

# As see it



Dear Wilmer Friends and Family,

A decade ago, I received a once-ina-lifetime opportunity; the chance to return to Wilmer and Johns Hopkins, where I had trained, and do my best to position this fine institution for continued success in the future. The opportunity to once again be part of the Wilmer family was something that I had to accept, and my wife, Jan, and children were supportive.

Now that I have completed my first 10 years in this role, I want to thank all those who have worked diligently to make Wilmer the special place it is today. Truly it has been a blessing to partner with the students, residents, nurses, technicians, administrators, staff,

physicians, and scientists who come in every day determined to do their best, and specifically to provide the best care possible for all the patients who need us today or in the future.

Our incredibly generous alumni, patients, and friends have done so much to strengthen Wilmer during my tenure. The new Robert H. and Clarice Smith building transformed how we do research and allowed us to add extremely talented scientists working in new areas, so that research grants written by Wilmer faculty are double today what they were five years ago. Based on skyrocketing patient satisfaction scores, the Bendann Surgical Pavilion dramatically improved the experience of our patients who need eye surgery. In 10 years, we have been able to dedicate 14 new endowed professorships, endow the Chief Resident position, and establish four Scholar positions for our young assistant professors. Thanks to some generous benefactors, we have a fund that supports the costs of care for the poor who need surgery but cannot pay. This support for our research, teaching, and patient care missions has helped Wilmer staff do more for our patients and our trainees.

Wilmer has also changed in another important respect: More women have trained here during this time than in the cumulative preexisting history of the Institute. Similarly, as many women have achieved the rank of full professor in the last decade as achieved this milestone in the prior eight decades. Women now constitute half of new faculty hires and I believe it is likely that Wilmer will soon have more female full professors than most ophthalmology departments have faculty members! All of our junior faculty—male and female—give me great confidence in our future.

I thank all of you who have contributed to making this past decade such a positive experience.

Peter J. McDonnell, MD William Holland Wilmer Professor and Director

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# Philanthropy Funds Efforts to Address Fuchs Dystrophy



Albert Jun

enerous support from patients of Albert Jun, MD, will fund his research into potential drug treatments for corneal diseases such as Fuchs dystrophy, a disease for which there are no known treatments other than corneal transplant.

"I have rewarding interactions and relationships with many of my patients, but as research makes up such a significant part of my professional activities, I have a special appreciation for my patients who understand the importance of our work and take the extra step to support our efforts," says Jun, an associate professor of ophthalmology and vice chair for education at Wilmer.

Using genetically engineered mice with a form of Fuchs dystrophy, Jun has been looking into using lithium as a treatment for the disease. "We are investigating potential drug treatments, with the goal of reducing the need for patients to undergo corneal transplant surgery. Our current fundraising efforts will go directly toward ongoing work in this area," he says.

Lee Silverman, a businessman and private pilot who lives in New Castle, PA, was referred to Jun when he developed Fuchs dystrophy. Jun performed a corneal transplant, but Silverman says he became intrigued by the research his surgeon was doing into finding treatments other than surgery.

"Fuchs, a genetic disease, could affect my children or grandchildren," says Silverman, "and my interest was to help Dr. Jun in his research efforts."

"Not a day goes by that I am not appreciative of the surgery that he has performed," Silverman says. "It is my

hope that if the disease occurs in a family member, an easier treatment will have been developed to eliminate the need for surgery."

Diane Kemker, of Tampa, FL, received corneal transplants in both eyes for endothelial keratoplasty. "I donated to Dr. Jun's research program because of his innovative approach to the study and treatment of corneal disorders," she says. "Dr. Jun is a brilliant surgeon and innovative, creative researcher. He and his colleagues have been in the forefront of research and treatment for this condition. I just hope that the small part played by my donation will help find answers and solutions to corneal disease."

Donor Jean Mattison, also of Tampa, said that Jun has given her a "new lease on life," allowing her "to see with bare eyes, the world as it is; and to read easily." She adds, "My August 2011 endothelial transplantation was special to me, also, because Dr. Jun was teaching a young doctor how to perform the procedure... so the art can continue."

These patient donations are arriving at a time when funding sources are drying up, even for the most promising investigators. "There are so many reasons why such funding is critical to any type of medical research," says Jun. "Funding is so competitive that even the best researchers will come up short at times. This is particularly relevant given the current budget pressures on governmental and private research organizations."

Every gift counts and supports Wilmer's mission of offering the very best in eye care.

—Christine Stutz





linical trials have long been a vital tool used by researchers to gain insights into specific, often life-changing health conditions and possible treatments. Although many people hope to participate in such studies, frequent travel to Johns Hopkins Medicine's urban locations for clinical trials can prove to be a stumbling block.

**Adrienne W. Scott, MD**, is working to change the accessibility of such trials by bringing them to Wilmer Eye Institute at Parris-Castoro in Bel Air, MD., where she is medical director.

