



## Optical Coalition Champions Global Access to Eye Care

(Calgary AB – Oct 4th, 2018): Leading global optometric companies and networks are coming together as a coalition to help the 1.2 billion people worldwide who are unnecessarily vision impaired, simply because they don't have access to an eye exam and glasses.

Thanks to the campaign organized by Optometry Giving Sight, leading optical companies are part of a Coalition to raise money and awareness through the [World Sight Day Challenge](#) to help the significant global need for eye care.

Even with advances in eye health, the scarcity of resources confronted by people around the world is immense. Millions struggle to access basic vision care. To play their part in tackling this worldwide challenge, the Coalition is fighting the problem with a sustainable outlook.

The coalition members are collaborating towards a shared mission, supporting eye care programs around the world that offer immediate vision care assistance to people in need, long-lasting developments and training of local eye care providers to strengthen the local work force.

"It's amazing to see the effort and passion from the leadership and employees behind these companies," said Dr. Juan Carlos Aragon, Chairman of Optometry Giving Sight. "Without them, our work wouldn't be possible".

The impact of this work is evident. In 2017, Optometry Giving Sight supported 47 projects in 24 countries to get eye care to some of the most marginalized groups like women and children as well as funding optometry schools in some of the most poverty-stricken countries to train local people to become optometrists.

Company Coalition members include ABB Optical Group, Alcon Foundation, Bausch & Lomb, CooperVision, Essilor of America, Eye Recommend, EyePromise, Vision Source®, VSP Global®, WestGroup and Carl Zeiss Vision.

Another 60 companies are participating in the **World Sight Day Challenge** and many more are [signing up](#) and [donating](#) every day. The **World Sight Day Challenge** runs throughout October and November, so there is plenty of time to get involved!

For more information, about the [World Sight Day Challenge](#) and to learn how your organization can join the challenge, please visit [givingsight.org](http://givingsight.org) or call +1 403-670-2619 (Canada) / +1 888 647-4483 (USA) or email [canada@givingsight.org](mailto:canada@givingsight.org)



***Breakout: WSDC Coalition Members have a range of activities planned to raise awareness of the importance of eye health and to provide eye care to people in need, including the following initiatives:***

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**Carl Zeiss Vision Canada** is raising awareness and engaging employees in fundraising initiatives in support of the World Sight Day Challenge by hosting one event per week in October to raise funds for Optometry Giving Sight. Carl Zeiss Vision Canada will be matching employees' contributions.

For World Sight Day 2018, **WestGroupe** has assembled a team of champions who overcome barriers everyday as blind and vision impaired individuals. With these Champions, WestGroupe is challenging everyone with eyesight to take the **#WithoutMySight Challenge**. The challenge is to complete a daily task or routine such as making coffee, applying makeup or making a sandwich, blindfolded! Participants will record a 30 second video of themselves attempting their chosen tasks blindfolded; donate to Optometry Giving Sight; then upload their video to Instagram, Facebook or Twitter, tagging @WestGroupe and using the hashtag #WithoutMySight.

In support of the World Sight Day Challenge initiative, **ABB OPTICAL GROUP** will donate a percentage of its DIGITAL EYE LAB (DEL) Network sales through the month of October to Optometry Giving Sight.

**Alcon Foundation** is running its Cycle for Sight 20/20 Challenge. Reaching their goal of 2,020 Alcon participants across their sites will trigger a \$25,000 donation to Optometry Giving Sight. Many sites, including Australia, Singapore, UK and US, are ready to ride.

For the third consecutive year, **Bausch + Lomb** will hold a national employee fundraising initiative to support the 2018 World Sight Day Challenge. The company will also post on its social media channels to help raise awareness of World Sight Day and the importance of routine eye exams.

**CooperVision**, a Global Gold Sponsor of Optometry Giving Sight, is organizing its seventh consecutive Fight for Sight campaign with participation from employees across the Americas, Europe, Middle East, Africa and Asia-Pacific. An array of inventive, employee-led fundraisers are held over three months including artwork and premium parking auctions, themed apparel days, raffles, food sales and wellness events. With a generous matching gift commitment from the company, the campaign's cumulative contribution is fast approaching \$1 million.

**EyePromise** will yet again engage in multiple fundraising activities this year including employee and customer initiatives. At Vision Expo West, EyePromise hosted the cycle challenge "*Go the Extra Mile in support of OGS*" and raised funds in support of Optometry Giving Sight.

**Essilor of America** will be recognizing those eyecare professionals who embody the spirit of the company's mission of improving lives by improving sight with the launch of the DifferenceMakers campaign. At the microsite [EssilorUSA.com/DifferenceMakers](http://EssilorUSA.com/DifferenceMakers), set to launch on October 11, people can bring an eye care professional's good deeds into focus by nominating them to join Essilor on a Mission Trip to Southeast Asia in 2019. **Essilor Vision Foundation**, the non-profit organization, will host its



annual Kids Vision Fest on October 4<sup>th</sup>. Approximately 400 students from area elementary schools, will come to Essilor of America's Dallas campus, where they will get eye exams and glasses for those who need them. On World Sight Day, Essilor Vision Foundation team members will personally deliver glasses to students at one of the elementary schools.

**Vision Source** will raise funds for World Sight Day through donations from over 3,300 member practices nationwide. In addition, employees at the Vision Source Member Support Center are raising funds through fundraising events such as online auctions, dining events, virtual talent show, and a golfing trip raffle to name a few. Vision Source is also raising funds through the sales of merchandise from [VisionSourceGear.com](http://VisionSourceGear.com). Fifty percent of the proceeds from WorldSight Day branded products will be donated to Optometry Giving Sight.

**VSP Global** is matching donations through employee fundraising activities globally in the month of October and promoting awareness through @VSPVisionCare and @VSPProviders social media pages in support of the World Sight Day Challenge.

In 2018, **ZEISS Vision USA** donated over 300,000 eyeglass lenses to underserved communities in Haiti and Central America. In addition, ZEISS provides free eye exams to over 6,000 patients in underserved communities in India every month.

#### **Notes to the Editor:**

**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. 2018 is the sixth year of the [WHO Global Action Plan](#) which has the rolling theme: [Universal Eye Health](#). This year, the call to action for World Sight Day is [Eye Care Everywhere](#). World Sight Day is Thursday October 11<sup>th</sup> 2018.

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

**Here are some examples of how donations to this year's *World Sight Day Challenge* can help:**

- \$ 1,000 – Help provide glasses for 200 children
- \$ 2,000 – Clinical equipment kit to provide outreach services
- \$ 3,000 – Upskill clinical staff to provide eye examinations for children
- \$ 4,000 – Train 100 teachers to conduct child eye health screenings
- \$ 5,000 – Sponsor a school eye health screening for 2,000 children
- \$10,000 – Purchase equipment to set up a clinical eye health examination room