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**Prevent Blindness America Announces Semi-Finalists for
“Most Beautiful Eyes Contest”**

***--Winners from Maine, Oklahoma and South Carolina Vie for Grand Prize of
\$25,000 College Scholarship from Prevent Blindness America--***

CHICAGO (Nov. 3, 2011) – Three semi-finalists have been chosen for the “Most Beautiful Eyes Contest” from Prevent Blindness America. The three finalists, Hailey Verrill, age 4, from Maine, Lyla C. Zaragoza, age 2, Okla. and Kayla Helferich, age 8, of S.C., and their families will enjoy a trip to Chicago to attend the Prevent Blindness America Annual Awards Banquet on Friday, November 18, 2011, where the overall winner will be announced. Celebrity judges including former television broadcaster Larry King, Derrek Lee of the Pittsburgh Pirates and NASA astronaut Walter Cunningham chose the overall winner, as well as second and third place winners.

The national contest took place earlier this year when parents of children ages zero to 17 were encouraged to submit a photo of their child online. Voting took place on Prevent Blindness America’s Facebook page at facebook.com/preventblindness. The contestant with the most votes from each state, with the exception of Rhode Island, advanced to the final round, followed by the selection of the three finalists.

The Most Beautiful Eyes Contest winner will receive a \$25,000 college scholarship and become the face of the Star Pupils program for one year. Star Pupils is the signature children’s eye health program from Prevent Blindness America. The second prize winner will receive a \$4,000 scholarship, followed by third place to receive a \$2,000 scholarship. The scholarship prizes are made available by Marchon Eyewear and Advantica.

“We are so pleased that so many people participated in the contest, and that we’re able to present our winners with such wonderful prizes,” said Hugh R. Parry, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness America. “We also hope that, because of the contest, parents were reminded of the importance of eye health and will have their child’s vision checked.”

For more information about the Most Beautiful Eyes Contest or general children’s eye health and safety, please visit preventblindness.org, facebook.com/preventblindness, or call (800) 331-2020.

About Prevent Blindness America

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness America is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness America touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, divisions and chapters, Prevent Blindness America is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020. Or, visit us on the web at preventblindness.org or facebook.com/preventblindness.

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