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VISIONSPRING WINS SKOLL AWARD FOR SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

***\$765,000 Unrestricted Grant Will Provide Flexibility
in Challenging Economic Environment***

New York, NY, March 19, 2009 -- The Skoll Foundation recently announced that VisionSpring is one of seven organizations to receive a three-year grant of \$765,000 and join the growing global network of Skoll social entrepreneurs who are tackling the world's most critical social and economic challenges. The Skoll Foundation was created in 1999 by eBay's first president, Jeff Skoll, to promote his vision of a more peaceful and prosperous world. The Skoll Awards program provides social entrepreneurs who have already achieved significant impact with unrestricted funding to further extend their reach.

"We are deeply honored to join the group of 72 remarkable Skoll social entrepreneurs who are making widespread change tackling the world's most critical social and environmental problems," said Dr. Jordan Kassalow, Chairman and Co-Founder of VisionSpring. "This tremendous vote of confidence from the Skoll Foundation inspires us at VisionSpring to approach our work with ever more dedication and fervor to truly solving the global failure for affordable eyeglasses across the developing world."

"Today's difficult economic environment makes it all the more important to identify organizations that are tackling tough issues and delivering real and sustainable results. Unrestricted funding is particularly valuable against the current economic backdrop, since it provides these entrepreneurs with the flexibility they need to adapt to such difficult challenges," said Sally Osberg, President and CEO of the Skoll Foundation. "The high quality of applicants this year is further evidence that the model of social entrepreneurship is being adopted by innovators worldwide. We welcome the addition of these impressive leaders and their organizations to the Skoll portfolio and look forward to supporting the next step in their growth."

Dr. Jordan Kassalow will receive the award on behalf of VisionSpring on March 26 at the sixth annual Skoll World Forum on Social Entrepreneurship at the University of Oxford in England. The Skoll Awards will be presented by Skoll Foundation Chairman Jeff Skoll, Skoll Foundation President and CEO Sally Osberg and special guest, chairman of the Nobel Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change, Dr. Rajendra K. Pachauri. The Skoll World Forum convenes a global community of outstanding practitioners and thought leaders in social entrepreneurship to set the future agenda for visionaries who want to transform society.

ABOUT VISIONSPRING

VisionSpring is a non-profit social enterprise that empowers local individuals to become self-sustaining entrepreneurs by selling affordable eyeglasses to the millions of people in the developing world who need them. For tailors, weavers, artisans, and others throughout the developing world who need to see up-



close for their livelihoods, the loss of their near vision means the loss of their ability to work and support a family. Yet, more than 400 million of the world's poorest people do not have access to affordable eyeglasses, a product long available in every drugstore in the United States. Vision Spring's successful "Business in a Bag" model provides not only the delivery of inexpensive, yet life-transforming eyeglasses, but also a promising entrepreneurial opportunity that helps to lift people out of poverty.

For more information, visit www.visionspring.org

ABOUT THE SKOLL FOUNDATION

The Skoll Foundation was created in 1999 by eBay's first president, Jeff Skoll, to promote his vision of a more peaceful and prosperous world. Today the Skoll Foundation advances systemic change to benefit communities around the world by investing in, connecting and celebrating social entrepreneurs - individuals dedicated to innovative, bottom-up solutions that transform unequal and unjust social, environmental and economic systems.

The Skoll Awards for Social Entrepreneurship is the foundation's flagship program. There are currently 59 organizations represented by 72 remarkable social entrepreneurs in the program, working individually and together across regions, countries and continents to deliver solutions to the world's most challenging economic and social problems. The Skoll Foundation connects social entrepreneurs and other partners in the field via an online community at www.socialedge.org, and through the annual Skoll World Forum on Social Entrepreneurship. The foundation also celebrates social entrepreneurs by telling their stories through partnerships with organizations like the PBS Foundation and the Sundance Institute, with the goal of promoting large-scale public awareness of social entrepreneurship.

For more information, visit www.skollfoundation.org.

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