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Transforming lives through the gift of vision

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World Sight Day Challenge Celebrates its 10-year Anniversary Announces that funds raised in 2016 will help support Our Children's Vision

Optometry Giving Sight has launched its 10th Annual fundraising campaign to help raise funds for people who are needlessly blind or vision impaired simply because they can't access an eye exam and vision care provided by an optometrist.

This year's World Sight Day Challenge will focus on the need for effective, sustainable eye health initiatives for children and adolescents. The campaign will run from September 1st until October 31st and will help support vision care services being delivered around the world. World Sight Day is Thursday October 13th.

"All of us can appreciate the importance of good vision – not just for ourselves and our families, but for the many children around the world who don't have access to the vision care services they need," said Dr. Juan Carlos Aragon, Global Chair of Optometry Giving Sight. "After all, if you can't see, you can't learn, and that condemns many to a life of poverty and disadvantage."

For the past 10 years, [thousands of Optometrists, their staff, patients, students and colleagues in industry](#) have all taken the World Sight Day Challenge by raising funds to help eliminate the backlog of uncorrected refractive error, estimated to affect more than 600 million people.

"It's simple and fun to do," said Clive Miller, Global CEO of Optometry Giving Sight. "Practices, schools and companies can involve their staff, friends, family and colleagues in fundraising activities throughout September and October; or they can visit our website and make a personal, practice or company donation.

We have materials to help promote your involvement, lots of fun fundraising ideas, and information that you can share that shows how your donations are having an impact on the lives of people in need."

[Watch our video.](#)

[Dr. Colin Connors](#) from Middleton, Wisconsin has been participating in the World Sight Day Challenge since 2009.

"It's a great program. Our staff loves it; we have a great response from everyone about it. I really encourage all doctors to participate in the World Sight Day Challenge," he said.

Funds raised will help support Our Children's Vision – a global campaign to bring better vision, and eye health services to 50 million children by 2020. This will be in addition to our ongoing support for Optometry Development programs which train local people as Optometrists.

To donate, or pledge your participation by selecting one of our Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum Award levels, please visit www.givingsight.org or call 1-800-585-8265 ext 4.



Notes to Editor:

Our Hero Image for 2016:



Socheata is 17 years old and in her final year of studies. She recently received an eye examination as part of a School Eye Health program at her school in Cambodia, Asia.

“When I was in grade 11, I was really struggling to see,” said Socheata. “I found trying to see or read long distance an immense struggle, especially while the teacher was writing on the board. Once I received my glasses I started to use them often for travelling to school, especially for school time and

doing house work. I felt comfortable wearing my glasses and was no longer getting dizzy or suffering from headaches from straining my eyes”.

The School Eye Health program in Cambodia, which is co-funded by Optometry Giving Sight and implemented by the Brien Holden Vision Institute, has so far provided eye health services to 19,764 students and teachers and prescribed 2,225 glasses at 10 schools. It also provided information about the importance of professional eye checks and Socheata now frequently shares this information with her friends, relatives and community.

World Sight Day is an annual day of awareness held on the second Thursday of October to focus global attention on blindness and vision impairment. It is coordinated by the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) as part of the VISION 2020 Global Initiative. It is supported by eye health organizations around the world – including Optometry Giving Sight - and is included on the official World Health Organization (WHO) calendar. This year’s World Sight Day is on October 13th. This year’s call to action is: *Stronger Together*.

Optometry Giving Sight is the only global fundraising initiative that specifically targets the prevention of blindness and impaired vision due to uncorrected refractive error (URE) – simply the need for an eye examination and glasses.

It was established in 2003 by the World Council of Optometry, the Brien Holden Vision Institute and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness as a means of mobilizing support from the global eye care profession and industry to help eliminate the backlog of people who are needlessly blind or vision impaired – currently estimated at more than 600 million worldwide. It is a registered charity in the USA and in Canada.

Optometry Giving Sight funds the development of sustainable eye and vision care projects in communities where these do not currently exist. How donations can help:

- \$50 can help provide a study kit to an optometry student
- \$100 can help provide 20 people with access to an eye exam and glasses
- \$300 can help to provide a child size trial frame for a community based vision centre
- \$1200 could pay a month's salary for an optometrist

Our Children’s Vision is an initiative of the Brien Holden Vision Institute and Vision For Life / Essilor – aiming for every child, everywhere to have access to eye care. Optometry Giving Sight is a Global Partner in the campaign.