



Grants awarded by the EyeSight Foundation of Alabama have contributed greatly to the body of knowledge and research by UAB Department of Ophthalmology faculty and staff members.

The EyeSight Foundation of Alabama

Building a Tradition

Four years ago, when Torrey Smitherman became executive director of the EyeSight Foundation of Alabama (ESFA)—then known as the Alabama Eye Institute—she had a rather straightforward directive from the board of trustees: “Seek out members of the vision community.”

“All I had was a desk and a telephone, so I started calling people in the Department of Ophthalmology and the School of Optometry at UAB to identify members of the vision community in the state; each call led to another, so it wasn’t long before I had a fairly lengthy list,” Smitherman recalls. “That was a good introduction for me, and just the beginning of my education in this field.”

Since that day, the foundation has grown by leaps and bounds. It now has a full-time staff, an informative Web site (www.eyefoundation.org), its own newsletter, and awards millions of dollars in grants to programs and organizations in support of vision education, research, and patient care throughout the state.

A Proactive Force

Jim Davis, the first chairman of the EyeSight Foundation’s board after the Eye Foundation Hospital was sold to UAB and the UA Health Services Foundation in 1997, says one of his first tasks was clear: “Attract someone of the caliber of Torrey Smitherman,” he says. “With that accomplished, other challenges were to transform the former Eye Foundation Hospital board to one that would function as a grant-making organization, and then to develop a strategy for achieving its mission.”

The first step was to conduct a “needs assessment” survey to identify unmet vision-care needs in Alabama. After promptly completing that survey, the foundation was able to fine-tune its mission statement, which now reads, “To promote the health of the human eye through education, research, and patient care, including indigent care.”

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Living up to this mandate is an ever-evolving process, Smitherman says. "I feel that we've become a lot more sophisticated in determining how to best achieve that mission with each passing year," she says. "For my part, I've tried to educate myself by attending professional conferences focusing on the grant-making process."

One conference, organized with the help of Grantmakers in Health—a nonprofit, educational organization dedicated to helping foundations and corporate giving programs improve the nation's health—was especially helpful. "Its members are the leading foundations in the health-care arena, such as the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation," she says, "so I was able to learn a great deal from the experience, and also make some valuable contacts."

Stephen Horan, Ph.D., was one of those contacts; and with the help of his

company, Community Health Solutions, the EyeSight Foundation was able to hold its first-ever Community Vision Health Education Symposium this past May. "I'm really proud of the symposium, because we've received grant proposals in the past that were right on the edge of what we needed them to be but not quite enough to be approved. This was our way of helping potential grantees learn the proper way to structure their proposals."

As part of the symposium activities, Horan led the group in creating a grant proposal. He gathered input from the audience, took the material back to his office, assembled it into a "template" proposal, and then returned it to Smitherman, who shared it with all of the attendees.

"I am evolving as an executive for this foundation in my understanding of what works and what doesn't, so each year I feel that I'm better able to assist our potential grantees. This symposium was just one way for us to lend a helping hand," she says. "I'm also convinced that the more people who are involved in eye care talk to each other and network, the more good things will come of it. Rosemary Janiszewski, with the National Eye Institute, spoke, along with people from the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Sight Savers of Alabama, UAB, and other organizations, so it was a very well-attended event."

For Smitherman, the symposium is representative of the foundation's proactive role in supporting healthy vision in Alabama. "We don't want to be reactive," she says. "We don't want to just sit here and wait for people to come up with ideas. We want to play an active leader-



Jim Davis, Torrey Smitherman, Felix M. Drennen III, Hartwell Davis, and Duncan Blair (left to right) are proactive leaders in advancing ESFA's commitment to vision care and research.

ship role in helping make good things happen in the vision field."

Selfless Dedication

When Hartwell Davis, the foundation's second chairman, tries to pinpoint his primary reasons for volunteering his time and services, he says that it has to do with "the selflessness and dedication of all the people involved, from those who deliver health-care services to Torrey and Shirley Hamilton," who is Smitherman's assistant.

These words could also describe the foundation's Scientific Advisory Committee, which serves in a volunteer capacity as well. "We realized that we needed help reviewing the research grant proposals, and the Department of Ophthalmology's research faculty helped us identify a group of three individuals from some of the most respected organizations in the country," Smitherman says, referring to Robert B. Nussenblatt, M.D., of the National Eye Institute (NEI); Ann H. Milam, Ph.D., of the Scheie Eye Institute; and Gordon E. Legge, Ph.D., of the University of Minnesota. "They rank and rate our proposals just like the NEI would rate one of their applications. Whenever I

ESFA Grants, 1998-2004

Since 1998, the EyeSight Foundation of Alabama (ESFA) has generously funded numerous research, education, clinical, and outreach programs in both the UAB Department of Ophthalmology and the Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital. The ESFA has contributed more than \$14.5 million for general research support, education, clinical core support, and research in UAB's Department of Ophthalmology between June 1998 and June 2004. In addition, it has provided more than \$4 million for indigent care and other projects in the Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital in that same time frame, for a total of more than \$18.5 million granted in the past seven years.

have questions, I turn to them for help.”

As for the reasons for their involvement, Smitherman says it's simple: “I think these people love the whole process of scientific inquiry, as well as the fact that there is a foundation in Alabama that's dedicated to vision research and outreach. They've also told me that they recognize what a wonderful treasure we have in the foundation, and that the resources for vision research here in Birmingham are truly remarkable.”

Many of these researchers are found in the Department of Ophthalmology and have received support from the EyeSight Foundation. “These researchers have taken the money we've provided and multiplied it many times over in the form of major grants from organizations such as the National Eye Institute and Research to Prevent Blindness, so we've always considered that support to be an excellent investment,” says Smitherman.

Duncan Blair, now the immediate-past chair of the foundation, agrees. “I'm very proud of everything the department has been able to accomplish,” he says. “I think it has really flourished, and I'm proud to know that we've played a role in that success.”

Road Map for Growth

Of all the members of EyeSight Foundation's board of trustees, its current chairman, Felix Drennen, may have the most personal reason for volunteering his time. “I was injured as a young boy and developed a traumatic cataract,” he says. “I received excellent care from an ophthalmologist at Johns Hopkins at the time, but it was just last year that Michael Callahan, M.D., of the Department of Ophthalmology actually removed the cataract. That's probably the major reason I'm interested in supporting vision care.”

