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Brien Holden Remembered: Global Eye Health Leaders Honour His Legacy

Friends, family and colleagues join IVI-hosted online commemoration to celebrate his life

On the 10th anniversary of his passing, friends, family, and colleagues from across the world came together at an IVI-hosted online commemoration on August 23 to celebrate the life and legacy of Professor Brien Holden, whose pioneering work transformed global eye health and optometry.

Professor Brien Holden, remembered as a pioneer and humanitarian, dedicated his life to advancing eye care worldwide and improving access for millions in need.

Seven of his close friends and professional associates shared their memories and his contributions to eye healthcare – Dr GN Rao, Founder-Chair, LV Prasad Eye Institute; Professor Kovin Naidoo, Global Head of Advocacy and Partnerships, OneSight EssilorLuxottica Foundation; Vinod Daniel, CEO, India Vision Institute (host and moderator); Dr Juan Carlos Aragon, Chair, Optometry Giving Sight (USA); Professor Serge Resnikoff, Conjoint Professor, UNSW & Chair, Brien Holden Vision Foundation; Dr Monica Jong, Head of Medical Affairs – North America, EssilorLuxottica; and Professor Shehzad Naroo, Aston University.

Prof Holden's daughter, Karen Holden, offered a moving personal remembrance of the man whose vision touched millions of lives.

Speakers recalled his guidance, generosity and unwavering commitment to making quality vision care accessible to all. They underlined his belief that no one, regardless of geography or income, should be denied the opportunity of good vision.

Prof Holden's pioneering leadership in the study of myopia was remembered. His groundbreaking research and advocacy helped establish myopia as one of the world's most pressing public health problems and shaped international responses to it. Backed by data from Asia, he predicted its eventual global impact and warned it could become a leading cause of permanent blindness – a message that continues to guide policymakers and researchers today.

For more than three decades, Professor Holden drove research in eye health, combining scientific innovation with a strong emphasis on addressing the challenges of vision care in developing countries.

IVI's CEO Vinod Daniel said "With hundreds of millions worldwide affected by preventable vision impairment, Prof Holden's vision continues to inspire efforts to ensure access to affordable screenings, spectacles and equitable eye care."

"His legacy endures in the institutions he helped build, including at India Vision Institute, and through them in the lives of the countless individuals who now see more clearly," added Mr Daniel.

To mark the occasion, IVI conducted two outreach campaigns, providing vision screenings to over 250 people in underserved communities.