



# **EYE BANK ASSOCIATION of AMERICA**

## **FACTS ABOUT EYE DONATION**

- ◆ Eye banks have a long and proud history. The first corneal transplant was performed in 1905, and the first eye bank opened in New York in 1944. The opening of the New York bank marked the first organized attempt to facilitate the transfer of tissue from donor to patient.
- ◆ The number of eye and tissue donors is enormous when compared to donors of solid organs. Approximately 10 individuals donate eyes and tissue for every person who donates organs.
- ◆ Eye Banks have successfully met the U.S. need for corneal and sclera tissue for several years. There are no patient waiting lists at this time.
- ◆ In 2008, 54,359 corneal grafts were supplied by US eye banks. The gift of sight was donated by over 47,776 donors in the U.S.; 10,835 corneas were exported to foreign countries.
- ◆ Over 90% of all corneal transplant operations successfully restore the recipient's vision.
- ◆ Corneal transplant is one of the most frequently performed human transplant procedures. Since 1961, more than 1,000,000 corneal transplants have been performed, restoring sight to men, women, and children ranging in age from nine days to 107 years.
- ◆ Cataracts, poor eyesight, or age do not prevent you from being a donor.
- ◆ Eye, tissue, and organ donations are consistent with beliefs and attitudes of all major religions.
- ◆ Eye banks are non-profit organizations. An eye bank obtains, medically evaluates and distributes eye donated by caring individuals for use in corneal transplantation, research and education.
- ◆ Each year in the United States, more than 52,000 people have their sight restored through cornea transplantation and hundreds of thousands are helped through important research to find cures for other blinding diseases.
- ◆ In addition to the cornea, the sclera can also be used for ocular graft surgery in the treatment of cancer and other diseases.