



ASCO held its seventh biennial Summer Institute for Faculty Development (SIFD) on July 9-12 in St. Louis. This year's program was co-chaired by Dr. Janice Scharre, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs of Salus University, and Dr. Tiffenie Harris, Associate Professor of the Western University College of Optometry, served as co-chairs for this year's program.

Commenting on the value of the biennial event, Dr. Harris said, "I believe that SIFD is an invaluable service provided by ASCO. Faculty spends the time networking and working with mentors while gaining insight on the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. They work on how to be a more effective teacher as well as how to develop their career goals for future promotion with a lifelong commitment to academic optometry."

Dr. Susan Cotter was honored as the keynote speaker during the program. Dr. Cotter, Professor, Southern California College of Optometry at Marshall B. Ketchum University, has been involved with the 2009, 2013, and 2017 Institute's, serving as a mentor and speaker.

Fifty faculty members from 23 schools and colleges of optometry and one Canadian institution attended. Ninety-seven percent of the participants reported that the program met or exceeded their expectations.

"[I] appreciate the genuine interest the mentors showed in my future."

"Excellent! Appreciate the quality of the entire program!"

"It was an amazing experience. I'm walking away with a mentor that genuinely cares and I know I'll stay in touch with her. It's a great opportunity for us to take time to reflect on ourselves, while this can be put on the back burner with our daily responsibilities. Thank you for the wonderful opportunity."

The goal of the SIFD is to provide participants with an opportunity to gain the necessary knowledge and skills to enhance their success in an optometric academic environment as lifelong productive faculty, thus contributing to increased retention of faculty in the schools and colleges of optometry. The program promotes active learning in a nurturing environment and is comprised of formal presentations, workshops and shared activities in the areas of teaching and learning, scholarship and research, and academic culture. Each attendee worked with mentors to develop a long-term career plan with specific goals, objectives and action strategies.

ASCO thanks Alcon, Allergan, Essilor, and the National Board of Examiners in Optometry for generously sponsoring the SIFD. Representatives from Alcon (Tom Duchardt) and Allergan (Mark Risher) attended the Institute this year. The next program will be held July 14-17, 2019. For more information on the SIFD, e-mail ASCO's Director of Meetings and Special Interest Groups [LaShawn Sidbury](#), or call her at (301) 231-5944 ext. 3012.

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