



Contact: MJ Viederman

Email: mjviederman@gmail.com

Phone: 603 759 0738



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VisionSpring Announces New Chief Operations Officer with Private Sector Track Record in Health Care, Global Supply Chain and Entrepreneurship

Leena Palav Joins Social Enterprise to Drive Growth and Scale as VisionSpring Aims to Deliver Clear Vision for Their 10 Millionth Customer

(New York, NY) July 7, 2020 - **VisionSpring**, the award-winning social enterprise that is addressing the need for the 2.7 Billion people who need glasses to see clearly, announced the addition of a new Chief Operating Officer, Leena Palav. The new member of the executive leadership team brings two decades of private sector experience in health and technology, managing strategy, business development, global operations and supply chain. As COO, Palav will have global responsibility for VisionSpring's organizational development, operational excellence and performance at scale for an organization that serves partners in 18 countries.

A strategic and multi-functional leader with 20-plus years of experience driving operational rigor, building systems, improving customer service, and developing people and culture for growth, Palav brings an analytical and entrepreneurial approach to her work. She has built, managed and grown operations in start-up, mid-size and large health care and tech companies with P&Ls ranging from \$10 million to \$16 billion. Prior to joining VisionSpring, Palav led services quality, operations and corporate strategy at GE Healthcare and the scale-up of medical device sales, manufacturing and operations with Zimmer, Cardionics and AMC Health. Palav earned a Masters of Science in engineering at the University of Manitoba, and a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Wisconsin, and her deep expertise includes certifications in Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, project management, ISO and FDA quality management systems. Palav brings her unique experience to VisionSpring as the organization works to reach its 10 millionth eyeglasses customer in 2021 and respond to the spread of COVID-19 in low-income customer communities.

“We are so fortunate to have Leena join us during this key moment in VisionSpring’s history,” said Ella Gudwin, VisionSpring CEO. “We have integrated COVID prevention into our community-based work and are providing PPE to our global health care partners. In the context of a ‘new normal,’ Leena’s commitment to service quality, process excellence and inclusive leadership will enable VisionSpring to scale-up access to vision screening services and glasses delivery, emerging from this global crisis stronger than ever. We are thrilled she is here,” added Gudwin.

“I am very excited to start this new chapter in my career,” shared Palav. “After 20 years of working in the healthcare industry, I am looking forward to leveraging my experiences to help VisionSpring in its impactful mission of providing access to affordable vision care in low-income communities. It is a simple but powerful premise: clear vision can exponentially improve livelihoods and productivity. I am glad to have this opportunity to make such a difference in a person’s life. I was raised in Mumbai, India, and as a young girl, I was the first eyeglasses wearer in my family. I look forward to helping create millions of such stories,” she added.

VisionSpring’s COVID-19 Response

Since March of 2020, VisionSpring has deployed their global team of more than 300 to procure PPE, partner with manufacturers of masks, prototype hand-washing stations, and deliver food kits and education in India, Bangladesh, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, Vietnam and Zambia. Known for delivering vision screenings and eyeglasses to people living on less than \$4 per day, the organization pivoted its operations in the race to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the communities where they have previously delivered more than 6.8 million pairs of glasses. Working to support their more than 350 health care partners including hospitals, clinics and networks of community health workers who are on the front lines, VisionSpring shifted its operations to emergency response, an area in which several members of the leadership team have experience. For more information about VisionSpring’s COVID response, visit www.COVID19.visionspring.org

About VisionSpring

VisionSpring is the pioneering, international social enterprise accelerating the uptake of affordable eyewear among people who earn less than \$4 per day in emerging and frontier markets. Founded in 2001, VisionSpring uncovers latent demand for vision correction; conducts community, workplace and school vision screenings; trains others to do the same; and supplies radically affordable, durable eyeglasses. VisionSpring has delivered more than 6.8 million pairs of eyeglasses, providing vision correction in 43 countries with over 385 NGO, corporate, government and health partners. VisionSpring has been recognized for its innovative work, receiving multiple awards including the Skoll Award; social entrepreneur fellowships from Draper Richards Kaplan, the Aspen Institute, and the Schwab Foundation; and honors from World Bank, Duke University, Fast Company, and Tribeca Film Festival, among others.

www.visionspring.org