



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Prevent Blindness Ohio receives Toledo Community Foundation Grant

TOLEDO, OH– Prevent Blindness Ohio received a grant from the Toledo Community Foundation’s Margaret Toth Fund to support the expansion of the Vision Care Outreach (VCO) program which helps high-risk individuals receive donated eye care.

The ultimate goal of the VCO program is to reduce the incidence of vision loss and impairment by providing access to on-going, comprehensive vision care services. Prevent Blindness Ohio targets populations that need vision services the most, but are least likely to receive them in Lucas County. The Vision Care Outreach (VCO) program provides access to donated, comprehensive, professional eye exams, follow-up care, education and eyewear to medically indigent children, youth, families and homeless/uninsured adults.

Quotes from those helped by this program in the past follows:

“I am 53 years old and I have been having problems with my vision recently. Even though I work full time, I cannot afford an eye exam and glasses. Prevent Blindness Ohio’s Vision Care Outreach program is giving me the opportunity to keep my sight and my job as well”. Deborah B., Toledo, OH.

“I was in a real bind, we had just moved and school was about to start. I was given the name of this program and was able to get my daughter eye glasses to start school with. The program was easy to access and did not take me through a lot of paperwork. I would recommend it to anyone needing help to get their children eyeglasses for any reason. I really appreciate all of your help”. Linda Ritts, Toledo, OH.

Using a vast network of social service agencies, eye and other health care professionals, hospitals, optical companies and others, VCO provides access for indigent populations to receive donated preventive vision care for disorders as easily correctable as myopia (near-sightedness) to more serious diseases such as diabetic retinopathy or glaucoma. PBO trains and equips staff of local healthcare and social service agencies (VCO partner agencies) to conduct vision assessments for their clients. PBO also provides eye health orientation and education to Lucas County area health care providers, social service agency partners, and patients that help them to understand the importance of regular eye care and the eye care systems available community-wide to serve the eye health needs of the uninsured and underinsured. Partner Agency clients receive access, through PBO, to eye exams, eyeglasses, and surgical care when needed at no cost to the recipient.

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The Toledo Community Foundation, Inc. is a public charitable organization created by citizens of our community to enrich the quality of life for individuals and families in our area. In existence since 1973, the Foundation now has over 450 funds with assets of approximately \$152 million. The Foundation provides philanthropic services for individuals, families, businesses and corporations to meet their charitable giving needs. For more information on the Foundation, visit the organization's website at www.toledocf.org.

Prevent Blindness Ohio, founded in 1957, is Ohio's leading volunteer nonprofit public health organization dedicated to preventing blindness and preserving sight. We serve all 88 Ohio counties, providing direct services to more than 800,000 Ohioans annually and educating millions of consumers about what they can do to protect and preserve their precious gift of sight. Prevent Blindness Ohio is an affiliate of Prevent Blindness America, the country's second-oldest national voluntary health organization. For more information or to make a contribution, visit our website at www.pbOhio.org or call 800-301-2020.

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