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## **AGING EYE PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP WINS “BEST PRACTICE” AWARD FROM PREVENT BLINDNESS AMERICA**

**COLUMBUS** – Prevent Blindness Ohio received a “**Best Practice**” Award for their role in initiating *Ohio’s Aging Eye Public Private Partnership*. Prevent Blindness Ohio facilitated the creation of the Partnership and coordinates its administrative and project activities. The Partnership’s mission is to develop a strategic plan of action to address issues relating to vision care public policy, vision care services, vision education, and vision research that impact the quality of life for Ohio’s seniors now and in the future.

The award was presented to Prevent Blindness Ohio from Prevent Blindness America during the Annual Meeting in Chicago November 2005.

More Ohioans than ever are facing the threat of blindness from age-related eye disease. The number of Ohio seniors affected by these diseases is expected to double over the next 30 years as the Baby Boomer generation ages, largely resulting from the eye diseases of diabetic retinopathy, cataract, glaucoma, and age-related macular degeneration (AMD). More than 2.5 million Ohioans will be affected.

The creation of Ohio’s Aging Eye Public Private Partnership (AEPPP) grew from Prevent Blindness Ohio’s *Ohio’s Vision . . . Awaken to the Challenge* Conference on April 28, 2003, where more than 100 policymakers, government officials, social service agencies and others gathered for a day of learning and discussion regarding many of the vision health challenges that will face Ohio seniors and their caretakers over the next three decades. The formation of the Partnership and its on-going work is supported by a Proclamation from the Governor of Ohio.

The Hon. Merle Grace Kearns, Director of the Department of Aging and Robert D. Newcomb, O.D., MPH, Professor, OSU College of Optometry, co-chair the Partnership. The Public/Private Partnership consists of the following 23 member organizations: Association of Philanthropic Homes for the Aging, Association of Area Agencies on Aging, Association of Ohio Health Commissioners, Council for Older Adults, KnowledgeWorks Foundation, Ohio Council for Home Care, Ohio Association of Gerontology and Education, Ohio Agencies Serving the Visually Impaired, NASA Glenn Research Center, Ohio Department of Aging, Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Department of Insurance, Representative Kathleen Chandler, Representative Geoff

Smith, Ohio Nurses Association, Ohio Ophthalmological Society, Senator Steve Stivers, Senator Randy Gardner, Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission, Ohio Osteopathic Association, Ohio Optometric Association, Ohio Veterans Visual Impairment Services Team, Opticians Association of Ohio and Prevent Blindness Ohio.

Prevent Blindness Ohio, founded in 1957, is Ohio's leading volunteer, nonprofit public health organization dedicated to preventing blindness and preserving sight. It serves all 88 Ohio counties, providing direct services to more than 600,000 Ohioans annually and educating millions of consumers about what they can do to protect and preserve their precious gift of sight. Prevent Blindness Ohio is an affiliate of Prevent Blindness America, the country's second-oldest national voluntary health organization. For more information or to make a contribution, visit our website at [www.pbohio.org](http://www.pbohio.org) or call 800-301-2020.