



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Dr. W. Craig Fowler Awarded 2014 R. Townley Paton Award**

Chicago, IL -- W. Craig Fowler, MD, Associate Medical Director for Miracles in Sight (formerly the North Carolina Eye Bank), based in Winston-Salem, NC, received the 2014 R. Townley Paton Award during the EBAA/Cornea Society Fall Educational Symposium, in Chicago, Illinois, on October 17, 2014.

The R. Townley Paton Award is EBAA's highest honor for corneal surgeons, and is presented annually to an ophthalmologist in recognition of his/her contributions to EBAA, and for exemplifying the precepts of R. Townley Paton, MD, a prominent corneal surgeon, the father of modern eye banking and the founder of the first eye bank established in the United States.

After receiving the honor, Dr. Fowler presented his Paton Lecture, "*Knights for the Blind: What's Your Vision to Restore Sight Worldwide?*," which focused on the history of eye banking, highlighted leaders in the eye banking and corneal transplantation communities, and charged the audience to continue the fight to restore sight worldwide.

In addition to his dedicated service as a Medical Director at Miracles in Sight for over 20 years, Dr. Fowler is the Chief of Surgical Services at the Fayetteville Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) in North Carolina. Prior to joining the VAMC, he was a tenured Associate Professor of Ophthalmology at the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Ophthalmology. Dr. Fowler has also significantly contributed to EBAA for many years, as a current Medical Advisory Board member, presenter at Annual Meetings, as well as a past faculty member for the Technician Education Seminar. He has authored numerous papers and articles in ophthalmic publications such as *EyeNet*, *Ophthalmic Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery*, and *Investigative Ophthalmology & Visual Science*.

The Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA), established in 1961, is the oldest transplant association in the nation and champions the restoration of sight through corneal transplantation. EBAA has led the transplantation field with the establishment of medical standards for the distribution of eyes and comprehensive training and certification programs for eye banking personnel. Over 80 member eye banks operate in the United States, Canada and Asia. These eye banks made possible 72,736 sight-restoring corneal transplants in 2013, and the opportunity to perform more transplants is significant because virtually everyone is a universal donor. The function of corneal tissue is not dependent on blood type, age, strength of eyesight or the color of the eye. To learn more, visit [www.restoresight.org](http://www.restoresight.org).

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