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OPTICAL WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION TO HONOR DOWNES AND ENGLERT AT TWO SPECIAL EVENTS

DALLAS, TX – March 7, 2016 - OPTICAL WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION TO HONOR DOWNES AND ENGLERT AT TWO SPECIAL EVENTS

The Optical Women's Association (OWA) will be honoring Sue Downes, CEO of MyEyeDr. as the recipient of the 2016 Pleiades Award, and Ann E. Englert, owner and sole proprietor of Solutions as the Pyxis award honoree at two special events in New York during Vision Expo East, the OWA **Champagne Breakfast** and the OWA **Star Award Ceremony**.

The OWA **Champagne Breakfast** will be held on Thursday, April 14th from 7:30 am to 9:00 am at The Westin New York at Times Square. In addition to presentations by both award honorees on the value of mentoring and volunteering, the event will feature an intimate conversation with Sherianne James, Transitions Optical, in an interactive question and answer conversation with Jobson editor, Christie Walker. Born in England and raised in Jamaica and Trinidad, James received her degrees in chemistry and engineering at U.S. universities. James's personal and professional journey to her current position as the vice president of marketing at Transitions is both unique and inspirational.

"The Thursday morning Champagne Breakfast will give OWA members and the optical industry the opportunity to learn more about our honorees, Sue and Ann, as we raise a glass of champagne in their honor. At the breakfast event we will also glean insights from an intimate conversation with Sherianne James of Transitions Optical," explained Heather Smith, OWA president.

The plated breakfast includes the champagne toast, presentations about and by our award honorees, and an intimate conversation including Q&A. Seating will be limited and reservations are a **must**. The cost for this event is \$55 per person or \$550 for a table of ten. The event is sponsored by the OWA and OWA Platinum Sponsor, Luxottica. **Reserve online** at www.opticalwomen.com by Friday, March 25, 2016.

The excitement continues with the awarding of both the Pleiades and Pyxis awards at an exclusive **invitation-only OWA Star Award Ceremony** event hosted by the OWA and OWA Platinum Sponsor, Marchon, at the One World Observatory, at One World Trade Center. This intimate evening to celebrate the honorees is taking place on Saturday, April 16th. Only guests

who have RSVP'd to the specially sent invitations will be admitted, as space is limited. To request an invitation, send an email to: office@opticalwomen.com. Requests will be filled as space allows.

About Our Honorees

Sue Downes, CEO of MyEyeDr., is driven today by the same goal that inspired her to co-found the company 14 years ago—a belief that patients should receive the finest vision care from their local independent optometrist. Starting with one office in 2001, she led the growth of the MyEyeDr. brand to over 200 locations across the mid-Atlantic and southeast United States. Downes served on the advisory board for the Colombia Lighthouse for the Blind & Visually Impaired, was selected as a Vision Monday 2011 Most Influential Women in Optical, awarded the Smart CEO award for Entrepreneurial Spirit, and presented with the 2015 ACG Corporate Growth Award. Downes lives in northern Virginia with her husband, PJ, and has no plans to “slow down...ever.” While awards are appreciated, according to Downes, her proudest accomplishment is raising her two sons. The Pleiades award is named after the Pleiades constellation, which is also known as the "Seven Sisters." Together these seven stars create one of the brightest visible clusters in the northern hemisphere. Pleiades award honorees, like the shining stars in the constellation, are shining examples of women in leadership, working together to create companies and organizations that are bigger and brighter than the sum of their individual efforts.

Pyxis honoree, Ann E. Englert is the owner and sole proprietor of Solutions, a concierge-style business dedicated to working with wholesalers, retailers and ECPs in the eyewear industry. Englert was selected as one of Vision Monday's Most Influential Women in Optical in 2013. An active OWA member since 2001, Englert has served on the board and chaired multiple committees, including OWA president. Englert resides in Naples, Florida with her husband, Tom and enjoys sunny outdoor activities. The Pyxis constellation in the southern sky is known as "The Compass" and like a compass the Pyxis Award honoree helps guide the organization by her leadership and example.

The Optical Women's Association is a non-profit organization founded in September of 1997 with the mission of supporting and promoting the professional development of women in the optical industry. Projects and programs of the OWA include: the Connection Series, providing women in the optical industry with personal and professional growth opportunities; networking events at both Vision Expo East and West; and the annual Pleiades/Pyxis Star Award Ceremony, which recognizes and honors individuals who have made a significant difference for women in the optical industry.

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