Where there’s hope, there’s Haiti

Cover Story Page 15:
Janet Leasher, O.D., M.P.H.,
Smith Blanc, O.D.,
and Josie Toussaint, M.S.,
tackled more than just the elements
to reach the people in Haiti.

Also in this issue...
Congrats to
our 2010 Grads!
As dean of the College of Optometry since 1997, I have presided over an evolutionary process that has brought us far beyond the singular goal of the college at its inception—to train and graduate competent optometrists. While that goal still exists, as it should, the college has broadened its reach and influence by foraying into serious research, creating additional and unique educational programs, and expanding our outreach to the community. The Eye Care Institute continues to grow, offering an ever-widening set of specialty services at our clinical locations. The college’s faculty members and students participate actively in community outreach programs. We have also forged mutual exchange programs with institutions in other countries such as China, Spain, and South America. Having come this far, where will the college head over the next 10 years?

My vision is that NSU’s College of Optometry will be a leading optometric institution with a national and international reputation for its clinical, postgraduate, and continuing education programs.

Following are some examples:

• The college will be a leader for its optometric education—widely renowned for its clinical training and innovative approach.
• We will be known for our service to underserved populations and the community.
• We will be recognized as a leader in various focused areas of clinical research and will be renowned for our ability to apply knowledge and research findings to practical clinical application.
• We will create a mutually rewarding relationship with our alumni, providing them with various benefits and benefitting in return from their support of our growth and development.

How will we accomplish these goals?

First, we must recruit and retain high-caliber faculty members with unique backgrounds and expertise. To that end, we continue to search for and hire faculty members with research experience who will mentor clinical and less-experienced faculty. We will expand faculty development programs to enhance skills in course development, scholarship training, grant writing, and clinical teaching techniques.

Second, we must expand and maintain clinical facilities and equipment so we may increase patient numbers from diverse and underserved populations. To accomplish this goal, the college plans to build its own clinical facility in the Fort Lauderdale neighborhood where we presently rent space from another organization. It is anticipated that this location will serve a patient base that will provide wide-ranging diagnostic and patient care opportunities to our students, simultaneously improving both the health of our patients and enriching the educational experiences of our students.

Additionally, The Eye Care Institute has entered into an agreement with the Kids in Distress organization to provide eye care services to its many clients. The recipients of these services are children who comprise an underserved population that is in serious need of health care, to which they currently have very limited access. We will operate this clinic on the Kids in Distress campus, providing eye care services 5 days per week and on a 24/7 emergency basis, alongside the College of Dental Medicine, which will also operate a clinic at this site. Both of these new centers will increase our patient numbers, augment the diversity already found among our patient base, and serve those populations that currently have limited or no access to health care, beyond the very basic.

Third, the use of technology in the delivery of education is requisite. The overwhelming majority of students that comprise our classes are, by mere virtue of the generation to which they belong, technologically savvy with a strong preference for learning through technology. Our faculty members are already using a variety of formats for both the professional and graduate programs, including online delivery of course content and instant response systems in the classroom. Many faculty members utilize their own Web sites, while others are testing the newest devices on the market in a quest to enhance instructional capabilities. We will continue to move in this direction, using the most advanced devices and programs available, which will enable us to remain connected with our students long after they have graduated.

The future of Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry looks bright and exciting. I invite you to stay tuned as we progress—and to see how NSUCO looks in 2020.
“Striking at the very heart.”
When His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, visited the NSU campus on February 23, 2010, I had the opportunity to correlate some of the very wise statements he presented to the nearly 4,500 audience members sitting in the Don Taft University Center to the NSU Health Professions Division (HPD). The aspect that really struck me in regard to the entire HPD was his very articulate way of using the word we. He didn’t refer to you, to me, or to them. He referred to the concept of oneness and how we are all the same; therefore, we all must use the word we.

As I relate this concept to the manner in which we carry forth the direction and mission of Dr. Morton Terry, the founder of the NSU Health Professions Division, the word we is very important because no single physician or other health care provider should be more important than another. Similarly, these professionals should all work in tandem with each other’s abilities and knowledge.

The paramount tenet of health care service is based upon the fact that health providers use concepts of we rather than the concepts of me, I, or you. So when you really think about the structure of the Health Professions Division, the brilliance of Dr. Terry’s belief that health professionals should get to know each other as practitioners and providers of care to the general population was truly prophetic. Because, when you get right down to it, the more we know about each other, the more we become we rather than me, I, or you.

The Dalai Lama’s riveting oration, which related to many other issues such as individual responsibility, the concept of world community, peace, justice, and liberty, really struck me as I was sitting there and recognizing the fact that the principles of osteopathic medicine were really, in a sense, attested to by the words of a very kind and brilliant representative of the Buddhist teachings. The Dalai Lama is a man of exceptional intellect, and he exudes moral strength and positivity. His message is something all individuals should take to heart. He spoke of the negativity of anger and addressed the sense of healing and strength that comes from possessing the power to forgive.

He also discussed intellect and the importance of education, which is a major feature of enhancing human growth. But he also reminded us that there needs to be an inner balance—an ability to know yourself and love yourself. His words reminded me of some of the private conversations I had with Dr. Terry, who passed away in 2004. He used to tell me, “You really have to learn to like yourself before you can ask other people to gain your trust and follow you.” It’s not about telling yourself, “Hey, I’m a great guy or a great gal.” It’s a matter of intrinsically knowing yourself and understanding that in order to like yourself, you have to deal with some of flawed characteristics you possess—flaws you personally identify.

Although this is not the first time I’ve heard the Dalai Lama speak, I again found myself stirred by his words, even though many of the philosophies he expressed are not new. However, being there amidst his spiritual aura caused me to reflect on the multiple features of being a health care provider and brought me back to some of the cogent comments made by Dr. Terry. Whenever there was a meeting of the Committee on Admissions, Dr. Terry used to tell the members to “think about this applicant and decide whether you would want him or her to be your doctor.”

What was he really saying? Was he telling the committee members to look at the applicant and discover whether they thought this person was going to become the best student, the best surgeon, or the best optometrist? I don’t think so. In my opinion, Dr. Terry was telling the committee members to pick the person they thought could best understand him or herself and be able to freely share their knowledge while exhibiting a true sense of compassion for a patient.

Great people motivate us. It’s what His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, does—and it’s what Dr. Terry continues to do through the many words of wisdom he shared with those of us lucky enough to have known him.
**A Message from the University's Chancellor**

Ray Ferrero, Jr., J.D., Chancellor

On behalf of the entire university, I want to thank all of our alumni who recently participated in our Academic Outcomes Survey. The research initiative clearly validates the strength of our academic offerings and the strong learning outcomes that our graduates possess. The strong response we received gives us great confidence in the survey findings, and we appreciate your willingness to participate.

In affirming your overall satisfaction with the institution’s academic programs, an overwhelming 90 percent of NSU graduates would recommend their degree program to aspiring students. The study also affirmed our ability to prepare graduates for professional success as 88 percent of survey respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that Nova Southeastern University prepared them for their careers.

In addition to our overall academic assessment, our survey was designed to garner feedback from graduates regarding program-specific outcomes. The timely and helpful insights we received will only help to ensure that we are meeting the rigorous demands of today’s competitive job market.

This noteworthy study will provide important benchmark data for comparative purposes in subsequent years. We are steadfast in our commitment to providing students with innovative programs and academic excellence that will prepare graduates for the dynamic challenges of the 21st century. Thanks again for your continued interest in Nova Southeastern University and providing your feedback for this important assessment.

**NSUCO Receives $200,000 Gift from FOA Charities For New Kids in Distress Clinic**

FOA Charities, Inc. has provided a gift to NSUCO in the amount of $200,000 to purchase equipment for the college’s new clinic on the Kids in Distress (KID) campus in Wilton Manors, Florida. FOA Charities, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation that has been organized to support, benefit, or perform the charitable, educational, and scientific purposes of the Florida Optometric Association (FOA). The charity provides an apparatus and mechanism for the members of FOA to encourage and support the health and welfare and an improved quality of life for the residents of the state of Florida and individual communities within the state. This is accomplished by funding grants, programs, and projects that promote public education and awareness of the availability of vision care and provide vision care for the indigent.

The college is working collaboratively with Kids In Distress to participate in an extraordinary undertaking to provide optometric services to children who participate in the KID programs. KID is a local agency in Broward County, Florida, that provides a continuum of care for abused, neglected, and at-risk children as well as families in crisis with emergency shelter, counseling, and other needed services. Their current services include crisis intervention, foster care and adoption, therapeutic preschool, complete behavioral health services, parent education, domestic violence services, substance abuse treatment, kinship support, supervised visitation, access to medical care, and rehabilitative therapies.

As part of the KID expansion for access to health care, NSU’s College of Optometry, along with the university’s College of Dental Medicine, will establish clinics on the KID campus. Approximately 175 optometric students (third and fourth year), as well as eight optometric residents, will provide vision care to over 5,000 children annually. The KID Vision Care Center, one of five centers under the college’s The Eye Care Institute umbrella, will contain eight examination rooms, special testing rooms, an optical dispensary, an optical laboratory, student conference room, and faculty offices. Optometric services will be provided five days each week and 24/7 emergency eye services will be available. It is anticipated that the clinic will be scheduling its first patients in October.

According to Tom Tomczyk, KID president and CEO, “The KID-NSU Dental and Optometry Clinic reflects our longstanding commitment to the communities we serve. By expanding services to include dental and optometric specialties, we are further helping to meet the critical needs of a very vulnerable population within our community.”

**NSU College of Optometry Alumni Inducted into the American Academy of Optometry**

Ten NSU College of Optometry alumni were inducted into the American Academy of Optometry (AAO) in November 2009 during the AAO’s annual meeting in Orlando. The inductees are Miriam H. Farag, O.D. (‘05), Kenneth D. Boyle, O.D. (‘94), Joseph Convertino, O.D. (‘04), Michael A. Dagostino, O.D. (‘04), Mona Kardani, O.D. (‘08), Nichole Olson, O.D. (‘01), Alison C. Ramsey, O.D., M.S. (‘08), Christopher Lee Suhr, O.D. (‘06), Anna Wong, O.D. (‘99), and Celia Wong Tesinsky, O.D. (‘03).

