



NEWS FROM
THE EYE-BANK
FOR SIGHT
RESTORATION, INC.

SUMMER 2020

eye to eye

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EBAA Chair

The Eye-Bank Meets Challenges Created by COVID-19 Outbreak

AS ONE WOULD IMAGINE, THE EYE-BANK OPERATIONS WERE SIGNIFICANTLY IMPACTED by the COVID-19 pandemic starting with the outbreak's fast and severe onset in the New York Metropolitan Area beginning in March. As of March 17, when Governor Cuomo enacted a restriction on elective surgeries, The Eye-Bank's employees were instructed to work remotely from home.

However, the functioning of The Eye-Bank's ocular laboratory was maintained during this time by our technicians, who were considered essential workers, working on a rotational basis to perform routine quality control procedures and eye donor recoveries, as well as performing practice processing procedures to keep their skills in top form. As area hospitals quickly became overwhelmed treating COVID-19 patients, only emergency cornea transplants were permitted. The Eye-Bank was able to provide donor eye tissue for each of the requests for tissue and those patients did not go without treatment.

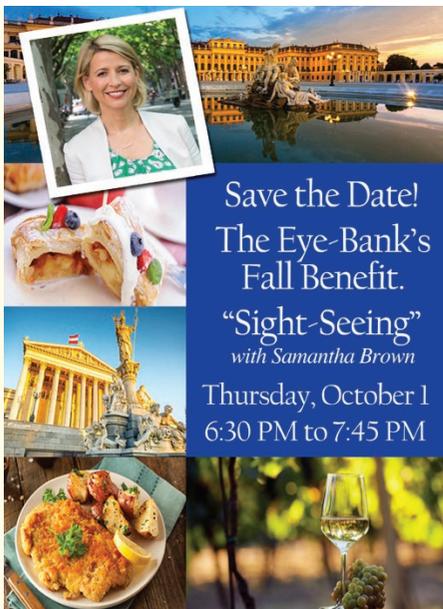
By May there was a slight increase in transplants as more patients qualified for "urgent" status and those surgeries were allowed due to an improved capability at most area hospitals. Governor Cuomo lifted the restriction on elective surgeries in June and the number of scheduled cornea transplants and the need for donor eye tissue has been on an increased rise since then. Since COVID-19 is a rule-out for eye donation, special criteria have been developed to identify risk factors and screen donor tissue for suitability.

During our "Work from Home" period, eye bank staff continued to meet via zoom teleconferencing and adapt to the changes and restrictions necessitated by COVID-19 and the guidelines for staying safe, socially distant and helping to stop the spread.

In support of our dedicated healthcare workers on the front lines, Eye-Bank staff reached out with continuous words of support and encouragement in as many ways possible while remaining socially distant – emails, teleconferencing, and through social media. In response to severe shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE) at area hospitals, The Eye-Bank was able to share more than 50% of our own PPE in response to an expressed need from Harlem Hospital and Elmhurst Hospital. The Eye-Bank's Medical Director, Michelle Rhee, MD, secured a



(continued on page 6)



Travel to Austria With The Eye-Bank

FALL BENEFIT SAVE THE DATE

The Eye-Bank's virtual Fall Benefit *Sight-Seeing* will be held on **Thursday, October 1, 2020** from **6:30 pm - 7:45 pm**.

We invite you to join us and Emmy-Award winning travel expert and TV personality, Samantha Brown, from PBS's *Places to Love*, as she takes us on a virtual tour of the stunning sights and rich culture of Austria. Then, sip some of Austria's most unique wines as we take a private tour of a fascinating vineyard. Finally, learn how to eat like a local and make a traditional

Austrian dish and don't forget to bid on some hot ticket items in our virtual silent auction!

This year's event will take place on Zoom allowing us all to celebrate The Eye-Bank's 75th year of sight restoration from the safety and comfort of our homes.

To register or to make a donation in support of the event, please visit eyedonation.org/FallBenefit.

For questions, contact Karen Bardavid at Kbardavid@ebsr.org.

We can't wait to go *Sight-Seeing* with you.

Prost!

Medical Advisory Board Elects New Officers, New Members

AT THE MAY 21 MEETING OF THE MEDICAL ADVISORY BOARD, The Eye-Bank welcomed newly elected members, Viral V. Juthani, M.D. and Elizabeth Viriya, M.D. The Board also elected Leela V. Raju, M.D. to the position of Chair and Himani Goyal, M.D. as Secretary. Returning to the Board for a new term after having rotated off for a year are James D. Auran, M.D. and Maayan Keshet, M.D. Members of the Medical Advisory Board help provide consultation for the Ocular Laboratory in coordination with The Eye-Bank's Medical Director Michelle K. Rhee, M.D. and members may serve two consecutive three-year terms after which, they must rotate off the Board for a minimum of one year.

