

2023

YEAR IN REVIEW

New Directions

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CHAIR'S ADDRESS

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



For me, the beginning of each year is always a time of reflection, and who doesn't love the profound words of Kermit the Frog as he was about to embark on a new journey in *The Muppet Movie*?

Looking back, 2023 was quite the year for the world and for EBAA. We saw the final months of the COVID-19 public health emergency worldwide. With the end of the pandemic, we spent the year journeying back into an atmosphere that looks familiar, but is forever changed from where we left it in March of 2020.

Fortunately, we are resilient people and have settled back into the ebbs and flows of a "normal" year. Highlights spanning this successful year include:

During February, we hosted with a well-attended virtual Technician Education Seminar – this course helps educate newcomers to eye banking on the technical aspects of the profession. This course has continued to grow year after year; it featured 30 on-demand session and four live workshops with nearly 80 individuals from the US, Canada, Europe, and Australia.

In March, we resumed both the Eye Banker Leadership Program and the Physician Leadership Program in-person. These events were held back-to-back in Kansas City, MO, giving participants opportunities for networking, learning, and professional development. It was exciting to see the next generation of leaders in eye banking coming together and getting involved in our community.

By June, we finally made it to Dallas for our Annual Meeting (postponed from 2020) where we honored both the 2020 and 2023 Heise Awardees, Donna Drury, MBA, CEBT, CTBS, and Chris Stoeger, MBA, CEBT, CTBS, respectively. And finally, in November, the Fall Leadership Meeting and the Cornea and Eye Banking Forum were held in San Francisco. More than 300 people attended the Forum which put a spotlight on the latest scientific and research developments in cornea and eye banking. Dr. David Verdier was honored with the 2023 R. Townley Paton Award.

Other highlights of the year included launching our new *Eye Banking and Corneal Transplantation* journal with Dr. Michelle Rhee as the inaugural Editor-in-Chief. Quarterly issues were released through 2023. The new DEI committee also organized its first events in 2023 with webinars throughout the year and sessions during the annual meeting.

As we look ahead into 2024, it is important that we continue working together to fulfill our common vision of sight restoration worldwide. Our profession, both as corneal surgeons and as eye bankers, is changing – we can't deny this; we need to be open to learning and adapting our shifting landscape. As an association, we continue to find new directions for growth to best support our members and our community. Thanks to your hard work and that of the EBAA staff and EBAA leadership, we continue to be global leaders in eye banking. Collaboration and innovation have gotten us to where we are today, and will continue to lift us into the future of eye banking.

In a time when it can feel like there is so much chaos and uncertainty in the world around us, Kermit the Frog reminds us to dream big. Just like in *The Muppet Movie*, if we can find it in ourselves to leave the proverbial swamp, we could make millions of people happy. And that vision of restoring sight to the blind is certainly no illusion – together we will make that dream a reality.

Jennifer Li, MD

"As an Association, we continue to find new directions for growth to best support our members and community. Thanks to your hard work and that of the EBAA staff and EBAA leadership, we continue to be global leaders in eye banking."

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Kevin P. Corcoran, CAE
President & CEO

The first automobile was built in 1885, but the first turn indicator wasn't invented until 1909. It wasn't until 1939 that the first manufacturer (Buick) made turn signals standard equipment, and it only takes a brief trip on any modern roadway to realize that many American drivers still have no idea how to use those lights.

At EBAA, we have no such challenges. During 2023, we struck out in a number of new directions, for the sole purpose of serving our members and the profession.

Most significantly, the Board of Directors undertook a wide-ranging discussion about the nature and value of EBAA membership. We asked ourselves what membership means in our rapidly evolving profession and how we can ensure that active participation in the association remains an essential criterion for success in eye banking, corneal transplantation, and the development of new therapies to restore sight. We are examining the products and services we offer to our members, the manner in which we deliver them, and the various ways that members and others can engage with EBAA. These discussions are ongoing and are expected to shape our strategic planning in 2024 and beyond.

We also reconsidered how the association uses the financial resources that we possess. Thanks to a history of operational surpluses and careful investment of our funds since our inception in 1961, the association holds nearly \$10 million in reserves. This is approximately four times our annual operating budget, and is far more than we need for a traditional "rainy day fund." For this reason, we have chosen to invest a portion of these funds into companies and start-ups that are developing the therapies and services that will transform the future of eye banking and corneal transplantation. Please see the article on page 24 for more information.

In addition to investing directly into the future of the profession, EBAA continues to support research that is the foundation for these therapies. Our [High Impact grant, Pilot Research grant and EyeFind grant programs](#) provide more than \$150,000 in annual funding for research at all stages of development. Additionally, EBAA has been a long-standing financial and operational supporter of projects such as the Cornea Preservation Time Study and the Diabetes Endothelial Keratoplasty Study.

Research findings on eye banking and corneal transplantation are often underreported. After a decade of self-publishing the *International Journal of Eye Banking*, we realized

that we needed an experienced partner to expand our reach. We partnered with Wolters Kluwer, the world's most prominent medical journal publisher, to launch a new publication - [Eye Banking and Corneal Transplantation](#). Their decades of experience have already improved our journal in many ways, and we look forward to continuing to showcase the latest developments in our profession.

These changes required a unique mindset within the Board of Directors; a strategic perspective that honors our long and successful history while looking to a future that will be vastly different than our past. A perspective such as this is difficult to maintain, particularly as EBAA is being confronted by immediate challenges and opportunities that also demand the Board's attention. Their ability to balance both of these imperatives demonstrates their commitment to the association and the profession.

Information about all these programs and more are included in this edition of EBAA's Year in Review.



None of these accomplishments would have been possible without our members' extraordinary contributions of their time, effort, and expertise. Nearly 300 eye bankers and physicians serve on EBAA's Board, committees, taskforces, and ad hoc workgroups; they are the engine that keeps EBAA moving forward. I encourage all members to consider volunteer service to the association.

And so, EBAA will venture into the future an ever-evolving organization. And while we may make some turns along the way, we will always keep our eye on our ultimate destination; the restoration of sight for people around the world.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin P. Corcoran". The signature is fluid and cursive.

President & CEO

MEETING, EVENTS, EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS

2023 TECHNICIAN EDUCATION SEMINAR: A DEEP DIVE INTO EYE BANKING

"Thank you for the entire course. I really enjoyed learning and listening to all kinds of fellow eye bankers." - 2023 TES Attendee

The Technician Education Seminar (TES) is an important step in an eye banker's professional development and training. This comprehensive course covering the basics of eye banking continues to evolve, offering each class a unique and meaningful experience. 2023's virtual course featured 28 on-demand presentations and four live workshops delivered by experienced faculty members. The program welcomed 80 attendees and was streamed in the US, Canada, Australia, and Europe.

The five-week course featured interactive workshops, allowing attendees to ask questions, review the on-demand content, watch live demonstrations, participate in energetic

discussions, test their knowledge, interact with the faculty during breakouts and case study discussions, and meet other eye bank professionals. Highlights of the live sessions included: interactive slit lamp microscopy evaluations, demonstrations of procedures, case study discussions, simulations, an in-situ excision demonstration, personal accounts of the gift of sight, and a networking with peers and colleagues.

Thank you to all the faculty members who contributed to this year's course, and our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Ingrid Schunder, MBA, CEBT, and Chris Conwell, CEBT, CQIA (ASQ), for leading the seminar and for diligently planning an educational and meaningful experience for early-career eye bank professionals.



2023 Physician Leadership Group

EYE BANKER LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

*"Really solid program - very organized, great content, friendly welcome, great for networking, very nice all around."
- Susan Grunow, Miracles In Sight*

Eye Bankers from around the country attended the [Eye Banker Leadership Program](#) in March at the Loews Kansas City.

Attendees began their leadership program experience with an evening at the World War I Museum and Memorial examining leadership through the lens of World War I and considering how lessons of the past can be applied to current and future challenges. Sponsored by Stephens Instruments and Vital Tears, the event featured exclusive after-hours access to the museum and a private reception allowing attendees to connect over Kansas City barbeque.

During the next two days, attendees heard from a variety of speakers, learned new ways to connect with others, discussed hot topics in eye banking, and honed a variety of skills and tools to apply in their personal and professional lives. They even created unique celebratory high-fives in one of the sessions. Attendees continued making new connections at the Networking Happy Hour, sponsored by Saving Sight.

Thank you to our generous sponsors for supporting this year's program.

Platinum: [Stephens Instruments](#) and [Vital Tears](#)

Gold: [Saving Sight](#)

Silver: [Medline](#)



2023 Leadership Program

PHYSICIAN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM: Introducing Rising Leaders to EBAA

"Very strong program overall, no weak points. Would highly recommend it to anyone interested in eye banking." - Viral Juthani, MD, Nominated by the Eye-Bank for Sight Restoration

The Physician Leadership Program (PLP) brought together 14 corneal surgeons to Kansas City, MO, during March for two and a half days of networking, learning, and professional development.

Led by our meeting facilitator and experienced faculty physicians and eye bankers, the PLP featured networking opportunities, personal leadership development, education on EBAA and eye banking, dynamic discussions, and networking opportunities. At the end of the experience, attendees shared their takeaways from the weekend and expressed appreciation for the opportunity, their interest in becoming part of the EBAA community, and that they were inspired by what they heard over the weekend.

Thank you to the PLP Faculty:

Jennifer Li, MD

Shahzad Mian, MD

Winston Chamberlain, MD, PhD

Joshua Hou, MD; Michelle Rhee, MD

Noël Mick; Tony Bavuso, CEBT

Donna Drury, MBA, CEBT, CTBS



2023 ANNUAL MEETING

"First time attendee. Really impressed, Great meeting. I really enjoyed being there. I am grateful for how people shared what they did in their banks, and I learned a tremendous amount."

"Thank you for this opportunity. This was my first meeting. I took in so much information - I can't wait to share with my team and continue to learn and grow in the future."

