



## Shelby Scholars Lecture Series

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### MARNIX E. HEERSINK

*Ophthalmologist and Founder,  
Eye Center South*

#### ABOUT OUR GUEST

Marnix E. Heersink, M.D., founder of Eye Center South, graduated Magna Cum Laude with a B.A. degree and an M.D. degree from the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario. His internship was completed at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal, Canada, while his residency in Ophthalmology was performed at Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He completed a Fellowship in anterior segment surgery in Philadelphia. In 1978, following his training, he and his wife, Mary Parks Heersink, moved to Dothan Alabama.

Dr. Heersink has a special interest and training in the diagnosis and surgical treatment of cataracts as well as laser vision correction. He is a member in good standing of the Alabama Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons and the American Academy of Ophthalmology. He is certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology and the American Board of Eye Surgery.

Dr. Heersink has shown financial and leadership support for many organizations by serving on numerous boards and institutions including Wallace Community College, Troy University, Marion Military Institute, University of Alabama at Birmingham, Wiregrass Museum of Art, First United Methodist Church, Houston Academy, Landmark Park, STOP Foodborne Illness, The Netherland-America Foundation, The Boys Scouts

of America, Alabama Institute of Deaf and Blind, Dothan Montessori School, University of Western Ontario, Dothan Boys and Girls Club, and Troy Sorrell College of Business Executive Advisory Council to name a few.

Together with his wife, Dr. Heersink funded the Heersink Family Foundation, which has endowed several scholarships and fellowships, including a Cornea Fellowship at Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia, a UAB Glaucoma Fellowship, Optometry scholarships for UAB students, an endowed scholarship for the UAB School of Health Professions, and scholarships at Troy Business School. In 2023, they created and funded a Pathways to Optometry program with Wallace College, Troy University Dothan, and University of Alabama Birmingham School of Optometry. Dr. Heersink also founded The Eye Education Foundation, a non-profit educational institute for eye care professionals.

Two years ago, Dr. Heersink made major transformative gifts to two universities. UAB named its Medical School the Marnix E. Heersink School of Medicine as well as the UAB Marnix E. Heersink Institute for Biomedical Innovation. McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario named the Marnix E. Heersink School of Biomedical Innovation and Entrepreneurship after Dr. Heersink.

The Heersink family is also philanthropically active internationally. A few of the organizations they support are the Netherlands Open Air Museum, Oude Jan Church Restoration, sponsoring the Heersink Innovation Fund for classical orchestral music Phion, Orange for Velp, Steenderen Church Restoration, funding the Audrey Hepburn statue in Velp, and the Classical Music Summer festival Zoom.

They are active supporters of The Netherland-American Foundation with endowing scholarships and promoting student exchange between the USA and the Netherlands. In 2022, Dr. Marnix and Mary Heersink were honored with the Netherland-American Foundation Ambassador's Award in Washington, D.C., recognizing their contributions to strengthening ties between the United States and the Netherlands.

Dr. Heersink has also been recognized for his contributions to business and community development, including the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce "Movers and Shapers" in 2023 and induction into the Dothan Business Hall of Fame in 2019.

In 2024, Dr. Heersink was inducted into one of the state's most prestigious honors in the business community, the Alabama Business Hall of Fame. It serves as a lasting tribute to individuals who have shaped Alabama's economic landscape, created jobs opportunities, and

fostered innovation across various industries. He was also inducted into the Alabama Healthcare Hall of Fame as a 2024 honoree.

UAB presented Dr. Marnix Heersink with the 2024 President's Medal. The President's Medal recognizes individuals who have attained scholarly distinction and/or rendered distinguished service to UAB; it is one of the highest honors bestowed by UAB.

In the Spring of 2024, Dr. Heersink was awarded a Faculty of Health Sciences Honorary Doctorate Degree (LL.D.) from McMaster University in Hamilton, Canada.

Dr. Heersink has lectured nationally and internationally in the USA, Denmark, Netherlands and Belgium. He has given named lecture talks, including the Ed Jaeger Memorial Lecture at Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia and the initial Southern Eye Congress Visionary Lecture. He has given the commencement ceremony address for Wallace Community College and gave the commencement address at Troy University and McMaster University in Canada.

Dr. and Mrs. Heersink have been married for 46 years and have six adult children, all of whom are in the medical field as well as entrepreneurial activities, with one dentist and five physicians. Marnix and Mary enjoy spending time with their 11 grandchildren.

***Wednesday, April 9, 2025  
Noon at Tuomey Hall***