

The Board of Directors of the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) added Interprofessional Education (IPE) and Collaborative Practice to its core Strategic Objectives. The action, taken at the Board's Nov. 11, 2014 meeting in Denver, Colo., formalizes ASCO's recognition of the importance of educating Doctor of Optometry students in multidisciplinary environments and preparing them to be part of collaborative healthcare teams, which has been a key priority of ASCO President Dr. Jennifer Coyle. As Dr. Coyle stated, "The new healthcare model is one of collaborative, multidisciplinary teams of professionals working together to improve population health, provide a better care experience to patients and reduce healthcare costs. Graduates of the schools and colleges of optometry must be prepared to work with members of other healthcare professions under this new model. ASCO believes that effective preparation to be a Doctor of Optometry includes educating students in collaborative care, and that this is best accomplished through development of interprofessional education initiatives in collaboration with other health professions." An ASCO Summit on IPE and Collaborative Practice involving all 21 schools and colleges of optometry as well as advocates of IPE from outside of the profession will be held Feb. 5-6, 2016, at Marshall B. Ketchum University in Fullerton, Calif. For more on the Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice Committee, [click here](#).

Also at the fall meeting, the ASCO Board:

- approved the first distributions of funds from the Partnership Endowment, a total of \$297,000.74, which will go to contributing schools and colleges of optometry to support programs addressing defined strategic objectives that advance optometric education and to ASCO for an initial [Online Clinical Educators Forum](#)
- established a new award, the Industry Leadership Award, to recognize an individual from a current or past ASCO Corporate Contributor company who demonstrates exemplary support of the Association and its member institutions
- began brainstorming on specialization and subspecialization in optometry based on the initial work of an ASCO working group and agreed to an objective of developing an ASCO statement and plan for consideration by other stakeholder optometric organizations.

In addition, the Board was informed by Dr. Coyle that long-time Executive Director Marty Wall will be retiring from ASCO in summer 2015 after 24 years in the position.