



# EYEsee

Vision for the World

[www.eyeseemission.org](http://www.eyeseemission.org)

Fall 2013 Issue

## Bringing the 'gift of sight' to developing countries

### EYEsee Mission News

In developing countries where the cost of a simple pair of eyeglasses can be the equivalent of a year's salary, the poorest of the population don't have the hope of purchasing their own eyeglasses. Yet, 4 million eyeglasses are discarded in the U.S. each year. By collecting discarded eyeglasses and recycling them for distribution to such developing countries, EYEsee helps improve the lives of the poor through the 'gift of sight'. EYEsee sees recycled eyeglasses as the low-cost and mass solution to this desperate need for eyeglasses in the poorer

countries. This year, EYEsee supplied health missions to Nicaragua, Cambodia, Uganda, Nigeria, Honduras and Haiti. Some of these mission clinics were conducted in remote locations and people traveled by foot—sometimes for days—to reach the clinics. Patients seen during the clinics were upwards of 1,500 each day. Many patients are suffering from poor eyesight and blindness as a result of poverty. A large number received their eyeglasses for the first time. Details about these missions are posted on EYEsee's website: [www.eyeseemission.org](http://www.eyeseemission.org).



A Nicaraguan patient with TUSM team member Lisa Netkowicz after being fitted with eyeglasses.

## EYEsee completes the '2013' Campaign Over 6,500 eyeglasses collected

The '2013 Campaign'—EYEsee's fifth annual used eyeglasses collection drive—concluded with 6,553 eyeglasses collected. Collection drives were held at various Chicago locations which included area churches, senior homes, private offices, optical clinics, elementary and high schools and universities. The '2013 Campaign' aimed to supply health missions this year to Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Cambodia, Philippines, Uganda and Nigeria. Peter Glinos, chapter president of EYEsee and a

senior at Saint Viator High School, coordinated the '2013 Campaign'.

### Parishes

Saint Viator students Amy Sonnicksen and Tristan Blus jointly led the EYEsee parish collection program. Twelve parishes joined EYEsee's '2013 Campaign'. The campaign began with the January 19-20 campaign kick-off at Holy Family Parish in Inverness. Parish weekend collection drives were held at several churches: St. Matthew (Schaumburg), St. Theresa (Palatine), *(continued on page 4...)* St.



The EYEsee 2013 Leadership Team during the June 2, 2013 eyeglasses collection at Northwestern University's Sheil Catholic Center.

## Bringing the 'gift of sight' to developing countries (cont.)

### Nicaragua

The health mission to Siuna, Nicaragua, which was held from January 27-February 23, 2013, was led by the Tufts University School of Medicine (TUSM). TUSM is a medical school dedicated to training doctors to meet the health care needs of communities in the U.S. and around the world. EYEsee supplied 450 eyeglasses for distribution during the TUSM medical mission.

The mission clinic was set up in a small village of El Hormiguero and a daily schedule where each village was assigned a day to come to the clinic. Some people walked up to six hours to come to the optical clinic. People were registered in the morning, given a number, and then were called in to be seen by a doctor. The medical team saw about 50 patients each day.

### Cambodia

The February 25-March 2, 2013 mission to Takeo, a province of Cambodia, was led by the Cambodian Health Professionals

Association of America (CHPAA), a U.S.-based non-profit organization that provides medically underserved Cambodians with ongoing services and education. The clinics provided patients with dental, ophthalmological, medical, and surgical services. EYEsee supplied this mission with 2,500 eyeglasses.

A daily schedule of clinics were held during the 6-day mission, and the medical team saw between 492 and 1,528 patients each day. During the week of clinics, the dental team treated 130 patients each day, the surgical team operated on 89 patients, the L-N 4 Hands team fitted 84 hands, and the eye team operated on 19 patients and distributed 813 eyeglasses. Dr. Vishal Nga, the CHPAA Vice President, gave EYEsee his thanks for its continued support of CHPAA missions.

### Uganda

The March health mission to the Kyangwali Refugee Settlement in Uganda was led by



Kyangwali refugees look through the eyeglasses distributed during PeopleWeaver's mission.

