

BRUCE SHIELDS, MD, AND HIS LONGTIME ASSISTANT AT DUKE, ROBIN GOODWIN

SPRING  
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Duke Eye Center

SIGHTLINES

## GIFTS OF SIGHT REVEALS BRUCE SHIELDS' RESPECT FOR HIS PATIENTS

“There is a type of vision that transcends the physical sense of sight,” says Bruce Shields, MD, a long-time Duke Eye Center colleague who recently retired from his 15-year post as the chair of the Department of Ophthalmology at Yale. “Even when a person is blind, she can still “see” the real beauty in life. I had so many incredible patients who faced serious physical limitations and diseases and yet maintained a sturdy attitude and good cheer, and served as role models for living a good life. While I was struggling to preserve their sight, they were giving me something of even greater value in their lessons of how to see our lives in a better light.”

He has taken these lessons to heart and has written about them in his recently published book, *Gifts of Sight*, where, with compassion, insight and the astute observations of a distinguished ophthalmologist, he weaves together poignant stories from his career.

He was compelled to begin writing this book over 20 years ago after being profoundly moved by an elderly widow facing immense challenges.

“She never let her circumstances rob her of the joy of living. One morning, she came for an appointment and described the colors, scents, breezes, warmth, and freshness of a gorgeous spring day. I realized she and I had traveled on the very same road that day, but I had been blinded by my own problems and worries and missed the entire experience—she had seen it all and I had seen nothing, and the remarkable thing was that she was blind!” On the cover of the book is a photo of that road.

Shields is a glaucoma specialist, who undertook his fellowship training at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, where he met and became good friends with David Epstein, MD, current chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology at Duke. He is the author of more than 200 scientific papers and chapters, and ten scientific books, including what is considered the standard textbook on Glaucoma, currently in its sixth edition. “Scientific discoveries come so quickly that what was true today may not be true tomorrow. I had the desire to write something that was more timeless—that would be just as true in 100 years as it is today,” he explains.

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## "GIFTS OF SIGHT" CONTINUED FROM FRONT

"I am pleased to see that Duke Eye Center continues to provide the best of both cutting-edge technology and patient-centered care." —BRUCE SHIELDS

The words to the *Gifts of Sight* almost came faster than he could record them, until half way through when he hit writer's block. He was perplexed and just set aside the book for a few months. Not long after, he received an offer from Yale. "I loved Duke—I'd been there for 25 years! But after a long consideration I accepted the offer. It was then that I realized I had only lived half the book—the second half was waiting for me at Yale."

This book is designed for everybody: patients, physicians, and all people—including Duke alumni. "I hope others will find inspiration in these stories about the lessons I learned from my patients at Duke and at Yale. I feel so fortunate to have spent my career at two of the world's finest universities and medical centers. I loved my association with fellow faculty and teaching young doctors, but most of all I was awed by the unique and special people I had the privilege of calling my patients."

He says his career took place during a time of incredible transformation in his field. "In 40 years of ophthalmology, the knowledge we have gained is incredible. We've seen so many changes with technology, new devices, the application of lasers and computers. While all these are so important to our field, there is a concern that doctors may lean too much on technology and lose touch with their patients. But I am pleased to see that Duke Eye Center continues to provide the best of both cutting-edge technology and patient-centered care."

After a rewarding career, Shields retired in June 2011, and moved with his wife of 47 years back to Burlington, NC, to be close to their daughter and granddaughter. Keeping up with his volunteer schedule isn't easy—depending on the day, you can find him teaching Duke residents at the Veterans Administration Hospital; building a house for Habitat for Humanity; delivering Meals on Wheels to the elderly and shut in; or working in the free eye clinic he organized in Burlington. "With the help of many in our community, including the Lions Club and local ophthalmologists, we created a place where people who are struggling to make ends meet can be cared for with dignity and compassion."

An Oklahoma native, influenced by a grandfather who was a country doctor and two uncles who were ophthalmologists, Shields clearly shares the kind of vision his patients taught him. Robin Goodwin, staff assistant, Glaucoma Services, worked with him for 16 years, and has stayed in close contact since he left Duke. "He lives his life in a beautiful way and continues to help everyone he meets do the same — he lives vicariously through the happiness of others."

