At Combat Blindness International, our mission is to eliminate preventable blindness worldwide by providing sustainable, equitable solutions for sight through partnerships and innovation.
Dear Friends,

After 35 years, we have come a long way, and have made significant progress in the fight against preventable blindness.

When we started our journey back in 1984, we had a central goal in mind: to provide quality, equitable eye care to the most vulnerable men, women and children around the world. That first year, in a modest eye camp in Sitapur, India, we helped provide eye surgery to over 300 people. Today, we’re supporting 15,000 to 20,000 eye surgeries a year.

We’ve expanded our work as well, providing nearly 250,000 vision screenings a year, scholarships to train hundreds of disadvantaged women to become ophthalmic technicians, and helping establish new eye clinics in underserved areas. All of these people’s lives have been transformed because of you.

Whether you’re a long-term donor who has strengthened us through the years, or a more recent supporter, we are forever grateful for your extraordinary desire to make a difference, and for your continued support.

With sincere thanks,

Suresh Chandra, MD
Founder & Chief Visionary Officer
Combat Blindness International
Furthering Education
80% of learning takes place visually. Kids with restored vision have more opportunities.

1984
Combat Blindness Foundation (CBF) is established in Madison, Wisconsin, and sponsors its first eye camp in Sitapur, India.

CBI BUILDS ON 35 YEARS OF VISION

In 2019, Combat Blindness International (CBI) celebrated a major milestone in our history, marking 35 years of alleviating preventable blindness in some of the most impoverished regions of the world. Working collaboratively with our dedicated in-country partners, CBI has impacted millions of lives over the past three and a half decades.

Our mission in 1984...

... has remained strong ever since.

17 Countries Where We Have Had an Impact

OVER 2.5 MILLION Vision Screenings

NEARLY 370,000 Sight-Restoring Surgeries

OVER 400 Women Empowered by Technical Training

Combat Blindness International, 1984-2019

1984
Combat Blindness Foundation (CBF) is established in Madison, Wisconsin, and sponsors its first eye camp in Sitapur, India.
YOUR IMPACT THROUGH THE YEARS

Generous support from donors like you has had an everlasting ripple effect on generations of individuals, families and communities.

Supporting Families
When you restore someone’s vision, you’re strengthening their entire family.

Strengthening Communities
Fighting blindness empowers people to thrive and contribute to the economy.

Furthering Education
80% of learning takes place visually. Kids with restored vision have more opportunities.

Restoring Independence
The gift of sight helps people return to work and enjoy being independent.

2019 at a Glance
We celebrated our 35th anniversary with some important achievements!

16,817 Adult & Child Surgeries Performed
243,372 Adults & Children Screened
27,932 Pairs of Glasses Distributed
179 Women Empowered by Technical Training

1987
CFB supports 1,000th cataract surgery.

1992
CFB helps establish Aurolab at Aravind Eye Hospital in Madurai, India, to produce quality, low-cost intraocular lenses, making surgery more accessible to the poor.
What We Do
Matters

90% of the world’s blind live in low-income countries

80% of that blindness is preventable

50% of avoidable blindness is caused by cataracts

Cataract Elimination and Prevention

Cataracts account for more than 50% of all blindness in the world, even though it is fairly easy and inexpensive to treat. The burden is acute in low-income countries, where 90% of the world’s blind people live. Underserved populations, including women, migrants and indigenous peoples, are especially at risk.

After 35 years, we have supported more than 1,763,000 adult vision screenings and nearly 370,000 surgeries through the International Cataract Program.

By providing 20-minute cataract surgeries for as little as $25 each, we help restore people’s sight just one day after surgery. The impact is transformative, enabling people to return to work, care for their families, and contribute to their communities.

All of this is possible when our generous donors give the gift of sight, enabling people to live longer, healthier lives, while also breaking the cycle of poverty.

1995
CBF supports 25,000th cataract surgery.
Providing Hope in Botswana

One of CBI’s biggest achievements in 2019 was reaching our goal of eliminating a backlog of over 6,000 cataract cases in Botswana.

It was the culmination of a three-year “Bring Sight to Botswana” effort, in partnership with Dr. Shroff’s Charity Eye Hospital, Cambridge Global Health Partnerships, the Botswana Ministry of Health and Wellness, and Peek Vision. Through our efforts, we opened a brand-new chapter of wellness — and hope — in that country.

