

For more information:
Prevent Blindness
Sarah Hecker
(312) 363-6035
shecker@preventblindness.org

Prevent Blindness and the National Center for Children’s Vision and Eye Health Announce Recipient of the Third Annual Bonnie Strickland Champion for Children’s Vision Award

-Award Presented to Dr. Sean Donahue, Professor of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, Vanderbilt University-

CHICAGO (Aug. 7, 2017) – [Prevent Blindness](#), the nation’s oldest volunteer eye health and safety organization, and the [National Center for Children’s Vision and Eye Health at Prevent Blindness \(NCCVEH\)](#) announced today the recipient of the third annual “Bonnie Strickland Champion for Children’s Vision Award.” This year’s selected recipient is Sean P. Donahue, MD, Ph.D., Professor of [Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences at Vanderbilt University](#).

The award was established by the NCCVEH Advisory Committee to commemorate Bonnie Strickland and her groundbreaking work to establish a comprehensive system for children’s vision in the United States. Strickland served as Director of the Division of Services for Children with Special Health Needs, Maternal and Child Health Bureau prior to her retirement in 2014.

The award recognizes significant efforts to improve children’s vision and eye health at the state or national level. The award was presented at the NCCVEH Annual Meeting on Aug. 5, 2017, in Alexandria, Va.

Dr. Donahue was selected by the volunteer Bonnie Strickland Champion for Children’s Vision Award Committee for his efforts to improve children’s vision through stakeholder engagement, volunteer coordination, and advancement of vision screening technology.

Highlighted contributions to children’s vision and eye health include:

1. Establishing a partnership with the Tennessee Lions Club to develop a vision screening program targeting preschool-aged children
2. Demonstrating program growth and sustainability growing from a state-level program to a national vision screening program in partnership with the Lions Club International Foundation which has screened more than 2 million children
3. Increasing available published scientific articles driving the use of evidence-based automated vision screening practices

4. Promoting collaboration across professional stakeholder groups to develop uniform best practices in vision screening methodology

“By detecting vision problems in children as early as possible, we can improve the opportunity for success in school and athletics, and even protect sight into adulthood,” said Dr. Donahue. “This award from Prevent Blindness recognizes the importance of using multiple approaches and resources to ensure meaningful results.”

“Prevent Blindness commends Dr. Donahue for his outstanding efforts to improve the vision and eye health of children across the country,” said Hugh R. Parry, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “We hope his research and program success will serve as a platform for other vision leaders to learn from and build on across the country.”

Past recipients of the Bonnie Strickland Champion for Children’s Vision Award include the Illinois Eye Institute (IEI) at Princeton Vision Clinic based at the Illinois College of Optometry, and The Pediatric Physicians’ Organization at Children’s (PPOC) based at Boston Children’s Hospital. In 2016, Vivian James, PhD, North Carolina Preschool Exceptional Children Coordinator for the Office of Early Learning - State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction, was named as Honorable Mention for the Award.

For more information on the 2017 Bonnie Strickland Champion for Children’s Vision Award, Prevent Blindness or the NCCVEH, please visit <http://nationalcenter.preventblindness.org/>, or contact Kira Baldonado at (800) 331-2020 or kbaldonado@preventblindness.org.

About the National Center for Children’s Vision and Eye Health at Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. In 2009, Prevent Blindness established the National Center for Children’s Vision and Eye Health, with funding and leadership support from the HRSA- Maternal and Child Health Bureau. Serving as a major resource for the establishment of a public health infrastructure, the National Center advances and promotes children’s vision and eye care, providing leadership and training to public entities throughout the United States. The National Center is advised by a committee of national experts and leaders from the fields of ophthalmology, optometry, pediatrics, nursing, family advocates and public health to guide the work and recommendations of the Center. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020. Or, visit us on the Web at <http://nationalcenter.preventblindness.org> or www.facebook.com/preventblindness.