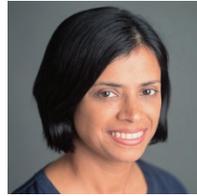


VIRAL V. JUTHANI, M.D. serves as an Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences at Montefiore Medical Center and Albert Einstein College of Medicine and as Co-Director of the Ophthalmology Department at the Montefiore Hutchinson Campus in the Bronx. Dr. Juthani earned his B.A. at the University of Pennsylvania and his medical degree from Yale University's School of Medicine. His post-doctoral work includes an internship at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center's Department of Medicine and a residency in ophthalmology and visual sciences at New York University/Langone Eye Center and the Manhattan Eye, Ear, and Throat Institute. His fellowships were completed in cornea and external eye diseases at Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia and in cornea and refractive surgery at the Cole Eye Institute in Cleveland. Dr. Juthani is a member of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery, and The Cornea Society.



ELIZABETH VIRIYA, M.D. is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology at Bellevue Hospital and is an Attending Physician at New York University/Langone Eye Center in New York. A graduate of Columbia University with a B.S. and M.S. in Biomedical Engineering, Dr. Viriya received her medical degree from the State University of New York's College of Medicine in

Brooklyn. Her post-doctoral work includes an internship at New York Presbyterian/Queens Hospital and training in ophthalmology at Bronx Lebanon Hospital Center. Her fellowship was completed at the Gordon-Schanzlin New Vision Institute in La Jolla, California in cornea and external eye disease and refractive surgery. Dr. Viriya is a member of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery, and The Cornea Society.



LEELA V. RAJU, M.D. (BOARD CHAIR) is Chief of Ophthalmology at Bellevue Hospital and Associate Professor at the Langone Medical Center/New York University, specializing in cornea, anterior segment and refractive surgery. Previously, she served as Assistant Professor and Medical Director/Vice Chair of the Charles T. Campbell Microbiology Laboratory at the University of Pittsburgh, Medical Center. Dr. Raju graduated from Brown University with a B.A. in Biology and received her medical degree from Marshall University in West Virginia. Her postdoctoral work includes studies at Johns Hopkins University in eye pathology, an internship in Internal Medicine at Mercy Medical Center, training in Ophthalmology at the University of Pittsburgh, and studies in Cornea and External Diseases at Baylor College of Medicine. She is a member of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgeons.



HIMANI GOYAL, M.D. (BOARD SECRETARY) is part of the Faculty Group Practice of NYU Langone Health, in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. A graduate of The College of New Jersey, she received her medical degree from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. She completed an internship in internal medicine at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital followed by an ophthalmology residency at SUNY Downstate Medical Center. Later, she completed a cornea and refractive surgery fellowship at the Belmont Eye Center/NYU Medical Center. Dr. Goyal is currently an attending ophthalmologist

at Coney Island Hospital and VA NY Harbor Healthcare System as well as a Clinical Assistant Professor in Ophthalmology at NYU Langone Health. She is an active member of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the Cornea Society and the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery.



JAMES AURAN, M.D. is currently a Professor of Clinical Ophthalmology at Columbia University and the Associate Attending in the Ophthalmology Service at New York Presbyterian Hospital. He received his B.A. in Biology (cum laude) from Harvard College and received his medical degree from Cornell University Medical College. Dr. Auran completed an internship in internal medicine at Lenox Hill Hospital, which was followed by an ophthalmology residency and cornea fellowship at Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital. He is currently president of The American Society for Ophthalmic Trauma.



MAAYAN KESHET, M.D. is currently an Ophthalmology Associate at the Fromer Eye Centers. She received her B.A. in Biology and French (cum laude) from Vassar College, which was followed by her medical degree from Tufts University School of Medicine. Dr. Keshet completed her ophthalmology residency at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine/Montefiore Medical Center and a cornea/external disease/refractive fellowship at Tufts/New England Eye Center/Ophthalmic Consultants of Boston.

GEORGE FLORAKIS, M.D. has rotated off the Board after having served as Chair since 2014. **DRS. DAVID HAIGHT** and **DAVID RITTERBAND** have also rotated off the Board having completed their terms as of May 2020. The Eye-Bank is extremely grateful to Drs. Florakis, Haight and Ritterband for contributing their expertise and thanks them for their generous service in support of our mission. 

75th Anniversary Donor Family & Recipient Reception

Join us for a special reception commemorating The Eye-Bank's 75 years of giving the beautiful Gift of Sight.

