



iNSIGHTFUL NEWS

A Newsletter from The Cincinnati Eye Institute Foundation

Winter 2011

Welcome To Our Newsletter!

Welcome to The Cincinnati Eye Institute Foundation's first newsletter! Our newsletter will provide you with



information about how The Foundation's programs and services help preserve and improve sight in Greater Cincinnati. You will get to know some of the doctors at Cincinnati Eye Institute. And you will see how your support

makes a difference right here in our community!

First, a little about our history: In 2006, the doctors at the Cincinnati Eye Institute (CEI) decided to establish a nonprofit organization that would help expand the charitable and volunteer efforts of CEI doctors and staff. The need for eye care in our community is huge, especially among the poor and uninsured, and CEI wanted to find a way to help people in need.

CEI doctors also wanted a nonprofit organization that would help raise awareness among all Greater Cincinnatians about their risks for eye disease and the importance of regular eye care.

In addition, CEI felt it was important to support and advance the education of current and future

eye care professionals to ensure that there are enough trained and skilled doctors to meet the eye care needs of our community.

And finally, CEI doctors wanted a nonprofit organization that could help raise money to support promising research on eye diseases and treatments.



CEI's Dr. Michael Nordlund (right) talks with a Roselawn clinic patient.

From these ideas, The Cincinnati Eye Institute Foundation was created to fulfill its mission to preserve and improve sight in the Greater Cincinnati community. In each newsletter we will share stories and examples of how we achieve our mission and how your support makes a difference.

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An Eye On... Mark Wilkins



Mark Wilkins

Mark Wilkins is a member of the Board of Directors for The Cincinnati Eye Institute Foundation. Before he joined the board, Mark was one of the first volunteers at the Roselawn Eye Clinic, The Cincinnati Eye Institute

Foundation's free eye clinic for uninsured, low-income adults. Mark is also a patient of Cincinnati Eye Institute (CEI). He has been a teacher and coach at St. Xavier High School for over 35 years and has taught in the Religious Education, Social Studies and Community Service Departments.

"I became a CEI patient in 2000 due to a series of serious eye issues, including two detached retinas. When I heard about the Roselawn Eye Clinic, I called to volunteer. It was my way of saying thank you for the excellent care I received at CEI. I realize that I am very lucky to have health insurance and that I have access to the medical services I need to care for my eyes. There are many in our community who are less fortunate.

"Volunteering gives me a chance to help someone else. Many of the patients who come to the Roselawn Eye Clinic have never been to an eye doctor. Without the

clinic, I know many of them would lose some or even all of their vision.

"I share my experience as a CEI patient and a Foundation volunteer with my students at St. Xavier High School. I team-teach a bioethics class with an anatomy teacher.

"Some of my students want to become doctors or health-care professionals or administrators. I tell them about CEI and the reasons why the doctors started a non-profit charity. Here are individuals who embarked on a highly respected profession and found a way to take that profession to another level by giving back to the community and helping people in need--people who often fall through the cracks of our medical system. That message really resonates with my students.

"I think there are a lot of CEI patients who feel like I do. We are grateful for the care we receive and we want to make sure that someone less fortunate than ourselves has access to the care they need. That's why I support The Cincinnati Eye Institute Foundation with my donations and my time. I now serve on the board of directors. It's a great feeling to know that sharing my story might inspire someone to give back, whether it's one of my students or another CEI patient."

What is Glaucoma?

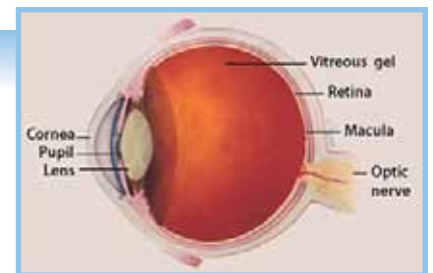
Glaucoma is a group of diseases that can damage the eye's optic nerve and result in vision loss and blindness. Glaucoma occurs when the normal fluid pressure inside the eyes slowly rises. However, with early treatment, you can often protect your eyes against serious vision loss.

Anyone can develop Glaucoma. Some people are at higher risk than others. They include:

- African Americans over age 40
- Everyone over age 60, especially Mexican Americans
- People with a family history of glaucoma.

Among African Americans studies show that glaucoma is:

- Five times more likely to occur in African Americans than in Caucasians.
- About 4 times more likely to cause blindness in African Americans than in Caucasians.
- Fifteen times more likely to cause blindness in African Americans between the ages of 45-64 than in Caucasians of the same age group.



