

# VOSH-ONE



## Voluntary Optometric Services to Humanity – of New England

SPRING 2017

VOSH-ONE is a chapter of VOSH/INTERNATIONAL. The organization is dedicated to the preservation of human sight, mainly in developing countries where there is no welfare system. VOSH-ONE accomplishes its goals through its own missions or by assisting other groups with the same purpose.

## Bina Patel, VOSH International Humanitarian of the Year, 2016

VOSH ONE is proud to announce that our very own Bina Patel received the VOSH International HUMANITARIAN OF THE YEAR AWARD for 2016 at the V/I Annual Meeting in November in Anaheim, California. The award is intended to “honor an individual who has distinguished him or herself during the year by bringing eye care to underserved populations.” The award recognizes a VOSH member who, during the year, has improved visual welfare through leadership, invention, public health, the development of sustainable eye care, and



VOSH-ONE's Bina Patel, 2016 VOSH International Humanitarian of the Year

the further understanding and correction of refractive error. Nominations are due May 1. The VOSH/ International Humanitarian of the Year Award will be

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

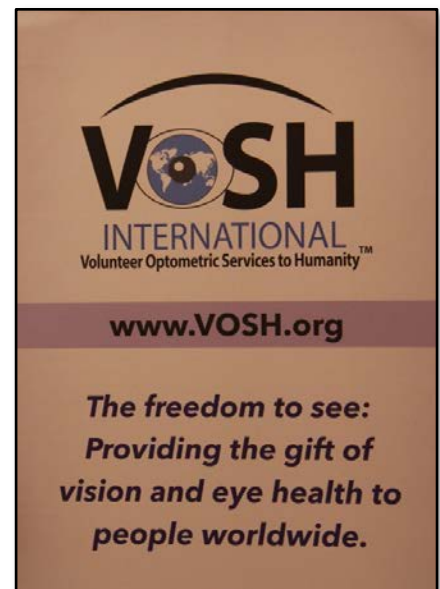
The next **VOSH-ONE meeting** will be on one of the two last weekends in April at NECO. We will send the date when it is confirmed.



The **2nd World Congress of Optometry** will be held in Hyderabad, India, September 11-13, 2017. The theme of the congress is "Accessible, quality vision and eye health." There is a call for abstract submission for the scientific and educational tracks. The congress is an initiative of the World Council of Optometry in conjunction with the Asia Pacific Council of Optometry and the Indian Vision Institute. <http://www.worldcongressofoptometry.org> Courses offered at the congress will be COPE approved.

Check the VOSH/International website for **upcoming clinic opportunities:**  
<http://vosh.org/get-involved/clinics-by-date/>

VOSH International Humanitarian of the Year Award **nominations** due May 1, 2017.



### Reminder: Annual dues, \$40

Please join VOSH-ONE and help provide the gift of sight to needy individuals in other countries or within our own borders. Membership dues can be paid online at:

<http://www.vosh-one.org/donations-or-become-a-member.php>

or mail your check to:  
VOSH-ONE Treasurer  
Dr. Andrea Murphy  
P.O. Box 371  
Grantham, NH 03753

## Granada and Ometepe, Nicaragua, February 5-14, 2016

# Two weeks, two clinics in Nicaragua

By Joe D'Amico, OD  
VOSH-ONE Optometry team leader

The first stop on our 2016 eye care volunteer effort was Granada, Nicaragua. Our small team of 10 included 3 ODs and 5 optometry students from the New England College of Optometry: Jesse Hogan, Marc Deeley, Riddhi Gohel, Chantelle Davis, and Cindy.

This initial eye clinic took place from Monday to Thursday in the second floor auditorium of the Japanese Hospital in Granada. The room was large, with ample room for both exam lanes and dispensary. Patients waited in the wide corridor outside the room. Local volunteers attended to crowd control and initial registration so there was not a frenzy of chatter and other noise. Patient flow was comfortable.

