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Prevent Blindness America Announces Ninth Annual Investigator Award Recipient

Research Grant Awarded to Dr. Alex V. Levin, Wills Eye Institute

CHICAGO (Aug. 7, 2012) – Prevent Blindness America, the nation’s oldest volunteer eye health and safety organization, announced today the recipient of its 2012 Investigator Award. This year’s selected recipient is Alex V. Levin, MD, MHSc from the Wills Eye Institute in Philadelphia, Penn.

The Prevent Blindness America Investigator Awards are research grants presented annually to scientifically-based studies that seek to end unnecessary vision loss. To date, Prevent Blindness America has awarded more than \$1 million to eye and vision research projects.

The 2012 Investigator Award has been presented to the “Cost and Effectiveness of an Eye Care Adherence Program for Philadelphia School Children with Significant Visual Impairment” study led by Dr. Levin, Chief of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Ocular Genetics at Wills Eye Institute. A panel of experts coordinated by the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) made the final selection.

According to Dr. Levin, the project seeks to provide critical information to eye care decision makers who are planning or currently engaged in vision programs as data will be collected and analyzed to calculate the effectiveness of follow-up measures for the new Wills Eye Institute Children’s Eye Care Adherence Program (CECAP). The program provides social workers with information on children who were determined to require follow-up care after a vision screening. The social worker then consults with the child’s family/caregivers to identify and resolve barriers to eye care which may exist at the individual, home, and community level. The social worker further attempts to schedule necessary appointments with a pediatric ophthalmologist.

Hugh R. Parry, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness America emphasized the value of the Investigator Awards. “Our organization was founded more than 100 years ago as a way to help provide healthy eyesight to children,” said Parry. “By providing funds to

research projects like Dr. Levin's, we hope to continue that legacy and put all children on a path to a lifetime of healthy vision."

For more information on the Prevent Blindness America Investigator Awards, or for free information on children's vision issues, please call Prevent Blindness America at 1-800-331-2020 or visit preventblindness.org.

About Prevent Blindness America

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness America is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness America touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates and regional offices, Prevent Blindness America is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020. Or, visit us on the Web at preventblindness.org or facebook.com/preventblindness.

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