



March 2026 VOSH Newsletter

The power of collaboration

This month, President Weiss invites us to listen to a podcast exploring how VOSH is changing global eye care. In celebration of World Optometry Week we highlight inspiring examples of collaboration from Nicaragua, Kenya, Jordan, Nigeria, Guatemala, and Mexico. We also share a recent collaborative success from the Research Day, along with several chapter and partner requests and a new publication. We hope you enjoy these stories of partnership, impact, and humanitarian service.

President's Insights

Adam Cmejla generously offered to host me on his Podcast

20/20 Money: The Business of Optometry Podcast this month. It was a fun and interesting exchange.

Adam is easy and enjoyable to talk with and he is genuinely interested in what we Optometrists do. He is interested in knowing what he and his community of listeners can do with and for VOSH/International. Take a listen in your car, while walking, or on public transport. I hope you hear something new and inspiring from VOSH/International.

You can listen to the podcast [here](#).

President's Insights

March 2026

Changing Global Eye Care

a podcast with



Mentoring the future researchers

Inspiring the next generation: A successful Research Day that sparked possibility

Courage, curiosity, and willingness to learn were on full display at the 2026 Research Day, organised by the Center for Eye Care and Public Health Intervention Initiative (CEPHII) in partnership with VOSH/International and supported by AFOS. Sixteen African optometry students presented their abstracts, received expert feedback, also from potential mentors. The best three abstract presentations were announced at the end of the event, plus the People's Choice. All participating students have been invited to benefit from mentoring by CEPHII and VOSH volunteers-opening doors to continue guidance and professional connections. The five best abstracts will present their work



at the upcoming African Council of Optometry Congress. The videos of the awardees' presentations are [here](#).

News from our chapters

A long-awaited visit strengthens our links with Jordan

After months of preparation, Dr. Tareq Nabhan, faculty adviser of the SVOSH chapter at the University of Missouri-Saint Louis (SVOSH-UMSL) completed a successful Ambassador's visit to the Jordan University of Science and Technology (SVOSH-JUST), strengthening connections through humanitarian outreach and inspiring lectures. Read the article [here](#).



VOSH-Connecticut Returns to Nicaragua

VOSH-Connecticut marked 25 years of service with its annual eye care clinic in San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua, continuing a strong partnership with the Fundación Patricia Claeys and welcoming SVOSH-UNAN students and graduates to participate, expand their clinical skills and professional connections. Read the article [here](#).



A growing partnership of service in Kenya touched by a gift of gratitude

Sometimes the deepest gratitude needs no words. After receiving high prescription glasses, a female patient returned to the clinic not only to say thank you for the transformation to her daily life, but to offer one of her most valuable possessions, a live chicken. Her heartfelt gift reflects the profound impact of a growing partnership between VOSH-MI, SVOSH-MMUST and Rotaract, which served 1,535 other patients across four days. The invaluable support of National Vision/ The Coalition for Clear Vision made this important work possible. Read a nice article on this work [here](#).



VOSH-MN calls on the VOSH community to support Antigua, Guatemala

VOSH-MN encourages fellow VOSH chapters to consider going to Antigua in 2027 and working with their trusted partners, **Common Hope**. Read the article [here](#) and check a nice PPT with more information [here](#).



Important Call to VOSH Chapters

In February 2026, VOSH Minnesota provided...

- Over 1,000 eye exams to our affiliates, many of them getting examined for the very first time
- Provided over 800 glasses at no cost to the families
- Delivered excellent care to the families through our clinic with the support of our local translators and medical team members





Bringing Hope during the Conflict in Lebanon

During conflicts, hope may feel distant, but together, and during this World Sight Day, we can make a difference!

Vision Care Association/VOSH-Lebanon launched

Eye on Lebanon Campaign 2026

And started preparing essential "Eye Care & General Hygiene kits" to families displaced by the war on Lebanon. But we need your help to reach even more families in need. For just \$17.5, you can provide a family with one of these critical kits, offering them the care and protection they need. Your donation could save a child's sight or bring relief to a mother in need.

DONATE NOW!

BANK DETAILS

BYBLOS BANK, JDITA BRANCH, LEBANON

SWIFT: BYBALBBX

USD Account: 3004262903001

IBAN: LB7800390000003004262903001

Beneficiary Name: VISION CARE ASSOCIATION

Address: BAR ELIAS - BEKAA - LEBANON

For more info, contact us on WhatsApp: 00961 3 299722

visioncareassociation.com

info@visioncareassociation.com

Vision Care Association - الجمعية اللبنانية للرعاية البصرية

Member of WCO, EMAO, GOPHA, IAPB & WHO Global SPECS Network

Supporting VOSH-VCA-Lebanon amid ongoing crisis

Our colleagues in Lebanon are experiencing an ongoing humanitarian crisis with profound consequences for families and communities. Amid displacement, uncertainty, and loss, VOSH-VCA-Lebanon continues to work tirelessly to support those most affected by the war. Let us not forget them. If you can, please support them. You can contact Ali Ali, President VOSH-VCA-Lebanon at Ali_ali_95@live.com



Kenya hosts its First Specialty Contact Lens Summit

Nairobi became a hub of learning and collaboration as Kenya hosted the 1st Specialty Contact Lens Summit, welcoming more than 100 participants from 14 countries. The event brought together clinicians, educators, industry partners, and optometry students, marking an important milestone for optometry in the region. The event focused on improving clinical skills in the fitting and management of specialty lenses. Congratulations to our Kenyan colleagues and their partners.

