ASCO, with support from industry partner Walmart, spearheads many efforts designed to help the eyecare profession foster diversity and cultural competency.

Cultural Competency Curriculum Guidelines Implementation Workshops

There is still time for ASCO member institutions to apply to receive a grant to fund an on-campus Cultural Competency Curriculum Guidelines Implementation Workshop. The program provides funds to schools and colleges of optometry for on-site Cultural Competency Curriculum Guidelines Implementation Workshops. The workshops demonstrate how to use the ASCO Guidelines for Culturally Competent Eye and Vision Care to incorporate topics and experiences in cultural competency into the optometric curriculum.

The deadline to apply in the 2014 grant period is August 8. The dean or president of the applying member institution should submit an application letter to Carol Brubaker, Liaison, Cultural Competency Curriculum Guidelines Subcommittee. The letter can be e-mailed to cbrubaker@opted.org or mailed to: 1017 Chumley Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 23451. All of the details about the program and application can be found at ASCO's website.

Cultural Competency Case Study Competition for Students and Residents



Chelsia Leong

This year was the first year for ASCO's Cultural Competency Case Study Competition for Students and Residents. Chelsia Leong, a Pacific University College of Optometry resident at the VA Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center and Clinics, won for her case study "Cultural Competency with the Navajo Nation." The 2014 student winner was Fatima Elkabti, who just completed her third year at the University of California at Berkeley School of Optometry, for her submission "At Home for an Hour: Competent Healthcare for the Homeless."

In addition to awarding $2,500 each to the student and resident who win each year's competition, the contest is a way to build a database of real-world examples of how to handle culturally sensitive patient encounters.

Developing a Diverse Applicant Pool in Optometric Education Mini-Grant Program



Fatima Elkabti

This is the tenth year ASCO has offered a diversity-related mini-grant program. For 2014, the program focuses on increasing diversity among applicants to optometry schools and colleges. The grants awarded help member schools and colleges to develop and implement activities aimed at recruiting and retaining underrepresented minority students, financially disadvantaged students and first-generation college students. This year, the program awarded nearly $20,000 to the following institutions to help fund their diversity programs, which reach out to and encourage potential students in various ways:

• Illinois College of Optometry (Focus on Your Future Summer Program)

• NOVA Southeastern University College of Optometry (The Preparatory Optometry Program [POP])

• The Ohio State University College of Optometry (Pathways to Optometry)

• SUNY State College of Optometry (Increasing Diversity by Engaging All [IDEA])

• University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry (Providing Diversity in Optometric Education through Continual Enhancement of Current Programs)

• University of the Incarnate Word Rosenberg School of Optometry (Summer Optometry Institute [SOI])

• University of Houston College of Optometry (Texas Optometry Career Opportunities Program [TEXOCOP])

• Indiana University School of Optometry (Your Future/I Can See Clearly Now).

Information about the programs can be found at the schools’ websites.