FALL/WINTER 2025 ISSUE

AMIGOS NEWSLETTER

AMIGOS EYE CARE
SVOSH AT PACIFIC UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY



Peru, Guatemala, Eye Ball, and Local Outreach

Read on to learn more about what AMIGOS has been up to from late summer to winter of 2025!

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AMIGOS Eye Care

www.amigoseyecare.com

This fall was a busy semester for AMIGOS! We worked on fundraising throughout the summer for our two International trips in August: Peru and Guatemala. Two groups of approximately 12 students & doctors each traveled simultaneously to their respective countries, providing eye care to over 1000 patients in total in the span of a week. Back in Oregon, the summer and fall were filled with local outreach trips and events, participating in the annual Forest Grove Lions Run/Walk, and our highly anticipated Eye Ball Gala & Fundraiser! At the core of each of these events we are a part of is our continual mission to provide eye care to underprivileged and underserved communities, wherever those may be. We are so grateful for all of the support we have received this past year and want to send a huge thank you to anyone who has donated, come to our events, or helped spread our mission in some way. Looking forward to 2026!





Guatemala, August 2025

By 2nd Year Student, Julia Sveen

I had the privilege of leading a trip to the Ixcán region of Guatemala this past August, and the experience has since left a lasting impact on me. Through Enfoque Ixcán, a long-time partner of Pacific University, our team served the local community over three clinic days – two in Playa Grande and one at a local grade school. Providing care alongside our team of students and dedicated providers was deeply meaningful, and the experience reinforced why service is such an important part of my journey in optometry.

Learn More about Enfoque Ixcán at:
enfoqueixcan.org



One experience that stood out to me was our clinic day at the grade school. When we arrived, our team was greeted by cheering students lined up outside their classrooms, eagerly waiting as we were introduced. We transformed classrooms into exam lanes and spent the day caring for children with a wide range of needs – from significant refractive errors and traumatic cataracts to students who were struggling in school simply because they could not see the board. Watching a child's face light up when they realized how clearly they could see, even with a small prescription, was incredibly rewarding.

Over the course of three clinic days, our team provided more than 540 eye exams, dispensed over 200 pairs of glasses, and referred about 30 patients for advanced specialty care. At the end of our school clinic day, the school presented each of us with a "diploma" bearing our names. Though simple, it has become one of the most meaningful reminders of the trip. It symbolized the trust placed in us, the impact of accessible eye care, and the responsibility we carry as future optometrists to serve communities beyond our own.



Peru, August 2025

By 3rd Year Student, Abby Hoepner

My time in Peru this past August was a truly unforgettable and remarkable experience, and that was entirely because of the people who surrounded me. We stayed with our generous hosts at Project Peru, where each morning we were excitedly greeted by the children who lived at the center. We'd clap along as they sang a lively morning prayer before eating a fresh and tasty breakfast cooked by the kind women of Project Peru. Then it was off to set up our clinic, where we'd begin every day by giving eye exams to those kids. Each person whose vision I checked, eyes I examined, or glasses I fit would give me the biggest smile and kindest thank you, and I felt so grateful for every moment.

We spent about three and a half clinic days, both at Project Peru and at a local school, providing eye exams to community members of all ages, from as young as three to over eighty. In total, we provided over 500 eye exams and dispensed approximately 400 pairs of glasses. Throughout the course of these clinic days, we began to see a pattern: there were far more children with high astigmatism than we had predicted, with a handful having 5.00 or more diopters. This was one of the many reasons that we were so grateful for the connections we made with two local optometry schools in Peru, Instituto Eurohispano and Universidad Nacional Federico Villarreal.

Not only did they volunteer their time to provide eye exams with us, but they were able to provide frames and make over 70 custom-made, special-order glasses for those high cyl or anisometropic children for whom we we were unable to provide adequate corrective lenses. In addition to this, they helped us make referrals for patients who required further medical or surgical evaluation. Their involvement drastically improved our ability to provide quality, effective glasses for all.

And of course, none of this would have been possible without our host, Project Peru. Project Peru is a UK-based charity that helps children and local community members with food, clothes, shelter, education, and health in the towns surrounding Lima. This organization began on a voluntary basis, but has since created an opportunity for paid employment for local Peruvians. The center where we stayed in Zapallal can care for up to 50 children and works closely with the surrounding community and the children's families. I encourage anyone to read more about their work and the impact the center has on these kids', and their families', lives. We saw firsthand how hard each and every person there works to provide these children with the resources and education that will open doors for their future, and the effect that has on those kids is so profound.

Learn More about Project Peru at:
projectperu.org.uk





Eye Ball Gala & Fundraiser

September 20, 2025

A huge thank you to all who supported our 32nd annual Eye Ball Fundraiser & Gala! This year's event was hosted at the beautiful Benson Hotel in Portland, where we welcomed optometry students, PUCO staff & faculty, and community members in joining us to raise funds for AMIGOS initiatives. Our Live and Silent Auctions were a huge success, and all proceeds will go toward future trips to provide eye care to underserved communities Internationally.