A comprehensive dilated eye exam can reveal more risk factors, such as high eye pressure, thinness of the cornea, and abnormal optic nerve anatomy. In some people with certain combinations of these high-risk factors, medicines in the form of eye drops reduce the risk of developing glaucoma by about half. Medicare covers an annual comprehensive dilated eye exam for some people at high risk for glaucoma.

What is the optic nerve?

The optic nerve is a bundle of more than 1 million nerve fibers. It connects the retina to the brain (see diagram above). The retina is the light sensitive tissue at the back of the eye. A healthy optic nerve is necessary for good vision.

(Information is excerpted from the National Eye Institute. To read the full text please visit: http://www.nei.nih.gov/health/glaucoma/glaucoma_facts.asp)

The Dr. Richard S. Kerstine Vision Outreach Program Wins Health Care Heroes Finalist Award



Dr. Richard S. Kerstine with Health Care Heroes award

Earlier this year, Dr. Richard S. Kerstine accepted a 2011 Health Care Heroes Finalist Award from the Cincinnati Business Courier. Dr. Kerstine is one of Cincinnati Eye Institute's founding doctors and also a volunteer with The Cincinnati Eye Institute Foundation. Dr. Kerstine accepted the award on behalf of the Foundation's

Vision Outreach Program, which is named in his honor.

"I am proud to be a part of the Vision Outreach Program, and I appreciate the community's support and recognition of The Cincinnati Eye Institute Foundation's work," says Dr. Kerstine.

The Dr. Richard S. Kerstine Vision Outreach Program provides free lectures on eye disease and free vision and glaucoma screenings to the community. Dr. Kerstine is actively involved with the program and delivers many of the free lectures to local senior groups, community centers, and health fairs.

The program targets adults over age 60 and African Americans. It makes a special effort to reach low-income adults who often go without eye care due to financial challenges.

Lectures provide information about age-related eye diseases, including cataracts, glaucoma, and macular degeneration. It educates the public about the prevalence of eye disease among certain groups. For instance, African Americans are at a greater risk for glaucoma than Caucasians, but Caucasians have higher rates of macular degeneration.

An eye screening does not replace the need for a comprehensive eye exam, but it can help identify

people who are at greatest risk for vision problems and eye disease. Early detection of eye disease is critical to minimize the possible damage to someone's vision.

"We had one man come to a screening who already knew he had glaucoma. He had lost his job, his health insurance, and had no way to pay for his glaucoma medication. He

came to our screening to check his eye pressure and to see how bad the damage was to his vision. His eye pressures were dangerously high," says Amy Jones, Community Outreach Coordinator for The Cincinnati Eye Institute Foundation.

"We referred him to our Roselawn Eye Clinic for a free comprehensive eye exam," says Jones. "We also enrolled him in a patient assistance program. He now receives his eye medication for free. Without it, he would have lost some or all of his vision."



A vision screening for seniors



Amy Jones, Outreach Coordinator, with a happy program participant!

Since launching the program in 2009, The Cincinnati Eye Institute Foundation has delivered 196 lectures and 205 screenings to 12,740 people. Local sites have included the Jewish Community Center, Sycamore Senior Center, Drake Center, and the Elm Street Health Center.

A Note of Thanks

We received this note of thanks from a woman who came to the Roselawn Eye Clinic for help. The clinic is the only free charitable eye clinic in our region. We provide free eye exams to uninsured, low-income adults. Patients who need eye glasses also receive a voucher for glasses at participating Lenscrafters stores.

"Now in our 60s, my husband and I have been responsible, hardworking individuals for over 40 years. Like many others, and for the first time in our lives, we find ourselves in serious financial distress as a result of the current economic environment. When faced with the prospect of asking for assistance with my vision, I was reluctant and frankly, somewhat embarrassed. Thanks to the Roselawn Eye Clinic and Lenscrafters I got the help I needed. Happily, the staff

at the clinic... alleviated any misgivings I was feeling about how I would be treated as a recipient of the program. Hopefully, our situation will improve soon, but I will always be grateful for this wonderful gift. Thanks once again." – Cheryl G.

Since opening in 2008, the Roselawn Eye Clinic has helped over 1,400 uninsured low-income adults in Greater Cincinnati receive the eye care they need, but cannot afford. The clinic is located inside Roselawn Lutheran Church and is by appointment only (no walk-ins). Patients must meet eligibility requirements before making an appointment. To learn more about the Roselawn Eye Clinic visit www.ceifoundation.org, or call the clinic directly at (513) 207-6140.

The Cincinnati Eye Institute Foundation is now on Facebook!

Please stop by our page and "Like" us as we work together to improve eye care and vision health in our community!

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The Cincinnati Eye Institute
FOUNDATION

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