

# 2022

ANNUAL REPORT



# FROM THE CEO

Dear member,

With the support and leadership of the Board of Directors and our volunteer committee members, The Vision Council was able to invest in our member services, engage our industry and action our mission to promote growth for our members. As we embark on a new year, I would like to reflect on the many successes and accomplishments of 2022.

At the heart of all our activities is the theme 'It's All Connected'. In April, we brought the vision care community together for the first Vision Expo East in New York City since 2019. It was incredible to be back in New York together and the energy was thrilling. The momentum continued with Vision Expo West in Las Vegas in September. Additionally, Vision Expo+, a free digital extension of the Show experience, offered online showrooms and recorded content.

We continued to find ways to bring members together in between Shows. In June, we hosted our first Regional Connection Series event in Chicago, which served as a way for us to deliver the content and speakers originally planned for our Executive Summit to a more intimate group of the community in an exciting new destination.

One of our most exciting updates this year was the launch of our new inSights Research Program in May. Powered by a modern analytics platform, The Vision Council inSights Research Program includes all-new reports developed from updated consumer and market data sources and methodologies. Designed to better serve the needs of members, the new program provides timely data and analysis in an accessible, flexible format.

Fostering a more diverse, equitable and inclusive vision care community continues to be a priority. The Vision Council partnered with Cornell University to develop an online four-course and capstone certificate program customized specifically for members of the vision community. The course was created by Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR), called Advancing Diversity & Inclusion: A Cornell Certificate for Optical Professionals. We've also expanded our partnership with Cornell University to offer members access

to their full suite of online executive education certificates, which is a great member benefit.

Furthermore, The Vision Council expanded Opening Your Eyes: The Vision Council Scholarship Fund to give more students at more schools opportunities to achieve a rewarding career in opticianry. The program supports these selected students through monetary scholarships to opticianry school, paid internships and mentorships.

In 2022, we also grew our staff to better serve our membership – recent hires include a new Director of Shows and a new Government Relations Manager, as well as a Data Analyst.

We relaunched our consumer public relations efforts in a new format that allows all members to use and customize our messaging. We garnered attention from top industry trade and consumer media publications. Our media event celebrating National Sunglasses Day brought press, influencers and guests together to celebrate the importance of wearing UV-protective sunglasses when spending time outdoors.

Meanwhile, The Vision Council's team of dedicated government relations and regulatory affairs (GR) professionals kept members informed on key issues. Members of The Vision Council's board and GR committee visited several Congressional offices in December to explain several issues impacting The Vision Council members, including the China 301 duties, Made in the U.S.A. limitations, the value of vision care as part of health care and the importance of low vision care coverage under Medicare. The Vision Council's GR team played an active role in monitoring, advocating and lobbying for the long-term success of our members.

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to serving you in 2023.



Ashley Mills  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Vision Council



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# INDUSTRY & MEMBER OUTREACH

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

### 2022 Power of Associations Silver Award

The Vision Council earned a Power of Associations Silver Award from the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) for its successful Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts.

“Congratulations to The Vision Council for exemplifying the impact associations have on the industries and professions they represent, and on society at large,” said ASAE President and CEO Michelle Mason, FASAE, CAE. “It’s always so incredibly satisfying to see associations going above and beyond their everyday mission to change the world. We’re very proud to spotlight this award-winning initiative.”

The Vision Council’s recent diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives include: the launch of The Vision Council’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force in 2020; the fielding of a comprehensive industry survey on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Survey in 2020; the launch of Opening Your Eyes: The Vision Council Scholarship Fund in 2021; and the creation of an online certificate program in partnership with Cornell University’s School of Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR) in 2021.



### Opening Your Eyes: The Vision Council’s Scholarship Fund

In 2022, Opening Your Eyes: The Vision Council Scholarship Fund expanded to institutions within the National Federation of Opticianry Schools (NFOS). Each scholarship includes tuition, as well as reimbursement of certification and state exam fees.

