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Prevent Blindness Announces Recipients of the 2023 Jenny Pomeroy Award for Excellence in Vision and Public Health, and Rising Visionary Award

Dean A. VanNasdale, OD, PhD, The Ohio State University, and Christina Ambrosino, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, named as recipients of national Prevent Blindness awards

CHICAGO (April 19, 2023) – [Prevent Blindness](#), the nation’s leading eye health and safety organization, has announced the recipient of the [2023 Jenny Pomeroy Award for Excellence in Vision and Public Health](#) as Dean A. VanNasdale, Jr., OD, PhD, Associate Professor at [The Ohio State University \(OSU\) College of Optometry](#), and Christina Ambrosino, medical student at [Johns Hopkins School of Medicine](#), as the recipient of the fourth annual “[Rising Visionary Award](#).” Both award recipients will present at the [12th Annual Prevent Blindness Focus on Eye Health Summit](#), to be held as a virtual interactive event, on July 12-13, 2023.

The award recipients were chosen by a volunteer selection committee. The committee consists of leaders and professionals in the ophthalmology, optometry, advocacy, public health and scientific communities.

The Jenny Pomeroy Award for Excellence in Vision and Public Health is presented annually to an individual, team, or organization that has made significant contributions to the advancement of public health related to vision and eye health at the community, state, national, and/or international level. The award serves as a living memorial to Jenny Pomeroy, who served as the CEO of [Prevent Blindness Georgia](#) from 1996 until 2013 and brought a passionate understanding of public health to her work and our mission.

Dr. VanNasdale was selected for this year’s Jenny Pomeroy Award for Excellence in Vision and Public Health for his significant contributions to vision and public health research. He has collaborated with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Vision Health Initiative to develop [state profiles](#) related to vision health and is conducting pioneering work in Ohio, using multiple surveys and administrative sources to estimate the impact of state policies on improving access to eye care. The goal is for this work to serve as a template for similar analyses in other states. More recently, he

collaborated with [VisionServe Alliance](#) to develop a series of innovative state-level profiles regarding vision and health status among older people.

In addition to teaching students at the OSU College of Optometry, he serves as a mentor to master's and PhD students working in population health. Dr. VanNasdale currently serves on the advisory committee for the [Center for Vision and Population Health at Prevent Blindness](#), and is a member of the [Vision and Eye Health Surveillance System \(VEHSS\)](#) expert panel for NORC at the University of Chicago, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"I am extraordinarily honored to be this year's recipient of the Jenny Pomeroy Award. Past recipients are people I have learned from and admire," said Dr. VanNasdale. "I appreciate Prevent Blindness' recognition of the work we are doing at the intersection of vision and public health and am grateful for all of the effort from the team I work with that makes this work possible.

The Prevent Blindness Rising Visionary Award recognizes an optometry student or resident, ophthalmology resident, primary health care, nursing, or other health professional student or resident in the United States who submits the best essay based on a question related to the 2023 Focus on Eye Health National Summit theme, "Why the Eye?".

Ms. Ambrosino's essay championed the importance and effectiveness of trainee-led vision screening organizations (TLVSOs). TLVSOs work by partnering trainees with local eye care providers to conduct community vision screenings and coordinate follow-up care. An additional benefit is that these programs foster trainee interest in eye care careers.

"Congratulations to Dr. Dean VanNasdale and Christina Ambrosino on these incredible achievements and for their outstanding work to help improve vision and eye health," said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. "We look forward to their presentations at our Focus on Eye Health Summit, and to seeing their important work advancing in the future!"

For more information on the Prevent Blindness Jenny Pomeroy Award for Excellence in Vision and Public Health, the Rising Visionary Award, or the Focus on Eye Health National Summit, please visit [PreventBlindness.org](https://www.preventblindness.org), or contact eyesummit@preventblindness.org.

About 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. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to

eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, visit us at preventblindness.org, and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

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