"Gifts of Sight" is available from [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) and [Barnesandnoble.com](http://Barnesandnoble.com).



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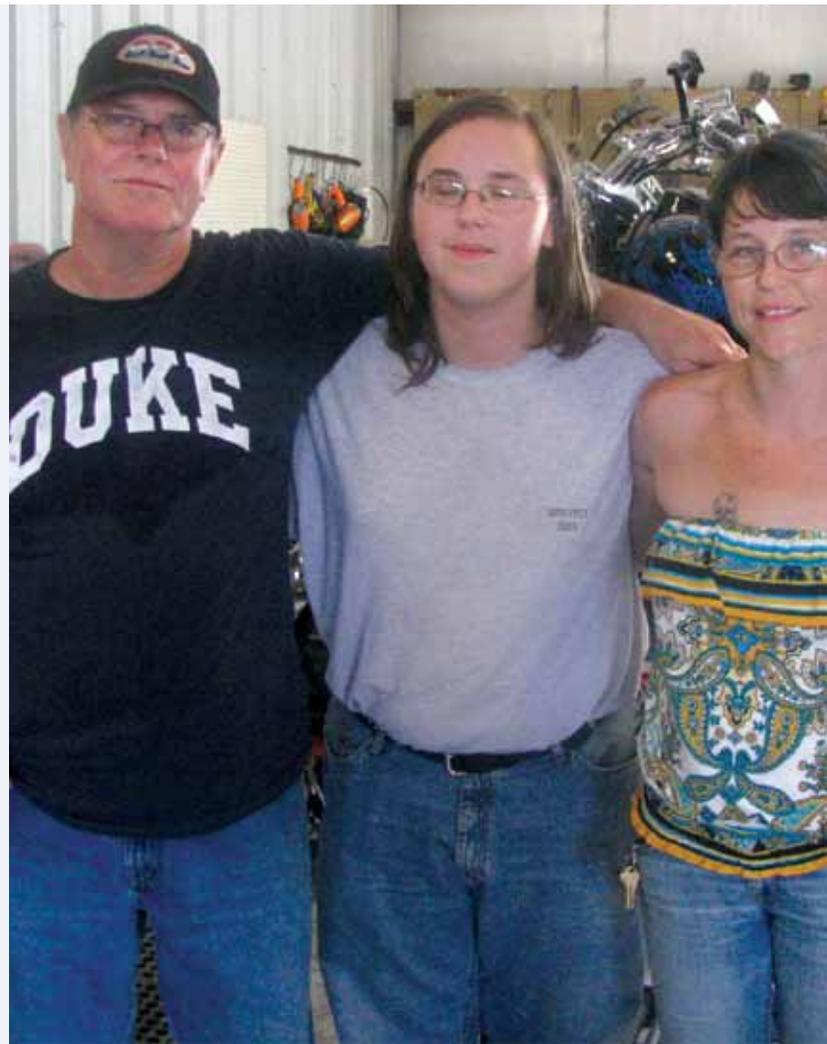


# HOME-GROWN FUNDRAISER GENERATES JOY & FUNDS DUKE PEDIATRIC EYE RESEARCH

The smoky, spicy aroma of fresh North Carolina barbecue mingles with the lively sounds of live bluegrass, folk and rock music, enhancing the already festive atmosphere.

Folks from across Lenoir County stream in by the carload and motorcycle for this annual celebration near the tiny town of La Grange, North Carolina. They gather in part to enjoy the beautiful outdoors, fantastic music, incredible food, and the company of old and new friends. But the true attraction is their desire to support Duke Eye Center and the pediatric research being done by Terri Young, MD.

It all started fifteen years ago when Donald “Dirt” Thompson and Cindy Reece had a baby, Donald Ray Thompson, known as “Little Dirt.” They enjoyed his early infancy but noticed that something wasn’t quite right with his eyes. They took him to the ophthalmologist in the nearest



Donald “Dirt” Thompson, Donald Ray “Little Dirt” Thompson, Cindy Reece, and Terri Young, MD

town, and when the doctor flatly told them their baby was going blind and suggested they put him in eyeglasses, Cindy’s mama bear came out. “That just wasn’t good enough! I knew we needed to get Little Dirt to the best possible eye care we could find. Someone told me about Duke Eye Center, so that’s where we went,” she explained.