As of October 2022, partner schools include:

- Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology (MA)
- Broward College (FL)
- Camden County College (NJ)
- Cuyahoga Community College (OH)
- Daytona State College (FL)
- Durham Technical Community College (NC)
- Erie Community College (NY)
- Georgia Piedmont Community College (GA)
- Hillsborough Community College (FL)
- Miami Dade College (FL)
- Middlesex Community College (CT)
- Raritan Valley Community College (NJ)
- Reynolds Community College (VA)
- Wiregrass Georgia Technical College (GA)





To reach more students and garner interest in the scholarship program, The Vision Council partnered with Spotted MP, a small, women and minority-owned business with expertise in regional, grassroots marketing efforts. Through Spotted MP, The Vision Council will seek opportunities to reach high school students and their families in local markets of participating NFOS schools with messages about the field of opticianry and applying for the scholarship.

In 2022, two scholarship recipients graduated from Middlesex Community College and New York City College of Technology. Currently, the Opening Your Eyes: The Vision Council Scholarship Fund has eight recipients pursuing an associate degree in Ophthalmic Dispensing.



## MEMBER RESOURCES

### Cornell Certificate Program

An extension of The Vision Council's certificate program customized specifically for members of the vision community by Cornell University, members gained access to Cornell University's comprehensive Executive Certificate portfolio at a discounted rate.

With certificates ranging from leadership, business and finance to marketing and human resources, members were given access to a range of professional and executive development opportunities.

The Vision Council's Advancing Diversity & Inclusion: A Cornell Certificate for Optical Professionals concluded in October with a capstone hosted by Tony Byers, Diversity & Inclusion Professional Programs Director and Senior Extension Faculty for Cornell University's ILR School.

### Emerging Optical Leaders Mentorship Program

In 2022, The Vision Council's Emerging Optical Leaders (EOL) Mentorship Program connected 22 mentees with 22 industry leaders to serve as their mentors. The program kicked off with a virtual meeting featuring an overview of the year's program and an update on mentee and mentor resources. Throughout the year, the participants were invited to connect at The Vision Council's in-person meetings and events.

The EOL Committee exists to identify the next generation of optical industry leaders for The Vision Council. The committee is responsible for creating leadership development opportunities and fostering networking opportunities for emerging optical executives, in addition to sharing insights helpful to the strategic goals of The Vision Council.

# TRADE SHOWS AND EVENTS

## IT'S ALL CONNECTED: VIRTUAL ALL-MEMBER MEETINGS

On Monday, January 24 and Tuesday, January 25, The Vision Council hosted two virtual events – the organization's Annual Business Meeting and an economic trends forecast by Brian Beaulieu – originally scheduled for the 2022 Executive Summit.

The 2022 Executive Summit was postponed due to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic, disruptions to air travel and business interruptions. The event was rescheduled for January 2023.

### Annual Business Meeting

Presented under the banner of "It's All Connected," the meeting included a welcome address from Karen Roberts, The Vision Council's Chair, followed by remarks from Ashley Mills, CEO of The Vision Council.

Additionally, an overview of the enhancements planned for The Vision Council's 2022 research program was presented by Alysse Henkel, The Vision Council's Director of Research Data and Analytics. The Vision Council also inducted its 2022 Board of Directors during the meeting.

### Economic Trends Forecast

The Vision Council's virtual programming continued on Tuesday, January 25 at 9 a.m. with a presentation by Brian Beaulieu, economist and CEO of ITR Economics, who shared insights on trade policies, economic trends and an outlook for the year ahead. The presentation was followed by a Q&A session.

## REGIONAL CONNECTION SERIES: CHICAGO

An extension of The Vision Council's theme for 2022, It's All Connected, the Regional Connection Series event in Chicago focused on sustainable growth and the connection between individual employee health and wellness, success of an organization and the advancement of the industry as a whole.

In June, the regional event was held in Chicago, IL. The event brought together almost 70 vision community members at The Drake Hotel for a full day of engaging presentations and networking opportunities.

## VISION EXPO

### Vision Expo East 2022



Vision Expo East 2022 took place March 31–April 3 at the Javits Center and marked Vision Expo's first Show in New York City since 2019. The Show featured more than 360 exhibiting companies across several distinct neighborhoods and offered leading continuing education as well as engaging programming.