More than 300 individuals attended the [EBAA 2023 Annual Meeting](#). Taking place over four days at the Fairmont Dallas, the program focused on empowerment, inclusive leadership, DEI awareness, research, innovation, and stories of donation and the gift of sight. The association also conducted governance functions, including meetings of the Accreditation Board, Medical Advisory Board, and the House of Delegates.

The [program](#) included four days of sessions on pertinent topics, ending with the Scientific and Medical Director Symposia on Saturday. Experience the meeting again or for the first with the [2023 Annual Meeting On-Demand Package](#).

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

One of the most impactful elements of our meeting were the stories of hope. To always remember our "why," the meeting featured two touching stories of sharing and receiving the gift of sight; Shannon Hartley (donor family member and cornea recipient) and Zoe Rabago (cornea recipient) and Rosalba Gonzalez (her donor's mother).

Shannon shared her unique story; tragically losing her dear sister, but then receiving her sister's cornea for her own sight-restoring corneal transplant procedure.

Zoe received a cornea at six months old from Rosalba's daughter, Aolani. In the months following Zoe's transplant, she and Rosalba were able to meet. They immediately connected and they continue to share an unmistakable bond.

Both families are champions of donation and work with EBAA to share their story and encourage others to register as donors. They were the "faces" of Eye Donation Month 2021, and were awarded the 2023 Crystal Cornea Award.



2023 Annual Meeting

HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES AND DEMONSTRATIONS

"It was so amazing to get be able to dissect the whole eye and see everything inside!"

Attendees received hands-on experience dissecting and evaluating tissue, interacting with the eye in new and interesting ways!

Dissecting Ocular Tissue for Research, featured an instructional wet lab including the opportunity for attendees to learn how to dissect, isolate, and preserve ocular tissue for research.

During *DSAEK Corneal Tissue Preparation Basics*, instructors presented on Descemet Stripping Automated Endothelial Keratoplasty (DSAEK), and the session included a live demonstration on preparing tissue for DSAEK.

Attendees received tips and training on evaluating corneal tissue using a slit lamp microscope during the *Slit Lamp Microscopy Workshop*. This interactive session was an in-depth presentation on slit lamp microscopy and an opportunity for attendees to evaluate tissue using Haag-Streit slit lamp microscopes.



General Education

GENERAL SESSIONS

The daily General Sessions brought all attendees together for compelling keynote presentations on topics and issues that resonate throughout EBAA and the eye banking community. EBAA was thrilled to welcome Dr. Shawna Nesbitt, Vice President and Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer at UT Southwestern Medical Center, to deliver the keynote address, *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Moving from Initiatives to Lasting Principles and Practice*.

Throughout the week, attendees heard keynote presentations on impactful topics:

- *Pathways to Donation after Neurological Death and Current Controversies*
- *Inspiring Culture: The Power of Empowerment in Eye Banking*
- *Research: Creating a POSITIVE IMPACT on the Word and Your Bottom Line*
- *Creating a Deeper and More Diverse Bench of Medical Directors*

ACCREDITATION AND MEDICAL ADVISORY BOARD MEETINGS

The Accreditation Board (AB) heard presentations on the Spring 2023 cycle of eye bank inspections and voted on accreditation renewals; the updated [Accreditation Status List](#) is available on the EBAA website. The Medical Advisory Board (MAB) met and updated the Medical Standards and Procedures Manual. These documents can be found in the Members Portal of the EBAA website under 'Medical Advisory Board.' Standard changes went into effect on September 1, 2023.

SCIENTIFIC SYMPOSIUM / MEDICAL DIRECTORS SYMPOSIUM

The Scientific Symposium featured the latest research and innovations in eye banking and corneal transplantation. The session, moderated by Joshua Hou, MD, and Maria Soledad Cortina, MD, included presentations of 14 scientific abstracts, and two invited presentations on “*The Future of Cultured Endothelial Cells.*” During the invited sessions, Ellen Koo, MD, presented on her research, “*Endothelial Magnetic Cell Injection for Treatment of Corneal Edema: The Early Observations and Clinical Results*” and then Alfonso Sabater, MD, PhD, presented on “*Novel Biological Therapies for Corneal Endothelial Dysfunction.*”

The Best Paper of Session Award was presented to Matthew Kigin, a medical student from the University of Iowa, for his presentation, “*Comparison of Conventional Methods and a Commercialized Cone- Shaped Funnel Adaptor Device for Loading DMEK Tissue into Modified Jones Tube.*” The Best Paper of Session Award is supported by [Eye Banking and Cornea Transplantation](#) journal.

The meeting closed with the Medical Director Symposium. The symposium included invited speakers on neurologic disorders and sepsis, interesting case studies, information about tissue evaluation consults, discussion on the importance of mentorship, the role of the Medical Director and important information about Accreditation inspections.

EBAA HEADLINES AT THE HOUSE OF BLUES

Aside from learning, connecting, and presenting, eye bankers had a lot of FUN! EBAA took over the House of Blues Dallas for a special night of Texas BBQ, singing, and dancing with ‘Members Only’ – an energetic cover band specializing in hits from the 80’s and 90’s.

AWARDS AND HONORS

During the Annual Dinner and Awards Program, we recognized honorees from both the current year and from 2020, since the pandemic forced the cancelation of that meeting.

The following individuals were honored:

- **2020 Gift of Sight:**
William Rohr, MD
- **2023 Gift of Sight:**
Satish Chundru, DO
- **2020 Heise Award:**
Donna Drury, MBA, CEBT, CTBS
- **2023 Heise Award:**
Chris Stoeger, MBA, CEBT, CTBS
- **2023 Crystal Cornea:**
Rosalba Gonzalez & Zoe Rabago
- **2023 Communications Optics:**
Matt Webber



2023 Annual Meeting Heise Award Winners

MEETING CONTRIBUTIONS

Thank you to these organizations for providing equipment, materials, supplies, instruments and tissue for the meeting.

Advancing Sight Network, Corza Medical, Georgia Eye Bank, Lions Eye Bank of West Central Ohio, Miracles In Sight, Old Dominion Eye Foundation, VisionFirst, VisionGift, Eversight, Lions Gift of Sight, Haag-Streit, Med-Logics, Dakota Sight and Health, UT Southwestern Transplant Services Center Lions Eye Bank

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Thank you to the EBAA 2023 Annual Meeting Sponsors for their generous support.

Diamond
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Vital Tears

Gold
Donate Life America
GWSG
Konan Medical

Silver
Med-Logics
The Cincinnati Eye Bank
Miracles In Sight
UT Southwestern Medical Center
Vision Gift
Lions Eye Bank

The [2023 Annual Meeting](#) is available on eyeLEARN. Registered attendees receive complimentary access.

The [2024 Annual Meeting](#) takes place June 5-8 at the Loews Kansas City Hotel in Kansas City, MO. We look forward to another successful event. See you in Missouri!

2023 CORNEA AND EYE BANKING FORUM

"Very good content. Speakers were excellent with no exception. Each talk was very interesting, and luncheon was informative. Awarding best paper is encouraging!"

The EBAA and Cornea Society hosted the [2023 Cornea and Eye Banking Forum](#) during early November in San Francisco.

The day-long event featured new research, invited sessions on current topics, lectures, award presentations, and the R. Townley Paton Luncheon. We welcomed 330 attendees to this year's program.

The program schedule, speaker information and scientific abstracts can be found in the electronic [program](#).

Presentations were recorded and are available as part of the [2023 Cornea and Eye Banking Forum On-Demand package](#) on [eyeLEARN](#). The package is available for purchase; attendees receive complimentary access.

Select speakers were invited to present on specific topics related to the future of eye banking and transplantation. In the first invited panel, *Emerging Therapeutics for Corneal Diseases*, M. Soledad Cortina, MD, presented on *The Present and Future of Cornea Collagen Cross-Linking* and Marjan Farid, MD, presented on *Updates in Artificial Cornea*. During the second invited panel, *Innovation in Cornea and Eye Banking*, Jennifer Li, MD, presented *With an Eye to the Future: Present and Future Trends in Eye Banking* and Sayan Basu, MD, presented on *Limbal Mesenchymal Stem Cells for Corneal Scarring*.



Dr. Verdier, MD, at the Cornea Eye Bank Forum

David Verdier, MD, received the R. Townley Paton Award for his contributions to the EBAA, eye banking and sight restoration. He delivered the [R. Townley Paton Lecture: It's All About Time](#).

The 2024 R. Townley Paton Award will be presented to Bennie Jeng, MD, at the 2024 Cornea and Eye Banking Forum.

Congratulations to Ved Shivade, an undergraduate student from Case Western Reserve University for earning the Best Paper of Session Award for his presentation, ["Donor Cornea Automatic Endothelial Cell Density Analysis."](#) This award is presented by EBAA and Cornea Society in recognition of the best paper by an undergraduate student, medical student, resident or fellow. The 2023 award was supported by an unrestricted educational grant from Lions Gift of Sight.



2023 Cornea Eye Bank Forum



Cornea Eye Bank Forum Moderators

Thank you to moderators Sophie Deng, MD, PhD, and Joshua Hou, MD, for planning and moderating the event. Thank you to the speakers for sharing their research, expertise, and knowledge and thank you to the program committee for reviewing abstracts and helping to plan the program.

The R. Townley Paton Luncheon was moderated by Winston Chamberlain, MD, PhD, and Zeba Syed, MD. The event featured a lively, interactive discussion on various clinical cases and issues facing corneal surgeons. Thank you to [Bausch + Lomb](#) for supporting the event.

Thank you to Lions Gift of Sight, OneLegacy, Rocky Mountain Lions Eye Bank, and Wolters Kluwer for generously supporting the event through unrestricted educational grants.

Congratulations to Ramy Rashad, MD, MBA, for receiving the travel grant to attend and present his abstract at this year's event. The grant is supported by Gunther Weiss Scientific Glassblowing.

