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November 3-6, 2021
Boston Convention and Exhibition Center
Registration and Housing Open June 1, 2021
www.aaopt.org/2021
Four Days in Boston

The American Academy of Optometry, at this time, remains cautiously optimistic we will be meeting in Boston, November 3-6, 2021. As such, planning continues to move forward for Academy 2021 Boston, for both a safe, socially-distanced, in-person meeting, as well as a virtual meeting option. In late April we will issue an “Intent to Attend” survey to gauge our members comfort level in attending an in-person meeting, given the increase of vaccinations and the decrease in travel bans. We will continue to communicate updates related to Academy 2021 Boston as they become available.

Boston, Massachusetts, one of the most historic cities in the United States, boasts something for everyone; whether it’s diving into the city’s rich history; exploring the Freedom Trail or meandering around Boston’s famed museums; or taking advantage of the vibrant shopping scene and world-class dining options. Commonly referred to as America’s Walking City, you’re bound to find something to pique your interest mere steps from your hotel. Click this link to take a virtual site tour of Boston and its many attractions!

Featuring more than 300 hours of continuing education in a variety of formats, from intimate hands-on workshops to large symposia, you’ll be sure to leave the Academy’s annual meeting with new knowledge and skills to bring back to your practice and improve patient care. Returning this year are the Academy Classroom Exchange (ACE) courses, which provide small group learning experiences that maximize discussion and interaction between the course presenter and attendees. These sell out, so reserve your seat for $25 when you register for the meeting.

We’re excited to share this year’s Plenary Session will feature Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, a noted expert on the psychology of racism and race relations and best-selling author of Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations about Race. Building off the successful 2020 Diversity Symposium, Dr. Tatum will bring her unique insights to jump-start a productive conversation on racial bias and its impact on health care.

Another not-to-be-missed Academy event is the Monroe J. Hirsch Research Symposium. This session will explore artificial intelligence and the future of clinical practice. The Ezell Fellows Present Session, featuring three former Ezell Fellows at various stages in their careers, will focus on research informing clinical practice. Look for more information about these and other special education sessions to be announced in the upcoming Program Preview later this spring.

Exhibitors are integral to our annual meeting program. The Academy will host a robust exhibit hall with more than 150+ companies. We encourage you to plan time to visit the exhibit hall, attend Industry Lunches, breakfast sessions, Vision Theaters and more. You will find an unmatched array of products, services, new developments, and advancements showcased by the Academy’s industry partners. Be sure to participate in our 2022 San Diego Giveaway for an all-expenses paid trip to Academy 2022 San Diego!

Interested in participating in the Academy education program and sharing your research with Academy members and attendees from around the world? The Scientific Program paper and poster submission window is May 1 to 31, 2021, at 5:00 PM ET. View the submission guidelines here. Registration and housing for Academy 2021 Boston opens June 1, 2021.

While planning is underway for Boston, the Academy recognizes not everyone may be willing and able to travel. As such, plans for a virtual option are underway as well. For more information, visit here and stay tuned for the Program Preview in the coming months.
Health and Safety Guidelines

Our top priority is the health and safety of all Academy 2021 Boston attendees, corporate partners, exhibitors, and staff. In planning for a live meeting and in partnership with the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center (BCEC), the Academy will adhere to all local, state, and CDC regulations and guidelines. While health and safety guidelines continue to evolve, the Academy will abide by all recommendations in place which still may include:

- Required use of masks within the BCEC;
- Increased spacing to enable social distancing in all areas of the meeting, including session rooms, exhibit hall, lounges, and public spaces;
- Smaller capacity meeting rooms with spaced seating and designated entrances and exits to assist with one-way flows if required;
- Increased directional signage within the BCEC to direct attendee traffic;
- Additional signage to remind attendees about social distancing, handwashing, mask requirements, etc.;
- Attendee service areas designed to limit contact, plus additional safety measures, such as plexiglass dividers between attendees and ancillary service areas (such as Registration);
- Additional hand sanitizing stations throughout the BCEC;
- Enhanced cleaning schedules and filtration systems within the BCEC.
- Designated onsite medical professionals to assist as needed.

Contracted Hotels

Omni Boston Hotel at the Seaport**
(Co-Headquarters Hotel)
450 Summer St.
Boston, MA 02210
$359 Single / Double
$379 Triple
$399 Quad

The Westin Boston Waterfront**
(Co-Headquarters Hotel)
425 Summer St.
Boston, MA 02210
$349 Single / Double

Renaissance Boston Waterfront Hotel
606 Congress St.
Boston, MA 02210
$319 Single / Double

Seaport Boston Hotel & World Trade Center
1 Seaport Ln.
Boston, MA 02210
$284 Single / Double
$309 Triple
$334 Quad

Aloft Boston Seaport
401 D St.
Boston, MA 02210
$289 Single / Double
$309 Triple
$329 Quad

Boston Park Plaza*
(Government Hotel)
50 Park Plz.
Boston, MA 02116
$281 Single / Double

Element Boston Seaport
391 D St.
Boston, MA 02210
$299 Single / Double
$319 Triple
$399 Quad

* Note that this is a government per diem rate hotel, and as such the rate can change as of October 1, 2021. The rate listed above is based on per diem rates approved through September 30, 2021. Meeting attendees must show Government ID to receive the special per diem rate. Please note that while the Academy works to secure as many government rate rooms as possible, there are only a limited number available at this rate.

**Hotel is directly connected to the BCEC.
AMCO SIG Symposium: From the Trenches: Complex Cases at Academic Medical Centers

Through the discussion of atypical cases, the teamwork and interplay between interprofessions will be highlighted, including the vital role optometrists play in academic medical centers. Panelists will share their perspectives regarding the diagnosis, treatment, and management of the case, followed by a question and answer session with the attendees. Attending optometrists will gain further insight and knowledge when faced with similar complicated cases in their practice. The moderator will be Sherry Day, OD, FAAO, and case presenters will be Angela Demetrulias, OD, Drake Devos, OD, and Lori Ann Kehler, OD, FAAO.

Joint Anterior Segment and CCLRT Section Symposium: Therapeutics vs. Sclerals: Is the Best Defense a Good Offense?

This symposium will feature a moderated panel of optometrists discussing the advantages and disadvantages of treating anterior segment disease with a therapeutic based approach as opposed to a scleral lens-based approach. This discussion will be loosely based on a point-counterpoint format and focus on the advanced experiences and therapeutic approaches of the panelists. The moderator will be Jacob Lang, OD, FAAO, and the speakers will include Amy Nau, OD, FAAO, Lynette Johns, OD, FAAO, FSLS, Aaron Bronner, OD, FAAO, and Nicholas Colatrella, OD, FAAO.

Joint BVPPO & PHEV Section Symposium: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Pediatric Vision Care

The Binocular Vision, Perception, and Pediatric Optometry (BVPPO) and the Public Health & Environmental Vision (PHEV) Sections’ joint symposium will feature speakers involved in advanced research on race, gender, and access to pediatric eye care. Additionally, this symposium will dedicate time for an in-depth panel discussion with each of our expert speakers. The moderators will be Tawna Roberts, OD, PhD, FAAO, and Sandra Wang Harris, OD, MPH, FAAO, and the speakers will include Leslie Walker-Harding, MD, Michelle Johns, PhD, MPH, and Olutosin Ojugbele, MD, MPH.

Comprehensive Eye Care Section Symposium: ExCELL & FLARE: A Uveitis Symposium

This event will explore current and relevant clinical advances in the treatment and management of uveitis. Topics will be pertinent to all comprehensive eye care providers with attention
to novel treatment options including biologics and surgical care. The symposium aims to address how the comprehensive eye care provider can improve patient care to prevent vision loss and blindness while working collaboratively with other medical specialists. The moderator will be Bisant Labib, OD, FAAO, and the speakers will include Michelle Marciniak, OD, FAAO, George Papaliodis, MD, and Tracy Offerdahl-McGowan, PharmD, RPh, FAAO.