"In our field, much of the information we have today regarding diagnosis, prognosis, treatment, and prevention of devastating eye conditions has come from our clinical trials," says Scott, assistant professor of ophthalmology. "It is critical we make access to participation in these trials as convenient as possible for our patients."

Scott is among a number of faculty researchers at Wilmer who are bringing clinical trials to the satellite locations where they are based.

One such study currently underway is led by **Prem Sagar Subramanian, MD, PhD**, head of the Thyroid Eye Disease Center, which is based in the Bethesda satellite.

"We currently treat thyroid eye disease with weekly intravenous steroids or orbital radiation. These treatments

may be effective, but they are inconvenient for patients and carry risk," he says. "If we can use an oral medication that works as well or better than the steroids, that would be a big advantage. Medications like celecoxib have specific action against some of the inflammatory mediators in thyroid eye disease, which make them good candidates for a clinical trial."

**Ingrid Zimmer-Galler, MD**, chief of Wilmer's Frederick, Maryland satellite, stresses that such clinical trials in locations off main medical campuses are vital to ongoing vision health.

"Evidence-based medicine has proven that vision loss from diseases such as diabetic retinopathy is largely preventable with appropriate and timely treatment," says Zimmer-Galler, who, with NIH funding, has spent years researching how telemedicine might improve public health programs for common retinal diseases. "Nonetheless, almost half of all patients with diabetes still do not undergo recommended examinations for diabetic retinopathy."

Zimmer-Galler is also working on ways to have community-based practices that work within a university setting—including Wilmer's Frederick satellite—become centers of excellence for clinical research trials.

—Nancy Dunham

# Catching Up with Nick Mahoney

ick Mahoney, MD, the first junior faculty member to benefit from Wilmer's Next Generation Fund (see "A Boost for Rising Stars," Sightline, Fall 2012) has spent a busy year performing research, seeing patients at the clinic, and leading change in resident education.

During his years of extensive medical training, Mahoney accrued significant debt. The Next Generation Fund support, "has really made a difference in taking away some financial stress so I can focus on work," he says.

In the area of resident education, Mahoney has redesigned the resident oculoplastics didactic education curriculum, in part through the innovative use of technology. He has developed a video lecture series that allows residents to view senior faculty lectures on their own time, and he created a Web-based audience response tool for smart phones for an interactive discussion session.

"The use of technology in education for our division has been well received, and I've been asked to create and oversee a transition to a Web-based ophthalmology education curriculum for the entire program that may also be shared with other trainees internationally," says Mahoney, who is a member of Wilmer's Resident Education Committee and was chair of the Residency Education Task Force Group on Subspecialty Clinics.

Mahoney has also been active in research. In one retrospective study, he examined the success rate of newly developed orbital implants after eye removal. He presented data from the study at the American Society of Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (ASOPRS) conference and has submitted a manuscript based on his findings. He is also coordinator for Wilmer's participation in a multicenter international prospective trial assessing anatomical success in orbital fracture repair.

"My most exciting project involves developing an algorithm to predict eye movement after surgery to expand the bony orbit for Graves disease patients," he notes. To advance that work, Mahoney has partnered with a German software and device company, Brainlab, which will provide an advanced research device for 3D volumetric analysis. This new tool will help yield critical insights into surgical planning for orbital surgery.

When he's not teaching or in the lab, Mahoney is working diligently to grow the oculoplastics practice at two of Wilmer's satellite clinics and also staffing the resident oculoplastics clinic. "The volume of patients and variety of conditions I'm seeing has been enjoyably staggering," he says, "and support [from the Next Generation Fund] has really made a difference."

—Sue De Pasquale



The Wilmer Eye Institute gratefully acknowledges the following donors who have made contributions to support the **Next Generation Fund:** 

Mr. H. Furlong Baldwin

Mr. Richard B. Betters

Mrs. Mildred A. Burns

**Dewall Family Trust** 

The Honorable Elizabeth Dole

Mr. Dennis Fisher

Mr. and Mrs. Rick Forsythe

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kogod

Ms. Bonnie McElveen-Hunter

Dr. Peter J. McDonnell

Mr. Mitch R. Milesi

Mrs. Gay L. Pasley

Ms. Sharon C. Shipley

Walter J. Stark, MD

Mrs. Rebecca Stirn

Dr. Harold P. Wittman

Mrs. Lynn R. Woodruff

# Relentless Pursuit

In his philanthropy as in business, T. Boone Pickens is a visionary. Through his extraordinary generosity to Wilmer, he's set his sights on nothing less than solving age-related macular degeneration.

By Christine Stutz / Photo by Justin Tsucalas

nergy billionaire T. Boone Pickens first met

Walter Stark, MD, some 30 years ago at a duck hunting camp in White Lake, LA. The native
Oklahomans became instant friends, and Pickens mentioned that his father was struggling with age-related macular degeneration (AMD), the leading cause of severe vision loss in Americans over 50. Stark, who was then director of Corneal and Cataract Services at Wilmer, examined the elder Pickens, though in those days there was little doctors could do to reverse the damage.

