

AEVR's Fifth Annual Emerging Vision Scientists Day on Capitol Hill

NEED TO KNOW:

On September 18 and 19, AEVR's Decade of Vision 2010-2020 Initiative hosted its Fifth Annual Emerging Vision Scientists (EVS) Day on Capitol Hill, which was supported by a grant from Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB). The event, featuring 20 early-stage investigators, occurred as Congress was working to finalize FY2020 appropriations before the start of the fiscal year. AEVR/NAEVR Board President Dr. Paul Lee participated in all events, as did Brian Hofland, PhD, the President of sponsoring organization RPB.



NEI Director of Extramural Programs Michael Steinmetz, PhD with Dr. Paul Lee



The class of the Fifth Annual Emerging Vision Scientists Day who participated in the AEVR and NAEVR events reflecting the breadth of breakthrough vision research and were nominated by their Departments of Ophthalmology or Schools/Colleges of Optometry from across the nation.

Stephanie Adams, OD, PhD	(Illinois College of Optometry)
Ava Bittner, OD, PhD	(UCLA/Stein Eye)
Kinga Bujakowska, PhD	(Mass Eye & Ear/Harvard Medical School)
Florence Cabot, MD	(University of Miami/Bascom Palmer)
Vicki Chen, MD	(Tufts Medical Center)
Daniel Coates, PhD	(University of Houston College of Optometry)
Ross Coltery, PhD	(Medical College of Wisconsin)
Susana da Silva, PhD	(University of Pittsburgh)
Irina De La Huerta, MD, PhD	(Vanderbilt University)
Abigail Fahim, MD, PhD	(University of Michigan)
Muneeb Faq, PhD	(NYU/Langone)
Ian Han, MD	(University of Iowa)
Lynn Hassman, MD, PhD	(Washington University)
Ajay Kuriyan, MD	(Flaum Eye/University of Rochester)
Jesson Martin, PhD	(Kentucky College of Optometry)
Sangeetha Metlapally, PhD	(New England College of Optometry)
Sumit Sharma, MD	(Cleveland Clinic/Cole Eye Institute)
Jessica Steen, OD	(NOVA Southeastern College of Optometry)
An-Jey Su, PhD	(University of Colorado)
Jia Yin, MD, PhD	(Mass Eye & Ear/Harvard Medical School)



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

RPB 
Research to Prevent Blindness

Since 2015, AEVR has hosted more than 120 early-stage investigators on Capitol Hill. Summaries of the 2015-2018 events—including brief documentary videos—are posted at www.eyeresearch.org

AEVR Poster Reception

The 20 early-stage investigators—reflecting the breadth of basic and clinical vision research and who have not yet received their first investigator-initiated (R01) grant from the NIH or NEI—displayed posters of their research in an evening Congressional Reception and provided on-camera interviews about their research for a documentary video. 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 United States 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*.

A number of the EVSs presented research into therapies and technologies that are in development by a team in which they participate at their academic institution led by an NEI-funded Principal Investigator. The posters not only described the research, but also presented “public health” data about the incidence/impact of the disease and its cost as a means to fully explain benefit of the research investment.

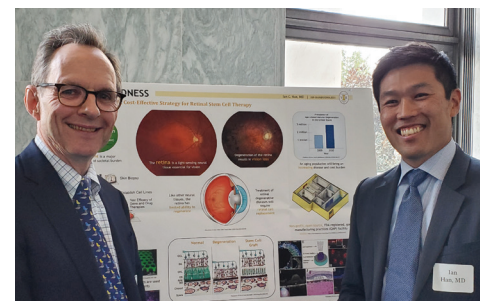
Dr. Lee hosted a brief program that included comments from Michael Steinmetz, PhD, NEI's Director of Extramural Science Programs, who described the Institute's commitment to the next generation of vision scientists. He was joined by NEI's Shefa Gordon, PhD and Nora Wong, MPH from NEI's Office of Program Planning and Analysis and Dustin Hays from NEI's Office of Communications. The NEI team visited each poster and spoke with the researchers, as did Dr. Lee and Dr. Hofland. Cong. Scott DesJarlais, MD (R-TN) and Cong. Steve Cohen (D-TN) visited the posters after also attending AEVR's AMD Congressional Briefing earlier that day.



Cong. Scott DesJarlais, MD (R-TN), speaks with Irina De La Huerta, MD, PhD (Vanderbilt University)



Cong. Steve Cohen (D-TN), left, speaks with Sumit Sharma, MD (Cleveland Clinic/Cole Eye Institute), and NEI's Dr. Shefa Gordon



Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB) President Brian Hofland, PhD with Ian Han, MD (University of Iowa)