

THE VISIONARY AWARD

The Visionary Award was established by the EyeSight Foundation of Alabama on the occasion of its tenth anniversary in 2007 to recognize extraordinary service by an organization or an individual in addressing the unmet eye care needs of Alabama's citizens.

Latest Recipients

Torrey Van Antwerp DeKeyser served as Executive Director of the EyeSight Foundation of Alabama for 22 years. She was a tireless advocate for vision and eye research, education and access to care. Mrs. DeKeyser also was a masterful relationship builder, resulting in fruitful collaborations and partnerships throughout the country. She received the Visionary Award on April 28, 2022, at her retirement celebration, where she was also named Executive Director Emerita.



Christopher A. Girkin, MD, MSPH, FACS, FARVO, served as Chair of UAB Department of Ophthalmology & Visual Sciences for more than nine years. Dr. Girkin's clinical practice focuses on the treatment of pediatric and adult glaucoma and complex cataracts, while glaucoma, optic neuropathy, and the higher prevalence of these diseases among people of African ancestry are the primary focus of his extensive research. Dr. Girkin is a transformational leader who led the DOVS to an unprecedented #5 ranking in National Institutes of Health funding during his tenure. He received the Visionary Award on May 17, 2022, in conjunction with the 25th anniversary celebration of the EyeSight Foundation.



During the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the organization, two distinguished individuals who were instrumental in its creation were awarded the seventh and eighth Visionary Awards. For their leadership and guidance, **Clarence B. Blair** and **James D. Davis** received recognition at the September 12, 2017 reception hosted by UAB. Mr. Blair was the chairman of the Eye Foundation Hospital during the time of its sale to UAB, and Mr. Davis stepped in as the first chairman of the new grant-making foundation that was created as a result of the sale. These two successfully led the transition and helped define the mission of the new organization, originally known as the

Alabama Eye Institute before changing its name to the EyeSight Foundation of Alabama. (Clarence Blair, previous page; Jim Davis, right photo)



Past Visionary Award Recipients



2013: **Dr. Alston Callahan** became the sixth recipient of the Visionary Award during the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the facility that bears his name, the UAB Callahan Eye Hospital. The award was presented posthumously in recognition of his wisdom, leadership, and dedication to making his dream of providing top quality eye care and research for the benefit of all citizens of Birmingham and beyond come true. In photo: ESFA Chairman Robert Field presents the Visionary Award to Dr. Mike Callahan, son of Dr. Alston Callahan.

2011: **Lanning B. Kline, M.D.**

For his extraordinary leadership as Chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology at the University of Alabama School of Medicine and the impact he has made on improving eyesight throughout the state and beyond through the Department's teaching, research, clinical and service activities.

www.uab.edu/eyedoc/ (in photo: ESFA board chairman Steve Yoder, past ESFA chairman Jim Davis, Dr. Kline, and past ESFA chairman and Visionary Award recipient Allen Rushton)



2011: **Hall Williams Thompson**

Given posthumously for his steadfast determination, leadership and generosity in supporting efforts to provide quality eye care to all Alabamians, but especially for the state's most vulnerable citizens--our underserved children.

2010: Allen D. Rushton

For his longtime support, leadership and dedication to the mission of the EyeSight Foundation of Alabama, including many years of service as Chairman of the Grants Committee, and also to Eye Foundation, Inc., including service as Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

2009: Alie B. Gorrie

For her compassion, vision and determination in creating Songs for Sight, a unique musical celebration that raises awareness and funds to support the ongoing clinical and research activities of the UAB Center for Low Vision Rehabilitation and its Low Vision Support Group, Orientation and Mobility Services and Low Vision Equipment Program for young adults in need.

www.songsforsight.org

2007: Sight Savers of Alabama (now Sight Savers America)

For its phenomenal success in providing comprehensive eye care for thousands of at-risk children throughout the state through a network of referrals, providers and other eye care professionals, improving vision among those whose eye care needs otherwise would go untreated.

www.sightsaversamerica.org