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Salus University, STAAR Surgical Launch Project MyVision

A 'Visionary' Plan for the Underserved Seeking Visual Freedom from Contact Lenses or Glasses

Elkins Park, Pa. — The Pennsylvania College of Optometry (PCO) at Salus University and its clinical facility, The Eye Institute (TEI), recently partnered with STAAR Surgical, a leading developer and manufacturer of implantable lenses and companion delivery systems for the eye, to launch **Project MyVision**, a charitable lens-based refractive surgery program.

Under the new partnership, STAAR will donate Implantable Collamer® Lenses (ICLs) to underserved, low-income patients diagnosed with myopia (nearsightedness) which is the need for distance vision correction. Myopia is the most common vision disorder globally and its prevalence is rapidly growing.¹

David Friess, OD '02, Resident '03, FAAO and former president of the University's Alumni Association was instrumental in developing the partnership between STAAR and Salus University. "The ICL is an elective surgical procedure designed to provide individuals visual freedom from contact lenses and glasses and this new partnership between Salus University and STAAR Surgical will expand access to individuals who may not have the economic resources to consider refractive surgery," said Dr. Friess who is currently vice president, global medical affairs at STAAR Surgical. "We believe **Project MyVision** can also benefit PCO/Salus students during their clinical training by exposing them to the benefits of vision correction with lens-based refractive surgery and potentially opening new career paths for work in collaboration with surgeons and surgical practices. We are honored to partner with Salus University."

James Lewis, MD, a Salus University consulting ophthalmologist specializing in cornea, cataract and refractive surgery based in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, will perform the ICL procedures for **Project MyVision**. Use of facilities, equipment and personnel support are being provided by the Fort Washington Surgery Center in Fort Washington, Pennsylvania.

“This technology offers better vision and safety for many patients with nearsightedness and astigmatism. STAAR Surgical, the manufacturer of the Visian ICL and EVO, selected us to introduce this philanthropic program to the country,” Dr. Lewis said. “**Project MyVision** will enhance the education of Salus University students and benefit many patients in our clinic at The Eye Institute. The nearby Fort Washington Surgery Center has made this possible through their substantial donation of time and resources. We hope to expand the understanding and appreciation of this life changing implant.”

The goal of **Project MyVision** is to provide ICL lens implant surgery to patients receiving vision care through The Eye Institute of Salus University with moderate to severe myopia. STAAR’s implantable lenses are designed to correct nearsightedness for people who are often very dependent on their glasses or contact lenses and the procedure is not covered by health insurance providers.

“The approach we’re taking with **Project MyVision** is really about assisting communities with vision needs and expanding our charitable efforts,” said Heather Ready, senior director of global market intelligence at STAAR. “We believe our partnership with PCO/Salus is a great opportunity to serve individuals who have high need and limited access.”

The initial ICL implant surgeries performed by Dr. Lewis were completed last month. Salus and STAAR hope **Project MyVision** can grow within the community and beyond over time.

¹ Holden BA, Fricke TR, Wilson DA, et al. Global Prevalence of Myopia and High Myopia and Temporal Trends from 2000 through 2050. *Ophthalmology*. 2016.

About Salus University

Salus University, founded as the Pennsylvania College of Optometry in 1919, today is a diversified, globally recognized professional academic center of learning that offers a wide range of degree programs in the professions of Optometry, Audiology, Physician Assistant, Blindness and Low Vision Studies, Biomedicine, Occupational Therapy, Speech-Language Pathology and Orthotics and Prosthetics. Salus operates four clinical facilities in Philadelphia and Montgomery counties that provide highly specialized vision, hearing and balance, speech-language pathology and occupational therapy services. The University has more than 1,200 students, and more than 14,000 alumni worldwide. For more information, please visit www.salus.edu.

About STAAR Surgical

STAAR Surgical (NASDAQ: STAA), which has been dedicated solely to ophthalmic surgery for over 30 years, designs, develops, manufactures and markets implantable lenses for the eye with companion delivery systems. These lenses are intended to provide visual freedom for patients, lessening or eliminating the reliance on glasses or contact lenses. All of these lenses are foldable, which permits the surgeon to insert them through a small incision. STAAR’s lens used in refractive surgery is called an Implantable Collamer® Lens or “ICL”, which includes the EVO Visian ICL™ product line. More than 1,000,000 Visian® ICLs have been implanted to date and STAAR markets these lenses in over 75 countries. To learn more about the ICL go to: www.discovericl.com. Headquartered in Lake Forest, CA, the company operates manufacturing and packaging facilities in Aliso Viejo, CA, Monrovia, CA and Nidau, Switzerland. For more information, please visit the Company’s website at www.staar.com.