(continued on back cover)

The top-tier departments of ophthalmology in our country have well-established lines of philanthropy. In any environment, but especially in the current climate of declining medical reimbursements, this financial underpinning is of critical importance. The UAB Department of Ophthalmology is most fortunate to have the philanthropic support of the EyeSight Foundation of Alabama (ESFA). The feature story in this issue of Vision outlines ESFA's history and the outstanding individuals who form its leadership. True to its mission “to promote the health of the human eye through education, research, and patient care,” ESFA has created the opportunity for the department to flourish. In the past seven years, ESFA has given more than \$14 million for educational activities, basic and clinical vision research, clinical facilities, the Low Vision Center for Rehabilitation, recruiting packages, and the African-American glaucoma project. In addition, ESFA endowed the position of the Chair of the UAB Department of Ophthalmology. Indeed, this strong sign of support was instrumental in my recruitment to the department in 1998. With this type of commitment and dedication, the future of the UAB Department of Ophthalmology is bright and exciting.

One indication of our future is the continued recruitment of outstanding faculty. Andrew Velazquez, M.D., completed his training at the University of Florida and Duke University and has joined the department, specializing in corneal disease and refractive surgery. Jason Swanner, M.D., a graduate of our residency program, completed a fellowship in glaucoma at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, Harvard University. He will join Christopher Girkin, M.D., in building an outstanding glaucoma service, delivering top-notch clinical care and performing cutting-edge clinical research.

The department continues to sponsor important educational meetings with world-renowned speakers. The newsletter features our upcoming Annual Clinical and Research Symposium to be held in May. Invited guests include Susan Bressler, M.D., and Neil Bressler, M.D., from the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins University, and Stuart Seiff, M.D., from the University of California, San Francisco. The department is committed to bringing the newest information on the diagnosis and treatment of eye disease to our resident physicians and ophthalmologists in the region.

In closing, I would like to pay tribute to our alumni and supporters. As you will read, the alumni have organized a Challenge Fund and in two years have obtained pledges of \$140,000. This year the organization committed \$25,000 toward an ultimate goal of \$500,000 to endow a professorship for the Director of the Residency Training program. This is a great vote of confidence for the department—and will further improve the training of ophthalmologists at UAB.



*Lanning B. Kline, M.D.
EyeSight Foundation of Alabama Chair and Professor
UAB Department of Ophthalmology*



from the department chair

UAB department of ophthalmology

TO PROVIDE our readers a glimpse into projects and personalities in the department, we profile selected faculty members in each issue of Vision. The names of faculty profiled in this issue appear in bold below.

Academic Faculty

Michael Callaban, M.D.	Professor
Martin Cogen, M.D.	Associate Professor
Jeffrey Crain, M.D.	Assistant Professor
Christine Curcio, Ph.D.	Professor
Ramon Dacheux, Ph.D.	Professor
Frederick Elsas, M.D.	Associate Professor
Richard Feist, M.D.	Assistant Professor
Donald Fletcher, M.D.	Associate Professor
Christopher Girkin, M.D.	Associate Professor
Clyde Guidry, Ph.D.	Associate Professor
Greg Jackson, Ph.D.	Assistant Professor
Wade Joiner, M.D.	Assistant Professor
James Kimble, M.D.	Associate Professor
Lanning Kline, M.D.	Professor and Chair
Virginia Lolley, M.D.	Assistant Professor
John Long, M.D.	Assistant Professor
John Mason, M.D.	Assistant Professor
Andrew Mays, M.D.	Assistant Professor
Gerald McGwin, Jr., Ph.D.	Assistant Professor
Robert Morris, M.D.	Associate Professor
Cynthia Owsley, Ph.D.	Professor
John Parker, M.D.	Assistant Professor
Robert Phillips, M.D.	Associate Professor
James Powell, M.D.	Associate Professor
Russell Read, M.D.	Assistant Professor
Carol Rosenstiel, O.D.	Associate Professor
Kay Scilley, Ph.D.	Assistant Professor
Harold Skalka, M.D.	Professor
Jason Swanner, M.D.	Assistant Professor
Michael S. Vapbiades, D.O.	Associate Professor
Andrew Velazquez, M.D.	Assistant Professor
Sbu-Zhen Wang, Ph.D.	Associate Professor
Milton White, M.D.	Assistant Professor
Douglas Wütherspoon, M.D.	Associate Professor
Jeff Yee, M.D.	Instructor

Clinical Faculty

Wade Brock, M.D.	Instructor/Fellow
James Byrne, M.D.	Clinical Instructor
Alston Callaban, M.D.	Clinical Professor
Britton Carter, M.D.	Clinical Instructor
William Cox	Adjunct Assistant Clinical Professor
Susan Eiland, M.D.	Assistant Clinical Professor
Andy Everett, M.D.	Clinical Instructor
Greer Geiger, M.D.	Assistant Clinical Professor
Christopher Kelly, M.D.	Clinical Instructor
James Kelly, M.D.	Clinical Instructor
Price Kloess, M.D.	Assistant Clinical Professor
Ferenc Kubn, M.D.	Associate Clinical Professor
Tirso Mark Lara, M.D.	Instructor/Fellow
Elmar Lawaczeczek, M.D.	Clinical Professor
Ralph Levene, M.D.	Clinical Professor
Michael Massey, M.D.	Assistant Clinical Professor
Nancy Medeiros, M.D.	Assistant Clinical Professor
Thomas H. Metz, M.D.	Assistant Clinical Professor
Marc Michelson, M.D.	Assistant Clinical Professor
John Morgan, M.D.	Assistant Clinical Professor
John Owen, M.D.	Clinical Instructor
Scott Parma, M.D.	Instructor/Fellow
Roswell Pfister, M.D.	Clinical Professor
Elise Cox Pratt	Adjunct Instructor
Benjamin W. Roberts, M.D.	Instructor/Fellow
Philip H. Scharper Jr., M.D.	Instructor/Fellow
Wayne Taylor, M.D.	Clinical Instructor
Warren A. Thompson, M.D.	Instructor/Fellow
Len Tucker, M.D.	Instructor/Fellow
Donald Turnbull, M.D.	Associate Clinical Professor

Exploring New Frontiers

Andrew Velazquez, M.D.

