

**IACLE to support Dominican Republic's first optometry program**



Through **Professor Hector Santiago** (pictured 4th from right), the [Inter American University of Puerto Rico School of Optometry](#) has been providing optometric clinical missions to the Dominican Republic for the past 25 years. Nearly 20,000 patients have received free eye exams, eyeglasses, ophthalmic medications, and pterygia surgeries.

Professor Santiago says that in a country with a population of nearly 11 million, there is a dire need for professional optometric services. There are about 350 ophthalmologists and over 500 ophthalmic practitioners in the country. However, most of the ophthalmic practitioners have no formal university education.

The Inter American University of Puerto Rico was fortunate in finding a prestigious Dominican Republic university, the [Universidad Tecnológica de Santiago](#) (UTESA), to establish the first Bachelor (Licenciatura) in Optometry program in that country. UTESA has already well established medical, veterinary and nursing programs.

Professor Santiago and the UTESA authorities are willing to receive suggestions and help from IACLE. So next month we will release the IACLE approach after our next call between Professor Santiago and the IACLE Americas office.

**IACLE Americas office visits Masters Program in Ecuador**

The postgraduate department of the [Universidad Técnica de Manabí](#) invited IACLE Americas Regional Coordinator **Guillermo Carrillo** to lecture to its Masters in Optometry students. This Masters course is focused on Contact Lens and Visual Therapy and it's the first one in Ecuador.



Academic sessions developed by Guillermo provided case discussions (pictured above), lectures and workshops on different topics. IACLE resources were very useful tools for lecture sessions for both groups: Masters students and regular students.

Masters students took part in workshops on multifocal and orthokeratology fitting and were enthusiastic participants in lectures and workshops. Pictured below is a collage of activities developed. The activities included 144 hours of academic contact and Guillermo had the opportunity to work closely with Masters students and promote IACLE within the group.

