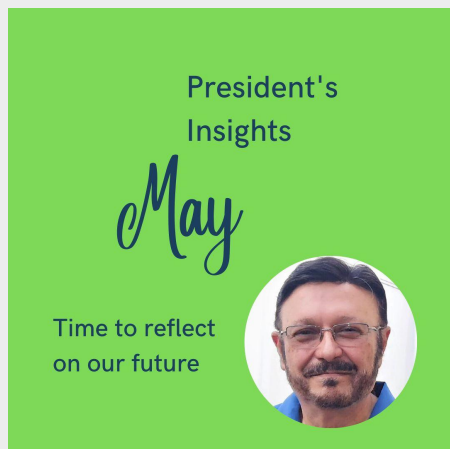




May 2024 Newsletter

This issue is full of interesting news. President Santiago extends an invitation to reflect on the future of VOSH/International. Read more about VOSH/International participation at the inaugural SPECS 2030 network, a COPE course on specialty contact lenses, several humanitarian clinics, interesting webinars, articles, and introducing a global network of students of optometry, OPTOGLOBE. We hope you enjoy it!



President's Insights

This month President Santiago invites us to reflect on the future of VOSH/International.

Read the article in English [here](#) and in Spanish [here](#).

VOSH/International at the inaugural WHO SPECS meeting

VOSH/International President, Dr Santiago, participated in the launch of the WHO SPECS 2030 initiative and the inaugural meeting of the Global SPECS network in Geneva, Switzerland between 14 and 15 May.

Read a short article on this meeting [here](#).



COPE course: What is so special about specialty contact lenses?

You are warmly invited to earn 1 COPE credit and learn about different specialty contact lens designs, discussing the pros and cons of each lens design through case

What is so special about specialty contact lenses?

COPE Course 91401-CL

COPE Activity 128488

Join us for 1 hour
COPE credit

MONDAY JUNE 3RD
7:00 - 8:00 PM
US CENTRAL TIME

DEEPA CHANDRASEKARAN MS,
OD, FAAO, FIAACLE, FSLs, FBCLA

Dr. Chandrasekaran graduated from the Elite School of Optometry in Chennai, India. She earned her MS in Vision Sciences from the University of Alabama, Birmingham, her OD degree from Pacific University College of Optometry and completed a residency in Contact Lens at the UAB School of Optometry (UABSO). Currently one of seven optometrists in the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences at the Vanderbilt Eye Institute, she practices in the Adult Comprehensive Contact Lenses Clinic. She has been a VOSH Ambassador in Ghana.



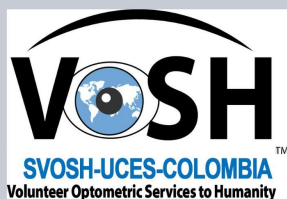
More information:
vosh@vosh.org

reports. Dr Deepa Chandrasekaran, an OD at the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences at the Vanderbilt Eye Institute and a VOSH Ambassador will present this course.

The course will take place on **June 3rd at 7:00 pm US Central Time**. Register [here](#) and download the flyer [here](#).

News from our chapters

Welcome - Bienvenidos



Welcome to SVOSH-UCES-Colombia

We are delighted to welcome a new international school chapter at the Universidad CES, Medellin, Colombia. The Universidad CES offers health services to the commune of Santa Cruz in the city of Medellin. The optometry program will offer eye exams and complement the integral health offer of Universidad CES to this community. The faculty adviser of the new SVOSH-UCES-Colombia is Dr. Maria del Pilar Oviedo Cáceres at moviedo@ces.edu.co. We look forward to working with SVOSH-UCES. Welcome ! Bienvenidos!

SVOSH-UDELAS serves indigenous community in Panama

Between April 7 and 12, SVOSH-UDELAS at the Universidad Especializada de las Americas in Panama organized a humanitarian clinic for the Narganá community in Guna Yala as part of the project Vision and Integrated Health in schools and communities in collaboration with VOSH/International, OneSight EssilorLuxxotica Foundation and FUNDAMERICAS Foundation. Dr Nadiuska Platero, faculty adviser of SVOSH-UDELAS, led a team of 4 students of nursing and 25 students of optometry, to serve 1,035 patients among children and adults. Besides eye exams all patients had their blood pressure, height, and weight measured. More details will be shared soon. You can contact Dr. Platero at nadiuska.platero.2395@udelas.ac.pa



Inspiring words

Dr Tracy Matchinski, Past President of VOSH/International gave the



Dr Tracy Matchinski delivering an inspiring commencement speech at the Illinois College of Optometry, USA

commencement speech at the recent Illinois College of Optometry graduation. Dr Matchinski's inspiring words outlined three areas of advice to the new graduates: advocate for the profession, champion health equity and eye health literacy, and volunteer when and how you can. Dr Matchinski's speech begins at minute 34 in this [YouTube video](#). Watch it and be inspired!