Read the article [here](#).

GUERRERO

SPRING CLINIC 2026



OVER 500 EYE EXAMS



282 CATARACT SURGERIES



60 RETINA TREATMENTS



92 CUSTOM GLASSES MADE



99 DENTAL PROCEDURES



HUNDREDS OF LIVES CHANGED

NEXT CLINIC: JUNE 21-28

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VOSH-TX Spring Clinic

The **Guerrero Clinic** just wrapped up another amazing week! With over 500 eye exams, 282 cataract surgeries, 60 retina treatments, and more, VOSH-TX keeps changing lives.

The next clinic is on June 21-28. For more information, contact Dr Amie Gisbert, President VOSH-TX at amie.gisbert@yahoo.com



Empowering teachers on early detection of vision problems in Jordan

Early detection of vision problems in children can be life-changing, yet school screenings can be infrequent and reliant on visiting teams. Building on earlier work by SVOSH-AAU, a pilot training held on March 12, 2026, aimed at equipping school teachers with the skills to recognise early signs of amblyopia and other vision issues.

Read the article and the published paper on this work [here](#).



Clearer Sight, Brighter Futures: Students leading the way in Benin City

Driven by purpose, Nigerian optometry students are making a difference for the next generation. Led by the Nigerian Optometric Students Association (NOSA) in partnership with SVOSH chapters, the Vision for Schools program organised an eye clinic and awareness sessions for high school students in Benin City.

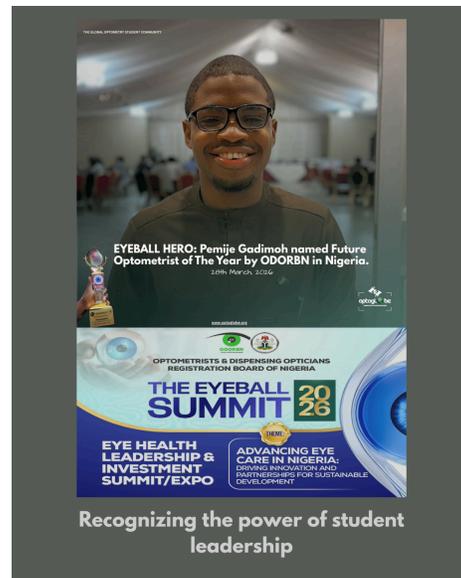
Read the article [here](#).

Awards

Celebrating a rising leader in optometry

We are proud to celebrate a student leader whose dedication and impact have truly made a difference. The Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Registration Board of Nigeria (ODORBN) presented the Eyeball Hero Award: Future Optometrist of the Year to Optoglobe founder and former SVOSH-UNIBEN leader, Pemije Gadimoh. This award recognises the power of student leadership to shape the future of optometry.

Congratulations, Pemije, on this well-deserved recognition.



Requests

Join VOSH-NorthWest in Sierra Leone

In October 2026, VOSH-NW, in collaboration with [Helping Children Worldwide](#) will go to Bo, about a 5-hour drive from the capital Freetown to organise a 4-5-day eye clinic, 1 day training of local nurses and volunteers on diabetic retinopathy and a couple of days for sightseeing.

They are looking for two to three optometrists and potentially two opticians. For more information, contact Joanna Haws, OD at drjoannahaws@gmail.com



SVOSH-ICO is looking for a clinic to join this August

SVOSH-ICO is seeking to join a humanitarian eyecare clinic taking place between August 1 and 10 after original plans were disrupted by severe weather.

If you are organising a clinic during this window, or know of one, please contact Caroline Onwuzu, President SVOSH-ICO at conwuzu@eyedoc.ico.edu



Optometrists needed for a multidisciplinary clinic in Peru

Optometrists are invited to join a multidisciplinary outreach clinic in Pucallpa, Peru, taking place May 20-27. Organized by the Spring Meadows Seventh-day Adventist Church from Florida the clinic will deliver eye care alongside medical, dental, physical therapy, counselling, and construction services. If interested, please contact Iliana Dialectakis at iliana@dialectakis.com



Interesting Publications

Collaboration and learning in a Guna community humanitarian clinic

The *Journal of Optometric Education* has published a paper showcasing the impact of a humanitarian clinic serving a Guna community in Panama. "A voluntary Guna Eye Clinic: opportunities for developing clinical skills, cultural competence, and research capacity" highlights the collaboration between SVOSH chapters at the InterAmerican University of Puerto Rico and the Universidad de las Americas in Panama. You can read the paper [here](#).



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