2024 CORNEA AND EYE BANKING FORUM - SAVE THE DATE!

The [2024 Cornea and Eye Banking Forum](#) will be held on October 18 in Chicago, Illinois. The call for submissions will be posted in March.



2023 FALL LEADERSHIP MEETING

The EBAA membership gathered at the Marines' Memorial Club in San Francisco in November for the 2023 Fall Leadership Meeting. The Accreditation Board, Medical Advisory Board and Board of Directors all met to discuss issues of importance to the EBAA membership.

The Accreditation Board (AB) released the [minutes](#), an [updated Accreditation Status List](#), and the [Accreditation Policy & Procedures](#) following their meeting.

The Medical Advisory Board (MAB) has released several documents following their meeting, including the [minutes](#), updated [Medical Standards](#), and a [Medical Advisory](#) highlighting standard changes going into effect **February 1, 2024**. There were no approved changes to the [Procedures Manual](#). The entire [Medical Advisory Board Meeting](#) was recorded and is now available on [eyeLEARN](#).



eyeLEARN

eyeLEARN / 2023 WEBINARS
eyeLEARN - A New Look and New Resources!

eyeLEARN received a makeover in 2023! With a comprehensive redesign of the learning platform, accessing all the webinars, event recordings, skills videos, and resources on eyeLEARN is easier than ever.

New Resources Added to eyeLEARN
Surgical Videos Now Available!

Surgical videos have been added to eyeLEARN on the [Ophthalmic Procedures site](#). Watch experienced corneal surgeons perform and explain various ophthalmic procedures.

Thank you to the physicians who provided videos



Creating a video for eyeLearn

for the surgical video library. We look forward to adding more videos in the future!

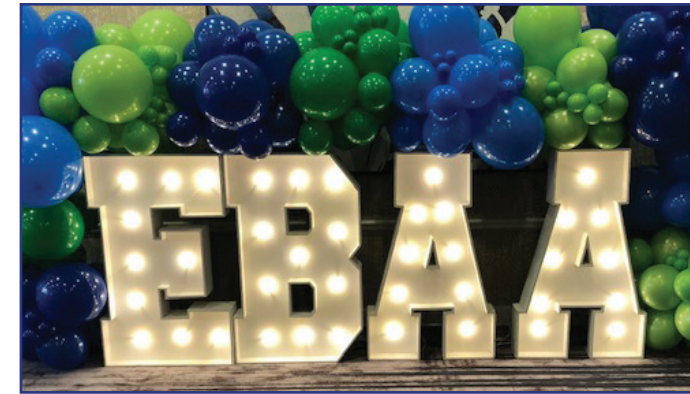
Videos include:

- [DMEK Using an Injector - Zeba Syed, MD](#)
- [DMEK Using Pull Through Technique with Novel Infusion Force - Divya Srikumaran, MD](#)
- [DSAEK with Sheets Glide - Jennifer Li, MD](#)
- [Descemet Stripping Automated Endothelial Keratoplasty \(DSAEK\) - Pull Through Technique - Joshua Hou, MD](#)
- [Penetrating Keratoplasty \(PK\) - Martin de la Presa, MD](#)
- [DALK - Groove and Peel Method - Ellen Koo, MD](#)
- [Boston Type I KPro - Ahmed Omar, MD, PhD](#)
- [Keratolimbal Allograft \(KLAL\) - Joshua Hou, MD](#)

TRAINING RESOURCES ADDED

Visit the [Skills Library](#) for videos on performing eye banking procedures.

View the [Physical Assessment of the Eye Donor](#), featuring Mudassir Razvi, CEBT, and Hannah Flaig, CEBT, from The Eye-Bank for Sight Restoration, about the process for performing a physical inspection of a potential cornea donor.



PREVIOUS ANNUAL MEETING PRESENTATIONS ARE AVAILABLE!

Presentations from the 2022, 2021, and 2020 Annual Meetings are [available on-demand](#) and for free for members. CE credits can be earned for watching recordings of past meetings.

2023 Community Chats/ Town Halls

EBAA members gathered online several times during the year for Community Chats and Town Halls discussing topics affecting the eye banking community and the association. These sessions were held in 2023:

[February Town Hall](#)

[April Community Chat - Viewing Chambers and Storage Media](#)

[September Town Hall](#)

[October Community Chat - Shipping and Distribution](#)

[November Community Chat - Staffing](#)

[December Community Chat - Organ Procurement Organizations](#)

WEBINARS

EBAA hosts webinars throughout the year on topics of relevance to eye bank professionals. All webinars are free for members and their staff. Miss a session? Access them on-demand!

[Marketing and Social Media Strategies for Tiny Teams](#)

[Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Unconscious Bias](#)

[EBAA 2022 Statistical Report: Interpreting the Data](#)

[Performance and Documentation of Annual Competency Reviews: Best Practices and Discussion](#)

[Infectious Disease: Overview and Updates](#)

[Information Session: Mycobacterium tuberculosis Transmission via Tissue Transplantation](#)

[Hosting a Wet Lab: What You Need to Know](#)

[Environmental Monitoring Fundamentals](#)

[Environmental Monitoring Data Management, Analysis, and Investigation](#)

[Maximizing National Donation Partners Campaign and Observance Opportunities](#)

[The CEBT Exam: What You Need to Know](#)

CERTIFICATION

Celebrating the Newest CEBTs

CERTIFICATIONS

EBAA is the nationally recognized organization for certifying eye bank technicians, we grant the [Certified Eye Bank Technicians \(CEBT\) designation](#). 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. In 2024, the CEBT Exam will be held April 6 -20 and October 12-26.

The Certification Board announced a change to the eligibility criteria to take the CEBT exam. There is now one uniform criteria for all candidates. The updated criteria were announced by Certification Board Chair, Adam Stockman, at the Medical Advisory Board Meeting in November and will be in effect for the 2024 Spring CEBT Exam.

The Exam Committee updated and distributed resources to assist candidates with preparing for the CEBT Exam. The committee released an updated [Content Outline](#) for the exam and a revised [Study Guide](#) following the outline. The Committee also hosted the webinar, [“The CEBT Exam: What You Need To Know!”](#), which is available on eyeLEARN. To learn more about the Exam and the resources available, visit the [CEBT Exam page](#).

2023 EXAM RESULTS

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 Spring CEBT exam had a 62.5% passing rate. A special congratulations to Jany Fradette from Banque d’Yeux du Centre Universitaire d’Ophtalmologie for earning the highest score for the cycle. The Fall CEBT exam had a 68.9% passing rate. Congratulations to Tolulope Oyedun from Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin for earning the highest score of the Fall cycle.

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

2023 Spring Cycle

- Nicole August, CEBT
Southern Eye Bank
- Madeline Bachus, CEBT
Sierra Donor Services Eye Bank
- Megan Beil, CEBT
Lions Eye Bank of the Northeast
- Ronald Bortzfield, CEBT
Saving Sight
- Ruby Contreras, CEBT
Lions Eye Bank of the Northeast
- Jordan Edelen, CEBT
The Eye Bank of Kentucky
- Jany Fradette, CEBT, *Banque d’yeux du CUO*
- Erika Furey, CEBT, *Lifeline of Ohio*
- Michael Grunewald, CEBT
Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin
- Sally Hicken, CEBT
Utah Lions Eye Bank – John A. Moran Eye Center
- Rebecca Hubbs, CEBT, *VisionGift*
- Erin Lambert, CEBT, CTBS
VisionGift
- James Lancaster, CEBT, CTBS, PCP
Lions Eye Bank
- Farnaz Milani, CEBT, *Georgia Eye Bank*
- Catherine Miller, CEBT, *Lions Gift of Sight*
- Zoe Ninos, CEBT
Eye Bank of Canada – Ontario Division
- Erika Peterson, CEBT
Lions Eye Bank of the Northeast
- Cecily Rivera, CEBT, *Lions World Vision Institute*
- Laura Thomas, CEBT
Georgia Eye Bank
- Kellie Wier, CEBT
Mississippi Lions Eye Bank

2023 Fall Cycle

- Delaney Alyse, CEBT
Mid-America Transplant
- Janice Baltos, CEBT, *New England Donor Services*
- Andre Clark, CEBT
CorneaGen
- Duncan Cody, CTBS, CEBT, *Regional Tissue Bank*
- Cierra Corley, CEBT
Rocky Mountain Lions Eye Bank
- Scott Day, CEBT
Center for Organ Recovery & Education
- Crystal Dubin CEBT, *Lions World Vision Institute*
- Melissa Durling, CEBT, *Regional Tissue Bank*
- Susan Grunow, CEBT
Miracles In Sight
- Alexander Harris, CEBT, *Beauty of Sight*
- Nicholas Howe, CEBT
Lions World Vision Institute
- Chak Sin Hung, CEBT, *Hospital Authority Eye Bank*
- Monica Keet, CEBT
Lions Eye Bank of Saskatchewan - Saskatoon
- Terri Koelling, CEBT
Rocky Mountain Lions Eye Bank
- Mark Macdonald, CEBT, *Regional Tissue Bank*
- Tolulope Oyedun, CEBT
Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin
- Dresden Redfield, CEBT
The Eye-Bank for Sight Restoration
- Sergio Romero, CEBT
CorneaGen
- Lisa Troy, CEBT, *Miracles In Sight*
- Minhua Wu, CEBT, *Lions Gift of Sight*

2023 EYE DONATION MONTH

A New View!

THEIR NEW VIEW:
 KATHY, RYAN, AND TODD DELOPLAINE HAD MANY VIEWS OF JACK 'HYDROPLANE' DELOPLAINE: HUSBAND, FATHER, PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL PLAYER, AND SUPER BOWL CHAMPION. AFTER HIS PASSING, THEY HAVE A NEW VIEW OF HIM - EYE DONOR HERO. BY DONATING HIS CORNEAS, JACK GAVE THE GIFT OF SIGHT. KNOWING HIS GIFT HELPS SOMEONE ELSE SEE THE WORLD ANEW BRINGS THEM COMFORT. THEY ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO REGISTER AS DONORS.

