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2022 YEAR IN REVIEW

MEMBER
VALUE



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CHAIR'S ADDRESS

Jennifer Li, MD, Sierra Donor Services Eye Bank
2022-2024



As I stop to think about and reflect on this past year, it feels like we've lived a thousand lifetimes and had five hundred, twenty five thousand, six hundred crazy moments. Looking back at 2022, can you even remember how the year began? Let's take a stroll down memory lane together, shall we?

At the beginning of January 2022, after nearly two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, fatigued and Zoomed out, we found ourselves in the worst COVID surge to date. The highly transmissible Omicron variant was spreading like wildfire; more than a million new cases reported in a single day in the US at its peak in mid-January. Despite our desire to return to the pre-pandemic way of life, the Omicron surge delayed the return of in-person meetings for a few more months. We had to postpone our biannual Eye Banker and Physician Leadership

Programs that had been scheduled for February, and we went back into our virtual interactions a little longer - like Punxsutawney Phil, seeing his shadow and returning to his hole for another six more weeks of winter.

Unlike Phil, who hibernates in the winter, we were hard at work with virtual webinars, community chats, info sessions and seminars. Some of our virtual highlights over this past year included a panel discussion event celebrating Women's History Month in March, an update from Dr. Sridhar Basavaraju from the CDC on emerging infectious diseases in May, and a webinar highlighting multicultural perspectives on eye donation during National Minority Donor Awareness Month in August.

As 2022 progressed, we found ourselves slowly entering a "post-pandemic" world. To be fair, COVID was still around (as I can personally attest), but as a nation, we were beginning to adjust to the "new normal." Many felt eager and ready to travel again, and most importantly, to finally meet again in person. And so in June, our EBAA family gathered in Baltimore for our first in-person Annual Meeting since 2019! Good morning Baltimore! It was a time for us to reconnect, meet new friends and colleagues, and of course, learn about what is new and exciting in eye banking and corneal transplantation. Together, we were able to honor both our 2021 and 2022 Heise Award recipients, Brian Philippp and Eric Meinecke. It was a wonderful few days together again that ended in literal fireworks. We couldn't have asked for a better reunion after so long away.

The Fall gave us another opportunity to gather together at the Cornea and Eye Banking Forum in Chicago. The Forum is a highlight every year for many of us - a favorite meeting because of the robust scientific presentations and interactive discussions. This year the Forum followed the World Cornea Congress and was a great success, with a truly global audience. We were able to celebrate our 2022 Paton Award Recipient, Dr. Anthony Aldave, whose R. Townley Paton Lecture looked at addressing corneal blindness in the developing world.

Our entrance into a post-COVID world, however, has been far from smooth. COVID supply-chain issues left us with a corneal preservation medium crisis with the discontinuation of Life4C and manufacturing delays with Optisol-GS. And just as we thought we were settling in to a post-pandemic period with COVID, we were hit with another new emerging infectious disease with the outbreak of Mpox. In each case, EBAA has responded swiftly to help prevent a major disruption in eye banking assuring that the needs of our donors and recipients continue to be met. I am proud of our association and our community for coming together in times like these to fulfill the mission and vision of the EBAA - to champion the restoration of sight through core services to our members to advance donation, transplantation, and research in our communities and throughout the world.

*"Five hundred, twenty five thousand, six hundred minutes
Five hundred, twenty five thousand moments so dear
Five hundred, twenty five thousand, six hundred minutes
How do you measure, measure a year?"*

- "Seasons of Love" from Rent

Finally, 2022 saw the launch of our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives, including the formation of a new DEI Committee. This is something that I am very passionate about, and I am delighted that there is so much interest in these issues within our community. As this group continues to meet, I am excited for the new ideas, perspectives, and programming that they will bring to our organization, and I am committed to furthering this core value within the EBAA. I hope that all of our members and all of the communities that we serve will feel that they are heard and have an honored seat at the table here at the EBAA.

It has been a truly been a rollercoaster of a year for all of us! But it really does feel like we are settling back into a routine of post-pandemic life. We can start to think about the future and where we are headed both individually and collectively. As we move through the new year, I hope we continue to come together and work collaboratively to ensure that the future of eye banking remains strong.

Thank you all for all the work that you do. Thank you to all of our eye donors and their families - we are forever indebted to you and your generosity and selflessness. Let us remember to seize all the moments that we can, and enjoy every minute that we have! May that be the measure of our year!


Jennifer Li, MD

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Kevin P. Corcoran, CAE

Benefit by Association

Associations are incredible institutions. They invite all the members of a given profession or industry to pay for the privilege of sharing their knowledge and insights with their peers and colleagues, who also happen to be their competitors. When viewed from that perspective, one must wonder; Why would anyone join an association? And yet, at EBAA, we are fortunate that every eligible eye bank is a member of our association.

So, why do they do it? Perhaps because of associations' unique strengths...

By harnessing the collective skills of the entire profession, **associations do work that individual members cannot**. Whether we're initiating legislative and regulatory advocacy, cultivating newly registered donors, or managing supply chain crises, EBAA's reach as representative of the entire profession gives us access and influence that exceeds that of any individual member. Governmental agencies and industry partners collaborate with us because they know that we not only speak *for* our members, but we also speak *with* them, and serve as the conduit for information exchange. This seat at the table is critical, giving members a voice in matters directly impacting their operations and futures.

By serving the needs of all their members, **associations are unbiased**. When the production of corneal storage medium was completely cut off for nearly eight months, a few eye banks could have easily hoarded the remaining supply, but EBAA worked to ensure that all eye banks had enough medium to serve their physicians. Through ongoing communications, facilitated sharing, and hands-on allocation of the limited supply when it came back online, we ensured that no eye bank ran completely dry.

Similarly, EBAA's Medical Standards and accreditation program demonstrate the importance of collective action. All members may serve on our Medical Advisory Board and Accreditation Board, and their significant decisions are ratified by the voting members of those bodies. This ensures that our policies and procedures are medically and ethically sound, and are not influenced by what's most convenient or beneficial to an individual eye bank or surgeon.

By inviting the participation of all members of the community they serve, **associations are inclusive**. The eye banking and corneal transplantation profession, like the broader

community in which it exists, is comprised of very diverse individuals, each with unique perspectives and experiences that enrich our common knowledge. Recognizing our shortcomings in this area, EBAA established a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to actively engage members of our community who may not have been fully welcomed in the past. This committee advises the Board and our members while helping us to broaden our view on the profession.

And by maintaining a broad and forward-looking perspective, **associations are dynamic**. Our profession is changing rapidly as new business models, competitive strategies, and ocular therapies transform what we do and how we do it. EBAA hosted a panel discussion on "The Future of Eye Banking" during our Annual Meeting, and the Board has referred to that session repeatedly as it considers new avenues to help all our members thrive in the evolving environment of eye banking, whatever that might look like.



Viewed through this lens, it's no surprise at all that eye banks and corneal surgeons participate in EBAA.

These are just a few examples of how we serve our members; the rest of our Year in Review report shares countless more. Please don't hesitate to contact me or any member of the EBAA Board or staff, if you have any suggestions on how we can help you benefit by association with EBAA.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Kevin P. Corcoran".

President & CEO

"EBAA's reach as representative of the entire profession gives us access and influence that exceeds that of any individual member. Governmental agencies and industry partners collaborate with us because they know that we not only speak for our members, but we also speak with them."

