Optometry in Poland: A Fellow’s Perspective

Joseph J. Pizzimenti, O.D., FAAO, travels to Poland on a six-month fellowship program at Poznan University.
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By the time you read this edition of The Visionary, the College of Optometry will have graduated its 15th class! A total of 93 newly minted O.D.s received their degrees on May 27, bringing our alumni census to just over 1,200—another milestone for the college. Commencement exercises were bittersweet for one family, whose daughter, Nichola Seegobin, was a member of the class of 2007 until her untimely death in 2006. The college sought and received permission from the university’s Board of Trustees to present a posthumous Doctor of Optometry degree to her parents as a tribute to her memory.

On a brighter note, I would like to share some events that make the College of Optometry the vibrant, forward-thinking educational institution it is today. I’m pleased to report that the number of applicants for the class that matriculated in the fall of 2007 is the highest ever. One of the many factors for the increase may be that optometry was rated one of the top 25 desired professions according to an article in U.S. News & World Report. This is due in part to the ever increasing eye care needs of baby boomers that have reached an age where optometric services are in greater demand. Additionally, the article states that optometrists are highly satisfied with their careers because they can resolve most vision problems with relative ease, thanks to evolving research and technology.

As the optometry profession grows, so does NSU’s College of Optometry. Six years ago, we developed a special program for students who needed—for a variety of reasons—five years to complete the O.D. program. To complement this program, we initiated a joint program in 2006 with the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences entitled the Preparatory Optometry Program. The POP, as it has come to be known, is a one-year course in which specially selected students—usually those whose background education needs strengthening for admission directly into the traditional program—take coursework in both the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Optometry. Those students who meet or exceed the POP completion requirements are granted admission into the professional degree program the following fall. A portion of the POP tuition earned by the college is used to fund academic scholarships, creating a win-win situation.

In addition, the college continues to expand its international relationships, currently exchanging students and educators with several schools and hospitals in China. In fact, Bai-Chuan Jiang, Ph.D., and I will travel to China in 2008, in time, we hope, for the Olympics to be held in that country. This is an opportunity to cement our current relationships and further expand our student/visitor exchange program. Likewise, we have made excellent inroads into relationships with the Latin American optometric community. Integral to this process, has been Janet Leasher, O.D., M.P.H., director of outreach services.

Our international relationships are perhaps an outgrowth of the ethnic and cultural diversity found among NSU students. The college is very proud of the diversity of its own student body, as over 50 percent of our students represent minority populations, including Hispanic, Asian, African American, and even a sprinkling of Pacific Islanders. Moreover, our students hail from 35 states as well as Canada and other countries. This diversity presents faculty and students alike with the opportunity to appreciate each other’s cultural backgrounds and learn in an atmosphere where conversations are broadened and ideas are exchanged. Students who receive a professional education in such a value-added environment have the advantage of being culturally competent when entering optometric practice.

In 2003, the College of Optometry launched an online Master of Science in Clinical Vision Research Program directed by Josephine Shallo-Hoffmann, Ph.D. The program has expanded to include a series of core courses that fit the needs of all the programs within the Health Professions Division. The natural progression of this successful course of study has been the development of Ph.D. level core courses. The program will commence in the near future in an academic environment that will foster creative thinking and lead to excellence in scholarship, research, and teaching.

Lastly, I would like to announce the addition of our two newest faculty members, Dr. Patricia Cisarik and Dr. Nadine Girgis. My hope is that this brief overview of our continuing achievements will encourage you to visit our campus, check the college and NSU Web sites for news and information, and make a connection with the College of Optometry. We should all be proud of our growth, achievements, and continuing progress. I hope to see each of you at one of our enjoyable alumni events, at professional meetings, or at one of our continuing education programs.

“Our international relationships are perhaps an outgrowth of the ethnic and cultural diversity found among NSU students.”
Without question, Nova Southeastern University’s future—and the outlook for the Health Professions Division—just keeps getting brighter and brighter. The dedicated drive toward preeminence started three years ago when the university established some bold strategic planning and infrastructure goals, including the creation of a University Center, Academical Village, and collaborative research building on the Davie campus.

The 366,000 square-foot University Center, which opened last year, has already become a critical university component because it provides a focal point for campus life and serves as a venue where NSU’s students, faculty, and staff—as well as the community—can enjoy concerts, sporting events, a wellness/fitness center, and convocations.

By the summer of 2008, the construction process for both the Academical Village and the 208,000 square-foot collaborative research building, which will be located immediately adjacent to the HPD parking garage, will kick into high gear. However, the campus’ transformation will actually commence much earlier than that as roadway placements are reconfigured in the months leading up to the first construction phases at University Park Plaza, which is the future site of NSU’s Academical Village. That will launch a whole series of events that will relate specifically to all our Health Professions Division programs, with the potential for constructing a new building between our current HPD lab/library edifice and the clinic building, which will add several hundred thousand square feet for our utility here at the Health Professions Division.

Under the current plan, which is still in the preliminary design stage, the existing NSU pharmacy will be relocated to the Academical Village site. As you can see, these enhancements effectively relate not only to the university but also very specifically to the Health Professions Division. As a result, we’re all going to start seeing some significant construction going on around our campus that will add great value to the university and help with the redistribution of the Health Professions Division in terms of space utilization.

These positive changes will also dramatically benefit our students. The Health Professions Division is already renown for its classroom teaching as well as its clinical and simulation instruction, and there’s no question that pedagogically, and from a curriculum perspective, we are blazing a trail with our many quality programs. But you need to have all the right components to be participatory on a national level with a reputation that is equal to what we already know our quality is.

These forthcoming enhancements will also give us a greater opportunity to utilize the latest technological capabilities and maximize the already adroit manner in which we use the latest hardware and software from a simulation, classroom teaching, and clinical application viewpoint. In fact, we are already ahead of most hospital and traditional medical office systems when it comes to medical error issues, such as using digitalized and totally paperless recordkeeping, which include everything from X rays to lab results.

In the midst of our current expansion efforts, the university is undergoing its mandatory 10-year SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) reaccreditation process. Although the full results of the SACS site visits won’t be revealed until early 2008, I can say with certainty that it was a very positive experience. The SACS team was very impressed by the university and its infrastructure, particularly our design and desire for exemplary education and our Quality Enhancement Plan. It was a very positive activity not only for the actual process of becoming fully accredited for another 10 years, but also for the university itself because we were able to gain some true insight and introspection regarding our own strategic planning and future direction.

To the students who are sitting in the classroom—the student doctors, student pharmacists, student optometrists, and student dentists—they may not recognize the educational revolution that is occurring because their focus is on soaking up all the information we present to them daily. I’m proud to say that we’re stepping beyond where some of the professions are today, not in terms of clinical practice, but in the foundations we are building to help create a more-formidable clinical practice.
During the past year, exciting new changes have been occurring. The Eye Institute has a new name—The Eye Care Institute—that was chosen to extend our mission of providing high-quality, cutting-edge eye care to our patients. It also ensures that the surrounding communities, including NSU students and employees, understand that eye care services in addition to education and research are provided at all our locations. Increased marketing has assisted in disseminating this message while informing others about all the vision specialty services provided at The Eye Care Institute.

The Optical Service at Davie was renovated last summer, which was an effort made possible due in part to the generous contributions of Marchon Eyewear, EyeDesigns, and Essilor. Patients have been impressed with the modern appearance and appreciate the larger selection of frames and lens options, like the Ipseo progressive lens.

Our new practice management software, NextGen, has enhanced patient care and student doctors’ experiences by improving continuity of care. NextGen also has reporting features that provide accurate information regarding patient follow-up visits, student doctor experiences with various procedures and diagnoses, data for future research projects, and the day-to-day operations. The order and inventory management portion of the system, OPTIK, enables the various services to track product sales and utilization. This provides important feedback to faculty members and students regarding the types of contact lenses being fit, the various low-vision devices dispensed, the utilization of different vision therapy equipment, and the types of lens designs and materials recommended in our optics.

The final component of the new system to be implemented is electronic medical records. This exciting new change will further enhance patient care and expose our students to the available technology regarding medical recordkeeping. The implementation of EMR is slated for next year.

We anticipate that these enhancements to The Eye Care Institute will result in improved patient care, heightened student learning experiences, and advancements of teaching techniques by the faculty. We look forward to the future growth of The Eye Care Institute and its continued support to underserved populations and the general community.

“The Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry’s (ASCO) “Each One, Reach One” campaign is a practitioner-based career promotion effort that encourages optometrists to talk to their patients and other gifted young people about optometry as a future career.

The goal of the “Each One, Reach One” program is to increase optometry’s national applicant pool to three applicants for each first-year position and to develop an applicant pool that reflects the diversity of the U.S. population. According to a 10-year study on incoming students at all schools and colleges of optometry, the majority of students indicated that their decision to choose optometry as a career was due to the encouragement of individual optometrists. However, although the number of unduplicated applicants has increased 27 percent since 2002, it is still below the number of students who applied in 1999. You are optometry’s best advocates—your enthusiasm and commitment to the profession will encourage students to choose optometry as a career.

An important note: This program is not about increasing the number of graduates from the nation’s optometry schools. It’s about making sure that those who are selected continue to reflect the profession’s ability to attract bright and caring young people.

Join Now!

It’s easy to become a member of the “Each One, Reach One” Career Promotion Corps and promote your profession to the optometrists of tomorrow. Just go to the ASCO Web site at www.opted.org and click on Career Promotion Corps or contact Victoria Smith-Moore at ASCO at vsmithmoore@opted.org.
In July 2006, I began a six-month fellowship through the WCO that took me to Poznan University of Medical Sciences (PUMS), Department of Optometry and Biology of Visual System, in Poznan, Poland. My primary goal was to assist the optometric education systems in Poland and, to a lesser extent, the Czech Republic, in training tomorrow’s optometrists to practice at the highest possible level, resulting in quality patient care. A desired long-term outcome of FCO’s continued work is the advancement of the profession of optometry in Central Europe.

