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The Vision Council Foundation's Scholarship Program Empowers Next Generation of Optical Industry Leaders

Donations support students from underrepresented communities pursuing a degree in ophthalmic dispensing

Alexandria, VA – September 18, 2023 – As the summer fades into memory and students across the nation return to classrooms, The Vision Council Foundation strives to continuously support young and promising talent, cultivating career pipelines into the optical industry.

Opening Your Eyes: The Vision Council Scholarship Fund, launched in 2021 and is now in its third year of operation. So far, the program has awarded 25 scholarships, raising a remarkable \$340,000 to support students from underrepresented communities pursuing a degree in ophthalmic dispensing. The central objective of the program is to award scholarships to opticianry students with diverse backgrounds and provide additional career support and resources as they prepare for a career in the eyecare and optical field.

Scholarships are generously funded by donors to help alleviate expenses associated with tuition (opticianry education programs), certification, and state exam fees. Funds awarded to Opening Your Eyes Scholarship recipients typically cover the entire cost of the 2-year academic program (associate degree) required to become a licensed optician.

As **The Vision Council Foundation** looks toward the upcoming academic year, individuals and organizations are invited to join us in investing in the future of the industry by providing financial assistance and career opportunities for students who show an interest in the eyecare and optical industry.

One of the previous scholarship recipients, Liliana, who studied at Reynolds Community College, expressed the profound impact of this opportunity: "I decided to return to school just to show my children that when they grow older, whatever they put their mind to can be accomplished. My plans after Reynolds are to pursue my career as an Optician. The financial assistance that I am receiving will help me to be able to provide more for my children. [...] I love my position and that is what drove more interest into starting school once again and making it into a career choice. Thank you for giving me this opportunity through your scholarship support."

The optical industry plays a pivotal role in safeguarding the nation's eye health, and the demand for skilled professionals continues to grow. By supporting Opening Your Eyes: The Vision Council Scholarship Fund, you're not only investing in the future but also helping create

opportunities for young talents who aspire to contribute to this dynamic sector but do not have the existing financial resources to do so.

Michael Vitale, Vice President of Membership, Government Relations & Technical Affairs at The Vision Council is a licensed optician and ABO Master Optician, and emphasizes the importance of this initiative: "At The Vision Council, we believe in building a brighter future for the optical industry. The Foundation's scholarship program is our way of fostering the talent and innovation needed to drive this industry forward. It's a privilege to see these students excel and become the leaders of tomorrow."

Help Us Reach Our Goal: To support the future of the optical industry, we aim to raise over \$300,000 each academic year in order to continue providing an increasing number of scholarships to students. Your contribution can make a profound difference in the lives of these talented students. Please consider making your 2023/2024 donation by clicking [here](#).

If you have any questions, please contact Bonnie Whitfield, Senior Manager of Membership Communications, at bwhitfield@thevisioncouncil.org.

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About the Vision Council Foundation

As the philanthropic foundation of The Vision Council, The Vision Council Foundation brings the power of sight to all through eye health educational programs and optical industry career training support. The Vision Council Foundation is a 501c3 charitable nonprofit organization dedicated to enabling better vision for better lives.