FINANCIAL REPORT

Eye Bank Association of America
Revenue and Expenses For Fiscal Year 2022

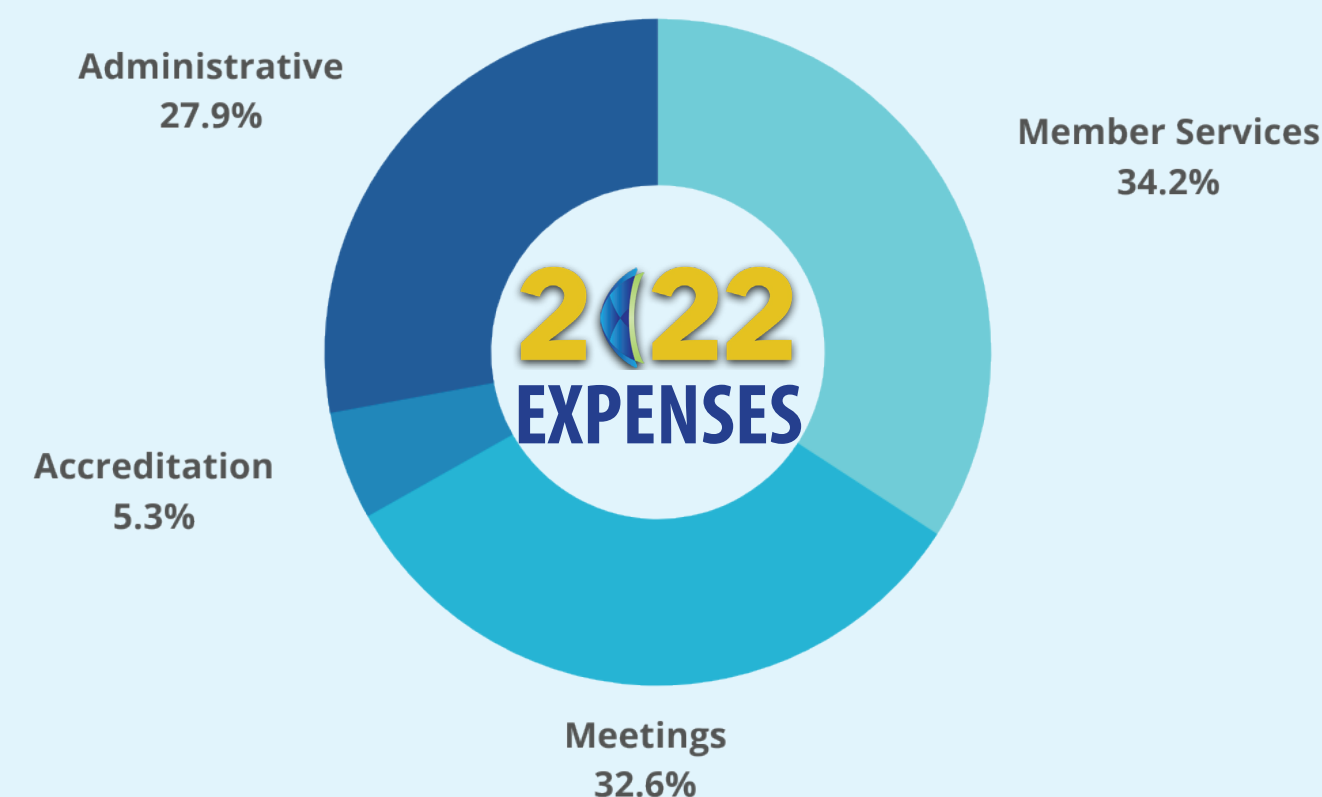
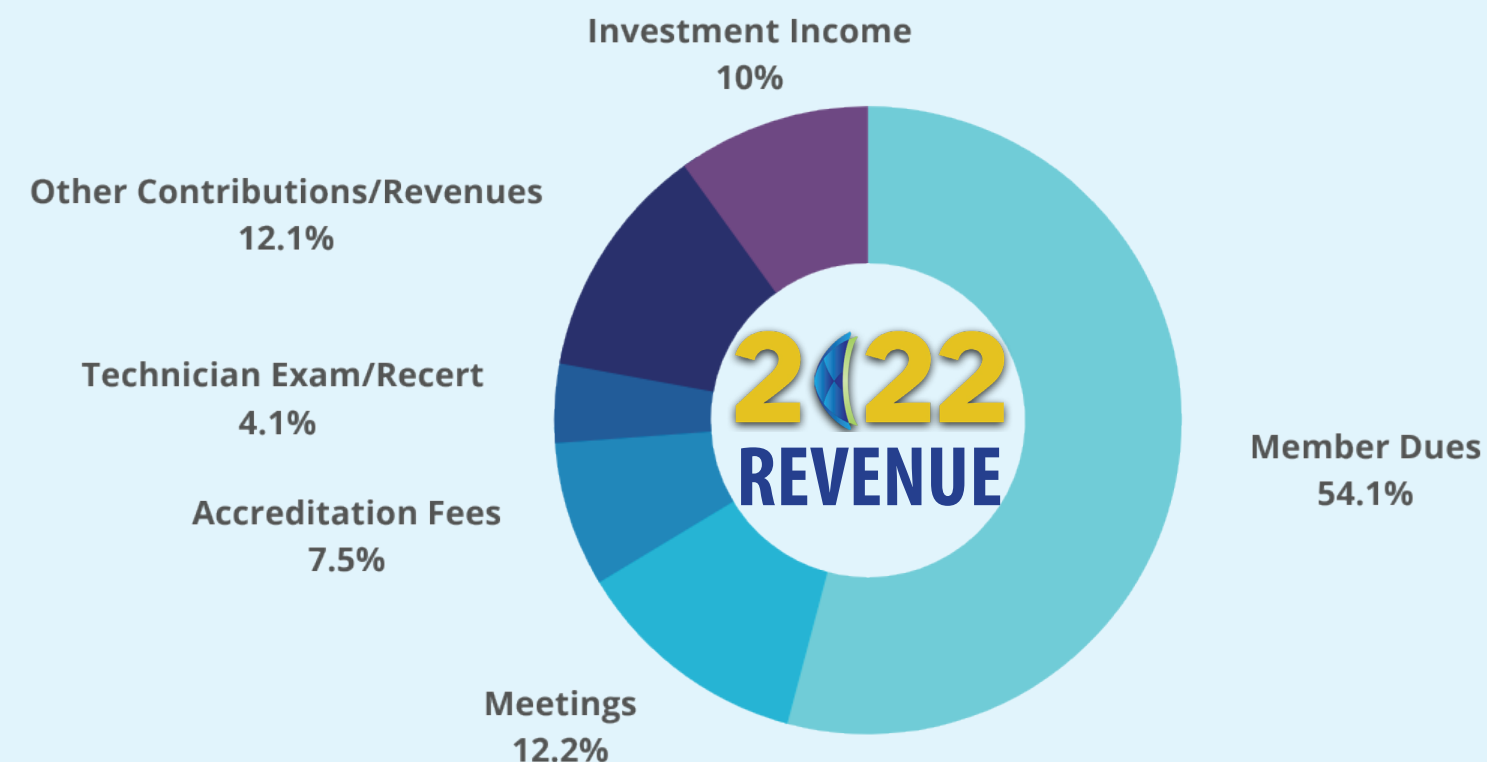
REVENUE

Member Dues	\$1,254,767
Meetings	\$283,528
Accreditation Fees	\$173,051
Technician Exam/Recert	\$94,389
Other Contributions/Revenues	\$281,287
Investment Income	\$230,735
Total	\$2,317,757

EXPENSES

Member Services	\$836,376
Meetings	\$798,836
Accreditation	\$128,857
Administrative	\$683,513
Total	\$2,447,582

NOTE: EBAA experienced an unrealized investment loss of \$1,680,955 in FYE 2022



STATISTICAL REPORT

Eye Banking by the Numbers

Since 1961, member eye banks have provided tissue for more than 2,279,302 sight-restoring transplants!

Eye banks in the United States adjusted to the reality of operating safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, 2022 brought new intermittent supply challenges with corneal storage media due to global supply chain and manufacturing issues. Responsibly reducing donor intake allowed eye banks to continue services uninterrupted. While U.S. eye banks were able to completely serve domestic needs, there was a heavy impact on the availability of tissue for international use or long-term preservation.

In 2022, total donors were down 3.6% and total corneas donated were down 3.3% compared to 2021. Total corneal grafts (transplanted or long-term preserved) using tissue from U.S. banks were down 0.6% in 2022 compared to 2021. Intermediate term preserved corneas, which included all refrigerated tissue stored in hypothermic corneal storage solution used for full thickness and lamellar procedures, decreased 0.3% from 72,038 in 2021 to 71,835 in 2022.

Domestic keratoplasty procedures increased slightly from 49,110 in 2021 to 49,597 in 2022 (1%). The number of domestic PK (15,835), DSAEK (15,544), and DMEK (15,248) procedures were essentially the same in 2022. Total international exports were down 3% from 22,928 in 2021 to 22,238 in 2022 and accounted



for the slight overall drop in total transplants using intermediate-term preservation medium. Both domestic and international transplant numbers still lag behind pre-COVID numbers.

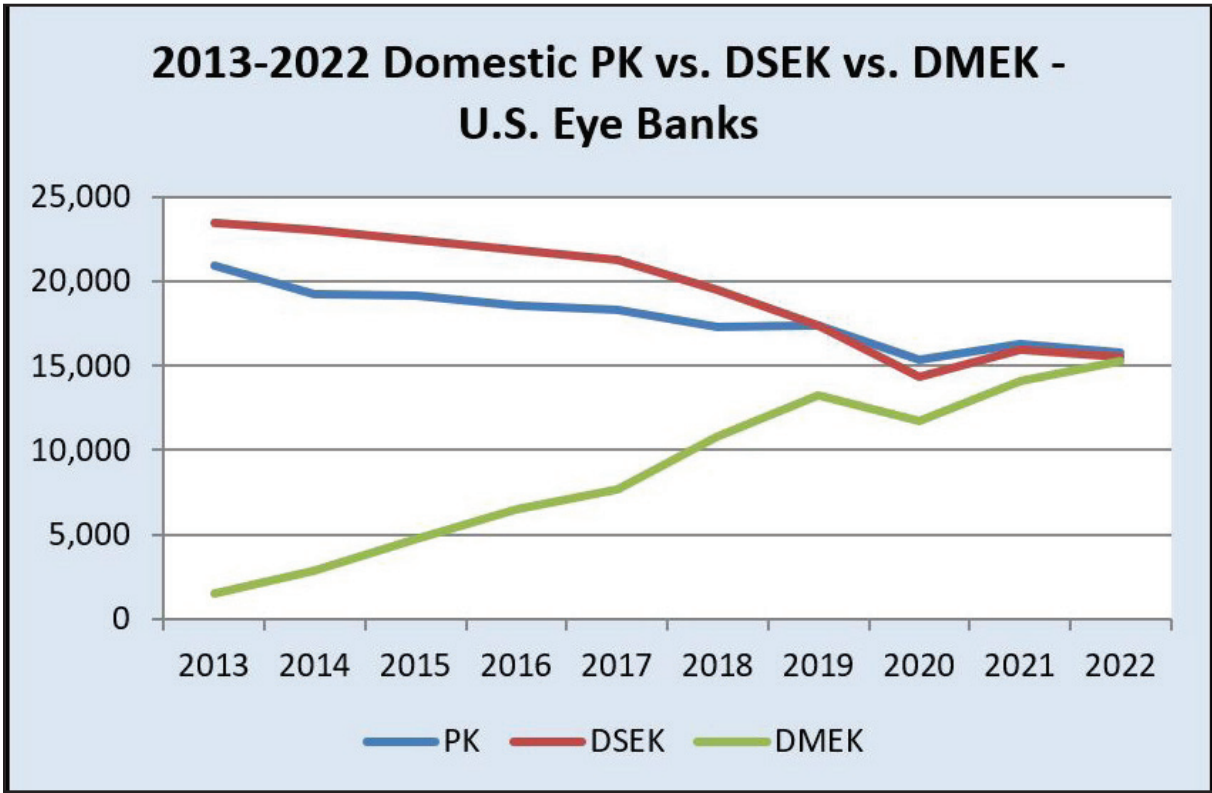
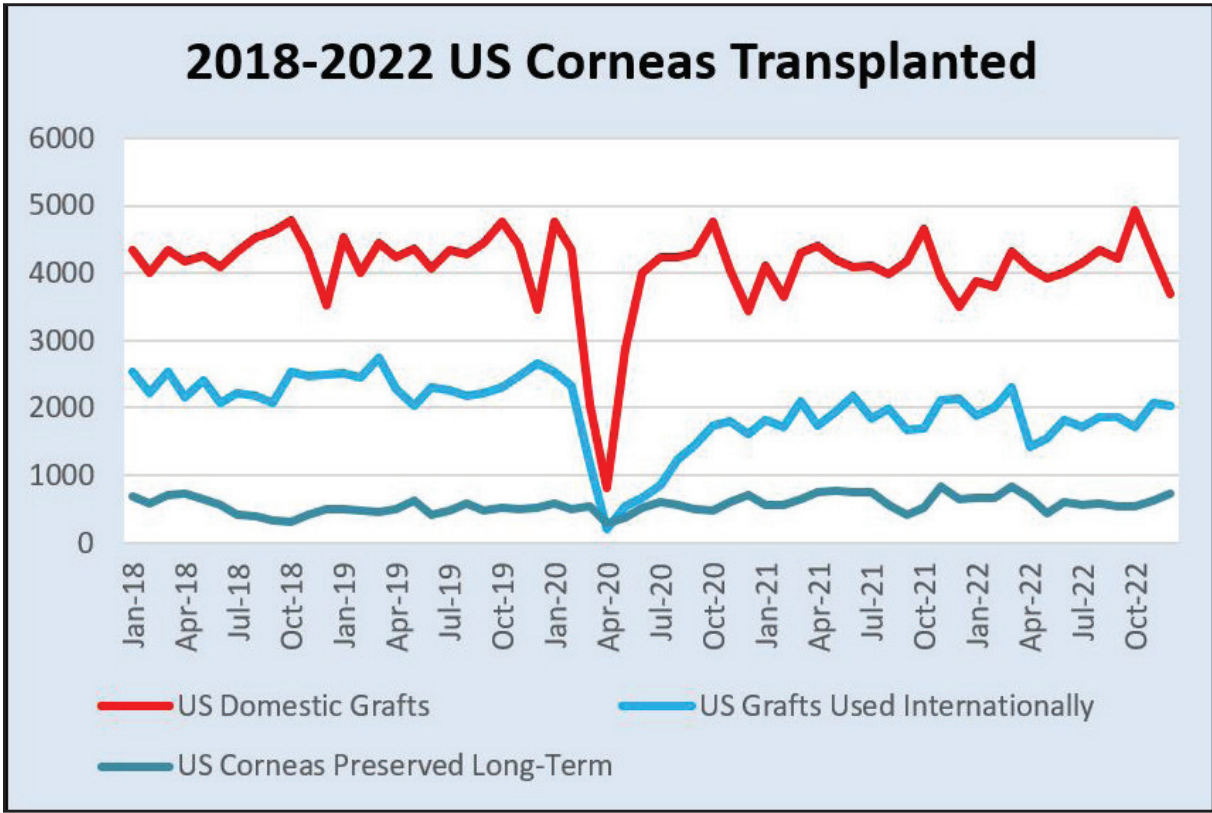
U.S. eye banks also provided 20,577 ocular tissues for research and training in 2022; placements for both purposes were lower than in 2021.