Cataract Surgery = Economic Empowerment

Cataract surgery can help people increase their economic productivity by up to 1,500% of the cost of the surgery during the first postoperative year.

Restoring sight allows people to support their families, and contribute to the economic growth of their communities.

1996
Dr. Suresh Chandra awarded the Outstanding Humanitarian Award from the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

1997
CBF begins collaboration with L.V. Prasad Eye Institute (LVPEI), Hyderabad, India.

2019 International Cataract Program Impact

16,460 Adult Cataract Surgeries Performed

189,053 Adult Patients Screened

20,250 Pairs of Glasses Distributed to Adults

Providing Hope in Botswana

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1997
CBF begins collaboration with L.V. Prasad Eye Institute (LVPEI), Hyderabad, India.
Allergan’s Impact by the Numbers

27,000 Surgeries Performed in India from 2007-2015

6,376 Surgeries Performed in Botswana from 2016-2019

33,376 Total Surgeries Performed from 2007-2019

The Allergan Foundation: a Catalyst for Positive Change

Good things happen when caring people want to make a difference. That’s what happened back in 2007 when Allergan employees Amy Murray, now a CBI Board member, and Meghann Bauer helped us secure our first grant from The Allergan Foundation. That year, The Allergan Foundation provided us with funding to support 3,000 surgeries.

And ever since, The Allergan Foundation has helped CBI restore the sight of tens of thousands of people, significantly enriching their lives.

1997

CBF supports creation of Aurolab suture factory in Madurai, India, increasing sustainability and the availability of affordable medical supplies.
Daya’s Story

When you help someone see again, you’re helping their entire family. That was the case with Daya, a 30-year-old father of two in Mallawan, India. Until he received sight-restoring cataract surgery, Daya found it increasingly difficult to support his family. Today, he is able to work, support his family and lead a happier, more productive life.

By restoring someone’s vision, you’re empowering them to rewrite their own destiny.

“For years, The Allergan Foundation has proudly supported Combat Blindness International’s efforts to alleviate avoidable blindness in low-income countries. To date, The Allergan Foundation has supported more than 33,000 sight-saving surgeries for men, women and children in India and Botswana.

Just think about what that means. Families are unburdened by the financial strain of caring for loved ones who can’t work or need extra help... children can more fully enjoy childhood and reach their potential in school... grandparents can see their grandchildren for the first time... and the list goes on. We’re pleased to have partnered with CBI in touching the lives of so many in need.”

Gwyn Grenrock
Executive Director
The Allergan Foundation

2001

CBF begins its long-standing collaboration with Dr. Shroff’s Charity Eye Hospital (SCEH), Delhi, India.

2001

CBF begins support of Tarabai Desai Eye Hospital, Jodhpur, India.
Giving Children the Gifts of Vision and Hope

A wise person once said, “Children are one third of our population, and all of our future.”

That is why we have worked tirelessly to combat preventable blindness affecting millions of children around the world through our International Pediatric Program.

Since 1984, CBI has helped provide more than 700,000 vision screenings, nearly 26,000 pairs of glasses, and 2,000+ surgeries for children.

Without early identification and treatment, visually impaired children around the world face tremendous educational barriers, and often drop out of school. Given that most eye problems are correctable if caught by the age of five or six, CBI’s early interventions have dramatically changed children’s lives for the better.

And we’re just getting started.
CBI’s Tech Solutions Help Young Learners in Madison

Since 2014, Combat Blindness International has teamed up with the Madison Metropolitan School District to screen kindergarteners with Spot® Vision Screeners.

Since the screening device does not touch the child or require a response, it enables school nurses to accurately and efficiently screen students — especially those with significant learning or developmental delays. In 2019, free vision screenings were provided to 3,438 kindergarten students, ages 4 and 5. 308 students were referred for further evaluation.

“Combat Blindness International has provided crucial support for our pediatric vision screening efforts in and around Mysore, India. Thanks to this partnership, we can screen tens of thousands of school children each year, providing glasses and follow-up treatments allowing them to more fully enjoy their childhood and continue their studies. We’re also grateful for CBI’s commitment to our collaborative efforts in The Gambia, where we’ve operated mainly on children to help them overcome cataracts and other visual impairments. This is highly challenging, yet very satisfying work.”

