

Retina Institute of Hawaii

Dr. Michael Bennett is in the business of saving eyesight. As president of the Retina Institute of Hawaii (RIH), his desire to heal sometimes trumps his belief in the bottom line.

RIH treats every patient who walks through the door, regardless of insurance or ability to pay. "We probably write off tens of thousands of dollars in free care each month," Bennett estimates. "They can't afford it."

Thanks to six years of growth, the institute can afford to help. Since opening in 2001, Bennett's practice has grown from two to nearly 30 employees, including four doctors. Last year, RIH opened offices on Maui and the Big Island and expanded to three on Oahu. Its reputation brings

patients from the Mainland, Asia and the Pacific for high-tech surgery. RIH physicians also conduct clinical research and educate other doctors in diagnosis and treatment.

Now RIH is even going out looking for patients who don't visit the eye doctor. Its new non-profit - Project Vision - recently debuted a state-of-the-art mobile screening clinic that travels to rural areas and community events, in hopes of detecting eye disease before it's too late.

Bennett credits a top-notch staff for RIH's success: "If you're honest, work hard, surround yourself with kind and generous and like-minded people, great things will happen."

- Colette P. Fox



Dr. Michael Bennett, president,
RETINA INSTITUTE OF HAWAII