Macular Degeneration Doesn’t Limit My Active Lifestyle

While spending time with her granddaughter in St. Louis 28 years ago, Gloria could not get that flyaway hair out of her eye. It was pestering her and wouldn’t go away no matter how many times she swiped her brow. Later, she noticed flashing lights in her rearview mirror when driving at night. But when she turned around to look, no one was behind her. It was then that Gloria decided it was time to see her optometrist. During her visit with her doctor, she learned these strange experiences were actually the side effects of macular degeneration.

Macular degeneration is a loss of central vision resulting from damage to the retina. The central part of the retina, called the macula, can become uneven as a result of fatty deposits or become scarred because of tiny leaking blood vessels. Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is by far the most common type of macular degeneration and is the leading cause of vision loss in Americans 60 years of age and older.

Over the next 25 years, Gloria would have surgery and receive several injections to curb the effects, but it was still difficult to manage small day-to-day tasks like reading the mail and the labels on her prescriptions.

“I am grateful that my condition is quite manageable but there are still everyday struggles,” said Gloria. “NewView Oklahoma has provided me additional resources that allow me to overcome those struggles and continue to do more each day.”

And yes, Gloria does more. A highly involved member of the Spanish Cove Retirement Community in Yukon, Gloria participates in numerous activities, including board and card games and the drama group, just to name a few. Most notably, Gloria teaches water aerobics to her peers and swims every day.

If you have a friend or loved one who is living with macular degeneration, we can help them be as independent as possible. Contact NewView today at info@newviewoklahoma.org or visit our website at NVOKlahoma.org.
Athletes Enjoy #BlindSportsDay

Hundreds of blind and visually impaired Americans participated in National Blind Sports Day Saturday, Oct. 6, 2018, to raise awareness of blind sports in our society. The NewView Oklahoma adaptive dragon boat team, The Drifters, and adaptive rowing team, The Vipers, participated at the Chesapeake Boathouse on the Oklahoma River by demonstrating their abilities out on the water.

The goal of National Blind Sports Day (NBSD) is to celebrate the abilities of and opportunities available to Americans with visual impairments and increase awareness of sports for the blind. Sport and fitness have the power to provide people who are blind and visually impaired with the framework to set goals, build work ethic and live a healthier lifestyle.

If you are interested in participating in either team or volunteering, contact Mellodie King at mking@newviewoklahoma.org.

Mayor Holt visits NewView

Oklahoma City Mayor David Holt took time out of his busy schedule to visit NewView on Wednesday, Sept. 26, 2018. Mayor Holt was given a tour of our manufacturing facility where he was able to see first-hand the work we do. He also took the time to learn about the many resources we provide for people who are blind or visually impaired including employment, rehabilitation services and community programming.

After his tour, the Mayor spent a great deal of time with all the NewView employees, where he talked about his plans to construct more sidewalks and expand public transportation to include Sundays. He knows these efforts will greatly benefit many of our employees and clients who heavily rely on these entities to navigate our city. He also held a question and answer session where he was able to answer each question with care.

*Mayor Holt, thank you for your eagerness to learn more about NewView.*

We always welcome our city leaders to visit our facility and learn more about the products we produce and the people we serve. Please contact Mark Ivy at (918) 408-7023 to schedule your tour today.
Gifts in Action

Only 25-30% of NewView services are reimbursed by medical insurance such as Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance. In addition, NewView never turns an individual away based on their ability to pay, so we also have a robust benevolent care component in our services. This funding gap must be covered by charitable gifts, which is why your support moves mountains.

Recently, NewView received grants and gifts from the United Way of Central Oklahoma, Philip and Miranda Kaiser Foundation, Oklahoma Arts Council, Maxine and Jack Zarrow Foundation and American Fidelity Foundation.