They were among the 164 new fellows who were inducted at the meeting’s annual banquet. Roughly 4,513 optometrists, vision scientists, residents, faculty members, and students, including those from NSU, attended the annual meeting at the Orlando World Center Marriott. The latest and very best of new discoveries and developments in optometry were presented in over 200 education sessions and in the exhibit hall that encompassed over 250 booths.

**Optometry Students Take the Challenge**

On October 8, 2009, students at optometry schools across the United States came out in force to take the World Sight Day Challenge and raise more than $5,000 to help give sight to millions in need. Denise Saunders, a class of 2011 NSUCO student, was introduced to Optometry Giving Sight at an industry trade show and felt a strong passion for its mission. She recruited other students to help and enlisted the support of local businesses. Best Buy donated several prizes for a raffle, while Saunders and her team raised $961 from both students and faculty members.

Sarah Brehm (class of 2011), was able to tap into Bank of America’s Matching Gift Program, turning the donation to Optometry Giving Sight into $1,922. Optometry Giving Sight funds projects that train local eye care professionals, establish infrastructure such as vision centers and schools of optometry, and deliver eye examinations and glasses in developing communities.
NSUCO Receives Five STUEY Nominations

By BARBARA KARPEL, M.S., DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION, ASSOCIATE EDITOR, THE VISIONARY

The 11th Annual NSU Student Life Achievement Awards, affectionately known as the STUEYS, were celebrated on April 20, 2010. As the Division of Student Affairs describes them, the STUEYS are “a celebration of NSU’s best in inclusion, leadership, scholarship, service, integrity, commitment, and involvement.” Nominations of students, employees, and corporate partners are sought from every sector of the university, and a committee is charged with selecting five finalists in each category.

The winners are selected by a second committee, comprised in part of the president and chancellor of the university. This year, the College of Optometry had five finalists in four categories—an achievement for which these individuals deserve kudos and accolades:

**Student of the Year**
Michelle Levin has been an active participant in the college’s Student Government Association (SGA) since her matriculation in 2007. She has been an instrumental leader of the Florida Optometric Student Association, promoting the optometric profession among her peers but also in Tallahassee with legislators. An excellent organizer and former radio station disc jockey who is a skilled marketing professional, Michelle remains involved, committed, inclusive, and dedicated to her studies, her class, the SGA, the College of Optometry, and the optometric profession.

**NSU Graduate Organization of the Year**
Since its establishment in 1997, the Student Volunteers in Optometric Service to Humanity (SVOSH) has provided eye care to individuals who are underserved due to their remote habitats and economic conditions. SVOSH receives donations of used eyeglasses and distributes them during mission trips to indigenous populations in the Caribbean, Central America, and South America. While the SVOSH members hold fund-raising events to pay for these mission trips, students often have to fund a good portion of the travel expenses themselves. In 2010, this service organization and its faculty mentors volunteered their time in Ica, Peru, which had been impacted by an 8.0 magnitude earthquake in 2007.

**NSU Administrator of the Year**
Fran Franconeri, the college’s admissions counselor, was selected as a STUEY finalist in 2010 for the second consecutive year. Although Fran works for the university’s Office of Admissions, we consider her to be one of our own. Fran’s dedication, commitment, and guidance have won the hearts of many NSU hopefuls. She communicates often and well with applicants and makes the application process less stressful for them. With her sympathetic ear, caring nature, and gentle leadership, Fran contributes to the professional growth of both students and peers, while ensuring that our classes are composed of the most qualified candidates.

Barbara Karpel, M.S., has been with the College of Optometry for nearly 15 years. She fulfills many functions, ranging from managing the operations and budgets of the college’s administrative offices and its eight support staff members, to serving as a recruiter at optometric conferences. She serves on several university committees, such as the Employee Relations Committee in the role of co-chair, multiple search committees for Enrollment and Student Services, and the Stewardship Council, which oversees the management of funds received as donations and contributions to college accounts. Karpel also is the associate editor of The Visionary, serving as proofreader and editor as well as a contributor, and uses her conflict resolution skills to manage personal interactions and create a conflict-free environment.

**NSU Corporate Partner of the Year**
Vision Service Plan (VSP), an insurance organization available to eye care professionals and their patients, is focused on vision care. A committed corporate sponsor to the college, VSP offers loans to new optometry graduates, annual sponsorships of student events, and educational speakers for the college. VSP also hosts dinners, workshops, and a speaker series for students. It recently developed a website, www.optoclubls.com, designed specifically for NSU’s Optometry Practice Management Association (NOPMA) students.
Eva Duchnowski, O.D.
Dr. Duchnowski earned her undergraduate degree in 2004 from Fordham University and her Doctor of Optometry degree from NSU's College of Optometry in 2008. Following graduation, she completed a one-year residency at NSUCO in primary care with emphasis on cornea and contact lens, earning the Resident of the Year award. Upon completing her residency, Dr. Duchnowski joined the NSU faculty full-time in August 2009 as an instructor.

Her teaching responsibilities include serving as an attending optometric physician in the primary care clinics at Davie, North Miami Beach, and Fort Lauderdale. Dr. Duchnowski currently serves as a clinical preceptor in third- and fourth-year NSU clinics and as an equipment liaison for all the students. Her professional interests lie in ocular disease and specialty contact lens fits. She is actively involved in writing papers, has authored posters on various topics at the American Optometric Association and SECO meetings. Dr. Misko, who is currently working towards her AAO Fellowship, is a member of the Florida Optometric Association, the American Optometric Association, and the American Academy of Optometry.

Bin Zhang, M.D., Ph.D.
Dr. Zhang earned his M.D. degree from the School of Medicine at Nanjing University in 1995. He then practiced as an ophthalmologist, specializing in cataract surgery at Jinling General Hospital in China. In 2003, he received his Ph.D. degree in Physiological Optics and Vision Science from the University of Houston College of Optometry and dedicated the following six years to various scientific research projects funded by the National Eye Institute. Dr. Zhang is currently a full-time faculty member at NSUCO and holds the rank of associate professor. In this role, Dr. Zhang teaches ocular anatomy to the professional students and experiment design and methods to the graduate students.

Dr. Zhang’s research interest is centered on the normal and abnormal development of the visual system. For example, he studies how the response properties of neurons in the visual cortex develop under the guidance of normal visual experience in early life. On the other hand, he investigates how abnormal visual experience, such as short sight (myopia), unequal refractive errors of the two eyes (anisometropia), and misalignment of the two eyes (strabismus) disrupts the smooth developing process of these properties and finally leads to lazy eye (amblyopia). The techniques applied in his research mainly include psychophysical testing, extracellular single unit recording, local field potential recording, and multifocal visual evoked potentials. His research has been published in numerous high-impact journals such as *Nature Neuroscience*, *Cell*, *Proceedings of National Academy of Science USA*, *Investigative Ophthalmology*, and *Vision Science*.
We came across this photo from our archives, dusted it off, and found a “treasure” of an image. We thought it would be fun to offer it up to alumni to see if anyone recognizes this faculty member. We also thought it would make for a great contest. For the first person to correctly identify the faculty member in the photo, the prize will be free CE registration to the 15th Annual Clinical Eye Care Conference and Alumni Reunion on May 13-15, 2011. Hint: This faculty member is a Nova Southeastern University graduate, but not a graduate of the College of Optometry.

Please submit your entry by email to TheVisionary@nsu.nova.edu
The winner will be announced in our winter/spring issue.
Good Luck!

Who’s This Alumnus Contest Winner
The winner of the Who’s This Alumnus? photo contest that appeared in the fall 2009 issue of The Visionary is Jay Patel, O.D. (’98). He was first to identify the mystery alumnus—Arnie Patrick, O.D.

Arnie Patrick, O.D. (’94)
Assistant Professor of Optometry
NSU College of Optometry
This is him now!

Stacey A. Coulter, O.D., FAAO, FCVO, was elected as a distinguished practitioner-member of the National Academies of Practice on March 20 in Arlington, Virginia. Only 150 distinguished members from each of the professions can be elected to membership, so selection is indeed an honor.

Erin C. Jenewein, O.D., M.S. (’09, resident ’10) was one of two residents in North America awarded the Terrence N. Inghram Pediatric Optometry Residency Award by the American Academy of Optometry. The Terrence N. Inghram Pediatric Optometry Residency Award is $4,000, part of which is in the form of a $750 travel fellowship to attend the 88th Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Optometry in November 2010 in San Francisco.

Jamie Althoff, O.D. (resident ’08) and her husband, John, welcomed Lowell Bradley into the world in June, weighing in at 6 pounds, 13 ounces and 20.3 inches high.
Dr. Dave Woods …
In His Own WORDS

Dr. Woods: The Early Years

I grew up in a variety of places since my father was an officer in the U.S. Air Force. My parents were living in France when my mom was due with me, and because it was suspected that I would be an Rh factor blue baby, she was taken to the main hospital in Wiesbaden, Germany. I started life with multiple transfusions as a tiny infant—well, maybe not so tiny.

We came back to the United States when I was three because my father was stationed at Pope Air Force Base near Pinehurst, North Carolina. This happened to be the location where my father’s family had lived for several generations. When I was starting first grade, my father was then transferred to Kadena Air Force Base in Okinawa, Japan, where I had the luxury of living for about three years. My biggest thrill while I was there was that I found an old, but live, grenade from World War II outside the base near the housing area. Being the good little Cub Scout that I was, I ran as fast as I could to the marine guard station and took them to the location, which earned me a nice shiny Cub Scout badge.

