

VISION

Michigan Eye-Bank • A Subsidiary of Midwest Eye-Banks • Fall 2014



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VISION

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From our Board of Directors



On behalf of the Michigan Eye Bank Board of Directors and staff, I would like to say

thank you to all of you who have donated funds and other resources to make this such a successful year for the Eye-Bank. We have placed 1,576 cornea tissues with surgeons for transplantation since Jan. 1, 2014, and have made great strides this year in fundraising, awareness and education.

I am pleased to announce that more than 48 percent of Michigan's licensed drivers are registered eye, organ and tissue donors. Michigan has officially surpassed the national average for donor registration, and donor numbers are continuing to grow.

It has also been a year of excellent fundraisers for the Eye-Bank.

Our annual Golf Outing was our most successful yet, raising more money than any previous year. We also introduced a new event, Bowling for Brighter Tomorrows. The funds from these events help support cornea transplants for underinsured and low income patients, who would not be able to receive the gift of sight without your support. We hope you will join us for these fundraisers again in 2015, and help us reach even more people with our mission.

Thank you to everyone who has attended our events, promoted eye tissue donation and contributed to the Michigan Eye-Bank in other ways throughout the year. Our mission, to give the gift of sight, would not be possible without you.

Gary Babcock
Board Chairman and Director



Gift of Sight Golf Classic

Event Chair and past Board member John Barletta, M.D. (second from left) gathers with friends in support of the Eye-Bank's annual fundraiser. From left: Scott Kraining, Daniel Dwyer, and A. Bawa Dass, M.D.

IN OUR NEWS

Cornea transplant recipient wins gold at Transplant Games of America



Cassandra Perry represented cornea transplant recipients on Team Michigan at the Transplant Games of America, hosted in Houston, Texas, and took home the gold medal in the 200 meter run. Perry was joined by her

sister, daughter and 13-year-old son, Jack, who took home his own gold medal at the 5k run. Perry said she was thrilled to be a part of the Games during the first year that cornea transplant recipients were allowed to join. "Quite frankly, the whole experience was life-altering," she said. "The best part was I was able to share it with my kids." Next year's Transplant Games will be held in Cleveland, Ohio.

Eye-Bank recognizes supporters with Shared Vision Awards



The Michigan Eye-Bank was pleased to present five Shared Vision Awards this summer. This award, created in 2009, recognizes individuals, groups and organizations that have shown extra-ordinary support of the Eye-Bank's mission to restore sight through corneal transplantation.

Honorees included Lion Karen Ates, PDG; Ray Collar; Lionel "Skip" Hampton III; David Verdier, M.D. (Photographed here with Professional Relations Liaison Holly DeMasi); and Bjork and Zhulkie Funeral Home.

Mark your calendars!

An Evening of Remembrance and Gratitude

Donor families are invited to join us for an evening of fall refreshments, and fellowship. We ask that families bring a picture of their loved one to share and honor their legacy. Please dress warm, as we plan to gather outdoors at the Michigan Eye-Bank's Memorial Garden.

Thursday, Nov. 6, 2014, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

**Michigan Eye-Bank
4889 Venture Dr.
Ann Arbor, MI 48108**

Please RSVP by Oct. 28 by calling (734) 780-2690.

BOWLING FOR BRIGHTER TOMORROWS

Please join the Michigan Eye-Bank for our 2nd Annual Bowling for Brighter Tomorrows fundraiser! This event, held in celebration of National Eye Donor Month, is fun for the whole family. Prizes will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams.

**Saturday, March 14, 2015,
1:30 - 4 p.m.**

**Bel-Mark Lanes
3530 Jackson Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48103**

**Call 734-780-2628
for more information.**



A man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt and a paint-splattered apron, is focused on painting a large canvas on an easel in an art studio. The studio is filled with various art supplies, including paint cans, brushes, and a Starbucks cup on the table. The background shows a window with blinds and other studio equipment.

Artistic Vision

Mexican artist promotes eye, organ and tissue donation

When Elton Monroy Durán visited the United States he couldn't have guessed where his artistic journey would take him.

"I asked God two questions," he said. "First, I wanted to know if I am an artist. Second, what is the purpose of my existence? I received this answer: 'Painting a message of life.'"

