

Lifetime Achievement Award



Dr. Charles R. Munnerlyn

The Lifetime Achievement Award honors an ISRS member who has made significant and internationally recognized contributions to the advancement of refractive surgery over his or her career.

Dr. Munnerlyn currently serves on the Academy of Ophthalmology Advisory Board, the Optical Society of America Board, and the University of Rochester Board of Trustees. Previously, Dr. Munnerlyn held the position of CEO at Visx, Inc. (now Abbott Medical Optics), of which he was a founder.

Dr. Munnerlyn received his PhD in optical engineering from the University of Rochester and launched a career in the ophthalmic medical device industry that began with the development of the first automated refractor. He later improved photocoagulation systems and introduced advancements to YAG laser design. His career culminated in the conception, development, and commercialization of excimer laser ablation for correction of refractive errors of the eye. Dr. Munnerlyn holds nearly 40 patents in the field of optical engineering. Rather than using the emerging excimer laser to create radial keratotomy-like incisions, Dr. Munnerlyn had the vision to propose a precise sculpting of the eye with the laser according to formulas that he developed.

Dr. Munnerlyn was recognized by the International Society of Refractive Surgery with a President's Honored Lecturer Award in 1999 and by Design News Magazine as the 2001 Engineer of the Year. He is the winner of the 2001 Stevens Institute Honor Award and the 2007 Edwin Land Medal awarded by the Optical Society of America. Dr. Munnerlyn has been recognized by the University of Rochester with a Distinguished Scholar Award and by Texas A&M University as a Distinguished Alumnus.