



March 2025 Newsletter

March was a busy month with two important celebrations. President Santiago reflects on World Optometry Day and we honor our wonderful colleagues on International Women's Day. We welcome a new VOSH chapter in Jordan, celebrate the 65th anniversary of the MCU College of Optometry in the Philippines, learn about VOSH-Ohio in Guatemala, and celebrate two important awards to remarkable VOSHers plus several news from our partners.



President's Insights

In celebration of World Optometry Day, President Santiago shares his insights on the importance of this day for optometrists worldwide.

Read the English version [here](#) and the Spanish version [here](#)

Celebrating International Women's Day

On March 8th, International Women's Day, we celebrated the leadership, expertise, creativity, agency, and commitment of women optometrists, students of optometry, and allies who work tirelessly to offer the gift of vision to all. Access to eye care is unequal and affects more women worldwide. The latest issue of the [Community Eye Health Journal](#) **Eyes on Equity: Advancing Eye Health for Women and Girls** is available [here](#).





VOSH/INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING NEW ENGLAND COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY



Boston, Massachusetts, USA
October 12th, 2025
8:00 am - 1:00 pm

News from our chapters



A new VOSH chapter in Jordan

We warmly welcome a new VOSH chapter at the **International Eye Health and Vision Association (IEVA)** in Jordan. Dr Bahaa Jaber, President of VOSH-IEVA-Jordan, **said** “At IEVA, we are committed to providing our full support to this chapter in advancing humanitarian efforts, educational initiatives, awareness campaigns, and knowledge transfer activities. We look forward to collaboratively achieving the objectives of VOSH-IEVA through well-structured strategies and by continuing the outstanding work of IEVA members”. During World Optometry Week, VOSH-

IEVA-Jordan worked with the SVOSH-AAU-Jordan chapter offering eye care to children with cancer in this country. An impactful collaboration between VOSH chapters. You can contact Dr Jaber at doctor_22@hotmail.com

VOSH-Ohio goes to Guatemala

In January VOSH-Ohio visited San Lucas, Guatemala. This area has a majority Maya descent population. The team of optometrists, opticians and lay volunteers saw 860 patients of which 117 needed prescription glasses and 68 referrals in five villages. Their local partner **Friends of San Lucas** has worked in this area since 1963. Read the whole report [here](#). For more information contact Brenda Krauss, president VOSH-Ohio at bjk885@gmail.com



Visits San Lucas, Toliman, Guatemala

nutrition at the 69th UN Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW)

2025 marks the 30th anniversary of the 4th World Conference on Women and the adoption of the famous Beijing Declaration (Beijing+30). On such a special occasion Dr Ellen Antwi-Adjei, former faculty adviser of SVOSH-KNUST-Ghana, and nutritionist Oluyemisi Akinsola organized a webinar on **Women’s vision and nutrition education** on March 13th to shine a light on the connection of these important topics.

Manila Central University College of Optometry celebrates its 65th anniversary

So many decades of educating Philippino optometrists deserve great celebrations. On March 13th MCU optometry students from different associations organized [a vision clinic](#) for the communities of Maysilo and Brgy. This activity adds to the established tradition of community service at MCU. Congratulations on this important anniversary!!



Courses you cannot miss

If you are coming to Minneapolis, please consider attending these courses led by VOSH leaders, VOSH volunteers and friends. The list of suggested courses is [here](#). We will share a list of posters when this is made available.

Awards

Dr. Timothy Wingert to join the AOA National Optometry Hall of Fame

Dr. Wingert, VOSH/International Education Committee Chair will be inducted into the **American Optometric Association National Optometry Hall of Fame**. The Hall of Fame recognizes and honors optometrists who have made significant and long-lasting contributions to the optometric profession. Dr Wingert's academic credentials are significant, his commitment to access to care and promoting international optometric education are very special to the VOSH community. Congratulations Tim!



