April 2023 Newsletter

This month we feature the second teaching clinic for Haitian students, highlight collaboration that maximizes the expertise of our chapters, welcome a new SVOSH chapter in Jordan, congratulate three seasoned VOSHers on receiving awards for their incredible work, and a young leader on his appointment as the head of school of optometry and much more.

Second teaching clinic in Haiti

Practice with patients is essential in optometry. What do you do when insecurity does not allow you to enjoy a standard education? The Haitian students of optometry know all about this. Since 2021 VOSH/International in collaboration with VOSH-PA are trying to bridge that gap and support the first graduating class of the Haiti School of Optometry with the practice they need. Read more details about the second teaching clinic for Haiti that took place at the end of March here.

Congratulations
Please join us in congratulating the following VOSHers who have been recognized for their academic, professional and humanitarian work. We are very proud of you !!!

**Robert S. Northrup Humanitarian Award of the Rotary Club of Ann Arbor**

Dr. Nelson Edwards received the **Robert S. Northrup Humanitarian Award of the Rotary Club of Ann Arbor**. This award is presented to those who demonstrate personal and long-term contributions to humanitarian efforts at local, national, or local levels. Dr. Edwards is a director of the VOSH-MI chapter and has very extensive work as a humanitarian. Dr. Edwards was recognized for serving in multiple Rotary International areas of focus. With over 30 years of experience as an OD, Dr. Edwards keeps leading humanitarian eye clinics in Africa and Latin American countries. Recently we were delighted to collaborate with him on a teaching clinic for over 20 Kenyan optometry students of MMUST. Dr. Edwards builds strong connections with local Rotarian clubs that contribute to the success of the clinics. Dr. Edwards, Lieutenant Colonel, retired US Air Force member, past vice-President of VOSH/International, 2019 awardee of the Ferris State College of Optometry Alumni of the Year, and a full-hearted Rotarian since 1991. Congratulations Nelson.

**James A. Boucher Award of Excellence**

Dr. W. Howard McAlister received the distinguished **James A. Boucher Award of Excellence** of the National Academies of Practice (NAP). The award is presented to a member of the academy who has demonstrated exemplary contributions to the profession of optometry, the healthcare field and has upheld the mission of NAP to advance science and the concept of interdisciplinary healthcare. Dr. McAlister is a member of the Board of Directors of VOSH/International and chairs the SVOSH Chapters Relations Committee.

**Oklahoma Medal for Excellence in Teaching**
Alissa Proctor, OD, Northeastern State University optometry professor and faculty adviser of the SVOSH-NSUOCO chapter will receive the 2023 Oklahoma Medal for Excellence in Teaching at a Regional University/Community College Award. This is one of Oklahoma’s most prestigious educator awards and recognizes public school educators for their passion and innovation, their commitment to professional development, and their extraordinary impact on student learning. Read more [here](#).

News from our chapters

Nicaraguan school of optometry appoints new head.

VOSH/International has watched many developments throughout its history. Nothing can be more satisfying than to have witnessed the journey of a student to becoming the head of his school of optometry. We are delighted to inform you that Dr. Jairo Antonio Mercado has been appointed as the new head of medical optometry at the Nicaraguan Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua. Dr. Mercado is the faculty adviser of the SVOSH-UNAN chapter, a member of the VOSH/International Board of Directors, and chairman of the Latin American Association of Optometry and Optics Legislation and Regulation Committee. We wish Dr. Mercado all the success with his new appointment.

Collaboration in action

VOSH/SOUTHEAST (V/SE) continues to use its new approach to supporting local optometrists in humanitarian clinics to increase their impact. Recently V/SE sent an optometric support team to amplify optometric services offered by the recent [ONE BALL / ONE VILLAGE](#) mission working in...
Welcome to our first SVOSH chapter in Jordan

We are delighted to welcome the first SVOSH chapter in the Middle East at the school of optometry at the Al-Ahliyya Amman University in Jordan, SVOSH-AAU-Jordan. The faculty adviser of the new chapter, Dr. Yazan Gammoh, is a recognized leader and humanitarian. VOSH/International looks forward to working with this chapter to support and learn from Jordanian optometry. Welcome!

Students are needed for the VOSH-Santa Cruz clinic in Ecuador

VOSH-Santa Cruz is looking for students interested in joining their clinic in Cuenca, Ecuador. The dates are July 20th to 30th earliest. This chapter also has boxes of 500 sunglasses to donate. Interested chapters need to pay for shipping costs only. Please contact Father Pierre Labine at pierre.labine@sympatico.ca for more information.

VOSH-SE and Eye for God Ministries need optometrists

Eye for God Ministries, a partner of VOSH-SE is looking for optometrists for 3 clinics in Guatemala as follows:
- May 8 to 13. One optometrist for Guatemala City.
- September 17 to 23. Two optometrists for San Juan Sacatepequez.
- October 22 to 28. Two optometrists for Jalpatgua.
Interested? Please contact Glenn Lashley at gmlashley@juno.com or 386-846-6293.
Inherited retinal diseases—or IRDs—can cause severe vision loss or even blindness. Prevent Blindness organizes this webinar focusing on children living with an IRD. Register here.