



PRESS RELEASE

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Eye Bank Association of America Announces 2018 Gift of Sight Award

Washington, D.C. (June 13, 2018) – Each year, the Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA) awards individuals and organizations that dedicate their time and expertise to restore sight to the blind and visually impaired.

EBAA is proud to announce that Alfarena T. Ballew, MBA, Chief Deputy Coroner, Marion County Coroner's Office (MCCO) in Indianapolis, Indiana is the recipient of the 2018 Gift of Sight Award. The Gift of Sight Award is presented to a professional who whose efforts have demonstrated significant support of eye banking and corneal donation.

Ballew is a strong advocate of eye, tissue, and organ donation. Her passion for donation comes from having a close cousin who needed a kidney transplant after suffering from Type I diabetes. Receiving a kidney transplant added precious years to her cousin's life. In every possible situation, Ballew educates the African American community about the importance of not only becoming a registered donor, but also how to share their wish with their family members.

"People like Alfarena demonstrate how cornea, organ and tissue donation can transform the lives of more than just their recipients. Her cousin's kidney transplant led to Alfarena's tireless efforts to encourage donor registration, which will directly extend and improve the lives of others in her community," stated Kevin Corcoran, EBAA President and CEO. "I deeply appreciate her work and am proud to present her with the Crystal Cornea Award."

Ballew passionately facilitates coordination between the MCCO and VisionFirst to assure that donation is completed in even the most complex cases. Because of her assistance, countless lives are being changed through corneal donation. In the last five years, the MCCO has been involved in 258 donor cases, providing the potential for over 500 people to receive corneal transplants. Of those cases, 64 were direct referrals to VisionFirst; giving the possibility for over 120 people to receive the gift of sight.

EBAA honored Ballew at its 57th Annual Meeting on Friday, June 8, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

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About the Eye Bank Association of America

The Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA), established in 1961, is the oldest transplant association in the nation and sets standards, provides education, and engages in advocacy to support eye donation,



and cornea transplantation and research. EBAA has led the transplantation field with the establishment of medical standards for eye banking, and comprehensive training and certification programs for eye bank personnel. Over 90 member eye banks operate in the United States, Canada, and Asia. These eye banks made possible 84,297 sight-restoring corneal transplants in the United States in 2017. To learn more, visit www.restoresight.org.