ANDREW VELAZQUEZ, M.D., relishes a challenge—that's one reason he chose to specialize in refractive surgery. As director of corneal and external disease and co-director of refractive surgery at UAB, as well as an assistant professor of ophthalmology, Velazquez embraces his position on the frontier of this dynamic and rapidly evolving field. "Refractive surgery changes yearly," he says. "In 20 years, the field will be completely different from what we know and do now."

Velazquez's journey to this frontier began when he enrolled in medical school at the University of South Alabama. Upon finishing his degree, he completed an internship at Baptist Health Systems in Birmingham before moving to Gainesville for his residency at the University of Florida.

The Atlanta native followed his tenure in Florida with a prestigious fellowship in corneal and refractive surgery at the Eye Center of Duke University. His experience there crystallized his desire to teach physicians in an academic setting. "I really benefited from my interactions with the residents," he states. "Residents have a unique base of knowledge, and I found that I really enjoyed teaching and interacting with them."

After completing his fellowship, Velazquez accepted his

Treating Patients for Life

Jason Swanner, M.D.

"IT IS VERY REWARDING when you can keep a patient from going blind," says Jason Swanner, M.D. A specialist in the diagnosis and treatment of glaucoma, this Alabama native knows a lot about blindness and the emotional toll that it exacts. Having recently completed a one-year glaucoma fellowship at the Massachusetts Ear and Eye Infirmary at Harvard Medical School, Swanner has brought his clinical expertise back home as an assistant professor of ophthalmology.

Throughout his career, Swanner has remained close to Birmingham and to UAB. After completing his undergraduate work at Samford University, he attended medical school at the University of South Alabama, where he first became interested in ophthalmology. "I was struck by the patient-centered aspects of the field," he recalls. "As an ophthalmologist, I get the chance to form strong relationships with my patients."

Swanner returned to Birmingham for his ophthalmology residency at UAB, an experience that greatly influenced his decision to practice in the Magic City. "The ophthalmologists at the Callahan Eye Foundation hospital are very supportive of, and interested in, the residents," he notes. "UAB attracts

current position at UAB, a welcome move for him. “I enjoyed living in Birmingham as an intern, and I wanted an academic position in a vibrant department,” he recalls. “The Department of Ophthalmology here is well-run and offers many opportunities for me to teach, serve my patients, and pursue my interests.”

These interests, which include corneal transplant surgery and the treatment of patients with chronic dry eyes, keep Velazquez busy in both the clinic and the operating room. He notes that his twin interests generate their own challenges and rewards, but the corneal transplants have the more dramatic effect on his patients, whose vision has been compromised by corneal disease. “With corneal transplant surgery, patients have a noticeable improvement in their vision, usually within a few weeks of the procedure,” he notes. “It is really rewarding to conduct these operations, not only to provide relief to a patient, but also to help that patient see better almost instantaneously.”

Although these operations have immediate impact, Velazquez stresses that the patients must also be followed in the clinic and, sometimes, through return trips to the operating room. “Patients often have residual astigmatism following corneal transplant procedures,” he states. “This is usually corrected with contact lenses, but I am also interested in ways to use laser techniques for post-transplant corrective surgery.”

Velazquez also specializes in the treatment of patients

Andrew Velazquez finds great reward in performing corneal transplant surgery on patients.

who suffer from chronic dry eyes, a common effect of aging. “As people age, their tear film evaporates. This condition affects a large portion of the population, especially women in menopause,” he notes. To manage dry eyes in his patients, Velazquez initially assesses the rate of tear production and identifies the source of the problem, which may result from age-related decreases in tear film production, inflammation, or damage to the eye’s drainage system. In most cases, he recommends the topical application of artificial tears, although some patients require plugs in their eyelids to discourage the draining of tears or anti-inflammatory eye drops. “As with refractive surgery, the techniques to treat dry eyes continue to evolve, and there will likely be many improvements in the next few decades,” he observes.



residents who place a high priority on patient care. I knew that I ultimately wanted to come back and have the chance to work with them.”

Swanner’s clinical focus is on the early diagnosis and treatment of glaucoma. Because the condition is treatable but not curable, he emphasizes that the specialty allows him

to forge unique emotional bonds with his patients. “Glaucoma may strike anyone. I treat patients of all ages and backgrounds. I often treat whole families and can follow patients for their entire lives,” he notes. “I get to grow old with my patients.

“Commonly, patients do not know

Jason Swanner enjoys the ability to forge unique bonds with his patients.

that they have glaucoma until their peripheral vision is gone,” Swanner observes. “Although it is rewarding to be able to extend a glaucoma patient’s visual lifetime, it is difficult to explain to patients with advanced glaucoma that they have a blinding disease.”

Glaucoma is the leading cause of blindness in African Americans and the third leading cause of blindness in Caucasians. These statistics have inspired a future project for Swanner—developing effective glaucoma screening programs for all patients, especially those whose vision seems normal. “An ophthalmologist can diagnose glaucoma long before the patient has a perceptible loss in his or her vision,” he notes. “A good screening program allows us to prolong the life of the optic nerve—in essence, keeping a patient from going blind.”

Swanner’s interest in screening programs complements his other clinical duties in the department of ophthalmology, where he is involved in all aspects of glaucoma diagnosis and treatment. For patients whose conditions are unresponsive to medicines, he performs laser surgery procedures and surgical trabeculectomies that lower their intraocular pressure. “The Eye Foundation is one of the best places in the world for a person to have eye surgery,” he notes. “The facilities are state-of-the-art and the staff are outstanding.”



Alumni Spotlight

Andrew J. Mays, M.D., and D. Wade Joiner, M.D.

“LIKE MANY ophthalmologists, I was attracted to the field because restoring sight makes such an immediate difference in patients’ lives,” says Andrew J. Mays, M.D. “Specializing in a chronic disease like glaucoma offers rich rewards. We can’t cure it, but in working to preserve vision, we build long-term relationships with our patients.”

A shared interest in glaucoma helped bring together two of Birmingham’s top ophthalmologists in treating the disease. Mays and D. Wade Joiner, M.D., met at the Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital when Mays was chief resident and Joiner was teaching him about the latest advances in preventing vision loss from the condition.