When we returned to the States, I had my first shocking—or I should stay stinging—“back in the USA” experience. In Okinawa, bumblebees, for some reason, do not sting, so these little creatures became excellent little pets. As you can imagine, I was in for a big surprise when I picked one up at our new home in Rome, New York. The second shock was going from the tropics and cyclones to snow—and LOTS of it. Unfortunately, my dad passed away several years after we arrived in New York, so my mom and I moved back to North Carolina to an almost completed two-story log cabin that had been built by hand from the land by my parents.

We also had a house in Miami, Florida, which is where my father first met my mom while she was working at the Miami Herald and he was attending the University of Miami. So after only a few months living out in the woods after my dad’s
death, we loaded up the car and moved to Miami, where a new life was to begin. This place was more familiar to me—tropics and hurricanes.

My mother also purchased a place in Key Biscayne because the houses were cheap on that remote island in those days. The place was also so undeveloped that you would be inundated with hundreds and hundreds of hermit crabs crossing the road as you came onto the island. In fact, I can still hear the “crunch...crunch...crunch” sounds. We resided there for a few years and then went back to North Carolina, although that was after learning that hurricanes can create a good wind power source for a makeshift sail-street board, which was constructed from one of my mother’s bed sheets, an old broom, and my handy skateboard.

One night, my mother sat me down and said we could try to live on our savings and military benefits or risk it all and buy an oceanfront hotel in Long Beach, North Carolina (now called Oak Island). We decided to go for it, and for the next three years I spent every Sunday morning at the Laundromat doing all the laundry for the eight units we owned. I obviously did not realize this was in the game plan and surely wasn’t thinking of that when I said yes. Our place was named the Scotch Bonnet Hotel after the state shell. Every week, we held a big fish and clam bake for everyone right on the beach in front of the hotel. I also had two dogs and an assortment of cats to accompany us, and on an occasion a squirrel and a pelican (don’t ask).

Well, it was not just my mom and I. We also had two dogs and an assortment of cats to accompany us, and on an occasion a squirrel and a pelican (don’t ask).

“So what do you do with a bright new shiny biology degree? You go to grad school, of course.”

Because of my dad’s military connections, I thought about going to the U.S. Air Force Academy. I earned my wings at the local air force base while I was still in high school and had joined the United States Army Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps to get my foot in the door. The colonel who headed up the program used to entice us to study harder for an air navigational exercise/exam by dangling the offer of a banana split to the highest scorer. Being a pilot, I easily won the first two in a row, so he upped the ante to a steak dinner for the final exercise. I had mine medium rare. But alas, my hearing was to fail me, and I would not be able to be an air force pilot. So I fell back on my favorite thing next to surfing and sailing, which was biology.

When it was time for me to go to college, we sold the Scotch Bonnet and I bought a VW bus with a surfboard rack ready to go. You could basically live in there, better than any hotel. Then I got a map out, and decided on how far I could go with my new vehicle and still be in the United States. My fingers perused to the far end corner where the words Washington State reached my eyes. It had uncrowded waves, except for a few orcas, mountains everywhere, and I’d almost still be in the USA! It looked like a dream from heaven.

I started out in a small community college that had a dorm on the Olympic peninsula because its catalog said, “Ski to sea in 30 minutes!” Well, I got it down to 20. The first drive out from Florida to the college was to be very educational. The college phoned me (yes, we are talking pre-Web here) about another new student from Chicago that was going to attend the college and needed to hitch a ride. So there we were cruising along in my somewhat bald-tired VW bus, with surfboard on top, on the road from Chicago to Washington State when we ran into a snowstorm in Medicine Bow, Wyoming.

This was my first time driving in snow, and as I was soon to learn, when a bullet-holed sign stated “Bridges Freeze Before Road,” it wasn’t kidding. As we were coming off of a high-canyon bridge, just a wee bit sideways (okay, maybe a bit more than wee), my new companion yelled, “Next time I’m flying.” My response was, “Dude, we are flying!” Two years later, when I looked at the map again, I realized that if I went to Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington, I could go even further north and be right next to the Canadian border. I graduated with a degree in biology (and a minor in snowshoeing), packed up my VW, and headed back for the East Coast along with my surfboard, a mountain bike, backcountry skis, and a kayak atop the VW.

So what do you do with a bright new shiny biology degree? You go to grad school, of course. This time, I just headed across the bridge to the Florida Institute of Technology in Melbourne, Florida, and started working on a master’s in cellular biology. My thesis research was looking at how synaptic morphology changed in the inner ear with age, but for any classes and lab projects outside of your thesis work, you had to work with another organ. Naturally,
I chose the eye since the synaptic morphology is very similar to the ear. After falling asleep several times while working on the electron microscope and waking up looking like Rocky the Raccoon, much to the entertainment of my faculty adviser, I realized I couldn’t spend the rest of my life working in a dark room.

I knew surgery would not be my forte from my work with the inner ear, and since I was comfortable with the eyes, I decided to go into optometry. Yeah, that was the ticket, plus it would get me out of working in a dark room. Having been to the northwest corner of the country, I decided to see how it was like living in the Northeast. I cranked up the VW and headed up to the Pennsylvania College of Optometry (PCO). I had pretty much decided during my first year that I wanted to do a residency in Baltimore at the VA Medical Center that was associated with Johns Hopkins because of its renowned research and clinical reputation. Four years later, I was starting a residency in Baltimore.

A Career as an NSU Educator Beckons

I had no intention of being an educator, and because of my hearing, I planned to work with veterans because they were always shouting at me due to their hearing loss, which meant I had no problem hearing them. I contacted an SVOSH friend of mine from PCO, Michelle Caputo, O.D., about staying a few nights at her home in Baltimore until I found a place to live while I did my residency. Those few nights turned into many months, which was why she always told me I never moved out. Dr. Caputo, who had also done a residency at the VA Medical Center the year before me, decided that after a year with me saying how great it was in Florida, we needed to go live with the palm trees nestled in the tropics and hurricanes. Since she was thinking of going down to the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute in Miami, I converted my sailboat trailer into a makeshift U-Haul and we loaded up the thing and headed to South Florida. The first thing that flew out of this makeshift U-Haul, which I didn’t have time to build a top for, was a roll of toilet paper that whizzed by Dr. Caputo as we crossed the border out of Maryland. And with that we said farewell to the Northeast.

When we first came to Florida, I worked for a staff model HMO in Palm Beach when someone brought to my attention the fact that a new optometry school was close by in North Miami Beach. I started my new job at Southeastern University College of Optometry (the precursor to NSU’s College of Optometry) on December 1, 1992. During my first day of work, I was told I would be teaching a course in systemic disease to third-year optometry students starting January 2, 1993. Let the fun begin!

Arnie Patrick, O.D., who was one of my new students that first winter, always rubbed me about my handouts being so fresh off the copier in the morning that they were still radiating a nice warmth. I just wanted to make sure they had the latest up-to-date information. Because of my learning experience in the area of neuro-eye, where during residency rounds Dr. Neil Miller at Johns Hopkins would wheel patients in with different neuro-eye prob-

One day, walking down the wrong hall at the wrong time (just kidding!), I ended up teaching an online course in information searching for clinical research, which now has grown into several advance disease courses for our online master’s program. In addition to our primary care clinics, several years ago I was helping one of our Ph.D.’s with the beginnings of our electrodiagnostic service, which I now head up, and draws patients from as far away as Central Florida to our north and the Caribbean and South America to our south.

So what makes me still get up early in the morning once a week, well before dawn, to drive or catch a flight down to Davie from either my home in Satellite Beach or the cabin in North Carolina? There are three reasons:

ONE The students. Each class brings something new to the table, keeping me on my toes to provide the latest information and share my patient experiences and clinical knowledge with them.

TWO The patients. The ones I see in clinic, especially at the Broward clinic, would probably never get any eye care if it weren’t for us being there.

THREE My colleagues. There is not a day that I don’t learn something new by listening to them talk about their experiences and what they have read.

I guess in the end I’m still a student, and as long as I keep on learning each day, I’ll keep sharing this information as a teacher. And when I stop learning, there’s always my surfboard and the waves.

Cowabunga!
The NSU Health Professions Division (HPD) Library recently reorganized its academic support services and added new liaison librarians to better provide excellent services to the students and faculty. The three liaisons are: Courtney Mlinar, M.L.S. (Colleges of Optometry, Dental Medicine, and Pharmacy); Bonnie DiGiallonardo, M.L.I.S. (College of Allied Health and Nursing); and Kaye Robertson, M.L.S. (Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine and Medical Sciences).

The HPD Library’s vision is to provide an innovative, user-centered, technologically sophisticated library that

- facilitates easy access to authoritative health sciences information
- serves as an instructional partner in the academic curriculum
- functions as a center for cross-disciplinary collaboration
- supports experiential learning, discovery, and scholarship

As part of our mission to provide excellence in service, the HPD Library recently conducted an online survey to find out where we need to improve and what we are doing well. We are looking forward to reading the results and finding innovative ways to serve you.

As the HPD liaison for the College of Optometry, I hope to serve as a guide to new resources and encourage both students and faculty members who pursue optometry research. All three liaisons are currently developing Campu LibGuides to better organize your access to resources in the form of subject pathfinders. The new LibGuides will feature

- new pathways to find the authoritative information needed in their subject area
- a starting point for research with searching tools and tips
- contact information for all liaisons by phone, email, text, in person, or instant message for specialized assistance
- special LibGuides, which may be created for a specific course at an instructor’s request
- information created regarding areas such as consumer health resources and mobile medical applications
Below are some examples of LibGuides created at other institutions:

http://researchguides.uic.edu/healthsciences
from the University of Illinois, Chicago

http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/content.php?pid=11693&sid=78448&search_terms=optometry
from the University of New South Wales, Australia

http://pacificu.libguides.com/content.php?pid=35994&sid=264936
from Pacific University, Oregon

In addition to providing new LibGuides for assistance in research, liaisons also work with faculty members as an instructional partner to provide instructional and academic support in reaching the objectives of the curriculum. This partnership is especially critical in the current and dynamic state of library services. We have found that most of our users prefer to access materials online, which is why we are working to accommodate this preference. For this reason, access to the HPD Library resources are rapidly changing. For example, resources that were previously available in print may now be provided in different formats as we purchase more online library subscription resources.

