



Optometry Giving Sight to Host Event in Honor of Founder Professor Brien Holden, PhD

Optometry Giving Sight [Brien Holden Founders Award Dinner](#) to be Held October 7

GOLDEN, CO – February 26 – [Optometry Giving Sight \(OGS\)](#) will host the inaugural Brien Holden Founders Award Dinner on October 7 in memory of Prof. Brien Holden, PhD. This year marks the tenth anniversary of his passing. The event will be held in Boston, MA, prior to the American Academy of Optometry's 2025 Annual meeting. During the evening OGS will present the first Optometry Giving Sight Brien Holden Founders Awards.

"Brien was an international leader in bringing awareness to, and addressing, Uncorrected Refractive Error (URE) globally," says OGS U.S. Board Chair Dr. Juan Carlos Aragon. "He spent his entire career working to eradicate preventable blindness and vision impairment caused by UREs."

In 2003, Holden along with the Brien Holden Vision Institute (BHVI) team, brought together leaders from the World Council of Optometry (WCO) and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) to discuss the need for a different approach to addressing URE—one rooted in the proverb: "Give a man a fish, and he eats for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he eats for a lifetime."

At the time, most efforts to address URE focused on optometrist-led mission trips to areas with no access to eye care. "While these initiatives provided valuable one-time eye exams and eyeglasses to people in need, they lacked long-term, sustainable solutions to the ongoing need for primary eye care," says Aragon. "Brien, along with BHVI, WCO and IAPB leadership, recognized that the root cause of URE was the lack of optometry professionals and infrastructure to support optometry in developing countries", says Aragon. "So, they established Optometry Giving Sight as a fundraising entity to support global projects that provide education and clinical training for optometrists, ensuring they can deliver care both now and in the future. Brien's vision was to invest in education and infrastructure that would build optometry and create lasting change."

Holden's widow, Yvonne, is pleased that Brien is being remembered this way. "He was passionate about OGS right from the very start," she says, "and determined it would serve a great purpose in Optometry. I'm really proud that this is occurring because it would mean so much to him. I'm so happy that Brien hasn't been forgotten, and that his work is continuing."

"Brien was truly a visionary in the effort to create lasting and impactful improvements in access to primary eye care for all," says OGS Canada Board Chair, Dr. Susan Cooper. "He understood that good vision is not only vital to the lives of individuals but also to the welfare of families and communities. We are proud to continue his legacy and pleased to honor him with this event."

Since its founding, OGS has awarded more than 200 grants for supporting the establishment of 14 optometry schools, more than 130 vision centers, and the training of over 14,000 optometry professionals. Programs partially funded by OGS have served more than 8 million people in 47 countries.

More information about dinner sponsorships, individual tickets, and memorial donations can be found [here](#). Award winners will be announced soon.

###

Media Contact

[Sarah Burtner](#)

Director of Communications

386/290-7400

