



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** February 14, 2022

## **\$300,000 Federal Grant to Fund National Vision Screening Association**

**TAMPA, FL** – The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has granted Lions Eye Institute for Transplant and Research \$300,000 to improve vision outcomes for children under five. Through this grant, Lions Eye Institute will establish a Pediatric Vision Association (PVA).

The PVA will improve vision outcomes for children by strengthening existing vision screening programs and serving as a national thought leader for pediatric vision health. The PVA will recruit a national advisory board to provide leadership, develop and disseminate tools and resources, provide technical assistance, and establish partnerships and collaborations to support children in need.

There is a silent epidemic of vision impairment invading the lives of our children before they even start their formal school experience. In the United States, 25% of all students suffer from undiagnosed vision problems that are significant enough to affect their performance in school and in life. To solve these problems, we need comprehensive vision screening programs, trainings, and resources to ensure that children receive quality vision health and eye care services.

“This grant from HRSA will address the vision health needs and help eliminate barriers that families of young children are facing,” said JL Bielon, Executive Director of the Lions Eye Institute Foundation. “This program will ensure that communities across the country are equipped to provide children with the best possible vision health care and give them a healthy start to their academic experience.”

Lions Eye Institute currently operates its own Vision Screening Program and the Glazer Vision Foundation’s Mobile Vision Clinic Program which have successfully provided vision screenings and follow-up care to thousands of children across Tampa Bay.

### **About Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)**

The Health Resources and Services Administration is an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services located in North Bethesda, Maryland. It is the primary federal agency for improving access to health care services for people who are uninsured, isolated, or medically vulnerable.

### **About Lions Eye Institute for Transplant & Research (LEITR)**

Lions Eye Institute for Transplant & Research is a nonprofit organization that is a global resource for providing the gift of sight through research, vision screenings, tissue distribution, and tissue recovery services. Our mission is to elevate standards in sight restoration, tissue transplantation, research, and education. LEITR supports sight restoration in Florida, across the United States, and to over 50 countries around the world. Since its inception 49 years ago, LEITR has brought the “Gift of Sight” to more than 160,000 people worldwide. For more information visit <http://www.lionseyeinstitute.org>

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