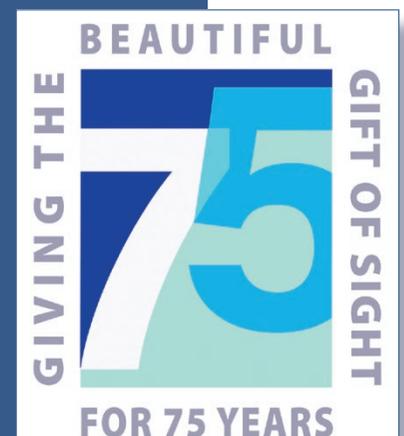
We are celebrating you...our donor families and cornea transplant recipients.

**Sunday, November 8, 2020
2:00 to 3:30 PM**

This special event will take place on Zoom allowing us all to celebrate The Eye-Bank's 75th year of sight restoration from the safety and comfort of our homes.

To RSVP go to [EyeDonation.org/75years](https://www.eyedonation.org/75years) and complete the form and submit. Once you RSVP you will receive an email with more information and the Zoom link to join us for this special anniversary event.

For questions, contact Marilyn K. Oliver at moliver@ebsr.org or call (212) 742-9000.



New Yorkers Reminded to Sign-Up to be Donors

Be Amazing.



Stay home. Save lives. "Flatten the Curve." Also, remember to sign up to become an eye, organ and tissue donor.

EyeDonation.org
THE EYE-BANK OF NEW YORK

ON THE ROAD AGAIN!

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak in the Greater New York Metropolitan Area being at its most severe from March through May, The Eye-Bank adjusted its important marketing campaign message to include asking New Yorkers to stay safe and to help flatten the curve as well as to help save sight and lives

through eye, organ and tissue donation. The look of the campaign changed as well featuring individuals wearing protective face coverings as another reminder to New Yorkers of the importance of staying safe and helping to stop the spread of the virus.

According to Eye-Bank Executive Director Patricia Dahl, while it is imperative to support patients and health care workers battling the effects of COVID-19, it is still important to remind New Yorkers to enroll in the Donate Life Registry because the need for eye, organ and tissue donation continues for those requiring sight and life-saving transplants. The rate of enrollment in the registry has suffered mainly because DMV offices have been closed and that is where many New Yorkers take the opportunity to sign up.

The Eye-Bank's new ad campaign urging New Yorkers to "Be Amazing," "Be Thoughtful," and "Be Generous" and sign up in the Donate Life NYS registry to become eye, organ and tissue donors once again appeared on the side of 300 New York City buses in July with some bonus time in June. Here too, the images on the large



size ads were of individuals wearing face coverings as a reminder for New Yorkers to stay safe and for the first time, one third of the Eye-Bank bus ads were in Spanish, with an appeal to "Sea Considerado," or "Be Thoughtful."

The campaign reminds New Yorkers that signing up is easy on their mobile device or computer and by going to eyedonation.org. Anyone age 16 and older can enroll to become an eye, organ and tissue donor in the New York State Donate Life Registry. Please do it today. 👁

New York Updates Anatomical Gift Law

THE EYE-BANK JOINED DONATE LIFE NEW YORK STATE (DLNYS) in Albany on February 3 to advocate for funding to help promote the NYS Donate Life Registry. Volunteers and staff representing eye, organ and tissue recovery agencies met with state legislators and their staff to discuss the importance of this funding geared to maintaining DLNYS efforts to increase the availability of life-saving and life-enhancing organs and tissues for transplantation. Thanks to our efforts, the 2020-2021 Final Enacted Budget included \$500,000 of the \$725,000 that had been requested. Initially delayed due to budget constraints created by the response to COVID-19, the funds were released allowing the DLNYS to continue its programming.

A portion of these allocations cover public education efforts to increase awareness of the Donate Life Registry and encourage in-person

Registry enrollment at New York State and County Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) offices, which in 2019 accounted for 81% of all Registry enrollments in New York State. Working in conjunction with DLNYS, The Eye-Bank partnered with the DMV to customize The Eye-Bank's ad campaign video, without sound, which will air on the Motor Vehicle Network at DMV offices when locations reopen. In New York State, New Yorkers can enroll in the Registry at the same time they obtain a New York State driver's license, permit or non-driver ID.