The Deloplaines DONOR FAMILY

LEARN ABOUT EYE DONATION
 GIVE A NEW VIEW WITH THE GIFT OF SIGHT. REGISTER AS AN EYE, ORGAN AND TISSUE DONOR.
 #EYEDONATIONMONTH EYEDONATIONMONTH.ORG

EYE DONATION MONTH

Taking place in November, [Eye Donation Month 2023](#) continued the theme of the previous year, "A New View!" It celebrated the new perspective on life that corneal transplant recipients experience after having their sight restored, and the change in viewpoint donor families express when the pain of a loved one's death is partially mitigated by the opportunity to share the gift of sight with someone in need. Eye Donation Month raised awareness about cornea donation and transplantation, honored the gift of sight, celebrated cornea transplant recipients, and educated the public about donation and registration.

Meet the Deloplaines

Instead of one individual, this year the "face" of Eye Donation Month was the [Deloplaime Family](#) - Kathleen (Kathy), Ryan, and Todd. Kathy's husband (Ryan and Todd's father), Jack 'Hydroplane' Deloplaime, was a beloved member of the Super Bowl champion Pittsburgh Steelers in the 1970's. He passed away recently, and his family carried out his wishes to be a cornea donor.

Kathy, Ryan, and Todd, tell Jack's story, and encourage others to register as donors and make sure families and loved ones are aware of that decision.

A NEW VIEW!
 BUILDING HOPE | RESTORING SIGHT | CHANGING LIVES

...My Dad was my hero. Now I add 'cornea donor' to the list of reasons why."
 - Ryan Deloplaime

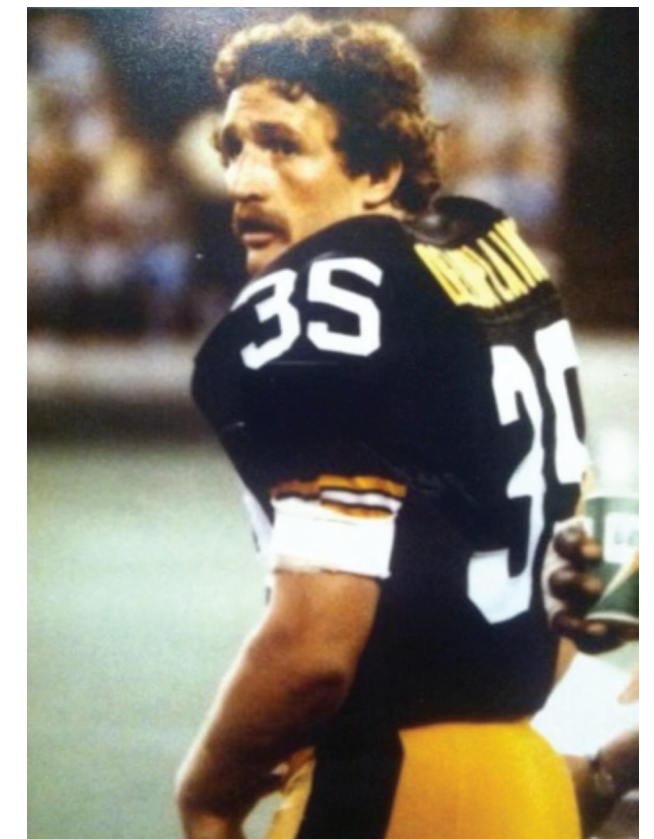
The Deloplaines DONOR FAMILY

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Filming on Location

With permission from the Pittsburgh Steelers, EBAA was able to film this year's [main video](#) on location at Acrisure Stadium, home of the Steelers, in Pittsburgh. Granted on-field and 'behind the scenes' access, the location provided context and a spirit for the video, deepening the message and understanding of Jack's life, story, and message of helping others.

Thank you to Kathy Deloplaime for connecting us with the Steelers, to the Pittsburgh Steelers staff for permitting and supporting our shoot, and to the Deloplaime family for taking the time to travel to Pittsburgh, and share their emotional story.



Cornea donor, Jack 'Hydroplane' Deloplaime, a Pittsburgh Steeler Super Bowl champion

SHARE YOUR VIEW PHOTO CONTEST: WINNERS

Share Your View Photo Contest

Because of its popularity in 2022, EBAA continued the [Share Your View Photo Contest](#) for 2023. We asked participants to submit photos they took that made them especially grateful for the gift of sight. Winners were chosen from the following categories: Activities and Hobbies, Family and Loved Ones, Nature, and Sunsets. [Winning images](#) were converted into Eye Donation Month social media graphics and made available for members and the public to share on their social platforms during November. Winning photographers also received prizes!



More than 100 images were submitted to the contest – thank you to all who took the time to enter, and congratulations to our winners!



Alexis Zorrilla (2022)



Zoe Rabago (2020)



Todd Deloplaine (2023)



Cameron Whittle (2019)

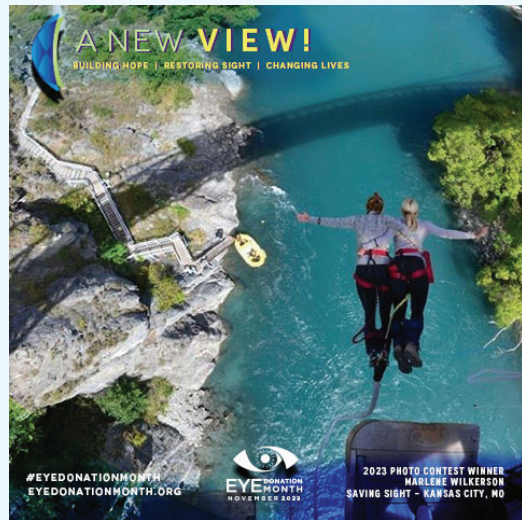
New for 2023

EBAA shares all its Eye Donation Month materials with its members for use within their communities. To facilitate this process, promotional materials and resources were placed in a Dropbox “toolkit” on EyeDonationMonth.org. For 2023, blog posts were added as a means of adding a personal voice and perspective on eye donation, and gave eye banks another form of content to share online.

Blogs included [Todd Deloplaine’s tribute to his father](#), and updates for former “faces” of Eye Donation Month, [Cameron](#) (2019), [Zoe](#) (2020), and [Alexis](#) (2022).

Celebrating in 2024

Eye Donation Month will continue in 2024 with a new look, feel, and theme. Join us at the Annual Meeting in Kansas City for updates!



Activities and Hobbies
Marlene Wilkerson, Saving Sight



Family and Loved Ones
Sullivan Howard, Utah Lions Eye Bank



Nature
Jodi Altenhofen, Lions Gift of Sight



Sunsets
Chelsea Green, Iowa Lions Eye Bank



Honoring Veterans

EBAA honored eye donors and eye bankers who served their country in the military during the week of November 11 – Veteran’s Day. Shareable profiles were created for [Karen Rohrback](#) of UT Southwestern Eye Bank and [Julian Evans](#), a U.S. Army Veteran eye donor. A special Veterans Day photo social media graphic was created so eye banks could honor their own specific veterans.



Julian Evans
CW5 Warrant Officer
U.S. Army



Karen Rohrback
UT Southwestern Eye Bank –
Technical Supervisor
Staff Sergeant, U.S. Air Force

MAIN ARTICLE

NEW DIRECTIONS

2023 was the first time since the outbreak of COVID-19 in March of 2020, that the focus of EBAA as an organization wasn't issues involving the pandemic. Although we reached the "new normal" in 2022, residual effects of COVID-19 were still of foremost importance to our industry and many others. Supply chain issues and lack of storage medium were daily struggles for most eye banks' functions.

With the bulk of these problems resolved, or at least contained, 2023 allowed eye banks and EBAA to focus on the future—rather than the immediate crisis of a global pandemic—and start moving in new directions.

Focus on the Future

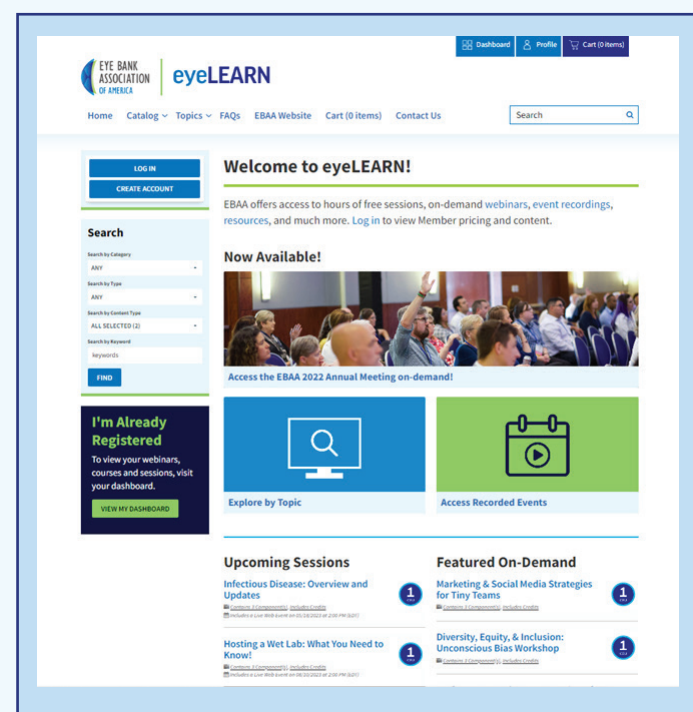
During the general session at the 2022 Annual Meeting in Baltimore, a presentation and panel discussion titled, ["The Future of Eye Banking and Corneal Transplantation"](#) caught the attention of attendees, and the EBAA Board of Directors. Since then, a concerted effort has been made by EBAA leadership to consider the future of eye banking, corneal transplantation, donation, and EBAA as an association. This led us to ask questions like: What's next for eye banking? How will technology change recovery and transplantation practices over the next 10+ years? How/where can EBAA expand to address these changes?

