The Summit VisionyOptica underlined the importance of collaboration in strengthening optometry education and professionalism in Mexico.

From August 20 to 22, Mexico City hosted the third edition of the Summit Vision and Optics. Organised by Creative Latin Media and the online publication 20/20 Latin America, with academic endorsement from the Universidad Autónoma de la Laguna (UAL), the Summit has become a key meeting point for optometrists, optometry schools, opticians, and industry representatives from Mexico and other Latin American countries. This year, the Summit welcomed about 2,000 participants, including those from Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Ecuador. Its goal is to connect the academic and commercial sides of optometry by combining scientific education with exposure to optical products, equipment, devices, and other industry innovations.



Salvador Gonzalez (UAL) and Vicki Weiss, President VOSH/International

Beyond attendance numbers, the Summit's significance lies in how it brought academic institutions, professional organisations, and industry stakeholders into the same conversation about the future of optometry in Mexico.

UAL has been involved with the Summit since its first edition three years ago and took a more active role this year by contributing to the design of the scientific programme. The programme was organised around two learning tracks: one for licensed optometrists and another for broader optical training open to other participants. Lectures and workshops covered topics including myopia progression, contact lenses, functional optometry, visual therapy, dry eye, and diabetic retinopathy, among others.

A central moment of the Summit was a panel involving Mexican optometry schools and Colombia's Universidad de La Salle. The discussion focused on how optometry schools can better prepare graduates for interprofessional teamwork, address the gap between academic training and real-world professional practice, and strengthen advocacy for the profession. Universidad de La Salle's experience in Colombia was highlighted as a strong regional model because of its academic standards, public health focus, clinical structure, updated curriculum, and openness to collaboration with other institutions.

For B.Opt. Salvador Gonzalez, coordinator of UAL's Optometry Programme, collaboration was one of the clearest recommendations to emerge from the Summit's panel and the meeting between Mexican optometry schools and VOSH/International. According to him, establishing a



Delegation from Universidad de La Salle, Colombia, with Salvador González

collaboration initiative among interested Mexican optometry programmes would be a significant first step, helping schools exchange information, share experiences, and offer mutual support for the benefit of Mexican optometry.

The VOSH/International presentation showed how the organisation could support stronger links between Mexican and international optometry schools, promote exchanges of expertise, and help chapters work together around a shared goal. In Mexico, financial limitations remain a major barrier to in-person collaboration and student participation. Virtual exchanges and shared humanitarian clinics could therefore become practical avenues for Mexican optometry schools to explore with VOSH/International.

Looking ahead, VOSH/International could play a larger role in future Summits by contributing high-quality continuing education sessions, encouraging student participation and poster presentations, and helping generate evidence for public health advocacy. For BOpt. Salvador Gonzalez, the Summit is more than a conference: it is a platform for strengthening optometry education, professional identity, public health engagement, and regional collaboration across Latin America.

Salvador Gonzalez concluded: "*The real strength of optometry is not only in helping people see better, but in our ability to unite optometrists, optometry schools, and colleges of optometry graduates in Mexico around a shared commitment to service, knowledge, and continuous learning. The Summit became a bridge for turning knowledge, collaboration, and commitment into action to strengthen the present and future of our profession.*"



VOSH/International meeting with Mexican Optometry Schools and Colleges



For more information, contact,

BOpt. Salvador Gonzalez

Optometry Programme Coordinator

Universidad Autónoma de La Laguna

sgonzalez@ual.mx