Presented under the banner of VisionEd, Vision Expo's education program offered more than 230 hours of education, ranging from the latest business strategies and fashion trends to patient education tactics and cutting-edge innovations. Returning to the Show, OptiCon®@Vision Expo offered an unmatched education program and exhibit hall experience for opticians, contact lens practitioners and ophthalmic allied professionals.



## Highlights from the Show include:

**The Bridge**, Vision Expo East's main stage destination, featured the EYE2EYE Series, an educational series of panels on topics ranging from fashion trend forecasts to the metaverse and cryptocurrency, and headlined by fashion innovator and author, Dapper Dan. The Bridge also housed the Innovation Stage, the Show Floor destination dedicated to groundbreaking content and state-of-the-art products and services revolutionizing the industry.

**The Career Zone–Student Lounge**, a destination for students to connect with optical companies that are actively recruiting and explore career resources, also returned to Vision Expo East on Saturday, April 2.

The winner of the **OPTimum Retail Award** – Black Optical – was announced and celebrated during a reception at Vision Expo East. The award celebrates independent retailers and showcases their products, stores, visions and stories.

**The Vision Choice Award**, which recognizes the best new product at Vision Expo East, was awarded to ZEISS for the company's PhotoFusion® X Lenses.

**NOW by Vision Expo**, a new eyewear trends showcase, also made its debut at the Show, spotlighting curated selections of eyewear from more than 80 exhibiting companies. The intent of the program is to expand beyond eyewear at future Shows to also showcase products, technology and equipment.

## Vision Expo West 2022

Vision Expo West 2022 took place in Las Vegas, Nevada, from Sept. 14–17 at The Venetian Convention Center & Expo. The Show featured more than 380 exhibiting companies across several distinct neighborhoods and offered cutting-edge continuing education as well as engaging programming. The Innovation Stage – Vision Expo West's main stage destination – featured a number of engaging presentations and panel discussions, including a session highlighting research conducted by The Vision Council; coverage of state-of-the-art ophthalmic technologies; and a Keynote address from globally recognized innovation strategist and author Shawn Kanungo.

Vision Expo West 2022 brought together key industry groups and supporters, many of which hosted parties, special events and networking sessions throughout the Show. Prevent Blindness, the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight, hosted its Swing Fore Sight Golf Tournament event on Wednesday, September 14.



Additionally, The Vision Council hosted several member meetings and events. An All Member Meeting offered updates from The Vision Council's team of experts. The Vision Council's divisions and Emerging Optical Leaders Committee hosted meetings to review the latest industry trends and future plans, and members, staff, and friends gathered to toast the kick-off of Vision Expo West at a festive Member Reception.

## Vision Expo+ On ShopVISION

In an effort to accommodate members of the community from around the globe, Vision Expo+, a free digital extension of the Vision Expo experience, offered online showrooms from Vision Expo's exhibitors and recorded Vision Expo content.

# CONSUMER OUTREACH

As part of The Vision Council's strategic plan and the organization's commitment to consumer outreach and education, The Vision Council promotes the importance of eye health; eyewear and eyecare trends; and the breadth of products and services available to consumers through strategic PR initiatives.

## NATIONAL SUNGLASSES DAY



In June, The Vision Council brought the importance of ultraviolet (UV)-protective eyewear to life through a successful National Sunglasses Day campaign. The Vision Council encouraged members and the industry at large to participate on June 27 by posting on social media channels using the official hashtags and tagging The Vision Council. Additionally, downloadable marketing assets were created and posted to the National Sunglasses Day website to make it easy for brands to participate.

The social media campaign, including the #NationalSunglassesDay hashtag, garnered more than 137 million impressions and more than 146,900 engagements, including posts from Pitbull, Iris Apfel, Paris Hilton, Green Bay Packers, NASA, the US Secret Service, and more.

To elevate awareness of the campaign and encourage consumers to get involved, The Vision Council distributed a national press release through PR Newswire. The release garnered pickup in 383 outlets and reached a potential audience of 169 million.

