Vibrant Seattle was the backdrop to the fall meeting of the Board of Directors of the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO). During the Oct. 22 meeting, as a first step in implementing the President’s Priorities set by Dr. Jennifer Smythe, members of the Board participated in a mini-workshop on best practices in interprofessional education (IPE) and collaborative practice. (See “Board Members Participate in IPE Workshop.”)

Also at the meeting, the Board approved:

• the development of an online ASCO Residents Registry

• the application from the Centro Escolar University College of Optometry in Manila, Philippines, to become an ASCO Affiliate Member. (See “ASCO Welcomes New Affiliate Member.”)

• a new “ASCO Awards Program” for 2014, including the establishment of a “Rising Star Award” to recognize a faculty member or administrator with less than 10 years of service who has made noteworthy contributions to ASCO or optometric education.

The Board received updates on:

• ASCO initiatives designed to increase and further develop a diverse and highly qualified optometry school applicant pool, including the production of a new video, the launch of a search engine optimization program, an undergraduate science student e-mail campaign, and an online Virtual Optometry Fair (See “ASCO Holds First Virtual Optometry Fair.”)

• the success of the 2013 Summer Institute for Faculty Development and Future Faculty programs

• the challenges surrounding optometric research funding for the National Eye Institute and U.S. Department of Defense given the current political climate

• the latest news from corporate contributors Essilor (www.essilor.com) and Abbott Medical Optics (www.abbottmedicaloptics.com) and how the developments could benefit optometric education.

In addition, Dr. Aurora Denial, Editor of ASCO’s journal Optometric Education, presented the 2013 Dr. Lester Janoff Award for Writing Excellence. (See “Winners of 2013 Dr. Lester Janoff Award for Writing Excellence Announced.”) Prior to adjourning the meeting, Dr. Linda Casser, who has been on the Board of Directors for five years, was presented with a special gift as a thank-you for her years of
service and dedication to optometric education.

The Board of Directors will meet next in March 2014 on Amelia Island in Fernandina Beach, Fla.