



# News Release

**The Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.**

**"Gift of Sight"**

**October 1, 2008**

The 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Voluntary Campaign begins October 1, 2008, and continues through April 30, 2009. The major emphasis of this campaign will be (a) to achieve a significant increase in donations over that received during the previous campaign, (b) to recognize those Sir Knights, Commanderies, and Grand Commanderies that make an outstanding effort on behalf of the campaign, and (c) to encourage 100% participation on the part of all Knights Templar.

The Knights Templar Eye Foundation was founded in 1956 by the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America for the purpose of providing service for the prevention of blindness. All Sir Knights, wherever disbursed, can take heart that thousands of applicants have been given another opportunity to enjoy the "Gift of Sight."

Sir Knight William H. Koon II, M.E. Grand Master of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America and President of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. has appointed Sir Knight Duane L. Vaught, REGCG and Trustee, as the 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Voluntary Campaign Chairman.

## **What is the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.?**

The Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc., incorporated in 1956, is a charity sponsored by the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America and is governed by a Board of Trustees comprised of the six elected officers of the Grand Encampment, all Past Grand Masters of the Grand Encampment, and six Trustees-at-Large elected from and by the membership for a term of nine years. It is exempt from federal income tax under Section 501 (c 3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, and contributions made to the Foundation are deductible by the donors in accordance with Section 170 of the 1954 Code. Medical and technical advice for the Foundation is provided by a selected group of Doctors of Ophthalmology whose assistance is freely given without compensation.

## **Mission of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.**

The mission of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. is to provide assistance to those who face loss of sight due to the need for surgical treatment without regard to race, color, creed, age, sex, or national origin provided they are unable to pay or receive adequate assistance from current government agencies or similar sources and to provide funds for research in curing diseases of the eye. This includes the correction of strabismus (cross-eyes) in children up to the age of 16 years. Such persons are provided with the cost of treatment, surgery, and hospitalization in a place of their own

choosing and by physicians of their own choice, if they are unable to pay and cannot receive adequate assistance from Medicare, Social Services, State Aid or similar tax-supported agencies. However, each applicant must be a citizen of the United States of America.

### **Source of Funds**

Funds for the operation of the Eye Foundation are obtained in part from an annual assessment of each Knight Templar, contributions made by Masons from throughout the Masonic Family, fund-raising activities, memorials, wills and bequests, donations from endowment funds or similar sources. Special award programs for contributions include the Grand Master's Sword of Merit (\$25,000), Golden Chalice (\$10,000), Grand Master's Club (\$1,000), Grand Commander's Club (\$1,000 in \$100 annual installments), Patron Certificate (\$100), Associate Patron Certificate (\$50), and Life Sponsor (\$30).

### **Permanent Donor Fund**

The Permanent Donor Fund was implemented to give perpetual recognition to individuals, corporations or foundations that make an initial donation of \$10,000. Additional amounts of \$1,000 or more may be added to the fund. Each year the Permanent Donor Funds will be listed in the Annual Report so that the donor who establishes the fund will be recognized as a Philanthropist. Permanent Donor Fund forms are available from the KTEF office or on-line at [www.knightstemplar.org/ktef](http://www.knightstemplar.org/ktef).

### **Our Records as of This Date**

Since 1956 over \$105 million has been spent on approved cases, and applications have been received from 85,000 people. Research Grants totaling in excess of \$10.4 million have been awarded to researchers working in the fields of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Ophthalmic Genetics.

### **How to Apply for Help**

Application for assistance from the Foundation can be made through a Knight Templar who is a member of one of over 1,200 Constituent Commanderies of the Grand Encampment. Information is available from the **Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc., 1000 East State Parkway, Suite I, Schaumburg, IL 60173, Phone (847) 490-3838; Fax (847) 490-3777.**

### **Other Help is Available**

The Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. is a co-sponsor of the Seniors EyeCare Program (formally known as the National Eye Care Project) with EyeCare America, a Public Service Foundation of the American Academy of Ophthalmology. The Seniors EyeCare Program helps those persons 65 years or over who do not have an Ophthalmologist. Anyone wishing to contact the Seniors EyeCare Program may do so by calling 1-800-222-EYES and telling them you were referred by a Knight Templar. If you have seen an Ophthalmologist in the past three years, call the Administrative Office at (847) 490-3838 for instructions.