The Department
Bogdan Miskowiak, M.D., Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Optometry and Biology of Visual System, was extremely collegial as he welcomed me to PUMS. Dr. Miskowiak and his staff helped me move into the former office of Fulbright Scholar Dr. Tim Wingert, who had spent the previous four months teaching in the department. Dr. Miskowiak provided me with information about the history and current status of the profession in Poland, the optometry curriculum at PUMS, and my planned teaching and other duties while visiting.

The optometry program at PUMS has two tracts. The five-year program includes three years of physics’ courses, with an emphasis on optics, followed by a two-year specialization in optometry. PUMS also offers a postgraduate two-year optometry program designed for students who have already earned a university degree.

While in Poznan, I delivered several lectures to both students and faculty in the areas of low vision, geriatric optometry, ocular disease, clinical procedures, binocular vision, and vision therapy. I provided the PUMS faculty members with my lecture notes so they could be incorporated and adapted for use in the optometry curriculum. In addition to these guest lectures, my duties included the instruction of students in clinical procedures. I also had the pleasure of presenting a lecture at a continuing education program in Poznan. The program was unique in that the fields of optometry, ophthalmology, and opticianry were all represented. At this meeting, the “three Os” attended lectures and workshops together and exchanged ideas.

The Profession
It pleased me to learn that the Association of Polish Optometrists is active and meets on a regular basis. I did have the opportunity to present a lecture to this group and afterward met with its president, Radoslaw Szewc.

Optometry as a profession is at a crossroads in Poland. While it is recognized as a health discipline, optometry the profession (with a defined scope of practice) is not defined by Polish law. Szewc indicated that Polish optometry is in need of legislative support from the ECOO and WCO. This is crucial, as the health care commission of the Parliament is composed of mostly medical doctors who may not be aware of the potential role of optometrists as primary eye-care providers.
By virtue of a well-established optometric education system and a strong association, optometry in Poland deserves to be recognized as a health profession distinct from both ophthalmology and opticianry. There is a need for optometrists, particularly in rural and low-income urban areas. The government-run health care system provides free eye care for all citizens, and most citizens seek well eye care only to be put on a waiting list. In addition, since refractive surgery is unaffordable to most residents, there exists a need for true contact lens specialists. Low-vision rehabilitation is another area of optometry that can address a growing unmet need.

Once optometry is formally recognized in Poland as a health profession with a distinct scope of practice, Polish optometrists can make larger gains and work toward becoming the country’s experts in refractive eye care. This includes clinical refraction, ophthalmic lens prescribing, contact lens fitting and prescribing (including soft, RGP, torics, bifocals, and other specialty designs), vision therapy, and low-vision rehabilitation. This, I believe, is a reasonable and attainable scope of practice.

There are currently over 3,000 ophthalmologists in Poland, but only about 800 of these are certified to perform surgery. Therefore, the majority of ophthalmologists spend their days providing refractive, contact lens, and non-surgical eye care. Unfortunately, this lack of progress in ophthalmology as a profession has contributed to optometry’s challenges in establishing itself in the health care scheme.

RESC Study
Another of my WCO fellowship objectives was to continue to work toward the establishment of a pilot study of refractive errors in children (RESC) in Poznan. Drs. Janice Scharre and Janice Jurkus of the Illinois College of Optometry did the initial groundwork for this project in Poland.

Poznan has a viable potential patient base, a university optometric institution, and ample practicing optometrists to conduct the pilot. Limiting factors include a relatively small faculty, limited computer resources, and the need for the cooperation of ophthalmology for the cycloplegic portion of the study (optometrists are not currently permitted to use cycloplegic agents). Dr. Miskowiak is in full support of the RESC study and has an energetic and enthusiastic faculty with expertise in this area. This bodes well for future progress in Poland.

A Word of Thanks
I wish to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to the WCO for awarding me this fellowship. In addition, I am grateful to Hoya Vision Care for its support for the WCO Fellowship Program.

I also wish to thank NSU President Ray Ferrero, Jr., HPD Chancellor Dr. Fred Lippman, and my college’s dean, Dr. David Loshin, for their support.
“Optometry as a profession is at a crossroads in Poland. While it is recognized as a health discipline, optometry the profession (with a defined scope of practice) is not defined by Polish law.”
Optometry has traditionally been an independent profession that is often practiced in a private, standalone setting. With the advent of managed care and the coordination of primary health care services, optometrists are now functioning as “gatekeepers.” Optometrists and their patients are increasingly benefiting from the delivery of eye care in multidisciplinary environments that allow for an expanded, dynamic scope of practice.

Several years ago, Roger Wilson, O.D., an optometric educator at New England College of Optometry, completed sabbatical work at NSU in the area of interdisciplinary clinical education. In his final report, he challenged the optometry program at NSU to begin implementing an interdisciplinary clinical curriculum. Dr. Loshin, NSU optometry administration, and several faculty members enthusiastically embraced this concept.

The Interdisciplinary Generalist Curriculum (IGC) for optometry at Nova Southeastern University is designed to assist select students in obtaining an understanding and appreciation for interdisciplinary health care. Key to this model is common clinical training experiences for students within the programs of optometry, osteopathic medicine, and pharmacy. Another IGC principle is the early-career clinical exposure of optometry students to positive role models in primary care practice (optometry and other disciplines). This, we feel, will enable them to develop confidence in their communication skills with patients, preceptors, and other health care providers.

Students rotating through the IGC program are assigned to physician mentors in medicine, pharmacy, and optometry. Through observation, role modeling, and interaction, the optometry students gain valuable knowledge and skills to recognize clinical problems and institute treatments. They learn how to utilize community resources for patients and integrate consultations and subspecialty care into the overall management of patients. During their pharmacy rotation, they learn how to assess current pharmacotherapy, assist in performing point-of-service lab testing (e.g., glucose, HbA1c, lipid profile), and participate in the education of patients.

Another programmatic aspect is the participation of the optometry students and residents in a daily Interdisciplinary Morning Report at the Davie campus. Morning report consists of regular presentations by each discipline—medicine, pharmacy, and optometry. In addition to their weekly clinic assignment, the IGC students may participate with the optometry residents, osteopathic medicine students and residents, and pharmacy students and residents at an interdisciplinary diabetes eye clinic, including the Diabetes and Macula Clinic in Davie.

In recognizing the benefits of interdisciplinary clinical care throughout the health care system, NSU Health Professions Division faculty members are taking a leadership role that will have a positive impact on tomorrow’s optometrists.
Alumni may be surprised to learn how traditional optometric courses currently use technology. For today’s optometry students who like to blog, surf the Web, or use software games and programs, NSU’s optometry faculty has incorporated newer technologies to make learning in lectures and laboratories more effective, interesting, and fun.

**Virtual Optics Program**
Bai-Chuan Jiang, Ph.D., FAAO, professor of optometry, created a Virtual Optics software program through collaboration with NSU’s mathematics’ faculty. The program was funded by an NSU President’s Faculty Scholarship Award and was established to provide demonstrations and virtual experiments in the areas of ray tracing, prisms, and refraction. The software was used in lecture classes to demonstrate concepts and was also available to students who could supplement lab exercises and problems by repeating additional experiments and practice problems. Students liked working with the new software, which provided instant results, for many reasons. Multiple trials of experiments could be performed to allow students to perceive trends in data and get the “big picture” of the theory. They could also work at their own pace and repeat experiments when desired.

**Beyond Question Audience Response System**
Another technology introduced to NSU’s College of Optometry was the Beyond Question audience response system, which allows students to respond in lecture settings by individual remote controls. Manufactured by Smart Room Technology, the system consists of software that is license-free, can be run off a flash drive, and features hardware that uses individual remote controls and a radio frequency receiver.

The system interfaces with Microsoft PowerPoint and can be embedded within a lecture presentation. The system can be used to allow students to answer questions or problems, survey student opinion, or administer quizzes. Beyond Question was used in several classes including Optics, Optometric Theory and Methods, Introduction to Optometry, and Binocular Vision. Dr. Jiang, along with faculty members Melanie Crandall, O.D., M.B.A., and Gregory Fecho, O.D., implemented Beyond Question in a variety of ways. The system allows faculty to instantly determine if students understand key concepts and promotes active learning. Faculty liked the interactive format Beyond Question brought to lectures, while students enjoyed the interactive, fun, and engaging system aspects.

**Electronic Course Diary**
Optometry students familiar with blogging and MySpace loved the electronic course diaries used by Dr. Fecho and Chris Woodruff, O.D., M.B.A., FAAO. In courses such as Binocular Vision, Ophthalmic Optics, and Optometric Theory and Methods, course instructors kept a daily diary that summarized main points of the lecture. The diary could be accessed through the course Web site and helped to organize information and guide students in how to study. Electronic notification let students know when new information had been posted. Students also liked that it “provided a glimpse into the mind of the professor.” Other helpful features were that students could search the diary by topic or date to get additional help and instructional “pearls” to learn the material. Students also enjoyed the convenience and access the electronic diary provided.

**Webcasting**
Dr. Fecho used the capabilities of electronic media to film and transmit Webcasts for Optometric Theory and Methods and Binocular Vision. Webcasting, sometimes called podcasting, allows students to view film clips of the instructor at work. In segments that range from 10 to 45 minutes in length, Dr. Fecho provided reviews, worked out problems, or discussed a specific topic. Because the information is captured electronically, students can download and view Webcasts anywhere, including on their own computers or portable players.

Webcasting allows students ongoing access to the information as well as the ability to review a topic. For students working on problems, the instructor’s explanation can be paused, repeated, and tailored to the individual student’s needs. Additionally, students can even watch Webcasts on topics after they have completed the class, providing an additional resource.

No technology is without its technical difficulties, and all technologies demand that both the instructor and students obtain certain skills. Yet it is clear that as we move into the new millennium, technology is here to stay. NSU’s faculty and students are harnessing their powers to teach and learn more effectively.

“NSU’s faculty and students are harnessing their powers to teach and learn more effectively.”
To state the obvious, as a college of optometry, our primary educational mission is to train our students so they may competently and professionally practice optometry. Consequently, all the courses, laboratories, and clinics are geared toward this goal.

A critical component of clinical training is the externship program. Clinical externships promote awareness about many aspects of optometry that are not available to the student in a traditional classroom setting. During clinical experiences, students learn to apply classroom learning to often-complex clinical problems, and to do so in a manner that satisfies professional practice standards.