INSIDE THE ASSOCIATION

Revamping eyeLEARN

While considering the "big picture" for eye banking as a whole, EBAA made changes and improvements inside the association to continue delivering significant value to the membership.

In May, EBAA announced the newly redesigned and updated [eyeLEARN](#) educational portal. With improved organization and search features, it is easier than ever to access EBAA's database of webinars, event recordings, training videos, and resources. Added to the portal were new skills videos on specific topics, including tissue preparation, a filmed in situ excision procedure performed on a donor, and several surgical recordings. eyeLEARN continues to be updated and revised as materials and sessions are added. EBAA members receive complimentary access to webinars and resources and discounted rates for products and events.



2023 BOARD ACTIONS

The EBAA Board of Directors maintained its strategic vision for the association and profession throughout 2023. Significant actions included:

- Engaged a research firm to examine the association's current and future membership structure.
- Revised the formula to calculate domestic eye banks' membership dues. The Board pledged to continue studying this issue and to bring its findings to the 2024 House of Delegates meeting.
- Initiated a campaign to conduct personal outreach to all domestic and Canadian eye bank CEOs, to better understand their needs and perspectives.
- Revised EBAA's Investment Policy to permit direct investment in companies and start-ups developing novel therapies to treat ocular disease, dysfunction, or developing services beneficial to our members.
- Considered investment opportunities under this new policy and directly invested in two of them; OcuCell and Kerify Vision.
- Issued a statement reaffirming EBAA's support for full reimbursement for ocular tissue by government and private insurers, noting that these are contracts between surgery centers and the insurers. Therefore, eye banks should not be expected to reduce their fees if the surgery center has negotiated contracts that provide insufficient reimbursement.

The Board continues to work towards a future best serving the needs of our members and partners. Members can always share their views with our Speaker of the House, Shannon Schweitzer



Eye Bankers gather at the Eye Banker Leadership Program in Kansas, City



Eye Bankers get hands on experience during a wet lab at the Annual Meeting



Staff from the San Diego Eye Bank attend the EBAA Annual Meeting

Continued Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

In 2022, EBAA added DEI as an official “value” of the Association and created a committee to begin the work of engaging the full range of EBAA’s members by putting a spotlight on DEI issues, conversations, and solutions. The DEI committee met monthly, and quickly implemented various methods of highlighting DEI topics and concerns. One such tactic was “passing the mic” to members in the form of written online blog posts, where the writer is free to speak on topics of concern or relatable to them. This year’s posts included entries on Black History Month, Asian American & Pacific Islander Month, PRIDE, and Women’s History. Blogs were posted both on EBAA’s homepage and to The Lens, allowing members to learn from one another, and comment in an ongoing conversation. EBAA continues to encourage members to share their experiences through blog posts and is accepting submissions on an ongoing basis. DEI programming was also available throughout the year in webinar and Community Chat form and was a focal point at the Annual Meeting in Dallas.

Developing Leaders

For the first time since before the pandemic in 2020, EBAA was able to convene the Eye Banker and Physician Leadership programs in person – this time in Kansas City during early March. Both programs gathered attendees from around the county to learn and build upon leadership skills using tools and techniques applicable to their professional and personal development. The Physician Leadership Program in particular allowed EBAA to connect with surgeons in the early stages of their careers, introduce them to EBAA and eye banking, and get them active in the association—usually leading to a career-long mutually beneficial relationship

Recognizing Excellence

EBAA has long honored and awarded those who go above and beyond and make significant contributions to our field and association. The Leonard Heise and R. Townley Patron Awards are the highest achievements for eye bankers and corneal surgeons respectively. The Crystal Cornea and Gift of Sight Awards recognize those from within and outside of the eye banking community who support and advance EBAA’s mission to restore sight worldwide.

Prior to 2023, there was no formal appreciation for communicating EBAA’s mission and advancing it through marketing and storytelling efforts. During the EBAA Annual Meeting, Matt Webber of VisionGift was presented with the first-ever [Communication Optics Award](#). Intended to be earned annually, it is presented to EBAA members eye banks whose creativity and mastery of storytelling increases the visibility of EBAA’s mission, and demonstrate ongoing dedication to and excellence in spreading awareness and highlighting the gift of sight and its impact.



Developing Leaders

Consistent Support

Besides updates and changes to best support the membership, EBAA continues to provide the services, tools, and opportunities members appreciate and expect, while always evolving to offer the best membership experience possible. Our Accreditation program is the gold standard of eye banking, assuring physicians that the tissue they receive for transplant is of the highest quality and safety, leading to the best possible patient outcomes. Our frequent webinar offerings present the most relevant educational updates, and are recorded for you to watch at your convenience. Community Chats allow for open and honest dialogue about issues arising in the industry that are best addressed through collaboration and idea sharing. The opportunity to earn CEBT certification gives technicians the ability to show mastery of their craft and is a career milestone. To advance the field, EBAA regularly offers research grants to aid in the next discovery in the reversal of corneal blindness.

It is our hope that members take advantage of all that EBAA has to offer as we conduct the daily work of the restoration of sight around the world and predict and prepare for what’s next—which new direction EBAA moves toward as the gift of sight and eye banking evolves.

Investing in the Future

EBAA is responding to the evolving eye banking profession by amending its investment policy to allow direct investments in companies developing new ocular therapies and eye banking processes. By engaging directly with these companies, we can foster innovation in the profession, anticipate and influence changes in the field, and ensure that these products and services are accessible to all our members.

We will ensure our continuity of operations by withholding at least 12 months of expenses from our investment pool, giving us more than \$6 million to invest.

In 2024, EBAA will establish an investment fund into which all members may contribute a portion of their own reserves. As new opportunities are presented to EBAA, we will share our due diligence research with all participating members and aggregate their resources with our own, increasing our impact and allowing all eye banks to benefit from our efforts.



RESEARCH AND GRANTS

EBAA annually awards funds to promote scientific research and innovation in the fields of eye banking and corneal transplantation.

PILOT RESEARCH GRANT

The [Pilot Research Grant](#) funds early-stage research, short-term protocols or pilot projects. Multiple awards of up to \$7,500 are awarded each year. The grant application is open for 2024, and the deadline to apply is March 18.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2023 GRANT RECIPIENTS!

Peter Bedard, MS

Lions Gift of Sight

Efficacy of WNT/beta-catenin Pathway Stimulation using a WNT Surrogate Antibody for Promoting Rapid Corneal Re-epithelialization after High-Risk Penetrating Keratoplasty

Doug Chung, PhD

Stein Eye Institute, UCLA

Characterizing the Transcriptomic Profiles of Cultured Ex Vivo Corneal Endothelial Cells Treated with Mitochondria-Targeted Antioxidants during Cell Expansion

Joshua Hou, MD

University of Minnesota

DEKS Sub Study of Automated Software for Analyzing Area of Cell Loss

Fangfang Qui, MD, PhD

Tufts Medical Center, Tufts University School of Medicine

The Efficacy of Local Adoptive Transfer of Plasmacytoid Dendritic Cells in Improving Allograft Survival in High-Risk Rejection Corneal Transplantation

Divya Srikumaran, MD

Johns Hopkins University

Expression of Pro- vs. Anti-Angiogenic Mediators in Anterior Segment Neovascular Disease Trepine

Leejee Suh, MD

Columbia University, Harkness Eye Institute

Use of 222nm UV Light for Corneal Donor Tissue: a Study of Antimicrobial Efficacy Against Fungi and Parasites and Safety Profile for Corneal Tissue

HIGH IMPACT RESEARCH GRANT

The [High Impact Grant](#) is awarded annually to advance innovation and knowledge in sight restoration. This year, EBAA requested proposals on "Enhancing Corneal Tissue Preservation."

The grant was awarded to Khoa Tran, PhD, from VisionGift. Dr. Tran received the grant for his proposal, "Enhancing Accessibility, Improving Eye Bank Logistics, and Advancing Corneal Transplantation through the Extension of Hypothermic Corneal Storage to 28 Days." Dr. Tran was awarded \$49,640 to complete his research.

In 2024, the EBAA High Impact Research Grant will fund one proposal focused on "Development of Pre-Distribution Testing for Microbial Species" up to \$50,000. The deadline to apply is July 31, 2024.

AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Honoring People In Our Community

JACHIN MISKO

MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Minhua Wu, CEBT

Eye Bank Scientist
Lions Gift of Sight

Minhua's role has developed over the years beginning with lab systems coordination, circulating, and now tissue evaluation and processing. Minhua has helped drive innovation at Lions Gift of Sight through various initiatives in the laboratory setting, including; storage solution performance tracking, decontamination process improvements, relationship development with eye bank partners in China, design of artistic technical images in our new expanded tissue evaluation space, and training student employees to grow their lab team and foster the next generation of eye banking professionals. Minhua is a passionate member of their team and has a deep commitment to their processing team, their organization, and our profession.

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



"I recently attended the Eye Bank Association of America Technician Education Seminar 2023. It was five-week course that featured interactive workshops, on-demand content, live demonstrations, discussions, and networking with other eye bank professionals. Sessions included personal accounts of the gift of sight, interactive slit lamp microscopy evaluations, procedure demonstrations, case study discussions, and simulations. I want to thank Saving Sight for sponsoring the Jachin Misko Memorial Scholarship. And I also want to thank EBAA for hosting the seminar."

