



DISCOVERY

THE DISCOVERY EYE FOUNDATION

Spring 2011

The Discovery Eye Foundation supports research, education and advocacy related to sight-threatening eye diseases and their treatments, improving the quality of life for patients and their families.

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For comments or questions about any articles, please feel free to [email us](#).

RESEARCH UPDATE

Stem Cell Trials Inspire Hope for Treatment of Macular Degeneration

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Phase I/II clinical trials using retinal cells derived from human embryonic stem cells (hESCs) to treat patients with Stargardt's Macular Dystrophy (SMD). One of the most common forms of juvenile macular degeneration, SMD affects children from 10–20 years old. Blindness results from photoreceptor loss associated with degeneration in the pigmented layer of the retina, called the retinal pigment epithelium (RPE). As with the most prevalent type of macular degeneration, "dry" age-related macular degeneration (AMD), there is currently no treatment for SMD. [Read more...](#)

DEF NEWS

2010 Year-End Fundraising Report

[Web Wins, December Dollars and Symposium Success](#)

We made a special effort to reach patients and donors electronically this past year, greatly increasing our online presence and outreach through the Web and social media. We are very excited to report these efforts have literally paid off for DEF, as online donations increased from \$3,272 in 2009 to \$20,859 in 2010, with the number of donors increasing from 48 in 2009 to 236 in 2010. The average gift also increased by almost 30 percent to \$88.39 per donation. We hope these numbers will continue to grow as more and more people discover DEF and our two programs through our websites and facebook.

As always, December proved to be our best month for fundraising, helping to make up for the decrease in our renewal rate earlier in the year. This led us to believe that many donors cautiously

waited until the end of the year to determine their philanthropic gifts. This may have worked to our advantage, as we ended the year with a slight increase in our solicitation income compared with last year.

The Vision Symposium continued to grow, raising \$158,150, which was an increase of 188 percent over the first year. Many thanks go out to our sponsors:

- Pfizer
- Allergan
- Genentech
- Abbott Medical Optics
- UC Irvine
- Mario & Darlene Antonini - Angelus Block
- Jerry & Linda Bruckheimer
- Judy Carroll
- Herb & Beverly Gelfand
- Nesburn Family Foundation
- Ed & Sue Meltzer
- Dr. & Mrs. Marvin Rappaport
- Review of Ophthalmology
- Schoellerman Family Foundation
- Victor Snider

Be sure to mark your calendar for our next Vision Symposium, on May 14 in San Diego.



DEF Researcher Earns Top Grant Score

DEF researcher [Dr. Henry Klassen](#) was awarded part of a \$9.35 million grant to continue studying stem-cell treatments by the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM).

Klassen, one of DEF's most respected scientists, will use his \$3.85 million grant — the largest individual grant — to continue his stem cell-work for treatment of retinitis pigmentosa. CIRM reviewers gave Klassen's proposal the highest scientific score among all applications for early translational grants.

PLAN YOUR GIVING

While you consider including Discovery Eye Foundation in your estate planning, here are some helpful resources for your consideration.

2011 Tax Law Changes: Are You Ready?

With the new year comes the return of the estate tax. You may be wondering what this means for you. Find out how this major change will figure into your plans and what other updates are taking place this year. [Read more...](#)

Peace-of-Mind Checklist

Prepare for the unexpected. Having these essential documents will put you and your loved ones at ease if life takes a surprising turn. [Read more...](#)

Real-Life Estate-Planning Blunder

The past year has shown Andy and Debra how precious life is and how important it is to plan ahead for the unexpected. Read how they found peace of mind by creating and updating their estate plans. [Read more...](#)

A Penny-Wise Way to Help

Looking for creative ways to support Discovery Eye Foundation during your retirement years? By naming us as the beneficiary of your retirement plan assets or insurance policies, you can provide the support you desire without giving up assets today. [Read more...](#)

LIFESTYLE



Say Eye Love You With Chocolate

Go Dark or Go Home

This Valentine's Day, when you're buying chocolate for your honey — or your well-deserving self — you can feel extra good about it.

Dark chocolate is full of antioxidants, which combat the free radicals that cause damage to cells, particularly in the macula. It also contains flavonoids, which protect the blood vessels in your eyes so the cornea and lens stay strong. The purer the chocolate, the better (who didn't know that already?), so look for chocolate that contains at least 60 percent–70 percent cacao extracts for maximum health benefits.

One thing to note: Milk chocolate has a much lower amount of antioxidants, so go dark.

From our Chocolate Heart

Seems there are lots of different taste profiles around the DEF office! When asked what their favorite type chocolate is, DEF staff preferred dark over milk by a 2:1 ratio. Medical Director Anthony Nesburn chose See's Candies as his favorites, MDP Executive Director Judi Delgado goes for Cadbury's (English only), and Vice President of Development Susan DeRemer recommends Trader Joe's organic dark bar with raisins and pecans. DEF Board Chair Jack Schoellerman and NKCF Executive Director Cathy Warren are not picky and will eat any kind of dark chocolate, in case you were wondering.

Dip it Good

The "Eye Cook" section of the DEF website features lots of vision-healthy recipes. Just in time for Valentine's Day, you'll find a new recipe for perennial favorite [chocolate fondue](#), the healthiest of all chocolate desserts, as you can dip fruit to your heart's content.

MACULAR DEGENERATION PARTNERSHIP



The Volunteer Voice

A son-in-law tenders his talents to help those with AMD

One of the best things about Alan Brooks is his voice. It's smooth, soothing. One of those rhythmical lilt that could lull you to sleep. Or convince you to buy, well, anything.

Brooks has put his instrument to good use, working as an actor for commercials, television and stage for nearly four decades. Perhaps you saw him during this year's Super Bowl in one of the coveted commercial spots that vie for attention during breaks in the action. He played the boss in the Bud Light commercial. (To which his agent said: "Congratulations! No one over 30 gets beer commercials!") [Read more...](#)

NATIONAL KERATOCONUS FOUNDATION



KC Pitch Man

In retrospect, it made sense. The high-school baseball star now understood why he'd been unable to hit off-speed pitches during his senior-year season: He couldn't pick up the spin of the ball with his left eye. A Las Vegas native and lifelong athlete, Eric Evans was diagnosed with keratoconus (KC) in fall 1989 during a routine eye exam just after high-school graduation. [Read more...](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

March 11

Tour DEF's New Research Labs

Free guided tour of our new research laboratories at UC Irvine's main campus, noon-1:30 pm.

April 15-17

Abilities Expo in LA

Visit MDP at this year's Abilities Expo at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

May 14

DEF San Diego Vision Symposium

Free seminar on AMD, glaucoma, keratoconus, cataract eye surgery and the genetics of eye disease.

September 9

Tour DEF's New Research Labs

Free guided tour of our new research laboratories at UC Irvine's main campus, noon-1:30 pm.

[More information](#)

September 22-24

AARP Expo in LA

Visit MDP at the Vision Pavilion at this year's Life@50+ right here in Los Angeles.

[More information](#)