PeopleWeaver, which is a U.S.-based non-profit organization that provides economic assistance, such as microcredit loans, to impoverished women in developing countries. They are currently focusing on helping women refugees in the settlement. With the renewed violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the settlement has seen an influx of refugees. Presently, there are 26,000 refugees living in the settlement. The March trip was PeopleWeaver's 4th mission trip and EYEsee supplied this mission with 300 reading glasses.

The mission team scheduled the distribution of both eyeglasses and small malaria nets to take place in the same day and same location. The team gave out printed materials for people to read while they try on eyeglasses until they find the best magnification. Refugees in the Kyangwali settlement are desperately in need of eyeglasses. PeopleWeaver President Jeanne Ratzloff reported that the eyeglasses distribution was again a

huge success and they were one of the best uses of their limited baggage space. They took a few books to start the settlement's first library and the rest of their baggage and carry-on bags had reading glasses in them.

### Nigeria

The March 26-28, 2013 health mission to Ogomo-Lekki, Lagos State of Nigeria, was led by the One World Healthcare, Inc. (OWHI), a U.S.-based humanitarian organization that provides medical triage and treatment to indigents in 12 local communities in Nigeria. Because of security concerns, OWHI moved the mission location from Ebunwana to Lagos. The mission was led by OWHI President Dr. Kanyo Ubesie, M.D., and EYEsee supplied OWHI's mission with 300 eyeglasses.

Three days of clinics were scheduled and the medical team saw about 500 patients each day. The eye team saw about 75



A Cambodian child after receiving her first pair of eyeglasses during the CHPAA mission.



patients each day. They examined the patients and fitted them for eyeglasses. The remaining eyeglasses and medication were handed to the local health clinic for continuity of Care. Dr. Ubesie conveyed to EYEsee the community's appreciation and gratitude for all of the eyeglasses that EYEsee provided for the mission.

### **Honduras**

A team of physician assistants and physicians, nurses, and a dental hygienist led the May 5-9, 2013 health mission to Limon, Honduras. The team was affiliated with University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. This was their fourth mission to Honduras and EYEsee supplied the mission with 1,175 eyeglasses.

Five days of clinics were scheduled, beginning with the May 5<sup>th</sup> clinic in Colonial Laurels. The team saw 120 patients in a one-room church before making the 4-hour drive to the Mosquito Coast and the town of Limon. During the May 6<sup>th</sup> clinic, the team saw 177 patients in Limon and another 94

patients in Punta Blanca. The team saw 274 patients during the May 7<sup>th</sup> clinic in Punta Piedra and another 248 patients during the May 8<sup>th</sup> clinic. On May 9<sup>th</sup>, a school bus picked up people from the nearby village of Plan de Flores and brought them to the Limon clinic. The team had another busy day seeing these villagers along with more patients from Limon.

In this week of clinics, the team cared for more than 1,350 patients, filled 3,500 prescriptions and fitted people for prescription eyeglasses and sunglasses. They diagnosed and treated malnutrition, malaria, fungal and bacterial infections due to machete wounds. Dr. Ashley Bean, M.D., of the University of Arkansas, reported that they eyeglasses were a big hit during the clinics and thanked EYEsee for supporting their mission.

### **Haiti**

The May 6-12 health mission to Port Au Prince, Haiti, was led by the Mission to the World (MTW), an international



A Nigerian child tries on her first pair of eyeglasses during the OWHI mission.

mission organization of the Presbyterian Church in America. Each year, MTW sends a health mission to Port Au Prince to minister to the needy. EYEsee supplied this mission with 200 eyeglasses.

The team was comprised of five physicians, three nurses, and seven non-medical volunteers. During the mission, the team stayed at Reformation Hope Ministry in the LaPlaine section of Port Au Prince. The team scheduled five days of

clinics.

During the clinics, the physicians assessed each patient and dispensed eyeglasses to those who need them. Two team members helped find the suitable eyeglasses for each patient. During the week of clinics, 560 patients were seen. The team diagnosed and treated diseases and provided patients with medications and supplies. Mission team leader Amy Douglass, R.N., thanked EYEsee for supporting their missions.