When the younger Pickens developed vision problems, including early symptoms of AMD, he began to see Neil Bressler, MD, chief of the retina division at Wilmer, in addition to his friend Stark. "I was getting to know the people at Wilmer very well," says Pickens, now 85. So it was not surprising that Pickens, a philanthropist who has donated more than \$1 billion to charitable causes through his T. Boone Pickens Foundation, would be eager to contribute to Wilmer's growth and continued pursuit of excellence.

One of Pickens' early gifts to Wilmer was the 2005 endowment of the Pickens Professorship, with Stark—now the director of the Stark-Mosher Center for Cataract and Corneal Diseases at Wilmer—as the first faculty member to hold the honor

"Boone is a visionary, and he likes to work with winners," says Stark. "Boone's support of medical research is not only going to help him, it's going to help people who have other forms of eye disease, so it's a fantastic thing that Boone has done."

Not surprisingly, research into treatments for AMD is especially meaningful to Pickens. "Wilmer has about 50 faculty members, and more than 250,000 square feet of laboratory space, dedicated to research into ways to conquer the disease," says Bressler.

"One of the things I noticed about Boone and his personality is that he is relentless in the pursuit of everything he does," Bressler states. "And his health care is no different. ... He was going to make sure he pursued, not only here but everywhere else in the world, how to try and treat this macular degeneration. In fact, I still get emails from him once

or twice a month pointing out some new study or research, and asking if we know about it.

"Let's say you have a research idea. It might be a little off the wall, but maybe it's worth trying," Bressler continues. "He's right there to support people who want to do this sort of research, and some of [that work] moves on to major ideas that should be pursued in a bigger way. And it can't happen unless people like him are providing those sorts of funds."

Pickens' largesse facilitated the 2009 completion of The Robert H. and Clarice Smith Building and Maurice Bendann Surgical Pavilion, adjoining surgical and research centers, whose atrium was named for Pickens. The building "has allowed us to recruit talented scientists and put them in a collaborative environment," says Wilmer Director Peter McDonnell, MD, including the opportunity to work with researchers from other disciplines, such as biomedical engineering. The result, he adds, has been "a doubling in the number of grant applications per year and a doubling in the number of grants awarded to Wilmer faculty per year."

"Mr. Pickens is a remarkable man," says McDonnell. "He truly values and understands what research universities do, and he truly appreciates commitment to achievement and to excellence."







# Stem cells are biological marvels. With a little chemical coaxing, they can transform themselves into virtually any type of cell in the human body.

To medical science, stem cells are gold. They are the raw material of a research revolution in which human tissues and, someday, whole organs might be grown from scratch in the laboratory. This promise is on full display at the Wilmer Eye Institute. Several experts at Wilmer are in the vanguard of regenerative medicine as it is applied to the eye. While much is yet to be understood about stem cells, they represent the prospect of being able to study and treat countless diseases, injuries, and other afflictions in the eye as never before.

Already, specialists at Wilmer have grown a so-called "disease in a dish"—synthetic human tissues that permit scientific exploration in the lab rather than on live humans. **Donald Zack, MD, PhD**, the Guerrieri Professor of

Genetic Engineering & Molecular Ophthalmology, is one such scientist. He is using stem cells to grow diseased retinal cells to aid in a search for drugs to cure retinal diseases.

In one of his studies, Zack and his team have had success creating retinal pigment epithelial cells that are missing a key gene whose mutation or absence is known to cause progressive loss of vision. Zack has likewise been able to produce these cells in great quantity, a key accomplishment if the cells are to become a valuable research vehicle for other labs beyond his own. More recently, the Wilmer team is about to begin screening thousands of small molecules for efficacy against the specific genetic mutation that the cells share.

"We're enthusiastic about the research so far. We've already used this approach to identify drugs that promote the survival of the retinal ganglion cells—cells killed by glaucoma—and shown that they reduce damage in animal models of optic nerve disease. We've also used this approach to identify neuroprotective molecules for macular and retinal degeneration. Eventually, we hope to test these novel drugs in humans," Zack says.

**Gerard Lutty, PhD**, the G. Edward and G. Britton Durell Professor of Ophthalmology, is working in a different direction. He is applying regenerative medicine to study complications in blood flow to the retina that are at the heart of diseases such as age-related macular degeneration, retinopathy of prematurity, and blindness tied to sickle-cell anemia and diabetes.

In his research, Lutty must walk a fine line. The diseases are caused by occlusions or death of capillaries that supply blood to the retina, yet merely growing new vessels is not a solution. Excess blood vessel growth can be just as detrimental to eyesight as a lack of blood. Lutty, therefore, is regenerating only very specific capillary cells—the inner, or endothelial cells, and outer contractile cells, the pericytes—both in the small blood vessels of diabetic retinas. He grows these cells from stem cells and injects them directly into the eye where they migrate to the diseased areas, take root and, hopefully, restore blood flow.