“From our first visit, we were treated like royalty—it became our second home,” says Dirt, owner of Dirts Cycle Shack in La Grange. After numerous diagnostic tests under the care of Ed Buckley, MD, it became clear that Little Dirt had a congenital eye disease that required surgery to save his sight. Although it was a very difficult time for the family, they knew that Little Dirt was receiving the best care available. The surgery was successful and Little Dirt, now 15 years old, recently got the okay from Young, now his primary ophthalmologist, to take driver’s education classes. “To see Little Dirt, you’d never





know all he's been through. He's interested in science, biology and culinary arts—he has even said he might be the one to find a cure for his disease,” Young says.

Cindy reflects, “Over the years we've visited Duke Eye Center so many times—we feel like they are our second family. We saw all the other children there for eye care and it didn't feel like a hospital. It felt like a village—like everyone there was really taking great care of all the children, and their families. And, we have so much gratitude that we wanted to give something back.”

Several years ago, Dirt and Cindy noticed the success of another local fundraiser. They decided to host a day of great food and entertainment on their acreage adjacent to the bike shop. “The first year we didn't know what we were doing, but we did it anyway. We let the community know that this was a fundraiser to help Duke Eye Center do the kind of pediatric research that saved our son's vision, and the floodgates opened. People volunteered to supply and cook pigs; they donated chickens, soda, and paper products. Then we had donations of tables and tents, a stage, a sound system and live talent. It's been amazing,” Dirt recalls.

Dirt says he's just blown away by the generosity of time, resources, talent and money the community offers. “We close up shop a week before the event to get everything ready. My employees show up to help even though they're not getting paid. Seems everybody knows somebody who can offer something, and when everything is set up, all the food is cooked, the music is playing and the kids are playing in the sunshine, there's a magic moment when we all know this is a really special community.”

What started five years ago as a vision and a leap of faith has become an ever-growing annual event. Raising between \$5,000 and \$7,000 each year, and with hundreds of people attending, Duke Eye Center has received approximately \$23,000 for the pediatric research conducted by Young. “People don't stop giving after the event—this is a year-round fundraiser,” says Dirt.



Only through the generosity of donors can Duke Eye Center provide its cutting-edge, world-class level of service. Contributions of all sizes allow the Duke Eye Center to conduct research and find treatments for every eye condition imaginable.

To learn how you can help, please call

**919-684-0404**  
**dukeeye.org**

“One hundred percent of all the donations go directly to Duke Eye Center.”

“When Dr. Young came to the fair-like fundraiser with her children, we were deeply touched – especially since she's a vegetarian,” says Cindy. “Dr. Young and the folks at Duke Eye Center have a place at my table on Christmas. They are so caring, so invested and so professional. I have complete confidence in every aspect of their care of Little Dirt over the years and I hope every child who needs this kind of care can land at Duke Eye Center.”

Young says she was floored when she first learned that the Thompsons and Ms. Reece were hosting this event! “It is a celebration and gathering of a dedicated, committed community that has a permanent home at the Duke Eye Center. I direct our pediatric ophthalmic genetics program at the Eye Center, and these funds are used to help families with visually-impaired children undergo the proper genetic testing and counseling that they need to be better informed about their child's eye issues.”

Dirt said he's got about two pages of names of people he wishes to thank, people who go all out to make this fundraiser successful. “But I'm afraid I'd forget one or two, so I'll just give a big blanket thank you and the folks who have been helping us will know I'm talking to them.”

For information about this year's La Grange fundraiser, contact Dirt at 252-566-4090.

To contribute to Duke Eye Center Pediatric Genetics, please contact Kelly Revill at 919-684-3182 or via email at [Kelly.revill@duke.edu](mailto:Kelly.revill@duke.edu), or make checks payable to Duke Eye Center, Pediatric Genetics.

# HEALTHY EYES SEMINAR SERIES ENLIGHTEN PATIENTS, PUBLIC



Curious people living in the Triangle or the Triad have a unique opportunity to attend free seminars about eye health, diseases and treatments, taught by Duke's world-class ophthalmologists.

Modeled after the Healthy Focus community education seminars provided by Duke Raleigh Hospital, the Healthy Eyes Seminars provide the most current information for anyone interested in eye care.