TOTAL DONATIONS AND DISTRIBUTION BY EYE BANKS IN 2022

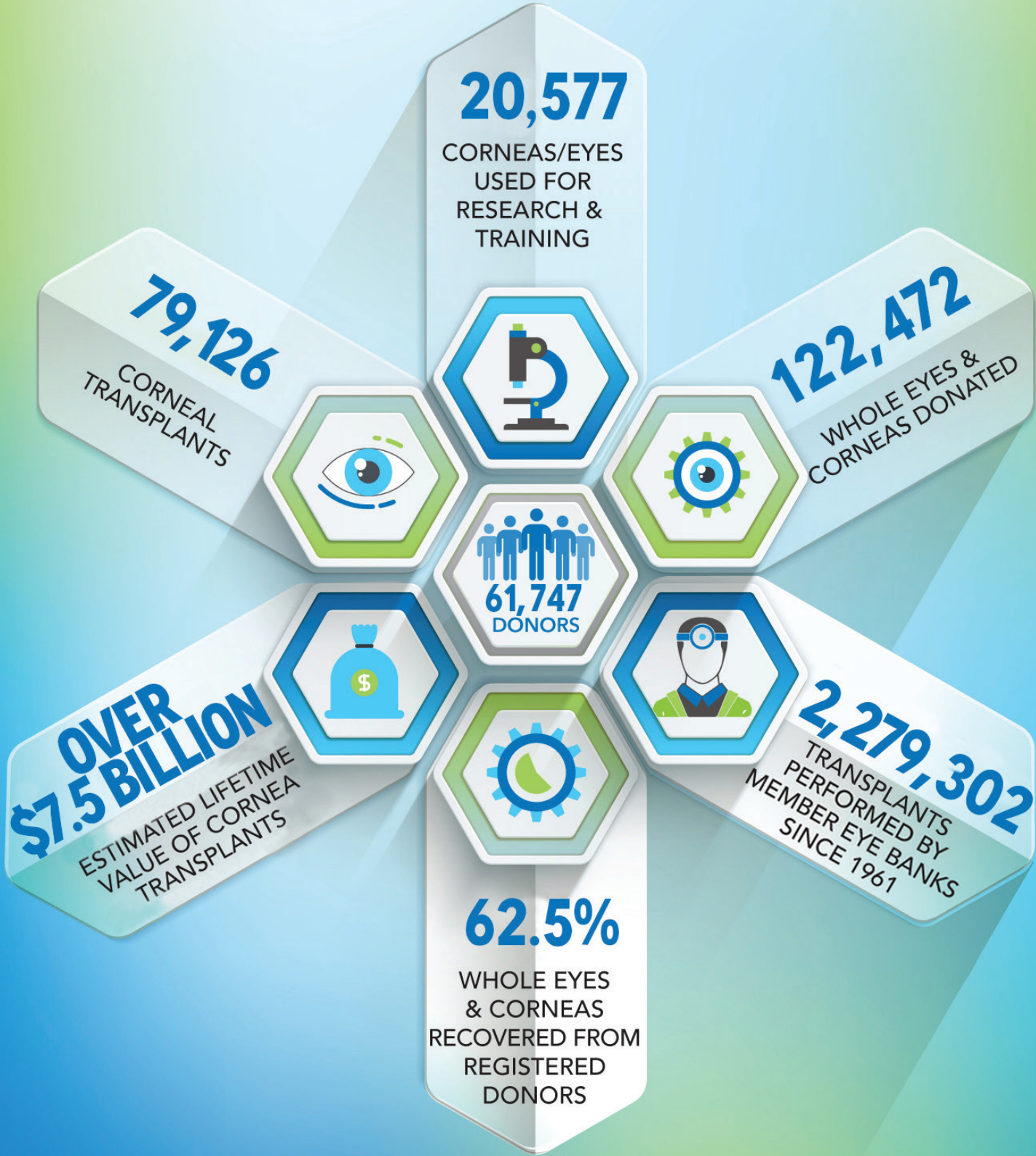
DONORS:	US EYE BANKS	INTERNATIONAL EYE BANKS	COMBINED
Total Number of Donors	61,747	2,851	64,598
Whole Eyes and Corneas Donated	122,472	5,669	128,141
Whole Eyes/Corneas Recovered from Registered Donors	62.5%	38.4%	
Corneal Transplants	79,126	3,310	82,436
Corneas & Eyes Used for Research & Training	20,577	1,248	21,825
Transplants Performed by Member Eye Banks Since 1961:			2,279,302
Total Value of US Transplants in 2022	over \$7.5 Billion		

STATISTICAL REPORT

Eye Banks by the Numbers



2022 EYE BANKING BY THE NUMBERS



CORNEA DONOR - GIVING NEW LIFE TO OTHERS

DELIVERING MEMBER VALUE

Moving Forward in the 'New Normal'

If 2020 and 2021 go down in history as the “COVID years,” then 2022 will likely be remembered as the “return to normal” or “the new normal.” COVID still influences our lives, but its threat level has declined as more research and scientific breakthroughs allow us to live our lives while pursuing our mission to restore sight worldwide.

It can be argued that the pandemic, and the measures it forced us to undertake, bonded us together as a community more than ever – we realized how much we need one another to share hardships and successes, offer ideas, and build one another up when our morale was low. Reflecting on these community ties in 2022 reveals how much value, both tangible and intangible, is contained within [EBAA membership](#).

Hello, Mpox...

Just as COVID was seemingly contained, we were introduced to mpox (originally referred to as “monkeypox”). As we once again braced for the unknown, EBAA’s members had the benefit of Jennifer DeMatteo, EBAA’s Director of Regulations and Standards, being in constant contact with the CDC and other federal agencies. EBAA shared the most updated information with members through email alerts and regular notifications in The Focal Point.

Our Medical Advisory Board educated members about how mpox could potentially hinder corneal transplantation, and provided guidance to protect the tissue supply, ensuring the best outcomes for recipients. The threat posed by mpox is ongoing, and EBAA remains dedicated to anticipating its potential impact on eye banking and keeping members educated on how to best navigate its development.

Goodbye Supply Chain Reliability

Corneal transplants cannot happen without donor corneas, and eye banks can’t provide corneas if they can’t preserve them as they move from donor to recipient. This process was severely interrupted in 2022 as the profession suffered a number of disruptions to the supply of corneal preservation media.

The spring brought two shocks to the eye banking system when Bausch + Lomb announced that they would be unable to provide Optisol due to supply chain issues, and Numedis discontinued operations entirely when they were unable to replace their contract manufacturer. Summer was no better; Bausch + Lomb resumed production for three weeks, and then suspended distribution for nearly five months.

This left eye banks scrambling for storage medium. EBAA provided support by regularly surveying members to understand their inventory on hand, and playing matchmaker between banks with a surplus and those running dry. Concurrently, Alchima began distributing Eusol-C, and later Kerasave, into the United States. As a result, no EBAA member banks were unable to provide tissue to their U.S. surgeons due to lack of storage medium, and international placements were only mildly affected.

Good Morning Baltimore

After two years of virtual Annual Meetings, we were able to return to meet in person during the first week of June in Baltimore. Among the insightful keynotes, educational sessions, inspiring donor and recipient stories was a palpable sense of delight to be together in person once again. While technology proved to be invaluable during the darkest days of COVID,

allowing us to connect and continue our essential work, there is no replacement for the human spirit and in person interaction of physical meetings. The Annual Meeting continues to be a vital event for members; offering renewed inspiration, continuing education, networking, and strategic conversations. We look forward to hosting you in Dallas in June.