"We are using human progenitor stem cells derived from umbilical cord blood and training them to transform into these two types of cells. We are also researching methods for reintroducing them into the eye. Our results, so far, have been promising and we are very hopeful about the future," Lutty explains.





Valeria Canto-Soler, PhD,

director of the Retinal Degenerations Research Center at the Institute, is using stem cells derived from skin or blood cells from patients affected by retinal diseases to grow near-complete human retinas in her lab. In the immediate term, these synthetic retinas can be used as research specimens to study diseases and therapies in the lab, but also might someday lead to retinal "patches" that can be transplanted in the eye to restore vision.

"We're well on our way toward those goals. We have defined an efficient process to direct stem cells to form a retina in the lab, just like it would in a human embryo, and we have produced large-scale, threedimensional retinal cups in a Petri dish that could one day restore vision in



diseased patients," Canto-Soler says.

Jennifer Elisseeff, PhD, the Jules
Stein Professor in the Department
of Biomedical Engineering, is using
her past experiences in regenerating
bones and soft tissues to help repair
eye injuries in the cornea. She has used
regenerative techniques to develop
new bio-adhesives and membranes

to heal eyes injured in accidents and in battle. For Elisseeff, regenerative medicine holds the promise of healing without scarring, which can adversely affect vision.

"These new eye structures are very similar to the original human tissue. Not only are they able to 'glue' the damaged areas together, but they also stimulate new tissue growth in order to seal the cornea and preserve sight without scarring or tissue rejection," Elisseeff says.

Ultimately, the hope for all these regenerative techniques is clinical applications, and before they make it there they will have to undergo rigorous clinical testing. That's where

Hendrik Scholl, MD, MA, comes in. Scholl, the director of the Inherited Retinal Degeneration Clinic at the Wilmer Eye Institute, treats patients suffering from degenerative retinal diseases. He is also testing the safety and efficacy of new regenerative therapies with the goal of moving them beyond trial and into practice.

Scholl, the Frieda Derdeyn Bambas Professor of Ophthalmology, was selected recently to lead a worldwide, multi-center study of Stargardt disease, a form of retinal degeneration common in children and young adults. In that effort, he will assess clinical outcome measures to test efficacy of therapies—including stem cell transplantation into the retina—with the hope of restoring damaged photoreceptors.

"Of the three types of therapy we have at our disposal—pharmaceuticals, gene replacement, and stem cell transplantation—only stem cells hold the promise of actually curing blindness. That day may be a long way off, but these early studies in regenerative medicine are a step in that direction," Scholl says.

—Andrew Myers



"Of the three types of therapy we have at our disposal—pharmaceuticals, gene replacement, and stem cell transplantation—only stem cells hold the promise of actually curing blindness."

-HENDRIK SCHOLL



By Andrew Myers

Hanes can imagine a day when macular degeneration patients may have the option of an injection once a year, or perhaps even less frequently with improvements in nanotechnologyenabled eye drops, or a pill that may be taken daily as easily as a vitamin.

n the "wet" form of age-related macular degeneration, abnormal blood vessels form behind the retina and leak fluid. This, in turn, causes damage to the macula, the region of the eye responsible for seeing fine detail. The consequence, if not sufficiently treated, is formation of a scar under the retina and rapid loss of vision.

There are drugs that can slow the growth of the abnormal blood vessels and the rate at which they leak fluid, but they require injections every four to six weeks into the interior of the eye.

It has not yet been possible to use eye drops or pills to treat the condition and injections remain the only option.

If Justin Hanes, PhD, director of the Center for Nanomedicine at the Wilmer Eye Institute, has his way, those injections will become fewer and farther between. Someday, perhaps, they will disappear altogether. He and his Wilmer colleague, Peter Campochiaro, MD, are working on a long-lasting therapy that stops leaking and causes the new blood vessels to retreat, essentially turning back the clock on the disease.

"Today's drugs are pretty good at slowing new blood vessels, but they should last a lot longer in the eye. As you can imagine, patients aren't thrilled about losing their vision nor about monthly shots, so we're working on new nanotechnology-based medicines that are more effective and last much longer," Hanes says.

Hanes is leading an interdisciplinary team from the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine that has successfully married individual drug molecules to a biodegradable polymer—a plastic. As the plastic slowly dissolves, small amounts of the drug are continuously freed. In effect, the researchers have created timed-release approaches that extend the life of all classes of drug molecules.





Justin Hanes (center) with his interdisciplinary team that is harnessing nanotechnology to develop more effective drug delivery systems.

In preliminary tests in the laboratory, Campochiaro showed that one of the team's nanoparticle drug systems was still providing effective drug levels in the eye more than 115 days later. A single injection of the particles controlled new vessel growth substantially longer than agents currently used in patients with wet agerelated macular degeneration. Perhaps even more exciting, the drug caused selective regression of unwanted leaky blood vessels and left healthy blood vessels completely intact.