"This generation of baby boomers are proactive—they are smart, interested and want to learn. They are eager to have this kind of discourse

and interaction with our eye specialists," says Jullia Rosdahl, MD, PhD, glaucoma specialist at the Duke Eye Center, and organizer of the series.

The monthly seminars are offered at the Duke Eye Center in Durham and Raleigh, with morning and evening sessions, and at the Duke Eye Center's Winston-Salem location in the evening.

2013 topics include: Glaucoma, Cataracts, Retina and Diabetic Eye Disease, Dry Eye, Double Vision, Corneal Transplants, Retinal Disease and Age-Related Macular Degeneration, Angle Closure Glaucoma, Oculofacial Rejuvenation and Plastic Surgery of the Eyelid.

"Part of Duke's mission is to provide education for our community," says Rosdahl. "Our patients get great one-on-one contact with their physicians, and we saw the opportunity for our outstanding eye experts and the public to connect through an ongoing, formal educational series.

"We saw the opportunity for our outstanding eye experts and the public to connect through an ongoing, formal educational series."—JULLIA ROSDAHL

FOR REGISTRATION AND INFORMATION  
ON DATES AND TOPICS:

**888-ASK-DUKE | [dukeeye.org](http://dukeeye.org)**

## DUKE EYE CENTER CLINICAL BUILDING UNDERWAY



Thanks to a lead gift of \$12-million by Bill Hudson of LC Industries, work on the new Duke Eye Center clinical building is well underway. Crews began moving dirt in the fall of 2012 to run new utility lines for the building. The next steps include building a temporary entrance on the west side of the existing Eye Center building and closing off the front parking lot before construction can begin in earnest.

The new Duke Eye Center clinical building will feature a flexible floor plan where patients will notice added patient seating, shorter check-in and checkout times, more exam and consultation rooms, and the ability to get from one room of an exam to another in as few steps as possible.

Together with the Albert Eye Research Institute and renovated space in the Wadsworth Building, the new clinical building will become the hub of Duke Eye Center, incorporating new patient amenities and services with Duke's expert clinical eye specialists and world-class ophthalmology research.

## COMMUNITY COLLABORATION CREATES SUCCESSFUL DURHAM EYE CLINIC PILOT



On a strong hunch, Kelly Muir, MD, MHS, Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology, took a leap of faith to organize a free eye exam event early in 2013. Wanting to do this for some time, she began consulting with colleagues from Duke Eye Center, local organizations, and Bruce Shields, MD.

In collaboration with Project Access of Durham County, the Lincoln Community Health Center, Duke's Local Access to Coordinated Health Care (LATCH) program, and the Triangle Residents Overcoming Substance Abuse (TROSAs), who helped identify uninsured Durham residents in need of eye care, Muir set a date and asked Duke Eye Center colleagues to volunteer. "I pushed the send button at 10 pm, and the next morning my mailbox was overflowing with positive responses from our physicians, ophthalmic technicians, administrators, opticians, and students—I was amazed at the generosity and enthusiasm of so many people."

On that cold January morning, patients streamed in. "We saw 44 people, and of those, 17 needed prescription glasses, and 24 needed follow up appointments, and four needed surgery. Through the efforts of our community partners and the opticians with Eye Care Associates, we were able to provide the services the patients needed, from low cost glasses to surgery.

This pilot program demonstrated that as a collaborative team, the Duke Eye Center and community partners can improve eye care for uninsured residents of Durham County. "The positive energy and sense of teamwork was palpable in the Eye Center that Saturday. The patients were thankful, the community organizations were delighted, and Duke Eye Center participants were inspired because we're making a real difference."



## GRATEFUL PATIENT MAKES FIRST OF ITS KIND DONATION

Gifts to the Duke Eye Center come in all sizes—and every little bit counts. But recently, the Eye Center received a gift of what is believed to be the first of its kind. John and Alice Haynes donated a 13x17 foot Persian rug worth over \$10,000 to Cynthia Toth, MD's research effort. Mr. Haynes has long been a patient of Toth's and wanted to show his gratitude for all she has done for him. The rug now resides in the atrium area of the Albert Eye Research Institute at the Duke Eye Center.