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Information: Leslie Gottlieb
212-821-9760

EMINENT PIONEER WHO IS HARNESSING TECHNOLOGY TO HELP VISUALLY IMPAIRED TO BE HONORED BY LIGHTHOUSE INTERNATIONAL

New York...Dr. Eliezer (Eli) Peli, world renowned scientist, inventor, engineer and clinician will receive the 2006 Pisart Award by Lighthouse International at a special dinner December 13, 2006. Marking the 25th year the award is being presented, The Pisart Vision Award is given for outstanding contribution to the field of vision impairment or blindness. Dr. Peli is Professor of Ophthalmology at Harvard Medical School and the Moakley Scholar in Aging Eye Research at the Schepens Eye Research Institute, Boston, MA.



According to Tara Cortes, PhD, RN and President and CEO of Lighthouse International, "Dr. Peli is one of the few people who has achieved international recognition as an acclaimed scientist, inventor, engineer and foremost clinician in visual impairment. His success in applying his knowledge of biomedical engineering and clinical care to eradicating problems in low vision and vision rehabilitation has propelled him to the forefront of the field of low vision research and its practical applications. For example, Dr. Peli's advancements now enable people with vision impairment to watch television more easily, and his basic work on contrast perception is extremely important to the millions in this country and abroad who will have vision impairment in the coming years."

Some examples of his accomplishments are:

*The discovery and publication of the concept of a preferred retina locus which has become a major concept in the rehabilitation of patients with age related macular degeneration.

*The invention and creation of image enhancement techniques that improve the visibility of specialized

TV systems primarily used by those with vision impairment. His method has been extended recently to digital television.

*"Vision multiplexing" a novel concept of processing multiple images simultaneously which creates an opportunity for development of numerous visual aids for visually impaired. This has already helped people with tunnel vision and half blindness due to brain injury or stroke as well as people with macular degeneration.

*Creation of a computational metric for quantifying and specifications of contrast in complex images. This metric has now been widely adapted in engineering, vision science and medical imaging.

*He has patented and developed a fiberoptic Taper magnifier specifically designed as a reading aid. The Pisart Vision Award is a prestigious annual award honoring an individual who has made an extraordinary contribution to the prevention, cure or treatment of severe vision impairment or blindness. Established in 1981, it is partially funded through a bequest of Mme. Georgette Pisart, a longtime Lighthouse volunteer. This esteemed award carries a prize of \$10,000 and a replica of the original Pisart sculpture -- a hand-cut piece representing the many facets and unique beauty of the eye.

Dr. Peli was chosen by an eminent independent panel of judges of experts from this country and abroad. Dr Peli was educated at the Technion Institute of Technology in Israel, and the New England College of Optometry in Boston. He has taught and lectured extensively. He is the recipient of numerous prestigious awards and has author or coauthored more than 145 scholarly articles and 2 books. Past recipients of the Pisart Award include Dr. Paul A. Seiving, Director of the National Eye Institute, Dr. Charles D. Kelman, who developed an ultrasound device that revolutionized cataract surgery, and the renowned ophthalmologists Drs. Charles L. Schepens and Eliot L. Berson.

Founded in 1905, Lighthouse International is a leading non-profit organization that helps people of all ages overcome the challenges of vision loss. Through services, education, research and advocacy, the Lighthouse enables people with low vision and blindness to enjoy safe, independent and productive lives. For more information about vision loss, its causes and what you can do about it, contact Lighthouse International at 1-800-829-0500 or visit www.visionconnection.org For more information about the Lighthouse, visit www.lighthouse.org.

[Click here for a larger version of Dr. Peli's photograph.](#)

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