With further testing and improvements, Hanes thinks the injection regimen could be reduced to once a year. While that is great news for patients, the real excitement is in the validation that such polymer delivery systems are effective. It opens up the possibility that such techniques could be used with other drugs, as well.

"The drug-polymer system we are working on with Dr. Hanes is important because it targets multiple agents that cause the formation of leaky blood vessels. The targeting of several 'bad actors' in a single agent causes leaky blood vessels to regress, which may greatly improve the effectiveness of the therapy," Campochiaro says.

On the horizon, Hanes can see the use of the timed-release technology to deliver additional drugs, or even combinations of drugs, similarly packaged in one injection for the treatment of a diverse range of diseases. Should that day arrive, it would be a major advance toward better, more compassionate treatment of many types of progressive eye diseases, such as those caused by new blood vessel growth. The timed-release technology might also help prevent rejection of corneal transplants, and improve the treatment of glaucoma.

Hanes can imagine a day when macular degeneration patients may have the option of an injection once a year, or perhaps even less frequently with improvements in nanotechnologyenabled eye drops, or a pill that may be taken daily as easily as a vitamin.

Drops and pills are not effective for macular degeneration today because too little of the drug makes it to the part of the eye where it is needed, Hanes says. With a pill, for instance, the drug must run a gauntlet through the stomach and the digestive tract, then travel the bloodstream where it has to find its way to a very specific and small target in the eye. By the time it makes that trek, too little of the active molecule remains to have a noticeable effect on the disease.

"There are many biological barriers that make pills impractical, but we have recently discovered hints to ways in which we might be able to perfect our tiny drug systems that I believe will eventually allow us to deliver sufficient amounts of drugs to the eye with an advanced 'nano-enabled' pill," Hanes says. "If this happens, then it will open the door to the development of effective methods to not only treat age-related macular degeneration, but to prevent it from occurring in the first place."

## Welsbie Receives RPB Career Development Award



Derek Welsbie, MD, PhD, an assistant professor of ophthalmology in the glaucoma division at Wilmer, has received a Career Development Award from Research to Prevent Blindness. The four-year, \$250,000 award is given to junior ophthalmology faculty who will devote at least 60 percent of their time to research activities. Welsbie is currently researching the genetic causes of glaucoma, with the goal of developing new and more effective treatments. Specifically, his interest is the use of high-throughput genetic screening (i.e. functional genomics) to identify the genes responsible for nerve cell death in glaucoma and other neurodegenerative disorders.

## The 72nd Wilmer Residents Association Clinical Meeting June 13, 2013

Wilmer Alumni gathered for a day of presentations given by Wilmer's brilliant young residents and to celebrate alumni who marked milestone anniversaries.



L to r: Drs. William Jarrett, Travis A. Meredith, Peter J. McDonnell, Albert S. Jun, Paul Sternberg, Jr., Daniel M. Schwartz, Reay H. Brown.



**Dr. Albert Jun presents** Dr. Nicholas T. Iliff with the Neil R. Miller Faculty Teaching Award.

## The Dedication of the Jonas Friedenwald Professorship & The Wilmer Legacy Society Luncheon / April 8, 2013

Dr. Deepak P. Edward, director of research at the King Khaled Eye Specialist Hospital in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, accepted the Jonas Friedenwald Professorship during the luncheon that was held to celebrate the dedication of the professorship and the generosity of Wilmer's Legacy Society. Celebrating these events together was the perfect match. The Friedenwald professorship was made possible as a result of bequests to the Wilmer Eye Institute.



Dr. Peter J. **McDonnell** presents Dr. Deepak P. Edward with the **Friedenwald** professorship crystal.



L to r: Dr. Adrian Hopkins, Dr. Alfred Sommer, Dr. Shahid Aziz, Dr. Fatima Aziz, Dr. Roy Vagelos, Dr. Peter J. McDonnell, and Dr. David Friedman.

## The 17th Annual Mohammed Aziz Lecture / April 17, 2013

Dr. David Friedman, director of the Dana Center for Preventive Ophthalmology, hosted the 17th annual Aziz Lecture. Dr. Mohammed Aziz played a leading role in the development of Mectizan, the drug responsible for curing Ochocerciasis (River Blindness). Guest lecturer Dr. Roy Vagelos, former CEO of Merck pharmaceuticals, made an unprecedented decision to provide the drug to all who needed it for as long as they need it regardless of their ability to pay.

## Wilmer Eye Institute Bethesda location grand opening / April 11, 2013

Wilmer family and friends gathered to celebrate the grand opening of the Bethesda location. The patient reception area was made possible by the generosity of Liz and Dick Dubin.



L to r: Dr. Shameema Sikder, medical director, Wilmer at Bethesda; Dr. Peter J. McDonnell; Liz and Dick Dubin.



L to r: Sue and Sandy Greenberg, Wilmer Board of Governors' chair; and Joan and Peter Andrews.

