



World Cornea Congress IX
Washington DC



World Cornea Congress IX

Washington, D.C.

by *Phil Fasone*

The Cornea Society is an international society dedicated to promoting the exchange of information in cornea. Every five years, The Cornea Society organizes a two-day meeting held concurrently with another meeting such as AAO or ASCRS. This year, the Cornea Society organized the meeting as a standalone in Washington D.C. It did not disappoint. Melanie Howell, Vision Share's new Marketing Manager, and I exhibited. There was a strong turnout of both domestic and international surgeons.

The booth was busy, and we met with new prospects, existing clients, and multiple industry contacts. Finally, the meeting gave us both a chance to connect with our members from Eversight, Utah Lions Eye Bank, The Eye Bank of Kentucky, and VisionFirst.

Update on GAEBA

by *Phil Fasone*

In late 2024, the Global Alliance of Eye Bank Associations accepted Vision Share as a member. Since then, I have been honored to speak on behalf of the Vision Share membership at the World Ophthalmology Conference and the World Eye Bank Symposium. I have had the pleasure of working on the Strategic Planning Group alongside Collin Ross (Eversight), Kristen McCoy (Miracles in Sight), and Heather Machin (Chair, GAEBA) to help shape the future of their work. In addition, Stacey Troha, CEO of the Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin, helped support their mission by organizing educational webinars on eye banking. You can access the first in the webinar series below.

#1: Establishing a Self-Sustaining Eye Bank - [View the webinar here](#)

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European Eye Bank Association

Rome, Italy 2025

by Phil Fasone

In January, The European Eye Bank Association held its annual meeting in Rome, Italy. I was honored to attend and represent the Vision Share network. Attendees came from across the globe. There were a series of presentations over the three-day event. Most notably, Andreea Bauknecht, Director of Quality Services at Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin, spoke about the impact of donor criteria modification on cornea tissue availability for transplant. Congratulations to Andreea on a great presentation!

Another exciting presentation, which could have a major impact on international tissue distribution in the future, came from Mark Ellison, Research Partnership Coordinator at VisionGift. He talked about their current study on the new Corneal Cold Storage media: Xtra4. This new media has shown promising results of storage time up to 28 days. Mark told us that Moria, the media proprietor, will seek FDA approval later this year.



Andreea Bauknecht, Director of Quality Services at Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin

Operations Update

by Tony Dang

Tissue supply throughout Quarter 1 was a challenge, while client demand continued to increase. I reached out to our clients on an individual basis to explain the situation. These conversations helped me identify opportunities with surgeons to increase the frequency of offers and/or expand criteria. This allowed us to maximize tissue placement and increase Member Conversion Rates.



Last month, I demonstrated our new Real-Time Portal capability of Access Plus. The feedback I received from selected members helped me improve our design and add new features. I will provide details of the release in the coming months.

Marketing Update

by Melanie Howell

We made good strides in marketing in Q1 of 2025. I grew our social media presence by posting consistently on our social media channels and creating content on the blog to attract leads to our website. I also started doing monthly member spotlight posts on our social media channels so that our Vision Share members get greater visibility online. I collaborated with Brian to make sure he has a pipeline full of leads to follow-up with in areas we want to target domestically and internationally. We saw an increase in leads that reached out to us via the contact forms on our website, and I expect that number to go up as we continue our online marketing efforts. I am currently coordinating with some of our member eye banks to get video footage for our upcoming fundraising videos. If you want your eye bank to be featured in our upcoming videos, please reach out to me at mhowell@visionshare.org. I'd love to highlight your eye bank on our website and on our social media channels via video.

Research Update

by Brian Keenan

Each quarter we will look at trends to help identify more ways for you to be involved in research. If you have questions or have topics you would like discussed, please let me know. Email me at bkeen@visionshare.org.

Over the last quarter, here are a few key advancements in preserving donor tissues:

- 1. Cryopreservation:** Freezing helps maintain the structural integrity and viability of the tissues, making them suitable for transplantation even after long storage times.
- 2. Antioxidant-Enriched Preservation Solutions:** Adding antioxidants to preservation solutions helps protect corneal tissues from oxidative stress during storage.
- 3. Organ Culture:** Storing corneal tissues in a nutrient-rich medium at controlled temperatures. Organ culture allows for longer storage times.

