Invites you to join us for a Luncheon Briefing Recognizing World Glaucoma Week 2020 (March 8-14)

The Impact of Federal Funding on Glaucoma Research and Clinical Practice

Wednesday, February 26, 2020
12 Noon - 1:15 pm
House Rayburn 2045

Featuring Speaker
Paul Lee, MD, JD
W.K. Kellogg Eye Center/University of Michigan
and AEVR Board President

Please R.S.V.P. to
Dina Beaumont @ 202-407-8325 or dinabeau@aol.com

AEVR, a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Educational Foundation, is pleased to host this widely attended event featuring an eye-healthy luncheon.
What is glaucoma and why is it important?
Glaucoma, the second leading cause of preventable vision loss in the United States, is a neurological disease affecting the optic nerve and causing loss of vision—and ultimately blindness. It affects more than 2.7 million Americans over age 40, with that number estimated to more than double by year 2050. It includes both diagnosed and undiagnosed cases, as often individuals are unaware that they have the disease until vision is lost. It is a driving factor—along with cataract and diabetic retinopathy—in the annual cost of vision impairment reaching $717 billion in inflation-adjusted dollars by year 2050.

Certain characteristics such as age, ethnicity, high intraocular pressure (IOP), and optic nerve structure are associated with disease development. Groups at highest risk include African Americans over age 40, individuals over age 60, and those with a family history of the disease.

How has National Eye Institute (NEI) funding affected glaucoma research and clinical practice?
Featured speaker Paul Lee, MD, JD (Kellogg Eye Center/University of Michigan) will describe the NEI’s long history of funding glaucoma research within the National Institutes of Health (NIH), ranging from determining the genetic basis of the disease to development of effective drug and device therapies. Among the many examples:

- An NEI Consortium has identified 133 genetic variants that predict within 75 percent accuracy a person’s risk for developing glaucoma related to IOP. Among the 133 variants identified, 68 had not been previously linked to IOP, and their loci point to cellular processes such as lipid metabolism and mitochondrial function that contribute to elevated pressure.

- NEI’s Ocular Hypertension Treatment Study (OHTS) found that pressure-reducing drug regimens delayed disease onset. NEI research resulted in the first generation of such drugs and, in 2018, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved a new generation of drugs that target the eye’s trabecular meshwork—which is one of pathways responsible for regulating fluid flow within the eye—reflecting an expanded menu of drugs, potentially in combination therapy, that lower IOP and better meet the need of patients.

About the Speaker….
Paul Lee, MD, JD, serves as the F. Bruce Fralick Professor and Chair in the Department of Ophthalmology at the University of Michigan Medical School and Director of the W.K. Kellogg Eye Center. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the University of Michigan Health System and serves in various leadership capacities therein. Dr. Lee has published more than 250 papers on glaucoma and eye care delivery in general, particularly on understanding and improving eye and health care. He is a member of the American Glaucoma Society and currently serves as President of AEVR’s Board of Directors.

About World Glaucoma Week 2020…
The first World Glaucoma Day was held on March 6, 2008, and the United States House of Representatives passed H.R. 981, which recognized the event and supported the NEI’s efforts to research the causes of and treatments for glaucoma. That day has expanded into a full week of educational events held worldwide. In 2020, AEVR’s Briefing is being held in conjunction with the American Glaucoma Society’s visits on Capitol Hill to educate about the cost and patient impact of glaucoma.

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