## Dr. Peter J. McDonnell's 10th Anniversary Celebration as Director of The Wilmer Eye Institute / June 2, 2013

Dr. Peter J. McDonnell was delighted to celebrate his 10th Anniversary as director of the Wilmer Eye Institute with a beach party in his backyard. He was thrilled to share this momentous occasion with Wilmer longtime supporters.



L to r: Dr. Peter J. McDonnell, Senator Elizabeth Dole, Mr. Ted Reiver, and Dr. Jan McDonnell.



Julia and Anna Heatherly enjoyed the festivities with Dr. McDonnell.



# **Faculty Feats**

A sampling of FY13 honors for Wilmer physicians

#### Esen Karamursel Akpek, MD

Awarded an investigatorinitiated research grant (\$242,000) from Allergan Inc. to study the functional impairment of reading ability in patients with dry eye



- Appointed to serve as a member of medical advisory board for Tissue Banks International
- Selected to be included in "Best Doctors in America" by Consumers' Research Council of America for the 9th year in a row

#### J. Fernando Arevalo, MD, FACS

■ Received the 2013 Rhett Buckler Award for Best Video for Surgical Complications Management at the Pan-American Retina and Vitreous Society, American



Society of Retina Specialists 31st Annual Meeting. Toronto, ON, Canada

#### Ava Bittner, OD, PhD

■ Chair of the Low Vision Cross-sectional group of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO)



■ Received NIH funding (R21 award from the National Eye Institute, NEI) to study acupuncture as a potential treatment for retinitis pigmentosa patients

#### **Neil Bressler, MD**

■ Selected as editor-in-chief of IAMA Ophthalmology, one of the leading peerreviewed ophthalmology journals in the world



- Elected president of the Macula Society, one of three major retina societies in the U.S.
- Became vice-chair of the Board of Trustees of the Interlochen Center of the Arts, an entity involved with people worldwide in educational, artistic and cultural programs in the arts

#### Susan Bressler, MD

■ Concluded a seven-year commitment to the NEI as principal investigator of the Age-Related Eye Disease Study 2 (AREDS2); two primary outcome publications



were released in Spring 2013 clarifying the role of oral supplements in the role of age-related macular degeneration and cataract

- Continues to serve as the manuscript leader for the Diabetic Retinopathy Clinical Research Network (DRCR.net), sponsored by the NEI, and facilitated publication of multiple scientific papers from the network this year in JAMA, Ophthalmology and Retina
- Invited to lecture at multiple international continuing medical education venues—including Brazil, Mexico, Germany, England, Scotland, Italy, Turkey, Lebanon, Portugal, Czech Republic, India and Switzerland—in recognition of her teaching skills and expertise in current management of common retinal disorders

#### M. Valeria Canto-Soler, PhD

- Awarded the 2013 Alcon Research Institute Young Investigator Grant
- Received the Research to Prevent Blindness William & Mary Greve Special Scholar Award



■ Named "Outstanding Personality" by the Council of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, Argentina

#### Tiffany Chan, OD

- Invited speaker at the Foundation Fighting Blindness annual conference, June 2013
- Became a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry



■ Invited program speaker at the Lions Club, District 22A, Combined Regions 1 & 2 conference, April 2013

#### Elia Duh, MD

■ Awarded R01 grant from the National Eye Institute to study the "Role of Nrf2 in retinal vascularization and retinopathy of prematurity"



- Invited speaker at 2013 ARVO Minisymposium, Seattle, WA, delivering lecture: "Advances in understanding and treatment of diabetic retinopathy from vitreous studies"
- Chaired the 24th Annual Wilmer Research Meeting on April 12, 2013

#### Charles Eberhart, MD, PhD

■ Organizer and session chair for "Advances in Intraocular Pathology"—the American Association of Ophthalmic Oncologists and Pathologists Compan-



ion Meeting at USCAP, Baltimore, MD

■ Distinguished visiting professor at Wills Eye Hospital

#### David S. Friedman, MD, MPH, PhD

■ Selected co-chair of Subspecialty Day at the American Academy of Ophthalmology Annual Meeting



■ Invited as keynote speaker to the Asia-Pacific Glaucoma Club in Singapore

#### Morton F. Goldberg, MD

■ Along with Connie Chen, MD, and Ian Han, MD, continuing an IRB approved follow-up study of retinal pathology in patients with incontinentia pigmen-



ti, an X-linked congenital vascular disease of the retina and brain

#### Judith E. Goldstein, OD, FAAO

■ Appeared on NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams, along with Dr. Oliver Schein, to highlight attainable rehabilitation accomplishments for AMD



patients with the implantable miniature telescope at the Low Vision Clinic

#### **Boris Gramatikov, PhD**

■ In November 2012, received the Biomedical Research Collaboration Award from The Hartwell Foundation with Dr. Cynthia Toth, MD, for a project titled



"Diagnosis and Management of Infant Retinal Disease: Fast Swept Source Optical Coherence Tomography Synchronized with Central Fixation"