Although Legislative Education Day, originally scheduled for April 29 in Albany, was cancelled owing to circumstances arising from COVID-19,



L-R: Glenda Daggert, kidney and pancreas transplant recipient; Alison McSherry, LiveOnNY staff member; Chadwick Shank, The Eye-Bank's Communications Coordinator; Melanie Evans, Donate Life New York State's Associate Director; Kelly Krzyzak, heart transplant recipient; Noemi Castro-Feinstein, Eye-Bank volunteer and cornea transplant recipient; & Phil Giltner, staffer for NYS Senator Brian Benjamin (Harlem and Upper Manhattan)

the New York Gift Act championed by The Eye-Bank alongside DLNYS went into effect on June 23. This law aligned New York's anatomical gift law with the rest of the nation, enhancing individual autonomy and improving the eye, organ and tissue donation process. 👁

Two Teens Celebrate Having Their Sight Restored

THE EYE-BANK'S LATEST TESTIMONIAL VIDEOS FEATURE TWO SPORTS-LOVING TEENAGERS, Gabriella (Gabby) and Juan, whose lives have been positively impacted through corneal transplants. We encourage you to visit our Web site at www.eyedonation.org/videos to view their stories.

Gabby who turned 13 years this past February, celebrated her B'nai Mitzvah with her twin brother, Ben, and shares the video spotlight with him. Gabby was only an infant when an eye disease threatened to rob her of eyesight. But thanks to two corneal transplants, Gabby grew up enjoying skiing and ballet and now plays soccer and basketball. Her brother Ben cannot imagine life with Gabby not being able to see. Gabby says she is so grateful for her eyesight that each day she is inspired to do something kind for others.

Thirteen-year old baseball lover, Juan, is thrilled that he can see again. Before transplants to both eyes because of ocular rosacea that caused severe scarring to his corneas, Juan needed help from his friends to know what was written on the board of his classroom. He says he also felt frustrated while playing baseball because he kept missing what should have been easy catches when the ball was hit really high – he could not see it. Juan is grateful to have received the beautiful gift of sight and expresses thanks to his donors.

These cornea recipients are grateful to their donors and families, their doctors and The Eye-Bank who all made the gift of sight possible and allowed them to have an opportunity to see the world clearly. 👁



75 Years of Giving and Receiving the Gift of Sight

AS THE EYE-BANK CELEBRATES 75 YEARS OF GIVING THE GIFT OF SIGHT, we take this opportunity to pay tribute to eye donors and their families who have left a legacy of sight. We honor them for their generosity and their selfless acts of kindness which have benefitted more than 68,000 grateful cornea transplant recipients since The Eye-Bank's founding. The cornea donor and recipient stories recounted below seek to give a glimpse into the lives of people who share the experience of donation and transplantation and the impact it has had on their lives. The cornea recipients are especially grateful to their donors for the gift of sight.

CORNEA DONORS



Harold Bergh

"Harry" as he was known to his family and friends loved life and people. A plumber by trade, he joined the Brewster Volunteer Fire Department in New York and for the next 33 years was an active member and Captain of the Fire Police. Harry loved to hunt and fish and reveled in 4th of July celebrations enjoying barbecues with family and friends. His wife, Jane,

knew he would have wanted to donate his eyes so someone else could enjoy life to the fullest as he had. Jane remembers him as a wonderful husband, friend and uncle to many.



Lorina (Lori) Durso

According to her friend Debbie, Lori had a great sense of humor and loved animals, especially cats. Lori would be seen with a stroller taking a walk and her friend thought she was baby-sitting, but upon closer inspection, Debbie found that Lori's two cats, Red and Mitzy were the "babies." Lori and her husband, Mike, had taken care of Lori's Mom till she was in her late

90s. According to Debbie, Lori had always intended to be an organ donor to give someone else a chance at life and had also wanted to donate her eyes because her brother had received donor eye tissue.



Glenn Mason

Glenn's Mom, Jeannine, remembers her son as having charismatic charm, a warm smile and a big heart! He loved his little sisters, giving them piggy back rides and his grandmother with whom he had a special bond. Glenn was a people person, well-mannered and helped others offering to carry his neighbor's groceries up three flights of stairs.

Jeannine says the decision to donate was not a difficult one because she knew someone else would have a new lease on life with Glenn's eye donation and this made her glad.



Christopher Nordquist

He was only two years old when he died but his family takes comfort in the fact that he was able to give two people the gift of sight. His mother, Andrea, remembers his beautiful green eyes and receives some measure of comfort to know that they live on in others. His mom says that donating Christopher's eyes was like a tiny ray of light that helped to lighten

the darkness surrounding the family at the time of his passing. In the years hence, Andrea has become a constant advocate for eye, organ and tissue donation and has established a scholarship in Christopher's memory.

CORNEA TRANSPLANT RECIPIENTS



Zulfiquir Ali

As a 15 year-old, Zulfiquir was a solid student who played handball and was also encouraged by a local agency to consider part-time modeling.

However, life as he knew it suddenly changed when he contracted a severely painful infection in his left eye. He credits his parents and older brother with being there to assist and encourage him. After the

infection healed, Zulfiquir's doctor performed cornea transplant surgery and restored sight to his left eye. His features began to appear normal again and he gained a new lease on life returning to the activities he enjoyed."



