



OHSU Casey Eye Institute Impact Report 2024



Oregon Health
& Science University
FOUNDATION

Message from CEI Leadership

This has been an exceptional year for Casey. We are humbled by the scientific advances we've seen, the level of education we provide and our growing ability to deliver expert, compassionate care to more Oregonians. We've never been more committed to reaching our goal to end preventable blindness in Oregon and beyond.

Your unwavering philanthropic support has **empowered us to transform** the lives of our patients, scientists, trainees and clinicians. By saying yes more often, we are **bringing hope and healing** to more children and adults facing the threat of blindness, **advancing groundbreaking research** that will revolutionize eye care, cultivating **compassionate and skilled ophthalmologists** and fostering a **supportive and inspiring environment** for our faculty and staff.

On behalf of all of us at Casey, thank you for your trust and philanthropic partnership. You are helping give the gift of sight to countless people.

Andreas Lauer, M.D.

Director, OHSU Casey Eye Institute
Margaret Thiele-Petti and August Petti Chair
of Ophthalmology

David Huang, M.D., Ph.D.

Director of Research, OHSU Casey Eye Institute
Professor of Ophthalmology and Biomedical Engineering
Wold Family Endowed Chair in Ophthalmic Imaging



Photography by Jeff Farrell

Casey by the Numbers

1035 free vision screenings

665 free prescriptions and glasses

3,223 hours of service from volunteers

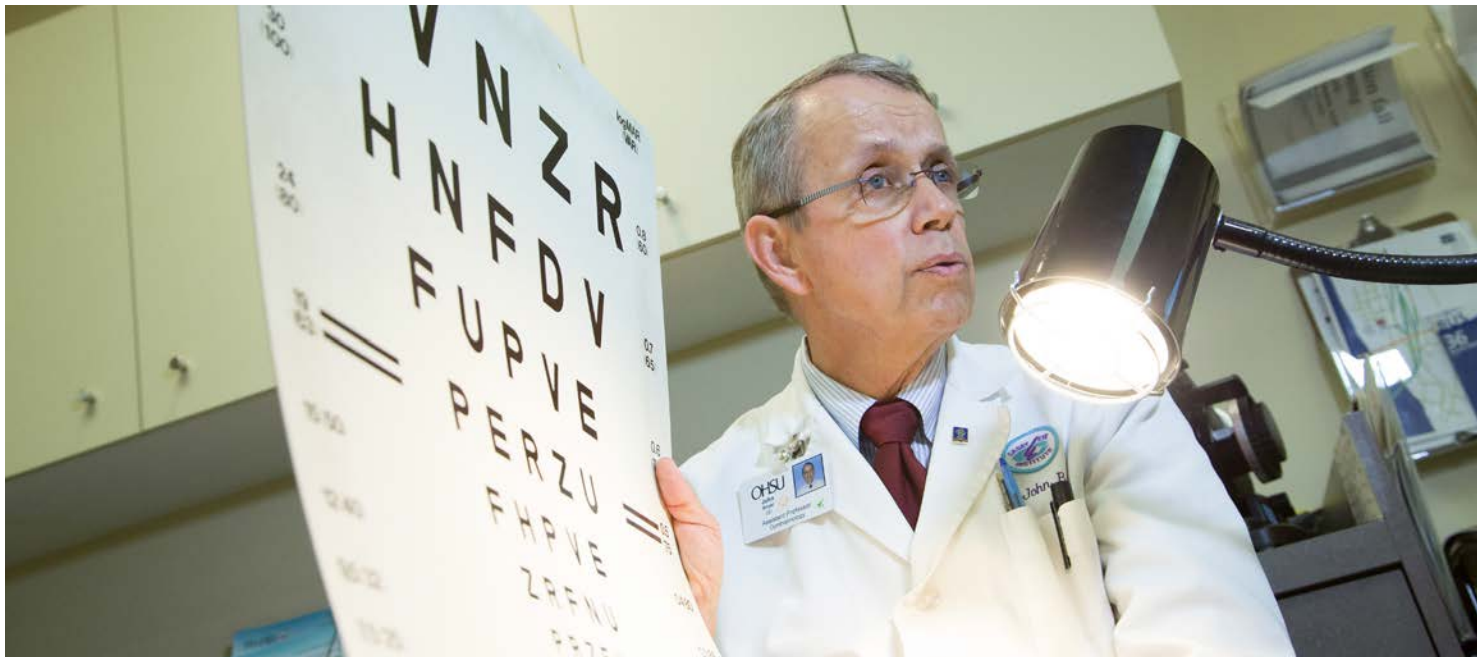
11 new faculty

68 active clinical trials

2,500 emergency and inpatient consults

158,000 patient visits

8,330 surgeries



John Boyer, O.D.