As your liaison, I hope to keep you informed on exciting resources available to you such as new e-books and new databases via Twitter: HPD Library News, accessible from the HPD Library homepage at http://www.nova.edu/hpdlibrary/index.html.

New databases and e-books added most recently include Bates Physical Examination streaming videos, Red Book Online, DynaMed, Visual Dx, and Psychiatry Online. Liaison services for faculty members also include:

• updating syllabi to reflect the latest edition of required and supplemental reading assignments and facilitating access to readings that may be available through online books and journals
• providing middleware – library instruction within your WebCT or Blackboard course via Courtney’s Corner, with assignment-specific videos, PowerPoints, or handouts to accompany research-based learning
• library instruction classes or new supplemental a la carte sessions to review using Endnote or PubMed, in person or online
• personalized faculty research assistance to find literature related to your topic
• library orientation for new faculty as well as current faculty members who want information on using newer library resources
• assignment-specific educational technology support
• course-specific resource support

Another project in progress by your HPD Library liaison is creating a vehicle for different disciplines to share their research. We hope to create a searchable HPD database to share scholarly communication across the HPD colleges, accessible from the HPD Library homepage. The possibilities for collaboration in research are very exciting, and we hope to have a role in bringing people together to share their work with their colleagues.

With effective instructional partnering and communication, your HPD Library liaison hopes to serve as an extension to your classroom as well as your personal assistant to your success. Feel free to drop by anytime; my door is always open. All my contact information is available on the HPD Library Ask a Librarian Web page. I look forward to helping you.
The Institute of Medicine’s 1999 landmark report *To Err is Human* provided critical insight as to the numbers of patients that die in hospitals as the result of medical errors. Hospitals are not the only setting where patients may encounter a treatment-related injury, and the report does not address those patients that are injured in the course of treatment.

Consequently, the rhetorical question becomes: Has patient safety improved in the last 10 years? That issue is debated in a number of forums. It is critical to personalize the issue and consider what each of us does in our course of care to promote the practice of patient safety. A component of improving safe patient care includes actively reviewing the office and clinical practice site for potential sources of injury.

There are a number of national patient safety initiatives that can be adopted to make the office setting safer for patients. The first is the adoption of the Universal Protocol—a template to ensure that the provider has a pre-procedure verification process (patient identity and procedure to be performed), marking of the procedure site (right V. left in the case of optical care), and a “time out” immediately prior to beginning the procedure. This is the final verification that the correct patient will have the correct procedure to the correct site.

Documentation is often the least-favorite aspect of patient care, yet is the one that if not done timely and fully will have significant repercussion on the practice. Legally speaking, the documentation should reflect the reason for care, services performed and offered, and the plan for future care. It is appropriate to include patient quotes and any comments the patient verbalizes about reluctance or dissatisfaction with a treatment plan. Evidence of coordination of care with other providers also should be included.

This step is critical especially if the patient has an emergent condition that requires specialty care. Be sure there is a mechanism to ensure closure so the patient does not “fall through” the proverbial cracks. Financially speaking, the billing charges must be supported with appropriate and complete documentation reflecting the necessity of care and services provided. Do not forget to have patient calls and messages entered into the permanent clinical record. This patient feedback is important and may impact future care.

Critically review your practice setting to minimize your particular set of risk exposures. Proparacaine should not be left unattended in the exam room; patients know or learn through the course of treatment that this medication relieves ocular pain. Patients have been known to take this medication from the exam room and self-prescribe. Often these patients suffer corneal damage and complicate the course of treatment, and they are reluctant to disclose its use when they return with complications.

Patient satisfaction surveys are a gift because they serve as a mechanism to solicit valuable information from the patient’s perspective. Patients gladly share what is working well along with those areas that represent an opportunity for improvement for the practice. Taking this feedback seriously and responding to the
information demonstrates your objective commitment to providing coordinated and safe patient care.

Appropriate storage of patient-care items will ensure the integrity of the packaging and product content. Do not store supplies where they could become wet (floor or under sinks) or in areas with ceiling-mounted fire sprinklers and be sure that items are stored at least 18 inches below the ceiling. Always check for product expiration dates and implement an inventory rotation system.

Minimize trips and slips by keeping floors clean, dry, and free of supplies. Take note of the office lighting; consider shadows and glare that could impact the patient’s ability to navigate through the office. Monitor the patient’s response to care and treatment, provide assistance to patients getting out of the exam chair, and ensure they are steady on their feet prior to having them leave the exam room.

Typically, a lot of trust is placed with the office manager and the front office staff. Take time to listen to how members of your office staff respond to patient phone calls, questions, and concerns. Pay particular attention to see if the information provided is within the scope of their job description. Review the documentation of office staff relating to cancellations and missed appointments because this may provide you with insight for a number of improvement initiatives.

Finally, when patients voice concerns relating to care and service, pay attention and determine what is the true root cause of their issues. Demonstrate your commitment to your patients by listening to them respectfully and validating with the patient what you heard. It is often helpful to do this in a private area away from other patients. Patients who feel respected and have a good relationship with their provider are less likely to seek a legal remedy.

There are resources to assist you with concerns relating to office management and clinical practice, including professional associations and risk-management resources of your liability carrier. These individuals are very happy to help you in addressing issues and mitigating your risk exposure. Often, this consultative service is available at no additional charge. In the event of a Notice of Intent to Initiate Legal Litigation (the advanced legal warning letter in Florida) that you are the subject of litigation, do not ignore this and notify your liability carrier immediately. Failure to take this notice seriously may impact your legal standing.

To keep your practice thriving, consider how you like to be treated by your fellow practitioners and go one step above that with your patients. Consistently document your charts concurrently with all relevant information from visits and calls. Ensure that your staff members’ roles are clear and that they view themselves as valued members of the care team. These people really know the pulse of the office and can help you shine. In addition, make the time to incorporate patient safety strategies into your practice because it is much easier, cheaper, and less time consuming than litigation.
NSU College of Optometry Responds To Crisis-Wracked HAITI

WRITTEN BY:
JANET LEASHER, O.D., M.P.H., FAAO, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF OPTOMETRY
SMITH BLANC, O.D. (*09, RESIDENT ’10)
JOSIE TOUSSAINT, M.S., LOW VISION ASSISTANT, THE EYE CARE INSTITUTE
Catastrophic Disaster

On January 12, 2010, shortly before 5:00 p.m., an earthquake measuring 7.3 on the Richter scale rattled Haiti for 35 seconds. It was the most powerful earthquake to hit the country in 200 years and struck the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, as well as the towns of Léogâne, Jacmel, and Petit-Goâve. The country’s capital of Port-au-Prince suffered catastrophic damage, and 80 percent of the town of Léogâne was destroyed.

The earthquake created a tragic situation of extreme vulnerability for the Haitian people. Haiti is considered to be the least developed country in the Western Hemisphere, and the disaster struck the country’s most populated area as well as its economic and administrative center. According to the Ministry of Health, it is a tremendous setback because for the last three years, Haiti has experienced stability in terms of society, politics, security, economic growth, and a remarkable improvement in living conditions. Nonetheless, it is the resilience and tenacity of the Haitian people that will bring recovery and reconstruction with international support.

Striking at the Very Heart

The human impact is immense. Roughly 1.5 million people (15 percent of the national population) were directly affected. According to the national authorities, more than 300,000 died and as many were injured. About 1.3 million people are living in temporary shelters in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, and over 600,000 people have left the affected areas to seek shelter elsewhere in the country. In addition, existing problems in providing access to food and basic services have been exacerbated. By striking at the very heart of the Haitian economy and administration, the earthquake has had a severe affect on human and institutional capacities, both the public and the private sectors, as well as some international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

Colossal Destruction

The destruction of infrastructure is colossal. The country’s main port cannot be used. The Presidential Palace, Parliament, law courts, and most ministerial and public administration buildings have been destroyed. About 105,000 homes were totally decimated and over 208,000 were damaged. More than 1,300 educational institutions and more than 50 hospitals and health centers have collapsed or are unusable. This includes the St. Vincent School for the Blind and the building that houses the Haitian Society for the Blind. In addition, 19 ophthalmology clinics were severely damaged or destroyed.

The nation’s university hospital, HUEH, which was the training center for health care providers for the entire country, was severely damaged and the School of Nursing was completely destroyed. The ophthalmology department, which trains three residents per year, suffered tremendous damage. Interestingly, there is no recognition of the optometry profession in Haiti; however, there are several optometrists serving as humanitarian missionaries and several short-term missions occurring in Haiti, including a VOSH team from Ohio that was conducting a field eye care clinic when the earthquake hit.

NSU Hears the Call

Aside from the immediate response of collecting money, food, water, and other needed items, an ad hoc task force of the NSU Health Professions Division, led by Dr. Leonard Levy of the NSU College of Osteopathic Medicine Center for Bioterrorism and All-Hazards Preparedness (CBAP), mobilized a response. On January 15, NSU’s College of Optometry, represented by Dr. Janet Leasher, participated with this ad hoc task force in creating an inventory of licensed health professional personnel willing and able to respond to the earthquake crisis in Haiti as part of a call to NSU from the Council of Florida Medical School Deans and the Region VII Health/Medical Southeast Domestic Security Task Force.

NSU licensed health professions employees were asked to become part of emergency response teams and recovery teams if ready and able to put their personal safety and health at risk at a moment’s notice. Through the University of Miami’s Miller School of Medicine’s Project Medishare program, volunteers would be working at a 300-bed tent hospital in the United Nations compound at the airport and serve other needs as directed on the ground. In particular, the call targeted those who speak Haitian Creole and/or French.

The very night before the earthquake struck Haiti, Dr. Ryan Price, an optometric Christian missionary (http://www.christianville-haiti.org) spoke to the optometry student club, Fellowship for Christian Optometrists (FCO), about the situation there. Little did he know that as he flew back to Haiti with his immediate family, a massive earthquake interrupted what he was working to improve. Many FCO members rallied to support his efforts. There was discussion of a student-led humanitarian mission, but the risks were felt to be too great for students without disaster experience to travel—especially with the state department advising against it—so the mission has been postponed indefinitely.