Section on CCLRT Symposium: Breaking the Chains of Presbyopia
This presentation will review the options of refractive technologies for presbyopia. This includes spectacles, contact lenses, IOL’s, and pharmaceutical options for presbyopia. Case presentations will explain the journey of presbyopia and demonstrate “how to” present options to patients to improve therapeutic outcomes. The moderator will be Rob Davis, OD, FAAO, and the speakers will include Selina McGee, OD, FAAO, Moshe Schwartz, OD, FAAO, Cristina Schnider, OD, MBA, FAAO, and David Seibel, OD, FAAO.

Glaucome Section Symposium: Monitoring Glaucome – Optimizing OCT Analysis
This course will give an up-to-date look at how to optimize the use of SD-OCT in glaucoma management based on the most recent evidence-based information and be a resource for optometrists to use in managing their own glaucoma patients. The main SD-OCT scanning protocols will be used, highlighting the use of scanning the macular vulnerability zone and how to fit this into the glaucoma assessment, as well as the importance of patient adherence. The moderator will be John Flanagan, PhD, DSc, FAAO, and the speakers will include Rim Makhlouf, OD, FAAO, Danica Marrelli, OD, FAAO, and David Friedman, MD, MPH, PhD.

Joint Low Vision and Optometric Education Section Symposium: Effective Connections with Patients: Cultivating Skills for Difficult Conversations in Eye Care
This course explores the relevance and challenges of developing and teaching advanced communication skills in eye care, especially related to serious vision conditions. Speakers will introduce a well-established model for cultivating communication skills in health care that has been developed by VitalTalk. Attendees will observe a teacher and a learner working with an actor who plays a patient with vision loss. Attendees will also learn specific communication and teaching skills, and explore ways to modify inquiry, practice, and teaching to further develop communication skills in eye care. The moderator will be Roanne Flom, OD, FAAO, and the speakers will include Marlee Spafford, OD, PhD, FAAO, Andrew Lawton, MD, and Roanne Flom, OD, FAAO.

Neuro-ophthalmic Disorders in Optometry SIG Symposium: Larry Gray Memorial Symposium on Neuro-Ophthalmic Disorders: Understanding Your Role in Neurosurgical Interventions of the Sellar Region
This lecture reviews clinical presentations, which suggest the presence of a sellar mass, need for surgical intervention, likelihood of visual recovery, and determination of urgency. You will hear perspectives of eye care providers as well as a neurosurgeon to help you better understand your role in diagnosis, work-up, referral, and both short- and long-term management of patients with sellar, suprasellar, and parasellar masses. The moderator will be Patricia Modica, OD, FAAO, and the speakers will include Kelly Malloy, OD, FAAO, Kelsey Mileski, OD, FAAO, and James Evans, MD.

Nutrition, Disease Prevention, and Wellness SIG Symposium: You Are What You Eat (And Smoke)
Because nutrition is an integral part of today’s eye care practice, this symposium discusses how diet and nutritional factors influence systemic and ocular health. Stuart Richer, OD, PhD, FAAO, will discuss the science of cannabis/CBD, as well as the ophthalmic effects. Kim Reed, OD, FAAO, will discuss “Trendy Diets,” including the myths and scientific facts of keto, fasting, Whole 30, etc. Julie Poteet, OD, MS, will detail the science behind the ideal anti-inflammatory diet. The moderator will be Whitney Catanio, OD, FAAO.

Optometric Education Section Symposium & Workshop: From Diversity to Inclusivity: Cases in Health Professions Education Leadership
Now more than ever, actively addressing racism and achieving equity in health care is essential. However, we are unable to meet this goal with the continued exclusion of minority groups in education and in education leadership, or by avoiding some challenging and tough discussions in clinical care. Through collaborative work and collective problem solving we can open the door to innovative and creative approaches to this global problem.

The Optometric Education Section symposium and workshop will discuss the benefits, steps, and risks inherent in moving towards diversity. Included concepts are fiscal and attainment benefits, inherent personal and societal biases, the impact of intersectionality in diversity, and the loss of privilege lived as persecution. The moderator will be Marc Taub, OD, FAAO, FCLOVD, and the speakers will include Constance LeBlanc, MD, Jamiu O. Busari, MD, and Lyn Sonnenberg, MD.
Public Health and Environmental Vision Section and Vision in Aging SIG Symposium: The State of the Pandemic: A Public Health Update on COVID-19 for Eye Care

The SARS-CoV-2 or COVID-19 virus was first reported in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. Since then, the world has faced a pandemic of proportions it hasn’t seen in modern times. This joint symposium will cover the public health aspects of COVID-19 and the salient aspects that every health care provider, especially eye care practitioners, should know. Special emphasis will be placed on the most recent breakthroughs, epidemiological findings, and lessons learned throughout 2021. The moderators will be Rebekah Montes, OD, FAAO, and Sandra Wang-Harris, OD, MPH, FAAO, and speakers will include Gary Chu, OD, MPH, FAAO, Rachel Druckenbrod, OD, FAAO, Suzanne Fleiszig, OD, PhD, FAAO, and Stanley Hatch, OD, MPH, FAAO.

Vision Science SIG Symposium: Natural and Artificial Light: Visual Modulators of Human Physiology and Performance

Environmental light is detected by the retina and the information is carried by the intrinsically photosensitive retinal ganglion cells to the suprachiasmatic nucleus, or master clock of the body. The goal of this symposium is to provide clinicians and researchers with current knowledge regarding influences of natural and artificial light on circadian rhythm, considering downstream effects on cardiovascular health, cancer risk, metabolism, and the eye. The development of evidence-based circadian lighting systems to protect human health and improve performance will be discussed. The moderators will be Lisa Ostrin, OD, PhD, FAAO, and Kristina Haworth, OD, PhD, FAAO, and the speakers will include Michael Do, PhD, Frank Scheer, PhD, Martin Moore-Ede, MD, PhD, and Debora Nickla, PhD.

Retina SIG Symposium: Hot Topics in Retina: Management of Complex Retinal Detachment and Macular Hole, and Inherited Retinal Disorders

This lecture will cover a practical approach for management of inherited retinal disease, as well as cell-based technology in management of retinal degeneration. Other topics include surgical management of complex retinal detachment and unusual and persistent macular hole. The moderator will be Jessica Haynes, OD, FAAO, and the speakers will include Steve Charles, MD, and Rachel Huckfeldt, MD, PhD.

Joint Vision in Aging SIG and Public Health & Environmental Vision Section Symposium: Immunology of Aging: What to Expect as We Get Older

This symposium will look at the effects of immunology on the aging system. An overview of system and ocular immunology with a specific focus on various disease process will be discussed. Additionally, vaccinations in the geriatric population will be reviewed. The moderators will be Rebekah Montes, OD, FAAO, and Sandra Wang-Harris, OD, MPH, FAAO, and the speakers will include Rachel Druckenbrod, OD, FAAO, Douglas Rett, OD, FAAO, Ruth Hyatt, OD, FAAO, and Satya Verma, OD, FAAO.
To the Roaring Twenties: A Time to Honor the Best of Us

With a little good fortune and a whole lot of vaccine, we will gather in Boston this fall to celebrate the end of 18 months of lockdowns and restrictions and the start of the new Roaring Twenties! It will be the first time we have returned to Boston in 10 years and the sixth time in our history. The first time was in 1929, toward the end of the original Roaring Twenties, a period of unprecedented social and political change immediately following the Spanish flu pandemic.

