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A Message from ASCO President Dr. David Damari

A member of the faculty here at Michigan College of Optometry recently asked me about my new gig as President of our great association. “So, is this one of those figurehead positions or does the ASCO presidency involve some real work?” he wondered. His sincere question took me a bit by surprise, I admit, but only because my perspective on ASCO has changed substantially in my four years as a member of the Board of Directors. Thinking back on my time as faculty at an ASCO institution, I better understood the context for the perceptions about us that may have prompted his question.

For many in optometric education, our association is largely seen as a means for all the Deans and Presidents to get together, or for the chief academic officers and clinic directors to meet, or as the organization that sponsors our common application service, OptomCAS. Some faculty know us by having attended the Summer Institute for Faculty Development in Saint Louis, or through one of our Special Interest Groups. Your role within your institution probably colors, and limits, your perception of what ASCO is and does. Given that all these committees, SIGs, and other groups meet on their own and feel self-contained, how difficult can it be to run ASCO, either as the Executive Director or as the chief elected officer?

Well, as it turns out, there is a lot of work done at ASCO. Not only do meetings for the groups above have to be set up and managed, but new projects have been undertaken. We must do better at developing future leaders in optometric education. We are working with the American Academy of Optometry to discuss how some Doctors of Optometry can demonstrate advanced competency in a specific area of optometric patient care. Finally, there is strong consensus that the major concern for optometric education, and for our entire profession, today is the decline in high quality applicants. If we cannot draw bright, talented women and men into our schools and colleges, we will not be able to graduate bright talented optometrists who have been able to complete rigorous clinical programs, pass the profession’s national board examination, and become excellent healthcare professionals and life-long learners. If you want to read more about all of these objectives, and more, I encourage you to look at our new vision, mission, and key organizational objectives.

So, you bet there is real work involved. Important work. But although I am doing some of that work, many more people in our volunteer structure and on the ASCO staff are working even harder to get us where we need to be. I think that every one of us who volunteers for ASCO would tell you we love it for two reasons: because we are passionate about developing the future of optometry and because we get to work with amazing people who feel the same way. Join us. Find something ASCO is doing you like, join in, and make your mark on optometry’s future.
Applicant, Entering Class, Post-Graduate Data Available Online

ASCO’s “Profile of Applicants to OD Degree Programs for Fall 2017 Entering Class” is now available on the Association’s website. This report lists the numbers of male and female applicants, the numbers of applicants who were in-state, out-of-state or from a foreign country, applicants’ average GPA and average Optometry Admission Test score, as well as other data.

“Profile of the 2017 Optometry Entering Class” provides similar information and can be accessed by clicking here. Also available at the ASCO website are two reports on graduate (non-OD) and other programs for academic year 2017-2018.

Questions about any of these reports should be e-mailed to Joanne Zuckerman, MSEd, ASCO’s Manager of Data Services and Special Projects.
ASCO Board of Directors Meets at AAO Conference, Chicago

The ASCO Board of Directors held a full-day meeting on Tuesday, October 10th in Chicago, one day before the start of the American Academy of Optometry’s Academy 2017 Conference. The meeting was led by ASCO President David Damari, Dean of Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University.

The dean or president (or voting representative) from each of ASCO’s 23 active member institutions was present for the meeting. Discussed were important issues such as:

- Approval of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between ASCO and the American Academy of Optometry (AAO) committing both organizations to working collaboratively to develop and administer sub-specializations within optometry;
- On-going discussions with NBEO on pass rate reporting;
- Status of negotiations with ARBO about governance of the COPE continuing education accreditation program;
- ASCO’s support of DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) by signing onto a letter sent to Congressional leadership in both houses from a coalition of 40 different health care associations;
- The need for local outreach to regional VA administrators in support of continuing optometry services and student training;
- Approval to become a party to a petition to the Florida Board of Optometry to address licensure challenges for students graduating in 2018;
- Reviewing a change in strategy around ASCO’s efforts to build a stronger applicant pool and to increase diversity among optometry students;
- Congress’ progress on the FY2018 appropriations process and its impact on NIH and DOD research funding for vision science (presentation by James Jorkasky of NAEVR/AEVR);
- Withdrawal of ASCO’s 2004 policy on Residency Affiliations Based on Geographic Proximity;
- Possible collaboration among ASCO members around disaster/emergency response;
- Approval of a clean audit for FY17;
- Approval of Advanced-Level Competencies and Learning Objectives in Visual Impairment and Low Vision Rehabilitation, developed by ASCO’s Low Vision Special Interest Group;
- Impending RFP for investment advisor services;
- Exploration of what it would take to produce an annual report on the “State of Optometric Education;”
- Discussion on recently-proposed changes to ACOE policies; and
- Approval of a MOU between ASCO and Special Olympics International to improve the health status of Special Olympics athletes.

Two of ASCO’s corporate contributors (Aerie Pharmaceuticals and Reichert Technologies) gave presentations to the Board on their companies’ latest products/services and their goals for working with ASCO members.

The Board also previewed three new ASCO-produced videos intended (1) to promote optometry as an attractive career choice; (2) to enumerate and endorse the benefits of interprofessional education and collaborative care; and (3) to extol the importance of academic research to the profession, thereby encouraging optometry graduates to pursue residencies and optometry residents to pursue careers in academia.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be held in April 13 – 14, 2018 in Santa Barbara, California. One day will be an ASCO-only Board of Directors meeting; the other will be a joint Board meeting between the ASCO Board and the Board of Trustees of the American Optometric Association.
ASCO Produces Three New Videos – Research in Academic Optometry, InterProfessional Education and Collaborative Practice, and Why I Chose the Field of Optometry

Videos available on ASCO’s YouTube Channel

The Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) announces three new videos, ready for viewing and sharing on its YouTube Channel.

Learn about Research in Academic Optometry from Doctors of Optometry who discuss how research produces clinical science results that can be used in practice, what it’s like being a faculty member or graduate student moving the profession forward through research, and more.

InterProfessional Education and Collaborative Practice presents interviews with a student and faculty members discussing the importance of learning with, about and from students from other health professions, and the benefits to patients of collaborative care.

Why I Chose the Field of Optometry highlights several optometric students and a faculty member. Each discusses why they chose to attend optometry school and the influences behind their decision such as work/life balance, making a difference in someone’s life, research and technology, wanting to be in the health care field, and the importance of being happy in your career.

All three videos were filmed in June during the American Optometric Association’s Optometry’s Meeting in Washington, DC.
ASCO/AAO Session for Students Held in Chicago

ASCO’s Academic Affairs Committee (AAC), chaired by Dr. Melissa Trego, Dean at Salus Pennsylvania College of Optometry, partnered with the American Academy of Optometry for a student-centered session at the recently held 2017 Chicago Academy meeting. Designed for students interested in research career paths in academia or industry, the session “ASCO-AAO Optometry and Graduate Student Session: Exploring Academic and Research Career Options,” featured four educator/clinician scientists who shared highlights from their career path stories in hopes of encouraging students (already are in or considering research degree programs) and sharing with them helpful guidance about research in optometry/vision science and career paths open to them in academic optometry and the vision care industry.

Panelists included session moderator and presenter, Dr. Kelly Nichols, Dean at UABSO; Dr. Mark Bullimore, Dean of SCCOMBKU; Dr. Barbara Caffery, President Elect of the AAO Board of Directors and Professor, University of Waterloo School of Optometry; and Dr. Jeff Walline, Associate Dean for Research, OSU. Opening remarks were given by Dr. David Damari, ASCO President and Dean of MCO. Answers to key questions, including “what can an extra degree do for me” and “how can a clinician get interested in research, and if they do, is it ever too late to go back to school?” were answered by the panelists. The new ASCO research in optometry video [link here] started off the session.

“In my opinion, no one wakes up one day and thinks, I am going to do research in Vision Science. Interest in optometric-based research occurs through exposure and good mentors that have passion for what they do,” said Dr. Kelly Nichols, session moderator. “Curious minds that love the idea of knowledge creation and being on the forefront of new ideas are ready for the challenge of academic optometry—that moment of realization that this is for me can come while in optometry or after years of practice. My advice—just run with it when it happens and see where it leads.”

An audio-recording of the session will be posted to the ASCO website soon. The AAC, as per their current yearly charge, plans to discuss more efforts and venues at which to reach out to students interested in academic and research opportunities.
Get Involved in the ASCO’s Inspiring Future ODs Program

ASCO’s Inspiring Future ODs program is an educational effort that encourages Doctors of Optometry and current optometry students to speak to prospective students and community members about optometry as a rewarding future career. Doctors of Optometry are the profession’s best advocates according to ASCO surveys.

ASCO is pleased to offer free materials that will help start the conversation in your office or your community. More information can be found on the Inspiring Future ODs website or by contacting Paige Pence, Director of Student and Residency Affairs.
Optometry Virtual Fair Held on October 4

ASCO sponsored its ninth Optometry Virtual Fair on October 4. Twenty-two schools and colleges participated in the Fair. InterAmerican University of Puerto Rico School of Optometry was not able to participate because of Hurricane Maria. The Fair had 526 prospective students who registered with 266 participating in a “chat” with school and college representatives.

The Fair is promoted along with the profession of optometry through a major email campaign to prospective students, in addition to pre-optometry clubs and health professions advisors. It provides a convenient platform to ask questions about the profession, the OptomCAS application, and school-specific requirements.

The next virtual fair will be held on June 12, 2018. For questions or more information, please contact Paige Pence, Director of Student and Residency Affairs at ppence@opted.org.
**ORMatch is Now Open**

ASCO’s Optometry Residency Match (ORMatch) opened for applications on Oct. 4. ORMatch, facilitated by National Matching Services Inc., is an application service and match that places applicants into optometry residency training positions based on a mutual ranking algorithm.

For 2018, 238 residency sites with 446 available positions are participating. The match results will be released to applicants and programs on March 12.

Visit the [ORMatch](#) website or e-mail [Paige Pence](#), ASCO’s Director of Student and Residency Affairs, for more information.
Profession Leaders Focus on the Future of Optometry

Representatives from the five national organizations representing optometry recently called for an upcoming summit on the future of the profession.

Meeting in St. Louis in early September, these representatives from the American Academy of Optometry (AAO), the American Optometric Association (AOA), the Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry (ARBO), the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO), and the National Board of Examiners in Optometry (NBEO) discussed a number of issues, including:

- The challenges associated with the advent of “super boards,” the effort by at least 6 states to combine their various health profession regulatory boards;
- Emerging proposals to restructure the veterans’ health care system being developed by VA officials and Members of Congress, which would impact the delivery of eye health and vision care;
- Approval by both the AAO and ASCO boards of directors of a plan to establish sub-specializations in optometry;
- The latest statistics about applicants to optometry schools and colleges;
- Accreditation of optometric continuing education;
- Review of AOA’s Position Statement Regarding Eye and Vision Telehealth Services; and
- Organizational planning for an upcoming summit on the future of the profession.

The group, officially known as the Inter-Organizational Communication and Cooperation Committee (IOCCC), consisted of:

- ASCO: President David Damari; Past President Karla Zadnik; Executive Director Dawn Mancuso.
- AAO: President-Elect Barbara Caffery; Board member Peter Kollbaum. (Executive Director Lois Schoenbrun was not able to be present due to extreme weather conditions in Florida.)
- AOA: Board member Robert Layman; Board member James DeVleming; Associate Executive Director Renee Brauns.
- ARBO: Vice President James Campbell; Board member Coby Ramsey; Executive Director Lisa Fennell.
- NBEO: President Jill Martinson-Redekkopp; Vice President Elizabeth Hoppe; Interim Executive Director Jill Bryant.

The IOCCC meets once or twice a year, providing a forum for the leadership of these five organizations to discuss strategic issues affecting the entire profession.