We attended 619 patients in the course of 4 days. Two patients were referred to Ophthalmology who were treated and released. One Ophthalmologist brought a 10-year-old girl for a workup for strabismus surgery. She turned out to be an accommodative strabismic and we were able to get the two eyes looking straight with glasses. Fifty-five pairs of glasses will be made up and forwarded through Dr. Rudy Vargas to the permanent clinic in Nicaragua where patients will be able to claim them. All other patients were given glasses from our inventory. We also handed



Joe's grandson, Cyrus Kurd, conducts an acuity test

out over 800 pairs of sunglasses. Final numbers in Granada were: Myopia 62; Presbyopia or Hyperopia 409; High Astigmatism 49.

At the end of the week, our team split up; some returned home and held a series of clinics in the more rural setting of the island of Ometepe, in Lake Nicaragua. Two optometry students, Tiana Camarillo, and Nauz Hassanshahi, worked the last day of the Granada clinic and then worked the 3 days of the Ometepe clinic. Anne May, Leslie Caputo, her husband Dean and sister Judith, along with Jay Jordan OD, Karen Koumjian OD, my wife Zabelle, my grandson Cyrus Kurd, Mark Milot, Nica resident Roger Barrios and 3 of Jay's staff from home rounded out this second team.

On Saturday of our second week, we held a clinic



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## Nicaragua

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at an elementary school in Urbaite and saw 177 people; the second day at a small community center in Bague we saw 127 people; the third day, in a different elementary school in San Jose we saw 135 people. On the last day of clinic on Tuesday, Karen, her friend Nina Avergun, Zabelle, Cyrus and I left for home. The next morning, the remaining team held a short clinic for the area around our hotel for another 39 people, bringing the grand total to just under 1,000 people.

It was an exhausting, but successful 2 weeks of clinics and we know that the people who received our services would not otherwise have been served.

For further information about our VOSH organization (Volunteers in Optometric Service to Humanity), see [vosh-one.org](http://vosh-one.org) or visit our parent organization, [VOSH International.org](http://VOSH International.org). In Granada, our VOSH-ONE team was part of a larger organization, *For Nicaragua Health/Friends of Rudy*. “Rudy” is Dr. Rudy Vargas, an Alabama endocrinologist who was born in Nicaragua. For more details, see [www.fornicaraguanhealth.org](http://www.fornicaraguanhealth.org) or on facebook: Friends of Rudy Nicaraguan Health.



Dr. Joe D'Amico examining a very young patient

## Gloves Go Far

By Bill Trabilcy

About 10 years or so ago, OD Joe Raczek of VOSH-ONE became a friend of a friend, and somehow in passing he heard that I had travelled the world (true) and spoke Spanish (sorta true). He blurted out that I should help a group of ODs going to Nicaragua in a few months. When asked, what the heck would I do with marginal Spanish skills and a passing recollection of what the Rosenbaum Pocket Vision Screener looked like?



Sorting donated gloves

He said, “Imagine a rural empty schoolhouse with 85 people from the countryside milling around, hoping to see an OD for

the first time in their lives... you’ll have to tell them that the children should go to this area, and the seniors to that area, and then keep the rest happy and occupied, and make sure they have their paperwork ...” or something like that. “I’m in,” I said.

Well, sure enough it became an annual thing, and it morphed. First to the Friends of Rudy medical mission in Granada. Main job: buy fun stuff from The Party Store and keep the kids and parents happy

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## Gloves go far

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while in long lines. That got old fast. The Newton MA Sister City Project was another mission working with San Juan del Sur....so I got some “work” from them; but still not enough engagement for me.

While shopping for coffee at the local Pali supermarket, I ran into a US national who mentioned in passing that baseball gloves were very hard to come by in Nicaragua, and for the majority of families: too expensive! So, kids didn’t play their national sport (no, not soccer!) until much later in life. In the meantime, playing with sticks and makeshift baseballs made of whatever was discouraging and certainly didn’t allow for leagues to form. Hence, in 2012, I began Gloves Go Far, raising money and gathering used baseball gloves, bringing them down by the large duffel full, and doing all the purchasing/coordination/logistics/strategy to ensure an annual fundraiser success. [www.Facebook.com/Glovesgofar](http://www.Facebook.com/Glovesgofar) tells the whole story...check it out.