Assessment of a clinical patient takes on quite a different texture when aspects such as cultural diversity, personal motives, treatment expectations, values, regional and geographical influences, and other internal and external forces are applied. These attributes simply can't be taught in a lecture hall or laboratory. For example, reading about viral eye disease in a lecture handout doesn't have the same impact as conducting a patient interview with a 72-year-old widow who suffers post-herpetic neuralgia, and learning how this has affected her quality of life.

As faculty members, we often hear students saying how something they learned in the classroom finally "clicked" when they saw the condition in a patient. It's also quite common for students to say they felt like they learned more in their first week of fourth-year externships than they learned in their entire first three years combined. (Of course, as a faculty member teaching within those first three years, I try not to get my feelings hurt when I hear things like that.)

Given the broad array of externship sites with which the college is affiliated, it is certainly challenging to guarantee identical learning experiences for every student. In fact, "identical" learning experiences aren't even a reasonable goal when considering that some sites offer intensive vision therapy experiences while others offer high-volume post-op cases. One of the college's stated objectives is to "ensure varied clinical experiences in multidisciplinary settings that will prepare the student to achieve entry-level competence in the diagnosis and management of ocular and visual conditions." This objective is deliberately broad to allow for the wide range of experiences available to our students.

However, as we continue to grow as a college and a profession, maintaining perspective on what our students are learning, and what they should be learning, takes on greater importance. And while our students and alumni consistently rank the externship program very highly on various surveys and evaluations, we recognize that we have an important responsibility to maintain that same high quality of education that our students and alumni have come to expect.

In that light, the college has adopted a Quality Enhancement Plan, or QEP, that is designed to enhance student learning in our externship program. Our QEP has three broad goals:

- to improve the student evaluation process
- to enhance the site evaluation process
- to advance the externship course curricula

As one result of the QEP, we hope to provide students with more specific feedback regarding their clinical strengths and weaknesses. Similarly, we anticipate the development of a finer-grained site-evaluation process, which will not only provide the sites with meaningful feedback regarding student perceptions of the learning environment, but also will allow future students who are in the process of choosing externship sites to base their decisions on more useful information. Finally, we hope to develop more specific learning objectives for each clinical externship in order to better guide both sites and students regarding the learning activities taking place during the externship.

A Web discussion board has been developed for faculty, students, site directors, and alumni to exchange ideas on these topics. We look forward to expanding our curriculum review process that currently and primarily involves only student course ratings and faculty review. Incorporating faculty, students, alumni, and site directors in an interactive relationship should generate a richer understanding of our program. We welcome your input in this important process. To participate, please contact Dr. Kimberly Reed at kimreed@nova.edu for the URL, username, and password to access the discussion board.
The advent of Healthy Vision 2010, a national strategy to improve quality of life and reduce health disparities in the American people, introduces a growing need for training future optometrists in health education, health promotion, and community-based initiatives. A new course in 2007, facilitated by Dr. Janet Leasher, gave students the experiential learning tools to design, deliver, and evaluate appropriate awareness interventions in the communities surrounding our campus in South Florida and in their future professional careers.

Prevention of sight-threatening eye conditions requires public awareness and behavior modification of potentially harmful practices that could lead to blindness. Effective collaboration of professionals, individuals, and the community drives the initiative to prevent avoidable blindness.

Twenty-one groups of second-year optometry students performed community needs assessments, designed and delivered health education initiatives, evaluated the outcomes of their work, and presented their findings in the form of a scientific poster session at the NSU Health Professions Division campus in April.

Two student groups focused on InfantSEE®, a public health program where optometrists provide a comprehensive infant eye assessment within the first year of life at no cost to ensure that eye and vision care become an integral part of infant wellness care to improve a child’s quality of life. Two groups worked to dispel the myths about vision in the NSU undergraduate and professional student community, while another focused on the importance of eye protection while riding motorcycles at a new rider class.

Glaucoma awareness was promoted at a local business in conjunction with Glaucoma Awareness Month in January. Understanding patients’ reasons for noncompliance with using glaucoma treatment was another project, while appropriate UV-protecting sun wear at the beach and pool was also emphasized. Getting a dilated eye examination yearly is important for early detection of eye disease. Educating schoolteachers and parents about the signs and symptoms of learning-related vision problems will help with the identification of children who may otherwise struggle in school. Understanding the dangers of UV in tanning beds at a local gym was another project, while sports vision, vision therapy, and the use of protective eyewear while playing racquetball were also emphasized.

Students found these projects to be very time-consuming and challenging. The rewards come when public awareness converts into action, which creates lasting change in how we protect our eyes and promote good visual health in the community.


Nova Southeastern University is the North American Associated Center for the UNESCO Chair of Visual Health and Development, which is dedicated to providing sustainable solutions for access to visual health for the most underprivileged populations in the developing world. One of the action lines to achieve this end is through education and sensitization.

A course in visual health and development was designed to deliver knowledge about the causes of poverty in the world, to understand cooperation for development, to examine the role health and education play in development, and to understand the state of visual health in the world and what can be done to improve it. Optometry, ophthalmology, and opticianry faculty members from across Europe, Africa, and the Americas have been trained to deliver this course at their institutions. The network of educators who form part of this UNESCOVISION Network has now grown to almost 75 institutions.

The Chair believes that educational materials about this topic should be freely distributed. The UNESCO Chair team developed a CD-ROM in 2004 that contains all the PowerPoint presentations, classroom exercises, participatory role-play, and examinations in order to deliver the course in English and Spanish. In December 2006, the Chair published the accompanying bilingual textbook. Dr. Janet Leasher, NSUCO faculty member and coordinator of the North American Associated Center, edited the English version and authored one of the modules for both the CD-ROM and textbook.

NSU piloted the first fully online delivery of this course in English to leaders of VOSH (Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity) in the spring of 2007. The course has recently been added as an optional core course in the Master of Science in Clinical Vision Research program. It is available for non-degree seeking students and was offered during the summer quarter.

Every five seconds another child goes blind in the world. Over 45 million people are blind, and an estimated 153 million people have functional blindness due to uncorrected refractive error, which can be corrected by a simple pair of eyeglasses.

VISION 2020: The Right to Sight, which is a global initiative of the World Health Organization and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness, intends to eliminate avoidable blindness around the world by the year 2020. Nova Southeastern University is a member of the World Council of Optometry (WCO), and the WCO is a “Category A” member—or member of the highest level of the VISION 2020 Task Force.

Faculty member Janet Leasher, in her role as vice chair of the WCO Public Health and Development Committee, has been working to develop a toolkit featured in a CD-ROM to teach optometrists around the world how to participate in VISION 2020. Developed in conjunction with WCO Executive Director Melissa Padilla, Dr. Chip Parker of Lake Worth, Florida, Dr. Ron Fyfe of New Zealand, and Kovin Naidoo from South Africa, this toolkit provides a roadmap to identifying key priorities, technical constraints, and operational strategies in a hands-on CD-ROM format for optometrists to develop long-term sustainable eye-care delivery systems. It familiarizes the optometrist with background knowledge and terminology needed to operate within a public health context to ultimately influence policy reformation, service delivery, educational programs, and workforce development.

Assistance in evaluating a situational analysis, baseline epidemiological data, human resources, capital equipment, and training requirements is included in a step-by-step approach to defining priorities and program development, implementation, and evaluation. By empowering optometrists with these skills, they will better be able to contribute to national plans for the prevention of blindness.

The toolkit was launched at the World Council of Optometry General Delegates Meeting in Mexico City in April 2007 and is available for member organizations through the WCO secretariat office. For more information, please visit www.worldoptometry.org.
Increasing support for faculty members to perform research and scholarship has become a major initiative of Nova Southeastern University. In fact, the university received $38,883,440 in sponsored funding for research, community service, and teaching/training activities in fiscal year (FY) 2005-06, which represents a 12 percent increase in sponsored funding over the previous fiscal year.

During FY 2005-06, the College of Optometry submitted proposals totaling $434,698 and was awarded sponsored funding of $957,780, research funding of $799,367, community service funding of $10,000, and teaching/training funding of $148,413.

Congratulations to the following faculty members, residents, and students who have been awarded support in the most recent round of funding.

**Bacigalupi M, Neiberg M, Schatz S, and Laubach H.**
NSU-HPD Research Grant: “In Vitro Evaluation of Topical Management of Canaliculitis.” ($2,500)

**SUMMARY:** In 1994, surgical canaliculotomy was established as the treatment of choice for canaliculitis. The study aims to demonstrate the effectiveness of newer topical antibiotic treatment for these infections. If the study participants are able to demonstrate that intracanular irrigation of topical antibiotics is effective in significantly decreasing the bacteria load, they can begin to make clinical recommendations for medical treatment of canaliculitis instead of surgical treatment.

**Woodruff C and Seger K.**
Vision Service Plan Grant: “Bring Down the Barriers to Practice Ownership.” 1-1-07 through 12-31-07. ($15,026)

**SUMMARY:** The project, which examines perceived barriers to optometric practice ownership, involves surveying fourth-year students and recent graduates regarding attitudes about practice ownership. After the surveys are analyzed, a one-day seminar will be provided to address the obstacles involved in practice purchase and practice startup.

**Wagner H, Black G, Frauens B, Pizzimenti J, and Silverman M.** “The Many Eyes of Diabetes.” A collaborative effort between the Florida Optometric Association and Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry that is supported by the HEALTHY VISION COMMUNITY AWARDS PROGRAM, National Eye Institute, and National Institutes of Health. ($10,000)

**SUMMARY:** Many patients do not recognize the importance of periodic dilated fundus examinations in the absence of ocular symptoms, nor do they recognize the benefits of early detection of diabetic eye disease. This project’s goal is to communicate a message—that vision loss from diabetes is often preventable with timely detection and treatment—through the construction of a Web site that incorporates a brief multilingual video and text message that may be presented in-office to patients with diabetes.


**SUMMARY:** The specific aims of the study are to evaluate the health of the ganglion cell layer by interpreting the data collected with the ONHC variation of the mfERG, to objectively quantify the data collected through evaluation of implicit time and amplitude of the waveforms, and to develop a normative database.