Guests attending EBAA Annual Meeting in Baltimore, MD



Dr. David Verdeir during Q&A



Kevin Corcoran, EBAA President & CEO

Valuing our Diversity

Last year, the EBAA Board of Directors placed a focus on the association’s diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the wake of incidents impacting broader society which highlighted DEI short-comings within EBAA itself. This focus produced unconscious bias training for the EBAA Board, an association-wide survey on overall DEI knowledge, opinions, and needs, and recruitment for and selection of a standing DEI Committee.

With the committee in place at the end of 2022, we look forward to bringing our members educational opportunities and resources, and to creating a safer, more representative, and more comfortable environment for all. Most importantly, the committee’s establishment reinforces that DEI is an ongoing, permanent value, benefiting all of EBAA.

Broadening Educational Availability

Some of the many EBAA offerings that proved to be invaluable during the pandemic were our continuing education webinars and virtual workshops. Members’ feedback highlighted the benefit of being able to deepen their understanding of eye banking while remaining in their own office or home to access these recordings at their convenience. To broaden the reach of these constructive sessions, it was decided to offer online educational sessions and webinars free of charge to any employee of member eye banks. This allows more individuals to benefit from these trainings and discussions at no financial burden to the eye bank.

Continued Commitment to Members

EBAA continues offering high-quality meetings, events, educational offerings, awards, scholarships, research and grant opportunities that are greatly visible to our members. Lesser-known are some of the daily efforts that do not get spotlighted, yet benefit EBAA members and eye banking as a whole. They include, but are not limited to: legislative efforts, international crisis assessment, physician outreach, brand/mission awareness, representation in the transplant community, and more. EBAA remains motivated by our mission to #RestoreSight worldwide, and inspired by our members to continue to offer all the tools possible to aid in the calling of sight restoration.

Moving forward in a new year, we’re exploring innovative new ways to help members prepare for the future of eye banking and what’s next for the industry. We encourage you to be an active part of EBAA, and take advantage of all the [benefits available through your membership](#).

The DEI Committee’s establishment reenforces that DEI is an ongoing, permanent value, benefiting all of EBAA.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) – Engaging ALL Our Members

Over the course of the past few years, events and circumstances captured public attention and started a nation-wide conversation on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). As part of this discourse, EBAA’s leaders reflected on how inclusive the association is to all facets of our community. To this end, EBAA partnered with Ascension Worldwide to help identify the current state of EBAA’s DEI efforts, and to develop a plan that is inclusive of all voices within the organization.

The first step in the DEI process was developing an anonymous and confidential survey to be completed by the membership. This helped determine levels of diversity throughout member eye banks, overall understanding of DEI, individual eye banks’ current DEI initiatives, and where EBAA could use DEI improvement. The results of this survey, compiled and analyzed by Ascension Worldwide, gave the Board a pathway forward on how to improve DEI throughout the Association.

Upon receiving the analyzed survey results, two immediate steps were taken by authority of the Board:

- Making Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion a standing “Value” of EBAA
- The creation of a permanent DEI Committee



EBAA held an interest session open to the entire membership to describe the DEI Committee’s role and processes and to encourage participation. Interest in the new committee was considerable; forty-five applications were submitted for roughly ten committee spots.

Once selected, members of the committee met to determine an overall charge for the group and identified goals for their first year and beyond. Just before the start of 2023, the DEI Committee announced its first educational event, an unconscious bias training webinar open to the whole EBAA membership at no cost.

Moving forward, the committee hopes to host quarterly informational DEI sessions on a variety of topics, identified by the committee itself and through member feedback.



COVID-19/MONKEYPOX GUIDANCE OVERVIEW

PPRS Continues to Provide Guidance for Emerging Infectious Diseases

MONKEYPOX

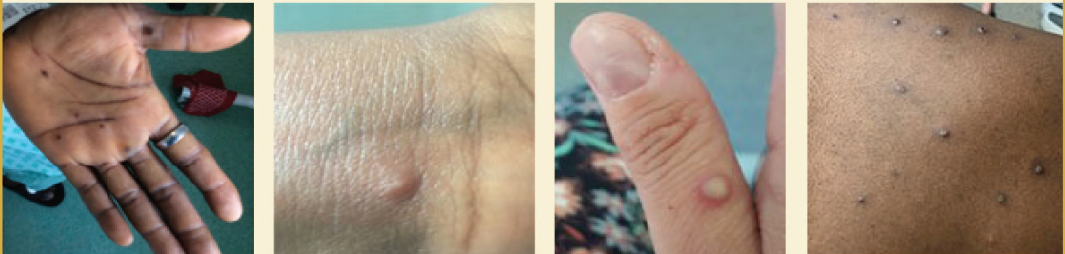



Photo Credit: NHS England High Consequence Infectious Diseases Network

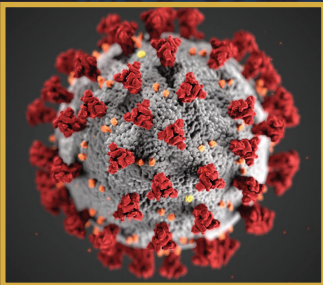
VISUAL EXAMPLES OF MONKEYPOX RASH



CS228W7-EK

The Policy and Position Review Subcommittee (PPRS) of the Medical Advisory Board is tasked with developing policy statements and screening recommendations for emerging infectious diseases like COVID-19 and Mpox, which may affect the safety of ocular tissue for transplantation.

The first informational alert and screening recommendations for COVID-19 were issued on February 3, 2020. The PPRS continued to provide updated guidance and donor screening recommendations as the pandemic evolved, based on guidelines from FDA and CDC, as well as available scientific evidence.



EBAA's current recommendations can be found in the [Updated Guidance and COVID-19 Screening Recommendations](#) released on March 14, 2022.

The CDC confirmed the first U.S. Monkeypox virus infection (now called Mpox) on May 18, 2022. Information about the Mpox outbreak continued to be provided through the EBAA newsletter, *The Focal Point: Advocacy & Legislative Update*.

The PPRS issued their first informational alert on Monkeypox and Eye Tissue Donation on July 6, 2022. The committee reassessed what is currently known about the risk of transmission of Mpox, including the potential for human-to-human transmission and disseminated infection from donated ocular tissues and issued their [September 26, 2022](#) guidance. The latest alert contained Mpox exclusionary criteria for ocular donors and recommended screening questions.

EBAA RESPONDS TO A SUPPLY CHAIN CRISIS

What do you do when a product that is essential to your operations is unexpectedly unavailable for eight months of the year? In the case of "The Great Storage Medium Shortage of 2022," you gather and share all available information, identify as many solutions as possible, and collaborate with all stakeholders to maintain operations and plot a course forward.

In March 2022, Bausch + Lomb, whose Optisol-GS corneal storage medium held 75% of the US market, announced that Optisol production would be halted for six to eight weeks due to supply chain issues; that shut down ultimately lasted 12 weeks. Ten days after B+L's announcement, Nume-dis, manufacturer of Life4C, which comprised most of the remainder of the market, discontinued operations entirely when their manufacturer opted out of their contract. This left US-eye banks with no domestic source of storage medium, a product without which tissue cannot be preserved.

EBAA immediately surveyed the membership to determine their current inventory and to anticipate their future needs, and learned that banks' situations varied widely, with between two and twenty weeks of storage medium on hand, and more than 40% reported that their inventory was below normal levels. We asked eye banks with a surplus to share medium with those running low; thankfully, members demonstrated their typical generosity, and EBAA was able to facilitate many transfers of storage medium among banks.

We then notified all other interested parties, including physicians (through AAO and Cornea Society), regulators (FDA), international eye banks (Global Alliance of Eye Bank Associations), and other potential suppliers of medium (Alchimia and Cornisol). Our goal was to keep everyone apprised of the evolving situation and to understand how we might be able to collaborate on our shared concerns.

Ongoing monthly surveys of eye banks' inventory helped us track the impact on our members and were invaluable when Bausch + Lomb's contract manufacturer came back online in early June. Since pent-up demand was more than three times greater than the initial manufacturing run, EBAA assumed the role of allocating the product based on need, ensuring that all eye banks could maintain operations and serve their surgeons, on the assumption that Optisol production would return to normal so banks could gradually restore their depleted inventory levels.

Unfortunately, after two production runs, B+L's contract manufacturer again suspended operations; initially announced as being approximately six weeks, this shut down lasted more than four months. While Alchimia's Eusol-C and Kerasave products were adopted by several banks, their limited production could never fully meet demand. Eye banks returned to stretching supply by tightening donor criteria, reducing international placements, and curtailing research and education uses.

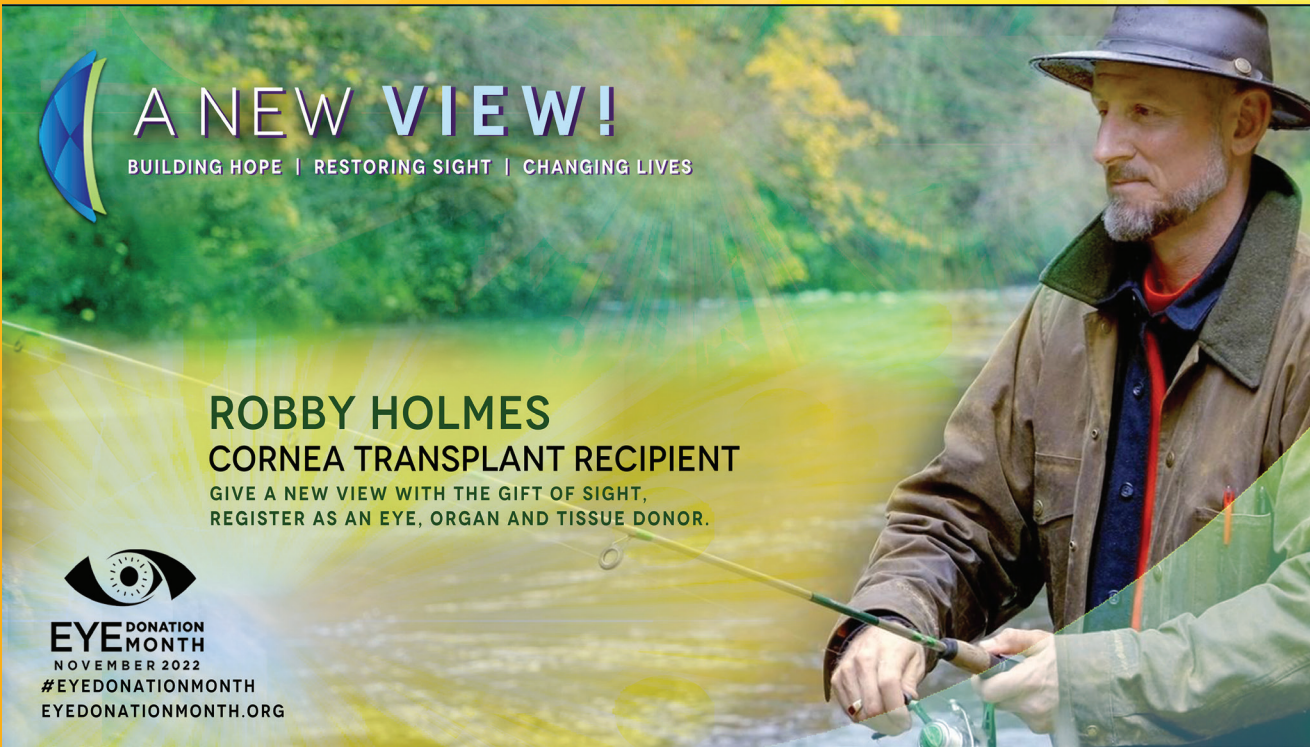
Dr. Jonathan Lass introduced welcome news when he reviewed data from his [Cornea Preservation Time Study](#) and found that placing processed tissue into the medium used during recovery had no ill effect on patient outcomes; this greatly extended eye banks' supply of medium.

