

Giving for Good

How Optical Companies Align Values With Social Causes



Image Credit: Getty Images/ Yellow Dog Productions, Stevica Mirdja / EyeEm, Luis Alvarez, StefanKloic, mixetto

BY VM STAFF

NEW YORK—The crescendo of a global pandemic's impact on health care, geopolitical upheaval, rising racial, diversity and inclusion awareness, climate change and fundamental economic challenges have escalated many things, one of which is a mindset among many that a company, large and global or small and independent, can and needs

to more clearly spell out its values, priorities and support on a range of issues and worthy causes.

Just a few months ago, Forrester Research reported that almost half of U.S. online adults report that they regularly purchase from companies that align with their personal values, and 42 percent try to support brands that are committed to social justice causes. Fully 68 percent of U.S. online adults wish more companies were transparent about their busi-

ness practices, and 63 percent believe companies are responsible for protecting the environment.

As Nadia Reckman, a writer at *Business News Daily* recently put it, corporate social responsibility, or CSR, is a form of self-regulation that reflects a business' accountability and commitment to contributing to the well-being of communities and society through various environmental and social measures.

Continued on page 42

 @VisionMonday

 Facebook.com/VisionMonday

VISIONMONDAY.COM

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2022



How Optical Companies Align Values with Social Causes

Continued from page 39

CSR plays a crucial role, Reckman writes, in a company's brand perception; attractiveness to customers, employees, and investors; talent retention; and overall business success. The definition of business success goes beyond profitability, growth rate and brand recognition.

In today's world, customers, employees and other stakeholders judge a company by how its activity impacts the community, economy, environment and society at large. In other words, by whether it cares about the greater good and not only greater profit.

She also pointed out, CSR has evolved from the voluntary choices of individual companies to mandatory regulations at regional, national and international levels. However, many companies choose to go beyond the legal requirements and embed the idea of "doing good" into their business models.

Certainly, a higher inflation rate in the latter part of this year is one development increasing a consumer priority toward value for their expenditures. But a company or brand's perceived purpose still matters. McKinsey corroborated this in its newest report, which is that young consumers/Millennials, Gen Xers and Gen Zers tend to support environmental, social and governance-related brands and companies who do too. But health care and non-profit giving to local and disadvantaged in the many areas are still important to all sectors.

In the eyecare and optical eyewear field, there continues to be a growing roster of examples of eyecare professionals, executives, companies and brands large and small, that are more consistently speaking about such diverse social causes as racial and social inequities, access to regular quality eyecare and eyewear, environmental causes, sustainability practices and much more.

VM highlights just a small sampling of these on the following pages, examples of only some of

“Corporate social responsibility has evolved from the voluntary choices of individual companies to mandatory regulations at regional, national and international levels. However, many companies choose to go beyond the legal requirements and embed the idea of ‘doing good’ into their business model.”

– Nadia Reckman, *Business News Daily*



the efforts being made across the optical industry in the name of being good corporate citizens, proof that making a difference matters.

Remember to read **VM's A Greater Vision** and **VM's Coronavirus Briefing** stories on *VisionMonday.com* and follow our *VMAIL* news to learn more. Please keep the staff at *Vision Monday* and *VMAIL* in the loop and we'll share your practice, brand or company's message as we move into 2023. ■

– The VM Editors

“In today's world, customers, employees and other stakeholders judge a company by how its activity impacts the community, economy, environment and society at large.”

– Nadia Reckman, *Business News Daily*

More →

Giving for Good



ABB Optical Group Makes Giving Easy for Employees

As a leading distributor of contact lenses and a major provider of prescription laboratory services and business solutions for eyecare professionals, ABB Optical Group has a broad impact on the North American optical industry. It follows, then, that the Florida-based company also takes an expansive approach to social purpose giving. Its ABB Cares program combines strategic relationships with local and national nonprofits, volunteer activities and other community investments, with the goal of contributing to solutions that help strengthen the communities in which ABB employees live and work.

