

Richard Alan Lewis, M.D., M.S.

Dr. Lewis is a native of Boston, Massachusetts. Growing up as the elder son of two physicians, he was exposed to medicine from a very early age. His father was an anesthesiologist and his mother a pediatric neurologist and the first female superintendent of a State School for the Mentally Retarded in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. From her detailed knowledge and enquiring mind, he learned to appreciate the wide spectrum of normal development and an intense curiosity to comprehend what happens and why some development fails to achieve “normal”. After his secondary education, graduating magna cum laude from the Roxbury Latin School, he completed his undergraduate studies in Biology A.B. cum laude from Harvard College. He received his medical degree from the University of Michigan Medical School in 1969 and a Master of Science in Ophthalmology from that University’s Rackham Graduate School in 1974. He served as an Intern in the Department of Medicine at the University of Michigan Medical Center, followed by a Fellowship in Retinal Diseases in Ophthalmology, during which he created and directed the first formal Ophthalmic Diagnostic Service in its Department of Ophthalmology. That led directly to his Residency in the Department of Ophthalmology at the University of Michigan, followed by an additional year of Fellowship in Macular Diseases at the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute at the University of Miami in Miami, Florida.

Dr. Lewis then returned to the faculty at the University of Michigan Medical Center where he worked in the Heredity Diseases Clinic along side his mentor (and long-time hero!) Dr. Harold Falls. Dr. Falls had helped to establish several decades earlier one of the first human heredity clinics in the nation, the uniqueness of which is that it became the first department of human genetics in an academic medical center in the United States and the only one that was originated by an ophthalmologist!

In 1979, Dr. Lewis was recruited to Baylor College of Medicine, where he is now Professor in the Departments of Ophthalmology, Medicine, Pediatrics, and Molecular and Human Genetics. He has authored or co-authored more than 600 articles, a number of named lectureships, and holds multiple U.S. patents. In the Department of Molecular and Human Genetics, his collaborations have resulted in the successful mapping and identification of numerous genes for hereditary eye diseases, including forms of albinism, retinitis pigmentosa, congenital cataracts, infantile glaucoma, and systemic disorders of metabolism with visual impairment and blindness.

His wife, Patricia, recently retired, had been involved in secondary education and had been the Executive Director of several philanthropic foundations dedicated to education. They have two children, both chemical engineering graduates of Princeton University. Dr. Lewis’ younger brother, Harry, is the Gordon McKay Professor of Computer Science and the former Dean of Harvard College.