

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Anthony D. Sakowski, Jr., M.D., F.A.C.S., Retiring from Virginia Eye Institute**

*Founder of Virginia Eye Institute, highly regarded researcher and pioneering ophthalmologist*

**Richmond, Va.** – [Virginia Eye Institute](#) (VEI), one of Virginia's oldest, largest and best-known comprehensive eye care organizations, has announced that Anthony D. Sakowski, M.D., F.A.C.S., founder of VEI and a leading pioneer in refractive and cataract surgery, will retire at the end of 2012.

VEI was established in 1976, and according to Dr. Sakowski, has always been deeply dedicated to excellence in eye surgery. In 1981, VEI made medical history when Dr. Sakowski and Walter E. Bundy, III, M.D., F.A.C.S. performed Virginia's first refractive surgery procedure. He also introduced small incision cataract surgery with intraocular implants to Virginia.

"We were particularly interested in innovative eye surgery and we were always willing to step forward and look at new procedures, new technology," said Sakowski. "If it was the right thing to do for the patient, we were willing to step out and do things others were not. Today, physicians at VEI continue to be innovative, to try new things. VEI is willing to do those things to improve patient care and to add to the knowledge that is out there."

"It's been an honor and a privilege working with Tony Sakowski," said Brad Smith, Chief Executive Officer, VEI. "His leadership at VEI will be missed. But we will certainly continue to recognize his profound influence for years to come."

Dr. Sakowski, a graduate of the Medical College of Virginia School of Medicine, Virginia Commonwealth University, served as a General Medical Officer in the United States Navy at the Naval Air Station in Alameda, CA. He completed his ophthalmology residency at MCV in 1975, and his fellowship in cataract surgery in 1976.

As a researcher, Dr. Sakowski has served as core investigator for multiple IOL companies over the last 20 years and has undertaken numerous clinical research projects.

"After 37 years my greatest satisfaction has been seeing my patients' happiness when their eyesight was restored," said Sakowski. "People come back years later – particularly after refractive surgery – and tell me it was the best money they ever spent. To be able to function and do things they couldn't do prior to surgery."

He earned numerous honors over the years, including being named Most Outstanding Graduate, International Fraternity of Phi Gamma Delta, 2001 and by Summit Technology Inc., as a "CRS investigator for pioneering efforts towards making the Summit Technology lasers the first approved in the United States for LASIK" in 2000. Additionally, Dr. Sakowski is a recipient

of the Foundation Fighting Blindness Visionary Award as well as the Eclipse Award of Excellence in Elective Surgery.

Dr. Sakowski has served the Richmond community in numerous ways. He was a member of the Board of Directors Catholic Charities of Richmond; Chairman, 1984-1985 Campaign, Alumni Giving, University of Richmond; and a member of the Board of Associates, University of Richmond.

In retirement, Dr. Sakowski plans to continue the things he's enjoyed over the years including spending more time sailing on the Chesapeake Bay, leisure reading, hunting and spending time with his eight grandchildren.

"I'd like to thank all the wonderful staff we've had through the years. Without them, we couldn't have accomplished as much as we have. It's been a privilege working with so many dedicated associates and the patients we serve," said Sakowski.

### **About Virginia Eye Institute**

Virginia Eye Institute (VEI) is a comprehensive eye care organization providing a wide range of ophthalmology, optometry, and optical services in 11 locations across Central Virginia. VEI offers exceptional ophthalmologic care, including cornea, glaucoma, retina, oculoplastics, pediatrics, and refractive surgery (LASIK). All of Virginia Eye Institute's physicians are board-certified and many are fellowship-trained. VEI also owns and operates an out-patient Ambulatory Surgery Center (ASC) which provides ophthalmology and ear, nose and throat surgical services to pediatric and adult patients. VEI optical shops provide board-certified opticians and contact lens fitters and have ranked in the Vision Monday list of Top 50 retail opticals in the U.S. for the past three years. Virginia Eye Institute is one of the ten largest independent ophthalmology groups in the United States. For more information please visit [www.VaEye.com](http://www.VaEye.com).

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