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Prevent Blindness Announces Recipient of Eleventh Annual Joanne Angle Investigator Award

- Research Grant Awarded to Dr. Agnes Wong, University of Toronto -

CHICAGO (June 5, 2014) – Prevent Blindness, the nation’s oldest volunteer eye health and safety organization, announced today the recipient of its 2014 Joanne Angle Investigator Award. This year’s selected recipient is Agnes Wong, MD, PhD, FRCSC, John and Melinda Thompson Chair in Vision Neurosciences and Ophthalmologist-in-Chief at The Hospital for Sick Children, and Professor and Vice Chair of Research and Academic Affairs, Department of Ophthalmology and Vision Sciences at the University of Toronto.

The 2014 Joanne Angle Investigator Award has been presented for the study, “Screening for Eye Problems in Preschool Children.”

The Joanne Angle Investigator Awards are research grants presented annually to scientifically-based studies that seek to end unnecessary vision loss. To date, Prevent Blindness has awarded more than \$1 million to eye and vision research projects. The program is part of the non-profit group’s more than 100-year-old mission to prevent unnecessary vision loss.

The award was recently renamed after Joanne Angle who served with the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) for many years as well as volunteered for Prevent Blindness as part of the National Board of Directors and various committees.

“Part of our core mission is to help provide support and funds to help save sight through valuable research endeavors,” said Hugh R. Parry, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “Through Dr. Wong’s research, we can get a better understanding of the necessary steps we must take to ensure our children have the best chance at healthy vision throughout their lifetimes.”

The goal of the Screening for Eye Problems in Preschool Children study is to provide important information on the most effective screening tools, both in terms of efficacy and cost, that can be used at schools to detect eye problems, specifically amblyopia or “lazy eye,” in children 3-5 years of age. The study also seeks to identify the best and most cost-effective method to detect refractive errors before children enter school.

The results of the study will contribute to the work of the National Center for Children’s Vision and Eye Health at Prevent Blindness (NCCVEH) and its mission to improve the systems that address children’s vision. To accomplish this mission, NCCVEH is working to develop a coordinated public health infrastructure to promote and ensure a comprehensive, multi-tiered continuum of vision care for young children. This coordinated approach to vision health for children leads to a uniform implementation of successful screening programs, increased follow-up to care, improved surveillance and stakeholder engagement.

“Because so much of a child’s learning happens visually, it is crucial to make sure all children are able to see clearly to help them succeed in the classroom,” said Dr. Wong. “Through this research, and with the support of Prevent Blindness, we can help determine what the best practices are to make a positive difference in the life of every child.”

For more information on the Prevent Blindness 2014 Joanne Angle Investigator Awards, or for free information on children’s vision issues, please call Prevent Blindness at (800) 331-2020 or visit preventblindness.org.

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 or facebook.com/preventblindness.

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