



Mary Gilbert Lawrence, MD, MPH

Biography — Women Physicians Leadership Academy, November 2025

Dr. Mary Lawrence is a board-certified ophthalmologist and an active leader in organized medicine and political advocacy. She currently serves as a Board Director for **AMPAC**, the American Medical Association's Political Action Committee, **MEDPAC**, the Minnesota Medical Association's PAC, and as **Medical Director for Governmental Affairs** for the Minnesota Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons.

Dr. Lawrence earned her **MD from Jefferson Medical College** and completed a **residency in Ophthalmology at Wills Eye Hospital** after a pediatric internship at the University of Colorado. She pursued **subspecialty glaucoma training**, practiced in the Boston area, and later joined the **Harvard Medical School faculty**, where she directed multiple clinical services and received the **Residents' Teacher of the Year Award** and **Dean's Commendation for Excellence in Teaching**.

She went on to complete a **Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar Fellowship** and an **MPH at Yale University**, followed by faculty appointments at both Yale and Columbia's Manhattan Eye, Ear & Throat Hospital. From 1997 to 2010, she was **Professor of Ophthalmology at the University of Minnesota**, where she developed a pioneering **telemedicine program for rural veterans with diabetes** at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center.

In 2010, Dr. Lawrence was appointed **Deputy Executive Director of the Department of Defense/Veterans Affairs Vision Center of Excellence** in Washington, D.C., coordinating global care for service members with vision injuries from Iraq and Afghanistan. Her frequent work with Congress deepened her understanding of the gaps between health policy and real-world medical practice.

Leaving federal service in 2015, Dr. Lawrence ran for **U.S. Congress**, an experience that solidified her passion for physician engagement in public policy. Since then, she has continued to **mobilize physicians and communities** through political fundraising, hosting and organizing events for candidates who support high-quality patient care. Notably, she and her husband hosted a 2023 fundraiser featuring **First Lady Jill Biden**, setting a record for the most funds raised by a First Lady event.

Dr. Lawrence served as **President of the Minnesota Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons** during 2019–2020, guiding the organization through the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the unrest following George Floyd’s murder. Licensed in five states, she has also lived and worked internationally in the **UK, Hong Kong/China, UAE, Nepal, and Kenya**.

She and her husband, **James A. Lawrence**, reside in Minnesota and have two grown children.