Ultimately, B+L resumed production, and after a few rounds of EBAA-directed distribution, eye banks have returned to ordering based on their need, while also purchasing a cushion to prepare for future unforeseen events. EBAA connects with B+L each month to confirm the next two months' production schedule, and three months into the resumption of service, they have met their distribution benchmarks.

There are many lessons one could take from this experience, but the most significant is the essential role that a coordinating organization like EBAA plays in responding to challenges such as this. By engaging with all interested parties, working with full transparency, and seeking to maximize long-term outcomes for everyone, even at the short-term expense of some, we were able to ensure that no EBAA-member eye bank ever fully exhausted its supply of storage medium.

2022 EYE DONATION MONTH

A New View!



The theme of Eye Donation Months 2020 and 2021 was, “A Community of Compassion” – a reflection of living and still working towards our mission to #RestoreSight worldwide during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the threat of COVID started to subside in 2022, we wanted an upbeat, optimistic, and hopeful theme as eye bankers adjusted to and moved forward in the “new normal.” At the Annual Meeting in June, we officially revealed “A New View!” as the theme for Eye Donation Month 2022. The reveal also included artwork for the “face” of 2022 Eye Donation Month, a corneal recipient named Alexis Zorrilla, and a poster for corneal recipient Robby Holmes – the subject of one of four promotional videos created for the membership.

New for 2022

Alexis Zorrilla, the “face” of 2022 Eye Donation Month, is bilingual and speaks fluent Spanish. So, for the first time, EBAA had the opportunity to record and release a promotional video entirely in Spanish – this was particularly appreciated by eye banks with significant Hispanic populations.

With the redesign of EBAA’s website, the [Eye Donation Month site](#) also received an upgrade. The new site was sleeker and easier to navigate for users, improved SEO search function for those seeking information about eye donation, and still housed all the materials and resources for promotion in an accessible Dropbox folder.

Fitting with the “A New View!” theme, EBAA conducted the “[Share Your View Photo Contest](#)” where members could submit their personal photos of ‘views’ that made them especially grateful for the gift of sight. The response to the contest was overwhelming; EBAA received more than 120 stunning submissions, which were narrowed down to 12 finalists. The Donor, Community and Partner Relations (DCPR) Committee was tasked to select four winners, but the submissions were SO GOOD, that three honorable mentions were also chosen. The winning photographs were converted into Eye Donation Month-branded social media graphics that members could use as content during November; and winning photographers received gift cards.

Based on member feedback and popularity from last year, additional shareable social media graphics were created for 2022 including; one for each EDM video, an eye donation statistics infographic, “Share Your View” photo contest winners (four graphics), an “A New View” branded ‘overlay’ to create a graphic out of any photograph, and customizable Veterans Day graphics.



SHARE YOUR VIEW PHOTO CONTEST: WINNERS



Looking to the Future

At the completion of Eye Donation Month, EBAA issued a survey to the membership soliciting feedback on the 2022 “A New View!” campaign. Based on responses, members can look forward to continued use of several videos to tell the story of corneal donation and the gift of sight, social media graphics that attract attention, compelling poster artwork, and more!



Run for Vision

The Run for Vision returned as an in-person event for the first time since moving virtual in 2020, due to COVID-19. Held in Chicago in conjunction with the Cornea and Eye Banking Forum and the American Academy of Ophthalmology’s annual meeting, runners were treated to a scenic course on the shore of Lake Michigan. Continued thanks to Bausch + Lomb for their ongoing sponsorship of this event.

Continuing the success of the virtual Run for Vision, we also offered our runners the option of running a remote 5K during November in support of Eye Donation Month. Virtual runners were sent the 2022 commemorative t-shirt, and were able to run solo, or as a group.

Recognizing EBAA Veterans



Because Eye Donation Month shares November with Veterans Day, EBAA once again took the week of November 11 to honor those throughout the

association who have served the nation in uniform. EBAA interviewed and profiled different veteran members and posted their stories to our homepage. Their stories were also shared across social media and in the November issue of Insight. Members had access to a customizable social media graphic to honor specific veterans within their own eye banks and were able to share it across social media.



Richard Jordan, Transplant Services Center
UT Southwestern Medical Center



Gregory Rubeo, VisionFirst

MEETING, EVENTS, EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS

Continuing Education with Eye Bank Association of America

In 2022, EBAA brought eye bank professionals and corneal surgeons together to learn, network, collaborate, and govern. Here is a snapshot of the EBAA events hosted in 2022!

TECHNICIAN EDUCATION SEMINAR

“The TES was great! It was very informative, and I would highly recommend for any new eye banker.”

The Technician Education Seminar (TES), hosted virtually January 21 through March 18, welcomed 59 attendees, and was streamed in the US, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Chile. The hybrid virtual course featured 27 on-demand presentations and 5 live workshops delivered by 17 experienced faculty members.

The live interactive online workshops provided attendees the opportunity to ask questions, review on-demand content, watch live demonstrations,

participate in lively discussions, test their knowledge, interact with the faculty during breakouts and case study discussions, participate in activities, and much more. Highlights of the live sessions included: personal accounts about the gift of sight, interactive slit lamp microscopy evaluations, demonstrations of procedures, case study discussions, simulations, and a cornea excision demonstration.

We want to thank all of the faculty members who contributed to the course and want to extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Troy Win'E and Ingrid Schunder for leading the seminar and planning a strong, meaningful educational experience for eye bank professionals.

“Thank you for an enjoyable learning experience! The course was well laid out and presented and the speakers were very knowledgeable.”



2022 ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS: REUNITED IN CHARM CITY!

“I had a fantastic time and appreciated how well organized and thoughtfully planned the conference was to provide administrative, technical, and leadership growth opportunities.”

“Being back in person with my eye bank family was the highlight for me.”

After two years apart, eye bank professionals and corneal surgeons convened in Baltimore on June 1-4 for the 2022 [Annual Meeting](#). Attendees were all smiles—thrilled to see each other and meet to discuss important topics facing the eye bank community. The themes of growth, inclusivity, innovation, relationship building, research, and the importance of cornea donation were all front and center through presentations, live demonstrations, interactive sessions, panel discussions, scientific sessions, workshops, award presentations, personal accounts and more.



Detective Anita Moore, corneal transplant recipient

RECEIVING THE GIFT OF SIGHT

Detective Anita Moore from the New York City Police Department shared her story about receiving the gift of sight through a corneal transplant. “Thanks to my donor, I have in many ways been reborn. I am truly sorry for my donor family’s loss, but want them to know how blessed I feel for the gift of sight from their loved one that I carry with me.” Detective Moore is also a living organ donor; she previously donated part of her liver to her father.

KEYNOTE SESSIONS AVAILABLE ONLINE

Each day of the conference started with a meaningful Keynote presentation. Here are two sessions that are now available online!

[The Inclusive Leader](#)

[The Future of Eye Banking and Corneal Transplantation](#)

HOUSE OF DELEGATES

The House of Delegates met and elected five individuals to the Board.

Chair-Elect:

Jim Quirk, CEBT, Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley

Speaker of the House:

Shannon Schweitzer, MBA, CEBT
Lions Eye Bank of West Central Ohio

At-Large Positions:

Esther Baker, MA, MBA, Iowa Lions Eye Bank
Tony Bavuso, MBA, CEBT, Saving Sight
Kristen McCoy, MS, CEBT, CTBS, Miracles In Sight

We thank all who ran for Board positions for their dedication to and interest in EBAA.

SCIENTIFIC SYMPOSIUM

The Scientific Symposium featured eleven scientific abstracts and an invited presentation by Sophie Deng, MD, PhD, on the “Management of Limbal Stem Cell Deficiency: Past, Present and Future.” The Best Paper of Session Award, supported by the International Journal of Eye Banking, was presented to Sung Lee, from Gift of Sight, for his presentation, “Low-friction Coating of Modified Jones Tubes Significantly Improves the Post-ejection Endothelial Cell Viability of DMEK Grafts.” [The Symposia Book](#) is available.

THE NIGHT AT THE NATIONAL AQUARIUM

#EBAA2022 meeting attendees gathered at the National Aquarium for a fun evening of food, drinks, networking, socializing, and aquatic life. Attendees shared that they had a wonderful time catching up with colleagues while also viewing the various aquatic life around them.



AWARDS AND HONORS

During the Annual Dinner and Awards Program, the following individuals were honored:

- 2020-2022 Board Chair:
Noël Mick
- 2021 Heise Award Recipient:
Brian Philippy, CEBT
- 2022 Crystal Cornea Recipient:
Senator Ralph Alvarado, MD
- 2022 Heise Award Recipient:
Eric Meinecke, CEBT

MEETING CONTRIBUTIONS

Thank you to those who made this meeting possible! Sponsors, speakers, the planning and review committees, exhibitors, the Living Legacy Foundation of Maryland, cornea recipient Anita Moore, VisionFirst and Miracles In Sight. We acknowledge the donors who made the live demos possible and contributed to the education of eye bankers from around the world, and everyone who contributed in some way to this meeting.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Thank you to the EBAA 2022 Annual Meeting Sponsors for their generous support.

