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**ESSILOR VISION FOUNDATION NAMED *HEALTHCARE EDUCATION HERO OF THE YEAR* BY  
DFW ALLIANCE FOR HEALTHCARE EXCELLENCE**

**DALLAS (November 14, 2008)** – Essilor Vision Foundation was named *Healthcare Education Hero of the Year* yesterday by the DFW Healthcare Alliance at their annual dinner in Las Colinas, Texas.

The *Healthcare Education Hero of the Year* award was given to Essilor Vision Foundation for its efforts in “improving patient participation through activities that increase patient awareness of the rights and responsibilities within the healthcare industry.” Audrey Reed, Executive Director of the Essilor Vision Foundation, accepted the award.

“We are so proud to honor the selfless actions of the Essilor Vision Foundation, said Corey Langley, President, DFW Healthcare Alliance. “Recognizing the vulnerabilities of children already disadvantaged in life and offering up essential vision care education, exams, and corrective glasses at no cost is an extraordinary act of kindness and generosity. The Essilor Vision Foundation should be proud of the work it does for our community.”

Earlier this year, Essilor Vision Foundation launched a major initiative called *Kids Vision For Life – Dallas Coalition*, which was formed to help Dallas ISD children get the vision care they so desperately need to succeed in school and life. The innovative vision care program currently is being piloted at 23 Dallas ISD schools during the 2008-2009 school year with the long-term goal of expanding to school districts in DFW and across the nation.

As part of this initiative, Essilor Vision Foundation and its partner, Lions Sight and Tissue Foundation, are providing free eye exams and glasses to children in grades one through six, who currently cannot afford vision care and do not qualify for other programs such as Medicaid. Essilor Vision Foundation and the Lions organization are working directly with Dallas ISD nursing staff to bring the mobile Vision Coach onsite to schools where optometrists conduct the exams and eyeglass fittings. Students choose from popular frames equipped with polycarbonate lenses – the safest lenses for kids.

Through this collaboration, as many as 1,500 elementary schoolchildren will receive eye exams and glasses this school year.

Another key component of the Essilor Vision Foundation initiative is what is believed to be the first-ever community-wide effort to identify children’s vision care as a key tool in improving literacy skills. The Dallas Coalition is comprised of community leaders, organizations, and educators. The goal of the coalition is to make sure Dallas children are not left behind academically because of vision problems.

“For such a young foundation, we are extremely honored to receive the *Healthcare Education Hero of the Year* award,” said Jacques Stoerr, President and Chairman of Essilor Vision Foundation. “We know that children must be able to see well to read and learn effectively, and, if that doesn’t happen, the consequences can be dire. Children with uncorrected vision are more likely to drop out of school

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and may go on to face lifelong struggles with literacy, low self-esteem, unemployment, poverty and crime. We are delighted to have the opportunity to make a critical difference in these children's lives."

In addition to the *Kids Vision For Life* program, the award recognized Essilor Vision Foundation for its Adopt-A-School program, which focuses on educating parents about the importance of children's eye health and the need for annual eye exams. Teams of volunteers are currently working closely with school nurses and other non-profit organizations -- such as the local Lions Clubs, VSP and Prevent Blindness -- to help provide eyeglasses to those kids who need them the most. The Adopt-A-School program launched this fall for the 2008-2009 school year with eight pilot teams in California, Florida, Massachusetts, New York, Texas and Utah. Plans are to expand the program throughout the U.S.

Also, the award acknowledges Essilor Vision Foundation's role as sponsor of the PBS documentary *The American Idealist: Story of Sargent Shriver* and its Vision Night program where educational videos about children's vision care were shown during PTA meetings.

"Vision is so important to every aspect of our lives," said Ms. Reed. "We are thrilled to have the opportunity to do our small part to provide glasses to children and educate parents about vision. We look forward to reaching out to even more people in the coming years."

#### **ABOUT ESSILOR VISION FOUNDATION**

*Essilor Vision Foundation is a public non-profit charity established by Dallas-based Essilor of America, the leading manufacturer of optical lenses in the United States. The foundation's mission is to achieve better life through better sight by creating and supporting activities that advance good vision and its benefits and offering special help to those who need it most.*

*We strive to give children a brighter future by helping them see the world more clearly. Our programs focus on improving the quality of school vision screenings so fewer children slip through the cracks, providing eye exams and eyeglasses to children who would not get them otherwise, and educating parents and communities about the importance of children's vision care and the role it plays in literacy, society, and the economy.*

#### **ABOUT ESSILOR OF AMERICA, INC.**

*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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#### **ABOUT THE ALLIANCE FOR HEALTHCARE EXCELLENCE**

*The Alliance for Healthcare Excellence is an association of health industry leaders working together to improve our nation's healthcare system. Members include healthcare providers, healthcare payors, employers who sponsor health plans, and healthcare consumers. The Alliance promotes access to quality, affordable healthcare through education, networking, cooperation, and collaboration. We believe that improvements in our healthcare system can best be achieved by bringing together all the participants to facilitate understanding and pursue mutually acceptable solutions to the complex healthcare issues our communities face.*

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