



PRESS RELEASE

Lions Clubs International Celebrates Lions World Sight Day in Iceland by Donating Medical Equipment

Oak Brook, Ill., USA, October 9, 2014 – The 17th annual celebration of Lions World Sight Day will be held in Reykjavik, Iceland, on October 14, 2014. Lions Clubs International President Joe Preston will present medical equipment purchased through a US\$70,000 SightFirst grant from Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) to the Department of Ophthalmology at Landspítali – the National University Hospital of Iceland.

The Lions World Sight Day celebration also features an exhibition open to both Lions and the general public. The exhibition, which will be held in cooperation with local ophthalmologists, optometrists and the Icelandic Organization of the Visually Impaired, will include information on vision health and education. Lions from Iceland and around the world will also gather to present their clubs and share their service work with a special emphasis on SightFirst activities.

“Lions Clubs International has championed the blind and visually impaired for decades. Lions World Sight Day is an opportunity to reflect on our achievements as we continue our commitment to the fight against preventable blindness,” said Lions International President Joe Preston. “Only by working together can we hope to eliminate preventable blindness from our communities and around the world.”

The US\$70,000 SightFirst grant approved by LCIF will fund the donation of medical equipment to Landspítali. Donated equipment includes instruments that measure visual field and a portable ERG device for pediatric use, which will help diagnose and treat vision disorders in children at an earlier stage.

SightFirst is Lions' most ambitious and successful initiative funded through LCIF. It has made quality eye care accessible to millions of people in need since it was founded in 1990. According to the World Health Organization, approximately 285 million people are visually impaired worldwide, including 39 million people who are blind. Yet, up to 80 percent of blindness is preventable. Lions and LCIF's SightFirst program are helping to reduce global blindness rates, even as the global need for vision-services increases.

World Sight Day is an international event launched by Lions in 1998 to recognize the importance of fighting preventable blindness globally. The event has grown to include hundreds of eye health care non-governmental organizations worldwide. Lions are encouraged to celebrate this event with local vision-related activities and services.



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In recent years, Lions have marked Lions World Sight Day by providing vision screenings in Australia and Turkey; screening vision and providing eyeglasses to children, elderly and migrant workers at the at the Shenzhen Disabled Persons Federation in China; providing diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma screenings for Native Americans on the Navajo Nation in the United States; conducting cataract screenings and surgeries in Madagascar; and scheduling programs to educate community members about what can be done to prevent vision loss in countries around the world.

In honor of World Sight Day, Lions and LCIF partner Johnson & Johnson Vision Care Companies (JJVCC) are announcing an expansion of Sight for Kids – a school-based vision screening program – to communities in Kenya and Turkey, the first two countries in Africa and Europe to receive Sight for Kids services since the program was launched in 2002. Through the program, more than 20 million children in underserved schools and communities across the Asia Pacific region have received free Sight for Kids eye health education, high quality vision screenings and access to professional eye care.

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About Lions Clubs International

Lions Clubs International is the largest service club organization in the world. Our 1.35 million members in more than 46,000 clubs are serving communities in more than 200 countries and geographical areas around the globe. Since 1917, Lions clubs have aided the blind and visually impaired, championed youth initiatives and strengthened local communities through hands-on service and humanitarian projects. For more information about Lions Clubs International, visit lionsclubs.org.

About Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF)

LCIF is the charitable arm of Lions Clubs International, the world's largest service club organization with more than 1.35 million men and women members in more than 200 countries and geographical areas worldwide. Since 1968, LCIF supports Lions by providing grant funding for their local and global humanitarian efforts, including preventing avoidable blindness on a global scale for more than 20 years through LCIF's SightFirst program. To date, Lions are investing US\$415 million in SightFirst's local capacity building efforts and have helped to restore sight to millions worldwide. Learn more at lcif.org.