In addition to applying for grants, NewView also holds two annual fundraising luncheons; one in Tulsa, which just took place on October 3. Special thanks to: Arvest Foundation, Presenting Sponsor, as well as Downtown Tulsa Lions Club, Harrel Eyecare, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Helmerich Payne, Mabrey Bank, TD Williamson, Max and Marian Vowel, Maxine and Jack Zarrow Foundation, Shining Honor Project, The Lou and Connie Miller Charitable Foundation and University Village.

Save-the-Date: The Oklahoma City luncheon will be April 11, 2019 at St. Luke’s United Methodist Church. If you know of a corporation or individual that would like to sponsor the OKC luncheon, please email or call Tiffany Henley at thenley@newviewoklahoma.org or (405) 602-0780. Sponsorships range from $500-$5,000, so there are support levels to fit every budget.

Charitable gifts are the engine powering the nonprofit mission of NewView. The rehab and employment services NewView provides in Oklahoma and in 17 states total, are changing lives daily. Your gifts make this possible. Thank you!

California Wildfires

Did you know that NewView Oklahoma is the sole producer of firehoses used by the U.S. Forest Service? That means that our hoses are used to fight the fires that have ravaged the California countryside.

During the month of November, NewView firehose production was highlighted in several news stories, including television stations, KFOR and KWTV in Oklahoma City and KOTV in Tulsa.

The media attention allowed our employees to talk about the pride they have in their work and highlight some of the ground-breaking technology that allows visually-impaired employees to produce up to 800 firehoses per day.

NewView Oklahoma produced more than 4,000 miles of hoses last year. That’s enough hose to go from Los Angeles to Philadelphia and back to Oklahoma City.

If you would like to tour the NewView manufacturing facility, please call Mark Ivy at 918-408-7023 or email him at mivy@newviewoklahoma.org.
Why I serve

Growing up in urban St. Louis in the sixties, Mike Dover was immersed in a world of diversity. Living directly on the line of the city's racial divide, Mike was a poor kid whose parents were both custodial workers who barely made ends meet. In addition to pervasive economic and familial hardships, Mike was born with poor eyesight and a unique optical condition that created rapid eye movements. The condition led to much teasing by other kids and an embarrassment so persistent, it followed him most of his life. However, this eye condition did not create strong enough barriers to inhibit the now well-renowned community and public policy advocate we know today.

Mike had an experimental eye surgery when he was young; although the rapid eye movements improved, Mike’s vision remained impaired and something that he would often be self-conscious about throughout his life. Fortunately, Mike encountered two mentors in his youth who overlooked his condition and instilled in him the importance of self-acceptance in order to become a full participant in life. Their influence gave Mike the necessary confidence to move forward in life with a college education.

Mike’s eye condition prevented him from going to Vietnam after joining the army in 1968, but this incident sparked an empathy for those who suffer from no fault of their own. Mike became involved in a lifelong career of public service.

Just over a year ago, Mike was invited to join NewView Oklahoma’s board of directors. During a meeting to discuss the opportunity, he toured NewView’s headquarters and manufacturing facility. During that tour, Mike met a NewView employee whose story of vision loss resonated so very closely with his own, he knew immediately he wanted to serve on the board.

Mike not only serves on the NewView Oklahoma Board of Directors, he is also a faithful donor. When asked why giving is so important, Mike responded, “NewView provides a quality of care that eliminates the perception that a nonprofit healthcare provider is ‘less than’ a private healthcare provider.” He continued by saying, “The caliber of staff at every level of the organization is impressive. Philanthropic contributions allow NewView to reach more people in need of this level of care.”

To find out more about opportunities at NewView, contact Sarah Frey at sfrey@newviewoklahoma.org.
Vision Therapy and Traumatic Brain Injury

By Byron Bonner, O.D.
Vision Rehabilitation Optometrist
OKC Low Vision Clinic

From sports injuries to blasts experienced in military combat and everything in between, it is common to hear individuals say that they feel like a different person after experiencing a concussion, which is considered a mild traumatic brain injury. An estimated 1.7 million traumatic brain injuries occur in the U.S. every year, and approximately 5.3 million Americans live with a traumatic brain injury causing a disability.

