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## **Prevent Blindness Names Howard Purcell, O.D., New England College of Optometry, as the 2025 Person of Vision Award Recipient**

**- Annual Prevent Blindness Person of Vision Award Gala at Vision Expo East in Orlando, Fla., to Honor Howard Purcell, O.D., President and CEO of the New England College of Optometry -**

**CHICAGO (Sept. 19, 2024)** – [Prevent Blindness](#), the nation's leading eye health and safety nonprofit organization, announced today that the [2025 Prevent Blindness Person of Vision Award](#) will be presented to Howard Purcell, O.D., F.A.A.O, president and CEO, [New England College of Optometry \(NECO\)](#). The Person of Vision Award gala will be held on February 19, 2025, at the Hyatt Regency Orlando, in Orlando, Fla., in conjunction with [Vision Expo East](#). All proceeds from the event will go to support Prevent Blindness programs.

The Prevent Blindness Person of Vision Award recognizes an individual whose inspired outlook champions healthy vision and its importance for a healthy life. Dr. Purcell was chosen by a volunteer committee as the recipient of the 2025 Person of Vision Award for his outstanding dedication to vision and eye health, leadership of eye care professionals and dedication to the vision industry.

Dr. Purcell has been the President and CEO of NECO since July 2018. Before assuming his leadership role at NECO, he served as Senior Vice President at Essilor of America and Senior Director at Johnson & Johnson Vision Care. A second-generation graduate of NECO, Dr. Purcell also participated in a group optometric practice for eleven years with his father in Miami Beach, Fla.

Beginning in June 1991, Dr. Purcell joined the faculty of Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry. During his career at the college, he was a principal in the development of the Department of Cornea and Contact Lenses. As associate professor, Dr. Purcell was responsible for both the didactic and clinical components of the program, serving as the Deputy Dean of the college.

Dr. Purcell also serves on the founding board of [Latinos en Optometry \(LEO\)](#). LEO works to gain a broader representation of Latinos within the optometry and larger eye care professional community, along with increasing eye care professional knowledge and understanding of unique cultural differences within the Latino communities they serve.

Maureen Cavanagh, Advancing Eyecare, is once again serving as the 2025 Person of Vision Committee Chair. To date, additional committee members include Marge Axelrad, editorial director emeritus, *Vision Monday* (VM); Deb Bulken, Luxottica Wholesale; Dr. Gary Chu, NECO; Marc Ferrara, Jobson Medical Information; Rick Gadd, Catalyst Health Group; Dr. Peter Kehoe, EyeMed; Prevent Blindness Board of Directors Chair Jim McGrann, Advancing Eyecare; Dr. Millicent Knight; and Jamie Shyer, Zyloware.

“We are excited to hold our first Person of Vision gala in Orlando, and that we have the opportunity to honor Dr. Howard Purcell’s extensive work and impact on the vision industry as well as his patients,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “We invite everyone to join us to celebrate his many accomplishments and help us raise funds for our sight-saving programs.”

For more information, including sponsorship opportunities, Person of Vision Award committee membership, and tickets, please contact Albert Muci at (312) 363-6020 or [amuci@preventblindness.org](mailto:amuci@preventblindness.org), or visit <https://preventblindness.org/personofvision>.

### **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](https://PreventBlindness.org), and follow us on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#), [Threads](#), [LinkedIn](#), [TikTok](#) and [YouTube](#).

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