Much has been said about the various obstacles that so many people endured – and continue to endure – during the pandemic. Maria H. is no exception. But she is thankful that her eyesight is better today than it was just a few months ago.

She first learned of the Lions Eye Foundation during the summer when her mother was referred for a procedure. In the process of accompanying her mother to appointments, she made a connection with Connie Jackson, Coordinator with the Lions Eye Foundation Clinic at Pacific Vision Eye Institute.

After her mother’s procedure, Maria returned home to help her father through an illness that quickly progressed. She had already been out of work for nearly a year and was busy trying to care for her parents. She was the only person in the home who could drive, but unfortunately, she soon began experiencing vision problems of her own.

Within a week or so, she could no longer see from her left eye. She was unable to drive and was even scared to walk for risk of losing her balance and falling. She made an appointment to see a doctor in Nevada where she lives and was told she needed cataract surgery. Desperate, she reached out to Connie who she remembered had given her mother such wonderful care just a few months prior.

“I was embarrassed to call her, but I didn’t know what else to do. She was such a kind person, so I prayed she could help me,” Maria said.

Thankfully, Maria got the help she needed, and she was soon scheduled for surgery at Pacific Vision Surgery Center under the care of Dr. Gena Damento with Dr. Kevin Denny as attending. Just prior to the scheduled date, Maria’s father passed away from cancer and Maria became apprehensive about her procedure. On the day of Maria’s surgery, the PVSC team and her surgeons made her feel comfortable and at ease – something she had not felt since losing her father and her vision.

“My doctors were amazing!” she said. “I was so grateful for the help. I have seen the opposite happen too often where my family has faced so many problems. I know this kind of kindness is rare.”

“Dr. Damento is an excellent human. She may be young, but she is a marvelous doctor. She also has the most beautiful eyes,” Maria said. “I also really admire Dr. Denny. His professionalism is everything. They both have my full respect and admiration.”

Maria knows it is a matter of time before she needs surgery on her right eye. But for now, she is grateful to be seeing much better from the left eye and profoundly grateful to Pacific Vision Foundation for funding her surgery at Pacific Vision Surgery Center.

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