



GLOBAL COMMUNITY SERVICE FOUNDATION TEAMS UP WITH ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF OPHTHALMOLOGY FOR VIET NAM EYE-CARE MISSION

U.S. Doctors to Teach Cataract Procedure in Hanoi & Perform 10 Procedures along with Vietnamese Doctors in Quang Tri Province

FAIRFAX, VA & VERNON HILLS, IL (June 19, 2009)—In its continuing effort to provide medical care and humanitarian assistance to the blind and visually impaired of Viet Nam, Global Community Service Foundation (GCSF) is teaming up with the Illinois Association of Ophthalmology (IAO) and Alcon-Viet Nam for a two-week, eye-care mission to Viet Nam beginning later this month, announces GCSF founder and president Marcia Selva.

The joint project will begin June 29 with a five-day cataract surgery training course—called “Transition to Phacoemulsification”—taught by IAO-member ophthalmologists to their Vietnamese counterparts at the Viet Nam National Institute of Ophthalmology in Hanoi. The course is sponsored by Alcon, which is providing organizational and financial support. Alcon is a leading ophthalmic company that develops, manufactures and distributes products in more than 180 countries worldwide.

Two doctors from Dong Ha, the capital of Viet Nam’s Quang Tri Province, will participate in the Hanoi training course. Following the completion of the course, the IAO and Dong Ha ophthalmologists will travel to Dong Ha to perform the “phacoemulsification” cataract surgery on 10 local residents starting July 7. Alcon is donating surgical equipment and supplies. The phacoemulsification cataract procedure uses a smaller incision and typically results in a quicker recovery time than the week-long recuperation required following the currently used procedure.

The IAO officials participating in the eye-care mission are Ronald C. May, M.D. (Deerfield, Ill.), IAO’s Viet Nam project director, and Marian Macsai, M.D. (Glenview, Ill.), chief of the Division of Ophthalmology at NorthShore University HealthSystem and professor and vice chair of the Department of Ophthalmology at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago. Additionally, IAO Executive Director Richard Paul (Vernon Hill, Ill.) is coordinating IAO’s Viet Nam activities. Drs. May and Macsai will teach the course in Hanoi and lead the surgical team in Dong Ha.

“This humanitarian service mission will provide critical eye-care training to ophthalmologists in Viet Nam, which will be instrumental in helping them provide more effective treatment to patients affected by cataracts,” says Selva. “These types of visual health care missions are an excellent way to introduce rural people to the need for taking steps to safeguard their eyes and to diagnose and treat conditions that might otherwise lead to vision impairment or total blindness. We are grateful to the Illinois Association of Ophthalmology and Alcon for partnering with us on this mission.”

Paul said: “This project is a logical extension of the programs the Illinois Association of Ophthalmology has implemented at home and in Viet Nam to improve eye-care services and to provide aid to the blind. We are excited about the opportunity to work alongside our peers from Viet Nam and with our friends from Global Community Service Foundation. We are extremely grateful for the partnership with Alcon-Vietnam.” IAO ophthalmologists first taught the cataract surgery training course in Hanoi last October.

(more)

BOARD MEMBERS

Marcia Selva
Founder & President

Mnsgr. Robert J. Vitillo
Chairman

Gary S. Smuckler, Esq.
Vice-Chairman

Nena Talcott
Treasurer

Marianne Henderson
Secretary

Priscilla Clapp

Arnold Feld

Lynn Feld

William L. Goldman, Esq.

Karen Kasmauski

John Madrid

Phu Ngoc Nguyen, Ph.D.

Jerome S. Nosanchuk, M.D.

Raymond F. Turner, Ph.D.

Frances M. Young

William P. Young Jr., Esq.

ADVISORS

John Boswell

Robert Frank

Hoai B. Huynh

Barbara Nosanchuk

Dang Chien Thang

Viet T. Tran

GCSF is a U.S.-based charity and Vietnam-licensed nongovernmental organization that implements community-focused initiatives under the auspices of its proven “Adopt-A-Village” program. These initiatives foster sustainable development and life-enhancement programs in communities across Southeast Asia that help reduce poverty’s reach in the region.

IAO is a statewide professional society for ophthalmologists (Eye MDs) in Illinois. Its primary mission is to serve the total visual health care needs of the people through public and professional education, membership services and government affairs advocacy.

Like GCSF, IAO also is working to improve the quality of life for the people of Viet Nam, especially those with disabilities, with its activities dedicated to aiding blind and vision-impaired residents. The association has embarked on a major project in Viet Nam that focuses on two primary areas: teaching phacoemulsification cataract surgery to ophthalmologists there and working to improve medical and surgical eye-care services in Quang Tri Province.

For its Quang Tri initiative, IAO is working closely with GCSF to raise \$60,000 to construct a facility that will provide services to the blind citizens of the town of Vinh Linh, located in the northern part of the province. This center will enable residents to learn practical life- and job-skills that will empower them to function with a significant visual impairment. It also will provide jobs so the blind or visually impaired can support themselves financially.

Over the past five years GCSF has been working with the Dong Ha Blind and Disabled Association to assist the blind and disabled residents of Dong Ha. Some of its successes include building a dormitory and safe workplace in addition to providing blind-compatible computers and educational materials in Braille.

About Global Community Service Foundation

Global Community Service Foundation (www.globalcommunityservice.org) is a Washington, D.C. area-based nonprofit organization that works to eradicate poverty in Southeast Asia by implementing sustainable community-based programs that focus on improving access to health care, education and income-generation activities.

About the Illinois Association of Ophthalmology

The Illinois Association of Ophthalmology (www.IEyeMD.org) is a statewide organization representing ophthalmologists and their patients. IAO’s activities include legislative advocacy, interaction with health insurers, public education about important eye health care concerns, and continuing medical education for ophthalmologists and their staff members.

###

For media inquiries:

Alan Greilsamer, Communications Resources, LLC
W: (703) 760-7007 / C: (703) 201-2508
E: agreilsamer@communications-resources.com