**Schatz S and Laubach H.** “Efficacy of Fourth-Generation Fluoroquinolones Against Selected Bacterial and Fungal Isolates.” ($25,000)

**SUMMARY:** This study focused on the efficacy of fourth-generation fluoroquinolones against selected bacterial and fungal isolates.

**Schatz S and Laubach H.** “Studies on Fungal Contamination of Selected Topical Fluoroquinolones.” ($7,000)

**SUMMARY:** This study focused on fungal contamination of gatifloxacin and moxifloxacin.

**SUMMARY:** Optometric students learn about medical recordkeeping, diagnosis and treatment, and the role of other health care practitioners. However, they do not participate in activities that give them experience in the legal consequences of poor recordkeeping, misdiagnosis, and failure to refer. By immersing students in the historical management of a patient and malpractice trial, factors that contribute to increased risk for medical malpractice were demonstrated. Following their participation, it was anticipated that students would develop a heightened sensitivity to the need to keep accurate and complete medical records, properly diagnose and manage patients’ conditions, and make timely referrals to other health care practitioners when appropriate.

Katell A, Blodgett MG, and Patterson N. “Broward Outlook 20/20: An Interdisciplinary Psychosocial Intervention Program for People with Low Vision and Their Caregivers.”

**SUMMARY:** The three overarching goals of this program are (1) to diminish negative psychosocial symptomatology and factors reducing quality of life and functioning; (2) to facilitate integration into mainstream low-vision resources, such as the Lighthouse of Broward; and (3) to improve participant’s overall quality of life. This will be accomplished by increasing social support, reducing depression and anxiety, challenging maladaptive cognitions, and promoting coping behaviors that facilitate better and more meaningful integration of participants and caregivers into their Broward County communities.


**SUMMARY:** This study is part of ongoing investigations into the efficacy of various multipurpose contact lens solutions against a variety of microbial organisms, including bacteria, environmental yeast strains, and a number of strains of Acanthamoeba.

Bai-Chuan Jiang, Ph.D., FAAO, is the primary investigator on a PFRDG award entitled “The Effect of Peripheral Vision on Myopia.”

**SUMMARY:** This study will investigate whether or not the effects are different between emmetropic and myopic subjects. Through this study, the investigators hope to understand the role of peripheral vision in the optical defocus of the retinal image.

Thomas D and Shallo-Hoffmann J. “Quality Enhancement Program for the NSU Institutional Review Board (IRB).”

**SUMMARY:** This research is of both a qualitative and quantitative nature. The measurable objectives include an internal analysis of the operation of the NSU IRB, an external analysis of the operation of the NSU IRB, and an internal analysis of the policies of the Office of Human Research Protection (OHRP) as interpreted by the current membership of that body. An additional objective is an evaluation of the IRBs identified by various sources (including information gleaned from the OHRP itself) as doing high-quality reviews and protection of human subjects while still fostering the research needs of their parent institution. Other goals are an evaluation of the IRBs that have had problems in protecting their human subjects during research and how these problems have been addressed as well as the development of NSU’s IRB into a model IRB of high-quality protection of human subjects while embracing the research needs of the university.

RESIDENTS
Elizabeth Sanders, O.D., received a first-place award and a $2,000 prize for her research paper entitled “My Most Challenging Contact Lens Case” from the American Optometric Association, which was presented at the CLCS Annual Business Meeting and Luncheon held June 29, 2007, in Boston, Massachusetts. Also included in the award were airfare to the meeting, two nights lodging, and a plaque displaying Dr. Sanders’ accomplishment.

STUDENTS
Takeia Locke, O.D. (fourth-year student) and Mark Taub, O.D. (faculty member) received a $1,000 BSK Student Research Grant.

Robyn Russell was a $1,000 national award winner for his paper entitled “Varilux® Lenses Solve Multiple Problems” from the Essilor – Student Grant Program.
SVOSH Mission 2007: Trinidad

by Julie Tyler, O.D., FAAO

Each year, the NSU College of Optometry Student Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity (SVOSH) organization plans a trip over spring break to a different country in order to provide ocular health examinations and spectacles to local people in need. The 2007 trip, lovingly referred to by many of the participants as “Survivor: Trinidad,” carried on the tradition of optometric services provided to otherwise underserved individuals in the country of Trinidad and Tobago.

Twenty-two students and physicians participated in the SVOSH mission, where clinical services focused on an area outside the capital city of Port of Spain, Barataria, and San Fernando over four days of patient care. While the days were long and hot, the participants had the opportunity to learn a lot and give of themselves.

The choice of country for 2007 was influenced greatly by wonderful contacts from Lions Club International who live in Fort Lauderdale but were born in Trinidad. They provided amazing hospitality, including assistance at the airport in Miami, traveling to Trinidad with the group, and assisting with wonderful meals of authentic Trinidad food at Norma’s Guest House in South Valsyn. All the SVOSH student and optometry volunteers had plenty of opportunity to experience both tasty and spicy combinations, as well as eat the infamous Trinidadian treat of a “hot double” and “Shark and Bake.” The local Lions Club members in Trinidad were also very helpful in identifying patients for the optometrists and students to examine, as well as providing lunch for everyone working during the very long clinic days.

In addition to examining patients, the students and doctors were able to experience optometric politics in Trinidad firsthand. On the first full day in Trinidad, the local optometric association sponsored a wonderful reception on behalf of our trip that included invitations to the country’s minister of health, local optometrists, and individuals on the licensing board. The minister of health was very welcoming and became aware of the limitations of optometrists in Trinidad due to laws restricting the doctors from using diagnostic and therapeutic medications.

During that evening and the next morning, prior to providing patient care, the five optometrists on the trip had to meet personally with the local board, provide a multitude of documentation, and have a local physician onsite in order for the group to provide full examinations for the patients in need. Hopefully, the mission trip will not only have provided care for hundreds of needy people, but also will advance the optometric profession in Trinidad and Tobago.

The patients represented a wide range of ages, from elementary schoolchildren to individuals in their 90s. Patients were seen with unusual conditions ranging from Marfan’s Syndrome, oculo-dermal albinism, vascular occlusions, glaucoma, and binocular intra-nuclear ophthalmoplegia (BINO). Whenever possible, patients were provided with a pair of glasses as close to the prescription obtained during a trial-frame refraction. The spectacles were chosen from hundreds donated to the Lions Club and verified by NSU student SVOSH members.
Not only were patients provided with spectacles, but many glasses were also left in Trinidad for the Lions Club to assist other needy people.

Besides all the work, there was time to play. Amongst the activities was a night at the Mas Camp, which included an evening of cultural music and entertainment, as well as time spent at the lovely Maracas Beach. Many of the mission participants learned about the national bird of Trinidad, the scarlet ibis, and the national sport—cricket. The culmination of the week was a 14-mile hike, up and down hills, to a beautiful beach, and a waterfall. It was an amazing day spent with several local guides who shared some of the history of Trinidad and Tobago while also giving the group a helping hand along the rough and rocky trail.

HAPPENINGS IN CHINA

The college’s externs (fourth-year students) in China—Nate Schramm, Sonia Fernandez, and Francisco Richardson—have been teaching vision therapy to 10 optometrists and two ophthalmologists at the Tianjin Eye Hospital. The Chinese optometrists do not understand the theory behind phorias, vergences, binocular vision, etc., and therefore accommodative and vergence disorders are not diagnosed.

Our students decided to improve their colleagues’ knowledge and experience in this area. They developed a goal to teach an introductory course in anomalies of binocular vision and sought endorsement from NSU’s College of Optometry to proceed with the course and lab instruction. Everyone is highly motivated—students, externs, and Tianjin Eye Hospital administrators alike. In fact, the hospital’s optometry clinic is providing space and equipment.

Our externs thank Drs. Jiang, Bartuccio, and Fecho for their assistance in putting this program together.
When you were a student at Nova Southeastern University, you were our most important focus. Today, as an alumna or alumnus, you are our most important resource. In fact, alumni are the true “owners” of the university. Faculty and staff come and go, but alumni remain the one true constant. Although many things have changed at NSU since you graduated, the heart and soul of the institution still beats strongly today. Small class sizes, cutting-edge technology, experienced and attentive professors, and quality programs continue to attract students to NSU.

Many things that make up a student’s experience in the College of Optometry are a direct result of alumni support. The NSU Annual Fund provides a vehicle for alumni to make an immediate impact on current College of Optometry students. Gifts designated to the Annual Fund directly support every aspect of the College of Optometry experience, from scholarships and technology to faculty development. Because fees and tuition alone cannot cover the depth of an education, the Annual Fund provides the dean with unrestricted dollars to meet the emerging needs not covered by fees and tuition such as recruitment initiatives, faculty development, and scholarships. The Jack Wolfe Scholarship Award and the Terry Ingraham Student Activity Award are given to third-year optometry students as a direct result of financial support from alumni and friends.

In addition to helping meet the needs of our students and university, alumni support increases the value of an NSU College of Optometry degree. Every gift increases NSU’s alumni participation rate, which boosts our national ranking and increases the value of the degree.

Please consider making a gift to the College of Optometry’s Annual Fund. You can truly enhance the NSU educational experiences and add value to your own degree by ensuring that the NSU College of Optometry builds upon its solid reputation for the future. NSU’s College of Optometry is the exceptional institution it is today because of dedicated alumni who want to ensure that the college continues to excel in serving the optometric needs of the public by educating optometrists to the highest level of proficiency, integrity, and professionalism.

Giving is only a click away. Visit www.nova.edu/giving and make your gift today. The students are counting on your support!
During my tenure as president of the College of Optometry Alumni Chapter of the Nova Southeastern University Alumni Association, we have seen peaks and valleys. The college published its first magazine, *The Visionary*, in May 2006. This publication definitely marks a significant stride toward showcasing our accomplishments to NSU colleagues and potential students.

