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Contact: Chelsea Pillsbury
media@thevisioncouncil.org

Record Number of Opening Your Eyes Scholarship Fund Recipients Graduate from Opticianry Schools

The Vision Council Foundation Program Assists Students from Underserved Communities

Alexandria, Va., June 18, 2024 — The Vision Council Foundation announced a record-breaking number of opticianry school graduates this year who benefitted from scholarships supporting students from underserved communities pursuing a career as a licensed optician. [The Opening Your Eyes Scholarship Fund](#), which launched in 2021 backed by donations from members of [The Vision Council](#), provided financial assistance and career opportunities to 16 newly licensed opticians.

The program facilitates the entry of a more diverse group of opticians into the industry, and currently provides funding for student tuition and expenses spans for opticianry students at 17 partner institutions within the National Federation of Opticianry Schools (NFOS). By lowering barriers associated with cost and connections, [The Vision Council Foundation](#) seeks to clear the way for opticians from a wider array of backgrounds to connect with patients and bring their input to the optical community.

“Because of certain health issues and being a single mom, working and going to school was difficult at times,” said **Raphaella Mompont, who graduated from the program through Broward College** in May. “Thanks to The Vision Council and the Opening Your Eyes Scholarship, the burden of financing my school was something I didn’t have to worry about.”

“These scholarships help students who may not be able to attend college because of the financial burden, and the Opticianry degree opens many opportunities for graduates to succeed in various positions in the healthcare field.” said **Thomas Neff, an opticianry instructor at Hillsborough Community College**. “This helps the recipients to get into a potential life changing job to help people see their best.”

GuerBea Lorissaint, who also graduated from Broward College in May, explained that her desire to become an optician came from her personal experience with needing to visit an eye doctor frequently as a child. “Finally being able to see behind the scenes and how they go about procedures really made me want to step into that industry and be one of those people who helps others with their vision problems.”

The Vision Council Foundation has continued to expand the program to include more institutions within NFOS in order to reach more potential applicants and their communities. The organization also continues to deepen its relationships with current and former students in the program.

“We’re so excited to welcome these professionals into the industry as new colleagues, who now have an incredible career path ahead,” said **Ashley Mills, CEO of The Vision Council**. “Their diverse and unique perspectives will help push the optical community forward. They champion our shared goal of improving vision for everyone, and our organization could not be prouder of the potential they represent.”

Help Empower Future Opticians: To support the future of the optical industry, The Vision Council aims to raise over \$300,000 each academic year to continue providing an increasing number of scholarships to students. Contributions 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, Director of Member Services, 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 empowers people everywhere to see and look their best through public eye health education and optical industry career training support. A 501c3 charitable nonprofit organization, the Foundation is dedicated to ensuring better vision for better lives.