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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Prevent Blindness Texas wins 2008 First Place Best Practices Award from
Prevent Blindness America, Chicago**

Houston, Texas – June 3, 2008 – Prevent Blindness Texas received the 2008 First Place, Best Practices Award from Prevent Blindness America in recognition of three nationally outstanding programs, two of which were developed in partnership with the Houston Ophthalmological Society: the **Eye Care for the Homeless of Houston Project**, and the **Houston Eye Care Disaster Response Plan**. A third commendation was received for the PBT Rib Eye Round –Up fund-raisers, held in Lufkin, Lubbock, and Midland, which were cited for success in supporting eye care programs.

Eye Care for the Homeless of Houston was developed to help meet the vision care needs of the approximately 10,000-14,000 homeless individuals in Greater Houston. The homeless are among the most impoverished and medically underserved citizens of Texas. Screening, referral, and distribution of glasses helped restore eyesight to more than 1,500 homeless individuals in the past year. Funding for the project comes from The Baylor /Methodist Community Health Fund and a Harris County Community Development Block Grant.

The Houston Eye Care Disaster Response Plan unites the skills and resources of Houston area ophthalmologists, optometrists, and the major Houston/Galveston eye care institutions to provide coordinated treatment of injuries resulting from natural or man-made disasters. The DRP serves a population of over 5.5 million in a 10-county area.

Plan partners include:

#MORE#

Prevent Blindness Texas

Best Practices Award

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- Prevent Blindness Texas
- The Houston Ophthalmological Society
- University of Houston College of Optometry
- Baylor College of Medicine/Harris County Hospital District Ben Taub General Hospital, Department of Ophthalmology
- University of Texas Health Science Center At Houston/Harris County Hospital District LBJ Hospital, Department of Ophthalmology
- University of Texas Medical Branch Galveston, Department of Ophthalmology
- Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Medical Center, Department of Ophthalmology

A new PBT Volunteer Opportunity website highlights ways in which Texans can get involved in vision-saving work through PBT. Volunteer opportunities include becoming a certified vision screener, creating computer databases, performing office support work, and sorting and distributing glasses. A new teen internship introduces young people to the importance of preventing blindness. Founded in 1956 in Houston, Prevent Blindness Texas is the largest affiliate of Prevent Blindness America. PBT screened the vision of 95,000 children and 35,000 adults in 2007-2008 and provided thousands of prescription glasses through their network of ophthalmologists, optometrists and opticians. Ten PBT branch offices reach across Texas to perform vision screenings, referrals and educational programs.

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