The *Visionary* project and the formation of the alumni chapter were both spearheaded by Dr. Lester Janoff, whose impact on the College of Optometry cannot be quantified. He will be fondly remembered for his nurturing disposition, intellectual inquisitiveness, and interest in students. Dr. Janoff remained committed to clinical excellence throughout his career, and his Five Cardinal Rules for Clinical Education, which are listed below, continue to provide insight to this commitment:

- The purpose of the clinical course is to teach the student how to deliver high-quality clinical care.
- Good education cannot take place when poor care is delivered. Therefore, patients come first and students second.
- Access to patients is not a right but a privilege that students must earn through taking personal responsibility for delivering the best quality care possible.
- Thinking, problem-solving, questioning, doubting, self-instruction, and a sense of responsibility for learning through active participation are the fundamental keys to learning.
- The attitudes, personal principles, and values that are essential are learned through preceptor modeling.

Dr. Janoff’s long-range vision developed and refined NSU College of Optometry’s curriculum. He strove for excellence and believed in evidence-based medicine and researched other health care professions in order to model optometric education. Through contributions that were received in his name, the Lester E. Janoff Scholars Award has been established. Thus, Dr. Janoff’s legacy will continue to support superior clinical optometric education for our students. For more information about Dr. Lester Janoff, please read the enclosed reprint of “The Renaissance Optometrist,” which is an interview conducted by former faculty member and administrator, Dr. Howard B. Purcell.

Just as Dr. Janoff was a resource for the students, you are an important resource for the college. Your support is vital in many ways, so please remember to update your contact information and provide us with your life events and professional achievements. It has been a pleasure serving as president these past two years, and I will continue to remain involved with the alumni chapter. I warmly welcome Dr. Adam Perlman as our new alumni chapter president and look forward to working with him and the new board members.
Every year, NSU acknowledges a graduate from each of its colleges as the recipient of the Award of Excellence. This year, Annette Bade, O.D., FAAO, was selected as the 2007 Award of Excellence winner for the NSU College of Optometry. The distinguished alumni achievement accolade is given to graduates who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and service to the university and the community, as well as a record of distinction and accomplishment in their field.

Dr. Bade graduated in 1993 as a member of the inaugural class. She relocated to Texas in 1995 and became involved with organized optometry, serving on the Texas Optometric Association Board of Directors from 1999-2002. During this time, she coordinated the Texas Statewide Gift of Sight program, which provided eye examinations and glasses to indigent children throughout the state.

In recognition of her service to the profession and community, she received the President’s Award from the Texas Optometric Association in 2001 and 2002 and the Texas Young Optometrist of the Year Award in 2001. Dr. Bade has been a member of the American Academy of Optometry for seven years and became a fellow in 2001.

She eventually returned to South Florida with her three daughters and is currently an assistant professor at NSU’s College of Optometry. Dr. Bade’s teaching responsibilities include serving as instructor for Clinical Optometric Procedures, assistant instructor for Optometric Theory and Methods, and clinical instructor to third- and fourth-year students. In addition, her position as clinical research coordinator has enabled her to act as co-investigator on several studies funded by the National Science Foundation.

She also is actively involved in the College of Optometry’s Alumni Chapter and has served in many instrumental leadership roles within the organization, including vice president and president, which have helped take the chapter to the next level. Dr. Bade also serves on the Broward County Optometric Society Board of Trustees, where she currently holds the position of treasurer/vice president.

We honor Dr. Annette Bade as our alumna of the year and hope that her service and commitment to the profession serve as an inspiration to others. She has involved herself on a local and national level and is truly devoted to advancing the profession.
Johnson and Johnson Vision Care, Inc. was nominated by the College of Optometry and became one of five finalists in the 2007 NSU Student Life Achievement (STUEY) Awards Corporate Sponsor Category.

During the past seven years, Johnson and Johnson Vision Care, Inc. has been a strong supporter of the College of Optometry’s students and professional degree program. In 2004, The Vision Care Institute™ of Johnson and Johnson Vision Care, Inc. was created as an innovative professional resource for students and recent graduates. As eye-care providers, today’s graduates require a broader base of knowledge than ever before. The institute is dedicated to providing that knowledge, along with the skills and confidence necessary to work side by side with other optometrists, ophthalmologists, neurologists, and a variety of health care providers in today’s multidisciplinary medical practices or hospitals.

This year’s curriculum focuses on specialty contact lens clinical practice and complements the curricula at optometry schools around the country. Classes on specialty contact lenses offer participants training in technical skills and practice in decision-making, group problem-solving, and engaging patients in feedback following an examination.

In addition to clinical training, The Vision Care Institute™ includes related instruction on critical communication skills required to help new eye-care professionals better inform and educate their patients. Videotape sessions allow participants to critique how they communicate in different scenarios, while giving experts in the field a chance to offer their advice.

Through The Vision Care Institute™, Johnson and Johnson Vision Care, Inc. has demonstrated leadership, involvement, and a commitment to optometric education. Each year, The Vision Care Institute™ hosts members of the College of Optometry’s third- and fourth-year classes at The Vision Care Institute™ in Jacksonville, Florida, for three days of teaching and interactive discussion, tours of the VISTAKON manufacturing facilities, and instruction from key optometric educators. All expenses for the students’ travel and lodging are paid for by The Vision Care Institute™.

Vistakon, a Division of Johnson and Johnson Vision Care, Inc., provided funding to underwrite the Alumni Banquet during the Fourth Annual College of Optometry Alumni Reunion in May 2006.

The Vision Care Institute™ is the College of Optometry’s “Partner in Education” and sponsors continuing education programs for students, faculty, and optometric practitioners. The Vision Care Institute™ also sponsors student events such as the annual Eye Ball. Additionally, each year, The Vision Care Institute™ presents an Excellence in Contact Lens Care Award to a fourth-year student at the graduation banquet.

We thank Johnson and Johnson Vision Care, Inc., Vistakon, and The Vision Care Institute™ for their continuing support of the college and its students, faculty, alumni, and continuing education programs.
Student Organizations Report
by William Yu, Class of 2008

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (SGA)

Student government had a very exciting 2006-2007 school year. The executive board consisted of President William Yu (president), Subadra Arunagirinathan (vice president), Vanessa Morales (secretary), and Diana de la Torre (treasurer). There were many exciting events that took place to build school spirit and bring all the classes together.

The school year started with the annual welcome back picnic held at Markham Park. Over 80 students enjoyed the event, which served as a wonderful opportunity for the classes to reunite after the summer break—and for the first-year students to meet their upperclassmen. The attendees enjoyed the food and music and had an opportunity to play games like volleyball and whiffle ball. This year’s picnic also included a first-time Optometric Olympics that paired up the first-, second-, and third-year students to compete in events that included a water-balloon toss and an obstacle course. When the results were tabulated, the first-year class emerged victorious at the inaugural Optometric Olympics.

This year, we also coordinated a first-time ice-cream social for the first- and second-year students. During this successful event, all members of the incoming class got a chance to meet their “big brothers/big sisters” in person and relieve some of their anxiety regarding starting optometry school.

The academic year also featured the fall and spring equipment fairs, which are big events—especially for the first-year students because it’s a bit daunting spending thousands of dollars on equipment they do not know how to use. For the purchase of their BIOs and lenses, SGA members participated in a workshop that took place the week before the equipment fair. This workshop was very beneficial to the first-year students as they were much better informed about the features of a BIO. Consequently, they were much more comfortable speaking to the vendors.

The highlight of the school year took place on March 24 at the 2007 Eyeball named “Golden Eyeball: Two Double O Seven,” which was held at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino and featured a huge turnout of over 310 guests, including over 30 faculty members. Music from diverse cultures was played, and we recognized outstanding faculty members for their excellence in the classroom and in the clinic. Following are the awards presented during the Eyeball:

Dr. Josephine Shallo-Hoffmann – OD1 Teacher of the Year
Dr. Chris Woodruff – OD2 Teacher of the Year

Dr. Albert Woods – OD3 Teacher of the Year
Dr. Michael Bacigalupi – OD3 Preceptor of the Year
Dr. Eulogio Besada – OD4 Preceptor of the Year
Dr. Tilena Waters – OD4 Resident of the Year

AMERICAN OPTOMETRIC STUDENT ASSOCIATION (AOSA)

The American Optometric Student Association (AOSA) implemented an executive council, which from now on will remain the OD3 class officers as president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. We held several meetings to keep students informed and had many guest speakers. The first guest speaker was Dr. Peter Kehoe, the American Optometric Association (AOA) vice president, who was accompanied by Laurie Bergman, AOA student relation’s coordinator. We also had a visit from AOA Contact Lens and Cornea Section representatives to discuss the research awards students are eligible for, as well as a visit from Low Vision Section representatives, who came and spoke with third-year students.

This year’s optometry meeting was held in Boston, Massachusetts, from June 27 through July 1. Many NSU students were excited to attend this convention, which includes various student activities as well as NBEO courses for Parts I and II. This year, students also had the chance to attend the AOSA general session presented by optometry’s first astronaut, Dr. Larry DeLucas.

Dr. Woodruff, AOSA student advisor, was extremely helpful and always willing to listen to all of our ideas no matter how outrageous. We were able to implement one suggestion to help make the AOSA Quiz Bowl at NSU more like the Varilux Super Bowl held at optometry’s meeting every year. A special thank you to Dr. Jay Rumsey, who helped design the program and made the revised edition possible. The AOSA Super Bowl was not quite as successful as last year; however, students really seemed to enjoy attempting to answer the questions. Our contestants this year were William Yu and Catherine Awad (OD3s) and Erin Jenewein and Jeff Cohen (OD2s).

Our new trustee, Bobby Sarivannara (OD3), will do a terrific job. In addition, Pauline Thai, a second-year student, has been appointed as the trustee elect. She will undoubtedly bring lots of new ideas to the table to help better the organization. Lastly, Beth Paternoster (OD4) is representing NSU as the AOSA secretary on the national level. Since optometry is a legislated profession, it is extremely important to stay involved as students. We’re also fortunate to be at an optometry school that helps students to join AOSA by paying half of the membership dues each year.
BETA SIGMA KAPPA (BSK)

The NSU chapter of Beta Sigma Kappa is one of 17 International Optometric Honors Societies in the United States and Canada. It is a true privilege to be invited as a member, but with this honor comes an inherent responsibility to the optometric profession and the community. One of the services BSK is proud to provide consists of a comprehensive tutoring service for first-, second-, and third-year optometry courses, delivered in small-group settings for maximum value. BSK also conducts the Mock Clinical Proficiency Examination yearly for the second-year students, thus providing an excellent resource in preparation for the Clinical Proficiency Exam.

COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS IN VISION DEVELOPMENT (COVD)

Nathan “Nate” Schramm, the COVD liaison for NSU, had the president elect of COVD—Dr. Dan Fortenbacher of Michigan—speak about “Optometry’s Best Kept Secret.” Dr. Fortenbacher discussed the benefits of including developmental vision and therapy in an optometric practice. The presentation focused on why it is important to look for binocular vision issues in patients in all ages, as this relates to reading, learning, and quality-of-life issues. The presentation was relevant to all optometric students, whether interested in VT or not. An informed O.D. needs to either identify or refer, just as one would do with a retina patient. A model of success was elaborated during this lecture. Over 100 new COVD members were registered during the 2006-07 year.

FLORIDA OPTOMETRIC STUDENT ASSOCIATION (FOSA)

This past year was very eventful for the Florida Optometric Student Association (FOSA). The organization has an important role within the College of Optometry, serving as an adjunct to the American Optometric Student Association activities and introducing students to local optometrists involved in the Miami-Dade and Broward County associations. We kicked off the year with our “Politics 101” event, which featured a presentation by the Florida Optometric Association on the importance of the legislative process for optometry. During the year, students were able to meet optometrists from all areas of the state at our fall membership social and the “Meet the O.D.s” dinner.

On March 8, a group of students, accompanied by a number of O.D.s, traveled to Tallahassee for the Optometry Legislative Day. Governor Charlie Crist declared March as “Save Your Vision Month.” The trip’s highlight was meeting the lieutenant governor, Jeff Kottkamp, who recognized the profession of optometry and urged Florida citizens to carefully consider their eye-care needs during this special month. FOSA Secretary Sara Gaib said, “Going to Tallahassee on the optometry legislative trip really reminds me to value what my future profession has to offer. We have worked really hard to get to where we are, and we must stand up to keep what we have.”

NSU OPTOMETRIC PRACTICE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION (NOPMA)

This was the first year for the NSU Optometric Practice Management Association (NOPMA). This organization, started by Steve Bussa with the help of Dr. Woodruff as the faculty advisor, is intended to help optometry students prepare for the real business world after they graduate. This club gives students extra learning opportunities and preparation for life outside the comforts of academia.

Many organizational goals were accomplished this past year, including all of the paperwork, petitions, Web site creation (http://www.nova.edu/optometry/NOPMA), and setting up accounts that were required for starting a club from scratch. The next goal was to provide speakers and meetings for the membership. Dr. Bacigalupi was nice enough to let the membership sit in on his fourth-year “Reality O.D.” program. Dr. Woodruff established a series that has continued into this academic year, and we had Dr. Gary Gerber fly in to speak to the club members.

These presentations have been a great supplement to the current curriculum. Our next goal is to continue the momentum by getting the new executive board to take over and build upon the foundation laid to continue making this organization useful for all students here at NSU’s College of Optometry.

NATIONAL OPTOMETRIC STUDENT ASSOCIATION (NOSA)

This organization, which is the student chapter of the National Optometric Association, was created to foster diversity in the field of optometry and in the provision of eye care to underserved communities. Our NSU chapter consists of 27 members and two advisors. We truly looked forward to our annual mission trip to Jamaica in June, where we visited Kingston and St. Mary. We conducted numerous fundraisers and activities to raise resources for this labor of love. In addition, our NOSA chapter offered a new travel grant this year to help the recipient travel to Jamaica.

We also participated in volunteer activities such as health fairs and screenings and sponsored several social events, such as a bowling outing and a potluck social, for our members and their families to encourage camaraderie and networking. Our most recent endeavor was our First Annual NOSA Banquet, where faculty, NOSA members, and family were in attendance to hear a guest speaker discuss the challenges that face minority optometrists.

We also held an awards ceremony to honor third- and fourth-year optometry student members. During the event, we unveiled our new Web site located at http://www.nova.edu/optometry/nsuo_students/nosa/index.html.

Another rewarding event was our networking seminar, which informed students about the best ways to maximize their networking skills. We also looked forward to hosting a concert and fashion show in the summer.
The NSU College of Optometry Residency Program has continued to develop and expand with each year. We now offer eight positions at NSU, including one full pediatric residency position and seven primary care positions with emphasis in ocular disease, pediatrics, binocular vision, cornea, contact lenses, or low vision. Our past and current residents have found the program to be rewarding and beneficial. Please meet the residency class of 2006-2007, which comprises Dr. Elizabeth Sanders, Dr. Tilena Waters, Dr. Allison Stanton, and Dr. Sarah Hill:

“Why did you decide to do a residency?”
• Dr. Elizabeth Sanders (Cornea and Contact Lens):
  “To gain specialty contact lens fitting experience, to improve my skills as a diagnostician, and to improve my professional speaking, writing, and research skills.”
• Dr. Allison Stanton (Pediatrics):
  “To further expand my knowledge base and experience with pediatrics, binocular vision, and vision therapy. The residency provided me with an opportunity to concentrate in this area. Many people say that a one-year residency is approximately equivalent to five years in private practice, which has proven true. I also wanted to keep my options open in the future since I am interested in teaching and academia.”

“Why did you choose NSU?”
• Dr. Tilena Waters (Pediatrics/Primary Care):
  “NSU offers ‘split’ positions between two different areas in the residency. I especially liked that I would be able to learn more in pediatrics, while at the same time keep up my skills and learn more in primary care.”
• Dr. Sarah Hill (Pediatrics/Primary Care):
  “The split program was intriguing to me. I liked the idea that I did not have to focus on only one program, but that I could improve my skills in two areas and become a more well-rounded physician. “The weather was also a factor after four brutal winters in the Northeast.”

“How do you hope to practice once you have completed your residency?”
• Dr. Allison Stanton: “I plan to start working part time in the pediatric field, while spending my spare time planning and building a private practice.”

• Dr. Elizabeth Sanders: “As a partner in a multi-specialty group practice.”
• Dr. Elizabeth Sanders: “I have grown a significant amount in my knowledge base and confidence. Having knowledgeable and experienced supervisors allows us to use the latest technologies and be current on the newest products and treatments available.”
• Dr. Tilena Waters: “I definitely feel more comfortable managing and treating many ocular diseases and binocular vision problems. The residency has also taught me how to put together presentations, posters, and papers.”
• Dr. Allison Stanton: “Expanded knowledge base and confidence.”

In additional to clinical training, residents also have the opportunity to attend professional conferences, specialty seminars, and workshops, participate in public service, prepare and present lectures and posters, publish abstracts or manuscripts, and participate in research. This comprehensive experience proves invaluable in establishing an optometric career that is at the forefront of the profession, not only allowing residents to develop important professional contacts, but also providing a professional pedigree that figuratively opens doors to all modes of practice that would otherwise remain closed.

But it’s not all about eyes. We have a wide range of extracurricular activities and interests with our current group of residents. Dr. Stanton has raised three hogs (Izzy, Frosty, and Mr. Pig), Dr. Sanders is an amateur numanistic (I had to look this up…coin collector), Dr. Hill is quite accomplished on snow skis, and Dr. Waters is a Harley girl!

It has been a fabulous year so far, and I am looking forward to introducing you to our new group of residents next year. If you have any questions about our residency program, please feel free to contact me.
When Kimberly Reed, O.D., FAAO, was a high school freshman, her science teacher shared his knowledge about the various health professions. His enthusiasm was contagious, and it planted a seed in Dr. Reed’s mind that she could become an optometrist one day.

“I think optometry is a great profession,” said Dr. Reed, an associate professor at NSU’s College of Optometry. “It combines knowledge, skill, and art.”

Dr. Reed followed her dream by earning a B.S. degree from Auburn University in 1986 and an O.D. degree from the University of Alabama Birmingham’s School of Optometry in 1990. Between 1990 and 1993, she did a residency in primary care optometry, a fellowship in clinical education, and was a member of the faculty at the Illinois College of Optometry. In 1993, she joined the faculty at NSU’s College of Optometry.

She teaches aspiring optometrists about ocular disease, and more specifically, she lectures about anterior-segment eye diseases. Whether it’s in the classroom, clinic, or laboratory, Dr. Reed is always there to make sure her students understand optometry inside and out. Her teaching skills have earned her high praise. In fact, NSU optometry students voted her as the Best Overall Professor twice, Best in Ocular Disease once, and Teacher of the Year eight times. “After 17 years in teaching, I still love to experience the moment when a student ‘gets it,’” Dr. Reed said. “It is so gratifying to be able to share my knowledge and skill with a student.”

Dr. Reed is interested in all aspects of ocular disease, especially the nutritional aspects of eye health, and has published numerous articles on ocular disease management. Dr. Reed plans to seek credentialing in nutritional counseling so she can share this knowledge with her patients and colleagues through continuing education programs. Her recent appointment as the director of educational effectiveness and outcomes assessment will allow her to expand her involvement with accreditation, outcomes assessment, and analysis of student learning.

Some of the biggest challenges facing optometry today, Dr. Reed said, are staggering loans that force former students to postpone the usual post-graduation purchases such as a car or house. The debt new graduates face when they start practicing creates stressful living conditions for many. Beyond the financial issues, optometry is often squeezed from both sides, meaning from ophthalmology trying to restrict scope of practice and from the opticians trying to expand their own scope of practice. “We must remain diligent if we are to continue to grow as a profession to serve our patients,” Dr. Reed said.

A passionate optometrist, Dr. Reed calls the profession “art” because it allows her to interact with people as individuals and customize her treatment or management of patients’ conditions based upon a variety of internal and external factors. “Two patients with the very same condition can be properly treated in two different ways,” Dr. Reed said. “This is the ‘art’ of optometry.”

At the end of the day, her reward is knowing that her students have made a big impact in the community. That was evident during the College of Optometry’s 11th Annual Clinical Eye Care Conference and 5th Annual Alumni Reunion, in which more than 200 people participated.