Today, with offices at both Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital and Brookwood Medical Center, they see patients from across Alabama, southern Tennessee, and eastern Mississippi.

“Since the early ’90s, technical advances in ophthalmology have made a tremendous difference in care. The laser surgery techniques we’re using to treat glaucoma continue to improve,” says Joiner.

Mays adds, “We’re learning more about exactly where to put the incision, how large it should be, and how to avoid complications. There have also been advances in medication to reduce scarring.”

As assistant professors in the Department of Ophthalmology, both Mays and Joiner lecture on glaucoma and bring residents in to observe surgical evaluations.

“I also work to make sure we fulfill all the requirements for accreditation, and to see that our residents receive the full range of training they need to provide high quality care,” says Mays,

who is also the director of the residency program. “There is a huge interest in the field, but there are few slots available. We try to match students and the program to find the best fit.”

Joiner attended Dartmouth and Birmingham-Southern College, then received his medical degree from the University of South Alabama. After an internship at Carraway Methodist Medical Center, the Shelby County native completed his residency in the UAB Department of Ophthalmology and a fellowship in glaucoma at The New York Eye and Ear Infirmary. After hours, Joiner enjoys gardening and spending time with his wife, Carla, and their three children.

Mays is from Decatur. After earning his M.D. degree at the UASOM, he interned at Carraway, then completed a residency in ophthalmology at UAB and a fellowship in glaucoma at the University of Florida.

When he’s not being a doctor, his passion is music. Before choosing medicine over a career as a concert pianist, Mays had completed bachelor’s and master’s degrees in music, and trained at the Conservatory of Music in Hanover, Germany. It was through music that he met his wife, Therese, who happens to be both a flutist and an internist at Carraway. They have four children under the age of 10—two sons and two daughters whose activities keep family life inter-



Andrew J. Mays (left) and D. Wade Joiner (right) were brought together by their shared interest in glaucoma.

esting and fast-paced.

Looking to the future of glaucoma care, both Joiner and Mays see reasons for optimism. “The technology is advancing so quickly—we can do so much, but we also need to do more early screening,” says Joiner. “Alabama has a higher-than-average population of people predisposed to glaucoma. We need to find them before there is serious damage to their vision—when technology can make a difference.”

Mays adds, “In ten years, maybe we’ll look back at the procedures we do now just as we look back at the late ’80s and early ’90s, and we’ll be amazed at how things have changed. Maybe a few years from now we’ll say, ‘Can you believe we used old-fashioned lasers?’ Yes, I’d like to see that day.”

Clinical and Research Symposium 2004

Preview of Events

THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL CLINICAL and Research Symposium will take place on Friday afternoon, May 21, 2004, and Saturday morning, May 22. The symposium's activities, conducted over the course of two half-days, will be capped by a Friday-evening cocktail reception in honor of the Alabama Eye Bank at the Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital and will conclude Saturday at noon.

The symposium will feature faculty and resident presentations, guest speakers, and a round-table discussion on diabetic retinopathy.

Three distinguished guests will address this year's audience:

NEIL M. BRESSLER, M.D., AND SUSAN B. BRESSLER, M.D., are experts on the retina. Neil is a professor of ophthalmology at the Wilmer Ophthalmological Institute at the Johns Hopkins University. He has published more than 140 peer-reviewed articles, authored numerous book chapters, serves as a section editor for the *Archives of Ophthalmology*, and on the editorial board of *Retina*. Neil will present "Cataract Surgery in Diabetic Patients." Susan is the director of the Wilmer Ophthalmological Institute's Photograph Reading Center

and professor of ophthalmology at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. She has published extensively in her field and is a highly respected member of the international ophthalmologic community. Susan will present "Cataract Surgery in Patients with Age-Related Macular Degeneration: What's Known in 2004?" In addition, the Bresslers will co-deliver the Helen Keller Lecture, "How Do We Treat Age-Related Macular Degeneration in 2004?"

STUART R. SEIFF, M.D., is associate professor and vice chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology at the University of California, San Francisco; and director of ophthalmic plastic and reconstructive surgery and chief of the Department of Ophthalmology at San Francisco General Hospital. He has written numerous publications describing proper imaging techniques in traumatic optic neuropathy and documenting outcome differences in patients treated/not treated with steroids. Seiff will deliver two presentations on Friday titled "Thyroid-Related Orbitopathy" and "Management of the Ophthalmic Complications of Facial Palsy."



*Jeannie Edwards Horton,
director of development*

Development Update:

Opportunities for Private Funding Support

AS THE CAMPAIGN FOR UAB neared its close in December, the Department of Ophthalmology assessed the ongoing need for private support in the department. We identified our strengths and abilities to provide unique, quality programs and then matched our priorities with those set forth by UAB President Carol Z. Garrison, Ph.D., in her strategic plan. Our resulting plan outlined areas where private funding can greatly impact the department of ophthalmology. Some of the identified opportunities are in vision research, residency training, faculty support, and low-vision rehabilitation.

Private funding is crucial to the department in many ways. It allows us to have an edge in competing nationally for the best and brightest residents, faculty, and research scientists. It also helps provide programs and services that excel. Whether you are a former resident, a fellow ophthalmologist, a grateful patient, or a friend, your charitable gift to the UAB Department of Ophthalmology is appreciated and makes a difference.

Quick Update As of December 1, 2003:

WE HAD A TOTAL of 57 donors pledging \$140,000 to the Alumni Challenge Fund. In addition, nearly \$200,000 had been pledged for the Glaucoma Service Renovation on the fourth floor of the Professional Office Building at Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital.

2003 Year End Review

UAB Department of Ophthalmology

By Lanning B. Kline, M.D.

THE UAB DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY can look back on 2003 with pride in its accomplishments. Some highlights include:

- The opening of a new Glaucoma Clinic on the fourth floor of the Professional Office Building of the Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital.
- Continued extramural support from a wide variety of sources, including the National Eye Institute, EyeSight Foundation of Alabama, Research to Prevent Blindness, Inc., and International Retinal Research Foundation.
- Expansion of the faculty including Jason Swanner, M.D., and Andrew Velazquez, M.D.
- The 2003 Annual and Clinical and Research Symposium, featuring Richard Lindstrom, M.D.,

delivering the Helen Keller Lecture and John Keltner, M.D., giving the special Rich Lecture.