#### Michael P. Grant, MD, PhD, FACS

■ Elected president, American Society of Ocular Trauma





■ Council nominating committee, American Academy of Ophthalmology

#### Jordan J. Green, PhD

■ Awarded the Maryland Outstanding Young Engineer Award by the Maryland Academy of Sciences



■ Received National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants from the NEI and NIBIB (National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering)

■ Invited speaker and drug delivery session chair at the Society for Biomaterials Annual Meeting, Boston, MA

#### **David Guyton, MD**

Board of Directors, The Smith-Kettlewell Eye Research Institute, San Francisco, CA



■ Presented the Harvey E. Thorpe Memorial Lecture— Pittsburgh Ophthalmology Society— "Adventures in Ophthalmic Optics"

■ Presented the G. Victor Simpson, MD, Lecture—The Washington National Eye Center — "Optical Tricks and Traps in Ophthalmology and Strabismus"

#### Ian Han, MD

■ Received the Frank L. Coulson, Jr. Award for Clinical Excellence



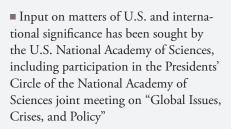
#### James T. Handa, MD

■ Inducted as an ARVO (Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology) Gold Fellow

■ Selected as member of National Eye Institute DPVS Study Section

### Justin Hanes, PhD

Collaborated with Drs. Elia Duh and Peter McDonnell on a paper that enhanced understanding of the behavior of drug delivery nanoparticles within the eye; the work was awarded the 2013 Innovation in Biotechnology Award by the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists



■ Selected as the chairperson of the Gene and Drug Delivery Study Section of the NIH

#### Barbara S. Hawkins, PhD, FSCT

■ Authored a chapter, "Collaborative Ocular Melanoma Study: Overview of Outcomes," in the Ocular Melanoma: Advances in Diagnostic and Therapeutic Strategies textbook



- Serves as deputy editor for *Clinical* Trials, Journal of the Society for Clinical Trials
- Serves as an investigator and editor for the Cochrane Eyes and Vision Group

#### Henry D. Jampel, MD, MHS

- Appointed deputy editorin-chief of Ophthalmology
- Delivered 17th Annual Robert S. Jampel Lecture at the Kresge Eye Institute
- Selected as the 2014 American Glaucoma Society Subspecialty Day Lecturer



more >

#### Albert Jun, MD, PhD

■ Cornea Program Chair, Association for Vision and Ophthalmology Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA



- International Guest
  Speaker, AlHokama Eye Centre and
  Saudi Ophthalmology Meetings,
  Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
- Published first experimental non-surgical treatment for Fuchs endothelial corneal dystrophy in *British Journal of Ophthalmology*

#### Richard J. Kolker, MD

■ Lecturer for the Johns Hopkins medical student ophthalmology elective, Wilmer resident orientation, and Johns Hopkins nurse practitioner program



- Invited to give two lectures at JCAHPO 2013 national meeting in New Orleans, LA
- Co-authored poster presentation at MSEPS annual meeting 2013

#### Gerard A. Lutty, PhD

- Faculty of the Italian Ophthalmological Societies Summer School in Venice
- Received an Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation grant on the inflammatory cells in human choroid
- Completed four years of service as a regular member of the Diseases of the Posterior Visual System NIH Study Section

#### Peter J. McDonnell, MD

- Elected president of the National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research
- Delivered the Randy Campo Memorial Lecture



- at the University of Miami School of Medicine
- Delivered the Helen Keller Lecture at the University of Alabama, Birmingham, AL

#### Shannath Merbs, MD

- Executive Secretary, American Society of Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery
- Co-author of the second edition of the World Health Organization *Manual for Trichiasis Surgery*
- Selected to participate in the American Academy of Ophthalmology Leadership Development Program

#### Neil R. Miller, MD

- Delivered the 25th Angelina M. Parks Lecture, Children's National Medical Center, Washington, DC
- Delivered the 40th F.
  Bruce Fralick Lecture,
  Kellogg Eye Center, University of
  Michigan Medical Center, Ann
  Arbor, MI
- Delivered the 3rd College of Ophthalmologists Lecture, 19th International Neuro-Ophthalmology Society Meeting, Singapore

#### Elliott H. Myrowitz, OD, MPH

■ Course director, 6th Annual Evidence Based Care in Optometry meeting; 2013 conference is noted to have the largest attendance



■ Invited featured speaker, The Dr. Joseph C. Toland 22nd Annual Excellence in Education Conference, Salus University

#### Josephine O. Owoeye, OD, MPH

■ Currently serving as a consultant for the Baltimore City Health Department to help revise vision screening guidelines for Baltimore City school children



- Lectured at the 1st Pediatric Optometry and Ophthalmology Symposium in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in March 2013
- Lectured at the 2012 American Academy of Optometry meeting in Phoenix, AZ