K.V. Ravishankar, MD
Managing Director
Usha Kiran Eye Hospital
Mysore, India
**New Possibilities for Pankaj and Sureshbai**

Imagine you’re a teen with your whole life ahead of you. But there’s just one problem. You have cataracts, so it’s hard to keep up with your studies in school and you can’t help your mom and dad with chores. Worse yet, your family can’t afford to pay for eye surgery. That’s the situation Pankaj, 14, and Sureshbai, 13, found themselves in. But things changed in February 2019, when they received sight-restoring surgery, supported by CBI, at Shri Jalaram Arogya Seva Trust Hospital in Meghraj, India. Today, the world, and their future, looks a lot brighter.

“...I’ve worked with Dr. Chandra since the 1980s, so I’ve seen the creation of Combat Blindness from the very beginning.

It’s easy to say, and maybe a little bit ‘campy,’ but I am glad to have the good sense to give some cents (dollars) to help adults regain their sight, and to help children overcome vision issues, from amblyopia to refractive errors. I also have loved assisting CBI with vision screenings in Madison Public Schools. CBI also helps the patients we see in the Right to Sight Clinics, so I’m grateful for that as well.”

**Guy Somers**
Retired UW Health RN & MMSD program volunteer

**By restoring a child’s vision, you’re giving them the opportunity to succeed in life.**

**2006**

*CBF begins its work in Africa, collaborating with the Lions Club Hospital, Nairobi, Kenya; Nkonjeni Hospital, Ulundi, South Africa; and Mahatma Gandhi Hospital, Durban, South Africa.*
A Generous Gift Impacting Over 1 Million People

At the World Sight Day Gala, we recognized one of our longtime supporters and dear friends, Catherine Taylor of the Jack DeLoss Taylor Charitable Trust. Reena Chandra Rajpal (left) and Suresh Chandra (right) presented Catherine (center) with the prestigious Radha Krishna Award, named after one of the first patients to be treated by Combat Blindness International.

“Combat Blindness International’s goals fit the goals of our trust, and we have been partners for almost 30 years,” Catherine said.

Catherine’s profound contributions have had a lasting impact on our work, including the screening of over 200,000 children in India.

Additionally, Catherine Taylor and the Jack De Loss Taylor Charitable Trust made it possible for CBI to build a surgical center in Keonjhar, India. It serves an area encompassing 1 million people who otherwise would not have eye care, let alone health care. [See details on p. 21.]

Congratulations, Catherine, and thank you!
One of the biggest challenges facing global eye care programs is the shortage of trained eye care professionals. This is especially true in India, where there are only 11 ophthalmologists per million. That’s why we decided to act.

By partnering with Dr. Shroff’s Charity Eye Hospital (SCEH) in Delhi, India, CBI has helped meet the demand for trained eye health technicians through the Certified Ophthalmic Paramedic (COP) Program. Since 2014, this program has empowered more than 400 young, disadvantaged women from rural areas to fulfill a variety of roles, including ophthalmic nursing assistants, vision technicians, medical records specialists and patient counselors. Not only does this program help fulfill the need for qualified eye care technicians, but it also dramatically improves these young women’s lives. Upon graduation, they receive a valuable education and skills, financial independence, the ability to support their families, as well as new-found confidence to reach future goals.

It’s a win-win for everyone.
CBI Supports Ophthalmologist Fellows

Combat Blindness International also works with partners in Brazil and India to provide training for ophthalmologists. Through short-term fellowships and hands-on clinical research training, we are equipping the next generation of ophthalmologists with vital skills and experience to serve their communities. Last year, Dr. Ana Leticia Darcie received valuable experience at the UW–Madison Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences. (Photo courtesy of the UW–Madison Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, 2019.)

Meet Bharti, a Promising COP Program Student

Bharti is from the village of Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh, in India. For Bharti, her family is a source of strength and inspiration. Her hardworking father is the family’s main breadwinner, supporting Bharti, her three siblings and her mother. Thanks to the COP Program, she’ll be in a better position to support her family. Although she admits to being soft-spoken, Bharti is a deeply committed to breaking stereotypes and becoming an independent woman.

