

## **It is the time for Africa**

**Héctor Santiago, OD, Ph.D., FAAO**

Africa is positioned as a continent of the future. It has the youngest population on the planet, with more than 60% under 25 years of age. By 2035, more young Africans are expected to enter the workforce than the rest of the world. Without a doubt, African youth have great potential to contribute to the progress of Africa.

The VOSH/International meeting in Indianapolis (Indiana) on November 9 was evidence of the leadership of that continent.

A recognition of the talent of our colleagues was the installation of Prof. Tuwani Rasengane as a member of the Board of Directors of VOSH/International. Prof. Rasengane is an SVOSH advisor at the University of the Free State of South Africa. She is also a leader of SPECS 2030, a World Health Organization initiative to increase access to vision correction services globally. Prof. Rasengane gave a presentation on SPECS 2030 at our meeting in Indiana.

Dr Levi Osuagwu is a professor and prolific researcher at the University of Western Sydney. He is the leading promoter of the African Federation of Optometry Students (AFOS). Dr. Osuagwu presented an overview of the mission and achievements of AFOS in Indianapolis.

Professor Mohammed Abdul-Kabir, Director of the Optometry program at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), and SVOSH members Bridget Appiah and Darrah Samson were present from Ghana. From Nigeria, Dr. Godwin Ovenseri-Ogbomo, Counselor of SVOSH University of Benin, and Prof. Edith Daniel-Nwosu, Counselor of SVOSH of the Federal University of Technology, were present.

Via Zoom, the student leader and founder of Optoglobe, Pemije Gadimoh, from the University of Benin, presented a summary of the mission and vision of that global optometry student organization.

We are grateful and flattered by the presence of optometry students and professionals from Africa at VOSH/International. We are committed to continuing to work with them to make our dream possible so that everyone can enjoy the gift of vision.



With our distinguished colleagues from Africa at the VOSH/International meeting in Indianapolis on November 9, 2024