

2016-2017 Fellow



Dr. Rath Itthipanichpong

During my working as a glaucoma fellow in Thailand, it was heart-wrenching to see a lot of patients' sorrow from irreversible visual impairment. Thus I promised myself I would find the way to help them to live better.

During my low vision clinic rotation, I could see patients happily smile when they first used low vision devices, and they could read newspaper again. The happiness in their eyes can be seen vividly. That's why I decided to be a low vision specialist and joined the Lions Low Vision Rehabilitation Fellowship Program.

There is nothing that could replace for the extensive learning experience of the low vision fellowship program at Johns Hopkins. The fellowship has allowed me to become a better doctor, researcher and teacher by the excellent research opportunity, access to state-of-the-art technology for helping low vision patient and supportive learning environment by both clinical and research mentors at Wilmer Eye Institute.

Currently, I am working as a low vision and glaucoma specialist at the Department of Ophthalmology, Chulalongkorn University and King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital, Bangkok, Thailand, where I take care of patients, lecture in the low vision rehabilitation to ophthalmology residents and medical students and also have continued my low vision research and technology development. Most recently, our team has developed a prototype of portable visual field screening glasses with artificial intelligence (AI) which aims at automatically screening of visual field defect in rural areas for an earlier treatment and thus preventing irreversible blindness from glaucoma.

My future goal is to improve ophthalmology healthcare and quality of life for low vision and blind people. From my keen interest in technology and innovation, I'm currently developing the new smart glasses, using mixed reality technology to help blind people navigate and prevent them from bumping. I believe this device will extensively improve the quality of their lives since they can walk freely.

I am confident that my Lions Low Vision Rehabilitation Fellowship training has provided me with the life-long tools to take care of patients and help my nation create other competent ophthalmologists, optometrists, and health care personnel for the future of low vision care.



A view of the Low Vision Center (on the left) in the King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital (on the right)