“It is a powerful feeling to see so many students that I helped train are out there in their communities doing great things, being professional, successful, and happy,” she said. “How can I ask for any better ‘outcome measure’ than that?”
In 2003, the College of Optometry launched the entirely online Master of Science in Clinical Vision Research (MSCVR) program. It is the only all-online master’s program in a college of optometry. To date, this program has attracted students from all over the world whose common interest is to master the tools necessary to perform research of the highest quality. It has expanded to include a series of core courses that fit the need of all health care professionals with an interest to perform clinical research. Our goal is to offer an academic environment that fosters creative thinking and leads to excellence in scholarship, research, and teaching. The MSCVR program is dedicated to quality education tailored to the needs of the individual student. It is with great pleasure that we present the two 2007 Master of Science graduates in clinical vision research.

YOU'RE NEVER TOO OLD TO LEARN

By Terry Don Moehnke, O.D., M.S.
Fort Dodge in Webster, Iowa

Almost 30 years after graduating from optometry school, I decided it was time to go back to school. Although the continuing education courses and magazine articles keep me informed about changes in therapy, techniques, and technology, something was missing. It became obvious to me that the profession has advanced remarkably since I was held accountable for my knowledge, so when I became aware of the M.S. in Clinical Vision Research program, I knew it would provide me with an opportunity to advance myself.

My goals when I started the program were straightforward—I wanted to enhance my clinical skills, obtain up-to-date information that could be applied to my patients’ care, and learn how to access this information in a timely fashion. As the coursework is now completed, I can see that this program has exceeded my goals and provided several additional benefits that weren’t apparent at the beginning.

The program has allowed me to interact with fellow students from around the country and with top-notch faculty members who go out of their way to educate you. It can be difficult to do assignments, write papers, and take tests after being out of school for a few decades, but the material was interesting and applicable to my practice. My long-term goal is to continue with my education and perform additional studies that will improve the care of our patients.

My current research project involves topographical analysis of the optic nerve in migraine sufferers. It has been suggested that migraines and pressure independent glaucoma share a common vasospastic pathophysiology, and both disease conditions show similar visual field defects. Since topographical analysis can detect optic nerve damage before the visual field defect can be measured, I designed a study to analyze the nerve head of migraine sufferers to see if there was a significant difference from an age-matched control group. The final analysis of the initial data showed there was no significant difference between the optic nerve parameters that were compared.

IF I CAN DO IT, SO CAN YOU!

By Dennis A. O’Neal, O.D., M.P.H.
Washington Eye Clinic in Washington, North Carolina

The NSU College of Optometry online Master of Science in Clinical Vision Research program allows practicing clinicians and other professionals to further their education and get involved in clinical research without leaving their jobs.

Before this program was developed, further education through a traditional on-campus program would have been difficult at best or impossible for those of us with ongoing careers and families to provide for on a continuum. I couldn’t have even thought of quitting my job and going back to school. However, with Nova Southeastern University’s leadership in Web-based distance education, I was able to complete my master’s degree with a concentration in ocular disease, which I have taken an interest in over the years. Other concentrations, such as cornea and contact lens, electrodiagnostics, public health, and several others, are also available as an elective to meet the needs and desires of the course of study without interrupting careers.

The course load can be as little as one course per quarter or up to two or three courses per quarter. In addition, the master’s program can be completed with a full workload in as little as two years or as much as four years with a lesser load.

I felt that the program not only gave me the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop and interpret research, but also enhanced my clinical skills as a practitioner. I found the classes, some of which included biostatistics, epidemiology, research ethics, grants and proposals, presentation and evaluation of research, information science, and research design, to be most
interesting and stimulating. Also, with the flexible schedule, you can decide when to study and when to do your homework without being restricted by a traditional classroom schedule.

I found the experienced faculty to be very helpful, engaging, and encouraging throughout the entire program. In addition, the electronic library includes a tremendous depth and breadth of journals, articles, and books that is virtually unlimited for one’s use throughout the master’s program.

I would highly recommend anyone who has any interest in furthering his/her education, or has any desire for research, to look into the Master of Science in Clinical Vision Research program through Nova Southeastern University. I’m glad I did it. In fact, I have been giving the NSU Ph.D. program in clinical research that is currently being developed some serious thought to further my interest in research. With the online program, you decide your schedule and study time. If I can do it, so can you!

Josephine Shallo-Hoffmann, Ph.D., is the director of the MSCVR program.

In Memoriam

We mourn the passing of the following members of the College of Optometry faculty:

Lester E. Janoff, O.D., M.S.Ed., FAAO (Dipl.)
Professor Emeritus
1927 - 2006

Robert N. Hutchinson, O.D., FAAO
Associate Professor
1926 - 2007
David S. Loshin, O.D., Ph.D., dean and visionary of the NSU College of Optometry, also is a founding dean of the Association of Latin-American Educators and Faculty of Optometry (known by its acronym in Spanish as ALDEFO). Nova Southeastern University was one of the U.S. colleges of optometry that assisted in the development of ALDEFO in November 2003 in Costa Rica and has been instrumental and actively involved in the enhancement of quality educational programs for the Latin American region.

In October 2006, Dr. Loshin and Dr. Janet Leasher traveled to Lima, Peru, to participate in the first inter-regional meeting of optometric educators, which was attended by Latin American, North American, and European educators. Dr. Loshin delivered a presentation describing the history of the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry in North America. Our college recognizes the importance of developing relationships with other schools in other countries around the world, which is why NSUCO has assisted in the development and improvement of optometry programs in Argentina, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Colombia.

Parallel to our involvement with organized educational associations, through the UNESCO Chair Associated Centers of Central America at the Universidad de El Salvador in San Salvador, El Salvador, and South America at Universidad de Santo Tomas in Bucaramanga, Colombia, NSU—as the North American Associated Center—strengthens education, research, and cooperation in visual health.

Deans from the founding optometry school members of ALDEFO—the Association of Latin-American Educators and Faculty of Optometry—are featured in a photo taken at the inaugural meeting in Costa Rica in November 2003. Pictured (back row from left) are: David Heath, New England College of Optometry; David Loshin, NSU; Randall Brooks, AOA trustee and schools and colleges of optometry liaison; Edwin Marshall, Indiana University College of Optometry; Norman Haffner, State University of New York College of Optometry; and Héctor Santiago, Inter-American University, Puerto Rico. (Front row from left) are: Pilar Contreras, Universidad Autónoma de Aguas Calientes, México; Margarita Ayala, Universidad de Santo Tomás, Colombia; Jairo García, Universidad de La Salle, Colombia; Julio Torres, Universidad Politécnica Nacional, México; and Jorge Cherusse, Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Argentina.

Dr. Loshin posed with a number of international optometrists at the Association of Latin American Optometrists and Opticians Congress in Lima, Peru. Pictured (from left) are Ed Marshall (associate dean, Indiana University College of Optometry, Dr. Loshin (NSU College of Optometry), Laura Brusi (faculty at the Universidad Nacional de La Plata—the only optometry school in Argentina), Patricia Garcia (president of the Federation of Optometrists in Colombia), and Nelson Rivera (vice president of VOSH International).
The ¡VERAS! Project:
Sustainable Visual Health Services for Schoolchildren in Central America

By Janet Leasher, O.D., M.P.H., Regional Coordinator for the North American Associated Center of the UNESCO Chair of Visual Health and Development

Three countries in Central America—El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala—are collaborating in an international, multidisciplinary, multi-sector project sponsored by the UNESCO Chair in Visual Health and Development. ¡VERAS!, which literally means “you will see” in Spanish, is an acronym for Visión, Educación, Rendimiento, Aprendizaje y Sostenibilidad (Vision, Education, Scholastic Improvement, Learning and Sustainability).

This project is a cooperative endeavor between the Ministry of Health and Education, the professional educational institutions, and the professional associations of ophthalmology and optometry in these countries that is designed to establish a permanent public health service of vision care for the most impoverished children in the aforementioned countries.

Dr. Janet Leasher, coordinator of the North American Associated Center of the UNESCO Chair here at NSU, worked with pediatric optometrists Bruce Moore at New England College of Optometry and Wendy Marsh-Toolette of the University of Alabama at Birmingham College of Optometry to design a screening and examination protocol that utilizes LEA Symbols. According to Dr. Leasher, “LEA Symbols are the most sensitive visual acuity test for preschool and kindergarten children. Transferring this simple technology from the developed to the developing world and empowering health promoters and rural school teachers how to screen students will go a long way toward detecting problems in schoolchildren in these countries.”

In the pilot phase, 150 schoolteachers and health promoters were trained to perform vision screenings on 4,000 children entering school (ages 4-7 years) in each country. A vision care clinic was established at the district-level hospital, with an optometrist and ophthalmologist working together to provide the comprehensive services to those children who fail the screening. In El Salvador, for example, the newly formed optometry school at the University of El Salvador works closely with the pediatric ophthalmology department of the Bloom National Children’s Hospital to deliver tertiary care as needed. Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity (VOSH) also participated in providing spectacles and needed examination services in Granada, Nicaragua.

Following the pilot phase, the Ministry of Health and Education will expand the program to cover more geographic regions in the three countries. NSU is committed to helping create sustainable vision-care systems in Latin America and beyond. Thanks to this program, children will have better access to visual health care, leading to improved school performance, self-worth, and the ability to find employment to better their lives and remove the chains of poverty.

The Lea Symbols booklet is available from Good-Lite at www.good-lite.com.

Schoolchildren in El Salvador show off their improved school performance as a result of receiving vision care through the ¡VERAS! Project.
FOURTH-YEAR STUDENT AWARDS

CHANCELLOR’S AWARD
Presented to the student who best exemplifies the characteristics of a fine optometric physician—a combination of scholarship, leadership, integrity, humanity, and loyalty to the profession.
Kasey Suckow, O.D.

DEAN’S AWARD
Presented for academic excellence to the student graduating with the highest scholastic achievement.
Marya Rezvani, O.D.

BETA SIGMA KAPPA SILVER MEDAL AWARD
Presented to the graduating chapter member who has attained the highest cumulative grade point average.
Marya Rezvani, O.D.

