



June - July 2023 Newsletter

This month we cover the work of two months. In this double issue you will find plenty of information about the work of our chapters, offers you do not want to miss, requests of advise. We are proud of everything you do and achieve. We launch the call for nominations to the VOSH/I awards and announce the opening of registrations to our Annual Meeting to be held on October 15 in New Orleans. We share a snapshot of a visit to the schools of optometry in Vietnam and President Ciszek shares an important reflection about deciding on technology options for our patients. Enjoy this issue, share it with your members and share your news with us.



President's Insights

Recently, our Executive and SVOSH Chapter Relations Committees held a relevant discussion triggered by a question of one of our SVOSH chapters about technology and what services we should or should not be offering to patients in our humanitarian clinics. The SVOSH chapter has access to... Read the whole article [here](#)

2023 Midyear Meeting

In Washington DC between June 23rd and 24th during the AOA's Optometry meeting, VOSH/International held its midyear hybrid Board meeting to assess progress to date and focus on key work related to support to Haiti, educative initiatives, key partnerships, and support to our chapters. We were honoured to welcome Dr Luckson Previll, Haitian OD committed to developing optometry in his country of birth. This time, the highlight was the brainstorming meeting with leaders of our US SVOSH chapters. We were delighted to reconnect with the young generation of VOSHers and listen to their ideas and suggestions. We will continue working with this core group of SVOSHers and reach out to those who could not join us this time. To end a successful meeting, once again we co-hosted a reception for AOSA leaders. Thanks to the AOA team for their constant support with this yearly event.



AWARDS

2023 Essilor Award for Outstanding International Contributions to Optometry

VOSH/International Board of Directors member and Chair of our Education Committee, Dr Tim Wingert has been awarded the 2023 AAO - Essilor Award for Outstanding International Contributions to Optometry. The Award will be presented on October 13 at the American Academy of Optometry meeting in New Orleans. Congratulations Tim!! Read the announcement [here](#).



NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN

Harry Zeltzer Lifetime Achievement Award

Humanitarian of the Year Award

2023 VOSH/International Awards open for applications

Every year VOSH/International recognizes volunteers who have excelled in their humanitarian work. VOSH/International chapters are encouraged to send nominations by August 25 for:

The **Dr. Harry I. Zeltzer Lifetime Achievement Award** is presented to a person who has provided a lifetime of service to people in need through improving visual welfare as a leader, educator,

inventor, public health work, developing sustainable eye care or furthering the understanding and correction of refractive error and visual impairment. The awardee meets the highest criteria that exemplify the spirit of VOSH/International.

The **Humanitarian of the Year Award** honors a VOSH member who, during the year, has improved visual welfare through leadership, education, invention, public health interventions, the development of sustainable eye care or the further understanding and correction of refractive error and visual impairment. Read more details on the nomination process and application [here](#).

2023 Annual Meeting- Registration is OPEN

2023 Annual Meeting

October 15th, 2023

New Orleans, LO, USA

Or via Zoom

7:30 am -1:00 pm (US CT)

Transforming access to eye care through technology and innovation.

Embassy Suites by Hilton New Orleans
315 Julia St, 70130
vosh@vosh.org



This year's hybrid Annual Meeting will focus on "Transforming access to eye care through technology and innovation". Through a range of presentations and

discussions ranging from telehealth and its uses in humanitarian settings, mobile clinics, the impact of the modern refractive technologies and retinoscopy, OCTs and low vision innovations, there will be plenty of food for thought.

The presentation of the two VOSH/International Awards and the inauguration of our new President for the period 2023-2025, Dr Hector Santiago, will be part of the program. A special session designed with the US SVOSH chapters will bring fresh ideas to the table.

Please join us on **October 15th between 7:30 am to 1 pm** at the Embassy Suites by Hilton New Orleans, a short 5 minutes from the AAO venue.

On October 14th there will be a networking dinner with a raffle to raise funds to continue supporting the school of optometry in Haiti through its SVOSH chapter. A separate registration will be available once the venue is confirmed.

