

STAAR Surgical Previews Strong Visian® ICLT Presence at the Upcoming World Ophthalmology Congress

The Associated Press

STAAR Surgical Company (Nasdaq: STAA), the leading developer, manufacturer and marketer of implantable refractive lenses for the eye, today provided a preview of the activities it has scheduled before and during the World Ophthalmology Congress (WOC) to be held in Abu Dhabi from February 16 through February 20, 2012.

"We are looking forward to a significant presence at the WOC and the opportunity to provide leading ophthalmologists with the most recent clinical data in support of our Visian ICL, Visian Toric ICL and newly available features," said Hans Blickensdoerfer, President of Europe, Middle East and Latin America for STAAR. "Over the past year, we made substantial progress in introducing some truly innovative technologies that improve patient comfort and make the procedure more simple and efficient for the surgeon and patient, while expanding the treatment range for the Visian ICL. Today, we can treat all LASIK eligible patients and more, through a procedure that offers better visual results, while maintaining the integrity of the cornea. The early registration has been very strong for our events and we look forward to featuring the new benefits of the V4b and V4c ICL models." Beginning Wednesday, February 15, prior to the official start of the WOC, STAAR will host its first ever Middle East ICL Experts Symposium.

The Symposium will feature clinical presentations by 22 surgeons from 11 countries as well as roundtable discussions on its Visian Implantable Collamer® Lens (ICL) and related new features, including the latest design improvement with CentraFLOWT technology utilizing the KS-AquaPORTT. There will also be presentations on the Visian Toric ICL which enjoys the strongest growth rates within the ICL portfolio in Europe, the Middle East and Latin America, and was just recently launched in Japan, following the November receipt of regulatory approval. Attendance at the Symposium is by invitation only and over 70 surgeons from 25 countries have registered to participate.

During the WOC meeting, there will be 12 presentations on the Visian ICL during the Free Papers sessions. Five of these presentations will be made by ophthalmologists from India, three from Saudi Arabia, two from Egypt and one each from Japan and Pakistan. Four symposia and one instruction session on the ICL are scheduled during the meeting.

STAAR will also conduct a certification training course for surgeons on the ICL and Toric ICL outside of the meeting.

STAAR will be sponsoring a WOC Evening Symposium entitled, "Revolutions In Refractive Surgery: The New Visian ICL." Six surgeons will present their most recent

data with the latest Visian ICL model and talk about how to increase ICL volume by positioning it versus LASIK. This impressive group will feature the following: -- Dr. Amar Agarwal from India will moderate the program.

-- Dr. Alaa El-Danasoury from Saudi Arabia will present on the evolution of ICL indications.

-- Dr. Erik Mertens from Belgium will update on the performance of the CentraFLOW technology in Europe since release.

-- Dr. Robert Rivera from the U.S. will discuss the limitations of laser vision correction surgery.

-- Dr. Kimiya Shimizu from Japan will present data on over one-year outcomes with the KS-AP on the V4c ICL.

-- Dr. Khalid Al-Sharif from Jordan will discuss keratoconus vision rehabilitation.

The Company has received several key new Visian ICL approvals recently. The Visian ICL and TICL V4c, with STAAR's CentraFLOW proprietary technology, received CE Mark approval in April 2011.

CentraFLOW eliminates the need for the surgeon to perform a YAG peripheral iridotomy procedure days before the ICL implant. The result is more comfort for the patient and a more convenient, efficient ICL experience for both the patient and the surgeon. The Company launched sales of the Visian ICL V4c in Europe in the fourth quarter of 2011.

In November, the Company received approval to market its Visian Toric ICL in Japan. This was an important milestone for STAAR, providing access to a very large market for myopia and astigmatism solutions.

In Japan, approximately 40% of the population has myopia as compared with 15% to 28% in the rest of the world. In addition 50% of these patients experience some degree of astigmatism as compared to 30% in the rest of the world. Only 445 of the 11,200 ophthalmologists in Japan perform laser refractive surgery. The Visian ICL allows surgeons in Japan to participate in the refractive market with a procedure that does not require an investment in capital equipment.

"The Middle East has been a very important market for us and we are excited to have so many opportunities to address physicians at the WOC on the advantages of Visian ICL technologies including the expanded range of treatable patients and the new CentraFLOW ICL and TICL," said Barry G. Caldwell, president and CEO of STAAR Surgical. "With the recent approvals and product launches, STAAR is well positioned to expand its revenue growth and profitability momentum. 2011 was a record year for STAAR and the Visian ICL technology. During the fourth quarter Visian ICL revenues established a record \$9 million of quarterly sales as revenues of our largest product line increased by 37% compared to the fourth quarter in 2010. For the full year 2011, ICL revenues increased by 32% and we expect to expand this

growth rate during 2012." About STAAR Surgical STAAR, which has been dedicated solely to ophthalmic surgery for over 25 years, designs, develops, manufactures and markets implantable lenses for the eye. All of these lenses are foldable, which permits the surgeon to insert them through a small incision. STAAR's lens used in refractive surgery as an alternative to LASIK is called an Implantable Collamer® Lens or "ICL." A lens used to replace the natural lens after cataract surgery is called an intraocular lens or "IOL." Over 250,000 Visian ICLs have been implanted to date; to learn more about the ICL go to: www.visianinfo.com [1]. STAAR has approximately 300 full time employees and markets lenses in approximately 60 countries. Headquartered in Monrovia, CA, it manufactures in the following locations: Nidau, Switzerland; Ichikawa City, Japan; Aliso Viejo, CA; and Monrovia, CA. For more information, please visit the Company's website at www.staar.com [2] or call 626-303-7902.

Collamer® is the registered trademark for STAAR's proprietary biocompatible collagen copolymer lens material.

Safe Harbor The fourth quarter Visian ICL revenue presented in this press release is preliminary and remains subject to review by STAAR's independent registered public accountants. Final financial information for the quarter, which STAAR will report in its Annual Report on Form 10-K, may differ. Visian ICL revenue is not necessarily indicative of total revenue or net income.

All statements in this press release that are not statements of historical fact are forward-looking statements, including any estimates of future revenues or revenue growth, any statements about the effect of new product approvals on our business, statements about planned product launches, any statements of belief and any statements of assumptions underlying any of the foregoing.

These statements are based on expectations and assumptions as of the date of this press release and are subject to numerous risks and uncertainties, which could cause actual results to differ materially from those described in the forward-looking statements. The risks and uncertainties include the following: the effect of poor global economic conditions on sales, especially sales of products like the ICL used in non-reimbursed elective procedures; our limited resources to promote new products; the risk that product launches may be affected by unplanned delays or be less successful than we expect; the risk that greater than expected demand for new products can result in backlog, the willingness of surgeons and patients to adopt a new product and procedure; the entrenched market position of laser-based procedures for many conditions treated by the Visian ICL; and patterns of Visian ICL use that have typically limited our penetration of the refractive surgery market. STAAR assumes no obligation to update its forward-looking statements to reflect future events or actual outcomes and does not intend to do so.

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02/14/2012 /Web Site: <http://www.staar.com> [2] (NASDAQ-NMS:STAA) / CO: STAAR
Surgical Company ST: California United Arab Emirates IN: HEA MTC SPM SU: TDS
PDT PRN -- SF52918 -- 0000 02/14/2012 11:30:00 EDT <http://www.prnewswire.com> [3]

Source URL (retrieved on 12/04/2013 - 3:23pm):

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