2010
Combat Blindness Foundation becomes Combat Blindness International; CBI partners with SCEH to construct the Rampur Eye Hospital in Uttar Pradesh, India.

2014
CBI partners with SCEH to establish the Certified Ophthalmic Paramedic Program in Delhi, India.

SCEH: A Longstanding CBI Partner

Before we established the COP Program in 2014, CBI already had a strong relationship with Dr. Shroff’s Charity Eye Hospital (SCEH) dating back to 2001. Since then, we have partnered with SCEH to deliver cataract surgeries, vision screenings, pairs of glasses, and in recent years, the COP Program.

Why We Empower Women via Training

• Less than 23% of Indian women participate in the workforce, compared to 79% of men.

• Women earn 24% less than men globally.

• Rural Indian women attain one third of the post-secondary education rates of their male counterparts.

SCEH’s Impact by the Numbers

2001-2019 Cataract Program Impact

165,642 Screenings

25,153 Surgeries

2014-2019 COP Program Impact

26% Increase in Screenings

16% Increase in Surgeries
COP Program Receives a Major Boost

In honor of World Sight Day 2019 and our 35th anniversary, Diane Ballweg, John and Amy Hurckman, The Hurckman Family Foundation and Hurckman Mechanical Industries gave from their hearts in a very big way.

They pledged a total of $300,000 over three years to support and expand our Certified Ophthalmic Paramedic Program.

“People give to people, and one of the main reasons to support CBI is in getting to know the dedicated people involved, the Chandra family, and their passion and mission to make the world a better place,” Diane explained.

“Our Foundation chose to support the Certified Ophthalmic Paramedic Program, as our visit to India [in 2018] demonstrated that this program not only elevated women’s opportunities, but it showed us how the work of a graduate enhances and optimizes the surgeon’s skills,” says John Hurckman.

CBI is deeply moved by, and grateful for, the caring commitment of these dear friends. Their generous contributions were used in our highly successful World Sight Day matching gift effort.

“We are privileged to have partners like Combat Blindness International.

They are helping us give these young women an opportunity to become financially independent and support their families, and at the same time, help us in our mission of eradicating needless blindness from our country.

We plan to scale this program up, to have a bigger, more positive impact.”

**Umang Mathur, MD**
Executive Director
Dr. Shroff’s Charity Eye Hospital
Delhi, India

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**2015**

*CBH travels to Myanmar on a cataract mission in partnership with the Global Community Service Foundation.*

**2016**

*CBH begins construction of an eye center in Odisha, India, in partnership with LVPEI.*
Combat Blindness International goes beyond simply providing surgeries.

For years, we have taken decisive action to strengthen eye care infrastructure in low-income countries, where there often is a shortage of medical supplies, equipment, facilities and other crucial eye health resources. CBI has worked diligently with our partners to determine their critical needs, and collaboratively develop sustainable solutions, providing the tools, knowledge, and infrastructure so they can operate independently.

As one might imagine, success doesn’t come overnight. However, CBI and its partners have made significant progress with several important infrastructural initiatives: establishing Aurolab, and supporting rural surgical centers in Rampur and Keonjhar, India.
Aurolab: 25 Years of Accessible Eye Care for All

In the early years of Combat Blindness International, cataract surgery was prohibitively expensive in low-income countries, due to the high cost of intraocular lenses, which typically cost hundreds of dollars each. This severely limited the quality and availability of cataract surgery for poorer patients.

That all changed in 1992, when CBI partnered with two other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to establish a revolutionary manufacturing facility, Aurolab, at Aravind Eye Hospital in Madurai, India. Aurolab was able to produce high quality intraocular lenses for less than $3 per lens. This was a game changer, enabling CBI to lower cataract surgery costs to an average of just $25 each.

Today, as it celebrates its 25th anniversary, Aurolab produces over 3 million intraocular lenses a year, and offers an expanded product range that includes pharmaceuticals, suture needles, equipment and other ophthalmic supplies. Aurolab provides these ophthalmic products at cost to NGOs in 120 countries.

Congratulations, Aurolab, on 25 years of making quality eye care accessible and affordable for all!