Originally established as a community grant program, ABB relaunched and reorganized it as the ABB Cares Employee Giving Program, a year-round initiative that helps employees achieve their charitable giving goals by facilitating employees' financial contributions to eligible charitable organizations. ABB employees contribute to eligible company-sponsored 501c3 charitable organizations via automatic payroll deduction, in-kind donations, a one-time payroll deduction for company-sponsored fundraisers, volunteer hours or by donating employee recognition points earned through ABB's recognition award platform.

Employees' contributions to ABB Cares company-sponsored organizations are eligible for a dollar-to-dollar match. Employees can designate their contributions to ABB Cares company-sponsored 501c3 charitable organizations. Company-sponsored organizations include two organizations sponsored at the national level: The American Red Cross (U.S.) and Optometry Giving Sight, plus 11 organizations at the location level: The Children's Harbor, Feeding America, The Don Bosco Community Center, Blythedale Children's Hospital, Court Appointed Special Advocates, Building Future, Easterseals, The United Way (Canada) and local chapters of the Red Cross in Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Kansas City, Mo.

The program also offers employees a way to



increase their contributions to their favorite charitable organizations. ABB Optical Group provides a 50 percent match up to \$1,000 per employee in a calendar year.

Additionally, ABB Optical Group provides each employee four hours of paid time off to volunteer their time during a scheduled workday. Employees can sign up for a company-organized event or choose a 501c3 organization to volunteer their Give Back PTO.

To date in 2022, ABB employees have given over \$22,000 in donations to qualifying non-profits, the company said. With the ABB Cares matching program, this has resulted in approximately \$40,000 in total charitable donations. These funds have been raised by organizing events across ABB locations, participating in national campaigns such as the recent campaign to raise funds for Hurricane Ian relief as well as earlier initiatives to support relief funds for Ukraine. (<https://www.visionmonday.com/people/optical-community/article/abb-optical-group-organizes-fundraiser-to-support-humanitarian-efforts-for-ukraine/>)

Most recently, ABB employees raised \$5,000 for recovery efforts for Hurricane Ian and with ABB's match will be making a donation of \$10,000 to the American Red Cross. This donation will be

used to provide food, shelter and other necessities for first responders and victims of Hurricane Ian.

ABB's biggest contributions came in January for the victims affected by tornados in the Midwest. ABB employees collected \$11,000 and with the ABB match donated a total of \$22,000 to the American Red Cross.

The ABB Labs Erlanger team donated spring-themed baskets and then raffled off tickets to win them which resulted in over \$1,000 raised for local charities. In addition, the ABB Canada office held a Q2 Raffle for the Red Cross.

As an ABB spokesperson explained, the company's charitable giving is driven by a shared sense of purpose among management and employees. "We help improve the sight of 70,000 people and make a difference in how they experience the world," the spokesperson noted. "It is serving this higher purpose that drives ABB to do its best, not only for our customers but for our employees and the communities they serve. The ABB Cares program was created because of this sense of purpose and is fueled by our core values of passion, accountability, customer focus and one team. We are all in this together as one team—together we succeed." ■

More →

Giving for Good



National Vision Cares Empowers Doctors and Associates to Support Local Communities

Through its domestic National Vision Cares program, National Vision empowers doctors and associates to support people in need in their local communities. All of National Vision's stores have access to the National Vision Cares Program. Each month, stores are provided with vouchers for a free eye exam and pair of glasses to give to eligible patients, customers or individuals in the community in need of vision care and who do not have vision insurance or participate in governmental health care programs, including those who have suffered major financial setbacks or have been affected by natural disasters.

Stores are encouraged to reach out to local organizations, schools and other entities to help identify people that need assistance.

In 2021, National Vision Cares was made one of the company's central priorities, and National Vision Inc. (NVI) allocated more than \$400,000 in funding to expand the program's reach and impact. This funding supported outreach to communities across the U.S., as well as an increase in the number of vouchers offered from each store. As a result of these efforts, the program delivered eyecare and eyewear to over 21,000 low-income members of the company's communities in 2021. This is more than 10 times the number of people reached in 2020.

This year, National Vision associates have provided more than 30,000 vouchers to people in need throughout the U.S.

