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Telephone: (804) 287-2020

Fax: (804) 287-4210

Website: [www.vaeye.com](http://www.vaeye.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**RICHMOND, VIRGINIA** - Starting November 2015 Virginia Eye Institute will expand its Annual Cataract Mission program. Virginia Eye Institute's Cataract Mission program is an outreach program designed to help Central Virginians in need of free cataract surgery. Eligibility criteria for the application-based program includes a lack of insurance (including Medicare or Medicaid) , lack of financial means (0-200% FPL) to pay for the surgery, and be a resident in the service area for at least six months. Qualified candidates may schedule an evaluation through the CrossOver clinic west on 8600 Quioccasin Road Suite 105 Richmond, VA 23229 804.521.8263.0803 to receive cataract surgery and other eye cares services from Virginia Eye Institute.

To date, Virginia Eye Institute's Cataract Mission program has donated over 800 eye exams and 240 surgeries in the program's 22 year history. Patients also get post-op follow-up at no charge. More than \$5,000 worth of services are provided at no charge to each patient undergoing cataract surgery. With the new Access Now partnership, Virginia Eye Institute has been able to serve our community throughout 2015 with 30 surgeries and numerous office visits.

From the front desk staff to each physician, all of the employees work with all of these patients throughout the year with the same goal of saving vision and world class eye care provided to those in need in the Richmond community. "Cataract Mission is the most important outreach program at Virginia Eye Institute. I have been fortunate to be the lead physician for 20 of the 22 years this program has been in existence. With hard work from our staff and Physicians, we are able to make life-changing differences in these patients' lives. I am always impressed by the enthusiasm of all of our staff. We have benefitted greatly from being in the Richmond community, and this program allows the physicians and staff to give back to those who most need our help." said Read F. McGehee, M.D., one of Virginia Eye Institute's partners.

**About Virginia Eye Institute**

Virginia Eye Institute (VEI) is a comprehensive eye care organization providing a wide range of ophthalmology, optometry, and optical services in 8 locations across central Virginia. VEI offers exceptional ophthalmologic care—including cataract, cornea, glaucoma, retina, ocular plastics, pediatrics, and refractive surgery (LASIK). All VEI physicians are board-certified and many are fellowship-trained. The institute also owns and operates its Ambulatory Surgery Center (ASC) for outpatient ophthalmologic and ear, nose and throat services to children and adults. VEI optical shops provide board-certified opticians and contact lens fitters. For more information, visit [www.VaEye.com](http://www.VaEye.com).