Research Highlights

OCT Angiography Advances Early Diagnosis and Treatment of AMD

Age-related macular degeneration is the leading cause of vision loss among individuals over 50. Identifying those at risk before significant vision loss occurs is crucial, yet challenging, due to the difficulty following and treating AMD when there are no symptoms to monitor. To address this issue, a research team led by **Yali Jia, Ph.D.**, and **Steven Bailey, M.D.**, at Casey Eye Institute has been awarded a four-year grant from the National Eye Institute. This funding will support the enhancement of a new optical coherence tomography angiography (OCTA) prototype. OCTA is a safe, non-invasive imaging technique that captures detailed images of the eye's blood vessels, which are impacted by AMD.

“Patients with AMD can have a quick and non-invasive scan that will help their ophthalmologist predict who is at risk for vision loss, determine the appropriate time to initiate treatment and help evaluate response to treatment,” says Bailey.

Retinal Stem Cell Center Update

Since the **Retinal Stem Cell Center** was established in 2022, we have been able to collect blood samples from 100 patients thanks to the generous support of our donors. Our repository samples span 23 inherited retinal diseases with many genes and mutations represented within those conditions. With continued support, we plan to test different therapeutics to accelerate bringing new and improved therapies to patients.

Funding New Discoveries in Glaucoma Research

Transforming basic research insights into treatments for patients is an arduous, multi-stage process taking years or decades. While government grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and groups like Research to Prevent Blindness provide critical funding, these awards have cyclic gaps between funding periods.

Donor support allows Casey to recruit top glaucoma researchers, each receiving philanthropic funding for three years. This helps them establish their research endeavors and test new ideas in the laboratory so they can confidently apply for external grant funding.

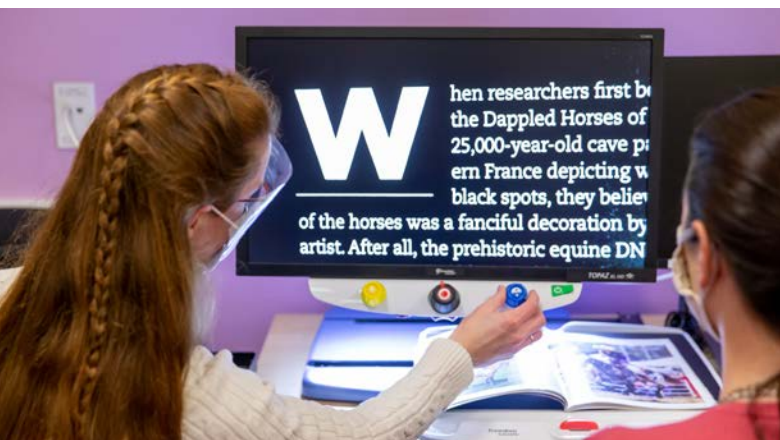
“To keep our research continuous, excellent and innovative, we need donor support,” says **David Huang, M.D., Ph.D.**

With donor funds to generate initial research results, **Kate Keller, Ph.D.**, secured three major NIH grants totaling \$2 million. She also took the lead role on a prestigious T32 training grant that supports two graduate students and a post-doctoral glaucoma researcher.

Donor funding also allowed Casey to support the clinical research of **Aiyin Chen, M.D.**, a glaucoma specialist now developing an outreach and screening program that has the potential to help thousands of patients across the region and eventually, millions more.

New drugs and surgical techniques can slow the progression of the disease, but the root cause of glaucoma is still not completely understood. “We have made advances in treating glaucoma, but we need more basic research to truly understand and overcome this disease,” says Keller.

After centuries of leaving glaucoma’s disabling impacts virtually untreated, modern medicine is finally beginning to shed light on this “silent thief of sight.” With sustained philanthropic support bolstering the efforts of brilliant minds at Casey Eye Institute, there is hope for revolutionary progress in detecting, preventing and curing this age-old scourge of blindness.



Kathryn Marxen-Simonson, MSOT, OTR/L, CLVT (left)

The Power of Philanthropy for Children

For the past 75 years, more than \$40 million has been contributed by the Oregon State Elks Association, helping thousands of children regain their sight through corrective treatments. The Oregon Elks Children’s Eye Clinic, a division of the OHSU Casey Eye Institute, began as a pioneer in the Pacific Northwest and has now established itself as a world-leading center for pediatric eye care. Pediatric eye specialists utilize the most advanced technology to diagnose and treat both common and complicated eye conditions in a world-class facility that makes children and their families feel at home.