"When our associates encounter a person in crisis or identify a need in their community, the National Vision Cares program empowers them to do what's right and respond with compassion," said Heidi Henneman, senior vice president, head of stores. "National Vision's philanthropy helps people all around the world—over one million people last year. National Vision Cares is a way for our associates to make a truly meaningful impact in the lives of individuals right here, right now."



National Vision, Inc. released its first Corporate Responsibility Report last month, titled A World Worth Seeing, (https://bucketeer-db2073e4-ac1a-4046-97bf-04dce765dca1.s3.amazonaws.com/public/documents/FA_210825_NVI_Corporate_Responsibility_Report_digital_V4.1_Large_2.pdf) as part of its ongoing efforts to increase transparency in the company's environmental, social and governance (ESG) activities. "As a low cost health care provider to primarily uninsured Americans living on tight budgets, our business provides an inherent social good," said CEO Reade Fahs.

"This report is National Vision's first attempt to lay out in detail all the things we are doing to be responsible citizens and to bring eyecare and eyewear to low income Americans and people around the world," Fahs said.

The new report builds on the company's 2019 philanthropic impact report and for the first time,

expands disclosure across key ESG areas. Beyond data, the report presents National Vision's approach to corporate responsibility and leverages the company's "SEE+G" framework to focus activities and reporting within four key pillars: Social, Employees, Environment and Governance.

Some of the highlights of NVI's activities in each of the SEE+G focus areas, include:

- **Social:** Donated more than \$2.3 million to strategic nonprofit partners to alleviate the global vision crisis.
- **Employees:** Enhanced benefits to align with what associates said mattered most to them, such as extending the amount of paid parental leave.
- **Environment:** Completed the company's first Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory.
- **Governance:** Board composition and diversity overview, including achieving gender parity among independent directors.
- **Response to COVID-19,** including supporting the safety and well-being of associates, doctors, patients and customers.
- **The company's Crisis Relief Fund** granted more than \$900,000 to associates and doctors in need.
- **Efforts to foster** a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion.
- **Launched new DEI** strategy and goals.

In addition to the America's Best banner group, National Vision operates Eyeglass World, Vision Centers inside select Walmart stores, Vista Optical inside select Fred Meyer stores and on select military bases, and several e-commerce websites. ■

More →

Giving for Good



L'Amey America and Two Blind Brothers Join Forces for a Bigger Purpose

In the beginning of 2022, L'Amey America announced a promotional partnership with Two Blind Brothers, the clothing line founded by brothers Brad and Bryan Manning, who both live with Stargardt disease. This “Do Good, Feel Good” partnership involved a tiered sales program in which customers received one adorable stuffed guide dog plush toy per certain number of frames purchased. All profits from the sales of the stuffed guide dogs went to research to find a cure for blindness.

The program was a resounding success, and in August L'Amey America and Two Blind Brothers announced an official multi-year licensing agreement to produce a collection of sun and optical frames for Two Blind Brothers. The first collection is expected to launch in Fall 2023, and will continue to support the brothers' mission of finding the cure for blindness.

Two Blind Brothers has received endorsements from Ellen DeGeneres, Ashton Kutcher, Richard Branson, NBC Nightly News, and a number of other notable names. To date, the brothers have donated over \$1.5 million to the Foundation Fighting Blindness—a mission that will be strengthened as the brothers enter the optical market.

Brad Manning explained, “Our journey began when our vision started declining as young boys and we had to visit an ophthalmology practice, our first link to the optical community. Our partnership with L'Amey brings us back to where we started—in the eyecare professional's office—as together we develop an eyewear collection that will not only align with our perfect shirt ‘feel the difference’ concept, but benefits clinical trials and helps us raise awareness to further our cause.

“Researchers are on the cusp of therapies that are going to revolutionize medicine and eye disease, and they simply lack the funding to get through clinical trials. Our partnership with L'Amey



Earlier this year, L'Amey America announced a promotional partnership with Two Blind Brothers, the clothing line founded by brothers Brad (l) and Bryan Manning, who both live with Stargardt disease.

America rounds out our mission to be a 360 degree organization: we now donate to the future, contract with blind and visually impaired workers and organizations, and will produce a product that gives back vision,” Manning said.

