The Desert Southwest Hosts ASCO Board of Directors Meeting

On March 10, 2016, ASCO's Board of Directors gathered in Scottsdale, Ariz., for a condensed, but no less productive, meeting.

Two new optometric institutions were welcomed as members of ASCO: the University of Pikeville Kentucky College of Optometry and the Chicago College of Optometry at Midwestern University. Both Founding Deans, Dr. Andrew Buzzelli and Dr. Sunny M. Sanders, spoke about their institutions.

Outcomes from the meeting included:

• Excitement and anticipation to gather the Strategic Planning Task Force and other invited guests to begin developing the first comprehensive strategic plan ASCO will execute since 2002.

• A joint meeting with the board of trustees of the American Optometric Association (AOA), where key challenges to the profession were discussed.

• The IOCCC (Inter-Organizational Communications and Cooperation Committee), consisting of ASCO, the AOA, the Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry and the National Board of Examiners in Optometry, will gather each group's communications personnel to work more collaboratively.

• The establishment of a special committee to explore the possibility of instituting a subspecialization in Low Vision Rehabilitation.

• A partnership with the American Board of Optometry that waives the $1,500 board examination registration fee as a new benefit for all full-time faculty at ASCO schools and colleges beginning in July 2016.

• ASCO's endorsement of House Bill H.R. 4223 (also known as the Post Grad Act), which would reinstate federal Stafford loans for graduate and professional students.

• The Joint Project Team on Further Developing A Robust, Diverse and Highly Qualified National Applicant Pool reported on paid media and direct mail campaigns; optometry videos and podcasts; an increase of more than 6,000 visits to the True Stories landing page in January; an increase of more than 400% in Eye on Optometry blog views from last July to December compared with the same period the previous year; and the highest number of visits ever to ASCO's home page in January 2016 in addition to an increase of visits to the Professional OD Programs section.

• Approval to add ex-officio, non-voting liaisons from ASCO Affiliate members to the International Optometric Education Committee.

• Of particular note among the presentations from ad hoc and standing committees was a summary of ASCO's inaugural Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice Summit.

• The Board of Directors chose the winning nominations for ASCO's Lifetime Achievement, Rising Star and Industry Leadership awards for 2016. All winners will receive their awards during the Annual Leadership Luncheon at ASCO's Annual Meeting on June 29 during Optometry's Meeting in Boston. Refer to the next issue of Eye on Education for details about the winners.

• To welcome the Board and invitees to the ASCO Strategic Planning meeting and to Arizona, Dr. Donald Jarnagin and his wife, Sharon, generously hosted a barbecue at their home, making for a wonderful evening for all present.

ASCO's Board of Directors will meet again June 28-29 for the Association's Annual Meeting in Boston.