The National Optometry Student Association, which represents underrepresented minorities in the profession of optometry and whose mission is to serve those populations that are underserved in our community, leapt to action, assisting in the collection and sorting of donations for Haiti relief for the Health Professions Division.

South Florida’s Rich Haitian-American Heritage

South Florida has a strong Haitian-American community (as Miami is believed to have the highest percentage of Haitian immigrants in the country), many of whom are patients, students, and/or employees at NSU. Haiti is roughly 800 miles south of Fort Lauderdale where NSU’s main campus is centered. The university has responded to our neighbors in this time of need through a variety of outreach, donations, and personal support.

College of Optometry Answers

Two remarkable individuals answered the emergency call to volunteer their professional services in Haiti from the NSU College of Optometry: Smith Blanc, O.D., and Josie Toussaint, M.S.

Dr. Blanc, a 2009 graduate of NSUCO and currently in the primary care/contact lens residency program at NSU, is Florida-born of
Haitian heritage. He had participated in a previous humanitarian mission to Haiti and three to Jamaica through the National Optometric Student Association, where he served as student president and student team coordinator. Dr. Blanc also has assisted the AOA/FOA HEHP Glaucoma Awareness Campaign for Caribbean-Americans in South Florida and is active in community outreach.

Toussaint, who was born and raised in Haiti, works for The Eye Care Institute at NSU as a low vision assistant and has a master’s degree in psychology. Sadly, she lost family members in the earthquake due to horrific circumstances. Fluent in English, French, and Creole, and intimately familiar with Port-au-Prince, her service would prove to be invaluable.

Broward Optometrists Contribute to a Monumental Task

With such incredibly short notice and with a three-day college-wide donation drive, gathering enough pharmaceuticals, supplies, and equipment for Dr. Blanc to provide quality urgent care was a monumental task. Unfortunately, ready-made spectacles could not be obtained in time, although refractive services and materials were an identified need.

A call to the local Broward County Optometric Society members yielded donations of topical antibiotics, anti-inflammatories, ocular lubricants, and supplies augmenting that which was supplied by NSU’s The Eye Care Institute clinic inventory and monetary donations from students, as well as staff and faculty members. The response from the NSU and Broward optometric physicians was absolutely inspirational.

Providing on-the-Spot Care to the Fullest

Dr. Blanc and Toussaint were deployed to Haiti on February 22 and returned safely on March 1. They joined a larger health care relief team through the University of Miami Project Medishare program, which traveled on a chartered flight through Vision Airlines. According to Dr. Blanc and Toussaint, even though the flight to Haiti is just two hours away, the day of the deployment to Haiti was a long one. Shortly before reaching Haiti, an aftershock shook the grounds of the Port-au-Prince airport and a power outage cut

“The human impact is immense.”
the airport lights. Furthermore, this inevitably forced the plane carrying the team to be rerouted to the Santo Domingo airport in the Dominican Republic (where team members slept for the night). After successfully arriving in Haiti the next day, the medical team received an orientation to the University of Miami’s Project Medishare base and began to work.

Dr. Blanc served in the triage area, where he was able to better address the various ocular complaints of the patients that lined up from all over the city. He estimates seeing almost 100 patients per day and served as the sole provider of eye care during the time he was there. Dr. Blanc treated and managed conditions such as dry eye, foreign body complaints, ocular trauma, and bacterial infections. He also provided consultation and baseline ocular testing for those patients on tuberculosis treatment. Drug resistant TB is one of the most prevalent infectious conditions in Haiti, and without access to medications as a result of the earthquake, many were concerned about spreading infection.

One of the most memorable patients seen by Dr. Blanc presented with suspected rhabdomyosarcoma (a soft-tissue tumor of the eye). Dr. Blanc worked to medically transport this patient to the United States for better treatment. Dr. Blanc witnessed the systemic and physical consequences of the disaster firsthand, including cases of gangrene of injured limbs and amputations. The rising rates of infectious disease and trauma were astronomical.

As was previously mentioned, Toussaint works as the coordinator of low vision services in the United States, but in this mission she served in many aspects that tested her skills outside the College of Optometry. As a fluent speaker of Haitian Creole, French, and English, she provided invaluable interpretation on the base (representing both Haitians and non-Haitians alike). Bridging the communication barrier between those foreign doctors and the Haitian patients was a godsend. She also served as an on-the-spot nurse, where at any given time she took care of about 20 patients. While not on the base, she acted as a social worker and transported patients to their homes and to other facilities. Her knowledge of her hometown city of Port-au-Prince proved to be a precious gift to the foreign agencies conducting disaster relief. *(Please see the accompanying sidebar to read Toussaint’s personal account.)*

**Sustainable Recovery of Eye Care**

In addition to providing direct care to patients during the emergency phase post-disaster, part of the College of Optometry Haiti assistance plan was to connect with the eye care leaders in Haiti to assist in the needs assessment for long-term recovery and development planning. NSUCO is also home to the North American Center of the UNESCO Chair in Visual Health and Development, who has been communicating with other VISION 2020 USA and IAPB agencies in the eye care response, recovery, and sustainable development agenda for Haiti.

NSU optometry and public health faculty member Dr. Janet Leasher, the coordinator of the North American Center of the UNESCO Chair in Visual Health and Development, participated in the eye care reconstruction planning workshop on May 17-18 in Santo Domingo, which was hosted by the Ministry of Health of Haiti and the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO). In attendance were PAHO’s collaborating nongovernmental organizations such as Sightsavers International, Lions Clubs International Foundation, Cristofol Blinden Mission, World Blind Union, Caribbean Council for the Blind, Orbis International, International Centre for Eyecare Education, Deseret International, IRIS Foundation, Pan-American Ophthalmology Association, the American Academy of Ophthalmology, and the UNESCO Chair at NSU. Representatives participated from the Haitian Society of Ophthalmology (SHOO), the National Committee for the Prevention of Blindness (CNPC), the University Hospital (HUEH), and the Haitian Society for the Blind (SHAA).

PAHO carried out an evaluation report of the damage to the eye care system and the results were reported.

Prior to the earthquake, the Ministry of Health in Haiti had an established eye health program, which included community health education, vitamin A distribution, surgical interventions for cataracts (with the Cuban partner, Operación Milagro), nominal salary support for some ophthalmologists in the public sector, and partial support of the ophthalmology residency training program at the University Hospital.

Most of the ophthalmology clinics in the affected region sustained damage. One ophthalmologist died, clinics were destroyed, equipment damaged, and services stopped. Those who were providing services were asked to provide care for free by the Ministry of Health. Unfortunately, eye care providers also sustained personal loss, and this lack of income has stressed the eye care system even further. The immediate need is to recover those ophthalmologists who suffered loss of their practices, families, and homes.

The Committee for the Prevention of Blindness in Haiti had been working on getting approval for a national blindness prevention plan (VISION 2020: The Right to Sight) with the Ministry of Health before the earthquake. Now, infrastructure and administrative support is much needed to continue and broaden those efforts. An attempt to register and coordinate the aid that is arriving was decided to be the responsibility of this body. Anyone interested in eye care reconstruction should contact the CNPC.
The Haitian Society of Ophthalmology expressed concerns about the lack of regulation, control, or coordination of the 10,000-plus NGOs working in Haiti post-earthquake and the usefulness of the donations (out-of-date items, not in good working order, inappropriate or unneeded items). Some of the services have been completely provided by foreigners and undermine the efforts of the local health care providers. There are currently 52 ophthalmologists practicing throughout the country. Ophthalmic equipment procurement, instrument repair, ophthalmic pharmaceuticals, and supplies are currently imported and principally provided by foreign NGO donations. A registration and regulation process for the visual health providers (local and foreign) is an identified need. Glaucoma and eye injuries are reportedly more concerning than cataract blindness in the country. Refractive error services need to be strengthened. Public awareness of the importance of visual health as a key component in development also was discussed.

As mentioned earlier in this article, the St. Vincent School for the Blind, a boarding school for an estimated three-to-four percent of the over 300,000 thought to be visually impaired or blind Haitians, was totally demolished and needs to be rebuilt. The Haitian Society for the Blind, which offers supportive rehabilitation aids, and orientation/mobility training, was also destroyed. Low vision aids and devices, teaching materials for the blind, training of teachers for the blind, and community outreach services were identified needs. Advocating for universal access for those with disabilities such as blindness or loss of limb is also a priority for SHAA in the reconstruction of buildings and transportation systems in Haiti.

The University Hospital, which trains ophthalmology residents and some ophthalmic assistants, needs to rebuild. The school of nursing collapsed, and many public eye care services were suspended to accommodate the urgent care needs of trauma injuries post-earthquake. A proposal to increase ophthalmology training to three more positions, enhance emphasis on continuing education of current eye M.D.s, and increase subspecialty competence were prioritized.

“Some of the services have been completely provided by foreigners and undermine the efforts of the local health care providers.”
The meeting in Santo Domingo culminated in the development of objectives and strategies for the short-, mid-, and long-term reconstruction of eye care in Haiti. Working groups brainstormed appropriate options that would improve the eye care system for the entire country, not only in the regions affected by the earthquake. All participants agreed that building capacity, improving infrastructure, and facilitating quality eye care for all the citizens of Haiti means converting the challenges of disaster into opportunities for development.

Interestingly, the SPHERE guidelines, considered to be the directives in international disaster relief, do not have specific guidelines for eye care services and systems. The International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness, under the leadership of Jerry Vincent, O.D., M.P.H., of the International Rescue Committee, is working on those guidelines for vision care. Input and feedback on those guidelines will be sought from those ophthalmologists in Haiti involved in the disaster relief and those international entities such as the American Academy of Ophthalmology, as well as Dr. Janet Leasher, who has worked in disaster recovery in Honduras.

