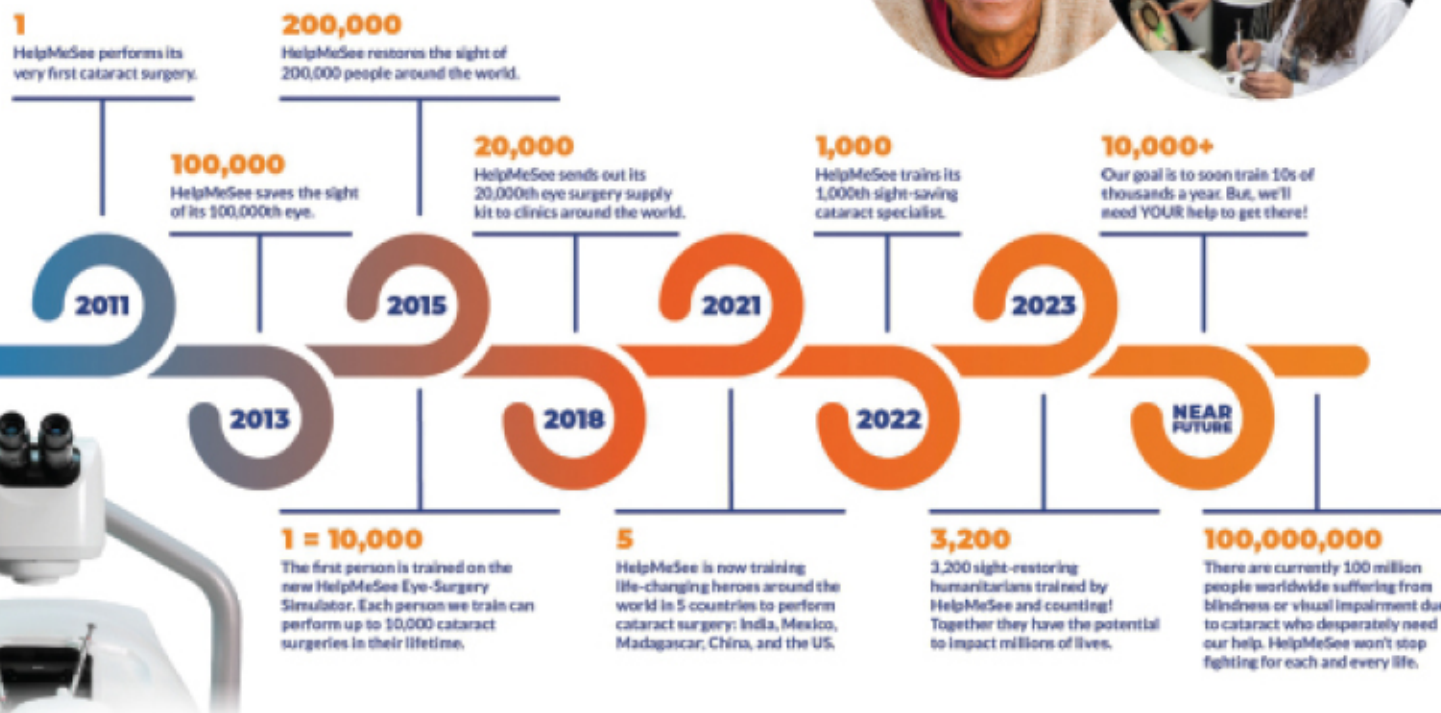


HelpMeSee

Our Impact Because of You



DONOR SPOTLIGHT: JEFF AND TONYA

"I give to a few nonprofits, but HelpMeSee is my favorite. The whole concept of how sight changes people's lives – it's literally night and day. That's why I support their mission."
– Jeff from Maryland

"I recently had cataract surgery myself on both eyes (one in November and one in December). The vision in my first eye was already much improved the very next day! My second eye is still blurry, but I hope it will clear up soon. I know each eye is different. I am so grateful that I had access to cataract surgery, and the opportunity to prevent further deterioration of my eyesight. Everyone should have access to eye care, especially since vision loss from cataract is treatable!"
– Tonya from Minnesota

NEW YEAR, NEW LEGACY WITH HELPMESSEE

Kick off 2024 with a plan to protect the people and causes you love. Consider HelpMeSee as part of your legacy through a number of non-cash planned giving options:

- ✓ Name HMS as a beneficiary in your retirement plan, life insurance policy or annuity
- ✓ Direct a gift through your donor advised fund
- ✓ Give a gift of stock, crypto
- ✓ Include HMS in your estate plan or will. Don't have a will? We're partnering with FreeWill, an online estate planning resource, to make this important task simple and 100% free.

Visit <https://helpmesees.org/plannedgiving/> or contact Jennifer.burroughs@helpmesees.org to learn how you can make our work a part of your legacy.



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HelpMeSee is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization registered in the United States.

Also, stay informed and connected with us on:



DONOR SURVEY INSIDE!



Scan here to complete the full survey online!

We want to hear from you! In an effort to improve our organization and be more attentive to the needs of our supporters, we are conducting a donor survey. We would love your help in answering some questions about yourself and our organization.