- Important awards to faculty including Cynthia Owsley, Ph.D., recipient of the Bartimaeus Award from the Detroit Institute of Ophthalmology, and Clyde Guidry, Ph.D., recipient of the James S. Adams Special Scholar Award from Research to Prevent Blindness, Inc.

- An outstanding class of first-year residents, including:

JEFF CHAIPIRAKOB, M.D. – University of Alabama School of Medicine

STEVEN HOWELL, M.D. – University of Louisville School of Medicine

MATHEW SAPP, M.D. – University of Alabama School of Medicine

BRIAN SHELLEY, M.D. – University of South Carolina School of Medicine

TODD SLEEP, M.D. – University of Iowa College of Medicine

Finally, the department has begun partnering with alumni, friends, and grateful patients for philanthropic support. We are fortunate to have Ms. Jeannie Horton as our director of development. We hope our efforts in vision research, medical education, and patient care will create enthusiasm and excitement to make our funding efforts a success for years to come.

Grants and Awards

THE UAB DEPARTMENT OF OPHTHALMOLOGY received grants from the National Institutes of Health totaling more than \$2 million for fiscal year 2002-2003. The department is currently ranked 27th nationally in grant support from the National Eye Institute.

The Department of Ophthalmology received an unrestricted grant from the EyeSight Foundation of Alabama (ESFA) for \$1.2 million, and a \$110,000 unrestricted grant from Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB), the world's leading voluntary organization supporting eye research.

Research grants and awards to faculty members totaled approximately \$4 million. Funding sources and project titles are described below.

CHRISTINE CURCIO, PH.D.

National Eye Institute: *Bioengineering Studies of Transport Across Bruch's Membrane*

National Eye Institute: *Administrative Supplement to Quantitative Analysis of Aging Retina*

International Retinal Research Foundation: *Age-Related Maculopathy Histopathology Laboratory*

RAMON DACHEUX, PH.D.

National Eye Institute: *Cell Communication in Retina*

National Glaucoma Foundation: *Glutamate, Lactate and Optic Neuropathy in Glaucoma*

EyeSight Foundation of Alabama: *Vitreous Lactate and Optic Neuropathy in Glaucoma*

Research to Prevent Blindness: *Senior Scientific Investigator Award*

DONALD FLETCHER, M.D.

Norvatis: *Visual Performance Effects After Visudyne Therapy*

CHRISTOPHER GIRKIN, M.D.

National Eye Institute (K-23 Grant): *Multivariate Confirmatory Factor Model of Glaucomatous Optic Neuropathy*

American Glaucoma Society Research Fellowship Award (Sponsor: Allergan): *Subjective and Objective Methods of Evaluating the Optic Nerve and Nerve Fiber Layer to Discriminate Glaucoma in African Americans and Caucasians*

Pharmacia Ophthalmology Unrestricted Research Fellowship Award: *Unrestricted research fellowship award providing support for a clinical research fellow in glaucoma.*

Merck Clinical Research Grant: *A five-year study to*

investigate longitudinal differences between African Americans and Caucasians in individual measurements of optic disc structure and function in glaucomatous damage

EyeSight Foundation of Alabama: *Multifactorial Composite of Structural and Functional Measurements in Glaucoma*

Allergan: *A 48-month, multicenter, randomized, double-masked, placebo-controlled clinical study to evaluate the effectiveness and safety of oral memantine in patients with chronic open-angle glaucoma at risk for glaucomatous progression*

National Eye Institute (U-10 Grant): *African Americans with Glaucoma: Structure and Function (co-investigator)*

CLYDE GUIDRY, PH.D.

National Eye Institute: *The Insulin-Like Growth Factor System*

International Retinal Research Foundation: *Muller Cell Biology and the Insulin-Like Growth Factor System and Muller Cells*

Juvenile Diabetes Foundation: *Molecular Mechanisms of Muller Cell Adhesion*

Research to Prevent Blindness: *James S. Adams Special Scholar 2003-2004*

GERALD MCGWIN, PH.D.

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases: *Outcome of SLE in Minorities— Nature vs. Nurture*

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases: *A Genetic Risk Profile in Longitudinal SLE Cohorts*

CYNTHIA OWSLEY, PH.D.

National Institute on Aging: *Visual Dysfunction and Aging: Underlying Mechanisms*

Department of Veterans' Affairs: *The Impact of Blind Rehabilitation on Quality of Life in Visually Impaired Veterans*

Research to Prevent Blindness: *Senior Scientific Investigator Award*

EyeSight Foundation of Alabama: *Matching funds for clinical research infrastructure.*

National Eye Institute: *Clinical Vision Research Unit at UAB*
National Institute on Aging: *Age-Related Maculopathy in African Americans*

Contract from Schepens Eye Research Institute: *Driving Performance in Visually Impaired Persons*

National Eye Institute: *Predictors of Successful Optical Rehabilitation in Age-Related Maculopathy*

National Institute on Aging: *Center for Translation Research on Aging and Mobility*

Detroit Institute of Ophthalmology: *Bartimaeus Award*

RUSSELL READ, M.D.

EyeSight Foundation of Alabama: *Complement Inhibition in Experimental Autoimmune Uveitis*

NATIONAL EYE INSTITUTE (K-08): *Complement Inhibition in Experimental Autoimmune Uveitis*

KAY SCILLEY, PH.D.

EyeSight Foundation of Alabama: *A Planning Grant: Barriers to Eye Care for Older African Americans*

National Institute on Aging: *Visual Dysfunction and Aging: Underlying Mechanisms*

MICHAEL VAPHIADES, D.O.

Allergan: *A one-year, multicenter, open-label study in patients with Leber's Hereditary Optic Neuropathy*

SHU-ZHEN WANG, PH.D.