“Aurolab was established with the generous support of Combat Blindness International. All throughout our journey, Combat Blindness International has been using our lenses and other products, which has enabled Aurolab to support CBI’s programs all over the world.”

R.D. Sriram
Managing Director
Aurolab
Madurai, India

2017
CBI, UW–Madison & the University of São Paulo, Brazil, create partnership to provide ophthalmology residents training at the UW.

2018
The Bijayananda Patnaik Eye Center, which CBI helped establish, opens in Keonjhar, India, to serve 1 million people in the region.
Reaching India’s Rural Poor

From 2014-2019, Shroff Charity Eye Hospital observed a **36% increase** in patient screenings and a **33% increase** in surgeries in rural surgical centers. These centers, like the one in Rampur, provide much-needed access to eye care among the rural poor, while expanding training and employment for Certified Ophthalmic Program participants.

Dr. Shroff’s Charity Eye Hospital: Expanding Access to Those in Need

“If you build it, they will come...”

That definitely has been the case for Dr. Shroff’s Charity Eye Hospital (SCEH), which CBI has supported in expanding its presence in rural India.

In 2007, CBI originally collaborated with SCEH to open a surgical center in the village of Rampur Maniharan, in the Saharanpur district of Uttar Pradesh, India. This hospital underwent further upgrades to deliver a higher level of care, including an operating theater and a 20-bed in-patient facility. In 2018, the facility moved to a new location with better infrastructure, in the village of Manani, and is supported by a network of seven primary care vision centers.

We are excited about partnering with Dr. Shroff’s Charity Eye Hospital to increase our impact on impoverished communities!
Bijayananda Patnaik Eye Center

Since it opened on March 1, 2018, the Bijayananda Patnaik Eye Center, located in the small mining town of Keonjhar, Odisha, India, has made great strides. Created through a partnership with the L.V. Prasad Eye Institute, CBI and the Jack DeLoss Taylor Charitable Trust, the center provided screening for 19,702 men, women and children in 2019. In addition, 1,018 eye surgeries were conducted in 2019.

Among those whose lives were transformed at the Keonjhar facility was Kanhu, a 65-year-old who no longer could earn a living due to vision problems and had become dependent on his family just to get by. After receiving free surgery at the Bijayananda Patnaik Eye Center, his vision dramatically improved – 20/40, to be precise, even without glasses!

“What does Combat Blindness International do? Not only do they support ophthalmic surgery, but they also support infrastructure, capacity building of the people working in eye care, and the establishment of secondary centers.

We at L.V. Prasad have benefited significantly from the generous contributions of Combat Blindness International.

We are indebted.”

T.P. Das, MD
Vice Chairman
L.V. Prasad Eye Institute
Hyderabad, India

We are proud of the milestones we have achieved, but our journey is far from over. Together, we can help the world’s most vulnerable people conquer blindness and lead happier, more productive lives.

2019 Combat Blindness International celebrates its 35th anniversary.
Our Impact in 2019

**THE AMERICAS**
- **Madison Metropolitan School District Vision Project**
  Madison, Wis., USA
  3,438 Pediatric Screenings
- **Right to Sight Clinic**
  Madison, Wis., USA
  104 Screenings

**AFRICA**
- **Botswana Ministry of Health & Wellness**
  Gaborone, Botswana
  1,205 Adult Eye Surgeries
  Intraocular Lenses & Supplies Donated
- **Sheik Zayed Regional Eye Care Centre**
  Kanifing, The Gambia
  34 Eye Surgeries

**ASIA**
- **Dr. Shroff’s Charity Eye Hospital**
  Rampur Surgical Center
  COP Program
  Delhi, India
  38,787 Adult Screenings
  3,214 Adult Eye Surgeries
  179 Scholarships for Ophthalmic Paramedic Training
  Equipment Donated

**ACTIVE PROJECTS**
1. Botswana
2. Brazil
3. Gambia
4. India
5. United States

**PREVIOUS PROJECTS**
6. Angola
7. Haiti
8. Kenya
9. Lebanon
10. Mali
11. Myanmar
12. Namibia
13. Nigeria
14. Paraguay
15. Philippines
16. South Africa
17. Vietnam
35 Years of Vision Around the World

