

The Cless Best of the Best Award

The Cless Best of the Best Award recognizes the most significant lectures given at the leading ophthalmologic professional society meetings each year, AAO (American Association of Ophthalmology), held in November, and ARVO (Association for Research and Ophthalmology) held in May. By recognizing the best talk, the award also recognizes important contributions to the advancement ophthalmologic care through basic and clinical research. The Cless Best of the Best Award is made possible by a generous gift from the Cless Family Foundation.

[Eligibility](#)

[Nomination Process](#)

[Review and Selection](#)

[Review Committee](#)

[Terms of Award](#)

[Past Honorees](#)

[For more information](#)

Eligibility

To be nominated for the Cless Best of the Best Award, individuals must be established professionals conducting research in the field of or relevant to ophthalmology and visual science. Eligible nominees must also hold an academic appointment in a medical college. The nomination letter must identify a *qualifying talk* that appears on the official schedule at the annual AAO or annual ARVO meeting.

Nomination Process

Nominations for the Cless Best of the Best Award can be made by heads of ophthalmology departments and vision researchers who serve as PIs of National Eye Institute grants at the time their nomination. The nominator should have attended the talk at AAO or ARVO of the individual they are nominating.

Nominations can be made for a period of one month following the last day of the AAO or ARVO meeting. The 2008 ARVO meeting ends on May 1, 2008. Nominations will be accepted until 5:00 p.m., June 1, 2008.

Review and Selection

A review committee of diverse experts in clinical and basic ophthalmological research will review nominations and make the final selection.

Review Committee

Name	Affiliation	Term
Anthony Adamis MD	President and CEO, Jerini Ophthalmic Inc. Research Professor Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences University of Illinois at Chicago	2008-2011
Dimitri Azar MD	B.A. Field Chair of Ophthalmologic Research Professor and Head, Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences Professor of Ophthalmology in Pharmacology, Department of Pharmacology University of Illinois at Chicago	Permanent Member
Gerhard Cless	President, Zebra Technologies Director, Cless Family Foundation	Permanent Member
Joseph Flaherty	Dean and Professor	Permanent

MD Michael Gilmore, PhD	University of Illinois College of Medicine - Chicago C.L. Schepens Professor of Ophthalmology Harvard Medical School Ankeny Director of Research and CEO, Schepens Eye Research Institute	Member 2008-2011
Morton Goldberg, MD	Joseph Green Professor of Ophthalmology Wilmer Ophthalmological Institute	2008-2011
Gregory Hageman, PhD	Professor of Ophthalmology University of Iowa	2008-2009
Peter Kaiser, MD	Associate, Cole Eye Institute Cleveland Clinic	2008-2011
Paul Kaufman, MD	Peter A. Duehr Professor and Chair Department of Ophthalmology & Visual Sciences University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health	2008-2011
Asrar Malik, PhD	Distinguished Professor of Pharmacology and Head Department of Pharmacology Professor of Pharmacology in Ophthalmology, Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences University of Illinois at Chicago	2008-2011
Bartley Mondino, MD	Bradley R. Straatsma Professor of Ophthalmology Chair, Department of Ophthalmology Director, Jules Stein Eye Institute University of California - Los Angeles	2008-2009
Jerry Neiderkorn, PhD	The George A. and Nancy P. Shutt Professor Director of Ophthalmic Research Departments of Ophthalmology and Microbiology U.T. Southwestern Medical Center	2008-2011
Joan O'Brien, MD	Professor of Ophthalmology University of California – San Francisco	2008-2011
Allen Putterman MD	Professor Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences University of Illinois at Chicago	2008-2011
Mrinalini Rao, PhD	Vice President for Academic Affairs University of Illinois Professor Department of Physiology & Biophysics University of Illinois at Chicago	2008-2009
Harris Ripps, DSc, PhD	Professor Emeritus Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology Department of Physiology and Biophysics University of Illinois at Chicago	2008-2011
Joseph Rizzo, MD	Associate Professor of Ophthalmology Harvard Medical School	2008-2009
Deepak Shukla PhD	Associate Professor Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences Department of Immunology and Microbiology University of Illinois at Chicago	2008-2011
Mary Ann Stepp, PhD	Associate Professor of Anatomy and Cell Biology Associate Professor of Ophthalmology George Washington University Medical Center	2008-2011
James Tsai MD	Professor and Chair Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Science Yale University School of Medicine	2008-2011
Scott Whitcup, MD	Executive Vice President Head, Research & Development Allergan, Inc.	2008-2009
Charles Wilkinson	Professor Department of Ophthalmology at Johns Hopkins Chair	2008-2011

Department of Ophthalmology at the Greater Baltimore Medical
Center
President, AAO

Terms of Award

The recipient of the Cless Best of the Best Award will receive an honorarium and will be recognized with a medal at a ceremony on the UIC campus.

Cless Best of the Best Honorees

ARVO 2007 Ilene Gipson Ph.D.
Professor of Ophthalmology
Harvard Medical School

AAO 2007 *In memoriam*
Judah Folkman, M.D.
Andrus Professor of Pediatric Surgery and Professor of Cell
Biology Harvard Medical School
Surgeon-in-Chief, *Emeritus*, and Director, Vascular Biology
Program, Children's Hospital

The Gerhard Cless Family Foundation

The Gerhard Cless Family Foundation supports scientific research and programs aimed at improving the lives of those who suffer from or at risk for vision loss.

University of Illinois Eye and Ear Infirmary, Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences

For 150 years, the University of Illinois Eye and Ear Infirmary has been dedicated to improving the ophthalmologic care and quality of life for individuals who are visually impaired and blind through excellence in patient care, education and research. The Infirmary is the patient care and teaching center of the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, and sees 55,000 patients each year. The full time clinical faculty of 14 MDs and 3 ODs forms the core attending staff for the Infirmary's General Eye Clinic and nine subspecialties. In addition 21 part-time and 34 volunteer community ophthalmologists also serve as attendings. Fourteen of our physicians were again named Top Doctors™ and Best Doctors in America™ this year. Eighteen residents (six per year in a three-year program) and ten fellows in six subspecialties work closely with attendings in one of the nation's most highly sought ophthalmology education programs.

The department's vision research program is among the leaders nationally, with more than 30 ongoing sponsored research studies, including 14 funded by the National Institutes of Health. Few departments of ophthalmology can claim as strong a basic vision science program as ours. Half of our full-time faculty are PhDs with laboratories located within our department. Studies range from the examination of the properties of single molecules and their role in the visual process to investigations on the impact of eye disease on the quality of life.

For more information...

For additional information about the Cless Best of the Best Lectures, email daraska@uic.edu.