

IN THE NEWS

ACADEMY NEWS

Fellow Awarded 2006 Pisart Award

Eli Pelli has been awarded this year's Lighthouse International Pisart Vision Award. The award recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the prevention, cure, or amelioration of severe vision impairment or blindness. The award, which includes a \$10,000 grant and a replica of the original Pisart sculpture, will be presented this December.

Fellow Named Director of the Vision Care Institute of J&J

Richard Clompus, OD, FAAO, has been appointed Director, The Vision Care Institute of Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc. Dr. Clompus assumes the position of Director from Howard Purcell, OD, FAAO. Since its launch in March 2004, The Vision Care Institute, an innovative professional resource for optometry students and recent graduates, has hosted more than 2000 students from all 19 of the schools and colleges of optometry throughout North America.

ORGANIZATION & INSTITUTION NEWS

PCO Signs Landmark Agreement

Pennsylvania College of Optometry (PCO) and Danube University (DUK), Krems, Austria, entered into an historic partnership to jointly plan and implement advanced degree courses in optometry. These courses will be available to eye care practitioners in Austria, Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, and Serbia and is the first in a series of collaborative projects designed to improve eye care in Austria and its neighboring Eastern European countries.

The courses will be available through DUK's Department of Clinical Medicine and Biotechnology. Clinical instruction

will be conducted in the University's new state-of-the-art teaching center, which has been fully equipped by Zeiss-Austria. PCO and DUK will jointly teach classes in the Master of Science program. This is the first time optometry will be taught on the university level in Austria.

The first Master of Science in clinical optometry program is already in session. Students from Austria, Poland, and the Czech Republic are enrolled in the program. The next program is scheduled to begin in May 2007.

National Nonprofit Organization Holding Second Annual "Eyes on Capitol Hill" Event

Prevent Blindness America, the nation's oldest and largest nonprofit eye health and safety organization, is preparing for the 2007 Eyes on Capitol Hill campaign. The second annual event is designed to allow those affected by real-life vision issues an opportunity to discuss their experiences with their government representatives. The event will begin February 28, 2007, in Washington, DC, with discussions on federal funding efforts for vision programs and research and seminars on how participants can become effective advocates in their own community. Last year, Prevent Blindness America brought more than 100 patient advocates to the Hill to meet with various congressional representatives.

"Because of the tremendous success of last year's Eyes on Capitol Hill campaign, we are thrilled to be able to once again give vision care patients the opportunity to meet with our nation's leaders to discuss vision issues," said Daniel D. Garrett, senior vice president, Prevent Blindness America. "By bringing constituents to their member of congress, these lawmakers can hear the dire need for improved vision care and eye research funding."

For more information on Eyes on Capitol Hill, visit www.preventblindness.net/eyesoncapitolhill.

Nature Reviews Neuroscience Highlights Macular Degeneration: Recent Advances and Therapeutic Opportunities

In the October issue, authors Amir Rattner and Jeremy Nathans beautifully describe recent progress in understanding the pathophysiology of macular degeneration and the implications of this new knowledge for its treatment and prevention. They note how the past decade has witnessed remarkable advances, including the development of new, noninvasive retinal imaging technologies, the creation of animal models for macular disease, and the isolation of many of the genes responsible for both early- and late-onset macular diseases. These advances have set the stage for the development of effective mechanism-based new therapies.

NIH and CDC Investigate Diabetes in Young People

Approximately one in every 523 young people have been diagnosed with diabetes according to the first comprehensive assessment of the disease in Americans under 20. That places diabetes among the more common chronic illnesses of youth, the researchers report, striking 1.82 children per 1000 compared with 1.24 per 1000 with cancer and 120 per 1000 with asthma. The national study, in the October issue of the journal *Pediatrics*, provides a baseline for future studies of diabetes prevention and control, says study coauthor Jean Lawrence, a research scientist with Kaiser Permanente Southern California in Pasadena. Previous estimates have been drawn from smaller studies that focused mainly on white children and type 1 diabetes, she says.

Type 1, or juvenile, diabetes is the form of the disease most often associated with children, but in recent years, type 2 cases have been found in children. Although the prevalence is increasing, the numbers are small. Of the 6379 identified with diabetes at six sites in the study, type 2 was found in