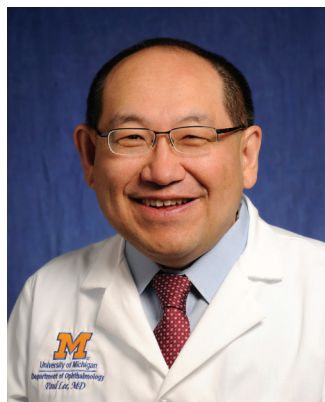


## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### New Beginnings and Opportunities



Spring represents new growth and new opportunities. This spring, the Alliances are beginning 2022 with new leadership, with Dan Ignaszewski as our new Executive Director, and with an eye to building on the foundation of the Alliances' past success. 2022 has already seen the Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (AEVR) delivering on an aggressive schedule of congressional briefings, and the National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (NAEVR) supporting increased funding for research by empowering advocates and engaging with Congress.

You'll see throughout this report that 2022 has already been a busy year with educational programming, publication of a new *JAMA Ophthalmology* article, and the passage of the Federal budget for the fiscal year 2022 (FY22), and we expect it will only get busier. *The Legislative Update* section of this report provides details around the passage of the Federal FY22 budget in March. The budget included \$863.9 million in funding for the National Eye Institute (NEI) within the National Institutes of Health's (NIH), and \$20 million in funding for the Vision Research Program (VRP) within the Department of Defense's (DoD) Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP). NAEVR worked with advocates to support the passage of the FY22 budget, and since its passage, has quickly pivoted to the fiscal year 2023 (FY23) funding requests.

In the *Education Update* of this report, you'll find details about AEVR's 2022 Congressional Briefing plans under its *Research Saving Sight, Restoring Vision Initiative*. This initiative includes five Congressional briefings in 2022, including AEVR's recently hosted glaucoma briefing conducted during World Glaucoma Week in March. We're also excited for AEVR to host its 8th annual *Emerging Vision Scientists (EVS) Day* in September and encourage all the Departments of Ophthalmology and Schools and Colleges of Optometry to nominate early-stage investigators to participate where they will be able to share their cutting-edge research and advocate with their Congressional delegation. We are also exploring new ways of engaging past EVS participants in continued advocacy efforts on behalf of the vision research community.

The Alliances have also welcomed two new Board members since our last *Contributor Report*, electing Joan O'Brien, MD who is immediate past Chair of the Department of Ophthalmology at the University of Pennsylvania Health System, as well as Eduardo Alfonso, MD who serves as Chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology of the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, and Director of the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute. With these elections, the Boards of the Alliances remain committed to working with our members and organizational leadership to maximize the Alliances' impact and expand opportunities for member engagement.

On behalf of the NAEVR and AEVR Boards, we also want to thank our outgoing Directors, Dr. Peter McDonnell, and Dr. Stephen McLeod for their contributions and service to our community. Finally, we want to thank all of you for your continued support of the Alliances and to ask for your ideas and suggestions. Our membership councils have provided important feedback and thoughtful discussions of potential new growth for the Alliances' activities. We look forward to working with you in 2022 and for many years to come.

**Paul Lee, MD, JD**  
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#### NAEVR Events: NAEVR at the 2022 ARVO Annual Meeting

##### Sunday, May 1 – Wednesday, May 4

NAEVR Central, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm Daily, Colorado Convention Center

##### Monday, May 2

NAEVR's *Defense-Related Vision Research Opportunities Session*

7:00 am – 8:00 am, Mile High Ballroom 1AB, Colorado Convention Center