As we prepare to socialize, within a safe distance from one another, and celebrate at our annual meeting, it is time to consider who you would like to honor with an award. The Academy and its Foundation offer annual awards for all walks of our profession; for clinicians, pioneers, educators, global visionaries, scientists, mentors, and your fellow colleagues. Our awards are only as good as the people nominated. Please consider who you would like to nominate, who you would like to second your nomination, and then submit your nomination. Talk to your colleagues, remember your heroes, recognize the exceptional among us. These are your awards and help shape our beloved Academy.

The Awards Committee looks forward to receiving your nominations and celebrating our awardees in Boston. We will also take the opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the 2020 awardees. The Roaring Twenties of the last century saw the rise of the radio, affordable automobiles, the movie theater, and the Jazz Age. Here’s looking forward to flapping and flea hopping, and “Inspiring Excellence in Eye Care” as we gather in historic Boston.

Submit your nominations by Thursday, April 1, to Helen Viksnins at HelenV@aaoptom.org. See a full list of awards here.

John G. Flanagan, PhD, DSc, FAAO, Awards Committee Chair
Technology to the Rescue for a Technology-based Intervention: Telerehab for Low Vision

Ava K. Bittner, OD, PhD, FAAO, Diplomate in Low Vision

The pandemic has necessitated changes in many aspects of our lives. It has accelerated the adoption of video visits to provide optometric follow-up care remotely to patients. At first blush, one may expect that a research study on the use of telehealth would flourish during the pandemic period. However, when the telehealth approach involves remote video visit follow-ups with low vision patients who receive a new magnifier, i.e., telerehab, there are technology-related challenges to overcome when working with this population. In our early pilot study work with telerehab for low vision patients (pre-pandemic), we quickly learned many of our elderly patients had never used videoconferencing and could not remotely access a Zoom session at home, even with the help of loaner devices and our assistance by phone. Therefore, our creative solution for the 2019 AAO Clinical Research Award was to use local Lions Club volunteers to set up loaner equipment for telerehab sessions in low vision patients’ homes to eliminate the burden of technology.

Just as we had recruited and trained local Lions volunteers for our multi-center, randomized, controlled trial, the pandemic hit, and we were unable to use the Lions’ assistance in participants’ homes. This required another creative solution, which we have now successfully implemented in our study protocol: the use of a remote control access software program on the loaner smartphone that we provide to study participants. This allows the study investigator to remotely initiate and end zoom sessions with telerehab participants, which means that all they need to do is turn on a loaner smartphone and place it into a study-provided loaner stand. Our study participants welcomed this approach since it alleviates the tech encumbrance and the need for in-home assistance from others outside the household.

One of our study co-investigators, Dr. John Kaminski, recently commented that “necessity is the mother of all invention” and the protocol change we’ve had to implement due to the pandemic has really worked out for the better, rather than another negative pandemic-related repercussion. Our anecdotal experience with telerehab for low vision thus far is that patients have conveniently and effectively received training remotely to improve their use of their magnifier for reading. On the other hand, participants in the usual care control group for in-office training have missed visits due to general health-related or weather-related issues. Telerehab also provides us with a view into the patient’s home environment, which is important to help provide recommendations for improved lighting and ergonomics while using a magnifier. The technology-related accommodations have been critical to be able to successfully conduct the telerehab sessions with a low vision patient population. We look forward to reporting the trial outcomes in 2022.

We are grateful for 2019 AAO Clinical Research Award and the efforts of our study investigators: Dr. John Kaminski in Midland, MI; Dr. Lexi Malkin in Boston, MA; Dr. Nicole Ross in Boston, MA; Dr. Tiffany Chan in San Francisco, CA; Dr. Suleiman Alibhai in Alexandria, VA; Dr. Lynn Watt Kurata in Santa Monica, CA; Dr. Kristin Protosow in Nesconset, NY; Drs. Pat Yoshinaga & Ashley Deemer in Fullerton, CA; and Dr. Melissa Chun in Los Angeles, CA; under the leadership of the study principal investigator, Dr. Ava Bittner at UCLA and UCLA study coordinator, Kelly Hofschneider.
Fellowship Anniversaries

Class of 1971, 50 years!
Dr. Charles J. Archibald, Citrus Heights, CA
Dr. Stephan A. Bensussen, Sherman Oaks, CA
Dr. Bernard H. Blaustein, West Chester, PA
Dr. Clarence S. Bowen Jr., Taylors, SC
Dr. Scott D. Brisbin, Sherwood Park, AB
Dr. Louis J. Catania, Atlantic Beach, FL
Dr. Eugene S. Channing, Frederick, MD
Dr. Mark W. Eger, Coraopolis, PA
Dr. John J. Hammerli, Winter Park, FL
Dr. David A. Koch, Maple Glen, PA
Dr. Philip B. Kruger, New York, NY
Dr. Arthur S. Muccilli, Somerset, NJ
Dr. James L. NeDrow, Beatrice, NE
Dr. C. Ellis Potter, Mission, KS
Dr. Patrick L. Reardon, Jacksonville, FL
Dr. Paul C. Roten, Dothan, AL
Dr. J. James Saladin, Big Rapids, MI
Dr. Frank L. Salimeno, Ogden, UT
Dr. C. Wayne Shearer, Hixson, TN
Dr. Robert O. Vore, Plymouth, IN
Dr. Ronald O. Watson, Burlington, ON
Dr. Richard C. White, Fulton, MO
Dr. Vincent S. Zuccaro, Brentwood, CA

Class of 1981, 40 years!
Dr. Moses Albalas, Los Angeles, CA
Dr. Roy L. Baker, Redway, CA
Dr. Stuart Bark, Scottsdale, AZ
Dr. Harold E. Bedell, Canon City, CO
Dr. Douglas C. Beemer, Pierre, SD
Dr. Peter D. Bergenske, Otis Orchards, WA
Dr. Matthew Blodin, Torrington, CT
Dr. Raymond J. Brill, Mission, KS
Dr. Richard L. Brilliant, Philadelphia, PA
Dr. Stephen P. Byrnes, Londonderry, NH
Dr. Barbara Caffery, Toronto, ON
Dr. Nancy B. Carlson, Cambridge, MA
Dr. Leo G. Carney, Kelvin Grove, QLD
Dr. Bernt Ralph Chou, Mississauga, ON
Dr. Stephen R. Chun, Berkeley, CA
Dr. Kenneth J. Ciuffreda, New York, NY
Dr. Gregory B. Clay, Durant, OK
Dr. M. Patrick Day, Clinton, OK
Dr. Salvatore DeCanio, Atlantis, FL
Dr. Larry M. De Donato, Delano, CA
Dr. G. William Doolin Jr., Fort Walton Beach, FL
Prof. Nathan Efron, Isle of Capri, Queensland, AU
Dr. Robert S. Foo, South San Francisco, CA

Academy Past Presidents Dr. Mark Eger and Dr. Joan Exford pictured together at Academy 2014 Denver.