Stephen Rappoport, CEO of L'Amey America said, “We started working this year with Brad and Bryan Manning and wanted to take the relationship with them to the next level as we develop a special eyewear collection. We believe Brad and Bryan's story, with the eyewear collection's ‘feel the difference’ feature, will have a major impact and we hope every eyecare professional will join us, Brad and Bryan, in the campaign to find the cure for blindness.” ■



L'Amey America and Two Blind Brothers' “Do Good, Feel Good” partnership was a resounding success.

More →

Giving for Good



For ECPs, Social Purpose Is Every Day

Ask any independent ECP and most will agree: one of the best things about running your own small business is the special relationship you build with your local community. Your neighborhood community is what makes you—it keeps you in business, of course, but it also makes life that much more fun and interesting. Good neighbors make for good lives, and being able to give back to local communities is a special privilege for many small businesses.

Beyond just providing eyecare, ECPs give back in a variety of ways depending on the needs of their community, the time of year and the passions of the doctors or business owners themselves. From helping the planet to supporting community members in need, social purpose initiatives are a central part of many ECPs' practice mission. ■

1

2

3

4

1. In Vancouver, Washington, the Evergreen Eye Care team partners with a number of organizations and outreach programs to get eyecare to those in need. These partnerships benefit the local homeless population, World Sight Day and more. *Image via [evergreeneyecarewa](#) on Instagram.*

2. This time of year is great for giving back. The team at Barnes Vision Clinic in Ardmore, Oklahoma, hosts a Thanksgiving Food Drive to benefit the local Food Resource Center of South Central Oklahoma. Plus, patients will be entered into a drawing to win a pair of Oakley sunglasses if they donate at least 10 items. *Image via [barnesvisionclinic](#) on Instagram.*

3. In Albuquerque, New Mexico, City of Vision Eye Care hosts a special Making Strides Against Breast Cancer campaign and fundraiser in October. Owner and president Tracy Ho, OD, matches every dollar donated. *Image via [city_of_vision](#) on Instagram.*

4. Melanie Denton Dombrowski, OD, of Salisbury Eyecare and Eyewear in Salisbury, North Carolina, shared her practice's upcoming Glaucoma Care Days, a partnership with a local Community Care Clinic of Rowan County. *Image via [dr.melaniedenton](#) on Instagram.*

More →

Giving for Good



For ECPs, Social Purpose Is Every Day

1

AMERICA RECYCLES DAY
NOVEMBER 15TH

Drop off your old lenses, contact lenses and contact packaging at our clinics and we can recycle them for you.

Contact Lenses, Plastic and foil blisters

Donate your used glasses without their cases

CARLSON TILLISCH

carlsonstillisch

carlsonstillisch Did you know that you can recycle your used or expired contacts and donate your old glasses?

2

Candy Canes & Cocktails

CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS WITH US

WHEN Thursday, December 8th 2022, 6pm - 8pm

WHERE Eyes of Cresta Bella

Fun GIVEAWAYS, big promotions, appetizer bites, YSL and Gucci Trunk show and local vendors!

eyesofcrestabella

eyesofcrestabella We are THREE weeks away from our holiday party! We are NOW accepting donations for @sapetsalive! Don't forget to text "HOLIDAY" to (210) 361-7720 and get your spot in for the fun night!!

3

familyvisioncenters

familyvisioncenters Family Vision Center is proud to partner with Sterling House Community Center for their 2022 Food Drive.

When you drop off a non-perishable food item at either our Stratford or Bridgeport eye care centers, you can enjoy a 20% discount on select brand name eyeglass frames. (No insurance or other discounts apply.)

Help us end food insecurity! Contact us to learn more or to schedule your appointment. #FoodInsecurity #EndHunger #EyeGlasses #2020Vision

4

vanbruntopicalhaus

vanbruntopicalhaus The AMOR-TINI frame honors and celebrates the wide spectrum of individual and communal expressions of identity in all their diverse, colorful glory. A limited edition frame, proceeds in which will support the vital senior services programs of the Los Angeles LGBT Center.

#eyeworks #amortini #onepair #onelove #rainbow #celebrate #diversity #expression #limitededition #eyewear #lgbt #independenteyewear #optical #opticalshop #optician #losangeles #loveislove

socandtheocmix So COOL!