Additionally, throughout the month of June, 'National Sunglasses Day' was mentioned in 521 media outlets, including on The Today Show, Essence.com and OKMagazine.com, reaching a potential audience of nearly 460 million.



## Media Event

On June 21, The Vision Council hosted a consumer media and influencer event at a trendy rooftop venue in New York City to further amplify awareness for National Sunglasses Day. Media and influencers, including editors from Bustle, Cosmopolitan, Marie Claire, New York Post, Oprah Daily, POP Style TV, PopSugar, Real Simple, Refinery29.com, Seventeen, Today.com, Us Weekly, Vision Monday, W Magazine and Women's Health, among others, attended and browsed the latest trends in a 'Sunglass Suite,' featuring sunglass and product options contributed by members of The Vision Council. Optician Sheena Taff was on-site to help guests find the best styles for them. Attendees also learned about the importance of UV eye protection through a fireside chat hosted by Julee Wilson, Beauty Editor at-large at Cosmopolitan and two of The Vision Council's medical advisors, Dr. Justin Bazan and Dr. Jennifer Tsai.





## MEMBER RESOURCES

The Vision Council curates consumer-facing resources that The Vision Council's members can use in their own consumer-facing marketing efforts. In 2022, The Vision Council launched several new resources, including:

**Vistaprint ProShop:** In April 2022, The Vision Council launched a Vistaprint ProShop that gives members access to printable marketing materials at a discounted rate. From stickers and selfie banners to posters and tabletop signs, the online store includes printable resources for National Sunglasses Day, Low Vision, Lens options and dispensing information, and more.

**Monthly Social Media Calendar:** In March 2022, The Vision Council introduced a new social media calendar, shared with members monthly, that can be used for consumer-facing social media marketing. The calendar includes suggested concept overviews and specific language tailored by major social media channel and links to resources that members can include in posts.

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

The Vision Council periodically reaches out to members to request submissions for consumer media pitches and to gauge interest in participating in media events. For more information and to get involved, contact Chelsea Pillsbury, The Vision Council's Vice President of Marketing & Communications, at [cpillsbury@thevisioncouncil.org](mailto:cpillsbury@thevisioncouncil.org).



# GOVERNMENT & REGULATORY AFFAIRS

## CHINA 301 DUTIES

The Vision Council continued its advocacy efforts towards reducing or eliminating China 301 duties for impacted member companies, by meeting with over two dozen members of Congress. In addition to explaining why the impacted optical products shouldn't be subject to tariffs, The Vision Council illustrated both the health and economic impact on Americans across the country by not receiving exclusions. To increase advocacy beyond congress and into the administration The Vision Council met with the Office of the United States Trade Representative, and sent letters to The National Economic Council and The United States International Trade Commission.

## VISIONPAC



This year The Vision Council relaunched and rebranded its non-partisan political action committee (PAC) that supports federally elected officials in Washington, DC. VisionPAC seeks to protect and promote a strong public policy agenda that will benefit the US optical marketplace, in an increasingly complex legislative and regulatory environment. The

Vision Council seeks to support individuals who have a proven track record of supporting the industry's commitment to providing quality eyecare and eyewear.

## UNITED NATIONS - FRIENDS OF VISION

The Vision Council continued its work as a member of the United Nations Friends of Vision, joining a letter campaign calling on the UN Secretary-General to appoint a Special Envoy on Vision, to help fulfill the global commitment of reaching the 1.1 billion people who have a vision impairment and currently do not have access to the services that they need.

## MADE IN THE USA



As conversations remain ongoing regarding China 301 Duties, The Vision Council sought to expand options for members to bring business operations back home from abroad. Holding an All Member Meeting this Fall on the topic of Made in the USA labeling and nearshoring, The Vision Council worked to inform members about Made in USA labeling and production. Asking what it would take for members to bring manufacturing back home, The Vision Council established a working group to determine member's pressing needs and ongoing issues preventing business expansion. With this information, the working group will provide the Government and Regulatory Affairs team with input needed to broaden the definition of Made in the USA claims and incentivize onshoring or nearshoring of production.