The next IOCCC meeting will be held in February, 2018, in Charlotte, North Carolina at the ARBO and NBEO headquarters.
Special Optometric Education Journal Issue on Diversity and Cultural Competence Available

ASCO’s special Journal issue on Diversity and Cultural and Linguistic Competence is available now at http://journal.opted.org/. The issue features two peer-reviewed articles: Cognitive Strategies to Improve Patient Care in Cross-Cultural Settings and Developing Military Cultural Competency to Better Serve Those Who Have Served Us, two special reports: The Path to Cultural Competence in Optometric Education and Practice: A Timeline to Multicultural Clinical Excellence and Diversity in our Colleges and Schools of Optometry and other insightful “Educator’s Podium” pieces. The guest editor for the issue, Dr. Gary Chu, of the New England College of Optometry and former chair of the ASCO Cultural Competency Curriculum Guidelines Subcommittee, also authored a guest editorial: Diversity, Inclusion, Cultural and Linguistic Competence: Do We Have a Strategy?

The timely issue examines ASCO’s and optometry’s commitment to diversity and cultural and linguistic competence to date and asserts that making an impact in these areas requires further efforts and an ongoing profession-wide commitment. Dr. Chu notes “ASCO has made great strides in moving the needle in the area of diversity and cultural competency. This journal is a reflection of what we have accomplished. However, there is much more to do. I hope this theme issue will help the reader pause, reflect, and act so we can move the needle further!”

ASCO and its member institutions have embraced diversity and cultural and linguistic competence in optometric education through the implementation of a multi-year, multi-stage project funded by Walmart that focuses primarily on the implementation of the ASCO Guidelines for Culturally Competent Eye and Vision Care at the 23 schools and colleges of optometry. The Guidelines are available on the ASCO website at https://optometriceducation.org/files/Guidelines_CulturallyCompetentEyeAndVisionCare.pdf.
The National Board of Examiners in Optometry (NBEO) announces upcoming changes to the Part III Clinical Skills Examination (CSE) beginning August 1, 2018

The National Board of Examiners in Optometry will make changes to its Part III Clinical Skills Examination (CSE), effective August 1, 2018. The examination will include the following additions:

- Clinical Decision Making
- Cranial Nerve Assessment
- Amsler Grid Testing
- Undilated 90D Exam

Also, the Injections Skills Examination will only be offered as a stand-alone examination, also effective August 1, 2018. The NBEO will work closely with candidates who wish to take the Part III CSE and the Injections Skills Examination in a single visit to Charlotte, NC.

To ensure the most up-to-date, comprehensive, contemporary optometric examinations are used by the profession, NBEO constantly reviews content, examination components, and clinical skills as part of its ongoing pledge to public protection and the profession of optometry. This review involves discussions with a wide range of individuals, optometric organizations, and stakeholders.

“We believe these changes are appropriate,” said Jill Martinson-Redekopp, OD, NBEO President. “After consultation with ARBO, ASCO, and their individual members, it became apparent that this was the ideal opportunity to contemporize the 2018-2019 Part III CSE exam with these updates.”

More information will be available on the NBEO website at [www.optometry.org](http://www.optometry.org) after January 1, 2018.
CooperVision

CooperVision Unveils ECP Viewpoints for Eye Care Professionals

As an extension of its partnership with eye care professionals to share valuable insights and information across the profession, CooperVision, Inc. has introduced ECP Viewpoints. This one-stop resource is accessible from CooperVision’s practitioner homepage (www.CooperVision.com/practitioner/ecp-viewpoints), and features original content including peer-written articles, legislative updates, and news and information from CooperVision’s Professional Affairs team.

ECP Viewpoints includes focus areas such as: “For Your Practice,” featuring articles written by eye care professionals about how practices are adapting to changes in patient behavior and the marketplace; “From the Lane,” which enables practitioners to share insights and practical experiences for building a successful contact lens practice; and “Best Practices,” containing updates from the program’s current and past honorees. Other sections include “Legislative Advocacy,” “Product Spotlight,” and “Optometry Students & Educators.”

“To keep our finger on the pulse of optometry and engage with our customers in meaningful ways, we partner with eye care professionals every day,” said Michele Andrews, OD, Senior Director of Professional and Academic Affairs, North America, CooperVision. “We’re uncovering insights about common topics of interest among practitioners, and also finding success stories—eye care professionals who have knowledge and experience to share. ECP Viewpoints is an opportunity for these insights to be cast more broadly, enabling more peer-to-peer information sharing across the profession.”

Content will be updated regularly, as well as aggregated into a monthly email newsletter. To read ECP Viewpoints, visit www.CooperVision.com/practitioner/ecp-viewpoints.

New CooperVision Study Shows Considerable Opportunities to Educate U.S. Consumers on Digital Eye Health

More than 1,000 Americans Weigh In on Digital Eye Fatigue, Device Use and More; Research Reveals New Ways for ECPs to Engage Patients on Critical Topics

A new study commissioned by CooperVision, Inc. and announced at Vision Expo West reveals that while the explosive use of digital device screens may pose vision challenges, only a fraction of United States eye care professionals (ECP) are talking about these issues.

Only six percent of U.S. consumers reported that they had spoken with an ECP regarding concerns about time using screens. However, 64% of contact lens wearers and 60% of glasses wearers reported they would be very interested or somewhat interested in exploring ways to reduce eye strain with their ECP.

“It’s clear that many people entering an eye care practice want to talk about their digital device usage with their eye care professional, even though such conversations are rarely being held,” said Michele Andrews, OD, Senior Director of Professional and Academic Affairs, North America, CooperVision. “With the growing adoption of groundbreaking products such as Biofinity Energys™ contact lenses—which recently celebrated their one-year anniversary in the U.S.—ECPs have new opportunities to engage in this discussion, providing even better care and welcome guidance in a digitally-dominated world.”

The study also cast light on terms used by consumers to describe how their eyes feel after spending long periods of time staring at digital screens—words and phrases that ECPs may employ to spark a conversation. These included tired (60%), dry (18%), blurry (17%), and strained (9%). To a lesser extent, words included fatigued, cloudy, scratchy, heavy, burning, and irritated. With 57 separate words or phrases reported in total, this points to a broad group of indicators, dependent on each person.

Among all surveyed adults, 16% report being concerned about the amount of time spent looking at screens in an average day. That jumps to 25% among contact lens wearers.
A portion of consumers are practicing good habits when their eyes felt fatigued from screen use, including taking a break for a few minutes (74%), closing their eyes for a few minutes (48%), and looking away for a few seconds (40%).

“interestingly, millennials (18-34) were more likely than older respondents to behave like this, perhaps from being digital natives,” said Andrews. “there’s still room for to grow these good habits among people of all ages, through regular advice and reminders from ECPs.”

When it comes to overall health, most consumers don’t think of their eyes first. 57% try to eat healthy, and 40% report exercising at least once per week, yet only 10% say they exercise their eyes regularly.

“As much as we rely on our eyes as the primary input device for digital screens, we have a long way to go in helping consumers understand the importance of eye health,” noted Andrews. “When 24% of the population say they actively research and maintain knowledge of how to live a healthy lifestyle, yet only 9% do the same to keep their eyes healthy, it speaks to significant opportunity. ECPs can take that leadership role, and based on what the data tells us, consumers are eager to listen.”

Biofinity Energys™ with Digital Zone Optics™ lens design is the first contact lens specifically created for digital lifestyles. These pioneering contact lenses are engineered from the ground up, combining breakthrough optical properties with an advanced moisture-retaining polymer material. Approximately 14,000 optometry practices across North America are now prescribing the patent-pending lenses.

The CooperVision-funded study was conducted among 1,129 U.S. adults (18+) from August 22-23, 2017 by YouGov Plc. All figures have been weighted except for consumer-supplied phrases relating to eye fatigue.

LensFerry Now Offers EHR Integration; Automation Drives Practice Revenue

System Integration Allows Patients to Order Contact Lenses from ECPs Anytime and Anywhere; Enables Practices to Increase Revenue and Save Staff Time

The digital age has fundamentally changed the marketplace with US online contact lens sales totaling almost $700M. Giving patients a seamless way to buy lenses from their doctor has become more important than ever. Simplifying patient contact lens ordering and empowering practices to retain more contact lens sales, EyeCare Prime® announced today that its LensFerry solution now integrates with electronic health record (EHR) systems utilized by eye care practitioners.

LensFerry allows wearers to order their prescribed contact lenses from anywhere at anytime, including text-to-order, subscriptions, an online practice portal, and other selling tools. The EHR integration enables contact lens prescription and ordering information to automatically sync between systems, streamlining the ordering process for both patients and practices.

“The new data sync functionality saves staff a significant amount of time, making LensFerry easier to use than ever before,” said Mark Lindsey, Global General Manager, EyeCare Prime. “LensFerry provides practices with automatic multi-channel selling capabilities so practices can drive lens sales even when their store isn’t open for business. Patients can order their contact lenses directly from their eye care practice with just a few clicks—any time of day, any day of the week—and the lenses are delivered right to their homes.”

With LensFerry, patients can quickly and conveniently order replacement contact lenses from any major manufacturer, and the prescribing practice receives the sales revenue as if the lenses had been ordered in-office. Patients are able to purchase lenses 24/7 by texting “order” or visiting their doctor’s custom-branded portal. The integration between LensFerry and practice management systems enables the patient’s prescription information to automatically pre-populate, making the checkout process simpler than many other retailers. Patients can also receive intelligent reminders based on purchases at the time of their exam including a “Win Back” campaign targeting patients who leave the office without purchasing anything. Subscriptions are also available for patients who want to pay monthly for their lenses, and receive automatic deliveries directly to their homes.

“In the current retail landscape, it is typical for many consumers to feel the need to shop around,” said Lindsey. “With those patients, there is a real opportunity to show them that the most convenient and reliable place from which to buy contact lenses is from their eye care practitioners. We have partnered with eye care practices to offer the tools necessary to make that possible. LensFerry enables practices to meet the needs of today’s anytime/anywhere patients by allowing them to purchase
when, where and how they choose.”

For more information, visit eyecareprime.com.
Essilor

Essilor of America Unveils Three Innovative Lens Technologies with the Ultimate Lens Package

Three new products that together will deliver Essilor’s ultimate in vision, clarity and protection

Essilor of America announces the availability of three new products -- Varilux® X Series™, Crizal Sapphire® 360o UV and Eyezen™+ 0 lenses – paired with Transitions® Signature® VII to create the Ultimate Lens Package – a combination of Essilor’s newest and most innovative lens technologies and Transitions Signature VII, designed to meet each eyeglass wearer’s visual needs with our ultimate in vision, clarity and protection in a single lens. The Ultimate Lens Package includes Eyezen+, Crizal Sapphire 360o UV and Transitions Signature VII for single vision patients, and Varilux X Series, Crizal Sapphire 360o UV and Transitions Signature VII for presbyopic patients.

“Essilor’s mission is improving lives by improving sight, and helping our customers help their patients see better is the key motivation behind everything we do,” says Eric Leonard, President, Essilor of America. “Patient needs are at the center of how we innovate. Examining their unique challenges and lifestyles led us to develop the Ultimate Lens Package, a revolutionary vision solution to meet patient needs today and tomorrow.”

Product Innovation Inspired by Patients

Each of these innovative new lenses is available separately so independent eyecare professionals (ECPs) can customize the solution that best meets their patients’ needs. To help patients achieve their best vision, the products are designed to be dispensed as a complete single-lens solution so wearers can experience how all the components of the lens work together to improve their vision.

Varilux X Series

In today’s modern world, presbyopes are shifting their focus between near and intermediate objects more than ever. Yet a survey of progressive lens wearers found that approximately 50 percent are not completely satisfied with visual comfort at arm’s reach, even with the most premium progressive lens designs. Varilux X Series lenses feature the revolutionary new Xtend™ Technology, which allows the wearer to see multiple distances through a single point in the lens, extending wearers’ vision within arm’s reach, so wearers no longer have to search for “just the right spot” to see sharply at any distance.

Additionally, Varilux X Series lenses include all the technologies that made its predecessor, Varilux® S Series™, so successful: Nanoptix™ Technology to help reduce the “off balance” feeling often experienced by progressive lens wearers; Synchroneyes™ Technology for smoother transitions between visual distances; and W.A.V.E. (Wavefront Advanced Vision Enhancement™) Technology 2™ for sharper vision even in low light.

Varilux X Series lenses are the result of an innovative new approach, immersing patients in research, testing and measurement from start to finish. More than five years of research and 19 wearer studies with over 2,700 wearers across the world have led to a technology so revolutionary, there are 15 new patents pending.

