Prevent Blindness:
The Sight Saving People

Mission Statement

The mission of Prevent Blindness is to preserve sight and prevent blindness.

Founded in 1908, we’re the nation’s leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening training, community and patient service programs and research.

These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, divisions and chapters, it is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America.

Why is our mission so important?

Blindness and visual impairments exact a great price from individuals and society. Vision loss robs people of their independence, mobility and quality of life. Blindness and visual impairment are also an enormous cost to society, estimated conservatively at $51.4 billion annually.

What are the leading causes of blindness?

In adults, the most common eye diseases are glaucoma, cataract, diabetic retinopathy and macular degeneration. In children, serious eye disorders include “lazy eye” (amblyopia), and strabismus (crossed eyes). Eye injuries in both adults and children, at home and the workplace, are also a leading cause of permanent sight loss.

Consider these important facts:

- More than 1.1 million Americans are legally blind and an additional
- 50,000 people lose their sight each year, yet half of all blindness can be prevented.
- Between 2 and 3 million people have glaucoma...but half don’t even know it.
- Blindness is the number one disabling complication of diabetes.
- Diabetic retinopathy is one of the leading causes of new cases of blindness.
- One in every 20 preschool children has an eye problem that, if left uncorrected, can lead to permanent vision loss.
- Nearly 2,000 potentially blinding workplace eye injuries happen each day.
What are our programs and services?

We offer many programs and services to help fight blindness and save sight:

- Adult and children’s vision screening;
- Patient and public education programs;
- School-based programs and curriculum;
- Professional education and training;
- The Vision Health Resource Center: 800.331.2020;
- Advocacy and research;
- Eye2Eye workplace eye safety program.

Our Achievements

1908 Spurred to action after learning that 30 percent of blindness in children was easily preventable, volunteers banded together to organize the forerunner of today’s Prevent Blindness.

1917 Successfully led legislation that virtually eliminated a leading cause of blindness in infants, called ophthalmia neonatorum.

1926 Created the first volunteer-run preschool vision screening program in the United States.

1942 Conducted the first glaucoma detection program in the United States.

1944 Organized the first volunteer glaucoma screening program in the United States.

1948 Created the Wise Owl Club of America, an industrial and school eye safety incentive program that has since recognized more than 86,000 Americans for wearing proper eye protection.

1956 Marshalled resources that developed equipment to test the vision of infants.

1972 Spearheaded legislation to require impact-resistant lenses in all eyewear.

1981 Launched the first professional and public education programs on diabetic eye disease, the fastest growing cause of new cases of blindness.

1983 Introduced the first home eye test for adults so that Americans could determine if they are seeing as well as they should.

1985 Released a national study that revealed blindness prevention as the third most important health concern among Americans.
1991 Initiated a program called Glaucoma High Risk Alert to educate Americans about the high risk of glaucoma.

1994 The National Society to Prevent Blindness changed its name to Prevent Blindness America.

1995 Introduced adult vision screening and photoscreening training programs.

1996 Developed a web presence at www.preventblindness.org to educate people about proper vision care.

2002 Published the Vision Problems in the U.S. report on the prevalence and burden of age-related eye disease in America.

2003 Helped establish a vision research and prevention program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Launched the Congressional Vision Caucus, a bipartisan coalition of Congressional Members.


2006 Established the “Eyes on Capitol Hill” campaign, bringing more than 100 patients and vision advocates to Washington, D.C. to discuss vision health policies with legislators.

2007 Published the groundbreaking Economic Impact of Vision Problems report, detailing the toll of major adult eye disorders, vision impairment and blindness, totaling $51.4 billion annually, on the U.S. economy.

