The Year In Review: 2019

Fight for Sight’s mission is to support and inspire eye and vision research by funding promising scientists early in their careers. This mission has been fulfilled consistently and with passion throughout our history.

**SCIENTISTS**

Mary Elizabeth Hartnett, MD, University of Utah Moran Eye Center and 2018 ARVO Weisenfeld Award winner with Sheila Wess, PhD, Wilmer Eye Institute and the Department of Epidemiology at John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, ARVO’s 2019 Weisenfeld Award winner. Mildred would be proud.

Paul Sieving, MD, PhD, Director of The National Eye Institute, who received a 1980 FFS Grant-in-Aid, was recipient of our 2019 Alumni Achievement Award.

Eve J. Higginbotham, SM, MD, Vice Dean for Inclusion and Diversity of the Perelman School of Medicine, and Professor of Ophthalmology at the University of Pennsylvania received the 2019 Physician Scientist Award at this year’s FFS Lights-On Gala. She received a 1985 FFS Grant-in-Aid.

**FUNDRAISING**

James Wang presented an estate gift of $500,000 to Norman Kleiman, PhD, FFS Board President, during Lights-On. It will be used to fund Glaucoma and Macular Degeneration Research.

Lights-On Chairman, past Honoree and FFS Board member, John LaSpina, with Nancy Kerrigan, 2019 Lights-On Emcee and past Honoree.

Tony and Emmy Award winning actress, Donna Murphy, received FFS’s 2019 Special Star Award.

Bryan and Bradford Manning, retailing entrepreneurs and vision research funders – also known as Two Blind Brothers, received FFS’s 2019 Vision Research Advocate Award.

**THE RESULTS OF OUR EFFORTS**

Jae-Hyun Jung, PhD, a scientist from Schepens Eye Research Institute, presented a poster during ARVO, citing research funded through a 2018 FFS Grant-in-Aid. He is seen here with Executive Director Arthur Makar.

FFS hosted a November screening of the film, Going Blind, for donors and other friends. It was followed by a discussion featuring Joel Schuman, MD, (1989 FFS Grant-in-Aid recipient) Chairman of Ophthalmology at NYU Langone Medical Center and FFS Board member; Serena Sukhija, OD, Low Vision Services Coordinator at NY Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai; moderated by the filmmaker, Joe Lovett.

Jordan Greco, PhD, is another 2018 FFS Grant-In-Aid recipient. Dr. Greco also presented a poster during ARVO, using FFS funded research.
2019 GRANT-IN-AID

Reyna Martinez-DeLuna, PhD
The Role of B2 and y3-Containing Laminins in Intrinsically Photosensitive Ganglion Cell Development
Upstate Medical University, SUNY
FFS—International Retinal Research Foundation
Grant-in-Aid

Srganesh Ramachandra Rao, PhD
Studies on the Requirement of Dolichol Synthesis-Dependent N-Glycosylation during Photoreceptor Development
University at Buffalo, SUNY
Mentor: Steven Fliesler, PhD

2019 POSTDOCTORAL AWARD

2019 SUMMER STUDENT FELLOWSHIPS

Samuel Adade
Neural Innervation of Superior Oblique Muscle during Vertical Vergence in Non-Human Primates
University of Houston
Mentor: Vallabh Das, PhD

Salma Al Saai
Investigation of TDRD7 Function in Lens Development and Cataract Pathobiology
University of Delaware
Mentor: Lachke Sall, PhD
FFS—Basil V. Worgel Lens Research Award

Elisa Arlotti
Memory T Cells in the Parthenogenesis of Glaucoma
Schepens Eye Research Institute
Mentor: Dong Feng Chen, MD, PhD
FFS—Aniridia Foundation International Award

Xiaoke Bi
ATF6 Signaling of Unfolded Protein Response is Essential for Cone Photoreceptor Survival
University of California, San Diego
Mentor: Jonathan Lin, MD, PhD
(Not Shown)

Apoorva Karsolia
Properties of Primary Somato-Sensory Cortex Eye Position Neurons in Strabismic Monkeys
University of Houston
Mentor: Vallabh Das, PhD

Nicole Karson
Functional and Structural Retinal Examination Outcomes in Patients with Prediabetes and Type 2 Diabetes
University of Houston
Mentor: Wendy Harrison, OD, PhD

Ashley Park
Quantification of the Effect of IOP Lowering on Erythrocyte Velocity in Episcleral Veins In Vivo
University of Maryland
Mentor: Osamah Saeedi, MD

Ali Salehi
Detecting Progression of Glaucoma from Optic Nerve Head Images using a Convolutional Neural Network
University of Memphis
Mentor: Balasubramanian Madhusudhanan, PhD

Ari Stoner
Objective Measurement of Sleep Quality and Physical Activity in Open-Angle Glaucoma by Actigraphy
University of Colorado
Mentor: Leonard Seibold, MD

Andrew Suscha
Anti-Inflammatory Dietary Tryptophan Metabolites and Diabetic Retinopathy
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Mentor: Nader Sheibani, PhD

Tu Tran
CRISPR/Cas9-Mediated Gene Editing to Suppress Choroidal Neovascularization
University of California, Davis
Mentor: Glenn Yiu, MD, PhD
FFS—American Macular Degeneration Foundation Summer Student Fellowship

Kallia Wash
Advancing Stem Cell Based Therapeutics for Age-Related Macular Degeneration
University of California, Santa Barbara
Mentor: Dennis Clegg, PhD
FFS—American Macular Degeneration Foundation Summer Student Fellowship

Fight for Sight
381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1119, New York, NY 10016 • (212) 679-6060 • www.fightforsight.org