“NSU is committed to supporting the development of eye care for the Haitian community both here and abroad,” stated Dr. David Loshin, who serves as dean of NSU’s College of Optometry. “The situation in Haiti is such that everyone must contribute.”

NSUCO is requesting that alumni who are interested in collaborating to develop sustainable programs in Haiti or other developing countries should contact Dr. Janet Leasher at (954) 262-1488 or via email at leasher@nova.edu.
February 26, 2010, was a remarkable day for me. An aftershock that morning cut out electricity on the tarmac. After spending hours circling the island of Hispaniola, the pilot decided to land the plane in Santo Domingo. I spent the night sleeping on a chair at the airport. At 7:00 a.m. the next morning, we left Santo Domingo en route to Port-Au-Prince. Thirty minutes later, we were flying over the city, which looked like a war zone.

An hour later, we arrived at the hospital camp and broke into groups based on discipline. The journey started for me by doing a few translations since I was new on the floor and didn’t have many skills to offer; however, by late afternoon, I worked with a group of trauma doctors doing translation. By the evening, I was pulled from left to right doing translation, picking up medications from the supply room, distributing toiletries to the patients, and helping the nurses that needed assistance.

By Wednesday, the new shift of volunteers came, but we were very short-staffed so I became a nurse with no training. I had six amputee patients and six in isolation. It was a challenging day; I quickly had to learn everything from how to change an IV line and tube feed a day-old baby as well as work with a few families doing grief counseling. Accompanied with a chauffeur, I also transferred advanced-case TB patients from our camp hospital to an infectious disease hospital. The week I was there, Dr. Smith Blanc, an NSUCO graduate and resident, was the only eye care provider onsite. Saturday evening, after Dr. Smith departed, an ophthalmologist came on board.

Sadly, the tragedy is far from over. The population is facing all kinds of brutality, from domestic violence and rape to car accidents and gunshot wounds. Children and women are the most frequent victims. Women are victims of rape and domestic violence whereas children are abandoned and often sold as sex slaves or given to more affluent families to do household chores.

In order for the country to recover from this dilemma, a reform government needs to be put in place, where it would be governed by an outside source. The corruption is so deep that the country has become disabled. The resources that are donated to Haiti must be controlled by a foreign institution. The population is greatly suffering, but in order to resolve the problem, we need to reduce the corruption, provide safety, and improve the health care.

I was delighted to be a part of the medical team and to represent NSU. It was an excellent experience, and I would be glad to do it again. I have even kept in contact with some of my patients, who have sent me emails from time to time to give me updates of their conditions.

NSU Responds: My Journey Back to Haiti
This program is designed to bring you the latest information on therapeutic treatment and management. As primary care providers, optometrists are presented with a number of challenging diagnostic dilemmas. The program will help you to increase your comfort level and update your knowledge base to incorporate all treatments into your practice.

This meeting starts on Thursday evening after a light dinner with two hours of CE and will continue on Friday with a full day of CE, which will include an extended break around lunchtime for participants to explore the French Quarter. We will have a similar schedule on Saturday with a slightly shorter lunch hour. Speakers include Drs. Joe Sowka, Alan Kabat, Kim Reed, and Mike Bacigalupi. The CE hours will be COPE approved, and 14 of the hours will be approved by the Florida Board of Optometry for transcript-quality credit.

The Royal Sonesta Hotel is a first-class facility in the French Quarter located directly on Bourbon Street. Its Web site is located at www.sonesta.com/royal-neworleans/. Go to our CE Web page at optometry.nova.edu/ce to reserve your specially priced room for the meeting.

This meeting will update attendees in all areas of primary care optometry, pediatrics, contact lenses, and therapeutic management of commonly seen conditions. Set on the beach at St. Simons Island, Georgia, the schedule will allow for ample recreational time at low tide when the beach is at its best. Saturday morning will be set aside for golf and recreation. We will have a few hours of CE late Saturday afternoon followed by a dinner. Sunday will be a full day of CE, followed on Monday morning with a half-day session. The event will offer 16 hours of CE with 10 of the hours approved by the Florida Board of Optometry for transcript-quality education credit.

The King and Prince Resort has plenty of amenities to keep the whole family entertained, while the charming and historic Village of St. Simons offers numerous sightseeing opportunities, including an interesting tour of a working lighthouse. The hotel’s Web site is located at www.kingandprince.com. Book your room through the NSU Web site at optometry.nova.edu/ce to obtain the excellent event rate set for the meeting. For your information, St. Simons Island is located 60 miles north of the Jacksonville airport near Brunswick, Georgia.
the fall 2009 issue of The Visionary, I invited you to make a contribution to the College of Optometry Scholarship Fund. As I explained at that time, the fund will be used to provide scholarships to entering students so we can remain competitive in attracting the best and brightest future optometrists to our program and place ourselves on a level playing field with other schools and colleges of optometry in our recruiting efforts. And, not surprisingly, a number of you came through and contributed to the fund. On behalf of the College of Optometry, I thank you for your generosity.

The College of Optometry Scholarship Fund is growing, but in order to begin awarding scholarships to entering students, the endowment fund needs to grow to $150,000. That amount will provide the capital to produce the earnings required to award a $5,000 scholarship to a deserving student, and as long as the student remains in good standing, the scholarship will be renewed each year for three additional years — for a total of $20,000. I would not ask you to consider giving to this very worthwhile fund unless I was willing to step up to the plate myself: Therefore, I have pledged $1,000 to the scholarship fund and will renew my pledge each year. The payments for my pledge are made through payroll deduction in the amount of $38.46 every two weeks — less than the cost of a latte each day. This type of payment plan can be arranged through your bank.

We are looking to you — alumni and friends of the college — to help us achieve our goal of raising $150,000 for the College of Optometry Scholarship Fund. So become a visionary by making a contribution today.

For information about how you can contribute to the success of the College of Optometry, please contact me on my cell phone at (954) 661-6550 or by email at Scott.Gorman@nova.edu.

Best regards,

Dr. N. Scott Gorman
Director of Development and Alumni Relations

Mrs. Elena Barnabei on behalf of the Stefano LaSala Foundation
College of Optometry Scholarship Fund

Dr. Gita Dangodara ('98)
College of Optometry Scholarship Fund

Dr. Barry Frauens ('96)
College of Optometry Scholarship Fund

Mr. Adam Goldberg, J.D.
College of Optometry Scholarship Fund

Dr. N. Scott Gorman*
College of Optometry Scholarship Fund

Dr. Walter Guerard ('95)
Lester E. Janoff Scholar Award Fund

Dr. Carrie Heller ('03)
College of Optometry Scholarship Fund

Dr. Cristina Llerena ('06)
College of Optometry Scholarship Fund

Dr. Mark Marciano ('98)
College of Optometry Scholarship Fund

Dr. Aaron Sako ('00)
College of Optometry Scholarship Fund

Dr. Ann-Kay Tenn ('06)
College of Optometry Scholarship Fund

Dr. Sam Villella ('01)
College of Optometry Annual Fund

Dr. Lori Vollmer ('02)
Lester E. Janoff Scholar Fund

Dr. David Warshaw ('06)
College of Optometry Scholarship Fund

Dr. Joni Scott-Weideman ('03)
College of Optometry Scholarship Fund

* Member of the President’s Associates

(Please keep in mind that your gift is tax deductible.)
Dear College of Optometry Alumni and Friends,

During my time at Nova Southeastern University’s College of Optometry, the most important thing I learned was to be a compassionate and dedicated doctor. One way I accomplish this is by staying involved and giving back to my community. You are my community, and I am asking you to join me in giving back by making a contribution.

As a private institution, NSU depends on us—alumni, students, faculty and staff members, and friends of the college—to fund scholarships, research, and up-to-date optometric equipment and facilities. Any help, no matter the size, makes a difference. It is important to leave our legacy for future students to have the same extraordinary experiences that we had during our time at the College of Optometry.

Leave your legacy now, and consider making a gift by completing and returning the enclosed envelope, or make your gift online at www.nova.edu/changingtheworld.

Thank You,

Amanda Woodie Nanasy, O.D., ’10
College of Optometry
Nova Southeastern University
Naomi Aguilera (class of 2011) and Sharon Park (class of 2013) have been selected by Vistakon for free student membership in the American Public Health Association Vision Care Section (APHA).

The APHA, which is the oldest and most diverse organization of public health professionals in the world, works to protect all Americans, their families, and their communities from preventable serious health threats and strives to assure that community-based health promotion and disease prevention activities and preventive health services are universally accessible in the United States. The association represents a broad array of health professionals, including optometrists, who care about their own health and the health of their communities.

The APHA also builds a collective voice for public health, works to ensure access to health care, protects funding for core public health services, and eliminates health disparities, among a myriad of other issues. The APHA Vision Care Section has actively advocated for visual health and eye care for 20 years. Optometrists are encouraged to join and become actively involved by visiting www.apha.org.

Pravina Patel, O.D. (‘10), Naomi Aguilera (class of 2011), and Leslie Rosenthal (class of 2011) were named 2010 Transitions Students of Vision Scholarship winners. Thirteen entries that demonstrated this year’s Focus on Children’s Vision were selected as the scholarship winners. Supported by the Transitions Healthy Sight for Life Fund, the scholarship program awarded 14 students from the United States and Canada. Projects were judged by a group of Transitions Optical representatives, eye care professionals, and marketing specialists. To encourage creativity and a wide range of interpretations, projects were accepted in three categories: Activity/Event, Multimedia, and Other. The Transitions Healthy Sight for Life Fund awarded six $1,000 scholarships and seven $500 scholarships.

“Switching the focus this year to children’s vision enabled the students to take a creative look at how they would interact with young patients,” said Carole Bratteig, professional development and education manager for Transitions. “We could not be more pleased with the entries received this year. I have faith that the next generation of patients will be in good hands with these students of vision.”

