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Eye Bank Association of America

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Longtime Utah Lions Eye Bank – John A. Moran Eye Center Executive Director Awarded Eye Banking's Highest Honor

Chris Hanna earns Leonard Heise Award for dedication to eye banking, corneal transplantation, and the restoration of sight.

Washington, DC—The Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA), the world's oldest transplantation association and the nationally-recognized accrediting and standards setting body for eye banks, today announced Chris Hanna, CEBT of the Utah Lions Eye Bank – John A. Moran Eye Center, as the recipient of 2026 Leonard Heise Award. The Heise Award is the association's most prestigious honor presented to an eye banker in recognition of their outstanding devotion to the eye banking profession and for exemplifying the precepts of Leonard Heise, one of EBAA's founders.

"For more than 25 years, Chris has dedicated himself to the restoration of sight," said EBAA President & CEO, Kevin Corcoran. "His longstanding relationship within EBAA includes multiple terms on the Board of Directors, serving as Co-Chair of the Accreditation Board, member of the Medical Advisory Board and its subcommittees, Governance Review Committee member, and contributor to the *International Journal of Eye Banking*. Because of Chris' devotion and service, EBAA is better equipped to pursue our mission to restore sight worldwide."

There are an estimated 12 million individuals around the world suffering from corneal blindness that could be corrected with a corneal transplant. There is no artificial cornea—the transplantation process depends on the priceless gift of donation from one human to another. Nearly anyone can be a cornea donor, as blood-type, eye color, vision quality, and age are not relevant to donation.

EBAA will present the 2026 Heise Award to Chris Hanna at the 2026 EBAA Annual Meeting in Indianapolis during an awards luncheon on Friday, June 5.

The Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA), established in 1961, is the oldest donation and transplantation association in the U.S. It sets medical standards, provides education, oversees professional certifications, and engages in advocacy to support eye donation, cornea transplantation, and research. Since EBAA's founding, member eye banks have provided tissue for over 2.5 million sight-restoring corneal transplants. To learn more, visit restoresight.org.