Durán's work is a testament to the far-reaching impact of eye, organ and tissue donation. Although he himself is not a donor family member or transplant recipient, Durán said he felt compelled to promote awareness of donation and transplantation through his art in a collection called "American Corpus."

"I want to save lives through art," Durán said.

A native of Mexico, Durán recently visited the Detroit area to further promote and explore his art. It was during his time in Detroit that he was inspired to start "American Corpus," and began work on the series of large-scale acrylic paintings on canvas.

"Art is extremely powerful," he said. "It can touch people very deeply. Education begins when we allow our inner artistic sensibility to speak to us."

He has been active in the local arts scene, exhibiting "American Corpus" at 555 Galleries in Detroit, Detroit River Days and Wyandotte Street Art Fair, where he won Best in Show.

At each of his events, Durán has encouraged people to join the Michigan Organ Donor Registry. He said he has distributed about a thousand donor registration cards.

"Life is wonderful, and life with awareness can make us loving people," he said.

Durán has also been closely involved with the Michigan Eye-Bank, working to promote our mission of restoring sight and lives through corneal transplantation. Two of Durán's works hang in the Michigan Eye-Bank's office.

"The Michigan Eye-Bank is a place with many special people doing extraordinary work," Durán said. "I have tremendous respect and appreciation for them."

He said he has been pleased with people's responses to his message.

"The gift of sight is something to celebrate," he said. "Without it, we would not be able to appreciate art and its colors."



Future Vision

Yvonne Kilbourne has always dedicated herself to others. A longtime nurse, Kilbourne faced many obstacles in her mission to help those in need – brutal snowstorms, the polio epidemic of the 1950s – but nothing deterred her until her vision began to falter.

She was diagnosed with Fuchs' Dystrophy – a condition that leads to excess fluid accumulation in the cornea, causing swelling, pain and cloudy vision – and underwent two cornea transplants to restore her sight. Now retired, Kilbourne serves as a parish nurse for her local church, writing health articles for the parish bulletin and visiting sick parishioners at home and in the hospital.

“Look at what the gift of sight has done for me,” she said. “Without the transplants, I would never have been able to be a parish nurse. ... I have to be able to see in order to do what I can to help others.”

Since receiving her first transplant, Kilbourne has continued her mission of helping others by supporting the Michigan Eye-Bank. As a volunteer Ambassador, one of her favorite events is Donate Life Day, where she works with her local Secretary of State office each year to encourage people to register as eye, organ and tissue donors.

She is also a regular contributor to the Eye-Bank and a proud member of the Visionary Society, a recognition program for our friends who have included the Eye-Bank in their financial or estate plans.

For some, Visionary Society membership offers the opportunity to make a more substantial gift than would be possible during one's lifetime.

For others, it is an opportunity to round out a lifetime of giving with a permanent legacy to the Michigan Eye-Bank.

Kilbourne chooses to support ocular research with her gift each year.

“Research is essential for improving the health and health care of people,” she said.

Visionary Society members receive invitations to special events, recognition in our publications and on our Visionary Society wall plaque, a lapel pin and the knowledge that their gift will help the Eye-Bank continue its mission of preserving and restoring sight.

“I can't give back all that I have been given, but my annual gift is a token of my appreciation for these wonderful gifts I have been given from people I don't even know,” Kilbourne said. “I plan to keep giving an ongoing, direct gift on an annual basis for as long as I am able.”

For more information about the Visionary Society, contact Executive Director Lisa Langley at (734) 780-2628.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Recovery Team



Recovery Manager Melody East with a box of recovered tissue.

Our mission – to preserve and restore sight – is only possible through an incredible amount of collaboration and teamwork. Every day, staff from all over our organization work together to ensure that those in need can receive the gift of sight.

An essential element of this collaboration is our highly-trained eye tissue recovery technicians, who travel to hospitals and

other facilities at a moment's notice, day or night, to recover donated eye tissue.

The recovery team, made up of seven full-time employees, is on-call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In addition to the full-time staff members, the Eye-Bank also coordinates with field technicians in other areas of the state to make sure all recoveries are done in a timely manner.

“Our ultimate goal is to make the most of the incredible human gifts that people give,” said Melody East, recovery manager. **“We do whatever it takes to make that happen.”**

Donated tissue should be recovered within 12 hours of death, and the recovery technicians do anything it takes to make sure that donations are recovered as soon as possible.

That includes partnering with members of the laboratory staff, who have also been trained for recoveries, when necessary.

