On March 25, NAEVR hosted an Advocacy Day for private foundations which had met the previous day under the auspices of RPB to discuss vision research funding challenges, especially due to lack of growth in the NEI’s budget. In addition to describing their important role in the local economy, the participants also noted their support for researchers at academic institutions throughout the country—often researchers in the early stage of their careers.

“The U.S. vision research community has sustained an effort, for decades, to prevent vision loss and restore sight and we are seeing some incredible breakthroughs with stem cell research, gene therapy, and regeneration approaches. Federal funding of vision research far exceeds all private foundation support combined. A recent convening of vision research funders—hosted and organized by RPB—established increasing federal funding of vision research through advocacy as a top priority for collective action on the part of the private foundations. For the sake of everyone confronting vision loss, we literally cannot afford to shortchange funding for eye research.”
—Brian F. Hofland, Ph.D., RPB President

“I have had Type 1 diabetes for 50 years. I have worked hard to maintain a good balance in my health, and so far I am okay. But those words ‘so far’ loom large. As a diabetic I am at higher risk for diabetic retinopathy, macular edema, glaucoma, corneal complications and dry eye. Insulin is not a cure, just as eye drops to treat glaucoma are not a cure. There are no guarantees. The closest we can come to a guarantee of good health is to ensure that the extraordinary scientists who will create cures and better treatments for our conditions are adequately funded.”
—Matthew Levine, RPB Director of Communications