Students were encouraged to be creative as they explored their roles in care for patients 18 years of age and younger. Projects included research papers, presentations, videos, posters, and community outreach. Winning students will also have their entries featured on the Transitions Healthy Sight for Life Fund Web site located at www.HealthySightforLife.org.
The Florida Optometric Student Association (FOSA), which is the student branch of the Florida Optometric Association (FOA), encourages students to participate in organized optometry at the state level. In addition, we provide opportunities for optometry students to make connections with local optometrists.

Our goals could not have been met without the dedication of our officers and over 300 members. I also have had the privilege to work with the 2009-10 executive board members: Ernie Cepero (president elect); Charles Nunez, (vice president); Pravina Patel (treasurer); Niketha Ajodha (secretary); and class representatives Wendy Wendel (2010), Jessica Rivera (2011), Margi Patel and Anthony Vu (2012), and Stephanie Frankel and Betsy Jacob (2013). Thank you to all the FOSA officers and members that support our organization every year.

**Optometry as a Legislative Profession: What Does This Mean and How Is FOSA Involved?**

In order for optometry to continue being the primary eye care profession it is and to continue expanding the way we practice, we must become active in the legislative process. This year, FOSA was very active.

On March 25, a group of 30 students headed up to Tallahassee by bus and joined other Florida optometrists to rally together for **Legislative Day**, which was organized by the FOA. We were there for an important reason: to meet with legislators about supporting Senate Bill 330, Optometry/Oral and Topical Pharmaceutical Agents, and educate them about our profession. After a long day of hard work, we headed back home on a seven-hour bus ride, which went by quickly as we watched movies, played games, and celebrated the success of our meeting.

Being active in the legislative process also means supporting optometry-friendly candidates running for office that will stand up for our profession. On February 19, over 50 students came out to support a fundraising reception for Senate President Jeff Atwater, who is running for the chief financial officer post and was amazed to see such support from the optometry community. Combined with optometrists, ophthalmologists, and optometry students, there were over 250 people in attendance.
Another candidate we support is Mark Marciano, O.D., an NSU graduate, running for the Florida House of Representatives in District 83 because it is important to have an optometrist in office. FOSA members helped spread the word about Dr. Marciano by going door to door delivering information about his campaign on April 11. These candidates and a few others not mentioned will continue to need our help as we approach the upcoming elections.

**FOSA Events**

We kicked off the 2009-10 academic year with the **FOSA Social**, our annual pool tournament at Gatsby’s in Davie. Doctors and students teamed up to compete for the FOSA Cup and bragging rights for a year. Congratulations to the 2009 pool tournament winners Dr. John Davis from Flamingo Falls Eye Care and his student partner, OD-2 Tiffany Doan.

Another terrific event was called **Meet the ODs**, which is held annually during our winter semester. This is a great time to meet many local ODs, including recent NSU graduates who are in different modes of practice. Students make connections and get questions answered by those that are in the real world of optometry. Thank you to all of our participating ODs who take the time out of their busy schedules every year to visit with us.

**FOA Convention**

The **2009 FOA Annual Convention** was held at the Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami with over 40 students in attendance. Many continuing education courses were available and free to optometry students, plus other meetings and fun events.

**Farewell**

We will surely miss Pravina Patel and Wendy Wendel as FOSA officers, but we know they will continue to support us as new Florida ODs. Congratulations on graduating.

After two years as FOSA president, my term has sadly come to an end. I truly enjoyed serving in this organization, and I will continue to support FOSA as past president. I have passed on the torch to Ernie Cepero, our new FOSA president for the 2010-11 academic year. Please join me in welcoming him in his new position. He is hardworking and dedicated to Florida optometry and will continue to expand FOSA and serve as a great leader.
My first experience working in the optical business was 25 years ago when my parents opened Cepero Opticians in Miami, Florida. In 2000, I graduated as a licensed optician from Miami Dade College (MDC) and went on to work in the family business. In 2001, Alan Sobel, O.D., from Miami-Dade College allowed me the opportunity to shadow him once a week for an entire year. After a few months with Dr. Sobel, I knew I wanted to be an optometrist.

I have been fortunate enough, prior to entering NSU, to experience the various aspects the field has to offer. For example, I was the optical manager and contact lens technician at our optical shop that was located within an M.D. practice, worked part-time as an instructor at MDC’s Opticianry Program, served as a licensed optician at Sears Optical, and as an ophthalmic technician at Bascom Palmer.

In 2007, I was accepted into NSU’s new Pre-Optometry Program (POP). After finishing the POP year, I knew I wanted to become more involved with my class. Fortunately, as an OD-1, I was elected as class president and earned BSK honors. As class president, I have been able to organize activities such as exam reviews by the professors, lab checkout practice relays, and student-led class reviews. I also became involved with the Florida Optometric Student Association (FOSA) and will become FOSA president beginning this summer.

Thanks to my involvement with FOSA, I was able to travel to Tallahassee the past two years for Legislative Day to support Florida optometry. I was also elected SGA secretary last semester and look forward to attending the AOA conference as NSU’s AOSA delegate and the FOA conference in Orlando this summer.

As we enter the clinical part of our education, I look forward to continuing to lead the class of 2012 members as we strive to be the largest graduating class ever at NSUCO.
Each year, the college’s SGA organizes a banquet called the Eyeball. In the past, we have had approximately 300 students, faculty members, and guests attend. For this year’s Eyeball event, tickets went on sale on January 20 at 12:00 p.m., and we sold out of the initial 300 tickets within the first 45 minutes, with a waiting list of over 200 students. In fact, the students lined up as if they were waiting to purchase Lady Gaga concert tickets. Why? Because Eyeball 2010, CaSEEno Royale took place on the luxurious Lady Windridge Yacht.

Fortunately, we were able to get sponsors to help provide an additional 200 tickets, so we extend a heartfelt thank you to NSU’s College of Optometry and Vistakon. All 500 tickets sold out by January 22, which is unheard of. It was exciting to see such hype for our college that even students from the other NSU Health Professions Division colleges wanted to attend.

The most anticipated NSUCO party took place on March 20. Cruising across the Fort Lauderdale Intracoastal, dancing under the stars, enjoying delicious dining, and having fun in our CaSEEno playing blackjack, roulette, and slot machines (all funny money) made for a tremendous affair. Imagine 500 students and faculty members on a boat—now that was some serious school spirit. It was the hottest party on the Intracoastal, and we were so proud that our school hosted it.

I’m not sure what the next Eyeball will bring, but I am sure that Eyeball 2010, CaSEEno Royale was surely a memorable one making history as one of the best Eyeball banquets ever at NSU. Thank you to the SGA officers Elliot Snyder, Sarah Brehm, and Carrie Carpenter, as well as Carey Jenkins and Lisa Cossetto, class of 2011 president, for helping me coordinate this fabulous event.
February was devoted to the recognition of African Americans of the past and present who’ve made significant contributions in communities both locally and abroad. At NSU’s Health Professions Division (HPD), Black History Month was celebrated by acknowledging the African American faculty members who’ve made contributions to their respective professions through education. Their tireless efforts in and out of the classroom continue to leave a lasting impression on the entire student body each year.

In honor of these exemplary faculty members, the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) collaborated with the Student National Pharmaceutical Association (SNPhA) to host a luncheon on February 10 in the HPD Chancellor’s Dining Room to commemorate African American HPD faculty members. The National Optometric Student Association (NOSA) was also invited to take part in this spectacular event to pay tribute to these faculty members from their respective colleges. Dr. Sherrol Reynolds, associate professor in the College of Optometry and NOSA faculty adviser, was among the honored list of 12 faculty members recognized for their contributions to the student body. The honorees were presented with certificates of appreciation by students from their respective disciplines. Support staff members were also recognized for the imperative work they do daily behind the scenes.

With over 100 faculty members, students, and staff members present, the event turned out to be a great success. The luncheon was a memorable event that was made possible through the cooperation of SNMA, SNPhA, NOSA, and the Black Student Nurses Association. The luncheon’s success represents more than the commitment of the aforementioned student organizations. It serves as a testament to the impact made possible in our communities with the collaboration of health care disciplines. Professors devote their lives to teaching and mentoring students, and many of them have a tremendous impact. It’s been unfortunate that some professors go their entire career without hearing a simple “thank you.” This event provided an opportunity to change that.
On April 9, the National Optometric Student Association (NOSA) hosted its Fourth Annual Banquet in the HPD Chancellor’s Dining Room to commemorate the end of the academic year. In attendance were faculty members from the College of Optometry, including Dr. Michael Bacigalupi (assistant dean of students), Dr. Julie Tyler (clinic module chief), and Dr. Sherrol Reynolds (NOSA faculty adviser). Also in attendance were several members from the Fort Lauderdale Lions Club, including Dr. James Brauss, District 35-D vice president of the Florida Lions Eye Bank.

During the banquet, awards were presented to those who continuously support the efforts of the organization. Faculty members recognized were Dr. Greg Black, Dr. Bacigalupi, Dr. Reynolds and Dr. David Loshin, dean of the College of Optometry. An award was also presented to Huldah Skinner, Fort Lauderdale Lions Club president, in recognition of the organization’s sponsorship of NOSA for mission trips to Jamaica as well as its participation and co-sponsorship with the American Optometric Association (AOA) Healthy Eyes Healthy People (HEHP) Glaucoma Awareness Campaigns, led by Dr. Reynolds.

The banquet guest speaker was Dr. Smith Blanc, a contact lens resident who is a graduate of NSU’s College of Optometry and a former NOSA president in 2007-08. Dr. Blanc gave an inspirational presentation regarding the advantage of residency in the optometric profession and also shared his recent experience of traveling to Haiti in the aftermath of the catastrophic earthquake that occurred in January.

NOSA officers for the 2010-11 academic year were introduced at the banquet. The new NOSA Executive Board will be lead by OD-3 Johnny Morette (president) and OD-3 Steven Klein (vice president).
On August 7, 2006, a group of wide-eyed young people embarked upon a long journey to become optometrists. When this group walked onto the Nova Southeastern University campus, Fergie’s song “London Bridge” was number one on the radio and the price of gasoline was $2.98 per gallon (some things really haven’t changed!). Understandably, May 30, 2010, seemed so far into the future that it was hard to imagine that date, but—“time flies.”

