

New England College of Optometry (NECO) recently welcomed eight students into the 2017 Summer Research Training Program. Funded by a a research training grant from the National Eye Institute of the National Institutes of Health, T35, the program runs from May through August 2017.

The Summer Research Program is led by director Dr. Jane Gwiazda and designed for first year optometry students from NECO, as well as other optometric institutions across the nation. It is intended to encourage optometry students to pursue careers that include research. The 2017 program welcomes Jacqueline Albert from SCO-Ketchum and Lucia Yang from SCCO as well as NECO students Alex Hentschel, Zhongliang Ju, Enian Kallamata, Spencer Traxler, Gabriella Velonias, and Hannah Yoon.
During the summer research training program, students gained research experience in the laboratory from a mentor and spent a minimum of 320 hours doing research. Weekly seminars are held to introduce the students to all aspects of research. This year's topics include:

- Dr. Chris Taylor, NECO: *Experimental Design and Statistical Analysis*
- Dr. Arthur Lage: *Animal Care*
- Dr. Paul White: *IRB*
- Dr. John Basl, Northeastern University: *Ethical Conduct of Science*
- Dr. James Akula, Children's Hospital, Boston: *Small-eyed Myopia: A Peculiar Consequence of Retinopathy of Prematurity*
- Dr. Srinivas Pundlik, Schepens Eye Research Institute, Mass Eye and Ear: *A Wearable Collision Warning Device for the Blind and Visually Impaired*
- Dr. Jae-Hyun Jung, Schepens Eye Research Institute, Mass Eye and Ear: *Prism Field Expansion/Visual Prostheses*
- Dr. Susana Marcos, Instituto de Optica, Madrid: *Photo-activated Techniques in Eye Treatments*

At the end of the program, the T35 students will present their findings to the other trainees and mentors and any other interested faculty and students.

By participating in the T35 research program, these accomplished OD students experience hands-on research early in their academic careers, which leads many of them to obtain both an OD and MS degree in their four years at NECO. This early research exposure complements their clinical and didactic training, and helps to ensure that they will provide evidence-based eye care in the future.