SVOSH-MCU-Philippines organizes another successful Eye Volunteer Mini Conference

On May 27, SVOSH-Manila Central University I the Philippines organized another successful Eye Volunteer Mini Conference, "Awakening the volunteer's heart in us". This year the program included presentations from Dr Jairo Mercado, SVOSH-UNAN-Nicaragua, Megan Webber, co-founder of Know the Glow and results of five research initiatives carried out by MCU students. What a wonderful way of motivating young optometrists to engage in public health research and support their communities. A big thank you to the faculty adviser, Dr Jennifer Viñola, and her wonderful team of students and colleagues who made this mini-conference a success. You can contact Dr. Viñola at drjennvinola@yahoo.com



SVOSH-IAUPR offers Vision Screening Services at the Kidney Foundation Health Fair in Puerto Rico

The SVOSH chapter at the Inter American University of Puerto Rico School of Optometry (SVOSH-IAUPR), along with other student organizations, held a vision screening at the pier of the Cataño municipality on April 28th. Dr. Héctor Santiago, President of VOSH/International, supervised the clinical activity. Many participants were diabetic or hypertensive, diseases which affect the eye. Therefore, the participants were counseled on regular eye examinations to prevent the ocular consequences of these diseases. The participants who failed the screening were referred

to the IAUPR School of Optometry clinic for a comprehensive exam. The Mayor of the City, Julio Alicea Vassallo, participated in the activity and thanked the SVOSH volunteers for their commitment to the visual health of the citizens of his city. The SVOSH-IAUPR President is Yarelis Martinez and can be contacted at R00576512@optonet.inter.edu

VOSH-Santa Cruz is looking for US students of optometry

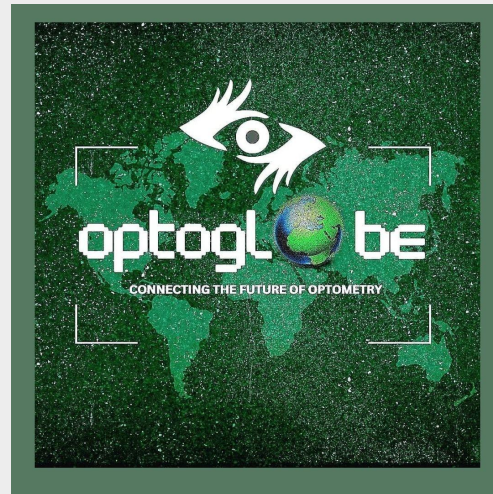
Quebec-based VOSH-Santa Cruz is looking for US students of optometry to join them in their humanitarian clinic in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico between November 20/21 to December 1st. Interested US students please contact Father Pierre Labine at



News from our partners

Introducing OPTOGLOBE

Organized young people can make wonderful things happen! We are proud to introduce **OPTOGLOBE**, a global community of optometry students where knowledge, mentorship, and connections flourish. Read more about OPTOGLOBE [here](#). We look forward to working with them.



Early Detection of Vision Impairments in Children Act

Take action for US children's eyes

On May 14, the Early Detection of Visual Impairments in Children (EDVI) Act of 2024 was introduced. This US bipartisan legislation seeks to create the first federal public health program to address children's vision and eye health through grant-based funding and technical assistance for US states and communities. This Act must be enacted by the US Congress and Prevent Blindness is leading an action to make this a reality. More information on the EDVI Act is available [here](#) and for the US chapters that want to support this action you can do it [here](#).

ASCO Webinar Online Clinical Educators Forum

A collaboration of three SIGS of ASCO, this webinar will emphasize clinical assessment. Dr Shehzad Naroo from Aston University, United Kingdom will be an invited speaker. This webinar may be of particular interest to SVOSH Faculty Advisers. Register [here](#).

ASCO ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS and COLLEGES of OPTOMETRY

Preparing for the NBEO PEPS:
An International Exam Style and Clinical Applications

A collaboration of the Clinical Affairs Committee, the International Optometric Educators Committee, and the Clinical Optometric Methods and Procedures Instructors SIG

Zoom Link to Register:
<https://bit.ly/4sGN2iO>

JUNE 6, 2024
12:30 PM - 2:00 PM ET

ONLINE CLINICAL EDUCATORS FORUM

This may interest our SVOSH faculty advisers

13th Annual Focus on Eye Health Summit
July 10–11, 2024

BEING SEEN AND HEARD

Prevent Blindness
Focus on Eye Health Summit

Prevent Blindness 2024 Focus on Eye Health Summit

On July 10-11, 2024, Prevent Blindness will host the 13th Focus on Eye Health Summit. This year's theme is **"Being Seen and Heard"** to emphasize the importance of a person-centered approach to vision health interventions, research, communications, and care. This is a free online event that attracts a significant diversity of stakeholders. Check the program and register [here](#). This is a great event!