Crizal Sapphire 360o UV

Patients are increasingly exposed to multiple light sources at all angles, which causes discomfort. In fact, 87 percent of wearers try to combat reflections by moving their head, changing posture, or taking off their glasses.

Crizal Sapphire 360o UV No-Glare Lenses feature the new Multi-Angular Technology™ to reduce reflections from any angle of light for less distracting glare, better aesthetics and safer nighttime driving. Crizal Sapphire 360° UV No-Glare lenses offer best-in-class transparency and clarity, as well as superior durability and cleanability. The UV protection is also improved with an increased E-SPF® index3 to E-SPF®35, providing optimal UV protection in a clear lens.

Eyezen+

Technology overload is a fact of life at every age. The numbers tell the story: 90 percent of adults are at risk for digital eye strain4; 73 percent of adults are unaware of the dangers of Harmful Blue Light5; and 77 percent of parents report being concerned about the impact of devices on children’s eyes6.

The new Eyezen+ 0 design, along with Eyezen+ lens designs 1, 2 and 3, provide sharp, comfortable vision and a complete
range of accommodative relief options for every single vision age group. All Eyezen+ lenses reduce exposure to Harmful Blue Light with Essilor’s Smart Blue Filter™, a clear feature which reduces exposure to Harmful Blue Light by at least 20 percent.

Additionally, all Eyezen+ designs have W.A.V.E. (Wavefront Advanced Vision Enhancement™) Technology to provide sharper vision than traditional single vision lenses. Eyezen+ lenses are only available through independent ECPs.

**Transitions Signature VII**

Transitions Adaptive Lenses seamlessly adapt to changing light. Transitions Signature VII lenses with Chromea7™ technology offer the most balanced darkness and clarity, and have the fastest fade-back speed of any Transitions lens. They provide 100 percent UV protection and reduce exposure to Harmful Blue Light both indoors and outdoors.

**A Simplified Way to Provide the Best Vision for Patients**

When choosing eyeglasses, consumers think a lot about frames but give little thought, if any, to lenses. Patients often don’t understand the benefits of premium technologies, or that lens quality can affect their vision. This means it is up to independent ECPs — the most trusted source for consumer information — to be armed with the knowledge and products to guide patients to their best vision. The Ultimate Lens Package is designed to do just that. “When it comes to innovation, Essilor leads the way in the ophthalmic lens category and today we are taking another step forward,” says Sherianne James, Senior Vice President of Marketing for Essilor of America. “Through a new consumer-focused approach, we are offering a combination of our best technologies to give both single vision and presbyopic patients a complementary suite of products designed to work together. The Ultimate Lens Package simplifies dispensing for independent ECPs to make it easy for their patients to understand and take action.”

Driving Patients to Independent ECP Practices Educating consumers is a key part of the strategy to bring the Ultimate Lens Package to market. As a result, Essilor of America has a robust marketing plan in place to support the Ultimate Lens Package, including national TV and digital advertising, social media, targeted online videos and support on EssilorUSA.com.

To increase excitement among consumers and drive them to visit their independent ECP, Essilor of America has created the Ultimate Offer. Consumers can purchase an Ultimate Lens Package and get a second pair of qualifying lenses that is of equal or lesser value at no cost through independent ECPs who enroll in the offer. The offer applies to both the progressive and single vision Ultimate Lens Packages:

- **Ultimate Lens Package progressive**: Purchase a pair of lenses that includes Varilux X Series with Crizal Sapphire 360° UV and Transitions Signature VII and get a second pair of lenses of equal of lesser value that must be one or a combination of the following Essilor products only – Any Varilux, Crizal, Transitions, Eyezen+, Xperio UV™ or, single vision design lenses (single vision design must have at least one of the following: Crizal, Transitions or Xperio UV).

- **Ultimate Lens Package single vision**: Purchase a pair of lenses that includes Eyezen+ with Crizal Sapphire 360° UV and Transitions Signature VII and get a second pair of lenses of equal of lesser value that must be one or a combination of the following Essilor products only – Any Crizal, Transitions, Eyezen+, Xperio UV, or, single vision design lenses (single vision design must have at least one of the following: Crizal, Transitions or Xperio UV).

The Ultimate Offer is open to all independent ECPs who meet the eligibility requirements. Enrollment for ECPs is July 13 through December 30, 2017, and the consumer offer period is September 12 through December 29, 2017.

For more information on the Ultimate Lens Package and the technologies within, visit EssilorUltimateLens.com.
Haag-Streit

The Haag-Streit Fundus Module 300 Brings Fundus Imagery into Education Easily and Efficiently

Hands-on fundus imagery education is now easier than ever

Implement a more hands-on version of fundus imagery education at your university. The Haag-Streit Fundus Module 300 slit lamp attachment is an innovative fundus camera that attaches directly to Haag-Streit slit lamps for full, stable integration with the examination process. With the Fundus Module 300, you get the superior optics and stability you’d expect from a standalone fundus camera, but with the value you’d expect from a handheld fundus camera.

“Fundus imagery is very important to the education of our future ophthalmologists and optometrists, but it’s a division of our field that isn’t always represented as well as it could be, because in the past it hasn’t been that easy to demonstrate,” says Pascal Gartmann, Sales and Marketing Director of the General Diagnostic Division at Haag-Streit USA. “The Fundus Module 300 works seamlessly with Haag-Streit slit lamps, and allows integration of non-mydriatic retinal imaging as part of the regular slit lamp examination. Its simplicity and compatibility allows for full examination without the need for a separate, stand-alone fundus camera. Just attach it to your slit lamp, and you’re ready to go.”

The Fundus Module 300 is designed to enhance the functionality of Haag-Streit slit lamps, making examinations easier to perform and easier to document and share with students. Mounting the Fundus Module 300 on the slit lamp is simple and effective, allowing users to capture a retinal image in a matter of seconds. The camera is controlled by the Haag-Streit control panel (RM02), and captured images are immediately transferred to Haag-Streit’s EyeSuite software. The Fundus Module 300 is compatible with the BQ 900, BP 900, BI 900 and BM 900 slit lamps, and can be used in combination with the IM 900 or IM 600.

For more information about Haag-Streit or the Fundus Module 300, contact Pascal Gartmann at pgartmann@haag-streit-usa.com or visit hsdriven.com/fundus
Hoya

Our Eyes Weren’t Made for Screens. Hoya Sync III Lenses Are. HOYA Vision Care Launches Sync III, Next Generation of Digital Single Vision Lens Technology

Ally of the Independent eye care professional, HOYA Vision Care announced at Vision Expo West the U.S. launch of Sync III, the next generation of enhanced single vision lenses.

The most common way patients treat Digital Eye Strain today is by rubbing their eyes. This is neither a remedy nor a treatment – SYNC III Lenses are the solution to alleviate Digital Eye Strain symptoms. SYNC III lenses have the distance power for everyday use and a ‘boost zone’ at the bottom of the lens which reduces eye strain during prolonged near activities such as - looking at digital screens. This allows your patients’ eye muscles to relax and focus more easily, helping to relieve eye strain and provide visual comfort.

“There are three key things to know about Sync III,” said Barney Dougher, President of HOYA Vision Care, North America, “First, this is a lens design based on an international study of human behavior. Everything we learned about how people live with their devices is embedded in this design. Second, the power distribution and lens design have been enhanced based on what we learned about this new generation of digital users’ behavior. Closer working distances and position of wear have been taken into consideration for all three boost zones. And third, Sync III is specifically designed for the single vision wearer who spends more than two hours a day on digital devices. Independent ECPs now have a unique option for their teen and millennial patients in the overcommoditized single vision lens space.”

“The most important thing to me as an active practitioner is that HOYA is using their resources to support my practice,” said Dr. Thomas Gosling, owner of a private practice in Colorado and member of HOYA’s advisory panel, he continued, “The research they conducted, implemented learnings, and the Sync III design allows for an enhanced patient experience that differentiates my business.”

Key Findings from the International Focus Group Study

- 85% of participants were on digital devices 8 to 10 hours per day with some as many as 15 hours!
- Participants switched between screens an average of 333 times per hour with 85% of those switches between near devices.
- Currently we advise people to adhere to the 20/20/20 rule. However, we learned taking a “break” does not mean taking a break from screens. For two-thirds of participants, breaks from screens did not last longer than one minute.
- Participants recognized they had symptoms associated with digital eye strain BUT…they did not connect those symptoms with their behavior of digital device use, and most just accepted them as “a fact of life.”

“I have long been an advocate of the previous Sync lens designs for my patients who suffer from accommodative lock up due to digital eye strain,” said Dr. Gosling. “What is most exciting for me, is HOYA has included instructions on how use a simple demonstration to allow patients to relax their eyes through the use of simple tools. Patients get to test drive the lenses and really “feel” the benefits of Sync III before they buy them. It’s easy and provides a “WOW” effect for the patient.”

For more information, staff training and collateral please contact your local HOYA Territory Sales Manager or visit our blog that has new articles on Digital Eye Strain at http://blog.hoyavision.com/eye-care-professionals.
Johnson & Johnson

Johnson & Johnson Vision Acquires Sightbox

Acquisition will help more patients connect with eye care professionals through a member-based contact lens subscription service

Johnson & Johnson Vision today announced that it has acquired Sightbox, Inc., an online, membership-based subscription service for contact lens wearers in the United States. Sightbox helps patients connect with eye care professionals and addresses a growing consumer preference for more convenient access to eye health services and products.

Sightbox services include scheduling a comprehensive, annual eye exam and contact lens evaluation for members, as well as providing them with an annual supply of contact lenses. The company’s growth has been primarily fueled by private pay patients who do not have vision insurance. This model encourages people who may not otherwise do so to visit an eye care professional and enter the category.

“Consumer preferences and digital technologies are accelerating a broad shift to e-commerce across many industries,” said Ashley McEvoy, Company Group Chairman, responsible for the Johnson & Johnson Vision Companies. “We are excited about how Sightbox can potentially fuel category growth by meeting consumers where and how they want, and by helping more contact lens wearers connect with eye care professionals through this concierge-type service.”

While Sightbox will become part of Johnson & Johnson Vision, it will operate as a separate business, leveraging its own unique business model. Sightbox will continue to provide contact lenses from all major manufacturers. The acquisition is complementary to Johnson & Johnson Vision’s strategy to become a broad-based, global leader in eye health. It further enhances the company’s leading eye health portfolio.

Sightbox marks the third acquisition completed this calendar year that expands the offerings of Johnson & Johnson Vision. The first – Abbott Medical Optics, acquired in February – included cataract, refractive and consumer eye care products. TearScience, acquired in September, added medical device technologies that address Meibomian Gland Disease, the leading cause of Dry Eye, to the Johnson & Johnson Vision portfolio.

Johnson & Johnson Vision acquired Sightbox, Inc. through its Vision Care operating company, Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc. Sightbox sales will be reported through the Medical Devices segment, under Vision Care. Financial terms of the transaction have not been disclosed.

Johnson & Johnson Vision Expands Monthly Offering with ACUVUE® VITA® Brand Contact Lenses for ASTIGMATISM

Nearly half of vision-corrected patients has astigmatism in at least one eye and full correction can provide improved visual quality of life

Johnson & Johnson Vision announced the U.S. launch of ACUVUE® VITA® Brand Contact Lenses for ASTIGMATISM, a daily wear, monthly replacement contact lens with BLINK-STABILIZED® Design and HydraMax™ Technology for consistent, clear, stable vision with reliable, exceptional comfort – all month long.

ACUVUE® VITA® Brand for ASTIGMATISM is the newest addition to the ACUVUE® VITA® family. Two-thirds of monthly spherical contact lens wearers report comfort-related issues, yet a majority (73%) do not tell their Eye Care Professional about their comfort issues because many think it is “normal” and some even fear that their doctor might take them out of contact lenses.

Astigmatism is an imperfection in the curvature of the cornea that can cause blurred or distorted vision. Symptoms of
uncorrected astigmatism may include eye strain and headaches, especially after reading or other prolonged visual tasks. Squinting also is a common symptom. Mild to moderate astigmatism can be corrected through eyeglasses, contact lenses or surgery.

