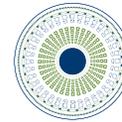


AEVR's Emerging Vision Scientists Day on Capitol Hill



The class of the Second Annual *EVS Day* (see names in box below) to participate in the AEVR and NAEVR events reflecting the breadth of breakthrough vision research who were nominated by their Departments of Ophthalmology or Schools/Colleges of Optometry



DECADE OF VISION
2010-2020
an initiative of the
Alliance For Eye And Vision Research

EVSS Educate About Their Research to Reduce the Burden of Eye Disease

On September 14, AEVR's *Decade of Vision 2010-2020 Initiative* hosted its Second Annual *EVS Day* on Capitol Hill, which was funded by a grant from Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB). The first-ever event held on October 7, 2015, was also funded by RPB and is documented in a video on the AEVR Web site.

These 22 young investigators—reflecting the breadth of basic and clinical vision research from across the nation and who have not yet received their first investigator-initiated (R01) grant from NIH—attended AEVR's annual AMD Congressional briefing, provided on-camera interviews about their research for a summary video, and displayed posters of their research in an evening reception. On September 15 and under the auspices of NAEVR (see story right), they visited their delegation offices.

Both the educational and advocacy activities were built around one question: "How will the breakthrough research being conducted by these *EVSS* prevent, delay, and treat vision disorders, which will grow to an annual U.S. cost burden of \$717 billion in inflation-adjusted dollars by year 2050, as projected by Prevent Blindness in its 2014 study entitled *The Future of Vision: Forecasting the Prevalence and Costs of Vision Problems*."

Petr Baranov, M.D., Ph.D. (Harvard University/Mass Eye & Ear)
Daniel Chao, M.D., Ph.D. (University of California San Diego/Shiley Eye Institute)
Anthony Daniels, M.D. (Vanderbilt University)
Astra Dinculescu, Ph.D. (University of Florida)
Brad Dougherty, O.D., Ph.D. (Ohio State University College of Optometry)
Michael Farkas, Ph.D. (SUNY Buffalo)
Morgan Fedorchak, Ph.D. (University of Pittsburgh)
Iris Kassem, M.D., Ph.D. (Medical College of Wisconsin)

In addition to the poster display, AEVR Board President Peter McDonnell, M.D. hosted a short program at which NEI Director Paul Sieving, M.D. Ph.D. offered a welcome and discussed the NIH/NEI commitment to early-stage investigators:

"What I see looking around the room is extremely important and a lot of fun. I see the next generation of vision research and the people committed to making a difference for eye and vision health. ...The road that you have taken is an exciting one, but not an easy one since the average age of a first-time R01 (investigator-initiated) grant recipient at NIH is 42 years old. The NIH and NEI recognize that challenge and are doing something about it, for example: shorter review cycles for first-time applicants and an emphasis on funding first-time investigators; training grants, such as the K99-R00 Pathway to Independence Award; and the NIH Director's New Innovator Award. ...We want to fund, mentor, and support the young talent here tonight."



NEI Director Paul Sieving, M.D., Ph.D. provided his welcome and commitment to early-stage investigators



Dr. Sieving spent time with each of the *EVSS*, including Petr Baranov, M.D., Ph.D. (Harvard University/Mass Eye & Ear) who described his research into neuroprotective growth factors in the eye



Commenting on the Second Annual *EVS Day*, RPB President Brian Hofland, Ph.D. said:

"We are not only bringing emerging vision scientists to Capitol Hill for a day, we are creating policy-savvy researchers and lifelong advocates. The interactions with members of Congress underscore the importance of explaining their work to non-scientists. For something to be a funding priority, the people enacting policy decisions must be educated on what it is and why it matters. These young scientists are uniquely qualified to speak compellingly about the impact of their research and embody the value of sustained, robust, and predictable NIH funding."

Heather Leisy, M.D. (New York University)
Phoebe Lin, M.D., Ph.D. (Oregon Health & Science University/Casey Eye Institute)
Daniel Lipinski, Ph.D. (Medical College of Wisconsin)
Yao Liu, M.D. (University of Wisconsin-Madison)
Alexis Malkin, O.D. (New England College of Optometry)
Paula Anne Newman-Casey, M.D., M.S. (University of Michigan Medical School)
Lisa Ostrin, O.D., Ph.D. (University of Houston College of Optometry)
Dolly Ann Padovani-Claudio, M.D., Ph.D. (Vanderbilt University)

Nimesh Patel, O.D., Ph.D. (University of Houston College of Optometry)
Andrew Pucker, O.D., Ph.D. (University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry)
Osamah Saeedi, M.D. (University of Maryland School of Medicine)
Mandeep Singh, M.D., Ph.D. (Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine/Wilmer Eye Institute)
Luis Vazquez, M.D., Ph.D. (University of Miami/Bascom Palmer Eye Institute)
Glenn Yiu, M.D., Ph.D. (University of California Davis)