

Biography Paul Sieving

Dr. Sieving became director of the National Eye Institute, NIH, in 2001. He came from the University Of Michigan Medical School where he was the Paul R. Lichter Professor of Ophthalmic Genetics and the founding Director of the Center for Retinal and Macular Degeneration in the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences.

After undergraduate work in history and physics at Valparaiso University, Dr. Sieving studied nuclear physics at Yale Graduate School (1970-73) under D. Allan Bromley, and attended Yale Law School (1973-74). He received his M.D. from the University of Illinois College of Medicine (1978) and a Ph.D. in bioengineering (1981) from the University of Illinois Graduate College. Dr. Sieving completed ophthalmology residency at the University of Illinois Eye and Ear Infirmary in Chicago. After post-doctoral study of retinal physiology with Roy H. Steinberg (1982-83) at the University of California, San Francisco, he did a clinical fellowship in genetic retinal degenerations with Eliot Berson (1984-85) at Harvard Medical School, Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary. He joined the medical faculty at the University of Michigan in 1985.

Dr. Sieving is known internationally for studies of human retinal neurodegenerative diseases, termed *retinitis pigmentosa*. His laboratory studies pharmacological approaches to slowing degeneration in transgenic animal models of these conditions. He conducted the first human clinical trial of ciliary neurotrophic factor (CNTF) for *retinitis pigmentosa* (PNAS, 2006). He developed a mouse model of X-linked retinoschisis and demonstrated successful treatment using gene therapy which restored retinal structure and function. He maintains a clinical practice at NIH for genetic retinal diseases, including Stargardt juvenile macular degeneration. He is currently conducting a human gene therapy trial for XLRS (ClinicalTrials.gov; # NCT02317887).

Dr. Sieving served as Vice Chair for Clinical Research for the Foundation Fighting Blindness from 1996-2001. He is an award jury member for the €1 million annual "Vision Award" of the Champalimaud Foundation, Portugal. He was elected to membership in the American Ophthalmological Society in 1993 and the Academia Ophthalmologica Internationalis in 2005. He received an honorary Doctor of Science from Valparaiso University in 2003 and has been named among the "Best Doctors in America" multiple years. He has received numerous awards, including the Research to Prevent Blindness Senior Scientific Investigator Award, 1998; the Alcon Research Institute Award, 2000; and the Pisart Vision Award from the New York Lighthouse International for the Blind in 2005. Dr. Sieving is a member of National Academy of Medicine, USA (elected 2006), and also of the German National Academy of Science (elected 2013).