Platinum
Medline

Silver
Donate Life America
Georgia Eye Bank
Lions Medical Eye Bank and
Research Center of Eastern Virginia
Med-Logics
Vital Tears
The Cincinnati Eye Bank

The [2022 Annual Meeting](#) is available on eyeLEARN. Registered attendees receive complimentary access.

The [2023 Annual Meeting](#) takes place June 21-24 at the Fairmont Dallas in Dallas, Texas. We look forward to another successful event. See y'all in Dallas!



2022 CORNEA AND EYE BANKING FORUM

“Excellent forum with great clinical cutting-edge information.”

The EBAA and Cornea Society hosted the [2022 Cornea and Eye Banking Forum](#) on Friday, September 30, at the McCormick Place West Building in Chicago, Illinois. The day-long event featured new research, invited sessions on hot topics, lectures, award presentations, and the R. Townley Paton Luncheon. We were thrilled to welcome 350 attendees for the program.



Best Paper of Session Award

Hamid Alemi, MD, MPH, a Fellow at Schepens Eye Research Institute received the Best Paper of Session Award for his presentation, “[Efficacy of Alpha Melanocyte Stimulating Hormone in Suppressing Corneal Edema Following Injury.](#)”

This award is presented annually by EBAA and Cornea Society to recognize the best paper by a medical student, resident or fellow. The 2022 award is supported by an unrestricted educational grant from Lions Eye Bank West Central Ohio.

R. Townley Paton Award

Dr. Anthony Aldave received the R. Townley Paton Award for his contributions to the EBAA, eye banking and sight restoration. Dr. Jennifer Li, the 2021 Paton Award Recipient, introduced Dr. Aldave

and presented him with the award. Dr. Aldave then delivered the [R. Townley Paton Lecture: The Science of Sight: Addressing Corneal Blindness in the Developing World.](#)

Program Committee & Faculty

Thank you to the moderators Sophie Deng, MD, PhD, and Joshua Hou, MD, for planning and moderating the event. Thank you to Zeba Syed, MD, Divya Srikumaran, MD, and Hajirah Saeed, MD, for being guest moderators throughout the program. Thank you to the speakers for sharing their research, expertise, and knowledge and to the program committee for helping with overall planning.

Conference Support

Thank you to the [Eye-Bank for Sight Restoration](#), [Lions Eye Bank West Central Ohio](#), [Gunther Weiss Scientific Glassblowing](#), [Lions Gift of Sight](#)/ Moria, [Wolters Kluwer](#) and [Oftal-One](#) for generously supporting the event through unrestricted educational grants.

2023 Cornea and Eye Banking Forum - Save the Date!

The 2023 Cornea and Eye Banking Forum will be held on November 3, in San Francisco, California.

“It was all excellent - there is a wonderful sense of community with this meeting, and it is very refreshing and encouraging!”

FALL LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

The Accreditation Board and Medical Advisory Board each met virtually this Fall. [The Medical Advisory Board Meeting](#) is available online. EBAA plans to host these meetings in person in San Francisco in 2023.



IN MEMORY OF PAUL DUBORD, MD: 1951-2022

Dr. Dubord was a Paton Society member for over 20 years and served on EBAA's Medical Advisory Board in a range of capacities from 2004 - 2022.

Dr. Dubord received the Paton Award in 2001 for his contributions to EBAA, eye banking, and sight restoration. He was also one of the driving forces behind the adoption of the Barcelona Principles, which established the ethical framework for the appropriate use of donated ocular tissue.

He contributed greatly to the eye banking and corneal transplantation communities and will be deeply missed.

eyeLEARN: LEARNING AVAILABLE ON-DEMAND

EBAA’s online education portal, eyeLEARN, continues to provide educational opportunities live and on-demand. eyeLEARN offers free sessions, on-demand webinars, live sessions, virtual events, event recordings, resources, and much more. In 2022, EBAA began offering all webinars to EBAA members for free. If you or your staff missed a session, access it on demand for free!



2022 WEBINARS

EBAA hosted these webinars throughout the year. Thank you to all the committees and speakers who planned and presented these sessions. All are available online and on-demand!

[CDC Update: Emerging Infectious Diseases and the Impact on Cornea Transplantation](#)

[DMEK Corneal Tissue Processing Basics](#)

[Funeral Directors and Donation: Ask the Experts](#)

[National Minority Donor Awareness Month: Multicultural Perspectives on Eye Donation](#)

[2021 Statistical Report: Understanding the Data](#)

[Risk Management in Eye Banking: Tools for Identifying and Assessing Risks](#)

[Media Relations: Promoting Your Organization’s Mission and Message](#)

[Women’s History Month: A Panel of Corneal Surgeon and Eye Banker Trailblazers](#)

[Designing and Delivering Impactful Presentations](#)

LEADERSHIP LISTINGS



2022-23 Board of Directors

2022 EBAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Jennifer Li, MD, Chair
Sierra Donor Services Eye Bank
- Jim Quirk, CEBT, Chair-Elect
Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley
- Elizabeth Fout, Secretary/Treasurer
Florida Lions Eye Bank
- Shannon Schweitzer, MBA, CEBT, Speaker of the House
Lions Eye Bank of West Central Ohio
- Noël Mick, Immediate Past Chair
The Eye-Bank for Sight Restoration
- Winston Chamberlain, MD, PhD
Medical Advisory Board Chair, VisionGift
- Esther Baker, MA, MBA, At-Large Member
Iowa Lions Eye Bank
- Tony Bavuso, CEBT, At-Large Member
Saving Sight
- Chris Hanna, MBA, CEBT, At-Large Member
Iowa Lions Eye Bank
- Kristen McCoy, MA, CEBT, CTBS, At-Large Member
Miracles In Sight
- Shahzad Mian, MD, At-Large Member
Eversight
- Megan Young, At-Large Member
San Diego Eye Bank
- Kevin Corcoran, CAE, President/CEO
Eye Bank Association of America

2022 EBAA STAFF

- Kevin Corcoran, CAE
President & CEO
- Jennifer DeMatteo, MCM, CIC
Director of Regulations and Standards
- Stacey Gardner, CAE
Director of Education
- Colleen Bayus, MA
Director of Communications
- Genevieve Magnuson, MS
Project Manager
- Herocia Hawkins
Administrative Assistant

2022 COMMUNITY CHATS

EBAA continues to bring members of the association together for Community Chats. These virtual discussions provide members opportunities to meet individuals with similar roles or job functions to discuss timely topics and share insights, lessons learned, best practices, and status updates regarding eye banking, donation, or transplantation. One of the most well attended chats was on storage solution. We look forward to continuing to offer these chats and discussions in the future.



CERTIFICATION

Celebrating the Newest CEBTs

EBAA IS THRILLED TO ANNOUNCE THE Newest CERTIFIED EYE BANK TECHNICIAN CEBT CLASSES OF 2022

CERTIFICATION UPDATE

Since 1981, EBAA has administered an exam to enable individuals in the eye banking profession to become [Certified Eye Bank Technicians \(CEBT\)](#). The certification process is a long-standing, well-respected program ensuring that eye bank technicians are well-versed in the standards and regulations of eye banking.

EBAA held the Certified Eye Bank Technician (CEBT) Exam in April and October, offering candidates the option to take the exam in person or at a location of their choice with a remote proctor. The exam took place April 9-23 and 19 of the 22 candidates passed the exam for an 86.4% passing rate. A special congratulations to Elizabeth Hacker from ConnectLife for earning the highest score in the spring exam cycle.

The exam was offered again in October with 21 of the 25 individuals successfully passing the exam, for an 84% passing rate.

A special congratulations to Julie Shephard from New Brunswick Organ and Tissue Program for earning the highest score during the fall exam cycle.

Congratulations to everyone who passed the exam this year and are now Certified Eye Bank Technicians!

Spring 2022 CEBTs

- Austin Adderly, CEBT
Utah Lions Eye Bank - John A. Moran Eye Center
- Lea Bagne, CEBT, *ConnectLife*
- Leonora Besancenez, CEBT
Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin
- Megan Chowhan, CEBT
Utah Lions Eye Bank - John A. Moran Eye Center
- Amanda Cunningham, CEBT
Arkansas Lions Eye Bank & Laboratory
- Sarah Czajkowski, CEBT
Center for Organ Recovery & Education
- Karli Diggins, CEBT, *Lions Eye Bank of Nebraska*
- Sarah Genest-Brunetta, CEBT, *Quebec Eye Bank*
- Melinda Glines, CEBT, *Dakota Lions Sight & Health*
- Myranda Grant, CEBT, *Eye Bank of Saskatchewan*
- Elizabeth Hacker, CEBT, *ConnectLife*
- Emma Letchworth, CEBT
Lions Eye Institute for Transplant & Research
- John Moore, CEBT
UT Southwestern Transplant Services Center Lions Eye Bank
- Jessica Odell, CEBT, *VisionGift*
- Eric Picone, CEBT, *Lifeshare Carolinas*
- Alberto Ramirez, CEBT
Sierra Donor Services Eye Bank
- Stacey Rios, CEBT, *Mid-America Transplant*
- Nikki Smith, CEBT, *The Eye Bank of Kentucky*
- Kelsey Zuk, CEBT
Western Texas Lions Eye Bank Alliance

Fall 2022 CEBTs

- Jamila Al-Shahrani, CEBT
King Abdulaziz Medical City for National Guard
- Katherine Ash, CEBT, *Eversight*
- Jose Benavides Barrantes, CEBT
Eye Bank of Canada
- Edmee Cuc, CEBT, *OneLegacy*
- Bobbie Duchek, CEBT
Lions Eye Bank of Saskatchewan
- Laken Duncanson, CEBT
Lions Eye Bank of Nebraska
- Syed Hashmi, CEBT, *Lions Eye Bank for Long Island*
- Larry Hightower, CEBT, *Advancing Sight Network*
- Maureen Hizon-Eulalia, CEBT
Tissue Bank Manitoba Shared Health
- Kwan Ho Lai, CEBT, *Hospital Authority Eye Bank*
- Bryan Horn, CEBT, *Lifebanc*
- Christopher LaGassie, CEBT, *Lions Gift of Sight*
- Eitan Quitoriano, CEBT
The Eye-Bank for Sight Restoration
- Jaime Robin-Partyka, CEBT
Lions Eye Bank of Saskatchewan
- Jennifer Rockwood, CEBT, *Lifeline of Ohio*
- John Rodnitzky, CEBT
UT Southwestern Transplant Services Center
- Jolie Schmidt, CEBT, *Lions Gift of Sight*
- Julie Shephard, CEBT
New Brunswick Organ and Tissue Program
- Stephanie Simpson, CEBT, *Lions Gift of Sight*
- Rick White, CEBT, *Saving Sight*
- Pengyu Zhang, CEBT
Tissue Bank Manitoba Shared Health

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Honoring People In Our Community

JACHIN MISKO MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR TECHNICAL ADVANCEMENT IN EYE BANKING

In 2022, the [Jachin Misko Memorial Scholarship for Technical Advancement in Eye Banking](#) was given to two individuals, since the 2022 Technician Education Seminar was a virtual course.