Class of 1996, 25 years!
Dr. Mark Alexander, Brunswick, ME
Dr. Douglas A. Apsey, San Antonio, TX
Dr. Henry J. Bausback, Sarasota, FL
Dr. Ron J. P. Beerten, Eerbeek, NL
Dr. M. Jean Bennett, Saint Charles, MO
Dr. Robert P. Bittel Jr., Jefferson Hills, PA
Dr. Traer G. Caywood, Springville, UT
Dr. Elyse L. Chaglasian, Chicago, IL
Dr. Susan T. L. Chung, Berkeley, CA
Dr. Robert P. Rutstein, Yardley, PA
Dr. Barry A. Weissman, Los Angeles, CA
Dr. Steven P. Wetcher, Morristown, NJ
Dr. Timcy C. Winslade, Wolfeville, NS
Fellowship Anniversaries

Dr. Alain S. Cote, Lachute, QC
Dr. Cynthia Louise Cupal, Fenton, MI
Dr. James R. Davis, Idaho Falls, ID
Dr. Robert E. Dister, Berkeley, CA
Dr. Mark T. L. Dunbar, Miami, FL
Dr. Robert M. Easton Jr., Oakland Park, FL
Dr. Franklin M. Edmunds, Orem, UT
Dr. Chidi U. Ekenna-Kalu, Pensacola, FL
Dr. Arthur B. Epstein, Phoenix, AZ
Dr. Theodore J. Felton, Kingsland, TX
Dr. Anthony A. Fiorilli, Howell, NJ
Dr. Suzanne M. J. Fleiszig, Berkeley, CA
Dr. Felicia A. Fodera, Sandy Hook, CT
Dr. Gary W. Fredericksen, Poquoson, VA
Dr. Robert B. Greer, Oakdale, CA
Dr. Bradford B. Grimm, Durango, CO
Dr. Suzan B. Grimm, Durango, CO
Dr. David T. Guzman, Voorhees, NJ
Dr. Ronald C. Harrison, Sonoma, CA
Dr. Ronald S. Harwerth, Houston, TX
Dr. David Peter Hong, Newport, Gwent, UK
Dr. Brian T. Hudson, Bemidji, MN
Dr. David G. Jupiter, Wilmington, DE
Dr. Alan C. Kabat, Cherry Hill, NJ
Dr. Rose Kaw, Santa Rosa, CA
Dr. Deborah L. Kerber, Florissant, MO
Dr. Jeffrey T. Kubo, Thousand Oaks, CA
Dr. Marjean T. Kulp, Columbus, OH
Dr. Jeffrey Donald Laferla, North Kansas City, MO
Dr. Paul J. Lavin, San Diego, CA
Dr. David Y. Lee, Chicago, IL
Dr. Cheryl A. Letheren, London, ON
Dr. Pamela A. Lowe, Niles, IL
Dr. Nicholas G. Luthman, Madison, VA
Dr. Matthew J. Maki, Owosso, MI
Dr. Cynthia A. Malvitz-Overly, Green Bay, WI
Dr. Andrew Matheson, Alresford, Hants, UK
Dr. Lance Matsuda, Seattle, WA
Dr. Jeffrey S. McFeely, Bellevue, WA
Dr. Jean-Pierre Meillon, Sr. Pantin, FR
Dr. Frederick M. Meyer, Roseville, CA
Dr. Steven N. Monroe, Shakopee, MN
Dr. Brenda Montecalvo, Beavercreek, OH
Dr. Kevin M. Moore, Alresford, Hants, UK
Dr. Alan R. Morse, New York, NY
Dr. Neil R. Nebeker, Merced, CA
Dr. Michael W. Ohlson, Marshall, MN
Dr. Robert A. Orsillo, Tallahassee, FL
Dr. Wesley T. Ota, Elk Grove, CA
Dr. Richard W. Phillips, Unicoi, TN
Dr. Deborah L. Prince, San Diego, CA
Dr. Philip B. Raber, Kidron, OH
Dr. Larry E. Richardson, Flagstaff, AZ
Dr. Karen B. Rosen, Tucson, AZ
Mr. David Mark Ruston, Teddington, UK
Dr. Valerie Savard, Alma, QC
Dr. Stephen W.D. Schokman, Wexford Town, County Wexford, IE
Dr. Joan M. Sears, Salisbury, NC
Dr. Padmalatha Segu, Missouri City, TX
Prof. Fiona Jane Stapleton, Sydney, NSW
Dr. Michael D. Stevens, Garden Ridge, TX
Dr. Zsolt G. Tapaszto, Boca Raton, FL
Dr. Dorothy C. Thomason, Clarksville, TN
Dr. J. Daniel Twelker, Tucson, AZ
Dr. Ken H. Uyesugi, Coronado, CA
Dr. Richard E. VanArsdel, Bloomington, IN
Dr. Eef van der Worp, Amsterdam, NL
Dr. Susan S. Whaley, Tallahassee, FL
Prof. Craig A. Woods, Ashgrove, QLD
Dr. Todd E. Wright, Edmond, OK
Dr. Kevin B. Wynne, Pittsford, NY
Dr. Irene L. Yang, Tacoma, WA
Prof. Graeme Young Farnham, Surrey, UK

Prof. Fiona Stapleton receiving the 2018 Glenn A. Fry Award from AAOF Past President, Dr. David Kirschen.

Academy Past President, Dr. Barbara Caffery speaking during the Academy 2017 Chicago Plenary Session.
Once Marshall completed his master’s degree in public health at the University of North Carolina, he returned to Indiana and was soon asked to become the founding chair of the Minority Health Advisory Committee for the Indiana State Department of Health. His experiences paved the way for his deep interest and commitment to addressing the disparities, inequality, and exclusion of minorities in optometry and the larger health care arena. In his words:

“Recently, I was invited to give the Jeffrey and Joyce Myers Lecture at The Ohio State University College of Optometry. I used the occasion to talk about what I called ‘The Not So Great American Truths – The Reality of Social Injustice and the Colorization of Health.’ My talk focused on the ethical and moral concept of health equity and the intersectionality of social justice and the health of people of color, with an understanding that health inequities and resulting disparities in health and health care arise, at least in a significant manner, from explicit and implicit public policies and social and structural practices that unjustly perpetuate unfair and avoidable health inequities or fail to alleviate their impact.

“A nationwide Survey on Race and Health conducted last August and September by ESPN’s The Unde feat ed and the Kaiser Family Foundation found that 70% of African Americans are likely to perceive discrimination in the U.S. health care system. A lack of patient-centeredness, leading to poor eye health, places a significant public health burden on the physical and mental health, the social and economic security and the productivity and quality of life of individuals, families and society, with particularly devastating impact on individuals and families of color. Throughout my professional career, my passion has been finding ways to increase equitable access to culturally-mindful, patient-centered eye and vision care, especially for racial and ethnic minorities and people who live in underserved communities who are at high risk for eye disease, the underutilization of eye and vision care services, and preventable vision loss.

“I am hopeful following last year’s disturbing and doubly viral events of heightened racial injustice and the COVID-19 pandemic that the optometric profession will, at a minimum, triple down on efforts at cultivating a professional climate that drives racial equity and fosters greater racial/ethnic diversity, and that those who come into the profession from African American communities and diverse cultural experiences will take up the mantle to advance the passion that I have lived both in and outside the exam room and work diligently to address the threat of acute and chronic vision impairment and eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in eye and vision care so that all people will be able to live full and productive lives.”
## Diplomate Prep Courses 2021

### Anterior Segment Section

The Anterior Segment Section Diplomate Prep Course will be a five-part series running from June through August.
- **June 8** – Chronic Conjunctivitis: An Overview on Classification and Management by Casey Hogan, OD, FAAO (one hour of COPE-approved CE)
- **June 22** – Sexually Transmitted Diseases and the Eye by A. Mika Moy, OD, FAAO (one hour of COPE-approved CE)
- **July 20** – Navigating Anterior Uveitis Like Your Name Was Magellan by Aaron Bronner, OD, FAAO (one hour of COPE-approved CE)
- **August 3** – Demystifying the Enigma of Corneal Infections by Zanna Kruoch, OD, FAAO (one hour of COPE-approved CE)
- **August 17** – Anterior Segment Jeopardy by Nicholas Colatrella, OD, FAAO, and Jeffrey Varanelli, OD, FAAO (one hour of COPE-approved CE)