You can complete the full survey by scanning the QR code, or by going to <https://bit.ly/jan24donorsurvey>. Alternately, a short version of the survey is attached in this newsletter which can be torn off and mailed back to us, or, you can take a picture of your responses and text the picture to (646) 575-0780.

HelpMeSee DONOR NEWS

January, 2024

2023 – A year of impact and growth

As we turn the page to a new year, we now reflect back on all that we've accomplished together in 2023 thanks to YOU, our steadfast supporter. Because of you, we are one step closer this year in our mission to eradicate cataract blindness in places where people are suffering the most.

Total number of cataract specialists trained in 2023:
1,367



Each cataract specialist can perform more than 10,000 surgeries in their community throughout their career, creating a ripple effect of change for generations to come.

New Training Location in 2023!
HelpMeSee opened a new training location in Strasbourg, France in 2023, allowing us to train more cataract specialists in more regions of the world.

- HelpMeSee
- In this issue:
- 2023 Impact Update
- Africa Sponsorship Campaign update
- Donor and staff spotlights
- 5 eye health tips for winter months
- Donor survey (we need your feedback!)
- Latest HMS simulation innovation
- Planned giving (do you have a will?)



Don't forget to follow us on:

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: DR. BONNIE AN HENDERSON

Last October, we welcomed a new president and CEO of HelpMeSee – Dr. Bonnie An Henderson.

We have been thrilled to have Bonnie's presence and leadership in our organization, and all the expertise she brings. Bonnie is an internationally recognized expert in cataract and refractive surgery, with a distinguished career that includes past presidency of the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery. She has also been a clinical professor at Tufts University School of Medicine. She completed her ophthalmology residency at Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary after graduating with high honors from Dartmouth College and Dartmouth Medical School. She serves as the associate editor of the Journal of Refractive Surgery and is a valued member of the editorial board of Ophthalmology. Her extensive publication record includes numerous publications, 5 textbooks, and over 300 invited lectures worldwide. She has also played a crucial role in empowering women leaders in medicine by creating the EnVision Summit, an international ophthalmology meeting.

"My entire professional career as a cataract surgeon and educator has led me to HelpMeSee. I am honored to be selected to lead this humanitarian mission," Bonnie recently shared. We head into 2024 and beyond with eager excitement with Bonnie at the helm of our organization. We're confident that Bonnie will bring out the best in all of us to maximize our impact on the global cataract crisis. At her core, Bonnie simply believes everyone should have the right to see again – just like you.

WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON FOR 2024

So what's next? We're so happy you asked. As we turn the page to 2024, we plan to train *even more* trainees than last year. Imagine all the eyes that will see again and lives that will change because of thousands more trained cataract specialists throughout the world. We're confident that together, we can do it!

In addition to training more sight restoring heroes, we continue to search for new areas around the world in need of training centers, and we're partnering with more organizations and institutions to continue expanding our reach in 2024. HelpMeSee continues to adapt, and we hope you'll complete our donor survey included in this letter which will help us in that process.

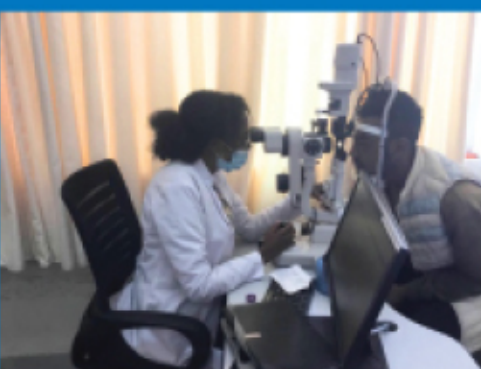
AFRICA SPONSORSHIP CAMPAIGN UPDATE

At the end of last year, we introduced you to Bezawit, a local medical student from Ethiopia. There is a crisis in her country - Ethiopia has one of the highest rates of blindness and visual impairment in the world. Bezawit responded to this emergency by seeking training in cataract removal surgery so she can begin restoring sight to the blind and impaired in her community. To make this possible, we shared our goal with you of raising the funds to get Bezawit and her classmates trained.

Thanks to your generosity, we are pleased to report that her training has been fully funded! And not only Bezawit, but 4 of her classmates as well! Bezawit will be traveling to our training center in Madagascar this month to receive her training. Afterwards, she will continue her training by partnering with a local institution as she transitions to live surgery training. We're confident she will be a beacon of hope in her community.

YOUR support has made this possible. Thank you for believing in these students. One trained cataract specialist can restore the sight of more than 10,000 people in their lifetime. For perspective, it would take a sports arena to fit that many people! Imagine each of those people receiving the precious gift of sight back.

Stay tuned for more updates on Bezawit and other trainees from Ethiopia as we track their journey.



This World Sight Day...

support the blind living in Africa by sponsoring a student's cataract training.



SIMULATION INNOVATION UPDATE

At the heart of our model of training sight restoring heroes, is our simulator and our instructor-led simulation based training program. HelpMeSee's Eye Surgery Simulator allows trainees to practice the procedure of removing a cataract again and again without the risk of harming a live person.