DONATION DRIVE

BENEFITTING SAN ANTONIO PETS ALIVE!

san antonio PETS ALIVE! Our mission is to provide the programs and services needed to eliminate the killing of at-risk animals due to lack of space, adopter or foster.

Please help provide these items for animals in need

- Cat Litter
- Wet Cat & Dog Food
- Cat & Dog Toys
- Puppy Pads
- Martingale Collars & Leashes
- Treats
- Unscented Baby Wipes
- Paper Towels
- Linens/Blankets (Used or New)
- Dog Bowls
- Cleaning Supplies
- Enrichment Toys (LickiMat & KONG)

San Antonio Pets Alive! is a nonprofit organization that relies on donations and support from individuals, groups, and businesses, to fund our programs, supplies and operational expenses.

Don't stop there! Visit our website to make a gift.

1. Carlson Tillisch Eye Clinic, in New Ulm and Mankato, Minnesota, celebrated America Recycles Day on November 15 by reminding patients that they can drop off their lenses, contacts and packaging at the clinics for recycling. *Image via [carlsonstillisch](#) on Instagram.*
2. Eyes of Cresta Bella in San Antonio, Texas, is hosting a holiday party to benefit Pets Alive!, a San Antonio-based nonprofit that provides for animals in need and aims to eliminate the killing of at-risk animals. *Image via [eyesofcrestabella](#) on Instagram.*
3. In Stratford and Bridgeport, Connecticut, Family Vision Center is partnering with Sterling House Community Center for its 2022 Food Drive. Patients who participate in the drive can receive a 20 percent discount on select frames. *Image via [familyvisioncenters](#) on Instagram.*
4. VAN BRUNT optical haus in Costa Mesa, California, spotlighted the AMOR-TINI frame from La.Eyeworks to mark Pride Month in June. Proceeds from the frame benefitted the Los Angeles LGBT Center. *Image via [vanbruntopicalhaus](#) on Instagram.*

More →

Giving for Good



Johnson & Johnson Vision and Lions Clubs International Partner on Sight For Kids

Johnson & Johnson Vision, a global leader in eye health and part of Johnson & Johnson MedTech, and Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF), a leader among international humanitarian volunteer organizations, recently celebrated the 20-year anniversary of Sight For Kids, a co-founded program to close the gap in access to eyecare by providing comprehensive services for children in low-income and underserved communities.

Founded in 2002 to address inequity in eyecare among children—of the estimated 312 million children younger than 19 with myopia, half of the cases remain undetected and untreated—Sight For Kids is now the largest-known, school-based eye health program in the world, having already served more than 42 million children in Asia, Africa and, most recently, the U.S., since the program's inception.

In 2021, the program expanded to the U.S., collaborating with the Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program, a division of Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, to serve students across Miami-Dade, Broward, St. Lucie and Palm Beach counties, with the goal of providing 20,000 screenings over the first year.

"To create healthy sight for life, we must start in childhood—and healthy sight means more than just the ability to see clearly, but also how we interpret the world around us, socialize and learn," said Peter Menziuso, company group chairman, Johnson & Johnson Vision.

"But not all children have access to basic eyecare services, which is why we partnered with Lions Clubs International Foundation 20 years ago to create Sight For Kids. It has been remarkable to see the difference our teams, partner educators, and eyecare professionals have been able to make across Africa and Asia, and I am so proud we are expanding our commitment to children in need in the U.S.," Menziuso said.

Dr. Alejandro Leon, an ophthalmologist for the Children's Hospital New Orleans talked about the



Dr. Alejandro Leon, an ophthalmologist for the Children's Hospital New Orleans, said it is great to have programs like Sight For Kids in Louisiana as they help children who have difficulty with access of care with their vision and eye problems.

program's expansion into Louisiana. "It is great to have programs like Sight For Kids (SFK) in Louisiana as they help children who have difficulty with access of care with their vision and eye problems. Sight For Kids, together with Lions ClubSight vision screening program, are very important for our community as they help detect certain conditions (e.g., amblyopia) and allow timely treatment to improve visual development that will last a lifetime.