JACHIN MISKO MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Madeline Bachus, CEBT

Ocular Processing Coordinator
Sierra Donor Services Eye Bank

Madeline's passion and thirst for knowledge exemplifies the characteristics of this scholarship. Even though she is newer to eye banking, she is a quick learner and has the intellect to apply what she has learned towards increasing efficiencies and improving current processes. Madeline routinely works with the senior technical staff to develop and troubleshoot new eye bank services. Madeline has routinely demonstrated strong initiative and leadership with her responsibilities and decision making. She is confident in herself and in her training and is able to apply this in order to successfully complete the tasks at hand. She is passionate about the mission and works daily to improve her skills in order to better serve corneal patients and further the legacy of their donor heroes through cornea transplantation.

As one of the recipients of the Jachin Misko Memorial Scholarship, Madeline attended the virtual Technician Education Seminar (TES). Madeline 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. The scholarship 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.



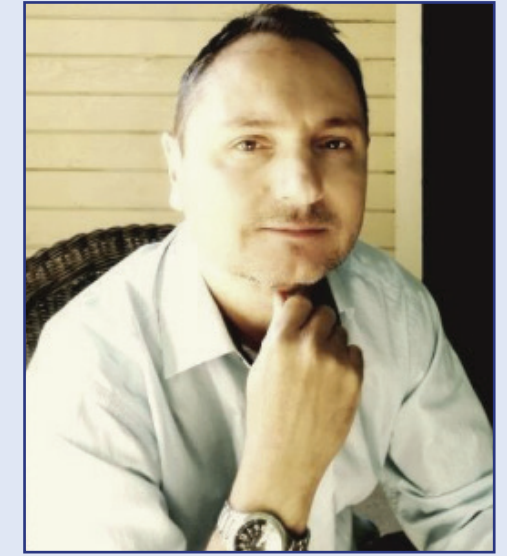
"I had a very narrow understanding of all of the details and nuances that went into donation, from start to finish. I particularly appreciated hearing the approach calls from donor families and the case studies, it helped me understand the gravity of our work and the words we choose when helping donor families. As every donor and case is different, I really loved discussing the details of cases, and how we might apply this experience and knowledge to future cases. Hearing other eye bankers' processes, experiences, and policies gave me the knowledge to better understand the differences, but also the similarities, of each eye bank; ultimately, we all share the same goal of facilitating a donor's generous gift of sight to someone in need."

PATRICIA AIKEN-O'NEILL SCHOLARSHIP

Jared Pappas

Quality Assurance & Regulatory Affairs Manager
The Eye Bank of Kentucky

Jared Pappas joined The Eye Bank of Kentucky in 2021 and is the Quality Assurance and Regulatory Affairs Manager. His responsibilities include maintaining EBAA and FDA accreditations, managing eye bank quality systems, and reviewing and updating clinical policies and procedures. Jared assists the clinical department in developing, implementing, monitoring, and archiving policies and procedures pertaining to quality control and improvement. He also monitors the eye bank's training program, ensuring that training, policies, and procedures are consistent. Jared is responsible for ensuring the completion of all complaints, errors, deviations, adverse reactions, and departures from procedures, investigation, and reporting. Jared was born and raised in a small fishing village in Wales, United Kingdom, but he has lived all over the world including London, Cape Town, Sydney, Hollywood, and New York City. He has traveled to more than 60 countries and six continents, indulging his interest in observing primates (mainly great apes) in their natural habitats. Jared, at the young age of 8, started working every Sunday at a local open-air market. Since then, he has worked a variety of jobs including as a baker, motor mechanic, historian, director of QA/RA, and global TV producer. He also has degrees in both History and IT. Jared aspires to become an EBAA Certified Eye Bank Technician and is excited to attend the Annual Meeting to network with peers from around the country.



"I want to thank the selection committee in choosing me to receive the Patricia Aiken-O'Neill Scholarship. Attending the EBAA Annual Meeting in Dallas was an opportunity I was determined to make the most of. From the Leadership Workshop early on Wednesday morning to the Medical Directors Symposium on Saturday afternoon, I was broadening my eye bank network and filling gaps in my knowledge and experience. The Annual Meeting was the perfect opportunity for me to immerse myself in the global eye banking community. Not only did I meet, in person, my QA peers whilst attending QA workshops but had the opportunity to meet other new attendees from eye banking departments outside my discipline."

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

R. TOWNLEY PATON AWARD

David Verdier, MD

Ophthalmologist
Verdier Eye Center, PLC

David Verdier, MD, is an ophthalmologist with more than 40 years of experience specializing in cornea and external disease, cataract surgery, corneal transplantation, and intraocular lenses. Dr. Verdier has published numerous articles and textbook chapters, including chapters on Penetrating Keratoplasty, DALK, DSEK, DMEK, DSO, Therapeutic Keratoplasty, and Combined Keratoplasty and cataract extraction. His surgical techniques have been published in video chapters for each of these procedures. He has provided leadership, authorship, and strong patient recruitment for the Cornea Donor Study, the Cornea Preservation Time Study, and the ongoing Diabetic Endothelial Keratoplasty Study. He is actively involved in lecturing and research to improve medical and surgical eye care, but his primary focus has always been on providing optimal care to his patients.

In 1984, Dr. Verdier brought to West Michigan the skills of modern corneal transplantation. His subspecialty practice in cornea and external eye diseases provides expertise in corneal diseases and surgical procedures, including corneal transplantation, cataract removal and intraocular lens implantation, and laser and refractive surgery.



Dr. Verdier is a Clinical Professor of Surgery, Michigan State University College of Human Medicine. He is a graduate of the University of Michigan undergraduate and medical schools. He completed a Family Practice Residency in Charleston, South Carolina, followed by his residency in Ophthalmology in Pittsburgh, then fellowship in Corneal and External Eye Disease at the University of Iowa.

Dr. Verdier has been heavily involved in EBAA committees for more than 20 years, particularly on the Medical Advisory Board, Accreditation Board, and Scientific Programs Committee. He received the award during the Cornea and Eye Banking Forum, where he delivered the [R. Townley Paton Award Lecture: It's All About Time](#).

The R. Townley Paton Award is the Eye Bank Association of America's highest honor for corneal physicians. This award is presented annually to an ophthalmologist in recognition of his/her outstanding contribution to eye banking and EBAA. Since 1982, esteemed corneal physicians who exemplify the precepts of R. Townley Paton, MD, the father of modern eye banking and the founder of the world's first eye bank, have received this notable award.

2023 LEONARD HEISE AWARD

Chris Stoeger, MBA, CEBT, CTBS

Chief Executive Officer
VisionGift

Chris Stoeger began his career in eye banking as a technician at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas in 1994. He moved to Oregon in 2000 where he joined VisionGift and advanced through the ranks up to CEO, all the while focusing on growth in the field of eye banking. He has been a resource of technical expertise and overall eye banking knowledge for colleagues around the globe. In a world of increasing competition and significant change, Chris remains focused on leading with an eye towards quality and collaboration however possible.

In his role at VisionGift, Chris often represents the eye bank through local collaborations with OHSU's Casey Eye Institute and Devers Eye Institute. He participates in OHSU's international ophthalmology charitable programs and ensures VisionGift's education on eye banking is part of the local Residents and Fellows training, including tissue support and wet labs. Chris also serves on the Donate Life NW Board—his work helps ensure state donor registry growth through legislation and fundraising. He often represents eye banking at community events.

In addition to serving on the EBAA Board, Chris has been part of many committees including International Relations, Meetings, Tech Education, Exam, Constitution and Bylaws, and the Medical Advisory Board and as co-chair of the Accreditation Board. Additionally, he has represented eye banking on the NDRI Scientific Advisory Council, CPTS Advisory Committee, and currently the DETECT



Advisory Committee. Chris is a Certified Eye Bank Technician (CEBT) and a Certified Tissue Bank Specialist (CTBS). He presents extensively at meetings on various eye banking topics and is a contributing author on more than 45 scientific publications. He serves as a reviewer for various journals, including Cornea, Nature Scientific Reports, and Eye Banking and Corneal Transplantation.

Chris found his calling in eye banking and hopes his dedication is infectious to those who know him. The award was presented to Chris during the 2023 EBAA Annual Meeting.

The Leonard Heise Award is presented to non-physician eye bankers in recognition of their outstanding devotion to EBAA's development and for exemplifying the precepts of Leonard Heise, a major contributor to the fight against blindness and one of EBAA's founders.

CRYSTAL CORNEA AWARD

Rosalba González

Mother of donor Aolani Lopez

Zoe Rabago

Cornea Recipient

On September 28th, 2016, a young girl named Aolani tragically died in a motor vehicle accident. Nine days later, one of her corneas was transplanted into six-week-old, Zoe Rabago. From that moment on, the lives of Aolani's family, Zoe, and Zoe's family have been intertwined.

Three days after Zoe's transplant, her mother, Nia, posted on UT Southwestern's Transplant Services Center's Facebook page expressing her gratitude for her baby's gift of sight and her eagerness to meet the donor family to properly thank them.

Shortly after the donation, Transplant Services Center received a call from Aolani's mother, Rosalba, asking to meet the recipients of her daughter's cornea. Rosalba was given information and soon after, the families exchanged letters. The following April, at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden, the two families met each other. Little Zoe immediately gravitated towards Rosalba and remained in Rosalba's arms for most of the event. After the two families spoke privately, they attended the "Garden of Life Spring Celebration Day" honoring donor families and recognizing recipients. During the program, both families publicly shared their stories.



Reflecting on Aolani's death, Rosalba says, "The thing I want people to know is even though she died, Aolani's death was not in vain. Due to her loss, she was able to change the lives of two other people and their families. I know this is what she would have wanted. I also want others to know that when they have a loss like mine, think how your loss can change other people's lives. You don't know how that person and their family could feel when they get the donated corneas, organs, or tissues they need. I'm glad my daughter could make it possible for a little girl to be able to see." Both families have been selfless with their time, working with UT Southwestern Transplant Services Center, EBAA, and Donate Life Texas.

The award was presented to Rosalba and Zoe during the 2023 EBAA Annual Meeting.

