Vision Impact Institute Steps Up Advocacy in India
Shailaja Pathania Announced as Principal Consultant for Advocacy

Dallas – April 15, 2016 – The Vision Impact Institute (VII) is pleased to announce that Shailaja Pathania is joining the team as the Principal Consultant for Advocacy in India.

Ms. Pathania will be responsible for spearheading the advocacy efforts of the VII in India, increasing awareness of the crucial and immediate improvements corrected vision can provide. India, the world's second most populous country, holds nearly 550 million people who have vision problems. With an estimated 205 million of its workers leaving their vision uncorrected, inefficiencies cost the country a staggering $37 billion in annual productivity. The VII knows that improving the vision of India's populace could dramatically impact the country's economic growth.

Earlier this year, Essilor Vision Foundation (EVF) partnered with Toyota to address the alarming number of accidents associated with the lack of road safety in Delhi. With more than 8,000 road accidents and an average of four deaths per day reported in the city, EVF and Toyota saw an opportunity to improve the lives of taxi drivers at Indira Gandhi International Airport and to subsequently improve road safety. A "Health Check-Up Camp" of airport taxi drivers found that 40 percent had poor vision – and EVF provided them with prescription lenses to resolve the issue on the spot. A subsequent program will soon take place in Mumbai.

"In India, 41 percent of children, 42 percent of workers, 42 percent of drivers and 45 percent of the elderly need visual correction. Shailaja understands the negative impacts – both economically and socially – that uncorrected refractive errors can have on a local and national scale, but she also knows India is an area with opportunity for vast improvement," said Maureen Cavanagh, president of the Vision Impact Institute.

Ms. Pathania joins the existing VII team of Maureen Cavanagh and Kristan Gross. As the Principal Consultant for Advocacy in India, Ms. Pathania will help connect governmental agencies, nonprofit organizations and opinion leaders as she raises awareness of the many benefits a life without uncorrected refractive error can provide. She will also focus on skill-building advocacy efforts, working

with key leaders to elevate the importance of skill development in order to address the unmet URE needs in the country. Her work will highlight how corrected vision could allow Indian workers to increase their incomes by 30 percent and their productivity by 25 percent, decrease the frequency of road accidents and improve children's grades as they pursue their education. Ms. Pathania and the VII will continue to work closely with Essilor's 2.5 New Vision Generation division to directly engage policy makers and elevate innovative vision solutions in India. She joins the VII in *Giving Vision a Voice* with the hope of an improved life experience for people worldwide as a result.

About the Vision Impact Institute
The Vision Impact Institute's mission is to raise awareness of the importance of healthy vision, including the socio economic impact of Uncorrected Refractive Errors (URE) and quality of life benefits of visual correction. Its Advisory Board is comprised of five independent international experts: Pr. Kevin Frick (United States), Pr. Clare Gilbert (United Kingdom), Pr. Kovin Naidoo (South Africa), Mr. Arun Bharat Ram (India) and Mr. Wu Jianmin (China).

The Vision Impact Institute is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, which receives support from the Vision for Life Fund from Essilor, the world leader in ophthalmic optics. The Vision Impact Institute hosts an interactive web platform, a unique data base of research, available at visionimpactinstitute.org.

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