Along the way, I become interested in the Tres Mundos Arts and Culture center in Granada. It’s a beautiful nonprofit kind of place....but they were short of instruments, specifically good quality working clarinets. So for

one year I also ran Clarinets Go Far ([www.facebook.com/clarinetsgofar](http://www.facebook.com/clarinetsgofar) is still up if you’re interested, but it’s static at this point.) I even get to play sax in various cafes/clubs--another blast of a lifetime (I’m a part-time semi-professional sax player)

The many hundreds of gloves that have brought smiles to many kids and many coaches in Nicaragua can be traced back to the willingness of VOSH and Joe Raczek to let a newcomer tag along and do whatever I could to help another VOSH mission in a developing country.

So while I’m not sure the difference between “borroso” and “turbio” I’ll brush up again and,



going full circle, join Joe D’Amico this year and get back to southern Nicaragua where it all began. I’ll combine things on this trip to work with VOSH ONE and do the Gloves Go Far thing.

You can also see what it’s all about here: <https://igg.me/at/yB1DvAw0UOc> Will report back on the flip side in March!

**NECO-SVOSH April 8-15th, 2016**

**Dominican Republic**

## **Narrowing the Gap: A Life-Changing Experience**

**By Sara Hanna- SVOSH president 2015-2016**

**Three years of dedicated volunteering, along** with the hard work of Dr. Bina Patel, and we were finally ready. As third year optometry students, we were now able to go on our first mission trip. On April 8th, the New England College of Optometry (NECO) chapter of Student Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity (SVOSH) traveled successfully to the Dominican Republic to provide eye care to an underserved community, with the help of Batey Relief Alliance (BRA). The trip, lasting 8 days, was an eye opening experience. Under the guidance of Drs. Bina Patel, Anna Maria Baglieri, Kathy Horn, and Mina Sehizadeh, our group of 21 optometry students was able to see approx 800 patients.

Batey Relief Alliance is an organization that works to improve socio-economic conditions in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Peru, and they were in charge of organizing much of our time in the Dominican Republic. Batey Sabana Grande de Boya is a community of just over 4,000 people in the Province of Monte Plata, Dominican Republic. The predominant forms of income within this town are cattle ranching, sugar cane harvesting, and palm oil production. The community is a mix between those of Dominican and Haitian decent.

Upon arriving in Santo Domingo, we were greeted by Denise, the program coordinator liaison at BRA, Dr. Ana Celia Carrero, the project coordinator, and Julio, our very knowledgeable driver. Denise served as an interpreter, project manager, and tour guide, and became a great friend to us all. On our first day, after we familiarized ourselves with the beach, we spent the rest of the afternoon preparing work stations and organizing drops, glasses, and toys for the kids.

Day 1 of clinic, we ran into minor space issues that limited our ability to provide care to all of the attending patients. Fortunately, the issue was quickly resolved by local community leaders and, as a group, we quickly picked up the pace and were able to see



over 120 patients by the end of the day. For the remainder of the trip, we saw patients with a variety of diseases and conditions. It was like an optometry boot camp: active toxoplasmosis one minute, end-stage glaucoma another, retinal detachments, diabetic retinopathy, macular holes, high refractive errors, all in a day's work. Antibiotics, allergy medications, glaucoma medications and steroid eye drops were dispensed as needed, as were reading and distance glasses, sunglasses and artificial tears. Patients with complex prescriptions were invited to select a frame, then measurements were taken and were told to expect their custom glasses within 6-8 weeks.

We were fortunate enough on this year's trip to have two fluent Spanish-speaking students who taught us enough Spanish to communicate through an eye exam. We were also provided with two on-site translators who were immensely helpful when we needed to educate the patients more effectively.

