

Since its establishment in 1996, the Partnership Foundation for Optometric Education served as a genuine “partnership” through which the optometric community could invest in the future of the profession. Despite this unique distinction, the Partnership’s Board of Directors had deliberated over the past year about the future direction of the organization. The combined challenges of the economic climate and the changing needs of the profession had been influencing the level of funding the Partnership was receiving each year. Additionally, the original goals of the Partnership of using funds for capital improvements and modernization are no longer priorities for optometry’s educational institutions.

As a result, the Partnership Foundation for Optometric Education’s Board signed an agreement with ASCO to establish the Partnership Endowment. The original Partnership’s fund balance has been transferred to the new Partnership Endowment with two specific goals. The first goal is to aid the schools and colleges with their current needs. Each year, a percentage of the Endowment’s investment income will be available through grants for programs or projects to advance optometric education. The second goal is to continue to grow the Partnership Endowment to ensure that funding is available for future generations.

Dr. Pete Kehoe, who had been the President of the Partnership Foundation for Optometric Education, noted the positive impact of the change, saying, “The original creators of the Partnership can be proud that their vision to support optometric education will live on for generations to come. The collaboration and spirit of cooperation between ASCO, AAO and AOA to transition to the Endowment is a testament to the passion that the organizations have for the future of our profession.”

For information about the Partnership Endowment, contact Christine Armstrong, ASCO’s Director of Development, at carmstrong@opted.org or (301) 231-5944 ext. 3018.