### Binocular Vision, Perception, and Pediatric Optometry (BVPO) Section

The BVPO Section will hold its annual Diplomate Prep Course on Tuesday, November 2.
- **Evaluation and Treatment of Non-Strabismic Binocular Vision Disorders: Advanced Concepts** by Mitchell Scheiman, OD, PhD, FAAO (two hours of COPE-approved CE)
- **Evaluation of Strabismic Sensory Adaptations** by Kristine Hopkins, OD, MSPH, FAAO (two hours of COPE-approved CE)
- **Pediatric Low Vision: Evaluating and Managing Kids with Bad Eyes** by Catherine Heyman, OD, FCVO, FAAO (one hour of COPE-approved CE)
- **Evidence-Based Refractive Prescribing for Pediatric Patients** by Graham Erickson, OD, FCVO, FAAO (two hours of COPE-approved CE)
- **Assessment and Management of Children with Cerebral Visual Impairment (CVI): The What, Why, and How by Jameel Rizwana Hussaindeen, MPhil, PhD, FAAO (one hour of COPE-approved CE)

### Comprehensive Eye Care (CEC) Section

This two-hour CEC Section Diplomate Prep Course scheduled for Tuesday, November 2, will present an overview of the Comprehensive Eye Care Section program and history. Steps to becoming a Diplomate will be outlined in addition to presentations involving case report writing, written examination, clinical case-based simulation, and the oral examination discussion. Additionally, this course offers a review of the essentials in contact lens, pediatrics/binocular anomalies, and vision rehabilitation in a rapid-fire setting. These topics are pertinent to those eye care providers seeking Diplomate status in the Comprehensive Eye Care Section. Speakers include Danielle Weiler, OD, FAAO, Tina Porzukowiak, OD, FAAO, Bisant Labib, Grace Liao, OD, FAAO, FSLS, and Christina Esposito, OD, FAAO, FCVO. This course provides one hour of COPE-approved CE.

### Section on Cornea, Contact Lenses, and Refractive Technologies (CCLRT)

The Section on CCLRT Diplomate Prep Course, a.k.a. SOAR (Subspecialty Optometric Advanced Refinement), will be held in Spring or Summer 2021 (exact dates TBD).
- **Applying Orthokeratology to Myopia Management** by Andrew Pucker, OD, PhD, FAAO, and Moshe Schwartz, OD, FAAO (two hours of COPE-approved CE)
- **Scleral Lenses in the Trenches** by Alan Kwok, OD, FAAO, Karen Lee, OD, FSLS, FAAO, Melanie Frogozo, OD, FAAO, and Sheila Morrison, OD (two hours of COPE-approved CE)
- **Ocular Surface Disease and Other Cornea Anomalies** by Renee Reeder, OD, FAAO, FBCLA (two hours of COPE-approved CE)
- **Scleral Lenses and Hybrid** by Dan Fuller, OD, FAAO, FSLS (two hours of COPE-approved CE)
- **Ortho-K and Myopia Control** by Patrick Caroline, FAAO (two hours of COPE-approved CE)
- **Refractive Technology** by Phillip Brunson, OD, FAAO (two hours of COPE-approved CE)
- **GP Lenses by Vinita Henry, OD, FAAO (two hours of COPE-approved CE)

### Glaucoma Section

The Glaucoma Section Diplomate Prep Course date will be announced in the coming weeks.
- **Applying the Evidence for Best Practice in Angle Closure Disease: Diagnosis and Management** by Jack Phu, OD, PhD, FAAO (one hour of COPE-approved CE)
- **Critical Analysis of the Research Literature for the Expert Clinician** by Richard Madonna, MA, OD, FAAO (one hour of COPE-approved CE)
- **Masquerader: When It’s NOT Glaucoma** by John O’Donnell, OD, FAAO (one hour of COPE-approved CE)

### Low Vision Section

The Low Vision Section will hold its annual Diplomate Prep Course on Tuesday, November 2.
- **Low Vision Landmarks and Disabling Disorders** by Andrew Rixon, OD, FAAO (two hours of COPE-approved CE)
- **Low Vision Technology by Raman Bhakhri, OD, FAAO (one hour of COPE-approved CE)
- **Seeing the Unseen: Understanding the Landscape of Visual Impairment** by Gregory Wolfe, OD, MPH, FAAO (one hour of COPE-approved CE)
- **Outcomes of Low Vision Rehabilitation Research and Interventions to Manage Psychosocial Issues in the Visually Impaired** by Ava Bittner, OD, PhD, FAAO (one hour of COPE-approved CE)
- **Low Vision Clinical Optics Review by Matt Valdes, OD, FAAO (two hours of COPE-approved CE)
Optometric Education Section
The Optometric Education (OE) Section will offer this two-hour course to assist potential and current OE Diplomate candidates. The OE Diplomate program provides an opportunity to obtain recognition of advanced knowledge and expertise in the field of optometric education. Diplomate candidates engage in professional development, reflect on their teaching, their students’ learning, and increase their publication productivity while experiencing camaraderie with like-minded Academy Fellows. The course reviews the Diplomate application and candidacy steps and provides tips and techniques regarding the pursuit and demonstration of OE scholarship. The date and time of this prep course will be announced in the coming weeks.

Public Health and Environmental Vision (PHEV) Section
The PHEV Section Diplomate Prep Course will take place on Tuesday, November 2. Attendees can earn up to 8.5 hours of COPE-approved CE during the prep course.
• History of Public Health by Debbie Hettler, OD, MPH, FAAO
• Ethics by Satya Verma, OD, FAAO
• Prevention by Kevin Jackson, OD, MPH, FAAO
• Epidemiology and Biostatistics in the Year of COVID-19 by Stanley Hatch, OD, MPH, FAAO, and Lisa Jones-Jordan, PhD, FAAO
• NASEM Report and World Report on Vision by Sandra Block, OD, MPH, FAAO
• Optometry and Tropical Diseases by Michael Radoiu, OD, MPH, FAAO
• Health Care Policy by Debbie Hettler, OD, MPH, FAAO
• Quality Assurance by Barbara Cohn, OD, FAAO
• A Brief Lesson on Public Health Law by Stanley Hatch, OD, MPH, FAAO
• Environmental Vision by Stephen Dain, PhD, FAAO
• Eye Injuries and Eye Protection by Brian Hatch, OD, MBA, FAAO
• Occupational Optometry by Jeffrey Weaver, OD, MBA, FAAO
• Health Care Systems by Richard Hom, OD, PhD, FAAO

If you attend a Diplomate Prep Course, the $100 Diplomate application fee will be waived!

Having a Dream: Diplomate Spotlight on Bhavani Iyer, OD, FAAO, Diplomate in Low Vision

The day I received my admissions letter from MCO Big Rapids, is clearly etched in my mind. I was in my third year of optometry school in India. I was going to become a doctor and help many blind people. There were many challenges ahead and the 8,000 miles separating me from my dream was just one of them, not to mention the elephant in the room – the huge price tag. But none of those mattered as I imagined donning my white coat, driving fast on freeways, and eating ice cream sundaes in fancy cones. I pinned that image front and center in my mind and that served as my goal. I told myself the rest would come. Armed with an unshakable faith that things happen for those who believed in themselves, and my parents’ undaunting support, I landed in Michigan.

My naivete’ both hurt and helped at the same time. Having never left my home, I was completely unprepared for the bitter cold weather, the 10-foot snowbanks, and the bland food. My Indian accent combined with a total lack of knowledge of American idioms provided plenty of fodder for laughter to my ever-patient classmates as they drove me around and tried to help me understand that one does not “walk” into a “drive through.” I quickly realized I needed a new goal and found that becoming a Diplomate was the highest achievement I could get as a low vision optometrist and decided to pursue that direction.

Being a full-time low vision specialist, I had access to plenty of low vision cases. I set aside one hour each day to work on the cases, get them accepted and progress to the orals. Fueled by my rapid progress, I set forth an attempt to finish everything in a record two years. What I thought would be a cake walk turned out to be quite challenging. The orals revealed some holes in my skill set that I was not even aware I had. Having a wonderful mentor made the biggest difference in this process. I went back to work for the next year with a new goal of simply understanding the science behind what I was doing. The hard work paid off. In October 2020, I became the 76th Low Vision Diplomate. I feel humbled and honored to be part of this elite group of colleagues. This journey has taught me a lot about myself. For those aspiring to take this path, I encourage you to take your time and enjoy the process for it’s not about how fast you go but how you get there.
2020 Student Fellows

Congratulations to the 547 optometry students who earned their Student Fellowship virtually during Academy 2020 At Home.

