

ARVO LOBBY DAYS EXPAND CAPITOL HILL PRESENCE

On October 24, 2003, and January 23, 2004, NAEVR escorted members of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO), a founding member of AEVR/NAEVR, on a total of more than 40 visits to House and Senate offices, including those of key appropriators. ARVO President Dr. Sally Atherton (Georgia) and ARVO Executive Vice President Dr. Paul Kaufman (Wisconsin) were “veterans” of both visits and cemented relationships with staff. In October, Dr. Atherton was joined by Dr. Martine Jager from The Netherlands who, as a first-time observer commented, “For me, it was fascinating to see how things work. We made it obvious that spending money on eye research now will help to cut spending on treatment of eye diseases in the elderly later on.” Dr. Atherton subsequently escorted Dr. Jie Jin Wang from Australia in the January visits, which provided all participants an opportunity to thank Senators who had just voted for the FY2004 omnibus appropriations bill the previous day.

During a Hill visit, Dr. Kaufman was asked for specific information on what NEI has accomplished with past appropriations and what it could do with additional funding. That request has resulted in NAEVR’s development of the report *Accomplishments and Opportunities at the NEI*, which is currently being distributed on Capitol Hill. It is available on the homepage of www.eyersearch.org.

Because the University of Arizona’s Department of Ophthalmology has a statewide reach, Dr. Alan Marmorstein visited the entire Arizona delegation of ten offices. He appealed to each district office as to how its constituents (e.g. large elderly, Hispanic, or Native American populations) benefit

from the investment in eye and vision research. “I had a good time educating the Arizona delegation about the cost-effectiveness of investing in eye and vision research, and learned a great deal about the legislative process. I was struck by how important it is for our community to make its case with Congress, since these offices are also hearing from other disease interests.”

NAEVR also wishes to thank Dr. Gary Abrams (Michigan), Dr. Usha Andley (Missouri), and Dr. Thomas Yorio (Texas) for being advocates. NAEVR will host a “Contact Congress” booth at the ARVO Annual Meeting, April 25–28, 2004, in Fort. Lauderdale, Florida.



ARVO member Dr. Alan Marmorstein and Marian Leonardo, aide to Cong. Ed Pastor (D-AZ), a member of the House Appropriations Committee



Left to right: Rachael Galoob-Ortega of NAEVR legislative counsel, Salem Law Group; Tyler Thompson, aide to Senator Miller (D-GA); ARVO President Dr. Sally Atherton; ARVO member Dr. Martine Jager