L.V. Prasad Eye Institute
Bijayananda Patnaik Eye Center
Keonjhar, India
19,702 Screenings
1,018 Eye Surgeries
5,026 Pairs of Glasses Distributed

Shri Jalaram Arogya Seva Trust Hospital
Meghraj, India
49,654 Screenings
3,053 Eye Surgeries
15,497 Pairs of Glasses Distributed
Intraocular Lenses & Supplies Donated

Usha Kiran Eye Hospital
Mysore, India
28,214 Pediatric Screenings
39 Pediatric Eye Surgeries
661 Pairs of Glasses Distributed

Sitapur Eye Hospital
Sitapur, India
12,990 Adult Screenings
1,481 Adult Eye Surgeries
1,079 Pairs of Glasses Distributed

Tejas Eye Hospital
Surat, India
90,483 Screenings
6,773 Eye Surgeries
5,669 Pairs of Glasses Distributed
INCOME

EXPENSES

PROGRAM SERVICES:
- Personnel Training: 29%
- Pediatric Eye Care: 21%
- Cataract Program: 15%
- Infrastructure: 6%
- Fundraising: 18%
- Management & General: 11%

INDIVIDUALS: 41%
GIFTS-IN-KIND: 19%
GRANTS: 17%
INVESTMENTS: 15%
SPECIAL EVENTS: 8%
As an eye surgeon, I have traveled to Myanmar and India with Combat Blindness International. I have seen people who could only see blurred images, or sometimes only light and dark. And at the moment their bandages were removed the day after surgery, I’ve seen them laugh and cry upon realizing they could see again and knowing that the biggest obstacle in their lives miraculously had been lifted. Thanks to Combat Blindness International, their lives were transformed. And so was mine.

This is why I’ve supported Combat Blindness International as a volunteer surgeon, a fundraiser and as a Board member.

Peter Holm, MD
Vice-Chairman and Chief Medical Officer
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Suresh Chandra, MD
FOUNDER & CHIEF VISIONARY OFFICER

Gordon Derzon, MHA
CHAIRMAN

Peter Holm, MD
VICE CHAIRMAN & CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER

Reena Chandra Rajpal, MPH
PRESIDENT (EX OFFICIO) & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Anant Baliga, MBA
TREASURER

Mike Altaweel, MD

Reena Chandra Rajpal, MPH
PRESIDENT (EX OFFICIO) & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Susan Axelrod, MBA*

Choton Basu, PhD

Wendi Dwyer**

Margaret Wolfgram
OPERATIONS MANAGER

Luxme Hariharan, MD

Richard Langer, JD

Sean Lynch, JD**

Bill Shepard, MA
MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Amy M. Murray, MBA**

Keshav Rajpal, MBA*

* Board term ended in 2019
** Joining Board in 2020

STAFF

Reena Chandra Rajpal, MPH
PRESIDENT (EX OFFICIO) & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Peter Holm, MD
VICE CHAIRMAN & CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER

Mike Altaweel, MD

Wendi Dwyer**

Bill Shepard, MA
MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER
AN EXCITING FUTURE LIES AHEAD

It is with tremendous gratitude that we share this information with you. It is your generosity that makes this work possible. In 2020, Combat Blindness International plans to expand our cataract and pediatric eye care programs in India, Africa and South America, allowing us to help more men, women and children. We also have plans in place to expand the number of young women we can support through our Certified Ophthalmic Paramedic (COP) Program. With your continued support, we can achieve these worthy goals. We encourage you to help CBI grow by engaging with us on social media, sharing our work with friends and family and sharing this annual report. Thank you for the impact you are making around the world.

With gratitude,

Reena Chandra Rajpal, MPH
President (ex officio) & Executive Director

It’s amazing that for so little, you can change a person’s whole world.
Be The Change: Ways To Give

Recurring Donations
Corporate Matching Gifts
Securities & Stock
Estate Planning

To learn more, contact info@combatblindness.org

Save the Date

VIRTUAL WORLD SIGHT DAY EVENT
Thursday, Oct. 8, 2020
Details Coming Soon

“PINTS FOR SIGHT” TAP TAKEOVERS
Planned for Summer 2020
Great Dane Pub & Brewing
For details, visit combatblindness.org in the future.