National Eye Institute: *Molecular Biology of Retinal Development*

EyeSight Foundation of Alabama: *Toward generating human photoreceptor cells in vitro*

Research to Prevent Blindness: *The Dolly Green Scholar Award*

Publications

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- JACKSON, G.R., OWSLEY, C. Visual dysfunction, neurodegenerative diseases and aging. **Neuro Clin N A: Neuro-Ophthalmology** 21:209-28.
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- MASON, J.O., III Intrathecal chemotherapy treatment of recurrent central nervous system intraocular lymphoma. **Ophthalmology** 110:1241-1244.
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- MORRIS, R., WITHERSPOON, C.D. The Birmingham Eye Trauma Terminology system (BETT) and the United States Eye Injury Registry (USEIR). Chapter in: I Trauma Oculari Borgioli, M (ed) 19-28.
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NUNN, T.L., JACKSON, G.R., OWSLEY, C. Evaluation of the scotopic sensitivity tester-1 (SST-1) dark adaptometer. **Invest Ophthalmol Vis Sci (Suppl)** 44:E-ABSTRACT 5004.
RAO, N.A., KIMOTO, T., ZAMIR, E., GIRI, R., WANG, R., ITO, S., PARARAJASEGARAM, G., READ, R.W., WU, G.S. Pathogenic role of retinal microglia in experimental uveoretinitis. **Invest Ophthalmol Vis Sci** 44:22-31.
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READ, R.W., VOGT, S., BARNUM, S.R. Attenuation of experimental autoimmune uveitis in genetically complement deficient mice [ARVO Abstract 4589]. **Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology. Also listed as: Invest Ophthalmol Vis Sci (Suppl)** 44:E-ABSTRACT 4589.
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VAPHADES, M.S. The ocular tilt reaction. **American Orth J** 53:127-132.
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VAPHADES, M.S., SIMMONS, D., ARCHER, R.L., STRINGER, W. A splinter of the mind. **Surv Ophthalmol** 48:230-3.
VAPHADES, M.S., PHILLIPS, P.H., TURPIN, R.E. Optic and chiasmal enhancement in Leber's hereditary optic neuropathy. **J Neuro-Ophthalmol** 23:104-105.
VAPHADES, M.S. Resolution of papilledema after neurosurgical decompression for primary chiari I malformation. **Letter to the Editor: Br J Neurosurg** 17:89-90.
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CANNON, T., HARPER, R., LANDERS, J., VAPHADES, M.S. Acute frosted angitis. **J Ark Med Soc** 9:234-235.
WHITE, M. Retinohoroidal collateral veins protect against anterior segment neovascularization after CRVO. **Arch Ophthalmol** 121:332-336.
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MORRIS, R., WITHERSPOON, C.D., KUHN, F., TAYLOR, S.W., BREAND, S. The effect of indocyanine-green on functional outcome of macular pucker surgery. **Am J Ophthalmol** 136:778-9.

Presentations

MICHAEL CALLAHAN, M.D.
12 Reasons Not to Operate. Annual Meeting of American Society of Ophthalmic Plastic & Reconstruction Surgery, ANAHEIM, CA
MARTIN COGEN, M.D.
Supramaximal Medial Rectus Recession for Esotropia. Annual Meeting for the American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus, WAIKOLOA, HI
Elimination of Paradoxical Diplopia Following Treatment with Botulinum Toxin and Prisms. Annual Scientific Meeting of the American Academy of Optometry, DALLAS, TX
CHRISTINE CURCIO, PH.D.
Ageing Retina. 50th Anniversary Symposium, University of Houston School of Optometry, HOUSTON, TX
A Partnership for Maculopathy Research (with Firmon Hardenbergh, M.D., Director of Technical Services, Alabama Eye Bank). Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology, FT. LAUDERDALE, FL
Cholesterol and the Pathogenesis of Age-Related Maculopathy: Learning from Cardiovascular Disease. University of Waterloo School of Optometry, WATERLOO, ONTARIO, CANADA
Photoreceptor Topography in Aging and Age-Related Maculopathy. University of Waterloo School of Optometry, WATERLOO, ONTARIO, CANADA
Cholesterol and the Pathogenesis of Age-Related Maculopathy: Learning from Cardiovascular Disease. Emory University, Department of Ophthalmology, ATLANTA, GA
Lipid Compounds in Aging Bruch's Membrane. International Symposium of the German Ophthalmological Society, BADEN-BADEN, GERMANY
RAMON DACHEUX, PH.D.
GABA- and Glycine-Inhibitory Currents of Rabbit On-Cone Bipolar Cell Axon Terminals. Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology, FT. LAUDERDALE, FL

RICHARD FEIST, M.D.
Immediate Severe Loss of Vision Following TTT for Occult Subfoveal CNV. Poster, Annual Meeting for the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology, FT. LAUDERDALE, FL
Macular Holes Associated with Diabetic Tractional Retinal Detachments. Poster, Annual Meeting for the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology, FT. LAUDERDALE, FL
Risk Factors for Severe Vision Loss after TTT for Occult CNV in Macular Degeneration. Poster, Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, ANAHEIM, CA
Sub-Tenon's Triamcinolone Acetonide for Refractory Diabetic Macular Edema. Poster, Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, ANAHEIM, CA; Poster, Annual Meeting for the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology, FT. LAUDERDALE, FL
An Association Between Central Serous Chorioretinopathy and Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease. Poster, Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, ANAHEIM, CA
FREDERICK ELSAS, M.D.
Oculomotor Nerve Dyskinesia Associated with Isotretinoin Embryopathy. Annual Meeting of the Jampolsky Fellows, LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND
Oculomotor Nerve Dyskinesia Associated with Isotretinoin Embryopathy. Annual Meeting of the American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus, WAIKOLOA, HI
DONALD FLETCHER, M.D.
How Hanging Out With Ph.D.s has Changed the Practice of a Low Vision Rehabilitation Clinician. Smith Kettlewell Colloquium, SAN FRANCISCO, CA
End of Life/End of Vision. CALIFORNIA PACIFIC MEDICAL CENTER GRAND ROUNDS, SAN FRANCISCO, CA
Current Status and Future Prospects in Low Vision Rehabilitation. Retina and Rehabilitation Seminar, Mobile