Jorge and Maria Amores

Now an adult and married to Jorge, Maria had been diagnosed with keratoconus as a teenager and had been prescribed hard contact lenses. When her eyesight worsened she received a corneal transplant which restored her sight. What is surprising, is that Jorge, who had enjoyed 20/20 vision, unexpectedly developed keratoconus and his vision rapidly

deteriorated. He had his first corneal transplant one year after Maria's and a second a few months later. With their restored eyesight, the couple embarked on creating awareness about donation via The Eye-Bank's Spanish Speakers' Bureau appearing on Spanish television and radio.



Sheyla Camacho

Originally from the Dominican Republic, Sheyla was diagnosed with Keratoconus and spent years operating with very limited eyesight which affected her performance at school and at her job. A turning point came while she was driving one day when her contact lens became displaced and she screeched to a halt because she could see nothing. Sheyla says a cornea

transplant completely transformed her life, "The most precious moment was when I could clearly see my children's faces for the first time in my life."



Wing Hong Ho

As the Ho family welcomed their second child they were devastated with the diagnosis of corneal blindness especially when they were told that doctors in Hong Kong witness only about 4-5 such cases in their lifetime. After intense Internet research, the parents decided to travel to New York where their son underwent a cornea transplant.

They were thrilled as Wing Hong followed a video on You Tube on his father's phone proving he could now see.

We trust these stories of selfless generosity and hope realized inspire you to take action and enroll in the New York State Donate Life Registry as an eye, organ and tissue donor. It is easy to do so from your phone or tablet. Go to eyedonation.org and click on the Donate Life logo. Like the donors featured above, you too can be Amazing! Thoughtful! Generous! Sign up in the Registry today and See *What Your Eyes Can Do for Others.*TM

President's Report 2019



Typically, the information included in my report addresses the activities of The Eye-Bank as they correspond to the year's accompanying annual Financial Statement. However, due to

restrictions necessitated by the COVID-19 health crisis, the annual audit could not be conducted in its usual time frame, thereby delaying the 2019 Financial Report until October, 2020. Once it is available, the 2019 Financial Statement will be posted on The Eye-Bank's website at www.eyedonation.org and will of course be available upon request to info@ebsr.org. In the meantime, I am pleased to share the following highlights of The Eye-Bank's activity during 2019.

The Eye-Bank's Ocular Laboratory recovered a total of 1579 eye/cornea donations in 2019 and provided tissue for a total of 1277 cornea transplants. Of those transplants, 650 cases were endothelial keratoplasty (EK) procedures and 94 percent (94%) of the tissue provided for those EK procedures was prepared by The Eye-Bank's laboratory technicians.

Once again, January led with The Eye-Bank's multi-media ad campaign urging New Yorkers to use their smartphones to sign up in the NYS Donate Life Registry. The message is an inclusive one – to become eye, organ and tissue donors and potentially restore sight and life to others. More than one million visits to The Eye-Bank's website were measured in January alone. New in 2019 with the advent of Spanish language pages on The Eye-Bank's website providing information about eye donation, was the ability to expand the audience of The Eye-Bank's ad campaign by providing ads for placement in Spanish-language

media. In June, The Eye-Bank placed ads in Spanish-language newspaper and on Spanish-language radio and digital platforms for the first time, with the potential for reaching a Spanish-speaking audience of approximately 2 million New York City residents.

Also in June, The Eye-Bank awarded its annual Young Ambassador Scholarship which is now being offered in the increased amount of \$3,000 to student applicants enrolled in a two or four-year institute of higher education. The 2019 winner was Keli Evelin Lopez of Brentwood, NY, who conducted multiple tabling events sharing information about the importance of eye, organ and tissue donation and whose efforts resulted in enrolling more than 30 individuals in the NYS Donate Life Registry.

The Eye-Bank's Leadership Council (formerly called the Junior Council) held a successful Meet and Greet in Manhattan in June. The Council comprises young professionals from diverse fields including marketing, software development, ophthalmology and the non-profit sector. Members of the Leadership Council help advance The Eye-Bank's mission of sight restoration by supporting special fundraising and community outreach efforts.

In August, The Eye-Bank once again hosted the Wing Chu, M.D. Cornea Fellow Day which was attended by four physicians from New York City who experienced a morning didactic session followed by an afternoon wet lab. The event, now in its fourth year, provides an opportunity for participants to learn about the mission of eye banking in curing blindness and to receive hands on instruction for performing the surgical technique, Decemet's Membrane Endothelial Keratoplasty (DMEK).

