



**Ohio's
Aging Eye Public Private Partnership**
A statewide collaboration preparing
for the growth of aging eye challenges in Ohio

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information:

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VISION RESEARCH SCIENTIFIC FORUM

Features projects from some of Ohio's most talented young scientists

Columbus, Ohio – A *Vision Research Scientific Forum* featuring presentations from recipients of Prevent Blindness Ohio's Young Investigator Student Fellowship Awards for Female Scholars in Vision Research will be held on Wednesday, November 18, 2009 from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at TechColumbus, 1275 Kinnear Road, Columbus. Registration opens at 12:30 pm. The Scientific Forum is co-sponsored by Ohio's Aging Eye Public Private Partnership and Prevent Blindness Ohio and is open and free to the public.

Dr. Katia Del Rio-Tsonis, Professor of Zoology and Co-Director of the Center for Visual Sciences at Miami University will give the keynote address, "*Bringing Research from the Lab Bench to the Public: A Challenge to Women in Science.*"

Student fellow presentations will be given by:

Andrea M. Crabb from The Ohio State University College of Optometry who is conducting research at the Cole Eye Institute, Cleveland Clinic Foundation. Her research could potentially identify useful biomarkers for diagnosing age related macular degeneration (AMD) before severe vision loss occurs. AMD is the leading cause of blindness among the elderly in the United States.

Rao Fu from the Cole Eye Institute, Cleveland Clinic Foundation is conducting research which has the potential for significantly impacting an important, but poorly understood aspect of photoreceptor biology relevant to human retinal disease, such as retinitis pigmentosa (RP), and could ultimately lead to the discovery of new approaches for the detection, prevention, and treatment of vision loss.

Kristina M. Haworth, OD from The Ohio State University College of Optometry is conducting research relevant to identifying underlying causes of dry eye disease by analysis of proteins present. Dry eye is one of the most prevalent ocular diseases.

Kathryn Richdale, OD, MS from The Ohio State University College of Optometry is conducting a study using multiple imaging techniques to examine the lens ciliary body, and geometric relationship of these structures to further the understanding of presbyopia. Presbyopia is a loss of focusing ability associated with the normal aging process which affects almost 100% of the population over 50 years of age.

Jennifer Van Grol from Case Western Reserve's Department of Ophthalmology and Pathology is conducting research in immunology that may provide results that eventually might help in design of a vaccine against *T. gondii* which is considered the most common cause of infectious retinitis in the world.

To register for the Forum, contact Laura Schwartz at 614-464-2020 ext. 112 or e-mail lauras@pbohio.org.

The Prevent Blindness Ohio Female Fellowship Award provides training support for future generations of outstanding female scientists committed to pursuing biomedical, behavioral or clinical research careers relevant to the mission of Prevent Blindness Ohio – to prevent blindness and preserve sight. To apply for the 2010 Young Investigator Student Fellowship Awards for Female Scholars in Vision Research, log on to: www.pbohio.org. Applications are due February 15, 2010.

The Award Program is supported by a grant from the Charlotte R. Schmidlapp Fund, Fifth Third Bank Trustee, The Reinberger Foundation, and The Sarah E. Slack Prevention of Blindness Fund Muskingum County Community Foundation.

ABOUT 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. We serve all 88 Ohio counties, providing direct services to more than 800,000 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 or call 800-301-2020.

ABOUT OHIO'S AGING EYE PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

The Aging Eye Public/Private Partnership is an initiative supported by the Ohio Department of Aging whose 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 formation of the Partnership and its on-going work is supported by a Proclamation from the Governor of Ohio. Visit www.preventblindness.org/ohio/agingeye for more information.

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