Thanks for your support and see you in New Orleans or via Zoom in October. Registration via Zoom will follow.

If you have any questions please contact Maria Arce, Executive Director at vosh@vosh.org

REGISTRATION IN PERSON ATTENDEES

News from our chapters

Supporting vulnerable communities in the USA

Serving vulnerable communities in the USA

In June VOSH-CT President, Dr Matthew Blondin, offered clients of the [IRIS-Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services of New Haven](#), CT-eye examinations at his Torrington office. Patients were from Venezuela, Guatemala, Congo, Mexico, and Ecuador, and included adults and several children. What a meaningful way to commemorate Refugee Awareness Month.



Services for gender violence survivors in Chicago

In July VOSH-IL and ICO students members of QE organized a vision screening for the clients of [Apna Ghar](#) (our home in Hindi/Urdu). In the last 30 years, Apna Ghar has offered comprehensive and culturally competent services to immigrant and refugee survivors of gender violence from 65 different countries in Chicago. Thirty-eight survivors of gender violence and some children received full eye exams, glasses and sunglasses with kindness and humanity. Thank you !!!

SVOSH Chapters supporting each other

Colombian SVOSH-AreaAndina

supports Peruvian SVOSH-Eurohispano

Our first **South-South exchange program** started with a working week between Dr Carol Pinzon, SVOSH-AreaAndina and the team of Peruvian SVOSH-Eurohispano led by Dr Severo Sanchez. This work was postponed due to the political situation in Peru earlier this year. We look forward to the next steps.

Thank you, Carol, Severo and the Peruvian team.



South - South Collaboration

Peruvian SVOSH-Eurohispano team led by Dr Severo Sanchez with Dr Carol Pinzon SVOSH-AreaAndina after a working session. July 2023 in Lima, Peru



SVOSH-NECO donates equipment to SVOSH-KNUST-Ghana

US SVOSH-NECO donated equipment to SVOSH-KNUST in Ghana. Dr Kwadwo Owusu Akuffo, head of the department of optometry and visual science expressed his appreciation to its fellow US SVOSH chapter and their faculty adviser Dr Bina Patel. Read more details in the article [here](#).

Networking and raising the profile

SVOSH-AAU-Jordan attends the Jordanian Optometric Conference

Between 22 and 23 June, students of the SVOSH-AAU (Al-Ahliyya Amman University) attended the annual Jordanian Optometry conference. This is the first official engagement of this SVOSH chapter. Students benefited from learning about new optical products and technologies. A great opportunity to network and learn.



Several VOSHers attend the 4th IACLE World Congress in Birmingham, United Kingdom

Between 5-8 July 2023 120 contact lenses educators from around the world met at Aston University in Birmingham, UK.

Several VOSHers were in attendance and VOSH Executive Director met with Dr Deepa Chandrasekaran (USA), Dr Emmanuel Kobiah Acquah (Ghana), Optometrist Sheila Nangena (MMUST, Kenya) and enjoyed meeting many VOSH friends and former colleagues.



Drs Chandrasekaran (USA), Kobiah (Ghana) and Nangena (Kenya) with Maria Arce, VOSH/IED.

Haitian SVOSH-UEH-FMPEO makes waves at the Health

Sciences Scientific Days

Between 27 and 28 July the Faculties of Health Sciences at the Université d'Etat d'Haiti held its traditional Scientific Day focused on "Patient centered health services: towards a new paradigm in Haiti".

Optometry students participated explaining about optometry and demonstrating what the profession can do. Always moving forward. Well done!!



Humanitarian work across the world



SVOSH-MCU-the Philippines Pediatric Eye Care Project

SVOSH-MCU together with the Optometry UNICEPS conducted its first in person seminar since 2020 entitled **Eye Care Seminar: Eye Dos and Eye Don'ts** for 63 Senior High School students from STEM 11-1 and 11-2, and some Optometry students. The seminar raised awareness about optometry, refractive errors, eye care tips and more.

