



The Board of Trustees of the American Optometric Association (AOA) and the Board of Directors the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) met last month in California to discuss critical issues facing both organizations. Led by ASCO President David Damari and AOA President Christopher Quinn, the meeting took place on Friday, April 13, 2018.

The agenda included a dialogue about how to cooperatively meet the need for broad-reaching marketing for the profession. Dr. Lewis Reich, President of SCO and Chairman of ASCO's Applicant Pool Task Force, and Dr. Robert Layman from the AOA Board, led a discussion about the recent decrease in student applications to optometry schools and colleges. Bob Bailey and Alex Angstrom from Truth Collective, a public relations firm engaged by ASCO, discussed plans for a completely revised approach to prospective student outreach, and Dr. Andrea Thau and Deirdre Middleton from AOA's staff shared recent results and plans for the *Think About Your Eyes* campaign.

Drs. William Reynolds and David Damari led a discussion about the obstacles and opportunities posed by the invention and use of new technologies in patient care. The group agreed that a research-based approach is needed to focus the use of new technologies on better patient outcomes.

The Boards also discussed how to address the education and training needs of both optometry students and current practitioners in a profession with an expanding scope of practice. A task force will be appointed with representatives from both associations to work on studying the questions associated with the issue and to develop a proposed course of action.

Other topics on the meeting agenda included the accreditation process for optometric continuing education, and the value of collaboration and education that takes place at joint meetings.

This year's joint meeting was the fourth that has happened in recent years. Typically, the Boards hold

joint meetings every other year, with on-going dialogue happening in-between through joint meetings of Executive Committees, special joint task forces, joint staff discussions and regular meetings of the Inter-Organization Communication and Cooperation Committee of the Optometry Profession (IOCCC).