



STATE NEWS - March 2024

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Web Site: www.yorkriteky.org/grandcommandery

Kentucky Eyes Shine Brighter Thanks to Knights Templar Eye Foundation Grant

The fight against vision loss continues to see crucial advancements in Kentucky, thanks in part to a generous grant from the Knights Templar Eye Foundation (KTEF). In 2023, KTEF awarded funding to research projects being conducted by Dr. Archana Jalligampala at the University of Louisville and Dr. Sumanth Manohar at the University of Kentucky.

Dr. Jalligampala's research focuses on a treatment for Retinitis Pigmentosa, which is the most common inherited eye disease and affects one in 3,000 each year. The research team has found a viable treatment and will be working on determining the necessary dosage and frequency of treatments. The treatment will not cure the disease but will stop its progression. Dr. Jalligampala stated that the treatment will be ready for FDA approval in approximately three years. Once approved, this treatment can guarantee patients will retain their vision.

Dr. Manohar's research focuses on the function of CHD7 during retinal development and the ocular complications of CHARGE Syndrome, which is a disease that affects both hearing and vision in one in 12,000 each year. Once the function of the CHD7 gene is determined, it could lead to treatments that can regenerate the retina, optic nerve, etc. Dr. Manohar hopes to complete his research by the end of this year.

Kentucky residents are no strangers to the challenges associated with vision loss. The state boasts a higher-than-average prevalence of age-related macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy, highlighting the critical need for continued research in this field. These projects hold great promise for improving the lives of countless individuals in Kentucky and beyond.

The Knights Templar Eye Foundation relies on the generosity of donors to continue funding vital research projects like this one. By contributing to the KTEF, you can directly invest in the future of vision care and help researchers like Dr. Jallipala and Dr. Manohar bring their groundbreaking work to fruition.

To learn more about the Knights Templar Eye Foundation and how you can make a difference, please visit ktef.org for further information or to donate, please contact me at ky.ktef@gmail.com. Together, we can help ensure that Kentucky eyes continue to shine brightly for generations to come.

SK Gregory T. England, PEC (7,10, 13)

KY KTEF Chairman

Grand Commandery of KY

Knights Templar Eye Foundation Research Grant Visit at University of Louisville



Left to right: Dr. Archana Jalligampala, KTEF Grant Recipient; SK John Dawson, VEDGC; SK Mike Yount, REGC, Greg England, Kentucky KTEF Committee Chair; Dr. Maureen McCall, Director of Research

On February 13th, 2024, REGC Michael Yount, VEDGC Jon Dawson and I paid a visit to the University of Louisville Dept. of Ophthalmology & Visual Sciences. Upon arrival, we were greeted by Dr. Archana Jalligampala and Dr. Maureen McCall. Dr. Jalligampala gave us a thorough presentation of their research into a treatment for Retinitis Pigmentosa, which was very informative and broken down into easy-to-understand terms. The three of us were very impressed with what they have achieved thus far. Both doctors stated that at the pace they are currently working that their treatment should be ready for FDA approval in approximately four years. They thanked us for our interest and welcomed any future visits. They also stated that they would be interested into speaking at any future KTEF events to explain their research and to express their appreciation for the support from the KTEF.

SK Greg England, PEC
KTEF Chairman
Grand Commandery of Kentucky

Knights Templar Eye Foundation Research Grant Visit at University of Kentucky



Left to Right Dr. Ann C Morris (Professor of Biology, faculty mentor); Dr. Sumanth Manohar (PI for the KTEF grant); Mike Yount, REGC, Tasha M Sweeney (PhD Student); Jessica D. Bills (Back, PhD Student); Dara Buendia (Front, PhD Student); Greg England, KTEF Chair; Jon Dawson, VEDGC and Dr. Peter M Mirabito (Associate Chair of the Dept. of Biology)

On February 28th, 2024, REGC Michael Yount, VEDGC Jon Dawson and I paid a visit to the University of Kentucky Dept. of Biology. Upon arrival, we were greeted by Dr. Sumanth Manohar. Dr. Manohar gave us a thorough presentation of his research into the function of the CHD7 during retinal development and the ocular complications of CHARGE Syndrome. Dr. Manohar did an excellent job of explaining his research - he and his team were very friendly and were excited to see us. The research uses Zebrafish as test subjects as their retinas are fully developed and functioning at the 3rd day of incubation. The eyes of the Zebrafish are also very similar to that of humans except that they have the ability to regenerate the main components of their eyes if damaged. The Dr. and his team feel that they will have definite answers from their research within a year, which could lead to groundbreaking treatments to restore sight that has been lost to diseases that attack the retinas, optic nerves, etc.

The three of us have been amazed at the breakthroughs being made due to the grants from KTEF.

SK Gregory T. England, PEC
KTEF Chairman
Grand Commandery of Kentucky

Grand Commandery of Kentucky Golf Scramble

Benefitting the Knights Templar Eye Foundation

Attn All Sir Knights!

**This year's scramble will take place on June 8
at Wild Turkey Trace Golf Course in Lawrenceburg KY.**

All Commanderies are asked to please send a hole sponsor of
\$100 as they are able.

Teams are also needed. Cost is \$60/person \$240/team.
Start time is 8:30, lunch and prizes will be provided.



**Please contact Mark Elliott with any questions
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