

Dr. Houdek Reflects on Vision Source®

Rob Houdek, OD, senior vice president of business development for Vision Source® has announced that he will retire on Dec. 31, 2013. Randy Sones, vice president of marketing and advertising, sat down with Dr. Houdek to reflect on his 13 years with Vision Source® and his plans for the future.



Sones: First off, Rob, why retire now?

Dr. Houdek: My parents are both in their 80s, and I want to spend as much time with them as I can. I can't buy that time later on.

Sones: How will you spend your time between now and the end of the year?

Dr. Houdek: I'll be doing what I love best – visiting with my colleagues in the Vision Source® network. I will be attending six member meetings in the next 30 days, delivering a state-of-the-network presentation on all the fantastic things that we've accomplished during the past year and the exciting opportunities to come.

Sones: Tell us how you came to join to Vision Source®

Dr. Houdek: The journey began when Vision Source® was still in its infancy. In October 1992, I was with the professional affairs division of Ciba Vision. We hosted an event for our contact lens advisory panel in Casa de Campo in the Dominican Republic. I invited Glenn [Ellisor] and Bobby [Christensen] to the event. Glenn and I had attended UHCO at the same time, but it was the first time I had ever met Bobby. While at the meeting, they began visiting and the topic turned to Vision Source®. They ran into each other over the next two years at CE events and resumed the conversation. In late 1994, they joined forces and began growing the business. I met both of them again at the American Optometric Association meeting in 2000 where they shared their goals for the future of Vision Source® and the optometric profession. The passion they had for both was contagious. They spoke of the need for someone to help them reach out to like-minded colleagues to join the network. I was in!

Sones: What are your favorite memories of Vision Source®?

Dr. Houdek: There are so many, but they all have one thing in common – the bond I share with my colleagues in the network. It seems like at every annual meeting, doctors come up to me and thank me for inviting them into the network. And I thank all of them for helping to make Vision Source® what it is today. This organization was built one relationship at a time, and although we are a very large network, the sense of family still resonates throughout the organization. It is really amazing and something I will always carry with me.

Sones: What are your thoughts about the future of the network?

Dr. Houdek: I am very bullish about the Vision Source® future. I think that the current leadership, especially with Jim Greenwood, has the vision and the means to propel our network to new heights, particularly with regard to managed care. We are in serious discussions with dozens of innovative health care organizations that are creating new delivery models for population health management in virtually every part of the country.

Sones: What are your plans for retirement?

Dr. Houdek: As I said before, I'll spend time with my parents and stay put for a while. My goal is to have no status with any airline, hotel or rental car mileage program. Also, I'm working with a friend from my hometown of Denton, Texas, on a documentary film. It started out to be about our football team back in the 70s but it has grown to encompass the desegregation of our high school and city during that time. The more we research it, the more we are realizing how unique our experience in Denton was. Today, Denton is still a diverse, welcoming city, and we think the way Denton faced its challenges 40 years ago has a lot to do with its success as a community today. If you want to know more about the project, go to brncodocumentary.com. We are raising all the production costs through donations and giving 10 percent back to a scholarship fund, so if anyone is inclined, we'd love the help. We're actually trying to complete it in time for the Thin Line Film Festival in Denton next year.

Sones: Is there anything you'd like to say to your Vision Source® colleagues before you leave?

Dr. Houdek: I would like everyone to know what an honor it has been to be a part of this organization for the past 13 years. I have had the opportunity to meet and get acquainted with hundreds, if not thousands, of colleagues all across the country. I cannot imagine a better way to spend my time than meeting and working with the members of this network who constantly encourage each other and build each other up. It has been an amazing journey.

Vision Source®