

SCIENCE *OF SIGHT BEYOND*
VISION

A CAMPAIGN FOR

 **ENVISION**[®]
RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Dear Valued Envision Supporters,

When Envision launched more than 80 years ago, we had a simple and very important goal – to provide jobs and advocacy for individuals who are visually impaired.

Since then, the need for services and support for those who are blind or have low vision has grown more than tenfold, and with it, so has our mission. From a small broom-making workshop in Kansas, we have grown to be a leading employer for those with vision loss, with manufacturing and retail locations spanning the nation. We expanded our reach to include social programs, a rehabilitation clinic, child development center, professional education, and most recently, a radio station to continue to do more for those we serve.

We have come a long way, but we have much further to go.

An estimated 285 million people worldwide are visually impaired, and that number continues to rise. Despite this rising trend, vision loss is still seen as a marginal disability by insurance companies, and clinicians struggle to provide patients with the resources they need.

There are significant gaps in our understanding of how to address the rehabilitation needs of the blind and visually impaired. Many organizations are seeking the cure which may be years away. At Envision we recognize the need for practical and applicable solutions today.

This gap is why we've established the Envision Research Institute. We have devoted ourselves to the development of improved clinical practices and assistive devices – innovative research that will remove functional barriers for those with vision impairments, world wide.

Our goal is simple – to continue to do more and be more for the people we serve. Join us as we embark on the Science of Sight Beyond Vision Campaign.

Please help us touch lives with your gift to the Envision Research Institute.

Sincerely,


Michael Monteferrante
President and CEO of Envision.

“At Envision, we face each and everyday with renewed purpose to seek a higher understanding of how we can make a difference. This is our opportunity to give back – to achieve meaningful outcomes for those we serve. In doing so we reap the greatest reward – the inspiration and joy found in lives lived to the fullest.”

Heather Hogan, Vice President, Foundation and Mission Services

THE NEED

Visual impairment and blindness can have profound impact on an individual's ability to function in daily life. Age-related diseases can cause vision loss later in life, leading to decreased independence, isolation and depression. Premature birth, genetics and birth defects can affect vision in young children or the youngest of children presenting lifetime barriers to education and assimilation in the community.

The lack of research funding, insurance remuneration in clinical practice and patient experiences have all been factors in driving a less-than-aggressive research agenda. But today, some of the more exciting opportunities to advance low vision patient care come from active research in the field of low vision rehabilitation and assistive technologies.

For 82 years, Envision, Inc. has strived to improve the quality of life and provide inspiration for the blind and visually impaired. However, there remain significant gaps in our scientific understanding of the condition.

WITH YOUR HELP ENVISION WILL:

- ✦ Develop and test visual prosthetics and novel devices to aid individuals with integration into their workplaces, homes and communities
- ✦ Research methodologies for screening and testing visual impairments
- ✦ Further our understanding of specific visual impairments while creating opportunities to advance treatment, rehabilitation and accessibility for those with low vision or blindness
- ✦ Applied research will investigate functional implications of vision loss and optimize clinical practices to improve the quality of life and functionality for those with vision loss



- ✦ Improve public health through improved rehabilitation operations, expanding and validating best clinical practices and treatments
- ✦ Improve our application and training for adaptive technology, and develop new uses and devices to better patients' quality of life
- ✦ Train the next generation of vision rehabilitation researchers
 - ✦ Inspire researchers to examine questions relevant to low vision and blindness
 - ✦ Facilitate collaborations among scientists, researchers and vision care professionals



"Medical marvels have increased the survival of prematurely born babies and lengthened the adult lifespan. As a result, the number of individuals with vision loss continues to grow. Until the causes of blindness have been eradicated, the need for rehabilitation and accessibility research is imperative. ERI will drive applied research aimed at restoring function to the blind and visually impaired."

Laura Walker, Ph.D., Executive Director, Envision Research Institute

THE PURPOSE

The purpose of the Envision Research Institute is to carry out significant and innovative research in blindness and low vision, with the goal of removing functional barriers for these individuals.

Person measure (visual ability)



THE GOAL

SCIENTIFIC:

- Create scientific opportunities to advance fundamental knowledge, treatment, rehabilitation and accessibility for the blind and visually impaired



- Drive the development of novel devices and methods for the treatment and integration of individuals into their communities and workplaces

- Examine and validate best clinical practices to optimize treatment and rehabilitation methods
- Establish a team approach with clinical and education staff to identify critical research needs in our patient population and to disseminate research findings to caregivers and the community



FUNCTIONAL & INSPIRATIONAL:

- Improve the quality of life for the blind and visually impaired
- Inspire researchers to examine questions relevant to low vision and blindness
- Educate and train the next generation of vision rehabilitation researchers
- Create scientific opportunities to advance treatment, rehabilitation and accessibility for those with low vision or blindness
- Applied research will investigate functional implications of vision loss and optimize clinical practices to improve the quality of life and functionality for those with vision loss.
- Support/develop novel devices and methods for the treatment and integration of individuals into their communities and workplace

- Facilitate collaborations among scientists, clinicians and rehabilitation specialists to promote a multidisciplinary approach to vision rehabilitation research.

