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**ASCRS Foundation and Sen. Rand Paul Support Mission to**

**Perform 200 Cataract Surgeries in Guatemala**  
*A nine-day mission will launch a major five-year commitment in the region*

FAIRFAX, VA—(August 13, 2014) – Five organizations have partnered for a five-year effort to bring high-quality eye care and vision-saving eye surgery to one of Guatemala’s neediest communities in the Baja Verapaz region—The American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery Foundation (ASCRS Foundation), the University of Utah’s Moran Eye Center, The Hope Alliance, Alcon and Lions Club International. The effort will kick off with an initial, nine-day mission, which includes ophthalmologist and U.S. Senator Rand Paul, MD (R-KY), from August 14-23, 2014.  
  
“One of the ASCRS Foundation’s primary goals is to help end preventable blindness around the world, as well as here in the United States,” said David F. Chang, MD, chair of the ASCRS Foundation International Committee. “This important mission to Guatemala and the support that Sen. Paul is providing will, hopefully, help us achieve this goal while raising awareness of the profound need for high-quality eye care worldwide.”

Sen. Paul will be one of seven on-site surgeons working to provide pre-/post-operative and refractive eye exams, diagnose vision problems and illnesses and perform cataract and other surgeries. The group plans plan to perform 200 cataract surgeries through the Hospital de Ojos-Club de Leones in Salama, Guatemala. Salama is a remote town of 40,000 residents, located approximately 89 miles northwest of the capital city. It is part of a large region served by only two ophthalmologists. The mission formed after Sen. Paul reached out to the ASCRS Foundation seeking a “strong international outreach program that he could accompany on a medical mission”.   
  
“We are pleased to be joined by Sen. Paul in our efforts to provide humanitarian care in Guatemala,” said Randall J. Olson, M.D., CEO of the John A. Moran Eye Center and Chair of the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences. “His participation is bringing attention to the huge problem of global blindness and the work we are doing to eradicate it.”

***The ASCRS Foundation*** *is a 501(c)(3) organization, which works to support physician education and to provide humanitarian cataract surgery in the United States and the developing world. Through its programs and partnerships, the foundation works to maximize the benefits of modern ophthalmology and to treat thousands of needy patients, each year.****The John A. Moran Eye Center****, part of University of Utah Health Care, is the premiere center for ophthalmology in the Intermountain West and is the largest eye care facility between California and Michigan. With collaborators from around the world, research advancements at the center provide new diagnoses, novel treatments, and creative new procedures designed to cure blinding eye diseases. Moran specialists cover every field of vision care including conditions like age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, cataracts, cornea, and external eye diseases. The Moran Eye Center offers the latest advances in LASIK and refractive surgery as well as a full range of optometry services, including contact lenses and eyeglasses.****The Hope Alliance*** *is a humanitarian organization that empowers impoverished people to create positive and sustainable change in the lives of their families and their communities. The Hope Alliance’s programs are helping thousands of people in developing countries break the devastating cycle of poverty. Since beginning operation in 1999, The Hope Alliance has accomplished many valuable projects. Some projects include remote medical clinics, schools, libraries, clean water wells, and micro credit, all of which have lasting value to the communities served; however, these community development projects have been in the past, secondary to medical outreach.*

***Alcon*** *develops and manufactures innovative medicines and devices to serve the full life cycle of eye care needs. They offer the broadest spectrum of surgical, pharmaceutical and vision care products to treat many eye diseases and conditions, including cataracts, glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration, retinal diseases, dry eye, eye infection and eye inflammation, ocular allergies, refractive errors, and other ocular health issues.*

***Lions Club International****’s**mission is to empower volunteers to serve their communities, meet humanitarian needs, encourage peace and promote international understanding through Lions clubs.*

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