For most of us, this trip was our first time to the Dominican Republic, and for some, their first time leaving the United States. Although the trip is mostly aimed at providing eye care for the people of the

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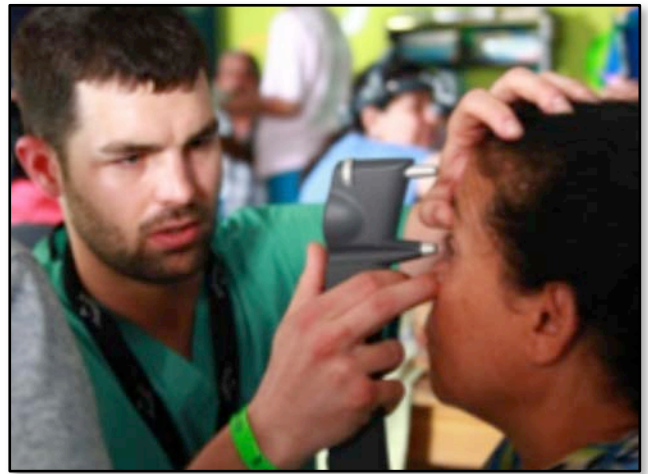


## Dominican Republic

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Dominican Republic, we also wanted it to be a cultural experience for our group.

On our last day, Julio took us into the capital, Santo Domingo, to see the historical and beautiful sites that the Dominican Republic offers beyond the beaches. It was a



The eye health station provides valuable experience for students and important eye health benefits for patients.

truly memorable and educational trip for us all.

With the help of a multitude of donors and volunteers, including the Lions Club and a generous Boy Scout troop, we provided every patient in need with glasses, meds, and toys. Batey Relief Alliance allowed us to deliver care for these communities and provided us with interpreters, project managers, tour guides, and on-site lunch and

snacks every day.

Words cannot describe the emotions experienced when we put trial frames with the correct prescriptions on patient and witnessed their faces lighting up. They can finally see my face clearly, they can read, they can look over and see their families faces for the first time in a long time. In the midst of multiple language barriers, their smiles were

enough to make every effort taken to attend the trip worth it.

When reflecting back on the trip, it is truly amazing how we were to be able to provide full eye care with limited resources and equipment. We are very thankful as a whole to have been given this opportunity and we pray that we are able to continue these trips in the future.

Santiago, Dominican Republic

## World Sight Day 2016

In honor of World Sight Day 2016, I had the privilege of collaborating with Timberland on a vision mission to the Dominican Republic. Through a patient connection, I was able to join forces with and be hosted by Timberland, which owns a factory near Santiago. Timberland provided over 40 translators throughout the 3-day mission.

We served a school in the very poor neighborhood of Cienfuegos. The school supports children, 4 to 14 years old, who would otherwise be working in the landfill nearby. It is an oasis in an otherwise underdeveloped area, which experiences constant flies and at times toxic air from the burning landfill. Many of the children worked in the landfill prior to the school being established. Now they spend their days in a clean, safe environment learning and growing. Of the 350-plus children



The principal and the students with their new glasses!

we saw, about 10% needed glasses and few had any pathologies.

This was a unique mission in that I was able to bring sample frames, donated by Modern Optical and myself. The children selected their frames, which I then brought back to the states and filled the prescriptions with donated stock lenses. It took some time to cut and fill all the orders, but it offered each child a

customized and size-appropriate pair of glasses.

As with all missions, it was a most rewarding experience for me and my team of 6 doctors and 2 staff. Three of the doctors flew all the way from Bethel, Alaska! I was fortunate to have a dedicated, organized support team with the school's staff and Timberland's volunteers. I hope to return for a second mission to see adults who



Many children spent days working at the local landfill. Now, a new school building provides a safe learning environment for students.





Our entire team with the morning students.

## World Sight Day 2016

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subsist on the landfill and need sunglasses and eye protection. I hope to return with a larger group and stay longer in order to better serve the greater community.

Much thanks to VOSH for loaning essential equipment and to Dr. Patel for guiding me in my preparations! If anyone is interested in learning more about the school here is the link:  
<http://cometasdeesperanza.org/>



Volunteer Hugo, student, Timberland employee Colleen Vien, and Dr. Donarum.

Also, here is a link to make donations to the school:

[www.gofundme.com/cometas-de-esperanza](http://www.gofundme.com/cometas-de-esperanza)

## Mother and daughter team up for service trip to Haiti

Suzanne Ward, VOSH-PA

My 16-year-old daughter, Kathryn, and I recently returned from a service trip to Haiti with VOSH PA. This was our second trip to Haiti, but will surely not be our last! As mother and daughter members of the team, we were able to share an experience that has brought us closer to each other and has given us a shared vision of service and love for others.

Our first trip to Haiti in July 2016 was Kathryn's idea. She was invited to go on a mission trip to a Haitian orphanage outside of Port au Prince by the retreat leader of her Confirmation class. She and a friend signed up. At 16, she would have been the youngest of the group and we felt she was too young to go without an adult, so I decided to go too. This trip changed both our lives. The poverty, lack of resources, and medieval living conditions were shocking. In contrast, the people we met were friendly, welcoming, warm, generous in spirit, and altogether wonderful. As an optometrist, I became immediately aware that the orphans had not had their eyes examined and I observed many of the children had esophoria and esotropia. I was determined to return and bring my equipment so I could get them some glasses.

Way back when, as an optometry student, I had been fortunate to travel with our NECO VOSH club to Columbia and Venezuela. Despite that experience, 20-plus years later I was somewhat uncomfortable doing eye exams outside my cushy office, so I decided to contact VOSH. An internet search led me to Diane Wilson, OD, and VOSH PA. Diane has been doing VOSH trips twice a year for many years and has travelled to Haiti 12 times. I signed up for Diane's trip and encouraged Kathryn to go with me. Fortunately, Kathryn's school enthusiastically gave her permission to miss a week of school. Kathryn was somewhat apprehensive, however, since she had no idea what an "ancillary" person like her could do for the team of 2 optometrists, 5 optometry students, 1 optician in



training, and 1 other ancillary person who was an adult. Kathryn's contribution turned out to be invaluable.

I knew my daughter was mature for her age, however, I was overwhelmed by her ability to rise to the occasion. Kathryn displayed a maturity that even I could not believe. A good 10 years younger than the optometry students, Kathryn held her own. Diane assigned Kathryn to the glasses dispensary where she quickly learned under the guidance of Jen, the optician in training. Kathryn did great. Next, the optometry students taught her how to do Icare tonometry, and Kathryn moved to that station. She was an ace! Greeting each patient politely and warmly in Creole, reassuring and confident, Kathryn helped us examine over 1,000 patients. We referred 180 of the most severe cataracts and glaucoma patients for treatment and I hope we helped the rest see better with the glasses we dispensed.

Upon our return home, Kathryn and I were exhausted but invigorated. Finally, Kathryn was able to release a week's worth of pent up teenage behavior! Silly Snapchats to all her friends, giddy laughing, big hugs and the desire to sit on Dad's lap reassured me that despite a week of hard work, mature behavior, and holding her own with the other adult team members, Kathryn was still my wonderful little girl! Next stop, back to examine those orphans.



# International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness 10<sup>th</sup> General Assembly

**Durban, South Africa**

The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) 10<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (10GA) was held in Durban, South Africa, October 27-30, 2016. It was hosted locally by the Brian Holden Vision Institute. Every four years a general assembly meeting is held. In 2012 the meeting was in Hyderabad, India. This global meeting provides a platform for ophthalmologists, optometrists, public health experts, other eye health professionals, community health professions, ocular equipment manufacturers, and companies involved with eye care to meet, share ideas, collaborate, and hear from the experts in the field.