#### Harry Quigley, MD

 Received the American Academy of Ophthalmology's Life Achievement Honor Award



#### Pradeep Ramulu, MD, PhD

- Received five-year R01 grant from the NEI to fund the Falls In Glaucoma Study (FIGS)
- Delivered Glaucoma Conference of Honor at Chilean Ophthalmology Conference
- Chosen to determine visual requirements for Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) employees, including FBI Special Agents

#### Oliver Douglas Schein, MD, MPH

■ Appeared, along with Dr. Judith Goldstein, on *Nightly News with Brian Williams* in a story about the implantable miniature telescope for AMD



- Local and national "Best Doctor" recognition
- Visiting professor, King Khaled Eye Specialist Hospital, Riaydh, Saudi Arabia

#### Hendrik P.N. Scholl, MD, MA

- Received the Visionary Award from the Foundation Fighting Blindness (FFB)
- Was invited to the Editorial Board of IAMA Ophthalmology
- Will receive the ARVO Foundation/Pfizer Ophthalmics Carl Camras Translational Research Award 2014 from the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO)



■ Founder and chair of the Human Eye Proteome Project, an international initiative to understand eye disease through characterizing the proteins of the eye in health and disease



■ Co-authored and published A Perfect Vision: Catalogue of the William Holland Wilmer Rare Book Collection, a 600-page fine illustrated book describing the rare book collection of William Holland Wilmer

#### Eric Singman, MD, PhD

- Author, "Clonidine premedication versus placebo: effects on postoperative agitation and recovery time in children undergoing strabismus surgery," which was highlighted in Pediatric Ophthalmology weekly
- Invited speaker at the Quarterly Meeting of the Chiari and Syringomyelia Foundation in Chevy Chase, MD

#### Debasish Sinha, PhD

■ Received the Sybil B. Harrington Special Scholar award for Macular Degeneration Research from Research to Prevent Blindness



- Invited to participate in the Fifth Arnold and Mabel Beckman Initiative for Macular Research conference
- Invited speaker at the XX Biennial Meeting of the International Society for Eye Research in Berlin

#### Akrit Sodhi, MD, PhD

■ Received a research grant from The William and Ella Owens Medical Research Foundation to study novel therapeutic targets for the treatment of diabetic macular edema



- Identified a novel cytokine that promotes vascular permeability (and macular edema) in patients with ischemic retinopathies (Xin, et al., PNAS, 2013); this work has been patented by the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine
- Awarded the "Most Promising Assistant Professor Award" by the Wilmer **Full Professors**

#### Walter J. Stark, MD

■ Castle Connolly Top Doctors 2013, 12th edition, Selected by Castle Connolly Medical Ltd.



- Member of the Marquis Who's Who family
- The 2013 Washington, DC-Baltimore-Northern Virginia Super Doctors

#### Prem S. Subramanian, MD, PhD

■ Distinguished visiting lecturer, Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, India



■ Visiting Professor, Argentine Council of Ophthalmology Annual Congress, Buenos Aires, Argentina

■ Appointed to Institute of Medicine National Science Foundation Committee on Human Health Risks of Spaceflight

#### Jennifer E. Thorne, MD, PhD

■ Promoted to Professor of Ophthalmology and **Epidemiology** 



#### Sheila West, PhD

Appointed to Special Technical Advisory Group for Neglected Tropical Disease to the Director General of World Health Organization



- Appointed to the National Advisory Eye Council for the NEI at NIH
- Received a \$1 million grant award from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for work on child health

#### David Zee, MD

■ Delivered the Ed Marres lecture, Maastricht University, the Netherlands



- Received the Betty and David Koetser Foundation for Brain Research Award and Prize, Zurich, Switzerland
- Keynote speaker at summer symposium of the summer internship program of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke

# Our Work to Cure Blindness: Our Donors

The scientists and staff of the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins gratefully acknowledge our partners in philanthropy listed here. The generosity of these friends supports a tradition of collaboration and far-reaching investigation as, together, we pursue the complex challenges of eye diseases. While our space here is limited, our thankfulness is not. Although gifts of any amount are gratefully received, only gifts, pledges, and pledge payments totaling more than \$250 in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013, could be listed in this report. If any donor was accidentally missed, or if you prefer to remain anonymous, please contact the Development Office at 410-955-2020.

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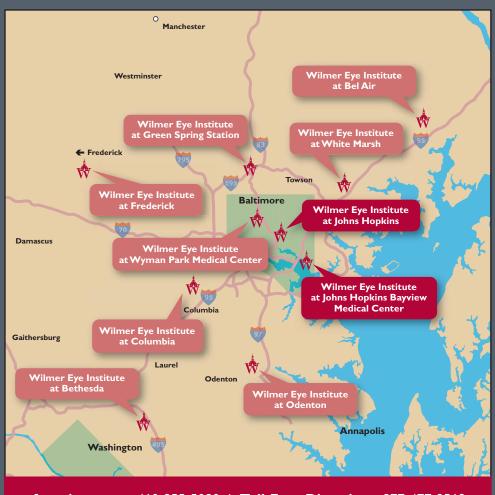
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