In September, The Eye-Bank hosted a special appreciation luncheon event honoring major supporters. The group enjoyed a program about innovations at The Eye-Bank as well as a presentation by Dr. Timothy Blenkinsop on the advances in retina pigment epithelial cell research and the importance of eye donation toward this progress.

Later in the Fall, approximately 300 supporters and friends of The Eye-Bank gathered for The Eye-Bank's popular annual Fall Benefit held on October 24th at the Bohemian Benevolent & Literary Association in Manhattan. The sell-out event, Bites for Sight II, raised more than \$84,000 for Eye-Bank programs. We thank our Benefit Committee and all our supporters for making this event so highly successful.

In closing, it is a true honor and privilege to express sincere gratitude on behalf of The Eye-Bank and all our cornea recipients for the beautiful gifts of sight made possible by our cornea donors and their families. Thanks to their selfless generosity and willingness to think of others, hundreds of individuals have received restored sight enabling them to live and work in a more normal, healthy way. For their role in this miracle of healing others, we are most grateful.

And lastly, The Board and entire staff of The Eye-Bank implores everyone to follow recommended COVID-19 guidelines for staying safe and healthy now and in the future.

James Fabian
President

The 2019 Financial Statement will be available on October 1, 2020 at eyedonation.org/financial-reports or upon request at (212) 742-9000

Major Donors \$500+ from 01/01/19 to 12/31/19 *(Italics denote EBSR Board Member or Medical Advisory Board Member)*

Kim and David Adler
Kathryn Alcazar, DO
Ms. Adrienne Armstrong
Kichiemon Asoma M.D.
Association for Macular Diseases, Inc.
James D. Auran, M.D.
Mr. Garrick Brown
Mr. Frank P. Bruno
Ms. Molly Burnett and Mr. Serge Budzyn
Ms. Jennifer Butt
Mr. Marvin H. Cheiten
Jessica Ciralsky, M.D.
Ms. Debra Coleman
Faith Colish, Esq.
Columbia University Medical Center
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Ms. Patricia Dahl
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Mail Marketing and Communications Inc.
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Sid Mandelbaum, M.D.
Manhattan Eye, Ear & Throat Hospital - Northwell
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Ms. Elizabeth Wruszek
Ms. Melissa Zack
Gerald W. Zaidman, M.D.
Mr. Michael Zambrelli

FOUNDATION SUPPORT
Alexandra Foundation
The John N. Blackman, Sr. Foundation

The Ernst & Elfriede Frank Foundation
George D. Benjamin Foundation, Inc.
The Gettinger Family Foundation
Jewish Communal Fund
The Macula Foundation, Inc.
Giorgio Misthal Family Fund
The Omer Foundation
The Pilkington Family Fund
Sandpiper Fund, Inc.
The David & Sylvia Teitelbaum Fund, Inc.
The Kranzendorf Family Foundation c/o Betty Kranzendorf

LEGACY AND TRUSTS

The Estate of Esther Geller
Estate of Lewis Kaplan
The McCurdy Trust
The Estate of Mabel Hylton
Estate of Mary P. R. Thomas
Trust U/W Patricia Grogan
Lehane FBO Ronnat
Grogan Trainer

MVP The Eye-Bank Salutes Frontline Workers

THE EYE-BANK JOINED COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT OUR SERVICE AREA in expressing gratitude for healthcare workers who are on the front lines helping those in greatest need during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. Even amidst overwhelming challenges presented by the pandemic, our hospitals remained committed to helping facilitate the emergency cornea transplant surgeries that were being done at the time.

To show our appreciation for the efforts of our medical personnel, The Eye-Bank's Creative

Specialist David Goodnight designed the "Healthcare Heroes" graphic for our Hospital and Community Liaisons who shared it at hospital educational in-service programs and donor council meetings via virtual videoconferencing.

Also to demonstrate our support and solidarity, The Eye-Bank's Hospital and Community Liaison for Queens and Long Island, Amanda Vesey-Askey, joined more than 100 cars in a "Caravan of Encouragement" at the Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center in West Islip on March 30.



The Eye-Bank is grateful to all of our hospitals in our service area, from Westchester Medical Center to St. Joseph Hospital in Nassau County, for their efforts in helping to save countless lives – Thank You!



St. Joseph Hospital-Catholic Health Services of Long Island



New York University Langone Hospital – Brooklyn



Mount Sinai Morningside



Caravan of Encouragement



Westchester Medical Center, Valhalla, NY



NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center

The Eye-Bank Meets Challenges Created by COVID-19 Outbreak

(continued from page 1)

donation of coveralls and N95 masks for healthcare workers in need as did The Eye-Bank's Director of Information Technology and Quality Assurance, Edwin Roberts.

