

## Feature: GSO Visits Camp Abilities

*An Eye Openers Special Report*

Each Memorial Day weekend for the past six years, a team of visionary organizers and volunteers have gathered to host an extraordinary event for some extraordinary kids. **Camp Abilities** is an overnight sports camp for visually impaired and blind children, and this past May *Eye Openers* travelled to Columbus, GA to experience the camp in person.

Camp Director **Jeanine Fittipaldi-Wert, PhD, CAPE**, who is also an Associate Professor at Columbus State University (pictured here with a camper) began Camp Abilities in 2012 with the mission to “empower children who are blind or visually impaired to be physically active and a productive member of their schools, communities and society in general.” Thanks to support from organizations like GSO, the Camp has grown every year, from four campers in 2012 to sixteen campers in 2017.



Campers range in age from 9 years old (Parker) to 20 years old (Reggie), and participate in team sports activities like beep kickball, tandem biking, rock climbing, tennis, and goalball. (If you are like your humble reporter with no previous knowledge of goalball, [click here](https://www.paralympic.org/goalball).)

(<https://www.paralympic.org/goalball>) Unlike a typical summer camp where each counselor is responsible for a whole group, Camp Abilities assigns each camper their very own counselor who stays at their side throughout the two to three days of camp. Because the degree of visual impairment varies from camper to camper, they wear opaque, padded eyeshades throughout all camp sports activities. These ensure everyone is competing from the same, completely sightless state.

Your *Eye Openers* reporter can attest that at Camp Abilities, campers get the true summer sports camp experience. Experts in each sport are flown in from all over the country to instruct the campers; and each sport requires expensive, highly-specialized equipment: whistling tennis racquets, beeping kickball bases, and seven-person tandem bicycles



where the riders are arranged in a circle. (Your reporter, regrettably, did not get to see this bicycle in action.) To get an idea of how to play beep kickball, watch the video below:

### Beep Kickball at Camp Abilities



Aside from the eyeshades, the various electronic signals from the sports equipment are the only observable element differentiating Camp Abilities from any other summer day camp. Impressively, out of the sixteen campers this year, thirteen of them are repeating participants—and even more impressively, three counselors are former Camp Abilities campers. The campers' enthusiasm is above average and contagious. Your reporter could easily see how much fun they were having, and had an extremely enjoyable time as well—even while being led down three flights of stairs from the goalball room to the group activity room with eyes tightly shut, Camp Director Jeanine describing surroundings and tapping railings for guidance along the way.

Camp Abilities is a truly inspirational event, and it wouldn't be possible without their many volunteers and the support of organizations like the GSO Foundation.

If you are unfamiliar with the GSO Foundation, (<http://www.ga-eyemds.org/?page=21>) Camp Abilities is the type of program that it funds—so consider including the Foundation among your charitable giving recipients.

Next year's Camp Abilities is May 25 through May 28, 2018. Click here for more information. ([https://hpex.columbusstate.edu/camp\\_abilities/index.php](https://hpex.columbusstate.edu/camp_abilities/index.php))



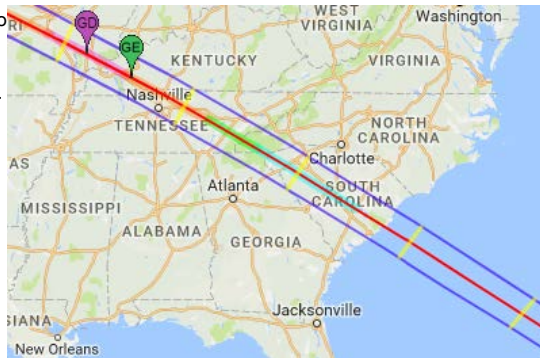
## Dark Side Of The Moon: Eclipse August 21

Where will you be?

On Aug. 21, 2017, the entire United States will see a partial eclipse of the sun, and parts of 11 states will experience a total solar eclipse. People within the **path of totality** will experience a complete eclipse. The path of totality is only 70 miles wide and will move across the continent very quickly.

Plan now for where you want to be!

Click here to use NASA's interactive map to identify your moment of maximum eclipse.



([https://eclipse2017.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/interactive\\_map/index.html](https://eclipse2017.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/interactive_map/index.html))

You may want a backup plan in case weather gets in the way of your view of the sky. Viewers in areas outside the path of totality will be able to see a partial eclipse.

**GSO Past-President Sid Moore, MD** was the featured expert in a recent news segment on WMAZ in Macon. Click here to watch Dr. Moore talk about eye safety and the importance of taking the proper precautions while viewing the solar eclipse.



