DEFENSE-RELATED VISION FUNDING
Vision Research Program Funding Scorecard
Since 2001, the Department of Defense’s (DOD) Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP) has funded $230 million in 189 awards, including Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) awards. Within that total, and since it was created by Congress in FY2009 Defense appropriations by NAEVR advocacy and through FY2017, the Vision Research Program (VRP) has been funded by Congress at $70.2 million and has made 83 awards for a total of $82 million.

FY2019: VRP Funded at $20 Million
The Defense/LHHS minibus spending bill H.R. 6157 (see NIH/NEI funding section) funded the VRP at a record level of $20 million, an increase of $5 million over the $15 million funding level in each FY2017 and FY2018. NAEVR advocacy efforts with Hill champions, in partnership with groups such as Blinded Veterans Association (BVA), were instrumental in Congress acting to increase the VRP funding.

FY2018: VRP Releases Program Announcement
On July 26, the VRP Program Committee issued its FY2018 Program Announcement. As announced at NAEVR’s Defense-Related Vision Research Opportunities session at the 2018 ARVO Annual Meeting, the VRP funds two types of awards: Investigator Initiated Research Awards (IIRA) with maximum funding of $500,000 over three years, and a new Focused Translational Team Science Award (FTTSA) mechanism, which seeks to support projects that are “highly collaborative” and would “fundamentally advance the understanding and treatment of military-relevant vision trauma.” This award will be funded over a period of four years for a maximum of $5 million and must have three-to-five distinct research teams addressing a specific trauma. Pre-proposals were due September 4, and researchers who are invited to submit full proposals must do so by December 4.

Visit the Defense-related Vision Research section of NAEVR’s Web site at www.eyeresearch.org for details

AEVR Cost of Military Eye Injury Study Submitted for Publication
On October 10, authors Eric Singman, MD, PhD (Wilmer Eye Institute/Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine) and AEVR consultant Kevin Frick, PhD (Johns Hopkins Carey School of Business) submitted the manuscript for AEVR’s 2017/2018 update of NAEVR’s 2012 Cost of Military Eye Injury study for publication in Military Medicine. The updated report estimates the total cost of deployment-related eye injuries and blindness in the 2000-2017 timeframe at $45.5 billion.

AEVR SUPPORTS WSD CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING
World Sight Day 2018 Focuses on Cost-Effective Treatments
The October 11 Briefing, held by VISION 2020 USA and supported by 15 vision organizations, focused on cost-effective treatments for Uncorrected Refractive Errors (URE) and other vision impairments and diseases.

AEVR Executive Director James Jorkasky with Joe Bogart, Executive Director of Blinded Veterans Association

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