

DISCOVERY

THE DISCOVERY EYE FOUNDATION

The Discovery Eye Foundation (DEF) supports research and is dedicated to finding treatments and cures for sight-threatening eye diseases.



DEF E-Newsletter

Spring 2018

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6 EASY WAYS TO HELP DEF

Discovery Eye Foundation's groundbreaking research needs your help to move forward.

Try these easy ways to support DEF and its sight-saving work:

1. Shop using [smile.amazon.com](#) instead of [amazon.com](#).

2. Honor others with a tribute donation to DEF.

3. Enjoy the ease of monthly donations charged to a credit card.

4. Maximize your gift by using your employer's matching program.

5. Donate stocks and bonds in DEF's name.

6. Join our Vision Legacy planned-giving society, and leave the gift of sight.

For more details, visit [www.discoveryeye.org/other-ways-you-can-help](#).

Donate Now

Secure donations through Network for Good

DEF's Timeline of Achievements

2018

Testing mitochondria-targeting drugs in AMD cybrid model.

2017

FDA Phase II of Klassen stem cell trials starts.

2016

Crosslinking approved by FDA for treatment of keratoconus.

2015

FDA Phase I of Klassen retinal stem cell trial starts.

2014

Cybrid model created to test potential AMD treatments.

2013

Mitochondria shown to be target for new drugs to fight AMD.

2012

Mitochondria shown to control major cell pathways.

2010

AMD retinas shown to have damaged mitochondria.

2006

Klassen joins DEF research team.

2005

KC corneas shown to have increased mitochondria DNA damage.

Your Eyes Age, Too

What to Look for After You Turn 50

Surprise! Our eyes are the same age as we are. As we get older, our eyes age accordingly, and new issues appear on the horizon. According to the American Optometric Association, you may begin to notice some of the following age-related vision issues in your 40's and 50's:

- Need for more light.
- Difficulty reading and doing close work. "Printed materials can become less clear, in part because the lens in your eye becomes less flexible over time."
- Problems with glare. You may notice additional glare from headlights at night, or sun reflecting off windshields or pavement during the day. "Changes in your lenses in your eyes cause light entering the eye to be scattered rather than focused precisely on the retina. This creates more glare."
- Changes in color perception. "The normally clear lens located inside your eye may start to discolor. This makes it harder to see and distinguish between certain color shades."
- Reduced tear production. "With age, the tear glands in your eyes will produce fewer tears. ... As a result, your eyes may feel dry and irritated."

[Your Eyes Age, Too Cont'd](#)

PROFILE - Rita Pynoos

Founder Encourages People to Discover

Rita Pynoos remembers the first big Discovery Eye Foundation (DEF) event.

In 1970, the organization had just started as the Discovery Fund for Eye Research, with a mission to fund research into eye diseases. Their first event was held on the main floor of the Bullocks Wilshire department store in Los Angeles. Wanting to include everyone they could, Pynoos and her late husband, Morris, "went all over LA to get people together from all walks of life — from the richest to the one on welfare," the nonagenarian recalls.



Founders - Rita and Morris Pynoos

"I wanted people to discover," she says. "The first thing they discovered was the exquisite building and Bullocks Wilshire," which is what she told the head of the store to get him to donate the space. "I wanted all the money to go to Discovery, so I made sure all the expenses were donated. We made more than \$20,000 that night, which was a lot of money back then."

[Profile - Rita Pynoos Cont'd](#)

Meet the Researcher: Dr. Sonali Nashine

Growing up, Dr. Sonali Nashine was curious about everything and always enthusiastic about science-lab projects. "I was always asking, 'Why?'" she says. It was only natural she'd become a scientist.



After completing bachelor's and master's degrees in biotechnology in India, Nashine attended the University of North Texas Health Science Center for her PhD program in biomedical sciences with a major in visual sciences. She studied the role of apoptotic proteins in retinal degeneration disease models of glaucoma and retinitis pigmentosa.

While finishing her PhD, she applied for post-doctoral positions at universities all over the United States. During an interview at UC Irvine (UCI) with DEF research director Dr. Cristina Kenney, she learned about her lab's work in studying AMD genetics and trying to find a genetic cause. "That overlapped with my long-term goal of identifying therapeutic drugs for retinal-degenerative diseases," Nashine says.

[Meet the Researcher Cont'd](#)

Discovery Eye Foundation Sponsors Cornea and Ocular Surface Conference

The Discovery Eye Foundation sponsored the Gordon Research Conference: Cornea and Ocular Surface Biology and Pathology in February in Ventura, Calif. The conference brings together experts in the field, as well as graduate and post-doctoral students.

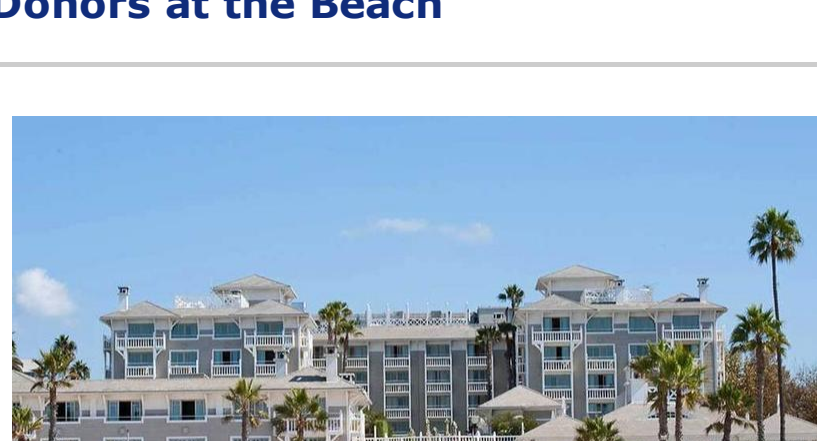
"This conference accomplishes two main things," says Dr. James Jester, a professor of ophthalmology and biomedical engineering at UC Irvine. "First, it brings together diverse experts in this and related research areas to discuss where we are and where the new frontiers will be. Second, about a third of the attendees are students, and it is an opportunity for this next generation of scientists to meet and form relationships with the field experts. It's a great place to meet researchers from related fields, exchange knowledge and begin collaborations."

"DEF has been sponsoring the conference since its inception about a decade ago," says DEF Medical Director Dr. Anthony Nesburn. "We are proud to be a part of such an important research event."



Gordon Research Conferences
Frontiers of Science

Donors at the Beach



Nearly two dozen of DEF's most loyal donors gathered for the annual Donor Appreciation Luncheon on Feb. 10 at Shutters on the Beach Hotel in Santa Monica.

Donors who donated \$1,000 or more to DEF in 2017 were treated to glorious views, good camaraderie and an inspiring research update from DEF research director Dr. Cristina Kenney.

"We really look forward to this event every year" DEF medical director Dr. Anthony Nesburn says. "It gives us an opportunity to personally thank our supporters for their generous and continuing commitment to saving vision through research. Without them, none of our work would be possible."



and help millions of people dealing with eye disease!

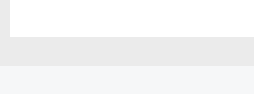
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