## Passion and Focus

The Foundation Fighting Blindness (FFB) was established in 1971 by a passionate group of individuals driven to find treatments and cures for blinding retinal diseases that were affecting themselves or loved ones. At the time, very little was known about these devastating retinal degenerative diseases that lead to blindness.

The Foundation's goal was clear: To drive the research that would lead to preventions, treatments and vision restoration for the degenerative retinal diseases – including macular degeneration, retinitis pigmentosa, and Usher syndrome – that together affect more than 10 million Americans and millions more throughout the world.

Today, the Foundation is the world's leading private source for inherited retinal disease research funding. FFB is committed to driving research until the entire spectrum of retinal degenerative diseases is eradicated.

## Key Facts about the Foundation

During its now 46 year history, the Foundation has raised over $700 million in support of its effort to reverse blindness and restore vision.

Throughout its history, the Foundation has, on an average annual basis, invested approximately 75 percent of its revenue in research and public health education programs.

The Foundation has 43 volunteer-led chapters across the U.S. These dedicated volunteers raise funds, increase public awareness, and provide support to families affected by retinal diseases in their communities.

In 2014, the Foundation kicked off *Envision 20/20*, a campaign to end blindness and raise the funds necessary to advance current and future research. To accelerate funding, then FFB Chairman, Gordon Gund and his wife, Llura, created *The Gordon and Llura Gund Family Challenge*. The Gund Family Challenge closed in June of 2016 having raised over $111 million for retinal disease research.

**Over the past four decades, the Foundation has raised over $700 million to support and advance the research that will reverse blindness and restore vision.**

### Driving Research, Saving Vision

Foundation-funded researchers are achieving remarkable success with a wide range of promising therapies for saving and restoring sight. Below are just a few examples of the research that is providing hope to millions affected by inherited vision loss.

### Gene Therapy Restores Vision

The Foundation is funding translational research and clinical trials of gene therapy that have restored vision in patients who were virtually blind from a childhood form of retinitis pigmentosa. Thanks to the treatment, they can now enjoy some of life's simple joys, like reading and playing baseball.

### Developing Drugs to Preserve Vision

The Foundation is funding research on potential drug therapies that work by slowing or preventing the loss of retinal cells, thereby saving vision. Many of these treatments are cross-cutting, meaning they're designed to work for a wide range of retinal conditions, regardless of the genetic defect.

### Harnessing the Power of Stem Cells

Foundation-funded researchers are using stem cells derived from a variety of sources, including a person's own skin, to create healthy retinal cells that can potentially restore vision. Stem cell treatments hold great promise for people with advanced vision loss.

### Funding the Best in Retinal Research

The Foundation has funded studies at hundreds of prominent institutions throughout the world including:

- Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
- Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, Harvard Medical School
- Insitut de la Vision in Paris, France
- Moorfields Eye Hospital, University College London
- Scheie Eye Institute, University of Pennsylvania

> "The Foundation has given hope to people who didn't previously have hope, and supported the most important retinal research being carried out anywhere in the world. Thanks to the Foundation, I am confident that we will be able to treat many retinal diseases in the near future."
>
> – Morton F. Goldberg, M.D.
> *Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine*