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PRESS RELEASE

United Way Teams Up With Local Eye Doctors to Help Students

March 17, 2017

(Youngstown, OH) - The United Way of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley's Success After 6 program provides wraparound services to students in Youngstown. Recently, United Way teamed up with several groups including Sight for All, Classic Optical Laboratories, Essilor Vision Foundation (EVF), Modern Optical International, and Opticians Association of Ohio to provide children with free eye exams and eye glasses. **On Monday, March 20th starting at 8:30 am students at the Youngstown Community School will be fitted for eye glasses at the school at 50 Essex Street, Youngstown, OH 44502.**

"The partnership with these groups truly defines community impact," said Bob Hannon, President of United Way of Youngstown and Mahoning Valley, "We want our children to succeed in the classroom, and sometimes they face various barriers including not being able to see the board in the front of the classroom. Many of our families can't afford to go to the eye doctor, so this is where we step in and work with the right partners to truly impact the students."

Hannon says by working closely with these groups the children can get what they need to correct their vision and hopefully, improve their performance in school. Students in kindergarten through sixth grade at the Youngstown Community School and Taft Elementary School were screened by volunteers with the United Way and Lions Club of Youngstown. Then doctors associated with the Sight for All stepped in to provide 75 students additional medical services.

"This was a tremendous community effort and involved many pieces to accomplish." said Dr. Sergul Erzurum, Eye Care Associates and President of Sight for All, "I was really humbled and proud of the volunteer efforts and cooperation everyone showed to help the children of our community. These kids were all wonderful; each one was respectful, thankful and happy!"

United Way of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley
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Sight for All arranged the eye doctors as well as the transportation through Camelot Lanes, Assumption Village, and Boys and Girls Club for the students to go to the doctors' offices during the school day. The doctors involved in this project include:

- Dr. Sergul Erzurum, Eye Care Associates & President Sight for All
- Dr. Michael Woloschak, Michael J. Woloschak, Inc.
- Dr. Robert Gaetano, Vision Care Associates
- Dr. Robin Maceyko, Eye Catchers Optical
- Dr. Peter Sforza, Peter E. Sforza Jr. O.D.
- Dr. Brad Bloomberg, Bloomberg Eyecare
- Dr. Brian Mathie, Roholt Vision Institute
- Dr. Nicholas Lawrence, Roholt Vision Institute

"This has been a massive undertaking with many people to thank, I'm proud to have Sight for All be a part of this project." said Dominic Mancini, Sight For All Communications Director.

Classic Optical, with its long-time partners at the Essilor Vision Foundation (EVF), and Modern Optical will manufacture, and provide eyeglasses at no charge to the children in need. The EVF donated the lenses and Modern Optical donated the frames. Employees from Classic Optical and members of the Opticians Association of Ohio volunteered during the event and will deliver the new eyeglasses to the school once they are ready.

"Classic Optical is a family-owned optical manufacturing company that's been part of the Youngstown community since 1970, and giving back has always been important for us," said Dawn Friedkin, President of Classic Optical. "We know how critical good vision is for students to succeed in school, and we're grateful for the opportunity to have been able to provide eyeglasses, equipment and volunteers to ensure local schoolchildren have access to the vision they need."

While the students waited for their exams, volunteers helped entertain and chaperone the children. Coco's Pizza provided lunch. Once the exams were done, care including surgery, glasses, and medical patching was instituted. Classic Optical will be providing 2 pairs of glasses for each child, one for home and one for school.

Thank you to all the doctors and volunteers who made this project possible:

Sight for All Volunteers:

Julia Kostnick
Leah Moody

YSU Students Volunteers:

Haley Klacik
Justin Jickness
Barb Alexander
Rayann Atway

Transportation Donated:

Camelot Lanes
Mercy Health Assumption Village
Boys and Girls Club of Youngstown

Donations:

Wendy's donated Frosty's
Camelot Lanes donated free games of Bowling
Cocca's Pizza donated the pizza lunch