist Research Award. He is also the recipient of an FFB career development award, an RPB career development award, and an FFB enhanced career development award. Most recently, he was awarded the Alcon Young Investigator Award in 2014 and a Residency Teaching award in 2015. He has also been elected into both the Macula Society and Retina Society.

Since joining the faculty at OHSU, Dr. Pennesi has become a member of the gene therapy clinical trials there including: the RPE65 gene therapy trial for Leber Congenital Amaurosis, the Stargen trial for treating Stargardt Disease, and the UshStat trial to treat Type I Usher Syndrome. Dr. Pennesi is intimately involved with a natural history study to monitor the progression of X-linked Retinoshcisis, this is in preparation for a gene therapy trial. He is also the Principal Investigator on the Valproic Acid clinical trial, to determine the efficacy of oral Valproic Acid in the treatment for Retinitis Pigmentosa. Additionally, he serves as the Director of the Visual Function Services, Director of the Ophthalmic Imaging Services and is Director of ERG Reading Center of the OHSU Casey Eye Institute Translational Clinical Trials Center (TCTC) Reading Center.