Another excellent volunteer effort was made by Eye-Bank technician Angelo Damanakis who personally manufactured a large supply of face shields and ear savers on his 3D printer and distributed them to three grateful hospitals near where he lives in the Lower Hudson Valley.

Fortunately, in June, New York City entered Phase I of Re-opening and Return to Work. As of June 8 the Governor announced that elective surgeries were allowed to be scheduled. The Eye-Bank's laboratory staff returned to their normal work schedules and personal safety guidelines were implemented. All personnel are required to wear masks when not in a private, enclosed office, maintain 6-foot distancing; and hand sanitizing is required before entering the office. No visitors are allowed at any time.

To further allow staff to maintain social distancing, plexiglass barriers were installed at open work stations as well as in the kitchen area for when employees take breaks. Extensive measures to improve indoor air quality were taken including upgrading HVAC filters; sanitizing and disinfecting ductwork; and installing an ionization system in the HVAC which improves air quality and can also destroy the DNA of submicron microbes.

As New York City moves into Phase IV of re-opening, staff will continue to follow recommended guidelines for the safety of themselves and others and non-laboratory staff will begin to return to the office on a schedule that will allow for safe social distancing.

According to The Eye-Bank's Executive Director Patricia Dahl, "I am very proud of The Eye-Bank staff which has worked so hard during this unprecedented health crisis and been diligent in following guidelines for staying safe and respecting the safety of others. Throughout the shutdown and as our service area re-opens, our priority is to serve the needs of the community for the recovery of eye donations needed for sight-saving cornea transplants while at the same time ensuring the safety of our staff."

Honor/Memorial Gifts from January 1, 2020 – July 13, 2020

Memorial and honor gifts are given to recognize loved ones or to mark a special occasion. To make a gift in honor or memory of someone, please use the enclosed envelope, visit www.eyedonation.org/give or contact The Eye-Bank's Development Department at 212-742-9000.

IN MEMORY OF...

Tillie M. Ambrosino
Vincent Banks
Candida Bello
Philip A. Bilotti
Aida de Acosta Breckinridge
Ms. Genevieve L. Bruno
Mary Burns
Doris E. Campbell
Angeline Corcione

Selena Davis
Sylvia Detkin
Piermichele Grana
Edward Gostissa
Barbara L. Hayes
Kurt Hoerlein
Sarah Humphrey
Brian M. Jackel
Stuart Kahn
Steve J. Kolk, Jr.

Colonel Daniel M. Marcus
Grace Mayer
John McNulty
Jack Metcalfe
Sharon Orenstein
Dr. and Mrs. R. Townley Paton
Audrey C. Raynor
Barbara G. Scarpato
Stuart Schneider
Mildred A. Van Horn Beck

IN HONOR OF...

Margaret Barry
Gary Baskind
Bess Diener
Robert A. D'Amico, M.D.
George J. Florakis, M.D.
Dennis Gitler
Himani Goyal, M.D.
Gigi Malone

Sid Mandelbaum, M.D.
Mr. Roy Marshak
Ilsa Moss
John A. Seedor, M.D.
Irene and Sidney B. Silverman
Successful Cornea Transplants
Arnold Turtz, M.D.

New Ideas Bring Increased Awareness to Donation

EACH YEAR THE EYE-BANK PARTICIPATES IN April is National Donate Life Month using the designation as an opportunity to encourage New Yorkers to enroll in the NYS Donate Life Registry. This year, due to restrictions surrounding the COVID-19 crisis that required many of The Eye-Bank's



Eye-Bank staff showed their Donate Life spirit from home and wore blue and green in support of eye, organ and tissue donation.

non-essential staff to work remotely, we participated in the month-long schedule of activities that promoted donation while we worked from home. In coordination with Donate Life New York State (NYS), The Eye-Bank joined with other members of the statewide organization of eye, organ and tissue recovery agencies in celebrating Donate Life Month in creative ways that brought us together even though we were apart.

The Eye-Bank celebrated by sharing photos for The Eye-Bank's Communications Department to post on our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter based on themes provided by Donate Life NYS. We then encouraged others to do the same on their own social media and to help spread the donation message.

Eye-Bank staff showed their Donate Life colors by dressing up in blue and green at home and submitting photos for Donate Life Month's Blue and Green Day on April 17. Even The Eye-Bank's pets joined in on the fun by donning blue and green. Additionally, staff shared on social media what they could spy from their home and apartment windows that was blue and green and we even spent time



Even The Eye-Bank's pets wore Blue and Green to help celebrate National Donate Life Month!

in the kitchen thinking up blue and green-themed dinner menu items.