“The almost eight decades of unwavering commitment by the Elks has allowed us to build programs and initiatives that would otherwise not be possible. I cannot overstate how important their support is. When kids can see better, they function better in life.”

— **Andreas Lauer, M.D.**



Andreas Lauer, M.D., (left) and Steven Bailey, M.D., (at scope)



2025 Casey Eye Resident Group



Ogul Uner, M.D.

Education

“From the first time I volunteered with Casey’s mobile outreach clinic, I was immediately taken by how innovative the program is, as we are essentially able to bring a full clinic on wheels directly into communities. This really allows Casey to get to those who would otherwise not seek care. Volunteering with Casey is a small act of service that truly goes a long way. It is a good reminder of our call to serve others, the very initial spark that led our paths to medicine.”

— **John Placide, M.D.**

Ogul Uner, M.D. is a Chief Resident at Casey. Originally from Turkey, Uner was accepted into the residency program at Casey in 2021 after graduating from Emory School of Medicine. He values the rigorous training he has received, the numerous research opportunities and the culture of respect and kindness. Uner became the principal investigator for a global research project in ocular oncology involving over 200 sites. He will be pursuing dual fellowship training in ocular oncology and vitreoretinal surgery.

“I think the residents’ mentors and advocates go above and beyond the clinic to set up excellent educational and training opportunities that enable residents to participate in cutting-edge research for the global health mission.”

— **Ogul Uner, M.D., Chief Resident**



Casey Community Outreach Program mobile eye clinic

Outreach

Celebrating the Lilley Family Endowment for Community Outreach and Service

We are overwhelmed with gratitude for the establishment of this new endowment for our community outreach program. This is a transformational, permanent philanthropic investment in our work to bring the world-class resources of OHSU Casey Eye Institute to those at the greatest risk of blinding diseases. This allows us to expand our ability to increase access to free vision screenings and prescription glasses and coordinate care with vision health navigators for people in their home communities.

Second Mobile Eye Clinic Launched in April 2024

In April 2024, volunteers, donors and friends gathered to celebrate the Casey Community Outreach Program's new mobile clinic at a

ribbon-cutting ceremony. Now, two mobile eye clinics provide free vision screenings to people in rural and underserved communities across Oregon.

We are grateful to donors, including the Roundhouse Foundation, Heather Killough, Rocky and Julie Dixon, Stephen and Melissa Babson, S. Page Evans and the Theodore Rutherford Lilley Fund of Oregon Community Foundation, who funded this new mobile eye unit and equipped both of our units with state-of-the-art ophthalmic tools, technology and imaging capacity, including OCT machines. We will be able to reach more people in need because of our donors. The second mobile clinic features two full private exam lanes and an imaging lane with an OCT machine. These features create a better patient and physician experience, allowing more people to be seen and improve our ability to provide accurate diagnosis for potentially blinding eye diseases.

Endowed Professorship of Global Ophthalmology

This year, **Mitchell Brinks, M.D., M.P.H.**, was honored with the title of The Sterling H. and Anna

Marie Tebbetts Professor of Global Ophthalmology. His pioneering work in advancing eye care extends well beyond the boundaries of OHSU, taking him to Cambodia, Bhutan, East Timor, Guatemala, the Marshall Islands and the Samoan Islands. Dr. Brinks' dedication to global health and his commitment to delivering eye care to underserved communities make him a perfect fit for this professorship and embody the vision behind this prestigious position.

Originally funded by Sterling and Annie Tebbetts, this endowed professorship has also benefited from significant contributions made by **Joe Robertson, M.D., M.B.A.**, former OHSU president and OHSU Casey Eye Institute Chair, and his wife, Patricia. Their support included both matching grants from the Ford Family Foundation and personal gifts. Sterling Tebbetts, a cousin of Dr. Robertson's mother, and Annie Tebbetts had a close relationship with Dr. Robertson and his two children, Katie and C.J. The Tebbetts were strong supporters of Dr. Robertson's work in global health, a field in which Katie also developed a deep passion. This professorship not only honors the close-knit nature of the family but also continues Katie's legacy of fostering cross-cultural connections.



Alan Labrum, O.D.



Casey Community Outreach Program mobile eye clinic

Our Deep Appreciation

The Casey Eye Institute's mission is to eliminate preventable blindness, and our work would not be possible without private philanthropy. Your generosity gives our scientists and clinicians the resources needed to explore, innovate and find new treatments for eye diseases. Thanks to you, we are overcoming geographic and socioeconomic barriers for children and adults at the greatest risk of blindness. Thank you for helping us preserve the gift of sight for children and adults across Oregon and beyond.



Thank you

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