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**TWO PARTNERS, ONE VISION**

*Essilor Renews Longstanding Partnership with the Special Olympics "Opening Eyes" Program*

**DALLAS – (May 4, 2009)** – Essilor of America, Inc., the nation's leading manufacturer of optical lenses, announces a three-year extension of Essilor International's partnership with the Special Olympics – Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes® program. Opening Eyes is the world's largest program dedicated to providing eye care for people with intellectual disabilities. Essilor is the official global supplier of ophthalmic lenses to Opening Eyes, and it also supports the program by participating in screenings, education on healthy vision and eye examinations.

“Essilor International is dedicated to enhancing the Special Olympics experience for all participants, and believes strongly that a pair of lenses is the best way to improve sight while preserving the integrity, health and safety of the eye,” said John Carrier, Essilor of America, Inc. president. “Our partnership with the Opening Eyes program crosses all frontiers, cultures and social conditions in an effort to bring people together in a unique spirit of solidarity and generosity—one pair of glasses at a time.”

Through the Opening Eyes program, athletes are able to experience easy-to-wear eyeglasses and feel the functionality and comfort first hand, whether it is during regular wear or sports activities. Opening Eyes also educates athletes, parents and coaches about the importance of regular eye care using research to increase the knowledge of eye health needs of persons with intellectual disabilities. Research has shown that among Special Olympics athletes, 68 percent have not had an eye examination in three years, 37 percent are in need of eyeglasses and 18 percent wear clinically incorrect eyeglasses.

Approximately 30,000 corrective lenses have been supplied by Essilor over the past three years for Special Olympics athletes who require visual correction. Essilor is often able to provide

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eyewear onsite during athletic events, providing Special Olympics athletes with immediate, tangible and spectacular benefits.

For additional information about The Special Olympics-Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes program, please visit [www.lionsclubs.org](http://www.lionsclubs.org) or [www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org).

Essilor is the leading manufacturer of optical lenses in the United States and is the market leader in progressive, high-index and anti-reflective coated lenses. A pioneer in the development and production of ophthalmic lenses, Essilor employs more than 8,500 people throughout North America. Essilor manufactures optical lenses under the Varilux<sup>®</sup>, Crizal<sup>®</sup>, DEFINITY<sup>®</sup> Thin&Lite<sup>®</sup>, and other Essilor brand names. Essilor Laboratories of America (ELOA) is the largest, and most trusted, optical lab network in the U.S. and offers a wide choice of services and lens brands, including Essilor premium lenses, to eye care professionals across the nation. Essilor of America, Inc. (Essilor) is a subsidiary of Paris-based Essilor International, S.A., a publicly held company traded on the Euronext Paris stock exchange (Reuters: ESSI.PA).

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