



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 31, 2007

**Contact: Kira Baldonado
614-464-2020 ext. 106**

PREVENT BLINDNESS OHIO AWARDS FELLOWSHIP IN VISION RESEARCH TO KRISTEN OBLAD

COLUMBUS –To bring awareness to the critical importance of vision research, Prevent Blindness Ohio (PBO) launched the **Prevent Blindness Ohio’s Young Investigators Student Fellowship Award for Female Scholars in Vision Research**. PBO is pleased to announce that Kristen Oblad from The Ohio State University College of Optometry has been named a fellowship grant recipient for 2007.

She is working to develop a new contact lens solution that will improve the comfort of contact lens wear, especially for those affected by dry eye. As many as 12 million Americans have moderate to severe dry eyes and this number is likely to increase with the aging population. According to Oblad, "When you first plan a research project, you focus on the question at hand and how to get it answered. Important aspects like how will I pay for this get put in the background. I'm grateful that Prevent Blindness Ohio has generously supported the pursuit of knowledge through research."

Fellowship research projects will continue through the summer and conclude by September 30, 2007. Fellows will present the results of their projects at a research forum sponsored by Prevent Blindness Ohio and Ohio’s Aging Eye Public Private Partnership on Wednesday, November 28, 2007 at TECHCOLUMBUS. The Award Program is financially assisted by the Charlotte R. Schmidlapp Fund, Fifth Third Bank, Trustee.

“For close to 50 years, Prevent Blindness Ohio has served as the voluntary, nonprofit advocate for the public on vision related issues,” said Sherill K. Williams, president and CEO of PBO. “But many may not know that we also provide research grants to those who are working to find the causes of and cures for vision loss. With the doubling of aging eye diseases in the next two decades, the need for research to find the causes of and cures for vision loss has never been greater. Early detection and prevention are key in our fight to preserve healthy sight for a lifetime.”

For more information on the Prevent Blindness Ohio Fellowship Award call Prevent Blindness Ohio at 1-800-301-2020 or visit www.pbohio.org.



Pictured above: Dr. Melvin Shipp-Dean, The Ohio State University College of Optometry, Prevent Blindness Ohio's Young Investigators Student Fellowship Award Recipient for Female Scholars in Vision Research, Kristen Oblad, and Sherill K. Williams-President and CEO Prevent Blindness Ohio)

Prevent Blindness Ohio is celebrating 50 years as Ohio's leading volunteer nonprofit public health organization dedicated to preventing blindness and preserving sight. Founded in 1957 by U.S. Senator John Bricker and Lion's Club Member, Bob Morrison with support from Nationwide, the Ohio Department of Health and Delta Gamma Fraternity, PBO serves all 88 Ohio counties. We provide direct services to more than 800,000 Ohioans annually and educate 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.

###