



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ESSILOR OF AMERICA ANNOUNCES 2009 VARILUX STUDENT
GRANT AWARD WINNERS**

*Top Honors Awarded to NOVA Southeastern College of Optometry and University of Montreal
School of Optometry Students*

DALLAS – (May 13, 2009) – Essilor of America, Inc., the leading manufacturer of ophthalmic lenses, today announces the winners of the annual Varilux® Student Grant Awards, a nationwide competition among optometry students. Sixteen students were awarded \$1,000 each in grant monies from Varilux, and from those winners one national award and one honorary mention were given.

This year, the honor of the national award belongs to Graham Räsänen, a fourth-year student at NOVA Southeastern College of Optometry in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., who wrote the winning case study. Nicolas Tea, a fourth-year student at the University of Montreal School of Optometry, also received an honorary mention and a total grant of \$1,500 for his report.

“Essilor is committed to investing in the education of tomorrow’s industry leaders,” said Dr. Rodney Tahran, vice president of professional relations and clinical affairs. “We are proud to offer many quality educational programs, such as the annual Varilux Student Grant Award Program, for both students and professionals.”

Räsänen and his advisor, Ana Abugazaleh, will each receive an all-expense paid trip for two to the joint meeting of the American Optometric Association (AOA) and the American Optometric Student Association (AOSA) to be held in Washington, D.C. the week of June 24-28. Räsänen will be a guest at the 17th Annual Varilux Optometry Student Bowl, the highly anticipated annual event sponsored by Essilor, and will receive \$1,000 in prize money.

Essilor Announces Varilux Student Grant Winners/Page 2

Judges reviewed all case studies based on criteria such as dispensing skills, application of Varilux lenses to the patient's needs, analysis of the care, and analysis of the lens design and lens performance.

Both Räsänen's case report, "New Lens Technology Solves Patient Problems," and Tea's case report, "New Varilux Physio F – 360[®] Fitting," are available to view at www.essilorusa.com under the "Services" section.

Other 2009 winners are listed below:

- Meghan Elkins, Southern College of Optometry
- Manyu Debra Cheung, University of California at Berkeley School of Optometry
- Ryan J. Brown, Michigan College of Optometry
- Brandon Mayes, Northeastern State University
- Amy L. Kohen, Pennsylvania College of Optometry
- Jennifer E. Nance, Indiana University College of Optometry
- Casey C. Bartz, Illinois College of Optometry
- Brian Parker, Southern California College of Optometry
- Lea Young, University of Houston College of Optometry
- Marc K. Lay, State University New York College of Optometry
- Deanne Wehner, University of Missouri St. Louis College of Optometry
- Matthew Bauer, New England College of Optometry
- Brent Hopfauf, University of Waterloo, School of Optometry
- Christopher McQuivey, The Ohio State University College of Optometry

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[®], Crizal[®], DEFINITY[®] Thin&Lite[®], 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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Essilor Announces Varilux Student Grant Winners/Page 3

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