

# PHILLIPS EYE INSTITUTE

Raising funds to ensure healthy vision for our community

## → ● ● ● → Phillips Eye Institute

The Phillips Eye Institute of Abbott Northwestern Hospital provides free vision screening, corrective eye surgery, and access to glasses in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

### Early Youth Eyecare (E.Y.E.) Community Initiative

Nearly 80 percent of early childhood learning takes place through vision, and approximately 25 percent of children have vision problems significant enough to affect performance at school and in daily life. E.Y.E. provides free vision screening and follow-up care for children in Minneapolis and St. Paul public schools. In 2019, the E.Y.E. Initiative provided vision screenings for over 25,000 students in pre-K through eighth grade. Of those 25,000 screenings, 1,800 students received follow up care funded through this community program. For qualifying students who need glasses, they are provided without charge. Families and the students themselves report higher achievement at school, and greater socialization and self-esteem with corrected vision. The success of the E.Y.E. program depends on charitable donations, as there is no cost to the school districts.



### Kirby Puckett Eye Mobile

The Kirby Puckett Eye Mobile is a mobile eye clinic owned and operated by Phillips Eye Institute. With two fully equipped exam rooms and an optical shop on board, the eye mobile is an eye doctor's office on wheels. The eye mobile and its team of professionals travel to community events and schools to provide eye care and eye health information; this includes children referred by the E.Y.E. Community Initiative. The eye mobile is named after the late Kirby Puckett, who was an advocate for eye health awareness and a Minnesota Twins center fielder.

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## Sight for Soldiers

Founded by renowned ophthalmic surgeon Dr. Neal Sher, since its inception this program has given the gift of sight to over 500 soldiers. In 2004, a young Dad, a member of the National Guard, was being deployed to Afghanistan. He needed vision correction surgery before his deployment. Dr. Sher donated his time to perform the surgery, and donations covered the remaining cost of surgery. Thus was born the Sight for Soldiers program. Said one grateful soldier when describing conditions in Southeast Asia, “It’s hot, it’s dry, extremely bright, and terrible on the eyes....the travel is dirty, dusty, grimy....glasses get scratched or worse – blown off during combat.” Said another, “It lifts a lot off my heart that I don’t have to worry about seeing clearly in battle anymore. It is like winning the lottery. I can’t imagine any better gift than this.” This program continues to support our troops.

## Transportation Services

For many people, lack of transportation is a significant barrier to receiving vision care. Aging, disabilities, and poor vision commonly limit a person’s ability to drive or use public transportation, and finding a friend or relative to drive may also be difficult. Phillips Eye Institute Transport Services drives over 3,000 patients annually to and from their appointments. This service ensures that patients don’t have to delay or cancel appointments or procedures, and the cost savings help patients afford procedures that can preserve or restore vision, contributing to their quality of life and ability to live independently.

## Advancing Excellence

Abbott Northwestern Hospital Foundation, with the generous support of the community, is raising funds to support healthy vision for children and adults. Your gift will support vision care for those in need, and will provide the gift of sight.

## Opportunities to support Advancing Excellence

- **E.Y.E. Community Initiative:** Free vision screening and follow up care for Minneapolis and St. Paul public school students.
- **Kirby Puckett Eye Mobile:** Free eye exams and fittings for glasses in schools and underserved neighborhoods.
- **Sight for Soldiers:** Pro bono corrective eye surgery for active duty military personnel.
- **Transportation Services:** Free rides to and from appointments for patients who might not have access to eye care otherwise.

To learn more about Phillips Eye Institute and how you can help, please contact the Abbott Northwestern Hospital Foundation at 612-863-4126.