

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Prevent Blindness Announces the Third Annual Focus on Eye Health National Summit**

**CHICAGO (March 3, 2014)** – Prevent Blindness and its partners announce the third annual Focus on Eye Health National Summit, to be held on Wednesday, June 18, 2014, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. The mission of the Summit is to elevate the national dialogue around vision and public health issues.

At the Summit, Prevent Blindness will release a new report projecting the potential burden and economic impact of vision problems into the future. The study expands on previous Prevent Blindness studies, "[Vision Problems in the U.S.](#)" and last year's "[Cost of Vision Problems: The Economic Burden of Vision Loss and Eye Disorders in the United States.](#)"

While the full agenda is still developing, currently scheduled presentations include:

- Forecasting the Prevalence and Cost of Vision Loss and Eye Disorders – John Wittenborn, NORC at the University of Chicago
- Overview of Multiple Chronic Conditions – John Crews, DPA, Vision Health Initiative, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- The Impact of Diabetes Among Children on Future Eye Disease – Neil Bressler, MD, Johns Hopkins University
- Smoking and Vision – David Lee, PhD, University of Miami
- Depression and Vision – Alan Morse, JD, PhD, Lighthouse Guild International
- Children's Vision: A Population Perspective – Panel members include David Musch, PhD, MPH and Joshua Stein, MD, MS, University of Michigan; Richard Bunner, MA, retired from the Ohio Department of Health; Alex Kemper, MD, MPH, MS, Duke University; Sandra Block, OD, MEd, Illinois College of Optometry; Rachel Schumann, PhD, RN, Michigan Department of Community Health
- Reducing the Impact of Diabetic Eye Disease – Panel members include Lori Grover, OD, PhD, Arizona State University and Neil Bressler, MD, Johns Hopkins University
- Turning the Tide – Can Public Policy Curb the Growing Impact of Vision Problems?

Attendees will include patient advocates, national vision and eye health organizations, government representatives, and community-based organizations. For those unable to attend in person, there will be an opportunity to follow the event on Twitter at #eyesummit.

Current gold-level sponsors include AMD Alliance International, BrightFocus Foundation, The EyeSight Foundation of Alabama, Genentech, Lighthouse Guild International, National Center for Children’s Vision and Eye Health, Transitions Healthy Sight for Life Fund, and VSP. Silver-level sponsors include Alliance for Aging Research, Alliance for Eye and Vision Research, Foundation Fighting Blindness, Regeneron, and Vision 2020 USA. **Sponsorship opportunities are still available.**

“We are excited to be hosting such an impressive collaboration of leaders in the vision and public health fields as well as patients and advocates to help further the important mission of protecting vision,” said Hugh R. Parry, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “We also want to thank our sponsors for their generous support. Because of their contributions, we can come together to help protect the gift of sight.”

In conjunction with the Summit, Prevent Blindness will hold the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Eyes on Capitol Hill event, bringing those directly impacted by vision loss and blindness together with their government representatives; a Congressional briefing on Tuesday, June 17 to preview results of the forecasting study for key policy makers; and a reception for the Congressional Vision Caucus (CVC) the evening of the Summit. The CVC is a bicameral and bipartisan coalition of more than 100 Congressional Members dedicated to strengthening and stimulating a national dialogue and policy on vision-related problems and disabilities.

To register or for more information about the Prevent Blindness Focus on Eye Health National Summit or sponsorship opportunities, please visit [preventblindness.org/eyesummit](http://preventblindness.org/eyesummit) or call (800) 331-2020.

### **About Prevent Blindness**

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness 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 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, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call (800) 331-2020. Or, visit us on the Web at [preventblindness.org](http://preventblindness.org) or [facebook.com/preventblindness](https://facebook.com/preventblindness).

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