WCO CooperVision® Myopia Management Navigator

The World Council of Optometry (WCO) in partnership with CooperVision, a global leader in myopia management, launched an interactive and educational resource for eye care practitioners worldwide to help advance myopia management as a standard of care. View the navigator [here](#).

ASOCIACIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE CLUBES DE LEONES
MÉTRICO EN SINALOA CAL COLUVERA S/S

Presenta el:

SEMINARIO CON CAUSA

CONFERENCIA
"AFRONTANDO LAS EPIDEMIAS DE NUESTRO TIEMPO: MIOPIA, OBESIDAD, HIPERTENSIÓN Y DIABETES"

DR. HÉCTOR SANTIAGO
Profesor del Programa de Optometría de la Escuela de Optometría de la Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico

12 • Junio • 2024
19:00 Hrs CLAY / 20:00 Hrs COMEX / 22:00 Hrs Puerto Rico

zoom
ID REUNIÓN: 883 4037 5651
Código de acceso: 929933

Conferencia en español "Afrontando las epidemias de nuestro tiempo: miopía, obesidad, hipertensión y diabetes"

El Club de Leones de Sinaloa invita a la conferencia del Dr. Héctor Santiago vía Zoom que se llevará a cabo el **12 de junio a las 7:00 pm hora Colombia/8:00 pm Ciudad de México**. El ID de la reunión Zoom es **883 4037 5651**. El código de acceso: **929933**

Interesting reading

Celebrating Myopia Awareness Week

The Journal of Clinical Medicine just published an article on **"Refractive errors of school children from economically disadvantaged areas in northwest Mexico"** as part of a

special issue *Advanced Research in Myopia and Other Visual Disorders*. This study evaluated 2422 children aged 6 to 18 years from schools in Northwest Mexico. The Refractive Error Study in Children (RESC) protocol by the World Health Organization was used to examine the prevalence of myopia, hyperopia, and astigmatism. Trained optometrists conducted visual acuity testing and autorefractometry, while ophthalmologists performed cycloplegic refraction to ensure accuracy. You can download the article [here](#).

Article
Refractive Errors of School Children from Economically Disadvantaged Areas in Northwest Mexico

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Abstract: Background: Refractive errors, including myopia, hyperopia, and astigmatism, are the leading causes of visual impairment in school-aged children and can significantly impact their academic performance and quality of life. This study aimed to assess the prevalence of refractive errors among school children from economically disadvantaged areas in Northwest Mexico, using a consistent methodology to facilitate comparison with global data. **Methods:** We adopted the Refractive Error Study in Children (RESC) protocol by the World Health Organization to examine the prevalence of myopia, hyperopia, and astigmatism. The study employed a systematic sampling of children aged 6 to 18 years from diverse schools in Northwest Mexico. Trained optometrists conducted visual acuity testing and autorefractometry, while ophthalmologists performed cycloplegic refraction to ensure accuracy. **Results:** The study found a myopia prevalence of 13.0% (95% CI: 11.2–15.1%), with a higher incidence in females (16.0% compared to 8.0% in males) and in at least one eye. Hyperopia (9.2% CI: 7.8–10.8%) and astigmatism (12.0% CI: 10.5–13.5%) were also prevalent. **Conclusions:** The high prevalence of refractive errors, particularly myopia and astigmatism, highlights the need for regular vision screenings in schools and the implementation of public health interventions to provide corrective eyewear. Our study confirms the importance of utilizing standardized methodologies like the RESC protocol to compare refractive error prevalence across different geographical and socioeconomic contexts, thereby informing global public health strategies.



Article

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Keywords: refractive errors; myopia; hyperopia; astigmatism; vision screening; pediatric ophthalmology

1. Introduction
Refractive errors, including visual conditions such as myopia, hyperopia, and astigmatism, significantly affect a child's academic performance and overall well-being [1]. In socioeconomically marginalized areas, notably specific regions in Mexico, the prevalence of these visual conditions is markedly high, often higher than in other regions where refractive error rates reach up to 30% [2,3]. The consequences of unaddressed refractive errors in these areas are extensive. Evidence suggests that children with uncorrected visual impairments experience underperformance in academics, experience social isolation, and even reduce their participation in physical activities, emphasizing the urgency for early detection and intervention [4]. While substantial efforts have been made globally in addressing refractive error correction, significant gaps remain. In Mexico, even with initiatives like "See Your Eyes



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Reflexions on Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month

During Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Month, we feature an article published by Women in Optometry with views of six female ODs of AAPI heritage about their life and professional experiences. [Women in Optometry](#) offers plenty of interesting resources. Check the article [here](#)

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