Honduran children wait to be examined during the University of Arkansas for medical sciences health mission.



A Haitian patient stands with a medical team member after receiving her eyeglasses during the MTW mission.

# EYEsee completes the '2013' Campaign (cont.)



EYEsee leaders & volunteers stand beside Fr. Tim Monahan during the January 19-20, 2013 collection drive at Holy Family Church.

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Raymond de Penafort (Mt. Prospect), St. Isidore (Bloomindale), Mary Seat of Wisdom (Park Ridge), St. Anne (Barrington), St. Julian Eymard (Elk Grove), St. Marcelline (Schaumburg), Queen of the Rosary (Elk Grove), St. Zachary (Des Plaines) and Church of the Holy Spirit (Schaumburg). The parish program netted 2,600 eyeglasses.

## Optical Clinics

Saint Viator student Paul Lewis continued on with his leadership of the optical clinics program that he assumed during last year's campaign. Paul is credited with having established EYEsee's network of optical clinics in the Chicago suburbs. Seventeen optical clinics donated 1,655 eyeglasses to this year's campaign. Paul received an additional donation of 45 eyeglasses from the Nursing Home Care Division of the Village of Schaumburg.

## Schools and Campus Ministries

Saint Viator student Alexandra Glinos once again led this year's school and campus ministries program. This program collected 783 eyeglasses from Frassati Catholic Academy (Wauconda), Our Lady of Perpetual Help School (Glenview), Hoover Math & Science Academy (Schaumburg) and Saint Viator High School (Arlington Hts.). Sheil Catholic Center at Northwestern University and Calvert House at the University of Chicago were again hosts to this year's campaign. Mary Nell Murphy of IT Services at the University of Chicago run a campus collection drive. EYEsee also received 148 eyeglasses from Daniela Alcazar, president of the International Club at Chaparral High School in Scottsdale, Arizona.

## Private Offices

Saint Viator Student Brandon Recht led the

private offices program, which collected 433 eyeglasses. The Women of AT&T Northern Illinois Chapter once again supported EYEsee's 2013 collection campaign with a donation of 180 eyeglasses. Collection drives were also held at CBRE Atrium Corporate Center (Rolling Meadows & Schaumburg offices), Jones Lang LaSalle (Schaumburg) and Hamilton Partners (Barrington). HealthPlus Fitness Center in Auburn, Alabama, also supported EYEsee again with a donation of 111 eyeglasses.

## Service Groups

This service group program, led by Saint Viator student Trisha Aguilar, brought in 667 eyeglasses. A senior from the Biotechnology High School in Freehold, New Jersey—Alec Silverstein—ran collection drives at ophthalmology clinics in his community after learning about EYEsee last year. He collected 343 eyeglasses for the '2013 Campaign'. Boy Scout Michael Jensen led collection drives in the Frisco-area, Texas, for his Eagle Scout service project. His project resulted in 324 eyeglasses during school collection drives in Hunt, Pioneer Heritage, Staley and Frisco.

## Senior Homes

Saint Viator student Amanda Esczuk led this year's senior homes program. Amanda and her team of volunteers held one-day collection drives at The Moorings (Arlington Hts.) and the Park at Golf Mill (Niles) for senior

residents. The team collected 99 eyeglasses.

## Private Donations

EYEsee received 271 eyeglasses from 49 named and anonymous donors who mailed their donation of eyeglasses. Many of these in-state and out-of-state donors generously supported EYEsee's past campaigns.

## Student Volunteers

Twenty Saint Viator students supported the campaign through their participation in EYEsee's collection events. Many helped out during the weekend parish collection drives. Other students worked in teams on their programs and ran their own collection drives. Collectively, these student volunteers logged 341 service hours.

EYEsee acknowledges the support from its donors, sponsors and volunteers for their support of the '2013 Campaign'. Details from the '2013 Campaign' can be found here:

[www.eyeseemission.org](http://www.eyeseemission.org).

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