Chicago College of Optometry, Midwestern University
Katie Flikkema
Kennedy Hall
Mitchell Kanellis
Camie Nakagawa
Abby Sperr
Sandy My Truong

Illinois College of Optometry
Nicole Bergman
Phoebe Chow
Natalia Anna Chramiec
Jena Gilbertson
Priya Janjukria
Doris Jin
Victoria Johnson
Erin Klukas
Stephanie Koss
Courtney Luce
Renee Marogy
Christine Nguyen
Fareesa Siddiqui
Navreet Singh

Indiana University, School of Optometry
Zena Atcho
Tanya Baek
Maddie Beagley
Jeremy Caylor
Kaila Cootts
Rushvi Desai
Kellie Gladys
Emily Hackbarth
Chad Herschberger
Mary Holder
Cydni Linton
Kayla Martin
Bret Miller
Sarah Miller
Rohil Patel
Olivia Ruiz
Lotus Schifsky
Samantha Schlesman
Brittany Taylor
Erica Tharp

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Department of Optometry and Vision Science
Naa Adorkor Lomotey
Earl Appiah Boadi
Joycelyn Arko Arhin
Christabel Arthur
Benjamin Baah Nonadu
Stacy Ewura-Ama Horthman
Ben-Nathaniel Fosu
Adwoa Owusuwaa Broni
Lucy Akua Afriyie Karikari
Isaiah Osei Duah Junior

Inter American University of Puerto Rico
Nerusha Abeyguneratne
Houdek Ashley
Claudia Vanessa Contreras
Perla Coronel
Taylor Fronczak
Kelsey Hayashi
Ashlynn Horton
Caryssa Ingersoll
Jessica Kaplan
Nitasha Merchant
Kajal Patel
Amy Rojo
Jorge Salazar
Kimbra Ussery
Catalina Vasquez
Desiree M. Vega Reyes

MCPHS University, School of Optometry
Kim-Thi Do
Gursewak Singh

Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University
Hussein Abdulameer
Aleasha Anderson
Alissa Athanasakos
Courtney Bieszczad
Ashley Bonneau
Rachel Bushey
James Carpenter
Rachel Chandra
Taylor Fiss
Paige Fuller
Allison Hyttinen
Rebecca Karl


Matthew Keller
Guang Lim
Jordan Marentette
Abby Mayer
Areli Mayorga
Caleb Mergener
Kristin Mohr
Connor Monaghan
Khushmanjot Pamma
Laura Paulson
Ashley Peters
Shelby Rauch
Karina Sandeen
Taylor Scheurer
Jason Spaude
Alina Usataia
Alyssa VanWerden
Viet Vu

Midwestern University, Arizona College of Optometry
Brittany Caputo
Madeline Gianandrea
Bryan Grossman
Chad Hawkins
Carmen Huang Wood
Thomas Hunter
Caitlin Jomoc
Hannah Ling
Joel Naberhaus
Anthony Nguyen
Megan Perea
Richard Saiz
Samantha Sanborn
Mahnoor Shahzad
Sarah Sipe
Melissa Van Mendoza
Eric Van Meter
Gavin Walters
Roseanne Work

New England College of Optometry
Samira Mortazavi
Lisa Nguyen
Sharon Qiu
Rachel Schwalbe
Fengqi Zhou

Northeastern State University, Oklahoma College of Optometry
Ameerah Al-Sadi
Kaylee Bobbitt
Jessica Olson Livermont
Wesley Rushing
Madeline Smith
Ann Marie Sparacino
Kevin Struble
Aubry Tackett
Paige Taylor

Nova Southeastern University, College of Optometry
Veronica Abadeer
Kaylee Aguilar
Amanda Aker
Mara Beane
Joshua Black
Vimarilyn Cardenas
Angelica Cifuentes
Stephanie Cuellar
Cameron Dawson
Bayinah Elyaman
Melynda Gagliardi
Adriana Garcia Aybar
Nestor Garcia Santos
Ariel Goodman
Roxanne Guerdt
Laura Hedrick
Morgan Hubbard
Rita Huynh
Alisha Kothari
Emily Lamb
Sarah Memon
Sarah Miles
Brian Nguyen
Katy Nguyen
Jesse Ning
Ryan Pham
Thao-Nguyen Phan
Angelicque Plante

Deann Raymond
Larissa Janelle Rodriguez
Jazmine Rojas
Monica Tarnawski
Justin Tran
Thu Tran
Kori Watkins
Jia Zhou

Other
Neha Irfan
Judy Nam

Pacific University, College of Optometry
Shweta Harvi
Michelle Lee
Chi Nguyen
Aldrin M. Santamaria
Kathryn Wong

Pennsylvania College of Optometry at Salus University
Jennifer Ashens
Natalie Hanna Baek
Zarsh Bhatti
Peter Chudolij
Dung Jennifer Dang
Denise Diaz Aguayo
Meron Fitta
Michelle Ho
Jenna Juarez
Ryan Keenan
Lucia Leone
Tanya Malhotra
Syeda Narmeen
Divya Patel
Olmedo Restrepo Jr.
Sarah Salman
Erika Saucedo
Cody Sherrin
Yu-Jen Su
Heidi Tedrick
Marina Verhagen
Bobi Yang

Southern California College of Optometry at Marshall B. Ketchum University
Allison Andrews
Anne Arah Cho
Joseph Bui
Lani May Centeno
Kevin Chan
Diana Chau
Grace Chau
Anna Choi
Lillian Choi
Alisa Chuang
Yau Han Eva Chung
Sally Corvacho
Zachary Cruz

SPRING 2021 15
University of California Berkeley, School of Optometry
Amber Candelaria
Jun Wing Chen
Ka Wei Miranda Cheng
Vanessa Davina Morales
Michelle Hoang
Kevin La
Jessica Liaw
Savanah Litton
Alexis Meyer
Loganne Mikkelsen
Eloisa Morfin
Angie Ng
Tuong-Vy (Vivian) Nguyen
Esther Sherbak
Michelle Hoang
Kevin La
Jessica Liaw
Savanah Litton
Alexis Meyer
Loganne Mikkelsen
Eloisa Morfin
Angie Ng
Tuong-Vy (Vivian) Nguyen
Esther Sherbak
University of Montreal
Victoria Barré
Odile Berube
Nicolas Blais
Noémie Bouchard
Geneviève Boucher-Costi
Djawed Boukhari
Jeremie Boulanger
Marissa Brideau
Justin Cloutier
Samuel Cote
Veronique Coutu
Tommy Désilets
Marwa Douhayni
Ariane Duchesne
Audrey-Anne Fausse-Nepton
Erika Fiset
Elana Floriani
Marianne Galibois
Monica Hebert
Sandrine Jodoin
Claudelle Jolicoeur
Doria Kawak
Emma Lamontagne
Alexandra Lapalme
Camille Malette
Karine Martin
Arnaud Massenet
Annabelle Messier
Aleksandra Mircheva
Laurent Nantel-Levreault
Marina Nguyen
Marilou Paquet
Rocio Rojas-Linares
Alexa Scalia
Victor-Ann Simard
Virginie Simard
Ariane St-Martin
Angel Ta
Carla Yassa
Christa Younan

University of Missouri at St. Louis, College of Optometry
Jacquelyn Bongard
Matthew Falconer
Katelyn Flood
Katie Kyles
Jialin Su
Jasmine Welch

University of Houston College of Optometry
Lily Arendt
Lindsey Chuxia Cai
Michelle Dang
Zebin Dholasaniya
Chase Francoeur
Teesha Frey
Hovhannes Hovhannisyan
Tiffany Huynh
Linus Klingler
Tiffany Lu
Maggie Lumei Zhang
Polly Luong
Anusha Rachel Mathew
Puja Mukesh Patel
Juliana Nghiem
Billy Nguyen
David Nguyen
Lawrence Nguyen
Quyen Nguyen
Thao Nguyen
Elizabeth Ortega
Sambridhi Paudyal
Amanda Piña
Kendal Pontarelli
Nikolai Sales
Joseph Trinh
Matthew Truong
Jessica Ustick
Vivian Yao

Northeastern State University third-year new Student Fellow, Jessica Livermont.