Infirmity Medical Center, MOBILE, AL;
 AMD Management: PDT Applications and the Role of Emerging Therapies, PHILADELPHIA, PA;
 AMD Management: PDT Applications and the Role of Emerging Therapies, CHARLESTON, SC
The Art and Science of Low Vision Rehabilitation. Annual Meeting of the Japanese Ophthalmology Association, FUKUJOKA, JAPAN
Visual Acuity Letter Errors in Low Vision Patients with Macular Scotomas. Annual Meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology, FT. LAUDERDALE, FL
Progression in the Longitudinal Southwest Florida Age-Related Macular Degeneration Study. Annual Meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology, FT. LAUDERDALE, FL
The Basic Magic Tricks to Doing Low Vision Rehabilitation. The Ophthalmological Society of Alberta Annual Scientific Meeting, BANFF, ALBERTA, CANADA
Some Exciting Science in Low Vision Rehabilitation. The Ophthalmological Society of Alberta Annual Scientific Meeting, BANFF, ALBERTA, CANADA
Clinical Benefits of Low Vision Rehabilitation Research. Smith Kettlewell Eye Research Institute Colloquium, SAN FRANCISCO, CA
The Science and Magic of Low Vision Rehabilitation: Applying Research in Low Vision Rehabilitation to Clinical Practice. University of Saskatchewan, Dept. of Ophthalmology Grand Rounds, SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN, CANADA
CLYDE GUIDRY, PH.D.
Retinal Müller Cells and the Insulin-Like Growth Factor System in Diabetes. Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Conference on Mechanisms of Vision Impairment in Diabetic Retinopathy, Pennsylvania State College of Medicine, HERSHEY, PA
Muller Cell Adhesion in Tractional Force Generation. Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology,

FORT LAUDERDALE, FL

Insulin-Like Growth Factor Binding Protein Biosynthesis by Normal, Reactive and Fibrocontractive Muller Cells. *Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology*, FORT LAUDERDALE, FL
GREG JACKSON, Ph.D.

Photoreceptor Dysfunction in AMD. *Department of Ophthalmology, University of California–Davis*, SACRAMENTO, CA.

JAMES KIMBLE, M.D.

Southeastern Vitreoretinal Symposium. *Emory University*, ATLANTA, GA

Angiografia Fluoresceinica. *Centro Cristiano de Servicios Medicos*, EL PROGRESO, HONDURAS

LANNING KLINE, M.D.

Visiting Professor, *University of Texas–Houston, Department of Ophthalmology*, HOUSTON, TX

Migraine and Other Cortical Visual Disturbances.

Visiting professor, *Baylor College of Medicine, Department of Ophthalmology*, HOUSTON, TX

Functional Visual Disorders. *Whitney G. Sampson Lecture, Houston Ophthalmology Society*, HOUSTON, TX

Ophthalmologic Indications for Botulinum Toxin.

Invited speaker at the Annual Meeting of the Alabama Academy of Ophthalmology, SANDESTIN, FL

High and Low Risk Profiles for the Development of Multiple Sclerosis Within Ten Years After Optic Neuritis: Experience with the Optic Neuritis Treatment Trial. *Discussant at Editor's Choice Symposium, Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology*, ANAHEIM, CA

Neuro-Imaging. *Breakfast with the Experts, Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology*, ANAHEIM, CA

Nystagmus Made Ridiculously Simple. *Instruction course, Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology*, ANAHEIM, CA

Diagnostic and Therapeutic Dilemmas in Neuro-Ophthalmology. *Instruction course, Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology*, ANAHEIM, CA

JOHN LONG, M.D.

Autogenous Dermis for Eyelid Reconstruction. *European Society of Ophthalmology*, MADRID, SPAIN

Experience with Suprymd Orbital Floor Implants. *International Trauma Symposium*, SOPORN, HUNGARY

Oculoplastic Day, Invited Speaker, *Department of Ophthalmology, University of Florida*, GAINESVILLE, FL

The Techniques of Ectropion Repair in Eyelid Reconstruction. *American Society of Dermatologic Surgery*, NEW ORLEANS, LA

Autogenous Dermis Skin Grafts in Lower Eyelid Reconstruction. *American Society of Oculoplastic and Reconstructive Surgery*, ANAHEIM, CA

JOHN O. MASON, III, M.D.

Immediate Severe Loss of Vision Following TTT for Occult Subfoveal CNV. *Poster, Annual Meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology*, FT. LAUDERDALE, FL

Macular Holes Associated with Diabetic Tractional Retinal Detachments. *Poster, Annual Meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology*, FT. LAUDERDALE, FL

Sub-Tenon's Triamcinolone Acetonide for Refractory Diabetic Macular Edema. *Poster, Annual Meeting for the American Academy of Ophthalmology*, ANAHEIM, CA; *Poster, Annual Meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology*, FT. LAUDERDALE, FL

En Bloc Technique for Macular Pucker with Internal Limiting Membrane Removal. *Video, Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology*, ANAHEIM, CA

Risk Factors for Severe Vision Loss after TTT for Occult CNV in Macular Degeneration. *Poster, Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology*, ANAHEIM, CA

An Association Between Central Serous Chorioretinopathy and Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease. *Poster, Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology*, ANAHEIM, CA

ROBERT MORRIS, M.D./C. DOUGLAS WITHERSPOON, M.D. **Fluidic Internal Limiting Membrane Separation in Macular Hole and Macular Pucker; Current Concepts in the Management of Eyes with Posterior Segment Intraocular Foreign Bodies; The United States Eye Injury Registry (USEIR)/The American Society of Ocular Trauma (ASOT).** *Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology*, ANAHEIM, CA

Counseling in Ocular Trauma; Ocular Traumatology; Management of the Opaque Media Eye with No Light Perception (NPL) After Recent Injury; Temporary Keratoprosthesis Vitrectomy (TKP); Ocular Rupture. *Third European VitreoRetinal Society Congress & Sixth International Society of Ocular Trauma*, SOPRON, HUNGARY

The Ocular Trauma Score (OTS); The Birmingham Eye Trauma Terminology (BETT) System. *Annual Meeting of the Croatian Society of Ophthalmology*, ROVINJ, CROATIA

The Birmingham Eye Trauma Terminology (BETT) System; The Ocular Trauma Score (OTS). *Annual Meeting of the Italian Society of Ocular Trauma*, FLORENCE, ITALY

Is This the Right Instrument for Intraocular Foreign Body Removal? *American Society of Retina Specialists*, NEW YORK, NY

The Internal Limiting Membrane: Removal Indications; Principles in the Management of Serious Eye Injury; Current Concepts in the Management of Patients with Intraocular Foreign Bodies. *Grand Rounds, Indiana University Medical*, INDIANAPOLIS, IN

Ocular Trauma. *Emergency Trauma Management for Emergency Department Physicians & Other Emergency Care Providers*, PANAMA CITY, FL

Current Concepts in the Management of Patients with Intraocular Foreign Bodies; The Internal Limiting Membrane: Removal Indications. *Annual Meeting of the Ophthalmological Society*, DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

Management of Eyes with Hyphema; Internal Limiting Membrane Removal Indications and Techniques. Pole to pole surgery: Endotamponade and intraocular substances in vitreoretinal surgery. RAVENNA, ITALY

CYNTHIA OWSLEY, Ph.D.