These advancements are helping meet the growing demand for corneal transplants.

Surgeon's Training

by Tony Dang

In January, we completed our first Surgeon Preloaded DMEK training course in Kansas City, MO in partnership with Saving Sight. Our domestic surgeon that took the course helped us pave the way for additional training opportunities.

I am currently formalizing the course into a regimented module that can be implemented at any eye bank throughout the Vision Share network. Internationally, there is a lot of interest in DMEK, from processing to surgery, including the use of preloaded devices. If you are interested in supporting a training program, or collaborating on something new at your facility for Vision Share clients, please reach out to me at tdang@visionshare.org.



L to R: Kevin Wright (Saving Sight Business Development), Dr. Hopp (middle), Dr. Ketcherside (Saving Sight Medical director and supervising surgeon).

2024 Annual Client Survey Results

by Vision Share

We're delighted to share the results of our 2024 annual client survey. The results show that our customers highly value our personalized service and think positively about the Vision Share brand. A big thank you to all our Vision Share Eye Bank members. Our team couldn't achieve these results without your support.

4.4 stars



I am satisfied with the reliability of tissue delivery.

5.0 stars



I value the personalized service I receive from the Vision Share team.

4.9 stars



I am satisfied with the process of requesting tissue through Vision Share.

4.8 stars



How likely are you to recommend Vision Share to another surgeon?

Farewell Wade

by Vision Share



After two decades in eye banking at the Utah Lions Eye Bank, Wade McEntire moved on to be the Associate Director of Finance at the John A. Moran Eye Center.

We want to thank him for his distribution support, process-changing feedback, and his leadership as Vision Share's Board Chair. Congratulations, and good luck in your future endeavor!

Looking Ahead

by Phil Fasone

Vision Share will be exhibiting at ASCRS in Los Angeles and ARVO in Salt Lake City. If you are attending, please be sure to stop by and meet with the Vision Share team. In addition, Tony and Phil will be attending the EBAA Meeting in San Diego this June. We look forward to seeing you there.

Spotlight - Our Member Eye Banks



Eversight is a global nonprofit eye bank with a mission to restore sight and prevent blindness through the healing power of donation, transplantation, and research. For over 75 years, Eversight has fostered authentic relationships with donors and their families to ensure that the gift of sight is available to as many people as possible. Their purpose in doing this work is to empower people and transform lives.

The values of Service, Drive and Trust guide Eversight every step of the way toward their vision of one day seeing a world without blindness, where no one suffers from preventable visual impairment.

In 2024, Eversight and NJ Sharing Network collaborated on a shared case that not only honored a young donor's gift but also helped a mother in her time of grief and healing.

They facilitated the donation of an 18-year-old donor's corneas, which were successfully transplanted to recipients in Arizona. The process involved coordination between healthcare teams, donor eligibility reviews, and surgical recovery, all handled with precision and care. The donor's mother found comfort in knowing her daughter's gift helped others, reinforcing the profound impact of donation.

Read the complete article here -
<https://www.eversightvision.org/eversight-orbit-transforming-loss-into-light-nj-sharing-network/>



Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin (LEBW) has served Wisconsin for over 50 years, working with medical professionals, hospitals, volunteers, and Lions Clubs to honor those who give the gift of sight. Committed to protecting altruistic, voluntary donations, LEBW ensures the integrity and impact of each donation for the shared benefit of all.

After meeting cornea transplant needs in Wisconsin, LEBW extends its reach globally through Vision Share. These donations transform lives, as shared by a donor's mother: "We said goodbye to Patrick on January 1, 2023. He was just 22, a hunter, fisherman, and devoted to his white Labrador, Kota.

His vision was essential for his passions and driving his truck, one of his most valued possessions. Patrick had a heart bigger than his body, always looking out for others.

He donated his hand to a young man, tissue for breast reconstruction, and, most importantly, his eyes—not to one, but two women in Vancouver, Canada. Though he lived in Milwaukee, WI, knowing his gift helped others see again is a true blessing. Thank you, Lions Eye Bank of WI."

LEBW and Vision Share are deeply grateful to Patrick and his family as we work together to end curable blindness worldwide.

PREPARED BY: THE VISION SHARE TEAM

Thank you for reading The INSIDER. If you would like to see other topics featured in the upcoming newsletters, please let us know.

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