The Crystal Cornea Award is presented to individuals or organizations from outside healthcare and eye banking who, through their words and actions, elevate public awareness of corneal donation and transplantation.

GIFT OF SIGHT AWARD

Satish Chundru, DO

Forensic Pathologist

Hill Country Forensics LLC

Nominated by Miracles In Sight

Satish Chundru, DO, is a board-certified forensic pathologist who currently works at a private company performing autopsies for several counties in Texas. Dr. Chundru does locums tenens work (traveling medical examiner), private autopsies for families, and consulting services for families and lawyers. Dr. Chundru has two companies: ISDP Consulting LLC includes locum work and consulting and Hill Country Forensics LLC deals with county government autopsies.

Dr. Chundru loves what he does because he has unique skills to help families cope with their worst moments in life: the death of a loved one. He went to University of Texas at Austin and attended medical school in Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine in Fort Worth, TX. His residency in pathology was at University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, TX, and his fellowship was in Miami, Florida in 2004.

Dr. Chundru has been a donation advocate since early in his career, playing an important role in the process of eye, organ, and tissue donation. He has embraced a direct referral program facilitating the identification of potential donors that do not enter through the normal referral process and would otherwise be missed. He coordinates with transplant organizations ensuring that all necessary procedures are followed to preserve the option of donation. Dr. Chundru provides support for families considering donation, explaining the process and answering any questions they may have.



When constructing his new pathology lab in 2020, Dr. Chundru made sure there was specific collaboration with the local tissue and eye bank to reduce challenges and to preserve the option of donation when and where possible. He is an outspoken advocate to colleagues across the nation about the positive potential of working alongside the donation community, highlighting how these programs can benefit the community while maintaining the integrity of a forensic death investigation. Dr. Chundru is a tireless advocate for donation and his passion for his work is evident through all his efforts.

The award was presented to Dr. Chundru during the 2023 Annual Meeting.

The Gift of Sight Award is presented to a professional who works closely with the eye banking community and whose efforts have demonstrated significant support of eye banking and corneal donation.

COMMUNICATIONS OPTICS AWARD

Matt Webber

Partner Relations Manager
VisionGift

Matt Webber is the Partner Relations Manager at VisionGift. In his role, Matt works with hospital partners, funeral homes, medical examiners, and donation partners. He also manages the correspondence program for donor families & recipients, and VisionGift's social media. Matt serves as a member of Donate Life America's Advisory Council and on EBAA's Donor, Partner, and Community Relations Committee.

As a true believer in the power of storytelling to engage and inspire, Matt's passion for creating high-quality, fun, and impactful communications has helped his own eye bank, and all EBAA members across the country. After Matt and VisionGift created donor family and recipient videos, he collaborated with EBAA to convert the videos into featured stories during the past two Eye Donation Months.

Matt designs unique social media graphics that are creative, humorous, and go beyond the standard "register as a donor" images. He often finds ways to feature VisionGift staff in his posts, giving donation professionals novel opportunities to connect with the eye bank's mission.

The award was presented to Matt during the 2023 Annual Meeting.



The EBAA Communication Optics Award was established in 2023. It recognizes an individual or team from an EBAA member eye bank who shows mastery of storytelling and creativity to advance EBAA's mission to restore sight worldwide and demonstrates ongoing dedication to and excellence in spreading awareness and highlighting the gift of sight and its impact.

MARY JANE O'NEILL FELLOWSHIP

Elisabeth Cittadino, MD

Eye Bank Technical Director and Medical Director
Hospital Oftalmológico Santa Lucía Eye Bank –
Health Secretary Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires

Elisabeth Cittadino, MD, is the Eye Bank Technical Director at Hospital Oftalmológico Santa Lucía Eye Bank in Buenos Aires. Dr. Cittadino is responsible for ensuring the quality of tissue, training staff, evaluating, processing, and preserving tissue for therapeutic, teaching, and research purposes. She is involved in educational activities for professionals from the entire country. Dr. Cittadino also trains ophthalmologists and technicians in other provinces of Argentina so that additional eye banks may be established. Five of the ten eye banks active in Argentina have been trained by Elisabeth and her eye bank.

After becoming a medical doctor in 1987, Dr. Cittadino completed her residency in Ophthalmology and continued working at Hospital Santa Lucía at Cornea Department and at the Emergency Department. She is an active member of Consejo Argentino de Oftalmología. In 2000, she became Technical Director of the eye bank and has been the Medical Director since October 2022. The eye bank has received a microkeratome as a donation, and she is interested in receiving training on the process of preparing lamellar tissue for DSAEK as it should be done in an eye bank.



Dr. Cittadino goal is to make a difference in patients' lives by promoting the creation of new eye banks in Argentina and by sharing her experience with younger generations to help to reduce the national waiting list to receive a corneal transplant in her country.

Thank you to Lions World Vision Institute for hosting Dr. Cittadino and thank you to The Eye-Bank for Sight restoration for their continued support of the Fellowship.

The Mary Jane O'Neill Fellowship in International Eye Banking was established in 2001 to provide medical or technical personnel from international eye banks with the skills necessary to develop, operate, and maintain successful eye banks within their own countries, reducing blindness due to corneal disease or injury.

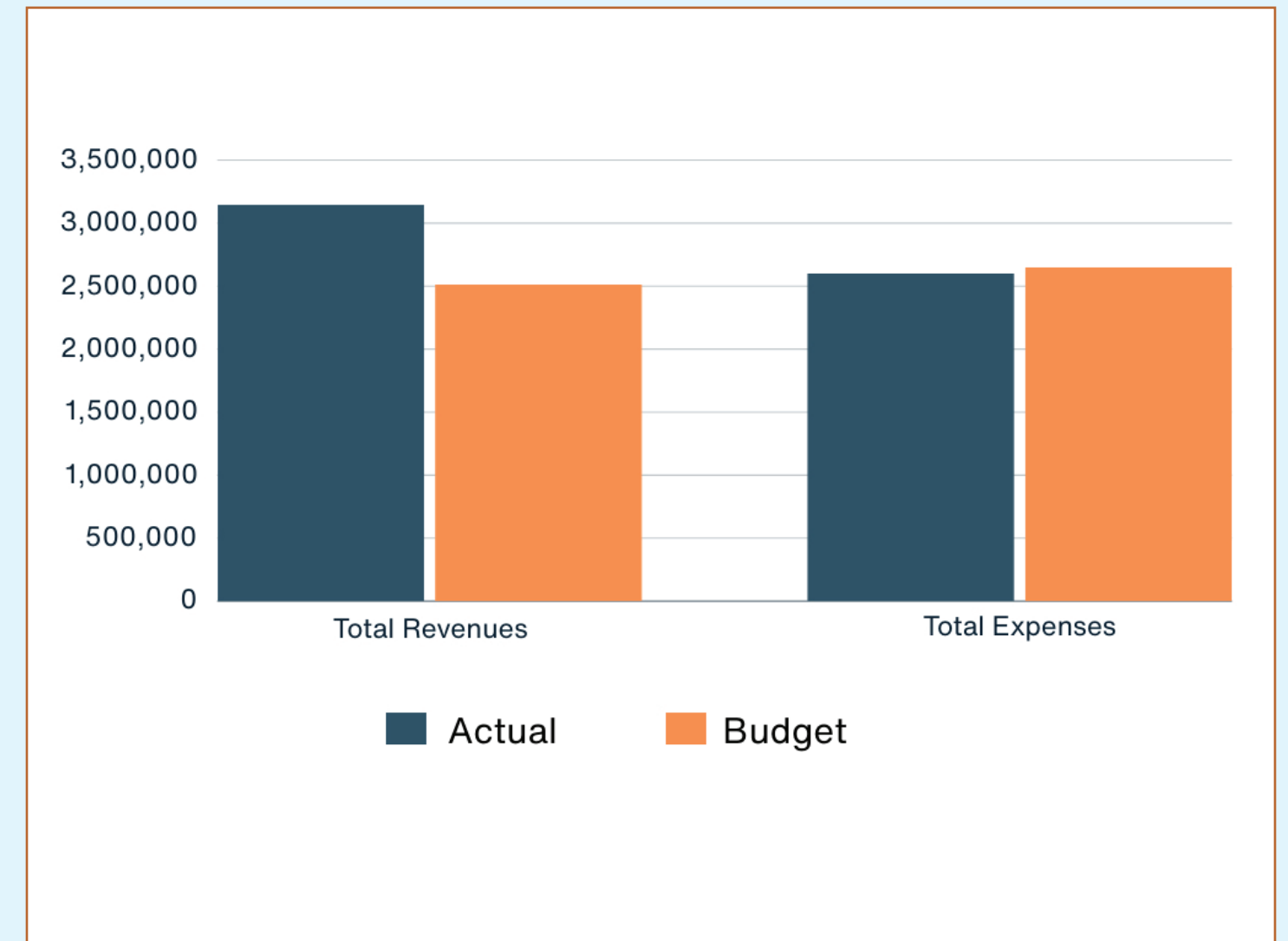
FINANCIAL REPORT

EBAA enjoyed another positive fiscal year, thanks to higher than budgeted revenue and a windfall contribution from an individual donor. The revenue bump came primarily from two sources; meeting sponsorships and eye banker certifications. This, coupled with our continuing controls on expenses, led to an operational surplus of \$23,000, which nicely outpaced our budgeted loss of \$135,000.

On top of this, EBAA was the beneficiary of a major bequest of nearly \$600,000 from the estate of Mrs. Clara Gleissner of North Carolina. First brought to our attention in 2022, EBAA received most of the proceeds of this bequest in 2023, with a small amount to be sent in 2024 upon the final probate hearing.

As a result of these developments and continued wise investment of our reserve funds, EBAA's Net Assets increased by over \$1 million. In December, the Board of Directors adopted a policy to use a portion of our reserve funds to foster innovation in our profession by directly investing in companies developing products and services that can transform eye banking and corneal transplantation.