Nearly 1 out of every 2 vision corrected patients has astigmatism in at least one eye, and full correction can provide them with improved visual quality of life.2 With the addition of ACUVUE® VITA® for ASTIGMATISM, the ACUVUE® VITA® family now offers parameters for nearly 96% of spherical and astigmatic eyes.

ACUVUE® VITA® for ASTIGMATISM combines two technologies:

- **HydraMax™ Technology** is a non-coated silicone hydrogel formulation balanced to help maximize and maintain hydration throughout the lens for reliable, exceptional comfort – all month long. In a clinical study, more than 7 out of 10 wearers reported that ACUVUE® VITA® for ASTIGMATISM delivers exceptional comfort at weeks 1, 2, 3 and 4.
- **BLINK-STABILIZED® Design** works naturally with the eyelids, helping to keep the lens in the correct position. In a clinical study, 75% of wearers reported crisp, clear, stable vision, even with head and eye movements.

“It is important that when eye care professionals prescribe a monthly contact lens for their astigmatic patients, they can be confident that the lens provides consistent, clear stable vision and exceptional comfort for a full month of wear – not just for the first week or two,” said Cristina Schnider, OD, Director, Global Professional Affairs for Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc.

ACUVUE® VITA® for ASTIGMATISM provides Class I UV protection, blocking approximately 93% of UVA and 99% of UVB rays.

Johnson & Johnson Vision will launch ACUVUE® VITA® for ASTIGMATISM through its operating company, Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc.

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**Johnson & Johnson Vision Completes Acquisition of TearScience**

*Acquisition marks expansion into Dry Eye medical device technology, providing a complementary eye health solution to address important unmet need*

Johnson & Johnson Vision today announced that it has completed its acquisition of TearScience, Inc., a medical device manufacturer dedicated to evaluating meibomian gland health and treating Meibomian Gland Dysfunction (MGD), the leading cause of Dry Eye Disease (Dry Eye). The acquisition is another step in Johnson & Johnson Vision’s strategy to become a broad-based, global leader in eye health and further expands the company’s leading eye health portfolio.

“Dry Eye is too often the culprit of why patients drop out of contact lenses or why they may have a less than optimal outcome from their cataract surgery,” said Ashley McEvoy, Company Group Chairman, responsible for the Johnson & Johnson Vision Companies. “The medical device technologies from TearScience will allow us to address the main underlying cause of Dry Eye, giving us a mechanical solution to a mechanical problem.”

Dry Eye impacts an estimated 340 million people globally, and MGD, a chronic, progressive condition that can range from mild to severe pain, is the leading cause. Patients with MGD may present in an optometrist’s office or at an ophthalmology appointment, so the disease is treated across the eye care community. TearScience technologies allow physicians to evaluate meibomian gland health and treat MGD with a 12-minute in-office treatment.

Johnson & Johnson Vision acquired TearScience, Inc., through its surgical vision operating company, Abbott Medical Optics Inc. Sales will be reported in the Medical Devices segment, under Vision Care. Financial terms of the transaction have not been disclosed.
Keeler

Keeler Americas and MST Expand Product Portfolios
Sister Halma Medical sector companies integrate Accutome product range

Keeler Americas and MST have reorganized to integrate the product range of sister Halma Medical sector company, Accutome. Keeler has taken on the Accutome clinical and diagnostic lines, while MST has absorbed the Accutome surgical line. The move results in two stronger and more focused ophthalmic companies to better serve customers worldwide.

Keeler’s new ‘Accutome by Keeler’ brand offers a full complement of clinical pharmaceuticals and supplies; measuring devices including pachymetry, tonometry, and A-Scan; as well as ultrasound imaging equipment, including the 4-Sight, B-Scan, and UBM. By consolidating these products with Keeler’s established binocular indirects, cryo, slit lamps, tonometers, and other diagnostic equipment, customers will benefit from access to all the eyecare products they require for their patients and practices. The expansion fuels Keeler’s vision to help everyone see happier lives through healthier eyes.

MST will consolidate the Accutome range of surgical tools, into the ‘MST Basics’ brand. This will complement its existing ‘MST’ portfolio of specialty ophthalmic surgical instruments and devices. With ‘MST Basics’, MST expands its reach within ophthalmology, and continues to act as a partner to surgeons by now encompassing all surgical needs. MST will continue to deliver precision manufacturing and the highest levels of innovation, product quality, and customer service while providing great products that people love.

Product information and support for all Accutome products remains available at www.accutome.com or by phone at (800) 979-2020, until further notice.
Luxottica

Luxottica is committed to offering our patients and customers the highest quality vision care solutions. Doing so requires heavy emphasis on the quality of our doctors who play a crucial role in our retail optical practices across North America. With this, we would like to share the following organizational changes to the Eye Care team.

After five years with Luxottica, Guillaume Bonniol is leaving the company to pursue external opportunities. We’d like to thank Guillaume for his contributions over the years.

We are happy to share that Dr. Jason Singh, Luxottica’s Chief Medical Officer, will expand his role and lead the Eye Care team as Chief Medical Officer and Vice President, North America Eye Care. He will focus on OD recruiting, field operations, business analytics, contact lens category management, and practice growth, including doctor marketing and communications.

In his six years with Luxottica, Jason has shown leadership across our businesses including OneSight, Pearle Vision and most recently as Chief Medical Officer within the Eye Care team. He earned his Doctor of Optometry from The Ohio State University College of Optometry. Prior to joining Luxottica, he was on staff at one of the largest ophthalmology groups in the United States and went on to own a private practice for five years.

Please join us in congratulating Jason on his new role while wishing him and his team continual success.
Marco

The New Marco Ultra M Series is an inspiring orchestration of the Ultra Optics pedigree, elegant and intelligent design, progressive engineering, and functional flexibility. Never have more relevant design enhancements been assembled in a single slit lamp series.

- Single element, high-luminance LED
- Multiple color and Cobalt-correction filters
- Patent pending integrated background illuminator
- Imaging System ready
- Extended slit aperture & wider field of view
- Five magnification options
- Fully incorporated transformer and cabling
- Intelligent operator and patient interfaces
- Fit, finish, and design beauty in your practice

Experience the uncompromised quality, control, and reliability of the Ultra M Series- the most contemporary and functionally empowering slit lamp designs ever.

We've reimagined better…and beyond. Truly the next generation of slit lamps.

For all things Ultra: www.MARCO.com | 800.847.5274
National Vision, Inc.

National Vision, Inc. Challenges Optometry Students to Identify Their “Why” Through 2017-2018 Grant Program

Third and Fourth-Year Optometry Students Must Submit Applications by January 31, 2018

National Vision, Inc., one of the nation’s largest optical retailers, is now accepting entries for its 2017-2018 grant program. Inspired by Simon Sinek’s Ted Talk on “Start With Why,” National Vision is asking students to reflect on why they decided to attend optometry school and explain what they believe their personal mission as a future Doctor of Optometry will be for the chance to win a $5,000 grand prize.

To enter, applicants must be a third- or fourth-year optometry student in the United States and write a 500-word essay or create a short video that addresses questions such as:

- Has anyone, or any particular event, inspired you to choose your career path?
- What do you like about the optometry profession and the optical industry?
- How do you envision your “Why” will impact your relationships with patients, team members and other industry professionals?

A flyer with additional information and entry requirement details is available on the Optometry Students section of NationalVision.com.

“Simon Sinek’s ‘Start With Why’ has influenced many conversations at National Vision because it’s a powerful reminder for all of us to stay focused on why we do what we do each day in our professional and personal lives,” said Mauricio Wissinger, Vice President of Professional Services for National Vision. “We are glad to support future optometrists with this grant and hope to inspire them to connect their career paths with their dreams and values at the same time.”

All submissions and questions regarding the program should be sent to Carly.Schenck@nationalvision.com by January 31, 2018. The winners, including two runner-up recipients, will be announced before March 1, 2018.
RevolutionEHR

Kentucky College of Optometry Chooses RevolutionEHR for Electronic Health Record and Practice Management Solution

Kentucky College of Optometry Chooses RevolutionEHR for Students and Staff in the Clinic and Classrooms

Rev360 is pleased to announce its partnership with University of Pikeville, Kentucky College of Optometry (UPIKE KYCO). At the heart of the partnership is Rev360’s flagship software platform RevolutionEHR, the leading cloud-based electronic health record (EHR) and practice management software platform for eye care. UPIKE KYCO will utilize RevolutionEHR in the classroom and clinic to serve the rural Appalachia community.

“The RevolutionEHR cloud-based software is ideal for the classrooms and clinic within Kentucky College of Optometry,” said Cliff Caudill, OD, FAAO, Assistant Dean for Clinical Affairs. “The ongoing training and support, which includes a sandbox environment, provides a flexible and easy solution for both students and clinic staff to learn the software before the clinic is open.” Cindy Braden, VP of Sales added, “We are excited to partner with UPIKE KYCO students and staff and support their vision of providing exceptional and accessible clinical care to the rural communities of Central Kentucky.”
Volk Optical

Volk Optical Releases Next Generation Lens Cases  
Redesign emphasizes form and function

Volk Optical (www.volk.com) has launched a new case design for its full line of diagnostic and therapeutic ophthalmic lenses. The next generation case enhances the durability and look of its classic case design.

Volk’s next generation emphasizes both form and functionality. The sleek modern design has been engineered to withstand 50,000 openings, without hinge breakage. A durable thermoplastic rubber insert cushions the lens, and a magnetic closure holds the case securely shut.

Volk’s Digital Series, BIO, Slit Lamp, Laser, Gonio, Surgical, and Specialty Treatment Lenses will all be available with the new case. For quick identification, the case exteriors are color coordinated by lens family and clearly labeled with the lens name. The cover plate can also be custom engraved with doctor or practice name.

The case’s new molded plastic exterior and interior insert are easy to wipe clean. The addition of nonslip stabilizing feet hold the case steady in place.

The next generation cases are now available. To see Volk’s full line of lenses, visit www.volk.com, phone Volk direct at +1 440-942-6161, or contact your Authorized Volk Distributor.
**VSP Global**

**New Collaboration Will Provide More Resources and Opportunities to Optometrists Transitioning into or out of Practice Ownership**

The Practice Management Center (PMC), Vision One Credit Union, and VSP® Global are teaming up through optometrymatch.com to connect doctors looking to buy or sell an optometry practice and make the overall experience a seamless transition.

Optometrymatch.com is the starting point for doctors who are looking to buy or sell part or all of a practice. After doctors register on this secure website, PMC implements its SMART MATCH model to match the doctor with a buyer, seller or practice that meets their criteria. Once a match is made, PMC works closely with the doctors providing support and consultation throughout the practice transition process.

“Purchasing a practice can be a challenging experience for doctors. Similarly, selling a practice can also be an overwhelming experience for retiring doctors. Our goal is to make the process smooth for both sides, which will in turn help ensure the future success and growth of independent optometry,” said PMC CEO Mark Wright, OD.

“It’s a priority to create new opportunities for VSP’s network of 38,000 doctors at every stage of their career. This collaboration is one of several initiatives underway to provide doctors options and resources along their path in the profession,” said Michelle Skinner, Chief Provider Relations Officer at VSP Global.

In addition to expert practice management guidance from PMC, Vision One Credit Union will provide the capital and financial expertise for pre-qualified optometrists to buy, grow, and sell private practices.

Only two years out of optometry school, Dr. Samantha Vavricek, a VSP network doctor, is in the process of purchasing her first private practice and turned to PMC for support and expertise. “Because PMC is owned and operated by ODs, they have a strong understanding of how a practice operates and functions as a business,” she said. “They conducted in-depth analysis and provided solid feedback and guidance every step of the way. PMC took the risk out of practice ownership, which gave me more confidence in choosing this path.”

Doctors interested in buying or selling an optometry practice can get started by registering at www.optometrymatch.com.
AZCOPT Ramps Up Sports Vision Training at Eye Institute

The Arizona College of Optometry at Midwestern University has added a key piece to their patient offerings by welcoming Matthew Roe, OD, as Assistant Professor with a specialty in sports vision training.

The Midwestern University Eye Institute, established in 2010 to provide community optometry services as well as train third- and fourth-year AZCOPT students in patient care, has offered sports vision services since its inception. As a specialist in sports vision, Dr. Roe hopes to educate local athletes and people interested in improving their peripheral vision and reaction times about the advantages specialized training and therapy can provide.