2008 Launched a national public service campaign to educate Americans about the need for regular eye exams.
National Committee Structure

Board of Directors

Executive

Affiliate Association

Audit  Budget  Nominating

Finance & Administration  Marketing & Development  Public Health & Policy  Scientific
2021 Affiliate Association
As of 1/11/2021

**Georgia**
Jill Shapiro Thornton
President and CEO
Prevent Blindness Georgia
270 Carpenter Drive, Suite 606
Sandy Springs, GA 30328
(404) 266-3334; FAX: (404) 343-4809
jthornton@pbga.org

**Georgia CVO**
Dave Smith
Kearny Street Consulting
215 Kearny Court
Alpharetta, GA 30022
(770) 569-0869; Cell: (770) 329-9823
dave@healthdave.com

**Iowa**
Jeanne Burmeister
Executive Director
Prevent Blindness Iowa
1111 Ninth Street, Suite 250
Des Moines, IA 50314
(515) 244-4341; FAX: (515) 244-4718
jburmeister@preventblindnessiowa.org

**Iowa CVO**
Philip C. Blumberg
Executive Director
Des Moines University Clinic
3200 Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50312
(515) 271-1574
Philip.Blumberg@dmu.edu

**North Carolina**
Edwin Jeffords
President & CEO
Prevent Blindness North Carolina
4011 Westchase Blvd., Suite 225
Raleigh, NC 27607
(919) 755-5044; (800) 543-7839, ejeffords@pbnc.org

**North Carolina CVO**
Sterling Perkinson
Attorney
Kilpatrick Townsend, LLP
4208 Six Forks Road, #1400
Raleigh, NC 27609
(919) 788-1664
sperkinson@kilpatricktownsend.com

**North Carolina CVO Designee**
Stephen D. Corman
130 Edwards Dr.
Morehead City, NC 28557
(252) 726-7428; Cell: (252) 646-8332
H2OCorman@gmail.com

**Ohio**
Sherill Williams
President & CEO
Prevent Blindness Ohio
1500 West 3rd Avenue, Suite #200
Columbus, OH 43212-2874
(614) 464-2020; FAX: (614) 481-9670
Sherryw@pbohio.org

**Ohio CVO**
Carolyn King – Co-Chair
VP, Treasury Management Advisor
Huntington National Bank
7 Easton Oval
Columbus, OH 43219
(614) 406-6271 cell
cjking61@msn.com

**Ohio CVO Designee**
Sherry Lewis
VP and Corporate Secretary
The Dispatch Printing Company
34 S. Third Street
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 461-5211
slewis@tdpcompany.com
2021 Affiliate Association
As of 1/11/2021

**Texas**
Heather Patrick
President & CEO
Prevent Blindness Texas
2202 Waugh Dr.
Houston, TX 77006
(713)526-2559 x107; FAX: (713)529-8310
(888)98-SIGHT
hpatrick@preventblindestexas.org

**Texas CVO**
Pat Segu, OD, FAAO
Clinical Professor
Regional Director of Houston Community-Based External Clinics
Clinical Director of Kids Vision for Life Greater Houston Area
Director of Family Practice Residency & Clinical Teaching Fellowship
University of Houston College of Optometry
4901 Calhoun Rd.
Houston, TX 77204
(713)527-8480
psegu@central.uh.edu

**Wisconsin**
Tami Radwill – Chair
Chief Executive Officer
Prevent Blindness Wisconsin
731 Jackson Street, Suite 405
Milwaukee, WI 53202
(414)765-0505; FAX: (414)765-0377
tami@pbwi.org

**Wisconsin CVO**
Charles B. Groeschell
Managing Director, Baird Advisors
Robert W. Baird & Co
777 East Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202
(414)298-1063; FAX: (414)298-1078
cgroeschell@rwbaird.com

**Wisconsin CVO Designee**
F.R. Dengel III
Managing Director
Emory & Co.
250 E. Wisconsin Ave., Suite 910
Milwaukee, WI 53202
(414)831-5680
frdengel@emoryco.com

**Wisconsin CVO Designee**
Jeff McClellan – Co-Chair
Sr. VP Creative
Branigan Communications
312 E. Buffalo St., Suite 30
Milwaukee, WI 53202
(414) 459-3951; Cell: (414)690-7369
jmccllellan@branigan.biz

**NATIONAL OFFICE:**
Jeff Todd
President and CEO
Prevent Blindness
225 W. Wacker Drive, Suite 400
Chicago, IL 60606
(312)363-6026 (direct line)
FAX: (312)363-6052
jtodd@preventblindness.org

**NATIONAL BOARD CHAIR:**
Kathleen Murphy, DNP, RN, FAAN
Professor
University of Texas Medical Branch – School of Nursing
301 University Blvd.
Galveston, TX 77555-1029
(409)772-8305; FAX: (409)772-3770
kamurphy@utmb.edu