Transitions Honors Award Winners at Annual Gala and Introduces New Celebrity Ambassadors

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ORLANDO, Fla.—Last night, Transitions Optical named its 2012 annual award winners in a number of categories, including Lab of the Year, Eyecare Practice of the Year, regional and national Retailers of the Year, Vision Benefits Broker of the Year, and the first ever HR Visionary of the Year. Honorees were recognized at a gala event attended by an international audience of more than 1,100 optical industry professionals and 140 managed vision care industry professionals at the 17th annual Transitions Academy at the Rosen Shingle Creek resort here. Videos highlighting some of the finalists can be viewed at the Transitions YouTube Channel.

Diversified Ophthalmics, Inc. was named the 2012 Transitions Lab of the Year, a distinction the Cincinnati-based lab also took home in 2005. One of the largest independent laboratories in the country, Diversified Ophthalmics is a single source supplier for ophthalmic products and services with accounts in all 50 states.

Lab of the Year finalists Expert Optics, Inc. and Walman Optical were also recognized for their commitment to growing their businesses with Transitions’ family of products and programs throughout 2012. In addition, Transitions honored Laboratório Technopark as the 2012 Brazil Lab of the Year, and Centro Integral Optico as the 2012 Latin American Lab of the Year.

Complete Family Vision Care was recognized as the 2012 Eyecare Practice of the Year for displaying excellence in promoting eye health and the Transitions brand within its practice and community. Owner Eric White, OD, accepted the award on behalf of the San Diego-based practice. Additional finalists for the 2012 Transitions Eyecare Practice of the Year award included Arizona Family Vision Care and Clarus Optical.

The 2012 Transitions Retailers of the Year were SVS Vision Optical Centers (for the regional category) and National Vision, Inc.
Transitions also honored Anthony Glaub, president, Professional Insurance Enrollers <http://pie-ins.com/> of Fort Wayne, Ind., as the 2012 HR Vision Benefits Broker of the Year for his consistent efforts to communicate the value of vision benefits to HR customers and their employees. Glaub is the third annual winner of this award. Additional finalists for the 2012 Vision Benefits Broker of the Year Award included Todd Hester, account executive, Neace Lukens <http://www.neacelukens.com/> , Bowling Green, Ky.; and Mark Lambert, senior business advisor, Conner Insurance <http://www.conneragency.com/> , Indianapolis.

For his commitment to providing a quality vision benefit and year-round eye health education to his work force, Maurice Evans, Jr., human resources director for real estate services company Integral Group LLC <http://http://integral-online.com/> of Atlanta, Ga., has been named Transitions’ first ever HR Visionary of the Year. The award is co-sponsored by the Institute for HealthCare Consumerism <http://http://www.cdhsolutionsforum.com/> as part of its HealthCare Consumerism Superstars program.

Additional finalists for the HR Visionary of the Year Award included Steve Browne, vice president, director of human resources, Wiginton Fire Systems, in Sanford, Fla.; and Cyndee Blue, director of human resources, Everence Financial, in Goshen, Ind.

In addition, Transitions also announced the company’s new celebrity ambassadors, including country and pop music superstar, Darius Rucker, former lead singer of Hootie and the Blowfish; Food Network celebrity chef, Robert Irvine, currently known for his hit show, Restaurant Impossible; and baseball legend Cal Ripken, Jr. Rucker and Irvine both attended this year’s Transitions Academy to participate in their introduction as Transition’s newest spokespeople.

During the event, Irvine told VMail about his experiences wearing Transitions lenses: “I’ve been wearing Transitions for so long that for me it’s a partnership, but it’s also a lifestyle. I live and breathe my glasses. My job is all about color and texture because we eat with our eyes first. If I can’t see it I wouldn’t be where I am today.” His next stop as Transitions ambassador will be at the Food Network South Beach Wine & Food Festival <http://http://www.sobefest.com/> , Feb. 21-24, in Miami, where Irvine will share with event attendees how a nutritious diet can impact eye health.

“The first pair of lenses I got were Transitions,” country music star, Rucker told VMail. Transitions will partner with the Country Music Association to sponsor the “Transitions Performance Park” at the 2013 CMA Music Festival in June in Nashville, Tenn., where fans will have a chance to meet Rucker and learn more about his Transitions lens experience.

In a recorded presentation at the event, Ripken said, “Transitions is a great fit for me at this point in my life. When I did succumb to the need and put my Transitions on, this whole world started opening up for me again, so I’m proud to use my fame to encourage people to do the same.”

At the 17th annual Transitions Academy, the company also announced for 2013 its largest national media campaign to date featuring television and print advertising, events, online outreach through public relations
and social media, and new point-of-sale materials. The national TV campaign will generate 1.22 billion
impressions, while print ads will create 160 million impressions.

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