



For Immediate Release

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**American Academy of Optometry Makes Donation in Honor of
2018 Brien Holden Humanitarian Awardee Dr. Akio Kanai**



The American Academy of Optometry is pleased to announce a \$5,000 donation has been made to Fuji Vision Aid Mission in honor of Akio Kanai, OD, the 2018 recipient of the Brien Holden Humanitarian Award. The funds will be used to help provide patient care to overseas refugees. Dr. Kanai will be recognized at the Academy 2018 San Antonio Awards Ceremony on Friday, November 9, 2018.

The Brien Holden Humanitarian Award honors the memory and work of Professor Brien Holden, PhD, DSc, FAAO. This award recognizes an individual or organization who has made significant contributions to improve eye care within a country or region. In particular, the award acknowledges humanitarian efforts in the non-profit sector that build or support the development of sustainable eye care systems in developing communities. The Academy annually makes a \$5,000 donation to the charity or cause of the awardee's choice.

"I am deeply honored to receive this prestigious award. I am very grateful to the Brien Holden Vision Institute and all the members of the awards committee for recognizing the value in what I have done in my optometric career. Just like the late Dr. Holden, a passion for caring the vulnerable has led me to where I am today. Improving vision of refugees brings their future in better focus, a little bit brighter. I hope that I keep working to help others for the rest of my life.," said Dr. Kanai.

Dr. Kanai was recognized for this award due to his tireless and sustained contributions in partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Since 1984, Dr. Kanai has been active in advocacy for access to eye care and in providing direct care to over 100,000 refugees in difficult and hazardous environments including Thailand, Nepal, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and most recently, to the displaced Rohingya.

The Brien Holden Humanitarian Award, established by the Brien Holden Vision Institute and Holden family estate, will be awarded annually. Nominations for 2019 should include two letters of nomination from Academy Fellows and a CV of the nominee. Nominations are due by April 1, 2019 to HelenV@aaoptom.org.

About the American Academy of Optometry

The American Academy of Optometry (AAO) enhances excellence in optometric practice by fostering research and disseminating knowledge in vision science through its journal, *Optometry and Vision Science*, and the continuing education presented at its annual meeting. Fellows of the Academy are committed to the premise that learning is a lifelong obligation of a professional, as is the commitment to expand the profession's knowledge base through ongoing fellowship and exchange.

The next annual meeting of the Academy will be November 7-10, 2018 at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio, TX. For more information, visit <http://www.aaopt.org>.

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