“I’m so lucky to have a phenomenal team,” East said. “They’re so devoted to what they do. It’s not just a job for them.”

Two field technicians the Eye-Bank works with have been acknowledged for their dedication with Shared Vision Awards, which the Michigan Eye-Bank gives to supporters who have gone above and beyond in promoting the Eye-Bank’s mission of preserving and restoring sight. Matt Kemp received the award in 2013, and Lionel “Skip” Hampton III was given the award at our Summer Celebration this past August.

“There’s so much passion on our team, and it makes all the difference in what we do,” East said. “It is a privilege to work with people who care so much, and to be able to do something that has such an impact on people’s lives.”

2014 Recovery Team Numbers



2,231

Tissue recoveries were performed



150,000+

Miles driven by recovery staff and field technicians



3 months

Average training time for a recovery technician

THE “S” STAMP OF APPROVAL



The “S” stamp, magnified 10x.

Our mission would not be possible without the valuable partnerships we’ve formed – cornea recipients, donor family members, medical professionals and other organizations all play a critical role in helping us restore sight to others. However, we also receive help and support from people who have no connection to the donation community – people like the staff at Stamprite Supersine.

The Eye-Bank first reached out to Stamprite, a millwright located in Lansing, Mich., six years ago. At the time, our clinical staff was looking for a way to help surgeons easily verify that corneas had been placed right-side-up during transplants. Medical supply companies sold tiny steel rods that could stamp the tissue, but with prices nearing \$1,000 per stamp, the solution was less than ideal. Kyle Mavin, director of clinical services, began looking for an alternative.

“When I first called Stamprite, I wasn’t even sure if it was something they could do,” Mavin said. “It seemed like such a strange request, but they were excited to make it.”

A week later, the stamps were completed. The slender pencil rods, made of stainless steel, have a microscopic “S” engraved at the bottom.

When laboratory technicians prepare corneal tissue for surgeons, they use ink to stamp a tiny “S” onto the side of the cornea that should face upward, helping surgeons confirm the placement at a glance.

Laurie Barcaskey, account manager for Durable Mecco, the company that owns Stamprite's steel stamp division, said the company takes pride in projects that help improve the health and lives of others.

“It is gratifying to work with organizations like the Michigan Eye-Bank, that place emphasis on making vision possible so that others can see the world with greater clarity,” she said.”

“So much of what we do and who we meet on daily basis amazes me,” said Lisa Langley, executive director of the Michigan Eye-Bank. “To think that we were able to pick up the phone, describe a unique need to someone not in the field of sight restoration and then to have received exactly what we asked for – which by the way, has made a world of difference in ensuring successful patient outcomes – stops me in my tracks every time. People giving their time, their talent, their gift of sight — it all creates 'micro' and 'macro' ripples that change lives.”

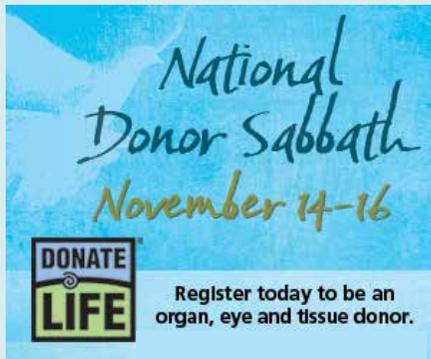


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Join us for National Donor Sabbath!

Faith communities around the country will come together this fall in observance of National Donor Sabbath, on Nov. 14 to 16. This event aims to raise awareness about the importance of eye, organ and tissue donation. Through their participation, faith leaders affirm that



choosing to be a donor offers the opportunity to share the greatest blessings of all – life, sight and mobility. Most religions support donation as a compassionate expression of generosity and love.

Ways to participate in National Donor Sabbath observance:

- Share your inspirational donation or transplant story.
- Provide literature to distribute before, during or after your worship service.
- Host a Donate Life Station at your place of worship to provide congregates an opportunity to join the Donor Registry.
- Offer sample bulletin messages (available through the Michigan Eye-Bank), sermons and prayers with a theme of giving and compassion.

The Michigan Eye-Bank can help you celebrate National Donor Sabbath within your own faith community. For more information about how to get involved, or for National Donor Sabbath materials, contact Community Engagement Associate Alex Teska at (734) 780-2675.