

Opening Eyes Program

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. The disabled are a largely underserved group when it comes to vision care. They deserve, and should have access to, quality care that is appropriate to their particular needs.

That is why LCIF and Special Olympics began a partnership in 2001 to provide free vision screenings at select Special Olympics sporting events worldwide. Athletes also receive diagnoses for vision-related problems, corrective and protective eyewear, and are taught how to take better care of their eyes.

A successful collaborative effort, the Special Olympics-Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes program relies on thousands of volunteer Lions, doctors, vision specialists and educators. More than 350,000 athletes have been screened, with prescription eyewear provided to 110,000 athletes. More than 20,000 volunteer eye care professionals have participated in the program. And, more than 20,000 Lions volunteers worldwide have offered their time and talents for this true team effort that has been active in more than 70 nations.

The Opening Eyes program is funded by an LCIF [Core 4 grant](#). Since the program began, the Foundation has awarded more than US\$13.3 million in grant funding.

At the 96th Annual Lions Clubs International Convention in Hamburg, Germany, LCIF announced an expansion of the partnership and opportunities for Lions. [Learn more about that here.](#)

For additional information about Opening Eyes, please visit the [Special Olympics website](#).

- See more at : <http://www.lcif.org/EN/our-programs/humanitarian-efforts/opening-eyes.php#sthash.G3SM49fZ.dpuf>