(<http://www.13wmaz.com/news/eclipse/how-to-protect-your-eyes-from-the-eclipse/460842934>)

## Show Us Your Solar Eclipse Moments

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As you may have noticed by our display at the Annual Meeting (right), all of us in the Executive Office are really looking forward to watching one celestial body pass and obscure the light from another celestial body on Monday.

We know GSO members are excited too, and we would love to see any and all photographs of your eclipse experience.

Share with us your eclipse-related photos--like this one of **GSO Council member Anna Kao, MD** in her solar glasses--by sending them to Sally (sally@ga-eyemds.org (mailto:sally@ga-eyemds.org).)



Afterwards, we will share your solar eclipse moments with the entire membership and with the national AAO office, who might use them in their social media campaigns nationwide.

**\*\*DON'T FORGET TO PROTECT YOUR CAMERA LENS AND/OR PHONE JUST LIKE YOUR EYES DURING THE ECLIPSE\*\***



## Next Session: A Record Number Of Lawmaker Physicians

*Eye Openers* recently spoke with Georgia's newest physician legislator, Kay Kirkpatrick, MD - a former hand surgeon and co-President of Resurgens Orthopaedics for many years - to find out how she got interested in public service and what she foresees in her legislative future.

### ***EO: What inspired you to run for office?***

I had been working down at the Capitol on behalf of patients and doctors for a long time, and I was planning on retiring soon. It just so happens that when I was retiring was almost exactly when the seat opened up. And it seemed like an opportunity where I could do some good even though it wasn't necessarily something that had been on my bucket list.



### ***EO: How would you describe your campaign experience?***

Extremely difficult! I found it to be very trying and stressful. I really did not anticipate the amount of negativity from people in my own party. At this point I would say that hand surgery is much more manageable than my new job.

### ***EO: What are your top legislative priorities?***

Definitely reducing the burdensome regulations on physicians, that's where I would want to start. Another priority is health care, revamping Medicaid insurance including chronic disease management. And then I want to work on Georgia's regulatory and tax environment—I would like to work on simplifying everything as much as possible. I have already been involved with the tax issue in Fulton county (<http://www.fox5atlanta.com/news/262943917-story>) that has been going on lately; I'm part of the state legislative committee trying to work that out.

### ***EO: What do you think will be the effect of having five physicians in the General Assembly?***

I hope it will lend itself to enough of a critical mass that we will be able to get a physician caucus going. I have already introduced the idea to my fellow physician legislators. My thought is that as a caucus we could hold informational sessions for other legislators—where we could offer insight and answer questions about legislation concerning medicine. I think that would be really beneficial for everyone.

### ***EO: Besides Health & Human Services, to which committees are you hoping to be assigned?***

My top three are Health, Insurance, and Public Safety. I have experience working with MAG's Medical Reserve Corps, so my interest in the Public Safety committee is not only to support law enforcement and the military, but also to work on disaster preparedness.

*Right: Once a month, Dr. K takes Dobie, her twelve-year old Goldendoodle, to volunteer as a therapy dog at Ronald McDonald House.*

**\*\*UPDATE\*\***

Since this interview took place, Sen. Kirkpatrick was assigned to the following Senate Committees:

- Health & Human Services (<http://www.senate.ga.gov/Committees/en-US/Committee.aspx?Committee=76&Session=25>)
- Public Safety (<http://www.senate.ga.gov/Committees/en-US/Committee.aspx?Committee=81&Session=25>)
- Science & Technology (<http://www.senate.ga.gov/Committees/en-US/Committee.aspx?Committee=142&Session=25>)
- Veterans, Military, and Homeland Security (<http://www.senate.ga.gov/Committees/en-US/Committee.aspx?Committee=137&Session=25>)



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## The PDMP: GA's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program

Everything You Need to Know

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A law was passed during the 2017 legislative session overhauling Georgia's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) database. The purpose of this effort is to reduce duplicative prescribing and overprescribing of controlled substances — specifically opioids and benzodiazepines. The new regulations do NOT apply to stimulants or to non-benzodiazepine sleeping aids.

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**By January 1, 2018**, every prescriber with a US DEA registration number must enroll and be a registered user of the PDMP. Prescribers already registered DO NOT need to re-register.

**Between January 1, 2018 and May 31, 2018**, the Department of Public Health will test the PDMP to make sure that it is operational 99.5% of the time.

**On July 1, 2018** Prescribers will be required to check PDMP before prescribing Schedule II drugs or benzodiazepines. (Prescribers are currently encouraged to check the PDMP before prescribing Schedule II drugs or benzodiazepines, but are not yet required to do so.)

For exceptions to these requirements and for more information, [click here](#) to see the full one-page informational handout.