# INSIGHTS RESEARCH PROGRAM



In May 2022, The Vision Council launched the new inSights Research Program. Powered by a modern analytics platform, the program includes all-new research reports developed from updated consumer and market data sources and methodologies.

The inSights Program reflects an overhaul of The Vision Council's technology, enabling more sophisticated analysis and quicker, more efficient reporting. Built on a foundation of rigorous methodology,

the program offers relevant research and exclusive perspectives on the state of the industry.

In 2022, The Vision Council published 46 reports to the research download center.

## KEY REPORTS

The Vision Council inSights Research Program provides a comprehensive perspective on the state of the vision care industry. In 2022, The Vision Council released an annual market estimate and industry forecast reporting on consumer behavior, eyecare providers, and eyewear and eyecare products and topics important to members.

**Consumer inSights:** Quarterly summary of monthly consumer survey about vision correction, eye exams, frames and lens purchases, contact lenses, Plano sunglasses, and over-the-counter readers. Data is representative of the U.S. adult population, with 60,000 respondents in 2022. This year, The Vision Council released 3 Consumer inSights quarterly reports, and 21 Consumer inSights+ reports.

**Provider inSights:** Summary of monthly eyecare provider survey about their practice, economic sentiment, telehealth offerings, staffing, and other rotating topics. In 2022, The Vision Council released a report of 2021 data and a 2022 survey.

**Focused inSights:** In-depth special interest reports on topics important to members. In 2022, the five Focused inSights reports included: Consumer Choices, Digital Habits, Sunglasses Snapshot, Online vs In-Person Buyers, and Blue Light Snapshot. Data sources for these reports include ad-hoc consumer surveys and transaction data (when applicable).

**Industry Data inSights:** New for 2022, The Vision Council established a member-reported data benchmarking program for select product categories facilitated by an external partner. Participating companies will provide data quarterly through a secure online portal that prepares anonymized aggregate reports ensuring data confidentiality. The Industry Data inSights online portal allows only participating members to easily access and download Excel and PowerPoint reports\* that benchmark their submitted data to the aggregate results.

*\*Topics and frequency contingent on member participation*



**Market inSights:** Annual market estimates of market size. These reports will also include forecasts for the coming year using predictive analytics. These reports will rely on consumer survey data, ECP survey data, transaction data, and member-reported data to create the market size estimates and forecast. The Vision Council intends to release quarterly reports in 2023, and will release a comprehensive annual report on market size for 2022 early next year.



Additionally, inSights+ reports are available across some report categories at an additional cost and will include detailed crosstabulations of demographic data.

For more information on The Vision Council's inSights Research Program, contact Alysse Henkel, The Vision Council's Senior Director, Market Research & Analytics, at [AHenkel@thevisioncouncil.org](mailto:AHenkel@thevisioncouncil.org).

# FINANCIALS

Financial Information shown represents The Vision Council's 2022 financial status as of April 12, 2023. As such, it is preliminary and unaudited.

PROJECTED 2022 BALANCE SHEET		PROJECTED 2022 INCOME STATEMENT	
<b>Assets</b>		<b>Revenues</b>	
Current Assets	4,398,107	Shows	7,031,864
Long Term Assets		Dues and Fees	2,249,070
Net Fixed Assets	624,054	Vision Watch	187,720
Investments	9,181,725	All Other Income	142,160
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>14,203,886</b>	<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>9,610,814</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		<b>Expenses</b>	
Short Term	710,133	Personnel	3,278,468
Long Term	1,256,633	General & Administration	1,511,676
Net Assets		Program	
Beginning Net Assets	13,259,992	Marketing & Communications	828,320
Year-to-Date Net Income	(1,022,872)	Shows/Expositions	525,490
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>12,237,120</b>	Member Services	1,446,100
		Meetings & Events	625,305
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>14,203,886</b>	Government Relations	318,447
		Executive Initiatives	149,552
		Think About Your Eyes	0
			3,893,214
		<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>8,683,358</b>
		<b>Net Income from Operations</b>	<b>927,456</b>
		Investment Gains/Losses	(1,950,328)
		<b>Total Net Income</b>	<b>(1,022,872)</b>