Dr. Roe came to Midwestern University from graduate and residency training at the State University of New York (SUNY) College of Optometry.
College of Optometry Alumni, Students, and Faculty Participate in National Keratoconus Foundation-Sponsored Event Featuring St. Louis Cardinals Outfielder Tommy Pham

On Monday evening, September 11th, Cardinals outfielder Tommy Pham was the featured speaker at a local event for individuals with keratoconus and their referring doctors. This included members of the MD-OD Contact Lens Foundation of St. Louis, as well as Dr. Julie DeKinder, Director of Academic and Residency Programs, and Dr. Jean Bennett. Tommy provided a very inspiring story of how he struggled in the minor leagues until Cardinals official (at that time) Jeff Luhnow recommended that he have his eyes examined. He was then diagnosed with keratoconus, and not long afterwards he became one of the first athletes to have corneal crosslinking performed.

Although it took six more years for him to have a breakout year with the Cardinals (due primarily to injuries), he has persevered with a condition that would normally make professional baseball an impossible dream. Tommy told everyone how determination, a good mental approach, and a very strong work ethic have allowed him to achieve his dreams and can do likewise for anyone with this sight-compromising eye disease.

The Master of Ceremonies of the event was Assistant Dean Ed Bennett, who had an expert panel to answer questions from the audience. The panel included Cardinals team eye doctor Adam Fedyk, MD, Carmen Castellano, OD, and David Seibel, OD ('87). Dr. Seibel, who has served as the team eye doctor for the St. Louis Rams and currently for the St. Louis Blues, was very impressed: “Having worked with professional athletes for over 30 years, it is very rare that I find an active player in any sport who will disclose information that may be perceived as a potential weakness in their performance. Tommy Pham is one of those rare professional athletes who not only discusses his visual complications with keratoconus, but champions the cause by raising public awareness.

Tommy’s story will inspire many young people dealing with visual impairment to overcome their visual challenges in athletics and in life.” Sean Mulqueeny, OD ('91), President of the MD-OD Contact Lens Foundation of St. Louis agreed: “This evening in Saint Louis was very special! We are fortunate to have an incredible spokesman in Tommy Pham. What he has been able to achieve in spite of his condition is nothing short of exceptional! I was impressed with Tommy’s humility and his commitment to getting the word out about contact lens and surgical alternatives for all that have the disease. Tommy showed what it takes to excel and that you can achieve anything if you put your mind to it.”

Several students served as monitors for this event. They were glad they came, as Justin Kendall ('20) relates: “...it was very inspiring to hear Tommy Pham’s story and all of the struggles that he has overcome in his lifetime... He is incredibly determined to be the best baseball player he can be, regardless of any setbacks he may encounter with keratoconus.” George Dowdy ('20) agrees: “It was amazing to hear Tommy’s story and how he kept pushing to put himself in the right opportunity to improve his vision. It is cool to see him as a role model and success story for patients that are newly diagnosed with keratoconus or other eye diseases.” And it is becoming evident that Tommy Pham is rapidly becoming the national spokesperson for this condition as Erik Peyton ('20) conveys: “The event was so cool: getting to see so many people who
struggle with keratoconus getting to meet the guy that is putting the disease on the map. So many people got to meet their hero, and hopefully his testimony can give them hope as they go through their personal struggles.”

Numerous individuals representing the St. Louis Cardinals, including coaches and media, attended the event, as did radio personality and part-time Cardinals radio broadcaster Mike Claiborne. Executive Director of the National Keratoconus Foundation (NKCF), Mary Prudden, presented Tommy with the NKCF Ambassador Award, a very deserving tribute to perhaps the Cardinals’ most valuable player in 2017. He was truly humbled by the award. The evening session was preceded by the filming of several educational videos at Busch Stadium – again sponsored by the NKCF – with Dr. Bennett interviewing Tommy about his history with keratoconus and how he has overcome it.
Dr. Melissa Trego Appointed Dean of Salus University Pennsylvania College of Optometry

Dr. Melissa Trego ’04 was recently announced as the new dean of the Pennsylvania College of Optometry (PCO). She is the first female graduate of PCO to hold this title. In her new role, Dr. Trego is responsible for the development, implementation and assessment of PCO’s academic programs, personnel and fiscal resources, as well as maintaining the program’s accreditation status.

Dr. Trego has acted as interim dean for PCO since May 2016, which has greatly prepared her for new role as dean.

“I am honored and humbled to be selected as the next dean of PCO,” she said. “I am fortunate enough to be working closely with some pretty incredible faculty every day, educating our students and caring for our patients.”

Dr. Trego brings more than 10 years of optometric clinical expertise and academic leadership to the position. After earning her Doctor of Optometry from PCO in 2004, she held a two-year primary care residency at The Eye Institute (TEI) of Salus University. She then became an instructor for PCO and a clinical instructor at TEI, while earning her PhD in Cellular and Molecular Biology from Cardiff University in the United Kingdom. From there, she rose through the ranks as an assistant professor, associate dean of Optometric Academic Affairs, associate dean of the Accelerated Scholars Program and ultimately interim dean. Dr. Trego, along with the current associate dean of the Scholars Program Dr. Beth Tonkery, was instrumental in the development of the University’s Accelerated Scholars Program, the first three-year Doctor of Optometry program in the U.S., which has seen much success in its first graduating class this past May.
Eye Institutes Shine During Total Eclipse

The Midwestern University Eye Institutes in Downers Grove and Glendale were busy during this summer’s total solar eclipse. The two facilities received a huge influx of new interest from members of the community – helped along by complimentary eclipse safety glasses distributed by the helpful faculty, students, and staff. Media interest helped put the University squarely in the news cycle, with TV and radio networks asking for interviews about how to prepare for the eclipse, the effects of solar retinopathy, and how people who may have exposed their eyes to sun damage could adapt afterward.
Good News from University of Houston, College of Optometry

UHCO has been ranked #1 among institutions with the most cited optometry faculty publications in the US and #2 worldwide, according to an analysis of highly cited articles by optometry school faculty and researchers during the 2000-2016 period. The bibliometric analysis was conducted by the NIH & UC Berkeley.

UHCO's own, Laura Pardon, OD, MS, FAAO, is the recipient of the Best Student Scientific Presentations of the 2017 American Academy and Optometry (AAO) annual meeting. Laura’s presentation entitled, "Quantification and Localization of Peripapillary Vascular Changes in Optic Disc Edema Using Optical Coherence Tomography Angiography”, was selected as the best student science presentation. Laura will be recognized for her efforts at the 2018 AAO meeting in San Antonio, Texas.

Rose Y. Reins, PhD, Assistant Professor at The Ocular Surface Institute, UHCO, was the 2017-2018 recipient of the Allergan Research Grant for her project, “Evaluation of Vitamin D Treatment for Dry Eye-induced Ocular Surface Inflammation.”

Rachel Redfern, OD, PhD, FAAO, Assistant Professor at The Ocular Surface Institute, UHCO, is the co-investigator on this project. The American Academy of Optometry Foundation (AAOF), in partnership with the Allergan Foundation, grant is highly competitive and awarded to a talented optometrist and/or vision scientist who is an Academy member and is currently undertaking cutting edge research in the areas of glaucoma and/or the anterior segment.

This is the fourth year that the Allergan Foundation has sponsored this generous grant through the AAOF.
Marshall B. Ketchum University is excited to welcome the appointment of Mark A. Bullimore, MCOptom, PhD, as Dean of the Southern California College of Optometry. Dr. Bullimore was hired after a national search and started his new appointment on Oct. 16, and following a brief transition, was on campus Nov. 6.

“Mark brings a comprehensive understanding of optometric education and research to his new position as Dean of the Southern California College of Optometry,” said University President Kevin Alexander, OD, PhD. “We are absolutely thrilled to be joined by an optometric scholar of his stature who will advance the vision of one of the country’s leading colleges of optometry, and of the University as a whole.”

Dr. Bullimore received his optometry degree and PhD in Vision Science from Aston University in Birmingham, England. He was a Professor at The Ohio State University College of Optometry for 15 years and taught a number of courses, including geometric optics and ophthalmic optics. Previously, he spent 8 years at the University of California at Berkeley and is currently Adjunct Professor at the University of Houston College of Optometry. His company, Ridgevue Publishing, produces interactive educational materials for the iPad.

His research interests include myopia, low vision, presbyopia and refractive surgery. He received grants from the National Eye Institute to study adult myopia progression and several training grants supporting optometry students in a summer internship program. Dr. Bullimore has over 92 peer-reviewed publications to his credit, as well as over 80 other scholarly publications and presentations. He also holds a patent for an ophthalmic instrument.

Dr. Bullimore was recognized by the American Academy of Optometry with the Garland Clay Award in 1995 and the Eminent Service Award in 2004. In 2012, he was inducted into the National Academies of Practice.

He is former President and Development Director of the American Optometric Foundation, a philanthropic organization devoted to the advancement of optometric education and research. He is Associate Editor of *Ophthalmic and Physiological Optics* and the former Editor of *Optometry and Vision Science*. He served a four-year term on the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s Ophthalmic Devices Panel and is a regulatory consultant for a number of ophthalmic, surgical and pharmaceutical companies.

“I am excited to join my future colleagues at SCCO and MBKU later this year,” said Dr. Bullimore. “With the addition of the School of Physician Assistant Studies and College of Pharmacy, Marshall B. Ketchum University is leading the way in health
care education. I am motivated to embody President Alexander’s vision of interprofessional education and look forward to the opportunities that lay before me and this great institution.”
Salus Pennsylvania College of Optometry Alumna Publishes First Chinese Primary Care Optometry Manual

A graduate of the University’s Advanced Placement Doctor of Optometry degree program (APOD) made history by publishing the first primary eye care and clinical procedures manual in Chinese. The textbook entitled, “Eye Health Management,” includes comprehensive information about how to conduct comprehensive primary care eye exams for both children and adults with a focus on the clinical aspects of optometry.

Zhi Lin (Julia) APOD ’16 noticed a lack of educational materials about primary care optometry in China after she was appointed director of the Zhongshan Ophthalmic Technology & Training Institute, Zhongshan Ophthalmic Center of Sun Yat-sen University.

“When I was trying to draft the strategic educational plans for the next five years, I noticed that there is no textbook in China covering the concept of primary eye care in a clinical setting, which is the essential role of optometrists in the US,” she said.

Two PCO faculty members also contributed to the book – professor Dr. Linda Casser and associate professor Dr. Jingyun Wang. Dr. Casser authored a chapter entitled, “The Training, Education, and Credentials of Doctors of Optometry in the United States.” Dr. Wang served as a reviewer and editor for two chapters on binocular vision and pediatric optometry.

The scope of practice for optometrists is much different in China, but there are efforts underway to move the profession forward, according to Dr. Lin. Chinese Ophthalmologists act as the general providers of primary eye care services for the public.

“There were no primary eye care services in China until recently for optometrists,” she said. “Most of the optical shops are trying to upgrade themselves into becoming optometry centers where they can provide primary eye care to the general population. This will not only require hardware updates, but people need to be trained to deliver primary eye care to those in need.”
Salus Pennsylvania College of Optometry Faculty Earn Top Honors at 96th Annual Academy Meeting

Three major awards were presented to PCO faculty members during the American Academy of Optometry's (AAO) 96th annual meeting in Chicago from October 11-14.

Dr. Mitchell Scheiman, dean of Research and Biomedicine program director at Salus, graciously received the Glenn A. Fry Award. The award is given annually to a distinguished scientist for his or her current optometric research and continual contributions to optometry. Since joining the faculty in 1982, Dr. Scheiman has directed several National Eye Institute sponsored research projects at PCO including investigations of convergence insufficiency, amblyopia and myopia and is a nationally recognized expert on convergence insufficiency.

Dr. Lorraine Lombardi, professor emeritus and interim dean of the University’s College of Health Sciences, received the Michael G. Harris Award for Excellence in Optometric Education. Award recipients demonstrate “ongoing and consistent excellence in the education of optometry students and/or the advancement of optometric education.” Dr. Lombardi has taught for nearly 50 years at Salus PCO, influencing more than 7,000 optometry graduates.