DR. LESTER E. JANOFF SCHOLARS AWARD
Presented to a fourth-year optometry student for outstanding performance in a scholarly activity such as teaching, research, or optometric journalism. In memory of Dr. Lester E. Janoff, a renowned educator, researcher, and pioneer in the area of cornea and contact lenses; a gentleman and a scholar who exemplified lifelong learning.
Parres Harris-Roberts, O.D.
STUDENT LIFE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD – OPTOMETRY
Takeia Locke, O.D.

COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS IN VISION DEVELOPMENT AWARD
OF EXCELLENCE (COVD)
Meghna Shah, O.D.

O.D.X-CHEL CONTACT LENS AWARD
Rido Pham, O.D.

RGP LENS INSTITUTE CLINICAL EXCELLENCE AWARD
Norma Zuniga, O.D.

CONTACT LENS PRACTICE MANAGEMENT AWARD
Isabel Calderon, O.D.

DAVID J. KERKO LOW VISION AWARD (AKA CORNING)
Takeia Locke, O.D.

ESCHENBACH AWARD OF EXCELLENCE IN LOW VISION
Parres Harris-Roberts, O.D.

ESSILOR CORNEAL REFLECTION PUPILOMETER AWARD
Dana King, O.D.

ALCON GLAUCOMA SERVICE AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Erika Herrera, O.D.

ODYSSEY DRY EYE AWARD
Amanda Hodges, O.D.
Erin Weston, O.D.

MARCHON PRACTICE MANAGEMENT AWARD
Pam Stynowick, O.D.

SOUTHERN COUNCIL OF OPTOMETRY AWARD FOR CLINICAL
EXCELLENCE
Tara Boyle, O.D.

PIONEER INSTRUMENTS’ PRIMARY CARE AWARD
Brandon Cornish, O.D.

VISION CARE INC. PRIMARY CARE CLINICAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
Eric Perez, O.D.

JORDAN EYEWEAR MODULE DIRECTOR’S AWARD
Vanessa Gonzalez, O.D.

ARÁN EYE ASSOCIATES’ EXCELLENCE IN OCULAR DISEASE AWARD
Ericka Herrera, O.D.

THIRD-YEAR STUDENT AWARDS

THE TERRY INGRAHAM STUDENT ACTIVITY AWARD
Jeanine Hayen

AMERICAN OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION STUDENT
LEADERSHIP AWARD
Subadra Arunagirinathan

THE JACK WOLFE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD
William Yu

VISION SERVICE PLAN
Michelle Cox and Ashley Zak

BRAVERMAN EYE CENTER CLINICAL EXCELLENCE AWARD
Ly Nguyen, O.D.

BRAVERMAN EYE CENTER EXTERN OF THE YEAR
Jason Berkebile, O.D.

LUXOTTICA AWARD
Maryam Rezvani, O.D.

PEDIATRIC AND BINOCULAR VISION CLINICAL EXCELLENCE AWARD
Vanessa Gonzalez, O.D.

ADVANCED MEDICAL OPTICS CONTACT LENS AWARD
Monica Brown, O.D.

COOPER VISION’S EXCELLENCE IN CONTACT LENSES AWARD
Takeia Locke, O.D.

VISTAKON AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Laura Sturm, O.D.

WILLIAM FEINBLOOM LOW VISION AWARD
Vanessa Gonzalez, O.D.

HEINE AWARD OF EXCELLENCE IN OPTICS
Rabia Awan, O.D.

MILROY OPTICAL SCHOLAR AWARD
Rabia Awan, O.D.

LOMBART INSTRUMENTS’ OPTOMETRIC AWARD
Maryam Rezvani, O.D.

WELCH-ALLYN AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Takeia Locke, O.D.

ALCON SCHOLARSHIP AWARD
Kasey Suckow, O.D.

FLORIDA OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION AWARD (FOA)
Trina Perkins, O.D.

GOLDEN APPLE AWARDS
Morton Silverman, O.D. – “Most Inspirational”
Joseph Sowka, O.D. – “Most Admired”
Julie Tyler, O.D. – “Best Overall Preceptor”
David Woods, M.S., O.D. – “Best Overall Teacher”
Greg Fecho, O.D. – “Teacher We’d Most Like to Have a Drink with”

ACUVUE EYE HEALTH ADVISOR STUDENT
CITIZENSHIP SCHOLARSHIP
Jennifer Keiser

VOLK OCULAR DISEASE EXCELLENCE AWARD
Shawn Poitras

ST. ROSE OF LIMA SCHOOL SCREENING AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Aida Glotter-Gotz

AMERICAN OPTOMETRIC FOUNDATION CARL ZEISS
VISION FELLOWSHIP
Ashley Zak
ALUMNI RECEPTION
2007 American Optometric Association Congress
Boston, Massachusetts
There is a current ad campaign where the tagline is “You’ve got people.” If you use that company for taxes, it has “people” available should any questions arise. That is exactly how we would like the alumni of NSU’s College of Optometry to think of the OPEP Web site. Managing an optometric practice is a process, a never-ending process of decisions and choices that impact your success. From buying a practice down to small nuances, such as employee overtime, faculty members who participate in the OPEP Web site stand ready to help you.

The OPEP is available to NSUCO alumni so they will have a real-time practice management resource. The OPEP also posts feature articles from faculty and industry leaders on management issues, small-practice pearls, and book reviews. The OPEP Web site has links to continuing education courses. Please visit the Web site and look over the current and archived material. From there, feel free to drop us a line with any questions you may have. If there is any topic you would like to see covered in greater detail, please let us know.

Drs. Crandall, Bacigalupi, and Woodruff, who are the primary contributors to the Web site, have a combined 40 years of practice experience and each possesses an advanced management degree. They are dedicated to providing NSUCO alumni the best counsel possible.

Many of our NSUCO alumni also have valuable experience and practice management information to share with their fellow alumni. The OPEP would like to tap into that experience and be a forum where alumni can learn from each other. We are planning a series of practice profiles on the NSUCO alumni, so if you would like to participate in the information sharing, please let us know.

The OPEP was established in 2004 with a generous grant from Vision Service Plan (VSP). This value-added program includes both online and onsite components that are focused on assisting alumni to develop, manage, and enhance their optometric practices.

Through a variety of resources, the OPEP Web site serves as a virtual repository of practice management information, advice, and support. When you have a question about practice management, make the OPEP Web site your first stop. We encourage you to take advantage of this value-added program, and we welcome your comments and suggestions. Help us make the OPEP Web site a vital resource for NSUCO alumni for years to come.

To access the Web site, go to the NSU Optometry homepage, click on Alumni and then on the OPEP logo, or go to http://optometry.nova.edu/opep. To obtain a username and password to access the online tutorials, please send an email message to opep@nsu.nova.edu.

Remember... as an NSUCO alumni member, you are never alone because “You’ve got people.”
Diabetic retinopathy is the most frequent cause of new cases of blindness in the United States among adults. Vision loss from diabetes is often preventable with timely detection and treatment, but national health survey data indicate that only about half of patients with diabetes obtain an annual dilated fundus examination.

The key message of this project is that vision loss from diabetes is often preventable with timely detection and treatment. Many diabetic patients do not understand the importance of annual fundus examinations in the absence of ocular symptoms, nor do they recognize the benefits of early detection of diabetic eye disease. The Many Eyes of Diabetes program adapts the Diabetes Eye Examination Report to the needs of a multicultural patient population through the creation of a Web page incorporating written and audiovisual patient education materials in several languages. The eye-care provider may also deliver this information to the patient in an office setting.

After English, the predominant languages represented in Florida include Spanish, French (Haitian) Creole, French, German, Italian, and Portuguese (descending order). While diabetes occurs in people of all ages and races, it is more common in specific patient populations, including Latinos, African Americans, and Afro-Caribbean populations. Spanish- and French (Haitian) Creole-speaking Florida residents represent patient populations disproportionately impacted by diabetes.

The Diabetes Eye Examination Report is a simple tool developed for the welfare of patients with diabetes. The intent is for a copy to be distributed to the patient’s primary care provider or endocrinologist, a copy distributed to the patient, and a copy maintained in the patient’s medical record. The flipside of the patient’s copy includes educational materials targeted at a layperson, while the physician’s copy includes information directed at a primary health care provider. Florida eye-care providers may obtain NCR triplicate forms from the Florida Optometric Association. We invite you to incorporate these resources into your practice.

Clinician forms, patient supplements, and downloadable videos are available by going to the Web site at http://optometry.nova.edu/opep.

This project was a collaborative effort between the Florida Optometric Association and Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry that was supported by the HEALTHY VISION COMMUNITY AWARDS PROGRAM, National Eye Institute, National Institutes of Health, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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**Partners in Education**

We thank our Partners in Education for their continuing support of our students, faculty, alumni, and continuing education programs.
Calendar of Events

October 19-21, 2007
20-Hour Therapeutic Pharmaceutical Agents Refresher Course (CE), Toronto, Ontario, Canada

October 20-21, 2007
Interdisciplinary Management of the Diabetes Patient (CE)

October 26, 2007
Alumni Reception, American Academy of Optometry, Tampa, Florida

April - August 2008
100-Hour Therapeutic Pharmaceutical Agents Certification Course, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, and Nova Southeastern University Campus

April 5-6, 2008
Retina Symposium (CE)

May 16-18, 2008
12th Annual Clinical Eye Care Conference and 6th Annual Alumni Reunion (CE)

May 25, 2008
Graduation - Class of 2008

June 21-22, 2008
Neuro-Optometry for the Primary Care Optometrist (CE)

June 27, 2008
Alumni Reception, American Optometric Association, Seattle, Washington

June 28-29, 2008
Florida Board of Optometry Examination Review Course

August 21, 2008
Tri-County Meeting

August 28, 2008
Glaucoma Update 2008 (CE)

October 18-19, 2008
Diabetes Symposium (CE)

October 24, 2008
Alumni Reception, American Academy of Optometry, Anaheim, California

Fall 2008
2008 Leagues Under the CE (Paradise Island, Nassau, Bahamas)

The Doctor of Optometry Program at the Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry is fully accredited by The Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE). The ACOE (243 N. Lindbergh Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri; telephone number 800-365-2219) is the accrediting body for professional degree programs offered by all optometric institutions in the United States.

http://optometry.nova.edu