NOAH magic was in the air on August 1st when 45 attendees, speakers and volunteers met at the Medical College of Wisconsin. People came from Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota and Australia. Dr. Shari Parker, a person with albinism who is a driving force of the Albinism Fellowship of Australia, fit us into her family’s tour of the U.S. With superstar speakers and a fun day at the zoo for the kids, there was something for everyone!

Research
On Friday, attendees could participate in the Advanced Ocular Imaging Project. Dr. Joe Carroll, one of the co-directors for the project, conducts imaging of the eyes of people affected with various eye disorders. Each disorder has dedicated researchers / graduate students who become experts on that condition. Melissa was the expert on the retinas of people with albinism.

Dr. Carroll’s team has constructed a camera that can look at the individual cells in the retina. Research participants had photographs and scans of their retinas taken using various cameras. They also had blood drawn for genetic testing, and some had their eyes examined by Dr. Gail Summers, our favorite ophthalmologist from Minneapolis.

You can learn more about the study at www.mcw.edu/AOIP.htm.

Learn & Share
Our keynote session focused on the latest in albinism research. Dr. Gail Summers, Dr. Murray Brilliant and Dr. Brian Brooks all spoke about their research into different aspects of albinism.

The first round of breakout sessions offered the choice of a genetics talk by Dr. Brilliant, an overview of the services provided by Vision Forward, or a presentation on low vision apps for phones and tablets. After lunch, sessions included a discussion of IEPs and an Ask an Adult with Albinism panel.
The rest of the afternoon was spent in discussion groups, one for parents and one for people with albinism. Everyone had the chance to ask questions and share personal experiences.

**Greet & Eat**
On Friday evening, several attendees went to dinner at the Cheesecake Factory. Several flavors of cheesecake were sampled by all.

Dinner Saturday was served on site. After socializing, email exchanges and Facebook friending, we headed home, counting the days until the national conference in Pittsburgh next July!

**Sincerest Thanks**
Thank you to the Medical College of Wisconsin who generously co-hosted the event. Thank you to Vision Forward for providing speakers who spent their Saturday with us, and thank you to Dr. Carroll and his team of doctors and graduate students for helping put this event together.

**Make it Your Mission**
Mini conferences aren’t just for the people in the cities where they are held. They are a great way to learn and connect on a smaller scale than a national conference, offering opportunities to speak one-on-one with researchers. And don’t forget the kids! Many kids don’t have the chance to interact with others with albinism on a regular basis. Socializing and playing with other kids who also have albinism can be a truly empowering and life-changing experience.

Visit [www.albinism.org](http://www.albinism.org) often to find out when the next mini conferences are scheduled. Plan a weekend to hang out with your NOAH family and experience the magic!