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Prevent Blindness America Announces Name Change to “Prevent Blindness”

- New Name Emphasizes the Group's Dedication to Save Sight -

CHICAGO (Jan. 13, 2014) – Prevent Blindness America, the nation’s oldest eye health and safety organization, today announced that it has changed its operating name, or DBA (doing business as), to “Prevent Blindness.”

The national group, with affiliates across the country, promotes public awareness of the importance of their vision and eye health, advocates for public policy that emphasizes early detection and access to appropriate eye care, educates allied health professionals about eye health, and supports vision-related scientific research.

Prevent Blindness is using the new name as a launching pad to refocus efforts around a number of key areas including awareness of diabetic eye disease with the growing diabetes epidemic, women’s eye health, children’s vision, improving the quality of life for those living with low vision, and an increased role in public health research related to vision.

In 1908, the National Society to Prevent Blindness was founded as an endeavor to save the vision in infants from a blinding yet preventable eye disease known as “Babies’ Sore Eyes.” The organization’s scope has expanded to sight-saving programs that address issues across the age spectrum.

The long, sight-saving history of Prevent Blindness includes landmark events such as:

1917 Successfully led legislation that virtually eliminated a leading cause of blindness in infants, called ophthalmia neonatorum.

1926 Created the first volunteer-run preschool vision screening program in the United States.

1942 Conducted the first glaucoma detection program in the United States.

1956 Marshalled resources that developed equipment to test the vision of infants.

1972 Spearheaded legislation to require impact-resistant lenses in all eyewear.

1981 Launched the first professional and public education programs on diabetic eye disease, the fastest growing cause of new cases of blindness.

1995 Introduced adult vision screening and photoscreening training programs.

2002 Published the “Vision Problems in the U.S.” report on the prevalence and burden of age-related eye disease in America. Follow-up reports were issued in 2008 and 2012.

2003 Helped establish a vision research and prevention program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Launched the Congressional Vision Caucus, a bipartisan coalition of Congressional Members.

2006 Established the “Eyes on Capitol Hill” campaign, bringing more than 100 patients and vision advocates to Washington, D.C., to discuss vision health policies with legislators.

2010 Established the National Center for Children’s Vision and Eye Health.

2011 Created the Star Pupils Curriculum, providing free educational kits to teachers and classrooms on eye health and safety practices.

2012 Held the first annual Focus on Eye Health National Summit in Washington, D.C.

2013 Published the “Cost of Vision Problems: The Economic Burden of Vision Loss and Eye Disorders in the United States.” Launched See Jane See: Health Eyes Now, a national program designed to bring awareness to women’s eye issues.

“By moving forward as ‘Prevent Blindness,’ we add focus to our mission and acknowledge the growing global reliance on the internet for information on eye health. Our goal is to expand our programs and develop new ones to address a wide variety of vision health needs,” said Hugh R. Parry, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “But with the new name, our mission remains unchanged. We continue to work towards the same result, which is to put an end to needless vision loss in adults and children.”

For more information on Prevent Blindness, its mission and its programs, please visit preventblindness.org, or call Prevent Blindness at (800) 331-2020.

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness 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 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, Prevent Blindness 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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