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## Alcon Celebrates Women's Entrepreneurship Day by Announcing Winners from the *Real Relief for Visionary Women* Program

- \$40,000 in Real Relief grants and iFundWomen coaching services awarded to eight winning entrepreneurs
- Businesswoman and TV personality Barbara Corcoran helped select winners out of a competitive group of applicants
- Alcon set out to provide women entrepreneurs with relief – both financial and from dry eye symptoms – so they can stay focused on performing at their best

**Fort Worth, Texas, November 19, 2019** – In honor of Women's Entrepreneurship Day, Alcon, the global leader in eye care, announced the winners of the *Real Relief for Visionary Women* program from SYSTANE<sup>®</sup>, aimed at funding women entrepreneurs and their business ideas. Through an extensive, competitive review process, eight female entrepreneurs were selected by Alcon, crowdsourcing platform iFundWomen and businesswoman and TV personality Barbara Corcoran to receive financial relief and expert coaching for their business ventures.

"We created the *Real Relief for Visionary Women* program because day-to-day challenges like struggling with dry eye – a condition that affects 30 million Americans – can be a barrier in the demanding life of entrepreneurs," said Sean Clark, General Manager, US Vision Care, Alcon. "Women's Entrepreneurship Day is the perfect time to announce the winners of this program, which is focused on helping provide real relief so these business owners can stay focused on performing at their best."

The winners will each receive a \$5,000 *Real Relief* grant and a one-year supply of [SYSTANE<sup>®</sup> Complete](#), Alcon's most advanced dry eye drop. They will also have access to educational opportunities and coaching services through [iFundWomen](#). Deepthi Sharma, the grand prize winner, will have the opportunity to speak with Barbara Corcoran about her business. She was selected because her catering concierge service, FoodtoEat, has demonstrated proof of concept for bringing food from women, immigrant and minority-owned restaurants into offices across NYC, removing roadblocks that prevent small businesses from growing their catering business and client base. As someone who has

managed her eye health from a very young age, taking care of her eyes is an important part of her day-to-day routine, which has helped her be successful both professionally and personally.

The full list of winners and their ideas are:

- **Brittany A. Rhodes, Detroit, Mich. – Black Girl MATHgic™ (BGM)** is the first and only monthly subscription box dedicated to increasing math confidence and decreasing math anxiety in girls on a third to eighth grade math level.
- **Charlie Grosso, New York, N.Y. – Hello Future** is a global non-profit that teaches adolescent refugees the business and creativity skills needed to become entrepreneurs and community leaders.
- **Deepti Sharma, New York, N.Y. – FoodtoEat** is a catering concierge service that identifies, qualifies and connects small, ethnic, food vendors to NYC businesses for unique meal experiences. (Grand Prize winner)
- **Julie Schechter, New York, N.Y. – Small Packages** is an eCommerce gift company that makes it easy for busy women to send pre-curated care packages for any occasion (from new babies to break-ups) in less than 5 minutes.
- **Lauren Beasley, Nashville, Tenn. – MOVE Inclusive** is a dance studio for individuals of all ages with special needs that uses the power of movement and music to transform their students' lives.
- **Marika Frumes, New York, N.Y. – HER USA** brings together inspiring, influential women in settings where networking is facilitated and women are taught the power of asking for help. HER events uphold the pillars of education and connection to help members reach their personal and professional goals. Currently in NYC, LA, Miami and San Francisco.
- **Sarah Bolinder, Tallahassee, Fla. – Chop Barbershop** is a unique barbershop franchise that celebrates all humanity – welcoming all people, regardless of gender, race, sexual preference, age, disability, marital status and socioeconomic status to enjoy a vintage barbershop experience.
- **Stacy Anderson, Los Angeles, Calif. – KENT Woman** manufacturers organic healthy underwear and sleepwear available ad hoc or on a subscription model.

"I am proud to partner with Alcon to recognize and celebrate these innovative grant recipients on Women's Entrepreneurship Day," said Corcoran. "It was a pleasure to help select the winners and I was impressed with the high caliber of applicants and their stories of determination. Whether it's access to seed money or dry eye relief, nothing should hold female entrepreneurs back from reaching their goals."

Stories are featured on SYSTANE.com. For more information on *Real Relief for Visionary Women* and SYSTANE® Complete, Alcon's most advanced dry eye solution, visit [www.SYSTANE.com](http://www.SYSTANE.com) or follow SYSTANE® on [Facebook](#).

### **About Dry Eye**

Dry eye occurs when the quantity and/or quality of tears fails to keep the surface of the eye adequately lubricated. Dry eye can cause a scratchy sensation or the feeling that something is in the eye, stinging or burning, excess tearing, and blurred vision. The risk of developing dry eye increases with advancing age.

### **About the Systane Family of Products**

Systane® lubricant eye drops have been clinically proven to reduce the symptoms of dry eye, providing immediate, long-lasting protection and comfort. The Systane brand is the best-selling dry eye franchise in artificial tear solutions and is the #1 doctor-recommended brand. Systane Complete is indicated as a first-line treatment option for people who suffer from evaporative dry eye, aqueous tear-deficient dry eye or mixed dry eye. While Systane Ultra is designed for dry eye with aqueous deficient patients,

Systane Balance lubricant eye drops are designed specifically for patients with dry eye associated with Meibomian gland dysfunction.

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### **About Alcon**

Alcon helps people see brilliantly. As the global leader in eye care with a heritage spanning more than seven decades, we offer the broadest portfolio of products to enhance sight and improve people's lives. Our Surgical and Vision Care products touch the lives of more than 260 million people in over 140 countries each year living with conditions like cataracts, glaucoma, retinal diseases and refractive errors. Our more than 20,000 associates are enhancing the quality of life through innovative products, partnerships with eye care professionals and programs that advance access to quality eye care. Learn more at [www.alcon.com](http://www.alcon.com).

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