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MICHIGAN FOUNDATION FOR VISION AWARENESS

2022

ANNUAL REPORT

 www.themfva.org

 [Facebook.com/MichiganFoundationForVisionAwareness](https://www.facebook.com/MichiganFoundationForVisionAwareness)

 ContactMFVA@gmail.com

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

It has been a wonder to see how the Michigan Foundation for Vision Awareness (MFVA) has expanded since its inception. There have been many optometrists who have received MFVA scholarships (over half a million dollars) and vision research grants. Non-profit clinics have benefited from funding to purchase optometry equipment to create or refurbish exam lanes so that the underserved have access to care.

Optometrists have worked hard to support MFVA by serving on the Board, volunteering their help on projects or events, and donating to the cause. I am thankful to all who have been involved with MFVA and I am excited to see the others that will join in our mission on educating the public on the importance of eye health care, supporting vision related research and optometry student scholarships, and helping the underserved gain access to eye health care.

This year our reach was expanded to several non-profits through grants that provided optometry equipment to their clinics, including Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ABVI), Exalta Health, University Eye Center (UEC) at MCO, and Health Unit on Davison Avenue (HUDA). We were also able to support the Children's Vision Committee in educating teachers at their Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children (MIAEYC) event. Another educational item we were happy to support was a grant that funded a virtual building tour of UEC at MCO with a program called Able Eyes. This organization provides customers of all abilities to view the clinic beforehand to explore accessibility and decrease their anxiety, a tool that is helpful for several types of disabilities or health conditions.

If you or a non-profit you know of is interested in applying for a grant, please visit our website for information on our grant criteria and deadlines, or send us an inquiry email. One update to note: Due to the nature of current fundraising and income earned by MFVA, from a tax perspective we will now be treated as a Private Foundation. As a Private Foundation, we continue to be classified as a 501(c)(3) organization by the IRS and your generous contributions are still tax deductible.

I'm excited to see what the future of MFVA holds. Will you be a part of it? We would love you to consider applying for a grant if you have a project that you feels fits our mission. Visit our website for more information or email us anytime to start a conversation. Also, we are always searching for those who are passionate about optometry and eye health education in Michigan to join our Board. Gain more information or stay updated by liking and following our MFVA Facebook page.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Geneva, OD, FAAO

MFVA President

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Watch the MFVA Facebook page for details on our 2023 Annual Meeting.

2022 MFVA ACTIVITIES

The MFVA had a record-breaking year of giving!
\$30,000 was given to 3rd-year optometry students this year!



Congratulations to the 2022 scholarship recipients!

Hussein Abdulameer (MCO)
Courtney Bieszczad (MCO)
Rachel Bushey (MCO)
Sarah DeVries (MCO)
Kaileen Freeberg (MCO)
Hannah Gaudette (MCO)
Hanna Grabowski (Ohio State)
Rebecca Karl (MCO)
Jessica Manders (Kentucky)
Areli Mayorga (MCO)
Taylor Scheurer (MCO)
Jason Spaude (MCO)
Olivia Truscott (MCO)

**The MFVA has donated
\$652,000 in scholarships
(\$602,525 to MCO)
since 1958!**

An additional \$20,000 was
invested in the MFVA's
Endowed Scholarship, which
helps recruit stellar incoming
1st year MCO students.



The MFVA generously supported a photobooth at a MOSPAA networking event in Grand Rapids.



MFVA was present at GLEC this spring, and had fun raffling off a wine basket at the MCO Fall Seminar!



Reception at 2022 MFVA Annual Meeting.

2022 MFVA ACTIVITIES

An astonishing \$188,638.20 was given in grants!

2022 grant recipients were:

- Special Olympics Opening Eyes/Jamey Seals: **\$20,000** for their event
- Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ABVI)/Laura Dulay & Linda Zizos: **\$33,085.35** total from 3 separate grants for low vision clinic equipment
- Michigan Eye and Contact Lens/Tiffany Zair-Yalda: **\$3,600** for a specialty contact lens patient in need
- MOA/William Harmon & the Children's Vision Committee: **\$5,440** to create eye/vision awareness among teachers at the Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children (MIAEYC) event
- MCO/Paula McDowell: **\$4,650** for an Able Eyes virtual building tour
- MCO/Emily Aslakson & Sarah Hinkley: **\$450** for a "delivering bad news" student workshop
- SVOSH/Dan Wrubel: **\$6,600** for 2022 and **\$18,700** for 2023 SVOSH trips
- Exalta Health/Edward Postma: **\$41,135.20** for equipment including a fundus camera, visual field, BIO and Tonopen
- Health Unit on Davison Avenue (HUDA)/Tracey Wilson: **\$52,648** for digital acuity charts and a new eye exam lane
- MCO/Brian McDowell: **\$2329.65** for FORUM software

Opening Eyes Special Olympics



SVOSH Dominica



MFVA BOARD NEWS

Julie Marvin-Manders and Morgan Porzsolt-Graves have retired from the MFVA Board. Julie served on the Charitable Donations subcommittee, and Morgan managed Grants. They both were invaluable to the Board and will be missed!



Jake Poniatowski, 2022-2023 Student Liaison

I am from Shelby Twp, Michigan. Prior to attending MCO, I attended Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio where I received a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a minor in chemistry. I became interested in optometry from a very young age due to a personal experience with my brother. He is on the autistic spectrum and at the time of his first eye exam, he was completely non-verbal. Not only was his optometrist able to accurately assess my brother's vision problems, but he also changed the way my brother perceives the world around him.