At the World Health Assembly in May 2013, governments adopted Resolution 66.4 Universal Eye Health: A global action plan 2014-19, making a commitment to act to significantly reduce avoidable blindness around the world. The theme of the 10GA assembly was “Stronger Together” to support the Global Action Plan.

Approximately 1,100 delegates attended the meeting, and about 40% were from Africa. The program format included breakfast sessions with a panel of expert presenters for a particular topic, keynote speakers, recognition of eye health heroes, short rapid-fire sessions, and exhibits. Some of the courses provided Continuing Education to eye practitioners in South Africa and England.

Some of the topics included Universal Eye Health,

eye care service delivery, integration of eye health in school health programs, eye care needs in emergencies, workforce challenges, Health Management Information Systems, Health Financing and Universal Eye Health, global burden of disease and future trends, low vision myopia, trachoma, human resources with a focus in Africa, onchocerciasis, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and retinopathy of prematurity.

Key note speakers included

- President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia (opening day)
- Matshidiso Moeti – Regional Director, WHO Africa
- Francis Omaswa, Executive Director, African Centre for Global Health and Social Transformation, spoke about Better Health for Africa: The challenge posed by the critical shortage of health workers
- David Donoghue – Permanent representative of Ireland to the UN, and Tim Evans – Senior Health Specialist World Bank who addressed Sustainable Development Goals
- Serge Resnikoff and Rupert Bourne, representing Vision Loos Expert Group, who spoke about Global Burden of Disease and future trends.

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## IAPB 10<sup>th</sup> General Assembly

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At the meeting, the IAPB launched the Vision Atlas, which is available on the website [atlas.iapb.org](http://atlas.iapb.org).

The atlas will be a tool for finding estimates of prevalence and causes of blindness and visual impairment. The Global Action Plan identifies a number of indicators to measure progress towards this goal.

The diabetes epidemic--and its implications for eye health--is rising exponentially. There were daily sessions on diabetic retinopathy. Several publications have been released to educate and inform primary health care professionals, eye care

Available to download <http://www.idf.org/eyehealth>

- Guidelines for Diabetic Eye Care 2017, from the International Council of Ophthalmology (ICO). This was presented at the 10GA meeting and can be downloaded <http://www.icoph.org/downloads/ICOGuidelinesforDiabeticEyeCare.pdf>. The guidelines help people in low-intermediate resource settings to high resource settings.

### November 14<sup>th</sup> is World Diabetes Day.

This year the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) chose the theme "Eyes on Diabetes." As part of the World Diabetes Day campaign, IDF set a target of 1

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**It is a shocking fact that in the 21st Century there are still some 285m visually impaired and blind persons and that 80% of these cases could have been prevented or treated.**

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professionals, and the public.

Some of them include the

- World Health Organization 2016 Global report on Diabetes.  
[http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/204871/1/9789241565257\\_eng.pdf](http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/204871/1/9789241565257_eng.pdf)
- The Fred Hollows Foundation Diabetes Eye Health: A guide for Health Professionals.

million people worldwide being screened either for diabetes or for diabetic retinopathy. To help achieve this, IDF has produced a toolkit that explains how individuals, health professionals and national associations can engage with this campaign.

<http://www.idf.org/wdd-index/>

Some interesting data:

- The target date to eliminate



Onchocerciasis is 2025.

Africa is most affected.

- In Ethiopia, 7 million people are at risk for Trachoma, and is the leading country that is affected by this
- Myopia is on the rise
- In 2040, 415 million people will be living with diabetes per IDF
- Retinopathy of Prematurity in developing countries is increasing cause of blindness in middle income countries

Some interesting devices were

presented at the exhibits and poster sessions, including

- Peek Vision
- The Arclight Ophthalmoscope: A Reliable Low-Cost Alternative to the Standard Direct Ophthalmoscope
- Telehealth devices – Pellucid Health care Networks

The next global assembly will be held in New Zealand in 2020.