"For those who are older and are starting to need glasses who have difficulty with access of care, SFK helps them get eye exam and glasses that promotes improved class participation and ultimately have a positive impact on their education."

Dr. Jayne S. Weiss, chair, Department of Ophthalmology, professor of Ophthalmology, Pathology and Pharmacology at Louisiana State University School of Medicine New Orleans said, "We greatly appreciate the support of Johnson and Johnson Vision and join you in celebrating the 20th Anniversary partnership with LCIF.

"I am so proud of the hard work of our Louisiana Lions! They have already provided 160 per-



Sight For Kids is now the largest-known, school-based eye health program in the world, having already served more than 42 million children in Asia, Africa and, most recently, the U.S., since the program's inception.

cent of this year's projected number of screenings of children in the Sight For Kids program. Their important work will have a critical impact in both preventing and treating vision loss for the children of Louisiana."

Sight For Kids is one of the longest running programs of its kind and provides teachers with training to deliver eye health education, perform visual acuity tests, and screen for common eye conditions.

Students identified with potential vision impairment or eye ailments are referred to health care providers for further evaluation, all at no cost to the family. To date, 200,000 teachers have been trained and more than 500,000 pairs of free eyeglasses have been provided to underserved children.

To mark the 20th anniversary, Johnson & Johnson Vision and LCIF will be showcasing the power and impact of delivering healthy sight over the past 20 years through 20 stories of people who have experienced that impact firsthand—with an eye toward the future and the lives Sight For Kids will continue to change globally.

Continued on page 58

Giving for Good



Vera Bradley Foundation's Breast Cancer Research Is Long Supported by The McGee Group

The McGee Group, a family-owned, American eyewear company specializing in the design and manufacturing of eyewear, sunglasses, readers and cases, is marking its 40th anniversary this year. The company has reinforced its commitment to breast cancer research by supporting the Vera Bradley Foundation and its own extensive support of the work to find a cure.

To help raise awareness and funding for the Vera Bradley Foundation Center for Breast Cancer, Vera Bradley designs a series of unique patterns every year. The specialty patterns are then applied to a number of products including bags, accessories and eyewear. The McGee Group designs eyewear each year that incorporate the latest Vera Bradley Foundation patterns and releases them into its product offering every October.

In the 2022 edition of its exclusive lineup of eyewear benefitting the cause, The McGee Group has been featuring three new frames, each one highlighting the Happiness Returns Pink pattern as well as other coloring options.

Vera Bradley launched its efforts to raise money for breast cancer research in 1993, and it has secured nearly \$35 million in contributions during the past 25 years. Researchers at the Vera Bradley Foundation Center for Breast Cancer Research at the Indiana University School of Medicine in Indianapolis, Ind., collaborate and lead clinical trials with researchers nationwide. They are focused on developing and dramatically improving therapies for some of the most difficult-to-treat types of breast cancer, including triple negative breast cancer.

Based in Marietta, Ga., The McGee Group, celebrating 40-plus years since its inception in 1976, markets ophthalmic frames, sunwear, reading glasses and cases to all customer groups throughout North America and many international markets including eyecare professionals, distributors, large optical chains, mass merchants and department stores. ■



Andrea P. is an oversized silhouette with an uplift that also features a vertical metal décor piece and metal foil logo on its temple. In addition to Happiness Returns Pink, it also is available in Black Bandana Medallion and Rose Toile.

Kim H. is an aviator frame with a metal end piece décor. It's available in Happiness Returns Pink and Black Bandana Medallion.



Cheryl P., available in Black Bandana Medallion and Rose Toile, is named for a beloved member of The McGee Group staff who is a breast cancer survivor. The petite frame features polarized lenses and a small metal décor piece with recessed enameled.

