

Company Helps Baptist Give Eyeglasses to Homeless

TOM WILEMON | The Daily News

Davis Vision has begun providing free eyeglasses to homeless people who receive medical care through Baptist Operation Outreach.

About 250 people showed up to have their vision checked and receive health screenings Friday when the company from Plainview, N.Y., and Baptist kicked off the program.

Johnathan Perrigin was one of the first people in the door at **Memphis Athletic Ministries-Sacred Heart** at 69 N. Cleveland Ave.

“I’m in pretty good shape,” he said after receiving a vision test. “It is good that Baptist hospital puts on something for the community to come and get checked. These people go out of their way to give free medical care.”



Johnathan Perrigin receives a free eye checkup with the assistance of Amy Stack, manager of community outreach for Davis Vision. The company has partnered with Baptist Operation Outreach to provide free eyeglasses to homeless people in Memphis.

Laura Dyer, assistant vice president of community outreach for Davis Vision, said the free eyeglasses come from the company’s Focus on America program.

“Baptist Memorial Health Care reached out to us in regard to their vision program, where they had the exam funded, but they had no one to give them the actual hardware,” she said. “That’s where we stepped in. We will be doing this on a monthly basis. This is not a one-time thing. This is a longtime partnership.”

Partnerships are important to the health care program, said Cynthia Allen, the system community outreach manager for Baptist.

“For over three years, we’ve provided care to the homeless three days a week in partnership with Christ Community Health Services,” Allen said. “Our clinic is located downstairs.”

In addition to the partnership with Christ Community Health Services, the program works with Bellevue Baptist Mobile Dental Clinic to provide dental screenings.

The partnership with Davis Vision began in December.

“We average about 20 to 30 eyeglasses per month at an estimated value of about \$340 per person,” Allen said. “This is a huge investment for Davis Vision. We just appreciate them coming to the Memphis community to provide that.”

More than 55 million people nationwide receive vision benefits through Davis Vision. The company has provided more than \$13 million in free vision services and materials.