FY 2023 ACTUAL VS. BUDGET



FINANCIAL REPORT

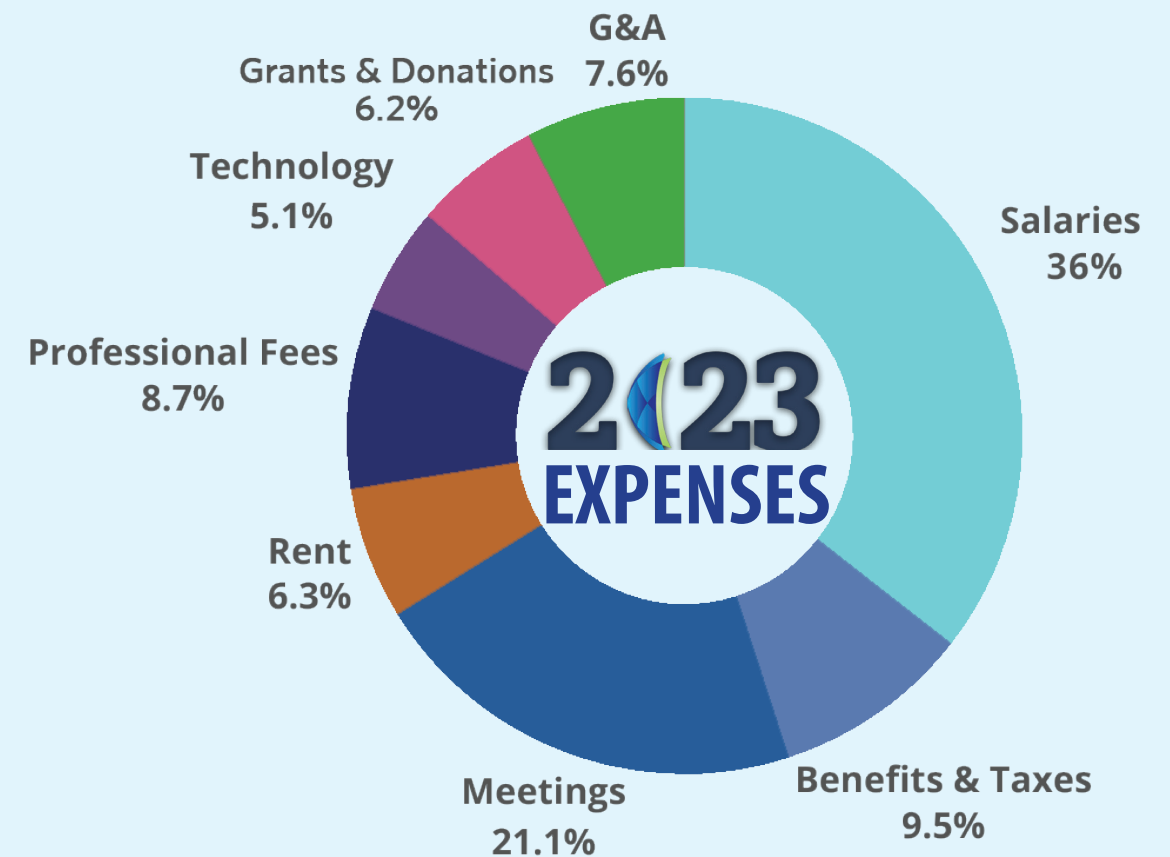
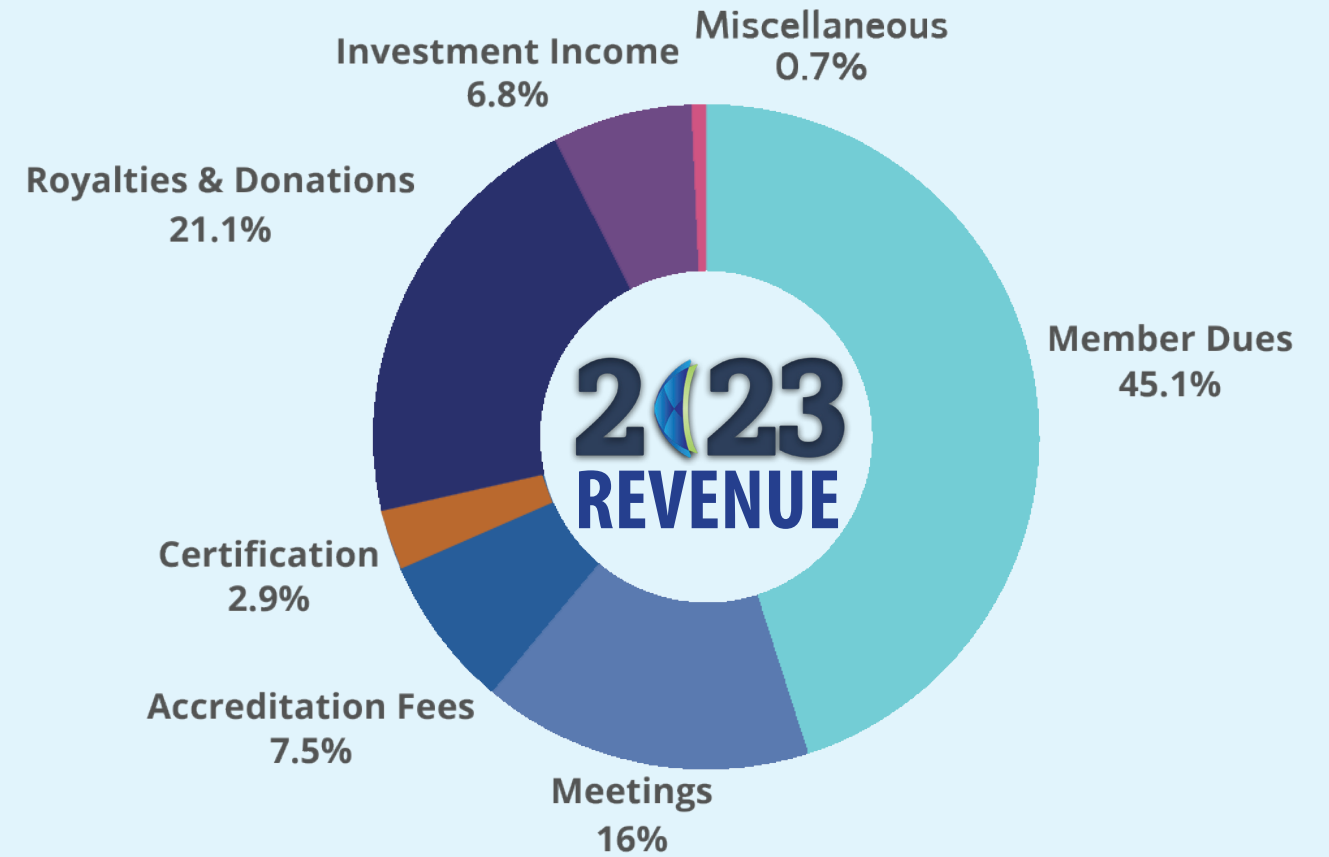
Eye Bank Association of America
Revenue and Expenses For Fiscal Year 2023

REVENUE

Member Dues	\$1,418,648
Meetings	\$503,368
Accreditation Fees	\$235,556
Certification	\$91,225
Royalties & Donations	\$664,362
Investment Income	\$213,326
Miscellaneous	\$20,700
Total Revenues	\$3,147,185

EXPENSES

Salaries	\$937,265
Benefits & Taxes	\$250,092
Meetings	\$555,912
Rent	\$166,330
Professional Fees	\$227,573
Technology	\$134,065
Grants and Donations	\$197,505
G&A	\$200,003
Total Expenses	\$2,600,402



EYE BANK ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
BALANCE SHEET: JUNE 30, 2023

ASSETS:	JUNE 30, 2023	JUNE 30, 2022
Cash and Accounts Reciveable	405,932	292,131
Investments	9,532,804	8,654,924
Fixed Assets-Net	47,458	64,259
Prepaid Expense & Other Assets	56,895	47,880
Right of Use Asset	727,802	889,349
Total Assets	10,770,891	9,948,542

LIABILITIES:	JUNE 30, 2023	JUNE 30, 2022
Accrued Expenses	413,910	437,595
Lease Liability	836,447	1,009,965
Deferred Revenue	22,204	47,721
Other	5,253	3,098
Total Liabilities	1,277,814	1,498,379
Net Assets	9,493,077	8,450,163
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	10,770,891	9,948,542

STATISTICAL REPORT

2023 statistical information was still being analyzed at the time of the Year in Review's publication. Once available, the 2023 Year in Review will be updated to include 2023 data.

LEADERSHIP LISTINGS



2023 EBAA Staff

2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Jennifer Li, MD, Chair
Sierra Donor Services Eye Bank
- Jim Quirk, CEBT, Chair-Elect
AltruVision
- Elizabeth Fout, Secretary/Treasurer
Beauty of Sight
- 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
- M. Soledad Cortina, MD, At-Large Member
Eversight
- Stephen Kaufam, MD, PHD, At-Large Member
Lions Gift of Sight
- Ellen Kerns, CEBT, At-Large Member
Advancing Sight Network
- Kristen McCoy, MA, CEBT, CTBS, At-Large Member
Miracles In Sight

2023 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 Director
- Herocia Hawkins
Administrative Assistant

CONCLUSION

In a rapidly changing profession, EBAA moved in new directions during 2023, and will continue to do so to meet challenges, solve problems, and plan for the future. These new directions and strategies are always chosen with deep consideration of the best path forward for all our members, keeping EBAA's strong and successful culture of collaboration and partnership amongst organizations. What remains consistent and unwavering is EBAA's commitment to the transformation of lives and the restoration of sight worldwide.



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[RESTORESIGHT.ORG](https://www.restoresight.org)

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