



COMBAT BLINDNESS FOUNDATION

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For immediate release

Tabin to speak at World Sight Day

(Madison, Wisconsin) -- Dr. Geoff Tabin is the fourth person to have reached the tallest peak on each of the seven continents. The accounts in his book, "Blind Corners," were described by Sir Edmund Hillary as "an astonishing mixture of wild adventure and the overcoming of formidable challenges."

It's not the thrill of adventure that Tabin is most passionate about today, however. The challenge he's taken on now has much more far-reaching and life-changing rewards as its goal.

"My partner, Dr. Sanduk Ruit, and I have vowed to work to eliminate all preventable and treatable blindness from the Himalayan region of our world in our lifetime," he notes. "That's a goal more audacious than setting out to make the first ascent of the East Face of Mount Everest" (which he did).

Dr. Tabin will be the featured speaker at the Combat Blindness Foundation (CBF) celebration of World Sight Day on the evening of October 19 at Monona Terrace. He will be in Madison as the guest of Dr. Suresh Chandra, the founder and chairman of CBF. The two men have a lot in common. They are both Professors of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences and Directors of the Division of International Ophthalmology, Tabin at the John A. Moran Eye Center at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City and Chandra at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health in Madison.

The men have an even stronger bond, however. They both have a vision for bringing sight back to the millions of people in the world who are needlessly blind. The most common culprit is cataracts. Like Tabin, who co-directs the Himalayan Cataract Project, Chandra's original focus for CBF was on the widespread cataract blindness problem in the impoverished remote areas in and around the subcontinent of India. At the World Sight Day event in October, the public is invited to hear more about the successes of the medical intervention there, as well as ongoing challenges.

Chandra and Tabin note that the cost of returning sight to one cataract patient in the developing world is just \$20. The task, however, is daunting. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there are 39 million blind people in the world, and 90 percent of those live in developing countries.

"The need is great," Chandra stresses, "but so is the reward. Many people are living happier and more fulfilling lives today because they have received the gift of sight through our work. They inspire me. In telling their stories at World Sight Day, I hope we inspire the many people in attendance.

"Together," Chandra concludes, "we work harder, knowing that there is a solution in sight!"

The Combat Blindness Foundation is dedicated to preventing avoidable blindness worldwide and believes it is the responsibility of the fortunate to help the less fortunate in accomplishing that goal.