Dear Colleagues:

The recent meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) meeting in Chicago proved to be a hot spot of international activity for the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology (PAAO) and the Pan-American Ophthalmological Foundation (PAOF).

On Friday we celebrated our 4th annual Circle of Vision luncheon. The Circle of Vision consists of individual donors, Foundations and industry partners who support the PAOF annual with a donation of US$1,000 or more. These donations are the life blood of the Pan-American which support our many educational programs.

The PAAO's 11th leadership development course, El Curso De Liderazgo, year graduated 17 more participants, totaling 159 from 26 countries around the world. There have been 19 nominations from affiliated subspecialty societies and 140 nominations from national ophthalmological societies. All Curso participants are required to do a project as a part of their program in Advocacy, Prevention of Blindness or continuing education.

This has been a spectacularly success educational program. Eight graduates have gone on to become president of their national ophthalmological society, 20 more have held other offices or leadership positions in their societies, 26 graduates have served on the PAAO’s board or on PAAO Committees. Strong ties and networks have been developed between the national societies and subspecialty societies, making the global village even smaller. We thank our private donors and industry sponsors for their support of this program.

Dr. Paulo Dantas, Editor of the Vision Pan-America: the Pan-American Journal of Ophthalmology continues to develop and expand the Pan-American’s journal. The journal is now indexed in eight international indexing sourcing and the next goal would be to be indexed in Medline. We thank Dr. Dantas and his editorial board, the contributing authors, and industry sponsors continuing this excellent publication.

Activities continue for the planning of the 31st Pan-American Congress of Ophthalmology, that is scheduled to take place August 4-8, 2015, in Bogotá, Colombia. This Congress celebrates the 75th anniversary of the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology.

The 2nd Summit of the Americas is planned, which gathers the 26 presidents of the affiliated national ophthalmological societies. This is an exciting ongoing program which brings all the national societies together to discuss common challenges and hot topics.

Andrés, Carne de Res, will be the charity dinner planned for the PAOF, on Friday, August 7, 2015, just outside of Bogotá. This is vibrant location which promises excellent food and entertainment. We welcome your participation in this event!

We thank our generous individual donors, industry partners and our family foundations who continue to be so generous and support our many programs with their restricted funding totaling over $150,000 this year: Abbott Medical Optics Inc., Alcon Laboratories Inc., Allergan International, David & Julianna Pyott Foundation, the Allergan Foundation, Oculus Surgical, the Retina Research Foundation, and the Tim & Judith Sear Foundation.

We look forward to 2015 where we will continue working with our partners, big and small, to provide continuing education, cultural exchange and prevention of blindness programs to the Ophthalmologists of the Americas and in the world.

Best regards,

William De La Peña MD
Chairman of the Board
Pan-American Ophthalmological Foundation