

## In a January 25 Advocacy Day, ARVO Researchers Make FY2009 NIH/NEI and Defense-related Vision Research Funding Requests to Congress

NAEVR hosted a January 25 Advocacy Day of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology's (ARVO) Program Committee, which engaged 20 participants in 50 Congressional visits in one of the earliest events in the second session of the 110th Congress. Using just-released NAEVR position papers and talking points, participants requested FY 2009 NIH and NEI funding at \$31 billion and \$711 million, respectively, an increase of 6.6 percent over FY2008—reflecting the

biomedical inflation rate of 3.6 percent plus 3 percent to begin restoring purchasing power. Participants emphasized the importance of timely appropriations, such that the continuity of research is not jeopardized by lay-offs of trained staff or lack of supplies for experimentation. The ARVO researchers also educated each office about the importance of defense-related vision research (see next page).



ARVO Advocacy Participants included (from left to right): Front Row: Carol Toris, Ph.D. (University of Nebraska Medical Center); Muna Naash, Ph.D. (University of Oklahoma Health Science Center); Janey Wiggs, M.D., Ph.D. (Harvard Medical School); Thomas Millar, Ph.D. (University of Western Sydney/Australia); Filippo Drago, M.D., Ph.D. (University of Catania/Italy); Second Row: Rajiv Mohan, Ph.D. (University of Missouri-Columbia); ARVO Executive Director Joanne Angle; Neeru Gupta, M.D., Ph.D. (University of Toronto/St. Michael's Hospital/Canada); Claude Burgoyne, M.D. (Devers Eye Institute); Third Row: Lenworth Johnson, M.D. (University of Missouri-Columbia); Erik van Kuijk, M.D., Ph.D. (University of Texas Medical Branch /Galveston); Ron Adelman, M.D., Ph.D. (Yale University School of Medicine); Debra Nickla, Ph.D. (New England College of Optometry); Fourth Row: Michael Kirby, Ph.D. (Loma Linda University); Michael Robinson, Ph.D. (Miami University); Not Pictured: Linda McLoon, Ph.D. (University of Minnesota); Todd Margolis, M.D., Ph.D. (University of California at San Francisco); and Dong Chen, M.D., Ph.D. (Schepens Eye Research Institute).



Dr. McLoon with Ryan Crowley in the office of Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN). Recently, Dr. McLoon hosted in her laboratory staff from the offices of Sen. Norm Coleman (R-MN), a member of the Special Aging Committee, and Cong. Betty McCollum (D-MN), an LHHs appropriator.



Dr. Steinemann, Dr. Adelman, and Dr. Johnson met with Elizabeth Lee in the office of Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY)



Maryam Khan from the office of Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX), an LHHs and Defense appropriator, met with Dr. van Kuijk. Ms. Khan had previously conducted vision research at Northwestern University.



Dr. Kirby, Dr. Margolis, and Dr. Millar (far right, one of three ARVO international members participating) met with Kristin Wikelius from the office of Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA). The group also met with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's (D-CA) staff in the U.S. Capitol.



Tim Steinemann, M.D., and Dr. Johnson (far right) met with Philip Young, a DOD Fellow in the office of Sen. Kit Bond (R-MO) and a former Special Operations soldier in Iraq. Dr. Johnson, a constituent and member of the National Advisory Eye Council (NAEC) and the NIH Council of Councils that manages the NIH common fund, requested that Defense appropriator Sen. Bond champion the continued listing of eye and vision research in DOD peer reviewed funding. Dr. Steinemann (Case Western Reserve University), who chairs the American Academy of Ophthalmology's (AAO) Research, Regulatory, and External Affairs Committee, joined in visits prior to the next day's AAO Federal Secretariat meeting.