Dr. Luigi Bilotto, adjunct professor at Salus PCO, received the AAO-Essilor Award for Outstanding International Contributions to optometry. In addition to his role at Salus PCO, Dr. Bilotto is the director of global education at the Brien Holden Vision Institute and lectures at universities throughout the world about optometry, including the University of Montreal in Canada, the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, the University of Applied Sciences Utrecht in the Netherlands and the University of New South Wales in Australia.
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Salus Pennsylvania College of Optometry Students Take Home Top Spots at NOA Conference

Three PCO students took home top honors at the recent National Optometric Association (NOA) conference, held in Tigard, Ore. Tasneem Maner ’20OD received Vision Service Plan Global’s Dr. Marvin R. Poston Leadership Award, Fatimah Hassan ’18OD, won the National Vision Essay Grant competition and Courtney Goode ’17OD was named student of the year.

All students are members of the National Optometric Student Association (NOSA), the student organization established by the NOA. NOSA aims to “stimulate and encourage highly professional, intellectual, and social relationships with members of optometric programs as well as other healthcare professional student organizations.”
SCO Completes Major Renovation Project

Southern College of Optometry recently debuted a significant renovation of its fourth floor building. In response to students’ needs, the college spent the summer renovating and expanding its dining and study spaces in time for the start of the fall semester.

An open atrium was filled in on two sides to expand a full floor encompassing several new study spaces, creating an extra 1,000 square feet. Restaurant-style booth were added under natural lighting in one area, with private study space and a lounge area added as well.

The college’s Blink Diner was relocated and expanded to provide greater kitchen and food preparation space. New furniture and A/V presentation capabilities also were added. The project represented a nearly $1 million investment.
SSM Health Medical Services Open in UMSL Patient Care Center

A primary health-care option returns to the Normandy area and north St. Louis County thanks to the new SSM Health Medical Group office in UMSL’s Patient Care Center.

“North St. Louis County continues to be an important market for SSM Health Medical Group, and partnering with the University of Missouri–St. Louis offers us the opportunity to serve even more residents in this community, along with the students, faculty and staff of the university,” said James Bleicher, MD, regional president for SSM Health Physicians’ Organization and SSM Health Ambulatory Services.

A ribbon cutting and open house Thursday introduced the community to the medical office, which offers primary care, obstetrics and gynecology services. The space has about a dozen exam rooms and an X-ray room and is decorated in cheerful blue and teal tones accented by calming nature canvases.

“I already feel healthier,” remarked a woman as she and others took in the décor and perused the space with all new medical equipment and furniture.

It’s a stark contrast to the state of the former Normandy Community Hospital, which used to stand on the exact ground where the UMSL Patient Care Center is now. The campus as well as the surrounding community has gone without a nearby health-care facility since the closure of the hospital in 2001.

“This new SSM Health location meets a great need locally,” Normandy Mayor Patrick Green said. “For more than 15 years, area residents have had to leave their neighborhoods to seek professional medical advice and treatment. My hope is that increased access to convenient, reliable health care translates to a healthier, happier community.”

UMSL Chancellor Tom George noted that the university has tirelessly fought to restore public health services to the area despite financial hurdles.

Through the creativity of College of Optometry Dean Larry Davis, campus leadership and the University of Missouri System, funding for a Patient Care Center came together. It required a significant shift in the optometry college’s budget and a student fee which the students voted for and approved.

The facility opened in November 2016 and immediately housed the University Eye Center, which provides comprehensive eye and vision care for adults and children. But UMSL leadership always had a larger community health focus in mind for the center. About 13,000 square feet of the 48,000-square-foot building was set aside for community partnerships.

“We’re excited to work side-by-side with SSM in delivering compassionate, quality care to campus and the community,” Davis said. “It is my great hope that the Patient Care Center will continue to grow its services and address health needs of all kinds for our patients. I’m so happy to take that first step with SSM Health.”

Family Medicine Physician Valerie Walker and OB/GYN Physicians Hamanah Siddiqui and Kinsey Dinnel have been taking patients at the office, which serves both the campus and general community, since Sept. 7. Appointments can be made online through SSM Health’s InQuicker website.
Key in bringing the university and SSM partnership to fruition was Rebecca Zoll, president and CEO of North County Inc., a regional development association.

“North County Inc. is about pairing people to help bring about the very best for the community,” Zoll said.

Her involvement in University Square, a community development corporation led by UMSL, North County Inc. and the City of Normandy, connected SSM leaders with UMSL.

The SSM/UMSL collaboration is also considered a positive outcome for the Great Streets Project, which continues to transform Natural Bridge Road into an economically thriving thoroughfare. Now it’s a healthier one too.
SUNY Optometry Receives Empire Innovation Program Award

SUNY College of Optometry was awarded $750,000 through the SUNY Empire Innovation Program (EIP) to recruit a leader and senior investigator with expertise in molecular genetic vision research focusing on eye disease.

EIP is a state-funded competitive grant program dedicated to recruiting and retaining world-class faculty at SUNY. The new position is part of a larger effort at the College to establish a Center for Translational Vision Research to integrate and enhance individual and collaborative research programs.

Translational studies, defined as the translation of basic research into clinical studies, will form a comprehensive research platform at the College as an incubator for new therapies and technologies that will eventually be tested at the previously established Clinical Vision Research Center (2013).

“Translational research fills the gap between our basic and clinical research programs and informs them both,” says Dr. David Troilo, vice president and dean for academic affairs. “This grant will provide an important element to our research efforts at the College and will help us advance the profession of optometry as we help more patients.”

Current translational research at the College focuses on neurodegenerative diseases of the eye, glaucoma, refractive errors (myopia), amblyopia, corneal disease, angiogenesis, traumatic brain injury, and cataract, each of which has specified as areas in which increased research is needed by the National Eye Institute (NEI).

Dr. Stewart Bloomfield led the College’s effort to secure the EIP grant and serves as director of the College’s Graduate Center for Vision Research. “[This award] will significantly increase the College’s competitiveness for federal research and training funding,” he says. “Recruitment of an EIP scholar and creation of the Center for Translational Vision Research will transform the overall experimental program at the College.”

Eight current members of SUNY Optometry’s graduate research faculty who conduct translational research will form the Center’s initial core, including Dr. Troilo, Dr. Bloomfield, Dr. Jose-Manuel Alonso, Dr. Alexandra Benavente-Perez, Dr. Robert McPeek, Dr. Tracy Nguyen, Dr. Miduturu Srinivas, and Dr. Suresh Viswanathan.
SUNY Optometry’s Dr. Alexandra Benavente-Pérez Receives ZEISS Young Investigator Award in Myopia Research

SUNY Optometry assistant clinical professor Dr. Alexandra Benavente-Pérez received the ZEISS Young Investigator Award in Myopia Research during the International Myopia Conference in Birmingham, UK from September 14 to 17.

The award recognizes young researchers for distinguished contributions to the field of myopia research, including visual psychophysics, physiological and biomedical optics, and research efforts to overcome limitations of vision. Eligibility is restricted to active junior myopia researchers who have completed a PhD, equivalent research degree, or myopia research training within the last 10 years.

Dr. Benavente-Pérez is a clinician scientist and trained under the mentorship of experts in clinical and experimental myopia and ocular vascular research, including Dr. David Troilo, Dr. Sarah Hosking, Dr. Nicola Logan, and Dr. Doina Gherguel. She received her optometry degree from the University of Valladolid in Spain and, two years after starting her career in optometry as a clinician, she moved to Manchester, UK, to pursue her MS degree in investigative ophthalmology and vision sciences. She dedicated her postdoctoral training to studying the mechanisms of visually guided eye growth.

She combines her basic and clinical research interests in myopia, ocular imaging, animal models, and vascular hemodynamics and currently focuses on the spatial and temporal integration properties of refractive development and the role peripheral refraction plays in visually guided eye growth and myopia development. Her collaborators are often experts in retinal physiology, neuroanatomy, physics, and imaging.

Dr. Benavente-Pérez also delivered the Josh Wallman Memorial Lecture during the September conference. As a long-term senior faculty member of City University of New York, Dr. Wallman pioneered the use of the avian model for understanding eye growth and made invaluable contributions to vision research and the field of myopia. He succumbed to pancreatic cancer on March 3, 2012 and is remembered for his enthusiasm for science and interest in and promotion of young researchers’ work.
SUNY Optometry’s Dr. Richard Madonna Receives Vincent Ellerbrock Clinician Educator Award

SUNY Optometry’s Dr. Richard Madonna has been selected to receive the 2017 Vincent Ellerbrock Clinician Educator Award by the American Academy of Optometry.

The Ellerbrock Award is presented annually to a distinguished clinician who is widely recognized by both Academy peers and the profession for their clinical expertise and willingness to share their knowledge for the benefit of improved patient care.

Dr. Madonna is a professor and chair of SUNY Optometry’s Department of Clinical Education and director of the Office of Continuing Professional Education. He previously served as chief of the primary care, ocular disease, and special testing services of the University Eye Center, director of the optometric residency program for the VA Hudson Valley Health Care System, and chief of optometry at the VA Medical Center in Castle Point, N.Y.

Dr. Madonna received his Doctor of Optometry degree from SUNY Optometry in 1985 and also holds an MA in biology from SUNY State College at New Paltz. He lectures nationally and internationally on glaucoma, therapeutic drugs, retinal diseases, ophthalmic imaging, and other topics.

The awards ceremony was held during Academy 2017 in Chicago this October.
UIW RSO Professor Recipient of American Academy of Optometry Foundation Inaugural Grant

The University of the Incarnate Word Rosenberg School of Optometry (UIWRSO) announces that Srihari Narayanan, OD, PhD, FAAO, is the recipient of the American Academy of Optometry Foundation (AAOF) inaugural 2017 Korb - Exford Dry Eye Career Development Grant. His proposal titled “Meibomian Gland Dysfunction Management to Relieve Contact Lens Discomfort” was chosen out of twelve competitive proposals and will provide clinically useful data for the management of contact lens discomfort associated with MGD.

The goal of the study is to investigate if improving the health of the eyelid margin in patients with Meibomian gland dysfunction will increase comfort during contact lens wear in these patients.

"We are very proud of Dr. Narayanan. His project will help advance the clinical science and improve the lives of contact lens wearers around the world,” said Dr. Timothy Wingert, Dean, UIWRSO.

Narayanan was honored in October at the AAOF celebration luncheon held during the American Academy of Optometry’s Annual Meeting in Chicago, Illinois.
UPIKE Dedicates Health Professions Education Building

Health Professions Education Building home to Kentucky’s only college of optometry

More than 650 people gathered on the University of Pikeville campus on Oct. 27 for the ribbon cutting and dedication of the institution’s newest facility, the Health Professions Education Building (HPEB). The ceremony commemorated a significant milestone for the university, Central Appalachia and all of Kentucky, as the HPEB is home to the only college of optometry in the Commonwealth and the 22nd in the nation – the Kentucky College of Optometry (KYCO).

The HPEB is 107,000 square feet of state-of-the-art classrooms, clinical education laboratories, basic science laboratories, primary care operatories and space that houses both KYCO and UPIKE’s growing nursing program.

“Our nursing students are enjoying their new space in the HPEB,” said Karen Damron, PhD, dean of the Elliott School of Nursing. “They utilize study areas that were not available prior to moving in the facility. In addition, the faculty offices are highly professional and conducive to meeting with current and prospective students. This new building will be key in the continued expansion of our nursing program.”

In his keynote address, US Congressman Harold “Hal” Rogers (KY-05) highlighted how UPIKE is helping close the gap on health disparities in Central Appalachia.

“Our today Central Appalachia has the highest rates of preventable blindness in the nation,” said Rogers. “So what does UPIKE do? They build a state-of-the-art facility with the very best equipment, cutting-edge technology and a first-class team.”

UPIKE President Burton J. Webb, PhD, said, “The HPEB will serve the needs of the people of the Commonwealth of Kentucky for decades to come. We deeply appreciate the support of the community and the region as we continue to build the University of Pikeville.”