Highlights from the night included our keynote speaker, Dr. Marina Roma-March. Dr. Roma-March is a Filipina-Canadian optometrist & humanitarian who graduated from Pacific University in 1994. In 1995, she founded the Third World Eye Care Society (TWECS) with her husband Derrick, and has since led more than 25 international eye projects in 19 countries. We were honored to have her with us at Eye Ball to share her inspiring story and remind us of all the reasons we strive to continue our mission.





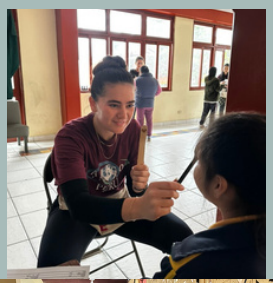
Above: Doctor of the Year, Dr. John Lowery, and AMIGOS President, Allison Wilkes. Right: Keynote Speaker, Dr. Marina Roma-March.

We also had a chance to recognize our VOLK AMIGOS Doctor and Student of the Year, Dr. John Lowery and Alana Wesenberg, respectively. These individuals have gone above and beyond in their commitment and service, and we are so proud of and grateful for all of their hard work.
For more information on this year's Eye Ball Gala, upcoming events, and a complete list of our generous donors, please visit our website at www.amigoseyecare.org. Thank you again to all who supported us this year––we cannot wait to see you again next fall!

Behind the Scenes: Guatemala & Peru













For more photos from our trips, follow our socials!

@amigoseyecare

More Events from Summer/Fall 2025

Eye Smile Outreach Trips

This year, we did not one, but TWO Eye Smile trips, partnered with PUCO Outreach and Pacific University's School of Dental Hygiene Studies. Both mobile clinics traveled to Cascade Locks and again to Hood River during the month of July. These events bring both eye and dental care to underserved communities across Oregon. It is an amazing opportunity to provide much needed healthcare while also showing students the value of interprofessional care.

Lions Run/Walk for Sight & Hearing

We also partnered with the Forest Grove Lions Club and Pacific University School of Audiology for their annual Run/Walk for Sight & Hearing. All net proceeds from this event go directly to the community to purchase hearing aids and glasses, provide scholarships for optometry and audiology students, and purchase equipment for AMIGOS to aid in our operations locally and internationally. This year's event was a great success with 150 participants! We look forward to another collaboration next year!

Welcome to the Board, Dr. Avisado!



We are so excited to welcome Dr. Mary Avisado to the AMIGOS Board!

Dr. Mary Avisado is a residency-trained optometrist and Assistant Professor at Pacific University College of Optometry. She teaches in both the classroom and clinic and conducts research in the field of contact lenses. She is passionate about helping students bridge the gap between, research, learning, and real-world patient care.

Dr. Avisado spent most of her years in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. She earned dual OD/MS degrees with Distinction from Pacific University, where she also completed a Cornea and Contact Lens Residency before joining the faculty. Her clinical expertise and research interests include specialty contact lenses, myopia control, and anterior segment disease. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry and Diplomate of the American Board of Optometry.

After a three-year pandemic pause in AMIGOS trips, Dr. Avisado helped revive the organization, leading eye care service trips to communities in all corners of Oregon all the way to Guatemala (twice!). She's thrilled to see the program growing and travelling farther each year. She hopes to one day bring the team to the Philippines, where her parents grew up (in a little treehouse on a farm!)

Dr. Avisado enjoys music, staying active, collecting coasters from breweries, and spending time with family and friends. She misses her Jack Tzu dearly!

Interested in Donating?

Scan the QR code here!

We accept prescription glasses, drops, and monetary donations. Contact amigos@pacificu.edu for donation coordination help.

Our Address:
AMIGOS Eye Care
Pacific University Optometry
2043 College Way A134
Forest Grove, OR 97116

Upcoming Trips

Costa Rica, March 2025

If you are Interested In learning more about our upcoming trips or donating to help bring eye care to underserved communities, please follow our socials & stay tuned on our website for ways to support!

Eye Ball 2026

For information regarding sponsorships, donations, & Eye Ball attendance, please contact our Eye Ball Chairs for the 2026 event:

Michelle: mshuai@pacificu.edu
Monet: f091031r@pacificu.edu

Student Officers

President: Allison Wilkes
President-Elect: Brittney Phung
Secretary: Kalica Kohner
Treasurer: Emily Chan
Treasurer-Elect: Lilinoe McCanna
Eye Ball Co-Chairs: Anna Reard & Karah Hopgood
Eye Ball Co-Chair Elects: Monet Alonso-Cruz & Michelle Shuai
Eyeglass Coordinator: Ryan Klaich
Eyeglass Coordinator-Elect: Abby Paterson
Equipment Rep: Tyler Oleson
Equipment Rep-Elect: Kyle Jackson
Events Coordinator: Xenia Mitsilios
Events Coordinator-Elect: Ibby Lorentz
PR/Historian: Abby Hoepner
PR/Historian Elect: Tiffany Li

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