

COMBAT BLINDNESS
INTERNATIONAL
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A SOLUTION IN SIGHT



A LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN

Suresh Chandra, MD

I recently returned from a four-day visit to one of our projects, Fundación Visión in Asunción, Paraguay. On the second day of my trip, I traveled with clinic staff to Guarambaré, a town 20 miles from the city of Asunción, for a day-long eye camp.

It was one of the hottest days in the Asunción area with temperatures soaring to 114 degrees Fahrenheit. But the extreme conditions did not deter patients or lessen the dedication of the medical team. During the course of the day, more than 150 men, women and children came seeking treatment, and 16 of those patients were diagnosed with cataracts and given appointments for surgery at the main hospital.

The residents of Guarambaré were so thankful for the eye care, and even the mayor of the town came to the clinic to see how things were going and to meet the medical team.

Personally, I was so happy to know that a lack of money would not stop any of them from receiving the treatment they needed. They would not be forced to make their way through life blind simply because they are poor.

Although you will never meet the people who received care in Guarambaré, on that hot day in the village eye camp, I was able look into the faces of people whose lives have been changed by your generosity.

With this newsletter, you'll find a copy of our 2013 annual report, and inside, you will be introduced to other patients from around the world who were blind but can now see clearly, thanks to you. One of those patients, Pablo (age 7), is also from Paraguay. On behalf of the citizens of Guarambaré and all those being helped by CBI, I thank you again for your commitment to restoring sight. You are making a difference!

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We know it's early in the year, and spring has just begun, but around CBI, we are already looking forward to October and World Sight Day. That's because this year's event is particularly special as Combat Blindness International celebrates its 30th anniversary. When founding CBI three decades ago, Dr. Chandra did not foresee that it would one day expand across four continents, reaching hundreds of thousands of people. We at CBI have you to thank for that. Donors like you have made possible every vision camp, every screening and every surgery.



This year's event is a chance to celebrate the lives you've helped to change over the last 30 years. In fact, there's no one we would rather celebrate with than you - our dedicated partners and supporters. Here's what's in store...

**"Freedom" by
World Sight Day
Keynote Speaker,
Lon Michels**

The World Sight Day Celebration is being held at the newly renovated Edgewater Hotel in Madison, and guests will enjoy live music and delicious food from around the world. Our keynote address will be delivered by Wisconsin-born artist, Lon Michels. In 2003, an aggressive viral infection in his optic nerve caused him to go blind in the span of just 15 minutes. Believing his sight would never return, Lon was forced to relearn how to do everything, including how to paint. Two years after losing his sight, he received specialized treatment and

surgeries in an attempt to repair his optic nerves. The procedures were ultimately successful, and over the course of several months, he regained his sight. Today, Lon is able to see clearly and will share a unique story of how the gift of sight restoration has impacted his life.

World Sight Day Celebration and 30th Anniversary Celebration

*Wednesday, October 1, 2014
5:30-8:30 pm*

*The Edgewater Hotel
Madison, Wisconsin*

and generosity of people like you! More information can be found online at www.combatblindness.org/events.

We are greatly looking forward to this year's event, and we hope you will come. We would have nothing to celebrate without the commitment