(/resource/resmgr/legislative/PDMP\_what\_you\_need\_to\_knowpd.pdf)

If you have any questions about the PDMP or registering, please send an email to [pdmpsupport@dph.ga.gov](mailto:pdmpsupport@dph.ga.gov) (<mailto:pdmpsupport@dph.ga.gov>) or call 404-463-1517.

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**TO REGISTER GO TO:**

[georgia.pmpaware.net/login](http://georgia.pmpaware.net/login)  
([georgia.pmpaware.net/login](http://georgia.pmpaware.net/login))

**YOU WILL ENTER:**

- Name & business address
- Primary phone number
- Last 4 digits of SSN
- DEA number
- NPI number
- Professional license #
- Health care specialty

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## New Members

*Welcome* to GSO

**Robert Bjerregaard, MD**

Resident/Fellow Member  
Emory University  
Atlanta

**Sara Branson, MD**

Resident/Fellow Member  
Emory University  
Atlanta

**Jonathan Katz, MD**

Resident/Fellow Member  
Emory University  
Atlanta

**David Levine, MD**

Resident/Fellow Member  
Emory University  
Atlanta

**Arash Davanian, DO**  
Resident/Fellow Member  
MCG/Augusta University  
Augusta

**David Felsted, DO**  
Resident/Fellow Member  
MCG/Augusta University  
Augusta

**John Gorham, MD**  
Resident/Fellow Member  
Emory University  
Atlanta

**Kevin Halenda, MD**  
Resident/Fellow Member  
MCG/Augusta University  
Augusta

**Julia Yurie Kang, MD, MPH**  
Resident/Fellow Member  
Emory University  
Atlanta

**Alexandria Li, MD**  
Resident/Fellow Member  
Emory University  
Atlanta

**J. Morgan Micheletti, MD**  
Resident/Fellow Member  
Emory University  
Atlanta

**Jacquelyn O'Banion, MD, MSc**  
General Member  
Emory Eye Center  
Atlanta

**Sahitya Reddy, MD**  
Resident/Fellow Member  
Emory University  
Atlanta

## Summer 2017

### Editors

Brian Kim, MD  
Barry Lee, MD

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## Leadership

### President

Barry Lee, MD

### President-Elect

Jeff Payne, MD

### Vice President

Jeremy Jones, MD

### Secretary/Treasurer

James G. Brooks, Jr., MD

### Immediate Past President

Brian Kim, MD

### Councilor to AAO

Anna Kao, MD

### Alternate Councilor to AAO

Michael Jacobs, MD

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### Councilors Class of 2018

G. Baker Hubbard, MD

John Ervin, MD

William Marks, Jr., MD

Randall Ozment, MD

Emory Patterson, MD

### Councilors Class of 2019

Amy Estes, MD

Nadeem Fatteh, MD

David Hemmings, MD

Tushar Suthar, MD

Margaret Wong, MD

### Councilors Class of 2020

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Phoebe Lenhart, MD

Mary Lynch, MD

Purnima Patel, MD  
Heather Weissman, MD  
**Legislative Chair**  
Malcolm S. Moore, Jr., MD

**PAC Chair**  
Jeffrey A. Carlisle, MD

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## Upcoming Events

(<https://www.aao.org/practice-management/coding/codequest-course/georgia>) **September 30, 2017:**  
**Codequest 2017** (<https://www.aao.org/practice-management/coding/codequest-course/georgia>)

([November 11-14, 2017:](#)  
**AAO Annual Meeting** (<https://www.aao.org/annual-meeting>))

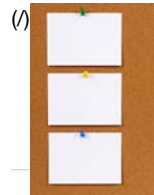
**February 10, 2018**  
**GEM Eye Meeting**  
**Westin Buckhead, Atlanta**



### Surgery By Surgeons

The GA Medical Eye PAC represents the political interests of Georgia ophthalmologists and their patients. Funds are used to show bipartisan support for our champions in the Georgia legislature.

Click here to contribute. (<http://www.ga-eyemds.org/default.asp?page=38>)



### GSO Online

GSO's Professional Job Board is an easy and effective resource that all GSO members should take advantage of.

([http://](#))Click here to view the current listings. (<http://www.ga-eyemds.org/?jobs>)



### The GSO Foundation

is a 501(c)(3) organization that promotes projects to raise awareness of ocular disease, and funds programs supporting underserved populations in Georgia.

Click Here to Donate (<https://ga-eyemds.site-ym.com/donations/donate.asp?id=10718>)



### We want to hear from you!

Contribute to the next edition of GSO's Eye Openers newsletter! Just email your submission (or submission idea) to: [sally@ga-eyemds.org](mailto:sally@ga-eyemds.org) (<mailto:sally@ga-eyemds.org>)

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