



Press Release

Essilor renews partnership with Special Olympics to improve athletes' vision

Charenton-le-Pont (France), December 19, 2011 – Essilor International has renewed its agreement to support Special Olympics, the world's largest sports organization for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. The Essilor Group has been providing corrective lenses to Special Olympics athletes around the world since 2003.

Through the Essilor Vision Foundation, Essilor will pursue its partnership for 3 more years as the exclusive global supplier of corrective lenses for the *Special Olympics-Lions Club International Opening Eyes* program. Part of the *Healthy Athletes* program launched in 1997, *Opening Eyes* promotes healthy vision for Special Olympics athletes thanks to vision screenings, corrective and sports protective eyewear for athletes in need, and referrals for athletes requiring follow up treatment and services.

"As part of its mission to help everyone see the world better, Essilor is proud of this long lasting partnership with Special Olympics. We are both very committed to bringing a better life through better sight to athletes with intellectual disabilities" says Claude Darnault, Chief Sustainability Officer, Essilor International.

"We are honoured to be working alongside Essilor, in support of the vision of our athletes", says Dr. Timothy Shriver, Chairman and CEO of Special Olympics, Inc. *"Together, we are able to create positive, and lasting, change in the lives of athletes - both on and off the playing field. This speaks volumes to the commitment that Essilor has shown to the health of persons with intellectual disabilities worldwide."*

Essilor's employees, customers and partners, regularly participate as volunteers in sporting events organized throughout the world, helping to provide quality visual care to people affected by a mental handicap. In 9 years, the Group has provided over 100 000 athletes with prescription lenses for their glasses. The screenings and the equipment of the people can generally be handled on-site during the day of the event, bringing an immediate improvement in sight to the athletes. Special Olympics and Essilor International continue to work closely to expand the reach of the global partnership into more countries, providing positive life impacts for more and more individuals with intellectual disabilities

*The world leader in ophthalmic optical products, **Essilor** designs, manufactures and markets a wide range of lenses to improve and protect eyesight (Varilux®, Crizal®, Definity®, Xperio®, Optifog™, Kodak®, Foster Grant®) as well as equipment, instruments and services for eyecare professionals. The Company's mission is to enable everyone around the world to have good vision thanks to lenses that meet his or her unique vision requirements. The Essilor share trades on the NYSE Euronext Paris market and is included in the CAC 40 index. Codes and symbols: ISIN: FR0000121667; Reuters: ESSI.PA; Bloomberg: EI:FP.*

*Created in late 2007 in the United-States, the **Essilor Vision Foundation**'s mission is to eliminate poor vision and its lifelong consequences. The Foundation provides free eye exams and new high-quality prescription eyewear, through in-school and partnership programs. It also educates parents, teachers, caregivers, and community leaders to be aware of the implications of poor vision and watch for signs of vision problems.*

Special Olympics is an international organization that changes lives by encouraging and empowering people with intellectual disabilities, promoting acceptance for all, and fostering communities of understanding and respect worldwide. Founded in 1968 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the Special Olympics movement has grown from a few hundred athletes to nearly 3.5 million athletes in over 170 countries in all regions of the world, providing year-round sports training, athletic competition and other related programs. Special Olympics now takes place every day, changing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities in community playgrounds and ball fields in every small neighborhood's backyard to World Games. Special Olympics provides people with intellectual disabilities continuing opportunities to realize their potential, develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage and experience joy and friendship.

Visit Special Olympics at www.specialolympics.org.

Opening Eyes, part of Special Olympics' Healthy Athletes public health initiative is the largest program in the world dedicated to providing vision care for people with intellectual disabilities.

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