After a successful mission trip in April 2017, Moran Outreach planned a large cataract and cornea transplant campaign for Bolivia in August 2018. Funding realities required a smaller trip in October 2018. The scaled-down trip participants included Drs. Mark Mifflin and Brent Betts, and U of U premed student Garrett Mifflin. Thanks to the generous support of the Utah Lions Eye Bank, Idaho Lions Eye Bank (Envision), and partner eye banks, 30 donor corneas were taken and transplanted by the team. Moran Outreach and SEE International also supported the trip.

This was the fourth Moran sponsored mission to the Instituto Nacional Optomologo (INO) in La Paz, Bolivia and the long-standing collaboration between Dr. Mifflin and the Director of INO, Dr. Joel Moya and the Director of the Cornea Division, Dr. Andrea Lozano. Dr. Mifflin became friends with both Dr. Moya and Dr. Lozano through their participation in observerships at Moran more than 10 years ago. Dr. Michael Duffin, a former Moran faculty member, also fostered this partnership with help from the humanitarian support of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. This collaboration allowed for the establishment of an optical lab and later the first, and only, eyebank in Bolivia. In 2017, Dr. Mifflin and Wade McEntire, Utah Lions Eye Bank Director of Operations, operationalized the eyebank and trained residents, faculty, and technical staff in the basics of eye banking. Due to very slow governmental and political processes in Bolivia, harvesting donor tissue in Bolivia is still a goal to be accomplished, but legislation is currently pending to allow this practice.

Highlights of the October 2018 campaign included successful complex full-thickness corneal transplants, lamellar keratoplasty, DSAEK, and the first ever DMEK performed in Bolivia. Firsts for DSAEK and DALK were accomplished during previous missions.
Donor Eye Tissue Essential in Drive to Treat AMD

By Anna Cekola

Each day, Lisa Nichols works to make sure the generosity of those who wish to donate eyes to the Steele Center for Translational Medicine (SCTM) at the John A. Moran Eye Center—a team dedicated to finding cures for age-related macular degeneration (AMD)—is recognized and their donations go to critical research uses.

Her team is on call 24/7. The team members, working in partnership with the Utah Lions Eye Bank, have a mere five-hour window after a donor’s death to ensure that the eye tissues can be preserved effectively for research.

“We all recognize the urgency of how quickly we need the donated tissue—we simply cannot afford to waste these beautiful and critical gifts,” says Nichols, administrative program coordinator of the SCTM’s eye tissue repository.

Donors are absolutely essential to the ongoing SCTM drive to develop new therapies for AMD, the leading cause of irreversible central vision loss among adults age 55 and over worldwide. Since no other organism develops AMD, scientists must work with donated human tissue. Each donated eye yields hundreds of points of information for SCTM databases and about 70 research samples.

The Utah Lions Eye Bank specialists meet with families within an hour of a donor’s death and employ detailed guidelines to determine whether a donation can restore vision through cornea transplantation or can support research, or both.

“It’s amazing how generous donors and family members are at what is one of the most difficult times of their lives,” says Nichols.

SCTM Executive Director Gregory S. Hageman, PhD, began collecting human eye donations in the late 1980s to examine the biology of AMD. Today, the repository counts some 8,500 pairs and includes tissue from 3,827 donors since late 2009 when Hageman established his lab at Moran. Thanks to donations supporting its research activities, the SCTM has the largest repository in the world dedicated to the study of normal and diseased retinal tissue.

Using the repository, SCTM scientists can compare tissue from donors with and without AMD. These studies have contributed to an understanding of the underlying genetic and biological bases of AMD. Based on the data, the SCTM is taking steps to begin clinical trials for treatments developed as part of a major discovery that AMD is at least two biologically distinct diseases.

Bolivia Mission Trip 2018 | continued from previous page

Moran trips. Bolivian surgeons including Dr. Lozano and other faculty and residents are hands-on learners for all procedures and the Moran team works intimately with the residency program at INO to screen, diagnose and manage patients before, during and after the trip. Moran surgeons also accomplished complex phacoemulsification surgery and training, serving dozens of needy Bolivian patients. Virtually all cornea and cataract patients treated during the trip were legally blind before the surgery.

The partnership continues…Dr. Mifflin will not give up until the Bolivian eye bank is fully functional, with local donors providing safe corneal tissue for the many needy patients suffering from corneal blindness.
Heart of the Lion Courier Program

Please join us in thanking the following Utah Lions for their support of the Heart of the Lion Courier Program by delivering precious eye tissue to local hospitals and surgery centers, November 2018–January 2019:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courier</th>
<th>Total Deliveries</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Al Woodmansee</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bill Barton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cathy Johnson</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmer Inman</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerry &amp; Zella Millard</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Bingle</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Thompson</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skyler Rohbock</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Anderson</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Gibby</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>81</strong></td>
</tr>
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Bereavement Support Groups

For bereavement support group information, please contact the University of Utah College of Nursing

**801.585.9522**

nursing.utah.edu/caring-connections

Grief Support Groups

For adjusting to the death of someone close

**SALT LAKE CITY**

Wednesday, May 8–Wednesday, June 26
from 6:00–7:30pm

University of Utah College of Nursing
Annette Poulson Cumming Bldg.
10 South 2000 East

**MIDVALE**

Thursday, May 9–Thursday, June 27
from 6:00–7:30pm

University of Utah Greenwood Health Center
7495 South State St.
Salt Lake City, UT 84047

**WEBER COUNTY**

*Adult grief group for those adjusting to the suicide death of someone close.*

Monday, March 4–Monday, April 22
from 6:30–8:00pm

Pleasant Valley Library
Conference Room
5568 Adams Ave.
South Ogden, UT 84405
Financial Gifts for Sight

The Utah Lions Eye Bank thanks the following individuals for their generous financial donations November 2018–January 2019:

Arla Zabolotny
Bertha Clark
Bessie Marie Peterson
Beverly Woodward
Brad and Gaylene Halvorsen
C. Boyd and Ladene Wiese
Catherine W. Olds
Constance Baker
Daniel and Barbara Hurlbutt
Dave and Londa Stout
Dee Ann Gornichc
Dennis and Carma Ewing
Donna Machac
Elwin Dutson
Floyd and Lolita Frehner
Gale Niemi
Gary and Garda Wardle
Greg Zenger
Henry Chevalier
James and Denise Thompson
James and Michelle Burr
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John and Robbin Yee
Joseph Anderson
Joyce and Don Polster
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Peter Wagner
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Samuel and Sharon Nichols
Sheri Bodily
Shirley Hardy
Stephen and Nancy Williams
Wilna Swain

Please use the enclosed envelope, or visit us online at www.utaheyebank.org, to give by credit card to make a donation in memory of, or in honor of, someone you love. Thank you for your generosity.

The only gift is a portion of thyself. —Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882)