Funding for the $72 million educational facility included grants from the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) and Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), as well as a low-interest stimulus loan from the US Department of Agriculture’s Rural Development Administration.

Federal Co-Chair of ARC Earl F. Gohl said, “It’s a beautiful day in Appalachia because this building and school are going to help support and move forward the culture of health in Appalachia.”

In addition to expanding vision care in the region, KYCO is projected to provide an estimated regional economic impact of $26.8 million over four years.

Vickie Yates Brown Glisson, secretary for the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, said, “This facility is a reflection of the university’s foresight and strategic efforts to increase educational opportunities for students, to stimulate economic development and to improve comprehensive health care needs that are are in Central Appalachia.”
“Preparing the future health care workforce is a major component in addressing Kentucky’s health challenges and our growing state’s economy. Again, this university is leading the charge,” Glisson said.

KYCO is currently preparing its inaugural class of 2020 and the class of 2021 for a broad scope of practice. Kentucky is one of only three states in the nation in which optometrists have the ability to perform laser and minor surgical procedures.

William T. Reynolds, OD, secretary/treasurer of the American Optometric Association, noted that KYCO is developing a national model for access to vision care in rural communities.

“This school and these students represent the future of our profession,” said Reynolds. “The Kentucky College of Optometry is in a unique place in time where they will be the drivers of optometric education for years to come. This school will be showing the entire nation how to properly educate and train students in this new frontier of our profession.”

Through the emphasis of specialization in rural optometry, more than 30 percent of graduates are expected to practice in medically underserved areas of Appalachia. KYCO is now operating rural clinics that will serve an estimated 18,000 unique patients annually.

Andrew Buzzelli, OD., KYCO founding dean, said, “What I am most proud of is that our faculty have already performed hundreds of eye exams, there is a pediatric eye clinic in Pikeville Medical Center that wasn’t there and we are in three Federally Qualified Health Centers that are in numerous clinics. Eye care that wasn’t there is now there.”

Rogers addressed KYCO faculty in acknowledgement of their national and international accolades.

“You’re not only teaching future leaders,” he said, “you’re writing the book on medical eye care in the nation.”

To view a video of the ceremony, visit https://livestream.com/piketvlive/events/7873353.
Western University College of Optometry Studies Role of Interprofessional Interaction in Treating Diabetes

Researchers at Western University of Health Sciences College of Optometry recently found that doctors of optometry play an important role working with other kinds of health care providers to take care of people with diabetes.

Most doctors of optometry who were surveyed - about 97 percent - interact with other health care professionals at least once a year, and even more regularly than every year, for patients with diabetes. Further, doctors of optometry who interact with other providers more regularly were more likely to be satisfied with their health care role, and are more likely to believe that team-based care makes a difference in patient outcomes.

The article, “Factors associated with regular interprofessional interaction by doctors of optometry in management of patients with diabetes mellitus,” by College of Optometry Associate Professor Kierstyn Napier-Dovorany, OD, College of Pharmacy Assistant Professor JaeJin An, BPharm, PhD, and College of Optometry Dean Elizabeth Hoppe, OD, MPH, DrPH, was published in the Journal of Interprofessional Education and Practice.

The survey found that about two-thirds of doctors of optometry who interact with other providers are satisfied with their interprofessional interaction. Factors that make doctors of optometry more likely to interact with other providers include practice in a rural area; spending a significant amount of time managing ocular diseases; managing more patients with diabetes per week; and having completed optional post-graduate residency training. Doctors of optometry who regularly participate in interprofessional interactions were more likely to be satisfied with their interactions, and more likely to believe that team-based care makes a difference in patient outcomes and satisfaction.

The research shows that doctors of optometry are actively working with other providers on behalf of patients with diabetes, and that they are happy with the results of that work.

“The American Diabetes Association has long been educating people with diabetes about the need to seek regular eye care. This research shows that when people do receive eye care from their doctor of optometry, they can expect an even greater benefit by bringing in another health care professional to work on their support team,” Hoppe said. “Because doctors of optometry share information with the other health care providers taking care of them, the patients stand to gain through a more comprehensive approach.”
White Cane Day

The white cane as a concept evolved when in 1930, the Lions of Peoria supported the idea of using the white cane with a red band to assist the blind in their independence. President Lyndon B. Johnson, with the support of Congress and in conjunction with the National Federation of the Blind declared October 15 of each year as White Cane Safety Day. The President recognized the white cane as a staff of independence for the blind and indeed, the white cane and harness has become a symbol of self-reliance and self-sufficiency for the blind citizens of the United States of America. The idea spread rapidly throughout the United States, and internationally. White cane day was celebrated this year as far afield as Yangon, Myanmar.

MCPHS School of Optometry’s involvement was a joint effort by Dr. Lou Frank OD, Associate Professor and Kelly Morgese, president of the Student American Academy of Optometry Club at MCPHS. This fall, as colored leaves sprinkled the sidewalks and the blustery wind brought a chill to the air, MCPHS School of Optometry participated in White Cane Safety Day as they have done in the three years before. The celebration started in front of the Police Station, across from the Eye and Vision Center, and the walk through Worcester streets ended at the library where a fair was held. The walk is graced by everyone’s favorite golden retriever guide dog, Harmony. This beautiful animal knows how to steal everyone’s heart, but his heart belongs to Peg.

Navigating the cityscape blindfolded may seem like dangerous task, but each participant is guided by a sighted guide that attended six weeks of training prior to the event. “The sighted guides first learn how to traverse doors, stairs and ramps and the move on to field training in Elm Park, where all four corners of the park has pedestrian crossings present different challenges to the blind,” says Ms. Morgese.

Dignitaries talking the walk included Tony Economou from the Worcester City Council and John R. Kelly, city commissioner of Inspectional services. “The blind rely heavily on the city infrastructure,” says Ms. Morgese of the importance of including community leaders on the walk. Attorney Elizabeth Myska, an attorney from Worcester, serves as a coordinator for the White Cane Day Event. Ms. Myska, who has Retinitis Pigmentosa, has been legally blind since 2005.

In addition to several MCPHS Students, Provost of the Worcester campus, Caroline Zeind and campus security officer Hazel Berry attended and participated in the event. A round table discussion was hosted by the dean of MCPHS School of Optometry, Dr. Morris Berman at the conclusion of the walk. The fair presented representatives from the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, the Worcester Talking Book Library and the Massachusetts Office on Disabilities.
Industry Spotlight on Aerie

‘Targeting the diseased tissue to restore normal function is a fundamental tenet of medicine, yet no available glaucoma therapies do this.

We founded Aerie with the specific goal of bringing a safe and effective trabecular outflow drug to physicians and their patients.’

-Dr. David Epstein (1943-2014) Former Duke University Chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology and Aerie Co-founder

Aerie began in 2005 after David Epstein, MD; Erik Toone, PhD; and Casey C. Kopczynski, PhD joined forces. Dr. Epstein, then Chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology at Duke University, was a long-time clinical scientist in the glaucoma field. He spent his research career searching for better ways to treat glaucoma, the disease that causes irreversible vision loss. Dr. Epstein collaborated with chemists to translate compound structures into clinical medications. Dr. Kopczynski, a biotech start-up veteran, brought his business expertise to the company. Together, they set out to bring a new class of medications to transform the therapeutic area.

The initial phases of research for a new trabecular outflow drug were filled with twists and turns. As said by Dr. Kopczynski, “Innovation is rarely a linear process, especially in drug development. In a start-up, you have to be focused, but more importantly you have to follow the data, even if it takes you in a different direction than originally planned.” That is exactly what the dynamic and adaptable Aerie team did. Aerie began by pursuing ethacrynic acid and ticrynafen, compounds that Dr. Epstein’s lab had studied for years. This proved to be a learning experience and led Aerie’s chemists to generate related compounds. They continued investigating beyond their original territory of exploration—and an opportunity soon came in a drug discovery program focused on Rho kinase (ROCK) inhibitors.

The proposed mechanism of action and the promising therapeutic potential of ROCK inhibitors make for a highly anticipated glaucoma treatment option. Although not entirely understood, it is believed that ROCK inhibitors bind to the protein Rho kinase. This seems to disrupt the binding interaction of myosin to actin and causes the stress fibers and anchoring complexes to disassemble. By reducing myosin-driven contraction in the TM, ROCK inhibitors appear to relax the meshwork. This facilitates increased outflow of nutritive aqueous humor through the tissue and reduces pressure in the eye.

Our drug discovery program ultimately led us to the development of a new class of glaucoma therapeutics called ROCK inhibitors. The first TM outflow drug in the pipeline, netarsudil ophthalmic solution 0.02%, has been shown in clinical studies to lower intraocular pressure (IOP). Excitement is brewing as Aerie enters launch mode. “Due to the progressive nature of glaucoma, new therapies are needed that directly target the diseased TM to block or reverse its deterioration, and we believe netarsudil ophthalmic solution 0.02% has excellent potential to address this unmet need,” said Dr. Kopczynski. If approved, netarsudil ophthalmic solution 0.02% would become the only once-daily product available that specifically targets the TM.

Aerie isn’t stopping there. Aerie will be conducting additional clinical studies to characterize the performance of netarsudil ophthalmic solution 0.02%. The company is also taking the potential of netarsudil ophthalmic solution 0.02% a step further by undergoing Phase 3 trials for netarsudil 0.02%/latanoprost 0.005% ophthalmic solution, a fixed-combination formulation of netarsudil ophthalmic solution 0.02% and latanoprost, a PGA that is the most widely prescribed glaucoma drug in the US.

“Being able to intervene early with a compound that targets the diseased tissue of the trabecular meshwork (TM), the main outflow drain in the eye is a critical unmet need,” said Dr. Kopczynski, Co-founder and Chief Scientific Officer. It was the
quest for a trabecular outflow drug that led to the founding of Aerie Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

SIG News

BINOCULAR VISION AND PERCEPTION EDUCATORS

Met: Oct.11, 2017

Chair(s): Christina Esposito (AZCOPT). Chair Elect: Alicia Feis (AZCOPT)

Actions: Competencies to be finalized by January 2018

Additional Topics Discussed/Speakers: Discussion on the Visual Information Processing Battery among the different programs and fresh topics for the SIG.

Sponsor(s): N/A

BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE EDUCATOR

Met: Oct. 13

Chair: Jan Bergmanson

Discussion Topics/Actions: Began with a minute of silence honoring the founding chair of SIG, Dr. Ruth Trachimowicz. New subgroups were formed to facilitate achievement of goals. The main action item proposed for evaluation during the next year was to work with ASCO to develop goals and objectives for licensed optometrists in order to propose a minimum required curriculum for Biomedical Sciences to meet the standards that NBEO expects from the profession. It would mainly serve for clarification purposes to aid optometrists to achieve board certification. All the instructors from the Biomedical Sciences of the Colleges of Optometry would have an invaluable contribution to this process as we all have a common goal.

Sponsor: N/A

CLINIC DIRECTORS/ADMINISTRATORS

Met: Nov 16-18, 2017

Chair: Maria Parisi (PCO)
Actions: Determine who will represent the Clinic Directors SIG on ASCO’s newly established Leadership Development Task Force. Update the Clinic Surveys survey, which is posted on ASCOConnect and maintained by David Durkee. Mark your calendars for the next Online Clinical Education Forum (OCEF) being held Friday, June 8, 2018 from 1:00-4:00 pm ET.

Established locations for future meetings:

- 2018 – SCCOMBKU (October 25-27)
- 2019 – Houston (Date TBD)
- 2020 – PUCO (Date TBD)

Discussion Topics/Speaker Highlights: Your Personal Communication Style for Leadership Effectiveness, Marilyn Nyman, M.Ed., CCC-SLP, Nyman Group; Remediation of the Struggling Optometry Student, Jeannette Guerrasio, MD, Author and Associate Professor of Medicine, University of Colorado; The Do’s and Don’ts of Managing Accommodation Requests in the Clinical Environment, Brian Zuckerman, Esq., Chief of Staff, Salus University; Dr. Lester Caplan Honorary Lecture: Clinical Optometric Education: A Look to its Past and a Vision of its Future, Linda Casser, OD, FAAO, FNAP, Salus University; Operational Issues and Solutions, Dr. Mark Nakano, Associate Dean for Clinics, Southern California College of Optometry, Marshall B. Ketchum University, Dr. Melissa Contreras, Clinic Director, University Eye Center Los Angeles; Patient Communications: Externship Program Pilot, Dr. Peter Kehoe, Professional Development Advisor, Transitions Adaptive Lenses; Lessons Learned When Opening an In House Pharmacy, Dr. Michael Chaglasian, Chief of Staff, Illinois Eye Institute, Illinois College of Optometry; Hurricane Harvey- Lessons Learned, Carl Branch, Associate Director, University Eye Institute, College of Optometry University of Houston; Industry Panel, Moderator: Pete Kehoe, Professional Development Advisor, Transitions Adaptive Lenses, Panelist: Kevin McNaught, National Director of Strategic Accounts, Diopsys; David Nelson, Vice President of Professional Relations, Optos; Donald Smith, Director, Professional Relations, National Vision, Inc.