Thinking outside the box helped to promote the most important message of all, to remember those in need and enroll in the Donate Life Registry to someday give the gift of sight and life. 👁️

Leadership Council Holds Virtual Wine Tasting

CLOSELY FOLLOWING THE JULY 4 HOLIDAY WEEKEND this year was an enjoyable virtual wine tasting hosted on July 7 by The Eye-Bank's Leadership Council and attended by members of the Board, cornea surgeons, staff, supporters, friends and friends of friends. The event was a great success providing an opportunity for the attending wine enthusiasts, ranging from neophytes to aspiring connoisseurs, to sample two pre-selected wines, *Bodegas Muga Rioja Rosado 2018* and *Marques de Riscal Rioja Reserva 2014*, with some suggested food pairings.

Distinguished sommelier, Dini Rao, who has 20 plus years of wine experience including being a host for British royalty tastings, was on hand to guide and instruct on the nose of the wine –



Attendees learn about and sample selected wines.

aroma; and its palate – taste. Her presentation included background on the region of Spain where Rioja is produced and questions about wine in general were answered. Attendees had

lively discussions and indeed formed strong personal opinions about the wines. All had an opportunity to lift their glass and savor the wines, fully engaging in the experience. It is here that the virtual at home tasting trumped in-person attendance with the foregoing of masks.

The Eye-Bank applauds the Leadership Council for hosting the entertaining event which provided welcome relief after the very challenging spring months. Under the purview of The Eye-Bank's Development Department, the Leadership Council, which comprises young professionals from diverse fields including marketing, software development, ophthalmology and the non-profit sector, helps advance The Eye-Bank's mission of sight restoration by supporting special fundraising and community outreach efforts. 👁️

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eye to eye is published by The Eye-Bank for Sight Restoration, Inc., a non-profit organization located at 120 Wall Street, New York, NY 10005-3902. The Eye-Bank was founded in 1944 for the purpose of collecting and distributing corneal tissue for transplants, research and medical education. More than 68,000 people in the greater Metropolitan area have had their sight restored through the work of The Eye-Bank.

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Of Interest...



NOËL MICK BEGINS TERM AS EYE BANK ASSOCIATION CHAIR

Noël Mick, The Eye-Bank for Sight Restoration's Director of Communications, began her two-year term as Chair of The Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA) at its annual meeting in June. She was elected Chair-elect by the House of Delegates at the EBAA annual meeting in 2018 and assumes the role of Chair this year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Association's meeting which convenes eye banking professionals from across the United States and internationally, was held online as a virtual conference. According to Ms. Mick, the meeting, which was originally planned to take place in Dallas, TX, is typically attended by approximately 400, but this year, more than 1,000 participants were able to attend remotely from their home locations.

During the meeting, The Eye-Bank's Medical Director **Michelle K. Rhee, M.D.**, together with Marjan Farid, M.D. of UC-Irvine, moderated the



EBAA's annual Scientific Symposium featuring panel discussions covering 14 scientific abstracts and additional invited presentations. Dr. Rhee

also led the meeting's annual Medical Directors Symposium which provides eye bank professionals and Medical Directors with the latest updates to the EBAA's Medical Standards, Accreditation, tissue suitability and additional information useful when working with an eye bank.

For the upcoming two years, Dr. Rhee is serving the EBAA in the critical role of Co-Chair of the Association's Accreditation Board, joined by Co-Chair Kyle Mavin, Chief Clinical Officer for Advancing Sight Network in Birmingham, AL.



Other members of The Eye-Bank staff will be serving the Eye Bank Association going forward as well.

Edwin Roberts, Director of Quality Assurance and

Information Systems at The Eye-Bank has been named to a three-year term on the EBAA's Medical Advisory Board which is responsible for establishing the medical standards for eye



banking. And **Mudassir Razvi**, Tissue Processing Manager at The Eye-Bank has been appointed to serve a two-year term on the EBAA's Technician Education Committee which

offers programs for skill development as well as programs that recognize and advance the role of the eye banking technician.



Additionally, **Patricia Dahl**, Executive Director of The Eye-Bank was recently named Co-Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Eye Banking (IJEB). Published by

the EBAA, the online, peer-reviewed publication is the only journal devoted exclusively to eye banking. Her Co-Editor of IJEB is Ellen L. Heck. Current and archived issues of the journal are at eyebankingjournal.org.

The EBAA supports a membership of 85 US and international-based eye banks in restoring sight worldwide through cornea donation, transplantation, research and innovation. The EBAA sets medical standards; maintains accreditation and provides technician education and certification for the field of eye banking. 



Let others know about eye donation and how to enroll in the Donate Life Registry at [facebook.com/EyeBankforSightRestoration](https://www.facebook.com/EyeBankforSightRestoration)



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