Cataract, Contrast Sensitivity, and Crash Risk in Older Drivers. *50th Anniversary Symposium for College of Optometry, University of Houston*, HOUSTON, TX

Clinical and Epidemiological Approaches: Research Opportunities in Low Vision. *National Eye Institute Workshop on Low Vision, Schepens Eye Research Institute*, BOSTON, MA

The Future of Vision, Aging, and Driving Research. *American Optometric Association, Vision, Aging, and Driving Symposium*, ORLANDO, FL

Vision Impairment and Driving. *American Optometric Association, Vision, Aging, and Driving Symposium*, ORLANDO, FL

RUSSELL READ, M.D.

Uveitis: Diagnosis and Management of Ocular Inflammation in the 21st Century. *Presented at the American Academy of Ophthalmology, Subspecialty Day*, ANAHEIM, CA

A Retrospective, Multinational Study of Treatment Patterns and Outcomes in Acute and Subacute Vogt-Koyanagi-Harada Disease. *Presented at the Third*

International Workshop on Vogt-Koyanagi-Harada Disease, ROME, ITALY

A Retrospective, Multinational Survey of Treatment Patterns in Acute and Subacute Vogt-Koyanagi-Harada Disease. *Presented at the American Uveitis Society–International Uveitis Study Group Meeting*, ANAHEIM, CA

Ocular Inflammatory Diseases: Pearls for the Rheumatologist. *Presented at the 48th Annual Lowe Conference, UAB Department of Medicine, Division of Clinical Immunology and Rheumatology, Camp McDowell*, NAUVOO, AL

KAY SCILLEY, Ph.D.

Health Care Delivery, Outcomes, and Miscellaneous. *Annual Meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology*, FORT LAUDERDALE, FL

SHU-ZHEN WANG, Ph.D.

Incorporation of Transdifferentiating RPE Cells Into the Retinal Ganglion Cell Layer. *Annual Meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology*, FORT LAUDERDALE, FL

Synergism Between cath5 and cNSCL1 in Promoting Retinal Ganglion Cell Differentiation. *Annual Meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology*, FORT LAUDERDALE, FL

Engrafted-mediated Repression of NeuroD Specifically Inhibits Photoreceptor Production in the Chick Retina. *Annual Meeting of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology*, FORT LAUDERDALE, FL

Towards Generating Retinal Neurons In Vitro. *Mason Eye Institute, University of Missouri*, COLUMBIA, MO

MICHAEL VAPHIADES, D.O.

The CHAMPS Study, Afferent Neuro-Ophthalmology. *22nd Annual Conference of the Mississippi Osteopathic Medical Association*, DESTIN, FL

Platform Presentation: MRA vs CTA vs DSA. *Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology*, ANAHEIM, CA

Driving Miss Daisy. *35th Annual Frank B. Walsh Meeting*, SALT LAKE CITY, UT

High Flow White Eyed Carotid-Cavernous Fistula from a Nontraumatic Dissection with Pseudoaneurysm. *Meeting of the North American Neuro-Ophthalmology Society*, SALT LAKE CITY, UT

High Flow White Eyed Carotid-Cavernous Fistula From a Nontraumatic Dissection with Pseudoaneurysm. *Meeting of the North American Neuro-Ophthalmology Society*, ANAHEIM, CA

A Better Method to Categorize Carotid Cavernous Fistulas. *Meeting of the North American Neuro-Ophthalmology Society*, SALT LAKE CITY, UT

MILTON WHITE, M.D.

Immediate Severe Loss of Vision Following TTT for Occult Subfoveal CNV. *Poster, Annual Meeting for the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology*, FT. LAUDERDALE, FL

Macular Holes Associated with Diabetic Tractional Retinal Detachments. *Poster, Annual Meeting for the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology*, FT. LAUDERDALE, FL

Risk Factors for Severe Vision Loss after TTT for Occult CNV in Macular Degeneration. *Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology*, ANAHEIM, CA

An Association between Central Serous Chorioretinopathy and Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease. *Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology*, ANAHEIM, CA

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During his term, Drennen will help pave the foundation's way into the future. "We're currently revisiting our original strategic plan, trying to polish and improve it so that we'll have a solid road map for future growth," he says.

Smitherman says that future plans also include developing fund-raising strategies for research activities and working toward the creation of a statewide vision-care initiative. She's quick to say, however, that the foundation's focus is not so much on these kinds of activities as it is on the scientists whose work it supports. "We're not doing any of this so that the EyeSight Foundation will be recognized," she says. "That, to me, is the least important aspect of any of this. We'd much rather our grantees get the recognition, because they're the ones on the front lines doing the work. What we're doing is important, too, but without them, we wouldn't have a reason to exist."

In the Headlines:

Link Between Statin Use and Macular Degeneration

A new study by UAB Department of Ophthalmology faculty has attracted international attention. In the September issue of the British Journal of Ophthalmology, co-authors Jeffrey Crain, M.D., Christine Curcio, Ph.D., Gerald McGwin, Ph.D., and Cynthia Owsley, M.D., reported research results showing that patients who take cholesterol-inhibiting drugs known as statins are less likely to develop symptoms of age-related macular degeneration (ARM). The findings suggest a possible associ-

ation between ARM and cardiovascular disease.

"This study suggests that patients with ARM were less likely to have filled a statin prescription and thus less likely to have used statins to control cholesterol," says Curcio. "Further research is needed to further understand the pathophysiology of ARM and the precise role, if any, of cholesterol. We also need to evaluate the effect of statins in lowering the risk and/or rate of progression of ARM," she adds.

UAB Ophthalmology on the Web

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