CLINICAL OPTOMETRIC METHODS & PROCEDURES INSTRUCTORS SIG

Met: Oct 10, 2017

Chair: Drs. Joan Portello (SUNY) and Laura Falco (NOVA)

Discussion Topics/Speaker Highlights: How and when in the methods and procedures program is scleral depression taught and a word about injections?; What will the future of instruction of methods and procedures in optometry given the advances in technology concentrate on? For example, “Do Students Still need to be Proficient in Gathering Data?” OR do we move our focus towards more instruction on clinical reasoning and data interpretation? Dr. Fuensante Vera-Diaz; How much should we dedicate to assistants (2nd year students) working up the patients before the 3rd or 4th year intern take over? What should be tested prior to the comprehensive examination by the interns, i.e., OCT, Anterior seg OCT, fundus photos, OPD results, etc., Joan Portello; Advanced Procedures (lasers, stitching, etc) in Schools, Dr. Joan Perotti; Using Electronic Rubrics to Grade Proficiency Performance, Dr. Jeff Perotti; Cheating in the Lab/how it is handled, real consequences, administrative
involvement, autonomy of lab instructors; examples of cheating, Dr. Heather Anderson.

**Sponsors:** Heine and Keeler

**CONTINUING EDUCATION DIRECTORS**

**Met:** Oct 13, 2017

**Chairs:** Drs. Elizabeth Grantner (ICO) and Jeannie Snider (SCO)

**Discussion Topics:** Grant applications/Sponsorships via Alcon & Novartis, Tom Duchardt (Alcon); Barbara Standley (Alcon IME) & xx (Novartis IME); New COPE Process Updates, Sierra Rice, Mgr of Accreditation Services for ARBO; Activity Practice Gaps/Post Activity Reporting; ASCO/ARBO Agreement Updates; Joint Providership (per ACCME Guidelines); Online CE platforms (recording techniques, etc./i.e. WCEA); Best Legal Practices & Copyright laws; Roundtable Discussions.

**Sponsor:** Alcon

**DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORS**

**Met:** Oct. 12, 2017

**Chairs:** Rachel Childress (OSU), Chair; Connie Scavuzzo (ICO), Immediate Past Chair

**Actions:** Appointment of Rachel Childress as Chair for a second term, Amanda Behnke (WUCO) as Chair-Elect, and Scavuzzo as Immediate Past Chair

**Discussion Topics/Speaker Highlights:** Creating an Effective Alumni Board, Connie Scavuzzo, Senior Director of Alumni Development, ICO; Ten Things I Have Learned as 10 Years of Being a Dean, Dr. Jennifer Coyle, Dean, PUCO; What I Wish I Knew My First Year as President of SCO, Drs. Lewis Reich, President, SCO, and Kristin Anderson, VP for Institutional Advancement, SCO.

**Sponsors:** Alcon, Luxottica, Vision Service Plan

**EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY**

**Met:** Oct. 13, 2017

**Chair:** Dean Swick (SCO)

**Discussion Topics/Actions:** Information Security, Dean Swick; Demonstration of new collaboration tools provided by ASCO; Roundtable discussion of various topics – ExamSoft, Ebooks, ERP, etc.

**ETHICS EDUCATORS**

**Met:** Oct. 12, 2017

**Chair:** Paula McDowell (MCO)

**Discussion Topics/Actions:** Presentation from Erik Mothersbaugh (ICO) on his research conducted with colleagues on Optometry and the Sunshine Act. He gave a thorough overview of previous publications regarding industry gifting in medicine, and detailing data as reported by optometrists to CMS. This presentation led to a stimulating discussion about how to handle industry gifting within schools of optometry, and ways to educate students and colleagues about the importance and impact of this practice... The Student Award in Clinical Ethics will be offered again this year... Additional updates regarding the AOA Ethics and Values Committee were discussed, including the recent update to the Optometric Oath, and the recent activity
of the AOA Ethics Forum. SIG will meet again in April or May via webinar to follow up on these discussions.

**Sponsor:** N/A

**EXTERNSHIP DIRECTORS**

![Attendees are waving their hands in this photo to honor honor and remember Dr. Harue Marsden, last year's co-chair, who passed away suddenly last year.](image)

**Met:** Nov. 16, 2017

**Chair:** Aarlan Aceto (CCO)

**Actions:** Established a subcommittee to work on issues surrounding Externships vs. Clerkships. Subcommittee members are: Tom Wong (SUNY), Etty Bitton (Waterloo), Lisa Christian (Montreal), and Ralph Herring (UHCO). Assist with the development of an ASCO contingency plan that will assist schools who incur devastation. Elected co-chairs for future programs: 2018: Aarlan Aceto (CCO) and Vikki Yu (UCB); 2019 and 2020: Elyse Chaglasian (ICO) and Dave Durkee (MCO).

**Additional topics/Speakers:** Meeting began by formally dedicating the meeting in memory of Harue Marsden. An official ASCO resolution was read. Alcon Externship Initiatives, Tom Duchardt, Director Professional Relations Academic Development; Externship Survey Update; Externships vs. Clerkships, Aarlan Aceto, Director of Rotations, Midwestern University, Chicago College of Optometry; Annual Reports of Affiliated Externship Programs, VAMC: John Townsend, Director, Optometric Service, Department of Veteran Affairs; ACOE Externship Standards, Bart Campbell, ACOE Chair, Ms. Joyce Urbeck, ACOE Director; Patient Communications Pilot Program, Christopher W. Lievens, Chief of Staff, Southern College of Optometry; Externship Distance Learning Modules, Mark Risher, Sr. Mgr, Optometric Academic Development, Allergan, Cathy Pagano, CME Matters, LLC; IPECP Workshop, John Nishimoto, Senior Associate Dean for Professional Affairs, SCCOMBKU, Jeffery Stewart, Senior Director for Institutional Innovation and Development, ADEA; Roundtable Discussions: Puerto Rico Devastation, Standardized Site Visit Form, Students' Site Selection / Assignment Process, Adjunct Extern Faculty Educational / Seminar / Other Perks.

**Sponsors:** Alcon and Allergan

**INTERNATIONAL OPTOMETRIC EDUCATORS**

**Met:** Oct 13, 2017

**Actions/Discussion Topics:** Alcon Initiatives, Casey Dietrich and Tom Duchardt

**Discussion/Presentation by Regional Vice-Chairs for our SIG**
Asia: Ida Chung; India (as separate from the rest of Asia): Shankaran Ramaswamy; Europe: Yi Pang; Latin America: Hector Santiago; Eastern European: Jeff Perotti; Africa: Don Lyon

**Group discussion/Breakout session on current and future projects and collaborations around the world**

Discussion facilitators: BHVI: Luigi Bilotto; VOSH-Dan Twelker; AFCO-Sara McGowan; ALDOO- Katerin Ortiz

**Sponsor:** N/A

**LOW VISION EDUCATORS**

**Met:** Oct. 12, 2017

**Chair:** Rebecca Marinoff (SUNY)

**Actions:** Advanced Competencies were approved by ASCO Board of Trustees, continued work on Low Vision iBook, begin creation of Low Vision Reading List to dovetail with Entry-Level Competencies and Advanced Competencies

**Additional topics/Speakers:** John Nishimoto (SCCO) gave a talk on Inter-Professional Education

**Sponsor:** N/A

**NEURO-REHABILITATION EDUCATORS**

**Met:** Oct. 13, 2017

**Chairs:** Dr. Valerie Wren (WUCO), outgoing SIG Chair (2014-2017), Dr. Surbhi Bansal (UCB), incoming SIG Chair (2017-2020), Chair-elect to be determined (2020-2023)

**Actions:** Create formal document for entry-level competencies and learning objectives for curriculum development and outcome measures; Develop and share teaching strategies within this group of educators; Consider how our plan plugs in to the ASCO Strategic Plan and IPE initiatives.

**Additional Topics Discussed/Speakers:** Two Subcommittees to be formed; Writing group and Reference/Evidence-based group

**Sponsor:** Chadwick Optical

**PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATORS**

**Met:** Oct. 12, 2017

**Chair:** Janet Leasher (NOVA)

**Actions:** Communicate with and arrange for an item writing session with the NBEO to include and create items to measure competencies from the ASCO Guidelines for Public Health and Environmental Vision Core Competencies and Learning Objectives (‘the Guidelines’). Create a mini-advocacy campaign, with key messages and talking points for all SIG representatives to use at their respective institutions if needed to adopt the Guidelines with the academic officer(s), curriculum committee, instructors of public health. Inform the ACOE about the Guidelines and investigate how these can be incorporated into future self-studies for the Curriculum Standard (2?) for the next round of accreditation review for each institution and report back to the SIG.

**Discussion Topics:** Report of the PHE SIG document – ASCO approval: ASCO Guidelines Public Health and Environmental Vision Core Competencies and Learning Objectives. Discussion on the use of the document by NBEO and ACOE. Discussion on development of a central PHEV teaching resource site available to all PHE SIG members including teaching techniques,
course outlines, video links, etc. New Issues in Public Health.

PHE SIG Leadership: Chair, Dr. Janet Leasher; Vice Chair (Chair Elect), Dr. Mort Soroka; Immediate Past Chair, Dr. Pat Yoshinaga; Second Vice Chair to be elected.

Sponsor: N/A

RESIDENCY EDUCATORS

Met: Oct. 12, 2017

Chairs: Dr. Doug Hoffman (NECO) and Dr. David Loshin (NOVA)

Discussion Topics/Speakers: ASCO Residency Affairs Committee Update, Dr. David Loshin ... ORMatch Update, Dr. Diane Adamczyk ... Accreditation Council on Optometric Education Update, Dr. Bart Campbell ... AAO Residents Day Update, Dr. Amy Grimes ... ASCO Remarks, ASCO President Dr. David Damari ... Update on Sub-Specialization, Dr. David Damari ... VA Residencies Update, Dr. John Townsend... AOSA and Promotion of Residencies … Ms. Emily Ellingson (ASCO-AOSA Liaison) … AOA Membership Update, Dr. Caroline Pate and Ms. Stacey Struckhoff.

Roundtable Discussions: Best Practices to Recruit Residents … Enforcing Deadlines for Residents and Faculty

Sponsor: Alcon
ASCO Sponsors Collaborating Across Borders Conference

ASCO was pleased to support the recent Collaborating Across Borders VI Conference, held October 1-4 in Banff, Alberta and presented by the American Interprofessional Health Collaborative, Canadian Interprofessional Health Collaborative and the University of Alberta’s Health Science Council. The conference brought together hundreds of individuals involved in interprofessional health professions education in the US and Canada to exchange ideas, discuss best practices and learn how to advance collaborative care to improve health outcomes.

In addition to being a silver-level sponsor, ASCO sent two representatives to the conference - Dr. Linda Casser, Professor and Coordinator of Interprofessional Education at Salus University Pennsylvania College of Optometry and chair of ASCO’s Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice (IPECP) Committee, who also moderated several sessions, and Ms. Joanne Zuckerman, Manager of Data Services and Special Projects at ASCO. The conference offered dozens of workshops and presentations from the perspectives of education, practice, leadership and policy, as well as several compelling keynote speakers. Dr. Casser and Ms. Zuckerman look forward to sharing their conference experiences with ASCO’s IPECP committee to assist in its work of moving optometric education forward in this very important area.