## Chapter of Month – VOSH-Ghana

**Flying off to a great start** as the 81st VOSH chapter worldwide, our first Chapter of the Month for 2017 is VOSH-Ghana. VOSH-Ghana became a full fledged VOSH chapter in 2016 and has been extraordinarily active. Membership includes 10 certified doctors of optometry, and 3 others in diverse fields with technical support from final year students of the KNUST school of optometry.

Here's a great opportunity to work with an active chapter in Ghana who welcomes and will host VOSH chapters on a mission to Ghana.

The Republic of Ghana along the Atlantic Ocean, is a territory inhabited for millenia. Present day Ghana is a multicultural nation, with a population of approximately 27 million, spanning a variety of ethnic, linguistic and religious groups.

Here's the latest report from VOSH-Ghana:



With financial support from the Rotary Club of Accra West, we have successfully organised two outreach missions in two regions in Ghana. A total of 419 people have had access to free eye care with 131 free eye glasses and 266 free medication. A total of 196 have been referred to various hospitals for further management. 87 of the people referred had cataract and 45 of them had refractive error

Vital eye care education provided included, printouts of informative eye health messages,

information on common eye conditions, signs and symptoms of vision threatening conditions, first aid care, and common myths about the eye. We emphasize on the need for frequent eye check ups and medication compliance.

VOSH-Ghana

Chapter President Abena Adjei Ntim, OD, MSC outlined an active and expanded future for the

chapter. "We look forward to organising missions three times in a year so as to be able to reach out to more people. This involves inclusion of surgical sessions in our missions especially for people with cataracts, people with refractive errors will also be given spectacles as well, fulfilling our humanitarian obligations by reaching out to the less privileged, and giving clinical exposure for the final year optometry students who provide technical support. We are very interested in hosting any chapter that will work with us."

**CONGRATULATIONS TO  
VOSH-GHANA  
CHAPTER OF THE MONTH**

## Partner with RestoringVision to eradicate near vision impairment due to uncorrected refractive error

By Pelin Munis, Executive Director, RestoringVision.org

As a member of VOSH, you are aware of the great need for vision correction around the world, the lack of access to glasses, and the millions of people living with near vision impairment due to uncorrected refractive error. You are doing something to change this and make a difference, and we are too.

We are RestoringVision, a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to providing new, high-quality reading glasses and sunglasses to organizations and groups serving people in developing countries. Like VOSH, we too want to ensure that every person on the planet who needs a pair of reading glasses has access to them.

Since 2003, we have partnered with more than 1,400 organizations and supplied over 6.5 million glasses to people in 124 countries. VOSH was one of our first partners and has been a longtime supporter since. In 2016, VOSH members distributed over 32,000 glasses from RestoringVision to people in need throughout the



Papua New Guinea, 2016

**“I am the current VOSH President for the IU chapter. We traveled to Frome, Jamaica and saw approximately 350 patients in 4 days, we had 10 optometry students and 4 optometrists. Thank you SO much for the glasses! They were distributed and brought so much joy to the patients!”**

**Melissa L.**

world. Since 2003, members have helped over 400,000 people see clearly and live better again!

As we celebrate our accomplishments, we also know that there is more that we can do this year. There are 544 million people living in developing

countries who need reading glasses to correct their vision, but lack access. We invite you and your VOSH chapter to partner with us and take reading glasses on your upcoming trips. Together, we can work to eradicate near vision impairment due to uncorrected refractive error and improve the quality of lives of hundreds of thousands of people!

To work with us, you can easily order reading glasses online at [www.RestoringVision.org](http://www.RestoringVision.org). We charge a nominal fee for our glasses, well below the cost of goods. We work with organizations that service people with disabilities who pack and ship the glasses – so the costs go right back to helping more people.

If you need financial support, VOSH and SVOSH members can apply to have glasses sponsored by National Vision, Inc. and its foundation, 2020 Quest. They support organizations working in developing countries through a variety of programs, including a partnership with RestoringVision. To submit a request for support, contact Lisa Aultman at: [lisa.aultman@nationalvision.com](mailto:lisa.aultman@nationalvision.com).