THE NATIONAL EYE INSTITUTE (NEI)

NEI has identified specific research needs in blindness and low vision:

- Understanding Visual Impairment
- Screening and Testing
- Assistive Device Technology
- Visual Prosthetics
- Rehabilitation and Improving Public Health

Envision is uniquely positioned to address these needs and gaps in scientific research given our longstanding and direct contact with blind and low vision populations. The founding of the Envision Research Institute is a natural and obvious action to take in service of our mission, and fills a great need in the national science and health agenda.

Additionally, the NEI global research framework includes goals relevant to ERI:

1. Accelerate the translation of basic research into clinical studies
2. Strengthen the pool of vision researchers (including clinician scientists & attracting young researchers from other disciplines to apply their knowledge to vision research)



VISION STATEMENT



We believe every individual has vision, and that eyesight is not a requirement to achieving a dream. Our goal is to restore function to the blind and visually impaired. To this end, we dedicate our research to investigating the functional implications of vision loss, early screening and access to treatments, optimizing rehabilitation therapies and developing accessibility technology.

The purpose of the Envision Research Institute (ERI) is to carry out applied and innovative research in blindness and low vision, with the goal of removing functional barriers for these individuals.

ENVISION FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Envision Fellows apply their diverse educational backgrounds creatively to improve the quality of life and provide inspiration for the blind and visually impaired through their research endeavors. Partnering with mentors at Envision and around the world at renowned educational, research and medical institutions, Envision fellows are on the fast track to independent and impactful research careers.

" The Envision Research Fellowship has provided me with an opportunity of a lifetime to pursue my goal of restoring and enhancing functional vision to people with irreversible blinding diseases. Through this fellowship I have been able to collaborate with international leaders in scientific low vision research at Envision's world-class facilities and through the application of advanced technology and continuing education, revolutionize the way in which we deliver low vision rehabilitative care " .

Tony Succar, Ph.D., Envision Research Institute Fellow





FACTS AND NUMBERS

- ◆ The U.S. unemployment rate for people who are blind and visually impaired is over 63% and has remained this high for decades.¹
- ◆ Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD) is the leading cause of vision loss for Americans age 65 or older.²
- ◆ AMD affects 2 million people and is expected to increase to 3.6 million cases by 2030.³

- ◆ In 2010 the National Eye Institute (NEI) estimated that there were 4.2 million people in the United States who were visually impaired or blind. By 2050 the NEI projects that this number will more than triple to include 13 million Americans.⁴
- ◆ Approximately 104,000 children under the age of five are blind or visually impaired, in the United States.⁵

¹ Erickson, W., Lee, C., von Schrader, S. (2013). Disability Statistics from the 2011 American Community Survey (ACS). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Employment and Disability Institute (EDI). Retrieved April 22, 2014

^{2,3} National Eye Institute website <https://nei.nih.gov/health>

⁴ National Eye Institute, Statistics and Data (2010). Available at: <https://www.nei.nih.gov/eyedata/visionimpaired.asp>
2010 est. prevalence of vision impairment and blindness: 4,195,996
2050 est. projection of vision impairment and blindness: 13,026,870

⁵ 2012 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, report S1810, U.S. Census Bureau.

7 SIMPLE WAYS TO MAKE A GIFT.

The Envision Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization under the IRS Code. As such, the Foundation accepts a variety of gifts as charitable donations.

GIFTS OF:

1. Cash.
2. Securities, (such as coin collections, antique cars, artwork, etc.).
3. Personal property, including real estate, homes, business property, farmland and pastures, etc.
4. Real property, including stock, bonds, and mutual funds.
5. Trusts, including charitable remainder trusts, unitrusts, lead trusts, family trusts, annuity trusts, etc.
6. Insurance, as long as the Envision Foundation is owner and beneficiary.
7. Bequests, donations made at death directed by a will, trust or designation.

100% of your gift will go toward development of the Envision Research Institute.

To make a gift or inquire for more information, contact Heather Hogan at 316-440-1517 or heather.hogan@envisionus.com

Envision Foundation, Inc. | EIN # 20-3874095 | 610 N. Main St. | Wichita, KS 67203

"There is a pressing need for scientific low-vision research because the effects of vision loss are not well understood or documented and therapeutic and rehabilitative techniques are in their infancy. The Envision Research Institute is ideally suited to undertake such research because Envision has a large and diverse blind/low-vision clientele, outstanding clinical expertise, excellent ties to researchers at other institutions, and an institutional environment highly supportive of research."

*George T. Timberlake, Ph.D., Research Scientist/Director of the Low Vision Research Laboratory
Kansas City VA Medical Center*



To improve the quality of life and provide inspiration for the blind and visually impaired through employment, outreach, rehabilitation, education and research.

610 N. Main, Wichita, KS 67203

316-440-1500 | FAX: **316-440-1540**

www.envisionus.com