

# GLASSES FOR 75,000 KIDS!

**JOSEPH CARBONE, 61**  
West Bountiful, Utah

**FINDING FOCUS** Growing up in an Italian-immigrant family in Queens, Joseph Carbone struggled with his eyesight but didn't see a doctor until he was 17. "My parents had to go without something else that month to pay for those glasses," he says, "but it was so wonderful to have clear vision."

**SEEING THE LIGHT** After earning his optician's license and setting up shop in Utah—where he moved after becoming a Mormon—he recalls fitting a teen boy with his first pair of glasses, paid for by a benefactor. The boy said he'd never seen leaves on trees before. "That," says Carbone, "literally changed my life."

**A BOLD VISION** Starting with donated services, he built EyeCare4Kids (eye care-4kids.org) into a full-time nonprofit in 2006 after shutting his practice and taking out a second mortgage. Today, with a clinic in Midvale and two school-based units in Las Vegas funded by casino magnate Steve Wynn, Carbone and his 11-person staff have provided free exams and frames to 75,000 kids.

**NEW OUTLOOK** "They're pretty and help me see better," says Citris Urcino, 4, who got free glasses along with her entire family of six. "Joseph," says her dad, Wayne, who quit his job as a cook to work with Carbone, "is a godsend."

—CATHY FREE AND JEFF TRUESDELL

## EYES WIDE OPEN

"If you don't have your sight, your world is limited in so many ways. Kids give up and drop out," says Carbone (with Citris Urcino). "A single pair of glasses can change everything."