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) commonly results in eye-related symptoms that can have a lasting effect on an individual’s daily living. The ability to read may become the most challenging task, even though the individual was an avid reader before. Symptoms related to a TBI include but are not limited to, eyestrain, light sensitivity both outdoors and indoors, doubled or blurred vision, headaches, words appearing to move on the page, loss of peripheral vision, balance disturbances or nausea.

The groups that have the highest risk of experiencing a TBI are ages 0-4, 15-19 and adults 65 years and older. Within these groups, males have higher incidence than females which are commonly the result of a fall. Ages 20 to 24 most often experience a TBI from a motor vehicle accident.

Due to the brains plasticity, vision therapy (VT) by an optometrist has been proven to benefit individuals with eye-related symptoms resulting from a TBI. Plasticity is the brain’s ability to reorganize itself by forming new neural connections during development and after an injury or disease. The process can begin as soon as one hour after diminished input to a portion of the brain.

The natural recovery process can take up to weeks, months or even years to complete. In some cases, the process never completes. I like to think of it as the eyes recalibrating to the brain since the eyes are an extension of the brain.

With the help of VT, we can help speed the process along, or in some cases, allow for it to finish completely. VT addresses the areas that cause the above-mentioned symptoms by focusing on one’s ability to stay fixated on an object, follow an object, look from one object to the next, focus on an image at close range and look up close and far away. VT can even help correct an eye turn caused by a cranial nerve palsy.

In some cases, immediate, temporary relief can come from a pair of glasses. This can be done by prescribing a bifocal to help with their reduced ability to focus up close, adding a prism to help expand their field of view, or using a prism to redirect the image to remove double vision. VT cannot correct all cases of a TBI but will help most cases with eye-related symptoms.

Optometrists and VT have a vital role in the comprehensive rehabilitation of individuals suffering from eye-related symptoms associated with a TBI. VT helps them return to school, work, and/or sports, living life to the fullest.
Macular Degeneration

Doesn't Limit My Active Lifestyle

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Upcoming Activities and Events

**VITAL Monthly Meeting**

**January 16, 2019**  
NewView OKC Clinic, 710 West Wilshire

**February 20, 2019**  
NewView OKC Clinic, 710 West Wilshire

**March 20, 2019**  
NewView OKC Clinic, 710 West Wilshire

11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

VITAL gives social support to vision-impaired servicemen, women, and their families, by providing opportunities to enjoy the company of their peers, share stories, be active members of their communities, and have access to helpful resources. The VITAL group is represented by men and women who have served in every major war since World War II.

VITAL meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month (September - May). Attendees enjoy a catered meal and guest speakers. The group takes quarterly outings to various military bases, museums, and other venues. NewView also hosts an annual Veterans’ Day Luncheon.

Email info@newviewoklahoma.org for more information.

**Keys to Work Transitions Institute**

Keys to Work is a collaboration between NewView Oklahoma and other statewide agencies to provide comprehensive services including occupational therapy, orientation and mobility, and assistive technology. The curriculum is designed to prepare young adults with blindness or vision impairment as their primary disability for college and employment.

**June 2-15, 2019**  
Staybridge Suites in Oklahoma City  
(Airport location)

For ages 16-22

Deadline for applications: March 29th  
Email info@newviewoklahoma.org to request an application.

**NewView Oklahoma Valentine’s Brunch**

You and a guest are invited to a LOVELy Valentine’s Day Brunch at NewView Oklahoma. Participants will make brunch items such as mimosas, chocolate dipped strawberries and muffins. After making brunch, we will gather to eat and make Valentine’s day cards. Thanks to the Junior League of Oklahoma City for their partnership and helping make this event possible.

**February 2, 2019**  
NewView Headquarters  
501 North Douglas Avenue | Oklahoma City  
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

This event is for anyone who is 21 years or older with a visual impairment. Please RSVP to Andrea Hamen at 405-250-627 or ahamen@newviewoklahoma.org no later than Jan. 25, 2019.