ASCO Board Bestows Honors, Hones Initiatives at Spring Meeting



ASCO President Dr. Jennifer Smythe (right) presents Dr. Melvin Shipp with a resolution in his honor during the Board of Directors' spring meeting.



ASCO Immediate Past-President Dr. David Heath (right) presents Dr. Rod Nowakowski with a resolution in his honor during the Board of Directors' spring meeting.

During its March 23 meeting in Amelia Island, Fla., the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) Board of Directors honored two valued members, Dr. Melvin Shipp and Dr. Rod Nowakowski, who are retiring this spring.

Dr. Shipp has been an outstanding leader in optometric education, the optometric profession and public health throughout his more than four-decade career. Optometric education and the profession have benefitted enormously from his expertise, diplomacy and leadership as ASCO President in 2009-2010, Professor and Dean of The Ohio State University College of Optometry, and previously as Professor, Assistant Dean for Clinical Services and Director of Clinics at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry (UABSO). Dr. Shipp was inducted into the National Optometry Hall of Fame in 2002, and he was the first optometrist elected President of the American Public Health Association.

Dr. Nowakowski served as the inaugural Chair of ASCO's Academic Research Committee. He has been a staunch supporter of interprofessional education (IPE) in the schools and colleges of optometry and a vigilant advocate for advancing optometric research. Dr. Nowakowski dedicated his career to optometric education, joining the UABSO faculty as Chief of the Low Vision Rehabilitation Service in 1975 and subsequently holding the posts of Director of the Ocular Disease and Low Vision Service, Chief of Staff for UAB Eye Care, and Interim Dean and Dean of the School of Optometry. His national accomplishments include his work as a member of the Steering Committee and Education Subcommittee for the National Eye Institute's eyeGENE project, and he has made lasting contributions to the medical literature as the author of numerous scientific articles and the textbook *Primary Low Vision Care*.

At the meeting, the Board approved:

• a revised "Outcomes Assessment Resource Guide for Schools and Colleges of Optometry," which was developed by ASCO's Academic Affairs Committee and spearheaded by committee member Dr. Elizabeth Steele

• Dr. Yi Pang, Assistant Dean for Research and Associate Professor, Illinois College of Optometry, as the first recipient of the ASCO Rising Star Award

• Dr. Barbara Fink, Associate Professor of Optometry and Vision Science and Chair of the Diversity Enhancement Committee, The Ohio State University College of Optometry, as the recipient of the Dr. Jack Bennett Award for Innovation in Optometric Education.

Also at the meeting:

• The Board passed a motion to develop a website statement making clear that ASCO does not rank or endorse any ranking of the accredited schools and colleges of optometry in the 50 states, Puerto Rico or Canada, nor does it provide information or participate in any way with any entity that puts forth such rankings.

• Dr. Debbie Godfrey, Principal, Pulse Point Group, updated the Board on new and expanded career marketing efforts pertaining to ASCO's multiyear applicant development campaign, including the release of a new video, "Be a Doctor of Optometry: Put Your Future in Focus." The video is available on the Association's newly launched YouTube channel as well as on its website.

• ASCO President Dr. Jennifer Smythe delivered a progress report covering several ASCO initiatives, including those related to her top President's Priority of IPE and collaborative practice.

• Mark Risher, Manager of Eye Care Strategic Initiatives for Allergan, spoke about the company's education initiatives.