## S-VOSH NECO

Faculty Advisor: Bina Patel OD, FAO (patelb@neco.edu)

Current Student President: Micaela Gobeille (michaelagobeille18@neco.edu)



### About us:

- We work to reduce the burden of preventable blindness both locally and abroad through local vision screenings, as well as an annual VOSH trip that third year optometry students participate in.
- To participate in a trip, students must complete a predetermined number of fundraising, glasses sorting, and other hours, as well as participate in local vision screenings

### Our work abroad:

#### Last Year's Humanitarian Trip

- 5 days of clinic in the Monte Plata province (shown in red on the map) in the Dominican Republic
- Partner with Batay Relief Alliance and a local MD
- Average: 200 patients per day



### Our work at home:

#### Fundraising

White coat embroidery, holiday luncheons, a game night event, and more!



### Our Set Up

Students and patients rotate through four stations:



1. Entrance Testing



2. Refraction



3. Dispensing



4. Ocular health

#### Glasses Sorting

We receive gently used glasses which we sort through and recycle or pack to bring with us on our annual trip



#### Screenings



We work with homeless shelters, free clinics, the Boys and Girl's Club, and on NECO's mobile clinic to expand access to eye care locally through vision screenings.

### Last year's statistics

#### We did...

- 800 comprehensive eye exams
- 50 school screenings

#### We dispensed...

- 539 readers
- 703 distance Rx's
- 463 sunglasses
- 3 low vision devices



### Get Involved!



#### Contact us:

Website: [www.svoshneco.org](http://www.svoshneco.org)

Email: [webmaster@svoshneco.org](mailto:webmaster@svoshneco.org)

We accept donations of glasses, equipment, and funds.



## Bina Patel: VOSH International Humanitarian of the Year 2016

*Continued from page 1*

decided on or about June 1 and will be presented at the V/I Annual Meeting.

Bina's accomplishments are many, not the least of which is her warm, kind personality. Tracy Matchinski of the VOSH board, did an excellent job summarizing Bina's many talents and contributions to the field for the award presentation.

- Grew up in Kenya. Came to US to go to the university, then optometry school.
- Actively involved with Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity since 1997
- Started with VOSH as faculty advisor on a trip to Mexico and has been involved ever since
- Has participated in 17 trips, 18-20 students/group, one big trip a year and several smaller trips
- Faculty advisor for SVOSH at NECO
- Actively involved in VOSH-ONE and VOSH International.
- Many years of international teaching experience in primary care optometry with an emphasis on ocular disease
- Certified reader in telemedicine for the Joslin Vision Network at The Joslin Diabetes Center's

Beetham Eye Institute.

- Taught in schools and colleges of optometry in Brazil, China, Colombia, and Germany
- Faculty advisor for the college's Advanced Standing International Program.
- Involved in educational curriculum design and in coordinating and implementing international programs in countries seeking to upgrade their optometric degree programs.
- Involved with the Educational Committee of the World Council of Optometry in 2000.
- Chair of the steering committee for the 6th World Conference on



Optometric Education in Durban, South Africa. Part of the working group for Diabetic retinopathy representing World Council of Optometry for the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness.

- Provided continuing education lectures in Mexico, Italy, and South Africa.



### NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings from my snowy Vermont hometown; it makes me look forward to my next opportunity to serve those in need of eye care in my usual clinic destination of warm, sunny El Salvador. We at VOSH-ONE hope everyone had a good holiday season.

Now that we have moved into a new year, I need to mention that dues are due! Please renew your membership soon so we can forward dues and roster to VOSH/International. Mail dues or use the VOSH-ONE website.

[Click here to pay your dues](#)

Speaking of the website, we're looking for recent trip photos! Contact me or anyone else on the VOSH-ONE board if you have any you'd like to share.

I've now been President of VOSH-ONE for almost 2 years, so elections are approaching. Happy to entertain offers from anyone interested in taking office...