Nikki Smith, CEBT
The Eye Bank of Kentucky

Nikki Smith exhibits the essence of a true eye banker: mission driven, professionalism, dedication, commitment to excellence, passion to provide Q, S, O (Quality, Safety, Outcomes) to all patients served by the eye bank. The Eye Bank of Kentucky is one of the eye banks that prepare ASEDs. Nikki has demonstrated an affinity for ASED preparations and she shows a kind heart to all ASED patients that she helps care for in this capacity. She was recently named a subject matter expert for ASED services at the eye bank.

As one of the recipients of the Jachin Misko Memorial Scholarship, Nikki attended the virtual Technician Education Seminar (TES). Nikki shares her personal account in this [video](#).



"Being able to attend TES has been invaluable to me as a fairly new eye bank technician! I learned many things regarding the history of eye banking, QA standards, and many technical aspects that I did not know prior. I have a much broader picture of eye banking as a whole than I did before participating in TES. I am confident that having gone through TES it will help me prepare to take the CEBT in April."

It was a wonderful experience being able to meet fellow eye bankers from across the country. It also allowed me to see what other eye banks did in some of their policy and procedures. It also gave me insight into some areas that I do not work in and am not familiar with. That in itself was invaluable. TES provided me with a wealth of knowledge! I would highly recommend TES to any new eye bank technicians! Overall, it was a wonderful experience!"

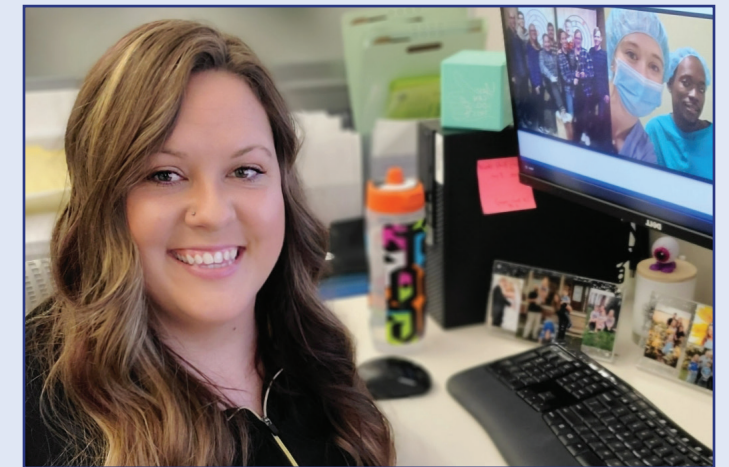
JACHIN MISKO MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR TECHNICAL ADVANCEMENT IN EYE BANKING

Kailynn Gilbert
Iowa Lions Eye Bank

Kailynn Gilbert exemplifies what it means to "be an eye banker" through her work at Iowa Lions Eye Bank. She always has the mission at the front of mind, guiding her actions and decisions as a leader within our organization. Kailynn has been integral to strengthening the eye bank's working relationship with their local OPO. This strong relationship has led to a change to their OPO's training curriculum in which there is specific time carved out for eye bank training to take place. This has helped lead to increased understanding of the differences between eye banking and tissue/organ donation.

As one of the recipients of the Jachin Misko Memorial Scholarship, Kailynn attended the virtual Technician Education Seminar (TES). Kailynn shares her personal account in this [video](#).

The Jachin Misko Memorial Scholarship for Technical Advancement in Eye Banking honors the memory of Jachin Misko, an eye bank technician who was dedicated to technical innovation in eye banking, and brings a highly motivated technician from an EBAA member eye bank to the Technician Education Seminar. Thank you to Saving Sight for sponsoring this scholarship.



"I have been performing In-Situ recoveries since 2016. I can tell you almost everything involving the actual recovery process in Eye Banking. Once I was promoted last Summer, I learned a little bit about every part of Eye Banking, but not very much. Completing the TES opened my eyes to so much. I enjoyed learning the entire process, from the very first call to the donors NOK, to the actual transplant process."

I loved the case studies, breaking out into groups and learning different States protocols. Interacting with different Eye Banks was awesome, I know I am so focused on Iowa's rules and regulations, I did not know about other States/Countries. I have learned so much about slit lamping, serologies, DE, processing, rule outs, rule ins, the list is ongoing. Thank you very much for this incredible opportunity and I cannot wait to implement everything I learned into my own training."

PATRICIA AIKEN-O'NEILL SCHOLARSHIP

Marc Gomez, CEBT

Senior Technician

Lions Eye Bank of West Central Ohio

Marc Gomez is a senior technician at Lions Eye Bank of West Central Ohio. Since 2015, he has been responsible for the eye bank’s Medical Director designee duties, evaluations, DSAEK processing, and training recovery staff.

Marc’s Executive Director, Shannon Schweitzer, said, “Marc has dedicated himself the way most true eye bankers do - working many long hours, sometimes in the middle of the night. He studied and dedicated himself after work hours to ensure that he earned his CEBT. Always willing to take on new projects or ideas, he is a great team player, and a truly remarkable trainer.

The Patricia Aiken-O’Neill (PAO) Scholarship is a merit-based scholarship to provide funds for an eye bank staff member to attend the EBAA Annual Meeting. EBAA will provide airfare, meeting registration and lodging to the recipient. This scholarship honors Patricia Aiken-O’Neill, who served as EBAA President and CEO from 1990-2011.



Paton Award Past Winners

R. TOWNLEY PATON AWARD

Anthony Aldave, MD

Presented during the 2022 Cornea and Eye Banking Forum, access the Paton Award Presentation and Lecture; [The Science of Sight: Addressing Corneal Blindness in the Developing World](#).

Dr. Anthony Aldave joined the Jules Stein Eye Institute in July 2002 as a full-time member of the Cornea and Refractive Surgery Services. He is currently a Professor of Ophthalmology, holds the Walton Li Chair in Cornea and Uveitis, is Chief of the Cornea and Uveitis Division, and Director of the Cornea and Refractive Surgery Fellowship Program.

Dr. Aldave has received numerous honors during his career, including the Alpha Omega Alpha Scholarship Award for graduating first in his medical school class, the Heed Ophthalmic Foundation Fellowship, the American Ophthalmological Society-Knapp Testimonial Fund Fellowship, the first Claes Dohlman Society Award, and the Achievement, Secretariat, and Senior Achievement Awards from the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

In addition to his busy clinical practice, Dr. Aldave directs the Corneal Genetics Laboratory at the Stein Eye Institute, which focuses on the molecular genetics of the corneal dystrophies, a group of inherited disorders that affect corneal clarity and constitute one of the primary indications for corneal transplantation. Recognized as a leader in his chosen field of scientific investigation, Dr. Aldave has authored more than 160 peer-reviewed manuscripts, has been invited to give nearly 500 scientific presentations at local, national, and international meetings, and serves as a scientific reviewer for 20 ophthalmology and genetics journals.



As a member of the EBAA Medical Advisory Board, Dr. Aldave and colleagues reported an increase in donor-transmitted fungal infections following corneal transplantation in 2013. He has maintained an interest in this topic since recently publishing an invited editorial on the role of antifungal prophylaxis after receipt of a positive donor rim fungal culture and a study investigating the incidence, treatments and outcomes of donor-transmitted fungal infection following DMEK. Dr. Aldave is also a member of the EBAA Policy & Position Review Subcommittee, and was previously a member of the Scientific Programs and Accreditation Board.

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

2022 LEONARD HEISE AWARD

Eric Meinecke, CEBT

President & CEO
Georgia Eye Bank

Eric Meinecke, CEBT, is the President & CEO of the Georgia Eye Bank in Atlanta. He grew up in Denver and graduated from the University of Colorado at Boulder in 2000. Eric’s career in eye banking started at the Rocky Mountain Lions Eye Bank (RMLEB), where he served in various positions of increasing responsibility. In April 2005, Eric moved to Madison, Wisconsin where he was the Technical Director for the Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin for three years. Family, friends, and his love of the Rocky Mountains brought Eric back to Colorado in 2008, returning to RMLEB as its Technical Director. In April 2011, Eric joined Bruce Varnum and the incredible team at Georgia Eye Bank. There, Eric began as Chief Operating Officer and later became President & COO after Bruce Varnum’s retirement in 2014.

Eric is passionate about collaboration and finding solutions to challenges. Currently, he is the Advisory Board Chair for LifeLink of Georgia (Georgia’s Organ Procurement Organization). Eric is frequently asked to speak about eye banking and cornea transplantation and has been invited to present numerous times at the Cornea Society’s Fellows Educational Summit and Emory Eye Center. Eric has also lectured and led wet lab sessions at multiple conferences, in the U.S. and internationally.

Eric is a very hands-on eye bank administrator. He regularly assists his donor coordination and laboratory staff with donor eligibility questions. Eric maintains his recovery skills and still goes out on donor recoveries.



Eric has been a Certified Eye Bank Technician (CEBT) since 2003 and has been in various leadership roles for EBAA. His committee service includes Technician Education, Legislative & Regulatory Affairs, Finance, Accreditation Board, and the Medical Advisory Board. Eric was also the Chair of both Technician Education and the Accreditation Board. Currently, Eric is a member of the Medical Advisory Board and Accreditation Board.