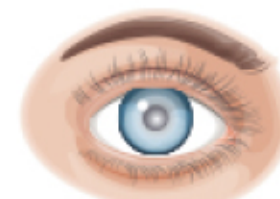
There are two main types of cataract surgery, MSICS and PHACO. MSICS stands for Manual Small Incision Cataract Surgery. This type of procedure can be done almost anywhere with limited resources and takes as little as 10 minutes to perform. MSICS is the surgery that we train our students in, which best prepares them to help people in at-risk communities across the globe.

In 2023, we released a training course for the PHACO procedure. PHACO, which stands for phacoemulsification, is the type of cataract surgery that you would probably receive if you went to see an eye surgeon in the US. This procedure utilizes a large machine called (yep, you guess it) a phaco machine which uses high-frequency sound waves to break up the cataract until it can be removed.

The release of this new training is significant because HelpMeSee can now help improve the quality and safety of cataract surgery here in the US and anywhere else the PHACO procedure is performed. It's our hope to benefit the health of people's eyes all over the world, regardless of their location and situation.



Regular Eye



Eye with Cataract

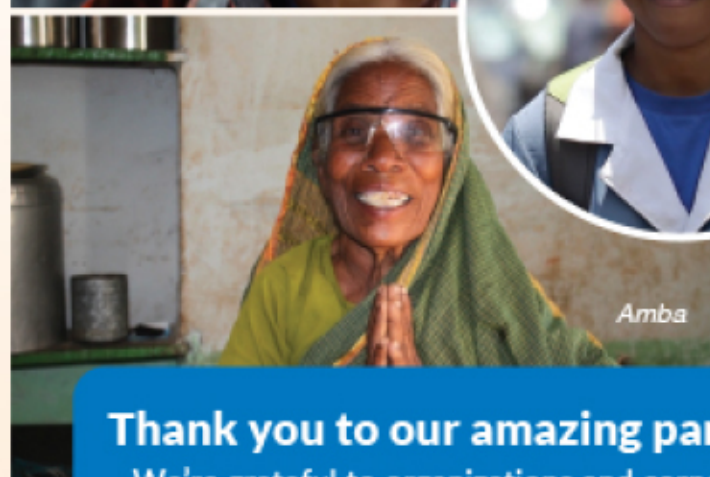
FACES FROM THIS YEAR



Hector



Marc Andy



Amba



Paul

We've introduced you to a number of people in 2023 whose lives have all been changed because of YOUR support.

Remember:

Paul, who was able to start working again and provide for his family after his sight was restored.

Marc Andy, a 13-year-old who is now able to see his homework again and resume his studies at school.

Amba, who was so overjoyed by her newfound sight that she couldn't sit still on the operating table.

And Hector, who told us a few weeks after his surgery, "everything that had been taken away from me was returned. You practically brought me back to life."

Without your generosity and compassion for others, stories like these would not have been possible. Your support enables us to continue training those who will change lives. Thank you for your kindness and mercy. Our world needs more of it.

Thank you to our amazing partners!

We're grateful to organizations and corporations like USAID, Intel, Splunk, and more who have helped us make 2023 an impactful year. Their belief in our work has extended our reach and increased the impact of our mission. Thank you!

5 EYE HEALTH TIPS FOR WINTER MONTHS

In the chilly winter months, your eyes may become itchy and irritated due to the dry air, UV radiation bouncing off snow and ice, and excessive screen usage. But don't fret! There are numerous ways to alleviate these issues or even avoid them altogether.

Protect your eyes from the sun

Excessive sun exposure can heighten the likelihood of developing cataract and other eye conditions, so put on those UV sunglasses (yes, even in the winter) or throw a hat on and protect those eyes!

Moderate your screen time

Extended screen time can lead to dry and sore eyes. We don't realize the strain that screens put on our eyes, so do your eyes a favor and take frequent breaks from screens when possible.

Keep your hands clean and touch your eyes as little as possible

Did you know you can get cold and flu viruses through bacteria that enters through your eyes? Avoid touching your eyes until you've thoroughly cleaned your hands to help prevent sickness and scratched eye.

Be cautious when applying makeup

Make sure to clean your eyelids and face well before and after applying cosmetics, be careful applying around your eye, and clean the tools used to apply makeup often as they can retain bacteria.

Make sure your eyes stay moist!

As the humidity levels remain lower during the winter months, our eyes have to work harder to stay moist. Blinking more frequently and avoiding high inside temperatures (i.e. space heaters, fireplaces), can help prevent dry eye.

Tips inspired by everydayhealth.com

DONOR SURVEY Please tear off and complete the survey below and return to us in the enclosed envelope.

- How did you hear about HMS?
 Friend Facebook Internet Search Other
 - How do you prefer to be contacted:
 Mail Email Text Phone
 - Would you like to learn about ways to become more involved?
 Yes No
 - Do you feel your donations are appreciated by our organization?
 Yes No
 - Do you have a will?
 Yes No
 If not, would you like (free resources) to create a will?
 Yes No
 - Why does this cause matter to you and/or what interests you most about our organization?

 - If you had one suggestion for us what would it be?

- Your name (optional): _____