



## POST ACTIVITY REPORT

**Name of Activity:** 9th International Symposium on Special Education (ISSED9)

**Theme:** *Life Transition: Learning, Living and Working for Children with Special Needs*

**Date:** June 11–13, 2025

**Venue:** Raktakanit Convention Hall, Suan Dusit University, Bangkok, Thailand

**Submitted by:** Dr. Jennifer Lyn G. Viñola

**Designation:** Board Member, VOSH International | Faculty Adviser, SVOSH-MCU Chapter | Faculty Member, Manila Central University College of Optometry

### I. Objectives of Participation

As a Board Member of VOSH International, participation in the ISSED9 aimed to:

1. Promote global collaboration in advancing eye and vision care within inclusive and special education settings.
2. Share clinical experiences and research in developmental vision care for children with special needs.
3. Establish institutional and international linkages to strengthen VOSH's advocacy in developmental optometry and inclusive eye health.

### II. Overview of the Event

The **9th International Symposium on Special Education (ISSED9)** convened educators, clinicians, researchers, and policymakers from Southeast Asia including delegates from the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Japan, Bhutan, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

Key topics revolved around:

- Inclusive education systems
- Transition strategies for children with disabilities
- Clinical and rehabilitation innovations
- Multidisciplinary approaches to developmental and visual care



### III. Contribution and Involvement

On behalf of VOSH International and Manila Central University, I presented:

#### **“A Pediatric Eye and Developmental Case Study of a Child with Autism”**

This presentation highlighted interdisciplinary collaboration between optometrists, pediatricians, and educators in the early diagnosis and vision management of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). It underscored the vital role of visual health screening and therapy in developmental outcomes.

This initiative aligns with VOSH International’s mission of providing vision care to underserved populations and reinforces our commitment to the holistic development of children with special needs globally.

### IV. Key Insights and Learning

- There is a pressing need to integrate **developmental vision care** into early intervention programs in special education.
- Multidisciplinary collaboration—among optometrists, therapists, educators, and parents—is essential in optimizing learning and life transitions for children with disabilities.
- Southeast Asia shares common challenges in access, early diagnosis, and inclusive education infrastructure—highlighting the need for regional solutions and shared strategies.
- Vision health is an often-overlooked area in inclusive education but is fundamental to learning and development.

### V. Recommendations and Future Actions

As a result of this international engagement, the following are proposed:

1. **Regional Vision Screening Partnerships:** Collaborate with Southeast Asian institutions for pediatric vision screening in inclusive schools.
2. **Training Workshops and Advocacy:** Organize VOSH-led workshops focused on developmental vision and its role in inclusive education.
3. **Research Collaborations:** Initiate multi-country studies on visual health status and intervention outcomes for children with disabilities.
4. **MCU-VOSH Model Clinic:** Establish a pilot Multidisciplinary Developmental Vision Clinic in partnership with VOSH and Manila Central University.



## **VI. Conclusion**

Participation in ISSED9 strengthened VOSH International’s advocacy for visual health equity among children with special needs. It provided a valuable platform for knowledge exchange, collaboration, and engagement with educators and healthcare professionals across Asia. I am optimistic that this experience will spark long-term partnerships and initiatives that will further VOSH’s mission of “Vision for All.”

### **Prepared and Submitted by:**

**Dr. Jennifer Lyn G. Viñola**

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**DOCUMENTATION:**







Philippine Delegates with Delegates from Thailand, Malaysia, Japan, Bhutan, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos



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### Strengths and challenges Case: United States

- **Legislation:** Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA, 2014)
- **Core components:** Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)
- **Five required Pre-ETS services:**
  1. Job exploration counseling
  2. Work-based learning experiences
  3. Counseling on postsecondary education
  4. Workplace readiness training
  5. Instruction in self-advocacy
- **Successes:** Improved employment outcomes for youth with disabilities
- **Challenges:** Inconsistent implementation across states; underrepresentation of youth with complex needs