The [Leonard Heise Award](#) is presented to non-medical eye bankers in recognition of their outstanding devotion to the Eye Bank Association of America’s development and for exemplifying the precepts of Leonard Heise, a major contributor to the fight against blindness and one of the EBAA’s founders. This award is given annually during the Annual Meeting.

CRYSTAL CORNEA AWARD

Senator Ralph Alvarado

Kentucky State Senator
Nominated by: The Eye Bank of Kentucky

Ralph A. Alvarado is an American physician and politician elected to the Kentucky State Senate in 2014 as the first Hispanic member ever elected to the Kentucky General Assembly. He represents Kentucky’s 28th Senate district. He is Chairman of the Senate Health & Welfare Committee, member of Medicaid Oversight Committee, member of the Banking and Insurance Committee, and member of the Senate State & Local Government Committee. He also leads the Substance Abuse Recovery Task Force. He was the Republican nominee for Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky in 2019.

Senator Alvarado earned his bachelor’s degree in biology from Loma Linda University (California) in 1990, and then went on to earn his Doctorate in Medicine in 1994 from Loma Linda University at the age of 24. He completed his medical residency in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics at the University of Kentucky in 1998.

Alvarado has earned a reputation for working with both sides of the aisle. Because of his diverse medical background, his legislative focus has been on public health, and his passion for health care and sight restoration focuses on improving the quality of life for Kentuckians.

The Crystal Cornea Award is presented to individuals, or organizations, whose work helps the eye bank community give the gift of sight.



CONGRATULATIONS TO EBAA'S 2022 PILOT RESEARCH GRANT RECIPIENTS

Each year, EBAA awards the [EBAA Pilot Research Grant](#) to fund proposals specifically concerned with issues directly related to eye banking and/or corneal transplantation. Preference is given to pilot projects, well-defined short-term protocols, and initial studies directed toward new research initiatives. This year, eight proposals received the Pilot Research Grant. Congratulations to this year’s recipients!

THE 2022 PILOT RESEARCH GRANT RECIPIENTS

Beth Ann Benetz, CRA, FOPS

Case Western Reserve University

Improving Eye Bank Donor Cornea Endothelial Cell Image Analysis with Deep Learning Methods

Alfonso Lovieno, MD PhD FRCS FACS

University of British Columbia

Synthetic Active Nanoparticle Channel Membrane for Descemet Membrane Replacement

Ellen Koo, MD

Bascom Palmer Eye Institute

Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based Algorithm to Analyze Endothelial Cell Density and Quality of Human Donor Cornea

Sangly Srinivas, PhD

Indiana University

Endothelial Dysfunction via Oxidative Stress During Corneal Cold Storage: Role of Mitochondrial BKCa Channels

Megan Straiko, PhD

VisionGift

Ultrastructure and Comparative Analysis of Edge Damage Patterns Generated by a New Generation Barron Donor Trephine vs. Moria Busin Donor Trephine

Meraf Wolle, MD, MPH

Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins University

Quantitative Analysis of Endothelial Cell Loss in Preloaded DMEK Grafts after Endothelium Inward versus Endothelium Outward DMEK Surgical Techniques

Shudan Wang

Mass Eye and Ear, Schepens Eye Research Institute

The Function of BM-MSCs in Preventing Corneal Graft Failure in High-Risk Corneal Transplantation

Fasika Woreta, MD, MPH

Johns Hopkins University

Developing Standardized Quality Metrics Following Corneal Transplantation Using a Delphi

HIGH IMPACT RESEARCH GRANT UPDATE

The [High Impact Research Grant](#) was awarded to Stephan Ong Tone, MDCM, PhD, from Sunnybrook Research Institute / University of Toronto for the proposal, “Therapeutic Potential of Extracellular Vesicles-derived from Human Placenta for the Treatment of Corneal Transplant Graft Rejection and Corneal Injuries.” Dr. Ong Tone has been awarded \$50,000 to complete his research. The award was announced by Research Committee Chair, Bennie Jeng, MD, during the Cornea and Eye Banking Forum.

CORNEA RECIPIENT LETTERS

Donor Family / Recipient Letters

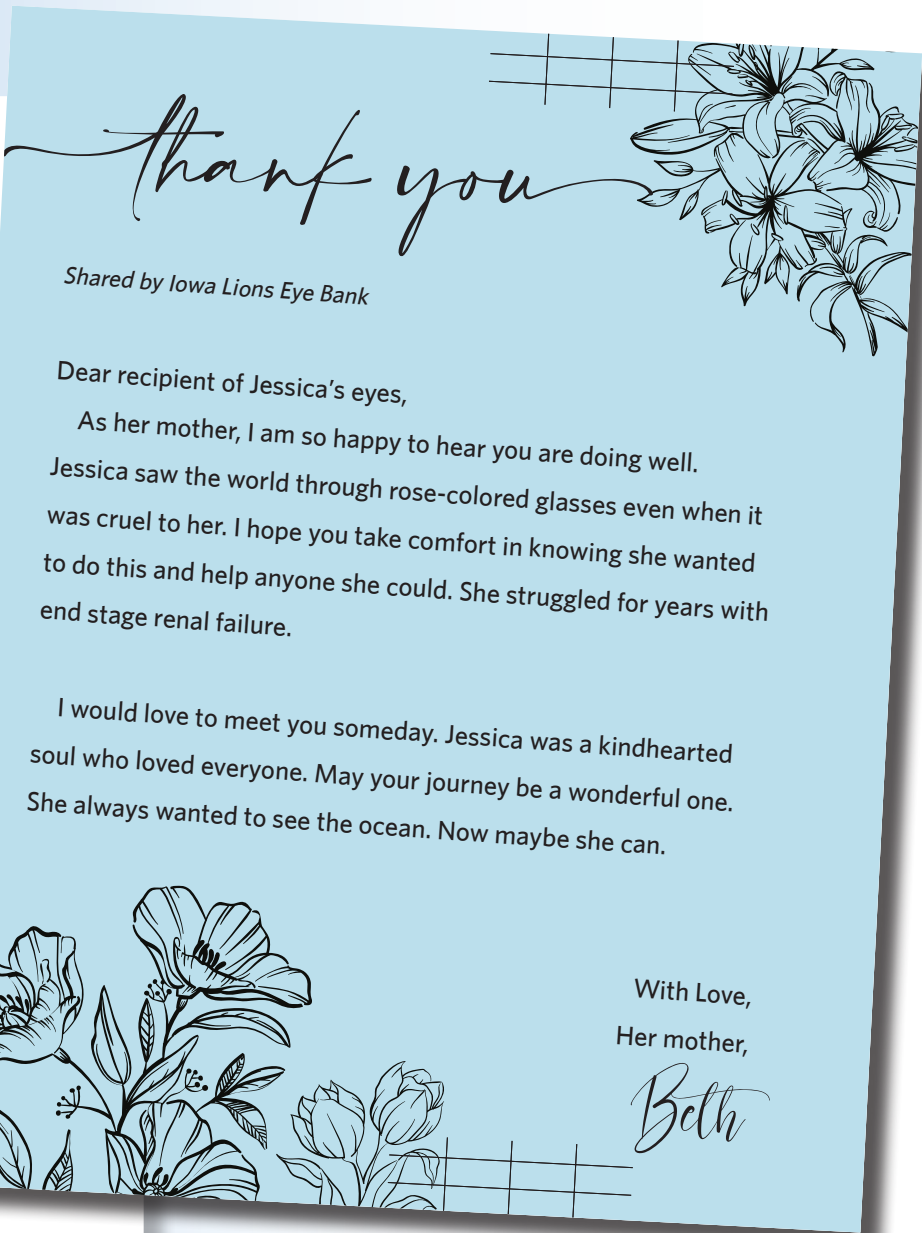
Each day, EBAA eye banks receive letters; cornea recipients filled with gratitude for their gift, and donor families wishing to express the generosity of their loved ones. Here is a sampling of letters from 2022, serving as a reminder of the “why” which motivates and inspires eye bankers throughout the year.

Shared by Advancing Sight

Dear recipient,
My brother and I were so happy to hear that our mom was able to continue her mission to help others even in her passing. It has been a difficult few months but knowing that a positive impact has been made provides a sense of comfort for us.

Our mom, Laura, was a nurse. I can’t express enough how grateful we are that her desire to help others lives on, just like she would have wanted. I want you to know a little about her, and please do not feel any pressure to respond unless you absolutely wish to do so. Know that she would have loved you simply for being you, as she loved every single person who was part of her life. We wish you all the very best and know that you will always be loved by us and be part of our lives, at least in our hearts.

Sincerely,
Rachael Upton



...CORNEA RECIPIENT LETTERS



June 25, 2022

Thank you

Dear Cornea Donor Family,

In May 2022 I became a recipient of a cornea transplant. This was only possible because of the incredible gift of a cornea from your loved one. I am truly sorry for your loss but know that I am sincerely appreciative for entrusting me with a living legacy from your loved one. It is truly a gift that will keep on giving every day of my life.

My corena transplant surgery is a success. It will allow me to maintain the quality of life like I had in the past and continue to enjoy my family. For that I will forever be grateful for the gift from your loved one. Words can't fully describe the gratitude I feel! THANK YOU from the bottom of my heart!

Forever grateful,

Jim

Shared by Dakota Sight and Health

CONCLUSION

Embracing growth, change, and innovation for the future of EBAA and eye banking.

Forging ahead in the wake of a global pandemic, we've identified new opportunities and responded to unexpected challenges. We've persevered with a continued sense of optimism and an enduring commitment to our mission to restore sight worldwide.

As an association, we gather strength from our unwavering community spirit, honoring the collaboration which led to EBAA's founding over sixty years ago and is still the connective tissue that makes our Medical Standards, and

our accreditation and certification programs, the gold standards for eye banking. Working together, we strive to identify and influence what's on the horizon to help all our members – eye bankers and physicians – thrive as the profession's needs, demands, and technology evolve.

In this new year we continue transforming lives though the priceless gift of sight; impacting individuals in ways that are infinite and indescribable. Thank you, eye bankers and corneal surgeons, for your tireless and transformative work; it is an honor to support you in your calling to restore sight.



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