University of Pikeville, Kentucky College of Optometry
Gabrielle Ault
Claire Forsythe
Dominique Fulk
Adriana Guardiola
Sherrall Jenkins
Yaadam Jobe
Miranda Koehler
Haley Liberty
Brittany Morris
Morgan Rogers
Joshua Russell
Jessi Sampson
April Sayavong
Rebecca Simmons Brown
Brandon Smith
Ashlee Taylor
Peyton Taylor

University of the Incarnate World, Rosenberg School of Optometry
Lydia Han
LaTorian King

University of Waterloo
Xiaojing (Katrina) Li
Peipei (Yunpeng) Liang
Cedrick Mah

Western University of Health and Sciences, College of Optometry
Ani Agabalian
Aruj Ali
Jeanette Cross
Suzane Elwishahi
Mania Chanem
Giovanna Giovannone
Arianna Green
Rebekah Klein
Bhumika Pandya
Crystal Sin
Coral St Onge
Keeping Nutrition at the Forefront of Clinical Practice

Every day new studies reinforce how important nutrition is to ocular health, particularly the benefits of vitamin D and omega-3 fatty acids.

**Vitamin D - April M. Lewis, OD, FAAO**

Several recent studies have indicated that vitamin D plays a significant role in the disease process of dry eye. Patients with dry eye disease have significantly lower serum levels of vitamin D3 compared to healthy controls, which correlates to higher Ocular Surface Disease Index (OSDI) scores and increased subjective symptoms. Deficient vitamin D levels are associated with decreased tear production and poor corneal and conjunctival staining scores.

Vitamin D deficiency has also been linked to the disease process of diabetes. Individuals with Type 2 diabetes and vitamin D deficiency have an increased risk of diabetic retinopathy. It is thought that vitamin D protects against retinopathy via positive effects on glycemic control and insulin secretion, and via the anti-inflammatory effects of decreasing lymphocytes, natural killer cells, and pro-inflammatory cytokines. Furthermore, the vitamin D metabolite calcitriol is an effective inhibitor of retinal neovascularization.

Many studies have indicated that vitamin D protects against inflammation and oxidative stress, which may also protect against age-related retinal changes. Low serum levels of vitamin D are inversely associated with both early AMD and late neovascular AMD. Women under the age of 75 with adequate vitamin D levels are less likely to have early age-related macular degeneration. Additionally, the antiangiogenic properties of vitamin D can protect against the advanced neovascular form of AMD.

For these special populations, evaluation of vitamin D levels may play an important role in long term ocular health. Recommending vitamin D testing, and supplementation when indicated, can improve long term ocular and visual health.

**Omega-3 Fatty Acids - Christine Winter-Rundell, OD, FAAO, FCVO**

We’ve been hearing about the potential benefits of omega-3 fatty acids for a very long time, but the variance in study data has complicated our clinical recommendations. In relation to dry eye disease (DED), of recent there have been three large systematic reviews of dozens of randomized clinical trials (RCTs). All reviews found evidence for improvement in TBUT and Schirmer scores with omega-3 intervention, and the majority found improvements in tear osmolarity. Additionally, meibum has been demonstrated to change after omega-3 supplementation. However, along came the recent DREAM study, essentially declaring no conclusive benefit for DED.

Common critiques of the DREAM study point out that it had fewer inclusion criteria, included only moderate to severe DED patients, allowed continuation of existing DED therapy, and used olive oil as a placebo, all of which potentially hampered the statistical difference between the groups. Despite the DREAM study, the clinical takeaway is that recommending omega-3 supplementation to patients with nonspecific, mild to moderate DED, not already on other DED medications, is supported by extensive review of the literature.

When it comes to omega-3s and AMD, the studies have also been inconsistent, but overall show...
enough evidence to support a positive role in preventing and/or slowing progression of AMD. A review of RCTs found higher fish intake is associated with a lower risk of AMD progression, likely because of the protective effect of DHA.\textsuperscript{17} There is also a beneficial relationship between omega-3 level and Macular Pigment Optical Density (MPOD).\textsuperscript{17} The Early Biomarkers of AMD study (EBAMD) further supports the benefits of omega-3,\textsuperscript{18} and the unique inclusion criteria make this study of particular interest. Participants were all systemically healthy offspring of AMD patients who lacked any of the major predisposing factors attributable to atypical MPOD profiles: advanced age, smoking, and an AMD clinical diagnosis. The EBAMD study spanned nine years, and found that a low omega-3 index was one of the major factors in the early biomarkers of AMD, significant among 41% of healthy AMD offspring with atypical MPOD profiles. Given the global AMD epidemic, and the availability and safety profile of omega-3 supplements, optometrists should share the above information, at minimum, with patients who have atypical MPOD findings and/or those with parental family history, if not with all AMD patients.

To learn more about Nutrition, Disease Prevention, and Wellness (NDPW) in relation to eye care, please join the AAO NDPW Special Interest Group.

References

Arizona Chapter

The eighth annual Spring Meeting of the Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Optometry took place on Saturday, March 13, 2021. Approximately 100 optometrists, residents, and students were in attendance at the six-hour CE event hosted in a live virtual format using Zoom.

The diverse CE program featured our members and local ophthalmologists. A two-hour lecture titled “Diagnosis and Management of Infectious Corneal Conditions” was delivered by corneal ophthalmologist Robert Fintelmann, MD, and optometrist, Florencia Yeh, OD, FAAO, FSLS. This informative presentation highlighted cases of bacterial, viral, fungal, and acanthamoeba corneal infections, the best ways to diagnose each with special attention to culturing and confocal microscopy, as well as a variety of new treatment options.

Keynote speaker Damian Berezovsky, MD, delivered a one-hour lecture entitled “Diagnoses That Make Neuro-ophthalmologists Nervous and How the Optometrist Can be the Hero,” which explored neuro-ophthalmic emergencies and the role of optometrists in obtaining critical testing prior to referral.

His second one-hour lecture was on “Neuro-ophthalmology Referrals: Current Patterns and Pitfalls,” which delved into current trends, tips, and recommendations for more efficient referrals.

The CE program ended with a two-hour Grand Rounds Show Case featuring case reports from some newer Arizona Fellows and Candidates Paige Reasor, OD, FAAO, Michelle Mijares, OD, FAAO, Sean Rowan, OD, FAAO, Jonathan Lam, OD, and Caitlin Morrison, OD, FAAO, FSLS.

The business meeting was held in conjunction with the Spring Meeting where eight new 2020 Arizona Fellows were recognized and new officers were elected. Congratulations to the new officers.

- President: Linda Ly Bianciotto, OD, FAAO
- Vice President: Sarah E. Huff, MS, OD, FAAO
- Treasurer: Damilola Lajubutu, OD, FAAO
- Secretary: Sean Rowan, OD, FAAO
- Immediate Past President: Brianna Ryff, OD, FAAO, FSLS

Save the date for the chapter’s Fall Meeting on September 18, 2021.