More →

Giving for Good



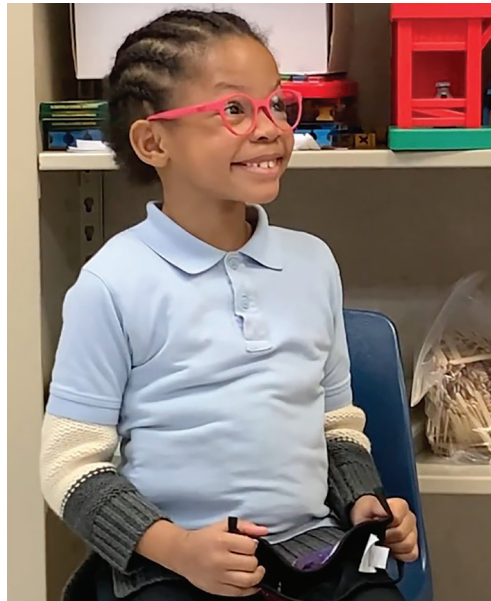
At Classic Optical, Giving Is Focused on Providing Eyeglasses to Students in Need

Classic Optical, a Youngstown Ohio-based manufacturer of prescription eyeglasses, has made participation in social programs part of their company culture. For years, Classic has been providing eyeglasses in coordination with organizations such as OneSight EssilorLuxottica Foundation, Helen Keller International, Vision to Learn, United Way, Sight for All United, VOSH International, and many individual eyecare providers who all play a part to donate time or materials or even both.

Classic's largest efforts focus on providing eyeglasses through school-based programs that identify children in need. They support entire district-lead efforts in the Chicago Public Schools, as well as programs that are out on the road utilizing vision vans to deliver services to more rural communities.

"Our eyeglasses are on the faces of students in need right in our hometown of Youngstown, Ohio, but we also ship out to schools in larger cities like Detroit and Atlanta and even all the way to Honolulu," said Morgan Hartzell, managing director of Classic Optical. "Where we excel is in the manufacturing and timely delivery of those eyeglasses right to the doorstep of where they are needed.

"In 2022, we will have made almost 75,000 pairs of eyeglasses at no charge to a student.



This student was delighted with her new eyeglasses, courtesy of Classic Optical and Fitz Frames.

The work we do with our charity partners has a huge impact on us too. Being able to play a role in the gift of sight provides a sense of purpose to our employees in the work they do every day," Hartzell said.

Classic has helped grow the amount of local students served in Youngstown from the initial Youngstown Community School in 2017 to six to

tal school districts. This year Classic was able to be part of a unique partnership with custom frame manufacturer, Fitz Frames. After the students were given eye exams, they were able to pick out a color and style for their pair of eyeglasses that would be 3-D printed and built to their unique facial measurements right in downtown Youngstown.

"It was a combined effort with national organizations like OneSight EssilorLuxottica Foundation supporting local organizations like Sight for All United and the United Way of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley," said Hartzell. "As a Youngstown native, it was an especially rewarding moment for me to see the entire manufacturing process, from the frames to the lenses, completed right here in Youngstown by Fitz and Classic."

Classic also strives to make "giving back" a part of the company culture. "Our mission is Improving Lives by Improving Sight, and we take the Improving Lives part of our mission outside of our four walls and into the Youngstown community through volunteer work such as ringing the bell for the Salvation Army Red Kettle campaign during the Holidays and serving at a local charity dinner where we donate our serving tips to the Animal Welfare League. We want to make a contribution to our community in more ways than one," Hartzell concluded. ■

Johnson & Johnson Vision and Lions Clubs International Partner on Sight For Kids

Continued from page 54

"Healthy sight is critical to a child's academic performance, self-esteem and overall well-being, but too often they don't have access to eyecare to diagnose and treat vision issues, whether due to financial reasons or a lack of resources in their community," said Dr. Freddy Simon, an ophthalmologist in Kerala, India, who actively engages with the Sight For Kids program.

"These children have their whole lives ahead of them, and by helping their vision through Sight For Kids, we can make a meaningful impact now that will carry into the future, from their studies to their career."

"It is incredible to think back on the past 20 years and all the people who have come together, both in the communities Lions serve and across our organizations, to give more than 42

million children the gift of healthy sight and the societal inclusion that comes along with it," said Dr. Jung-Yul Choi, chairperson, Lions Clubs International Foundation.

"Hearing the stories from around the world about how Sight For Kids is changing lives is inspirational, and I cannot wait to see the impact the program can have over the next 20 years, and beyond." ■