



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release 8/29/04

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Heartland Lions Eye Banks Expands in Southwest Missouri and Southeast Kansas

Joplin, Mo. (August 26, 2004) – In order to better serve the southwestern Missouri and southeastern Kansas areas, the Heartland Lions Eye Banks (HLEB) has opened an eye bank branch in Joplin, Mo. The new office will play a key part in HLEB's network of eye banking branches by recovering donor eye tissue in southwest Missouri and southeast Kansas. The Joplin branch is located at 2026 Connecticut Avenue, Suite C, and is supervised by local branch manager, Taryn Graham.

Each day, HLEB helps to give the "gift of sight" to approximately 5 people by retrieving, processing and distributing donor eye tissue to corneal surgeons who use the tissue in sight saving transplants. The Eye Bank also provides research tissue to ocular researchers and national projects like the National Disease Research Interchange (NDRI) to find cures for blinding eye diseases.

With addition of its newest office in Joplin, HLEB now has five branches in Missouri including: Columbia, St. Louis, Kansas City, Springfield and Joplin. The Eye Bank also houses two branches out of state in Springfield, Ill. and Hays, Kan.

HLEB is a program of the Missouri Lions Eye Research Foundation (MLERF) a statewide not-for-profit organization, based out of Columbia, Mo., with the mission to preserve and restore eyesight through the work of its community programs and eye bank operations. MLERF's programs include: Amblyopia Prevention Screening, Eye Care Assistance, Glaucoma Detection Screening, Eyeglass Recycling, Heartland Lions Eye Banks, and support of ocular research. For more information contact Tiffany at 573-443-1471 ext. 230 or visit our website hleb.org.

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