Timothy Wingert, OD, FAO

**American Optometric Association
National Optometry Hall of Fame**



Tracy Matchinski, OD, FAO

**American Optometric Association
Dr Jerry P. Davidoff Vision Care Award**

Dr Tracy Matchinski is awarded the Dr Jerry P. Davidoff Vision Care Award

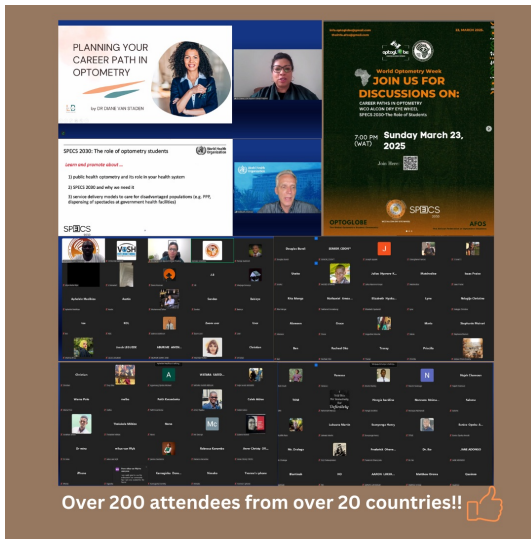
VOSH/International Past President, Dr Tracy Matchinski has been awarded the AOA **Dr Jerry P. Davidoff Vision Care Award** for actively serving in a clinical vision rehabilitation practice setting, giving back to optometry through education and demonstrating a long-standing contribution and sharing knowledge with fellow practitioners for the betterment of vision rehabilitation eye care. Congratulations Dr Matchinsky. We celebrate your achievement!

News from our partners

Celebrating World Optometry Day- Role of Optometry in SPECS 2030

The **Asia Pacific Council of Optometry (APCO)** in collaboration with the **Global Optometry Public Health Alliance (GOPHA)** organized an online webinar on the Role of Optometry in SPECS 2030. Panelists included a few VOSH leaders such as VOSH/International President, Dr Santiago, who highlighted the Latin America perspective, Prof Tuwani Rasengane offered the African perspective, and Dr Ameer Abou Adela the view from the Eastern Mediterranean. The importance of strengthening research and integrating optometry into the health systems featured in the discussions. Our appreciation to Dr Rajeev Prasad, President of APCO, and Prof. Kovin Naidoo of GOPHA for the organization of this webinar.





Celebrating World Optometry Week-OPTOGLOBE and AFOS mobilize students in a day of learning

On March 23rd **OPTOGLOBE** and the African Federation of Optometry Students (**AFOS**) organized a successful webinar attended by more than 200 participants from over 20 countries to offer optometry students insights into the role of students in the WHO SPECS 2030 initiative and wise advice on planning their career paths in optometry.

Podcast on Volunteering in Optometry

Dr Carol Pinzon, founder of **CERPRO** (Center of Professional Development) hosts a podcast with Dr Santiago, President of VOSH/International on volunteering in the eye health sector, the importance of collaboration, and the work of VOSH/International. The podcast is in Spanish and available [here](#).



New blog series on Cultural Responsiveness

Latinos en Optometry in collaboration with VSP launched a blog series on Cultural Responsiveness to support optometrists in understanding the importance of healthcare services that are responsive to the social, cultural and linguistic requirements of patients.

You can subscribe to receive the blog [here](#).

A successful Research Day for Africa

The Research and Advocacy Board of the African Council of Optometry in collaboration with the AAO-African Chapter organized another Research Day. Congratulations to the organizers. You can read the report [here](#).



2025 Focus on Eye Health Summit

Prevent Blindness annual online summit offers a groundbreaking gathering of leaders in public health, eye care, and government sectors. This year's theme, *Perspectives in Vision*, emphasizes the need for a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach to addressing eye health challenges in an evolving world. This is a free event featuring great presentations and opportunities to connect with a diversity of eye care professionals. More information on the program and registration [here](#). Do not miss it!

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