Dear PRRF Community,

It's harvest time, and in this October edition of *Sightlines* we take this opportunity to share our good fortune and bounty.

We celebrate and congratulate our dear friend and long-time PRRF Board member Kay White who was recognized recently by the Detroit-based charity Common Ground for her 37 years of service - from staffing the crisis line to chairing the Board of Directors.

We also pay tribute to Paul Fecko, MD who passed away on August 7, 2021. Dr. Fecko was an ophthalmologist and a prominent member of Michigan’s medical community. Politically active over his entire career arc, he passionately advocated for his patients and his profession and was an ardent supporter of the PRRF.

Our PRRF Board is growing! John Capone, Esq. has been advising our Board on legal matters related to the Foundation over the last year, and we are delighted and honored to have him formally join the PRRF team.

Stephanie Saville, our PRRF Foundation Manager, provides an update on our annual *Hope for Vision Walk*. As of this writing, we have 170 donors and are more than halfway to reaching our $30,000 goal.

Lastly, Luisa Recchia, our Community Outreach Coordinator has been working with Board member Lieutenant Colonel (R) Chuck Walls and the Family Advisory Committee on their 1st Annual Conference to be held on January 22, 2022. It promises to be an interesting and informative virtual event.

We are deeply grateful to the committed PRRF members who work to make it possible for us to continue to serve our community and pursue the quest for a cure.

Sincerely,


Board Member Recognition

Congratulations to PRRF Board Member Kay White who will be the recipient of Common Ground's first annual Kay White Legacy Award.

This award has been established in celebration of Common Ground’s 50th Anniversary to recognize dedication and leadership to the organization and its mission to help move people from crisis to hope.

Kay’s involvement with Common Ground began 37 years ago when she started volunteering on the Crisis Line, a service providing 24/7 crisis counseling by professionally trained volunteers. Throughout the years, Kay’s service to Common Ground has extended to many facets of the organization. Kay has served on the Board of Directors, including several terms as board chair. She has helped facilitate Common Ground’s move from Birmingham to Royal Oak, hire its longest-serving CEO, and orchestrate a merger with The Sanctuary teen runaway shelter. With many Common Ground board members crediting Kay when asked why they joined the board; she is also a natural recruiter and connector.

Tribute to Paul Fecko, MD, MBA, FCAS, FAAO

Dr. Paul Fecko received his engineering (BSc), medical (MD), and business (MBA) degrees from Wayne State University. After completing his ophthalmology residency, also at Wayne State University, he obtained fellowships in the American College of Surgeons (FACS) and the American Academy of Ophthalmology (FAAO). Dr. Fecko began his professional career in 1968 and continued practicing through May of 2021 (53 years). He practiced for many years in Birmingham, Michigan, and finished his career working with Dr. Luisa Di Lorenzo in Troy, Michigan.

Dr. Fecko taught ophthalmology to residents at William Beaumont hospital and was affiliated with the Henry Ford Macomb Hospital and St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Pontiac.

He was president of the Michigan Ophthalmologic Society (MOS) in 1998 and 1999. During his presidency, Dr. Fecko invited Sergei Khrushchev, son of the former Russian premier Nikita Khrushchev, to speak about his experience during the Cold War from a Russian perspective. Mr. Khrushchev was a faculty member of Brown University at the time.

Dr. Fecko was a true champion for his patient and his profession. He represented the Michigan Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (MiSEPS) at the American Academy of Ophthalmology Council meetings from 1993-1995 and again from 2002-2004. Dr. Fecko
will be honored for his service by the American Academy of Ophthalmology at its annual meeting in November 2021.

Dr. Fecko’s daughter, Alice, is a practicing comprehensive ophthalmologist in Marquette, Michigan, and currently serves on the MiSEPS Board of Directors.

The Pediatric Retinal Research Foundation is grateful to Dr. Fecko and his family for their generous donations to promote research and support for the community of families of children impacted by blinding retinal diseases, one of Dr. Fecko’s greatest interests.

We are all grateful to Dr. Fecko for his lifelong commitment to his patients, community, and profession.

Dr. Paul Fecko passed away on August 7, 2021. His service included many areas around Detroit. In addition to his interest in medicine, he always paid close attention to the political scene and his patients could always look forward to being asked about their opinions on current events. Dr. Fecko is survived by his wife, Ann, and two daughters and three grandchildren. PRRF is very grateful to the Fecko family for naming it as the recipient of tributes to Paul Fecko’s life of service.

~ Patrick J. Droste, MS, MD, and PRRF Board Member Kay P. White

New Board Member Welcome

The Pediatric Retinal Research Foundation is pleased to announce the appointment of John Capone as a new board member. John is no stranger to the Board as he has provided support and counsel to its members in the past. John is an Associate General Counsel at Quadient and specializes in IP and technology litigation and corporate matters and contracts.

In his spare time, John also serves on several other non-profit boards, including Italia Lacrosse North America, and the Italian American Lacrosse Foundation. He is U.S. legal counsel and serves as an assistant coach for the Italian Lacrosse Men’s National Team and travels often for clinics and all levels of national and international competition.

Hope for Vision Walk
We would like to thank all the participants, sponsors, and donors for your contribution to this year’s virtual Hope for Vision Walk month! We continue to receive donations and are most grateful. All proceeds from the Walk will not only directly benefit continued research efforts to discover treatments or cures for retinal diseases which affect infants and children daily; it will also help develop new community programming aimed at connecting families with children who have experienced vision loss. If you would still like to donate to the Walk [click here](#). We will keep the fundraising page open through the end of November. On behalf of the PRRF and families touched by retinal diseases, thank you!

**PRRF Community Stories**

The Foundation is excited to share the first in a series of four videos with a focus on the tremendous value and inspirational stories from the PRRF community. This video features Jacob Thomas and his journey from being diagnosed with Coats Disease to his career as a Registered Nurse.

Video link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pm8meUS8St8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pm8meUS8St8)

We’re excited to share future videos in upcoming issues of *Sightlines*, as well as on the PRRF website.

**Conference Save the Date**
Save the date for the virtual PRRF Family Connection Conference on January 22, 2022, from 10:00 am - 1:00 pm ET. The conference, focused on education for parents and caregivers, will include research updates with the doctors, featured speakers, and breakout sessions. More details will be coming soon!

Help sustain the work of the PRRF by signing up to be a monthly donor! A gift of just 65¢ per day ($20 per month) will allow the Foundation to increase community programming and advance further research.

Stay up to date with the latest news and events by following PRRF on social media:

- **PRRF LinkedIn**
- **PRRF Facebook**

Donate Now