In June and early July, this chapter in collaboration with

MCU College of Optometry, MCU UNICEPS, Junior IPAO MCU Chapter, IPAO CAMANAVA Chapter, and Know the Glow MCU Chapter, held a Pediatric Eye Care Project in 3 public elementary schools in Caloocan City. They provided free comprehensive eye examinations to 500 Grade 1 students and also catered for 84 senior citizens including some people with disabilities.

VOSH-TX leads successful clinic in Guerrero, Mexico

VOSH-TX held another successful summer clinic at their premises in Guerrero, Chihuahua. This chapter has a fixed infrastructure in place where they hold their humanitarian work.

They are receiving applications for their Fall Eye and Dental clinic. More information can be found [here](http://www.guerreroclinic.org).



Celebrating achievements

First female Panamanian PhD Optometrist

We want to express our heartfelt congratulations to Dr Nadiuska Platero, faculty adviser of our



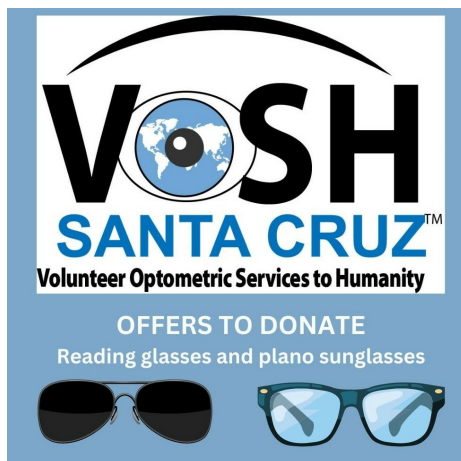
SVOSH-UDELAS chapter in Panama for obtaining her PhD degree from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain making her the first female optometrist with a PhD degree in Panama. Congratulations for your hard work!! Felicidades!!!

Requests and offers

Options to transport glasses

SVOSH-NECO needs your advise. They want to change their current boxes to transport the glasses they use in their humanitarian work for something lighter and durable. It is becoming increasingly difficult to take the crates abroad due to new customs requirements and bring them back as well.

We encourage VOSH chapters to share your suggestions with this SVOSH chapter. Please contact Michael Dubien, President SVOSH-NECO at michaeldubien25@neco.edu



VOSH-Santa Cruz- Quebec has new glasses to donate

This chapter just received a big donation of new glasses and sunglasses that they want to share with VOSH and SVOSH chapters. They can put them boxes of 500. Interested chapters need to pay shipping costs only.

Contact Father Pierre Labine at pierre.labine@sympatico.ca

Optometry in Vietnam

While in Vietnam for a non-VOSH work visit, our Executive Director visited the schools of optometry in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh city. In Hanoi, a productive meeting with Prof. Pham Trong Van, Head of the Ophthalmology Department and Minh Anh Tran, head of the school of



With Prof Pham Trong Van, Chair Ophthalmology Department and team at Hanoi Medical University.

Optometrists and ophthalmologists at vision clinic in Hanoi

With Dr Minh Anh Tran Head of the school in Hanoi

With Dr. Tri Trinh Quang, Head of the Optometry Department and team at the Pham Ngoc Thach University of Medicine, Ho Chi Minh City

With Dr Lori Copilevitz VOSH volunteer teaching at the school in Ho Chi Minh City

optometry was followed by an enlightening visit to the school and its vision clinics. Minh Anh Tran is the 2019 IAPB Eye Health Hero Award in recognition of her leadership role in developing optometry in Vietnam and a great asset to the school in Hanoi.

At the University of Medicine Pham Ngoc Thach in Ho Chi Minh City, a meeting was held with Dr Quang Tri Trinh, head of the

optometry department, Dr Lori Kopilevitz, lecturer and VOSH volunteer based in Vietnam and other members of the Vietnamese team. In both meetings, discussions focused on ways that VOSH/international could support both schools through our specific programs.

VOSH/International is very grateful for the warm welcoming to our Executive Director and looks forward to working with both schools in the near future. Drs Bob and Kim Molter lecturers at the Ho Chi Minh program were back in the USA at the time of the visit. Dr Bob Molter is a board member of VOSH/International.

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