India Chapter

As part of a drive to increase membership and engagement with the Academy and encourage the enrollment of eligible optometrists in Fellowship within India, the India Chapter conducted a series of activities during the past three months. Quotes from current Fellows within the chapter were shared on Facebook highlighting “What does FAAO Mean to Fellows in the India Chapter?”

This was followed by a series of five interactive interviews with the India Fellows on the Clinical, Scientific, and Special Category Fellowship candidate types and tips for case report submission. Fellows from each of these categories addressed FAQs and also enumerated the process towards application and successful completion of the fellowship. This series was received by more than 5,000 participants from across the country.

This year has also seen a record number of Fellowship applications from India, with more than 20 now in progress.

Illinois Chapter

The Illinois Chapter will hold its second virtual Rosenbloom Rounds scheduled on Thursday, April 22, on the topic of myopia management. Our speakers are Yi Pang, OD, PhD, FAAO, John Gialousakis OD, FAAO, and Jenelle Mallios, OD, FAAO.

The chapter would like to thank our speakers from our first virtual event this past January. It was our New Fellows Rosenbloom Rounds where brand new Fellows presented a case or research that they used to obtain their Fellowship. Our speakers were Chelsea Bradley OD, FAAO, Brittney Brady OD, FAAO, Bruce I. Gaynes OD, PharmD, MS, FAAO, Kathryn Hohs OD, FAAO, and Abigail Strauss, OD, FAAO. It was informative and very well attended.
Nova Southeastern University Student Chapter

Nova Southeastern University had 37 students receive their AAO Student Fellowship during Academy 2020 At Home last Fall. Many faculty members and residents participated in the virtual poster session and online education. Kudos to all who participated and made the very unique Academy experience a success.

Western University Student Chapter

On Saturday, February 20, Bennett McAllister, OD, FAAO, biked 66.66 miles for his 66th birthday to fundraise for the American Academy of Optometry Foundation Student Giving Matching Travel Grant Program. His ride along historic Route 66 was successful in raising $1,504 to provide travel grants for two Western University students to attend the next Academy annual meeting.

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365 VISIT NOW!
Dear Colleagues,

Happy Spring! I hope you are well and staying healthy. Since Academy 2020 At Home concluded, your Foundation has continued to work diligently on our six new programs, as well as our annual awards.

Kicking off this first quarter, we announced the first OD to PhD fellowship: The Jill and George Mertz Fellowship. This award supports an optometrist entering a PhD program and assists in cultivating the next generation of professors. Our research indicates this is a definite area of need within the profession and the Foundation is excited to continue to support new researchers and educators.

Related to our new programs, we received an overwhelming amount of applications for the Clinical Investigator Certification Training initiative. The inaugural session, consisting of 25 Fellows, will provide in-depth training on how to implement clinical research within their practice setting and is instructed by those working in clinical research every day.

Throughout the spring and summer, we will be introducing new collaborations and awards, which will benefit residents and researchers. Additionally, we will be launching our new research podcasts, staff training, and pitch competition programs. We’re excited to bring these to fruition and hope you take advantage of these programs, which are providing additional benefits to your Academy membership.

We are grateful to the many volunteers and donors who have helped us with these new initiatives. To learn more about these new and upcoming programs, continue reading this newsletter.

Please reach out if you would like to help the Foundation with your time and talents or consider making a donation. Every little bit helps our success.

Thank you for your continued support!

Sincerely,

Wendy Harrison, OD, PhD, FAAO
President, AAOF

Donate Here
American Academy of Optometry Foundation (AAOF) Launches New Programs

You’ve heard about them, read about them, and now we are pleased to launch beginning with the first of six new Foundation programs, the Clinical Investigator Certification training program.

Later this spring, AAOF will offer optometrists an online staff training program that provides basic foundational education for employees who are new to the eye care profession. The training modules are intended to be taken during the first two weeks of employment and certificates will be presented upon completion. Dave Sattler, a member of the Foundation’s Board of Directors, has led the task force developing the new program and recently remarked, “This comprehensive training course provides a simple and consistent way to help on-board new staff members into your practice. New staff members who complete all of the training modules will build their confidence more quickly and become even greater assets to your team.”

On Tuesday, March 30, the inaugural, eight-week Clinical Investigator Certification program commenced. This program provides training for practicing optometrists to acquire skills necessary to conduct rigorous sponsored, clinical trials within their practice. The class of 25 Fellows will meet virtually to learn interactively and discuss the responsibilities of an investigator conducting a clinical trial, basics in statistics specific to clinical trials, and the administrative/management aspects of research.

Later this spring, AAOF will offer optometrists an online staff training program that provides basic foundational education for employees who are new to the eye care profession. The training modules are intended to be taken during the first two weeks of employment and certificates will be presented upon completion. Dave Sattler, a member of the Foundation’s Board of Directors, has led the task force developing the new program and recently remarked, “This comprehensive training course provides a simple and consistent way to help on-board new staff members into your practice. New staff members who complete all of the training modules will build their confidence more quickly and become even greater assets to your team.”

The other program to launch this spring is the Clinical Podcast Series. As a practicing optometrist, research shows you may not have enough time or access to read relevant published research papers. This program will provide summaries of trending, clinically relevant research, which may directly translate and impact daily patient care. Dr. April Jasper, also a member of the Foundation’s Board of Directors, commented, “The podcast program is exciting and wonderful because it will allow me to listen to new and relevant research efficiently and provide me with best practices for implementing this research in my practice.”

Thanks to the generous support of Academy members and industry partners, the Foundation is developing these new programs as a way to to increase and add value to your member benefits.

If you are interested in helping the Foundation with your time and talents or in making a contribution, click here.
Ezell Fellow Update:
Billie Beckwith-Cohen,
DVM, MBA, FAAO

While 2020 was pivotal in my professional development, it was also challenging for me, as it was for our nation and the world. For many of us the number of cancelled meetings and presentations outnumbered those we could actually attend. Nonetheless, like others, I learned to utilize the powerful tools of remote conferencing, which offered novelty in many ways. They allowed us to continue the scientific discourse from the platform of our home, facilitated participation of attendees from marginalized and remote communities, and reduced the environmental footprint that is typical of large meetings.

This is my second year as an Ezell Fellow and I am certainly feeling the maturation of my clinical academic career. This year I have transitioned to the final stages of my PhD with the Kramer Lab in UC Berkeley, working on treatments to enhance vision in the face of debilitating retinal degeneration. A large portion of my work was recently published in the open access journal, eNeuro, bringing closure to a chapter in my life. The Ezell award has supported me in my education and as I sought to further my mentorship.

Recently, I commenced a four-year residency training program in comparative ophthalmology at Michigan State University. The training program aims to further develop veterinary clinician-scientists promoting ocular health in a breadth of species and supports their transition to a tenured academic position and obtaining extramural funding. The residency has a large research component to it, and it seamlessly builds on work done throughout my PhD, allowing me to study treatments for retinal degeneration in large animal models such as dogs and cats. I was recently awarded a two-year research grant to further my work with the Petersen-Jones Lab at MSU. I am extremely fortunate to have had the support of the American Academy of Optometry Foundation and the Optometric Glaucoma Society. As a mother of two young children, this support has made attendance in conferences and furthering my education not only possible but also a component in a highly successful academic trajectory. I am forever grateful.

Newest Giving Circle Members

The Foundation is deeply grateful for the ongoing commitment from this special group of donors. The President’s Circle was established in 1997 to recognize donors who contribute total gifts of $10,000 or more through either a pledge, one-time gift, or over time. The Foundation’s President’s Circle has seven giving levels: President’s Circle, Gold, Platinum, Diamond, Founder’s, Pioneer, and Visionary. Together they include more than 200 individual and corporate donor commitments.

The Foundation recognizes the newest President’s Circle members and those who increased their giving to a higher level (July 15, 2020 – March 8, 2021).

President’s Circle
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