Even to this day, my brother will not go anywhere without his glasses because of the impact they've had in his life. This experience has always stuck with me, and the thought of positively changing how people interact with the world around them is what made me passionate about optometry. I look forward to being able to work with MFVA and help with all of their outreach programs promoting eye care around the state.

Brice Edmonds, New Trustee

As a Michigander born and raised, I received my Bachelor of Arts degrees in Criminal Justice and Sociology from the University of Michigan-Flint. I've been employed by the State of Michigan's Disability Determination Service (DDS) since 2009, where I initially spent five years as a Disability Examiner. Since 2014, I've held my current position as a Professional Relations Officer (PRO). In this role, I work directly with physicians, medical offices, and hospital staff to acquire the necessary documentation that is needed for their patient's disability eligibility.



I have seen many obstacles that individuals must endure as part of the complicated disability application process and I strive to provide education by answering their questions and providing essential information and resources. I am very excited to join the MVFA and will use my background and experience to promote the MVFA's mission, particularly promoting eye health and well-being to those that are underserved.



Sulman Hans, OD, New Trustee

After completing my OD degree and residency, my desire was to return to Michigan and continue to serve those in my home community in whatever capacity I could. I have enjoyed the opportunity to serve patients at the Henry Ford Health System and at the HUDA Clinic, where underprivileged individuals receive free care. Working with the National Board of Examiners in Optometry and the Council on Optometric Practitioner Education has also been rewarding. I feel fortunate to be included in the MFVA's work to support optometric education, scholarly activity, and care for the underserved and help move our profession forward.

MFVA 2022 FINANCIAL REPORT

In 2022, the MFVA donated \$238,638.20 in Grants and Scholarships!

\$3,696 was received from donor contributions; \$3,341 in unused Grant monies was returned to us; operating expenses totaled \$28,816.45

The 2023 budget guidance is \$220,000.



Are you involved in a project or research that fits the mission of the MFVA? Apply for a grant today! Information and application can be found on our website, themfva.org

MFVA is Michigan's only
optometric foundation;
MFVA is YOUR Foundation!

Please consider contributing to the
MFVA with a generous tax
deductible contribution today!

Contributions may be made by
mailing a check to:
MFVA c/o Treasurer Micah Taylor
19320 Golfview Drive
Big Rapids, MI 49307

2022 MFVA ANNUAL MEETING

The 2022 MFVA Annual Meeting July 22-24 was fantastic! After 2 years of virtual annual meetings, being together again was better than ever! It was especially enjoyable this year because it was held in Big Rapids, and the MFVA hosted a catered reception in the beautiful MCO atrium ahead of the meeting. Many people from the MFVA Board, MCO faculty, local optometrists, special guests and a great turnout of 3rd year MCO students attended and enjoyed a delicious spread from Pierre Marquette catering as we caught up with friends, new and old.

The MFVA meeting held Saturday and Sunday were very productive. We welcomed our new MCO Student Liaison, Jake Poniatowski, who is a 2nd year MCO student from Macomb. MOA President James Hardie and Executive Director Jeff Towns gave the Board updates on all of the MOA's incredible advocacy and activities.

The Board is excited to continue enhancing our visibility throughout the state, and to collaborate with groups who are doing meaningful work that meets our mission. **A major goal of the MFVA moving forward is to support more grants.** Check out our grant criteria at themfva.org and apply today! We would love to support your non-profit organization's project or research.



Reception at 2022 MFVA Annual Meeting.

The 2022-2023 MFVA Trustees and Executive Committee are:

Cynthia Geneva, OD, President
Mitch Dobrzelewski, OD, Vice President
Micah Taylor, Treasurer
Sara Weidmayer, OD, Secretary

Trustees:

Jim Burns
Brice Edmonds
Sulman Hans, OD
Julia Holmes, OD,
Julie McMullen, OD.



MFVA Board (left to right): Julia Holmes, Jim Burns, Julie McMullen, Cynthia Geneva, Micah Taylor, Sara Weidmayer, Mitch Dobrzelewski and student liaison Jake Poniatowski

2022 MFVA CONTRIBUTORS

The MFVA Board would like to sincerely thank those who contributed to the MFVA in 2022. Generous contributions ensure that the Foundation can continue to support its mission. We encourage you to make your annual contribution today!

CONTRIBUTORS:

Bob Buckingham
Jim and Karin Burns
Nicholas Czinder
Mitch Dobrzelewski
Cynthia and Chris Geneva
Susan and Larry Gormezano
Mike Graves and Morgan Porzsolt-Graves
Sulman Hans
Julia and Bob Holmes
Matt Klein and Nancy Peterson-Klein
Whitney Klein
Carol and Mark Marston-Foucher
Julie Marvin-Manders
Julie McMullen
Philip Raznik
Charles Saccarelli
Jennifer Schad
Bradley Taylor

If you would like to promote the mission of the MFVA, please consider donating your resources by contributing and by volunteering your time as a Trustee on the Board. MFVA is a 501c3 non-profit organization; contributions to MFVA are tax deductible! Contributions may be given by individuals, businesses or organizations. Please also consider future planned giving as you prepare your will or estate plan. Contributions can be made by visiting our website: **www.themfva.org/donate**