Today, these students are now our colleagues. They are professional optometrists that undertook a very rigorous curriculum, challenging clinic experiences, and a comprehensive series of board examinations to gain entrance into the family of optometry. Let’s all welcome them and congratulate them.

These 106 (34 men and 72 women) new optometrists out-competed 673 applicants in 2006 for their seats at NSUCO. Their accomplishments did not stop there. In 2009, this group undertook the first administration of Part I of the NBEO exam entitled Applied Basic Science and passed it with an amazing 98 percent rate on its first attempt. One of these graduates even achieved the highest score in the country on this exam.

There are 22 states and Canada represented in this outstanding group of optometrists, including nine from California, which may be a record. Their educational backgrounds show great diversity including B.A., B.S., B.Sc., M.P.H., M.S., M.B.A., and even one Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. Now, all can add the O.D. designation after their names.

NSUCO class of 2010, you make us proud!
The College of Optometry proudly congratulates Dr. Evan Brinton for demonstrating outstanding academic performance during his four years at the college. In addition to winning four senior awards, he ranked first in his class and graduated with highest honors as the class of 2010 valedictorian. He also distinguished himself for achieving the highest score in the United States on Part I of the National Board of Examiners in Optometry examination—a first for Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry.

**DEAN’S AWARD**
Presented for academic excellence to the student graduating with the highest scholastic achievement.

**BETA SIGMA KAPPA INTERNATIONAL SILVER MEDAL AWARD**
Presented to the graduating chapter member who has achieved the highest cumulative academic average.

**LOMBART INSTRUMENTS OPTOMETRIC AWARD**
Presented to the individual with the highest overall grade in the optometric theory and methods courses.

**VISTAKON AWARD OF EXCELLENCE**
Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated excellence in contact lens care.
DAWN HALLUMS, O.D.

Abbot Contact Lens Award
Presented to a graduating student who attained the highest academic average in all didactic courses related to contact lenses.

Milroy Optical Scholarship Award
Presented to a graduating student for excellence in ophthalmic optics materials knowledge and dispensing.

SARAH MAKARI, O.D.

Luxottica Award
Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated excellence in clinical pediatric care and vision therapy.

Miramed Tech Academic Achievement Award
Presented to a graduating student in recognition of his/her outstanding academic performance and contributions to the eye care community.

MEAGAN STEG, O.D.

Alcon Scholarship Award
Presented to a graduating student who has written the best case report that incorporates the use of an Alcon product.

Marchon Practice Management Award
Presented to a graduating student for excellence in clinical optometric practice management.

ADAM SWEENEY, O.D.

GP Clinical Excellence Award
Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated eagerness to learn more about rigid gas permeable lens design, materials, and fitting techniques.

Volk Ocular Disease Excellence Award
Presented to a student for excellence in ocular disease.

MATTHEW WALSH, O.D.

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.

Pediatric and Binocular Vision Clinical Excellence Award
Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding clinical skills and patient care in The Eye Care Institute’s Pediatrics and Binocular Vision Service.

NICOLE ALESSI, O.D.

Eschenback Award of Excellence in Low Vision
Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding clinical application of low vision treatment.

JOHN BASCOME, O.D.

Braverman Eye Center Clinical Excellence Award
For demonstration of superior clinical skills and excellence in diagnosis and treatment of ocular disease.

BENJAMIN CROWELL, O.D.

Humana Specialty Benefits (VCP) Primary Care Clinical Achievement Award
Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated excellence in primary care.
CATHY DAU, O.D.

College of Optometrists in Vision Development Award of Excellence
Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated strong interest and clinical skills in the area of vision therapy.

MICHAEL DERHODGE, O.D.

Contact Lens Practice Management Award
Presented to a student who has demonstrated excellence in contact lens practice management as house officer.

APRIL GERHARD, O.D.

William Feinbloom Low Vision Award
Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding clinical application of low vision treatment.

SARA HENNEY, O.D.

Heini Award of Excellence in Optics
Presented to a graduating student who has attained the highest academic average in all didactic courses related to optics.

FARWAH HAG, O.D.

Braverman Eye Center Extern of the Year Award
In recognition of a superior work ethic, clinical acumen, and excellence in patient care.

FARWAH HAG, O.D., AND HINA PATEL, O.D.

Odessey Dry Eye Award
Presented to two graduating students who have demonstrated strong interest and clinical skills in the area of dry eye management.

X-Cel Contact Lens Award
Presented to a graduating student for excellence in fitting RGP contact lenses.

JESSE KERSHNER, O.D.

Cooper Vision Excellence in Contact Lens Award
Presented to a graduating student for excellence in corneal and contact lens clinical care.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module Directors Award</th>
<th>Presented to that individual who has demonstrated clinical excellence in the area of primary care, including disease management and diagnosis, visual and refractive care, and patient interaction.</th>
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<tr>
<td>MICHAEL REBACHIK, O.D.</td>
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<td>Essilor Corneal Reflection Pupilometer Award</td>
<td>Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated excellence in dispensing ophthalmic materials.</td>
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<td>BRETT MCNAMARA, O.D.</td>
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<td>Pioneer Instruments Primary Care Award</td>
<td>Presented to a graduating student for excellence in primary care performance.</td>
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<td>SONIA PATEL, O.D.</td>
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<td>David J. Kerko Low Vision Award (Corning)</td>
<td>Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated interest and participation in the area of low vision.</td>
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<td>ANN PATEL, O.D.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Lenny Cherdack Student Legislative Award (Florida Optometric Association)</td>
<td>Presented to the student who exhibits behavior consistent with the high ideals and moral ethics of organized optometry. This student has demonstrated outstanding dedication to the profession, the Florida Optometric Association, and the legislative process, including representing optometry at the Florida Capitol.</td>
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<td>KENNETH STATSICK, O.D.</td>
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<td>Southern Council of Optometry Award for Excellence</td>
<td>Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding clinical performance.</td>
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<td>NICOLE PSALTIS, O.D.</td>
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<td>The Dr. Lester E. Janoff Scholar Award</td>
<td>Presented to a student for outstanding performance in a scholarly activity; in memory of a renowned educator, researcher, and pioneer in the area of cornea and contact lenses; a gentleman and a scholar who exemplified lifelong learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Welch Allyn Award of Excellence</td>
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<td>SUSAN TRAN, O.D.</td>
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<td>Aran Eye Associates Excellence in Ocular Disease Award</td>
<td>Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated exceptional understanding and care of patients with ocular disease.</td>
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<tr>
<td>WENDY WENDEL, O.D.</td>
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On behalf of the entire NSU College of Optometry Alumni Chapter Board of Directors, it is a pleasure to address you in the summer issue of The Visionary. We’ve had the opportunity to interact with our graduates at the various alumni events during the past year. Our alumni receptions at the AAO, SECO, FOA, and AOA conventions provided an opportunity for fun and social interaction, and they were well attended by many of our alumni. We encourage all alumni to attend these events and reconnect with classmates, faculty, and administration.

Our alumni have not only made an impact on the profession of optometry and in their communities, but they have dedicated themselves to preserving our freedom. The Alumni Chapter would like to thank our military alumni members and their families for their service to our country. The recipient of this year’s Celebration of Excellence Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award, Major Andrew Gregory, O.D., is a prime example of dedication and service. He has served in Iraq as a medical detachment commander and optometry consult and was awarded the Bronze Star Medal as well as numerous other honors and commendations for his outstanding performance in a combat environment.

We recently held our Ninth Annual Alumni Reunion honoring the class of 2000. The continuing education courses, alumni business luncheon, and reception/dinner at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Hollywood, Florida, were successful and well-attended. Our alumni from the class of 2000 had a wonderful time reconnecting with their classmates after 10 years. We are currently in the process of planning for the 10-year reunion honoring the class of 2001. The dates for next year’s alumni reunion are May 13-15, 2011, so please mark your calendars accordingly.

There are now 1,529 alumni from the College of Optometry who continue to make significant and distinctive contributions to our profession. In fact, our college is an exceptional institution today because of our dedicated alumni, so thank you for your continued support. We encourage each of you to stay connected to Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry and its Alumni Chapter.

SHERROL A. REYNOLDS, O.D., FAAO
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF OPTOMETRY
PRESIDENT, COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY ALUMNI CHAPTER

Each year in January, the university honors its outstanding alumni at the Celebration of Excellence event, which allows each NSU college, school, and center to select an individual who personifies excellence by remaining committed and involved by serving his/her chosen profession as well as the community.

In January 2010, Andrew Gregory, O.D., was the distinguished alumni award winner for the College of Optometry. Dr. Gregory graduated in 2002 and is currently assigned to Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, where he is on temporary duty attending to the Army’s Command and General Staff College Course. In that role, Dr. Gregory also provides full scope optometric care to active duty military, retirees, and their family members.

Dr. Gregory deployed to Iraq for 28 months, serving first with the 101st Airborne Division and later as medical detachment commander and optometry consult for the entire Iraqi Theater of Operations. Dr. Gregory’s service awards include the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, and the Global War on Terrorism Medal.

Dr. Gregory remains involved in scholarly activities, serving as a faculty member of the New England College of Optometry, University College of Optometry, and Northeastern State University College of Optometry. In addition, he has published several articles and recently began the Army-Baylor Graduate Program in Health and Business Administration. We are proud of Dr. Gregory’s service to our country, personal achievements, and involvement with optometry both in practice and in academics.

Major Andrew Gregory, O.D., Receives NSU Celebration of Excellence Recognition
Genia G. Beasley, O.D., FAAO, FCOVD (’94), alumna and former faculty member, appeared on HealthWise, a Charlotte WTVI-TV program, for a one-hour interview about “The Critical Link Between Vision and Learning.” The program aired on May 23 and was rebroadcast on May 29. Dr. Beasley specializes in neurodevelopmental optometry as well as vision therapy and rehabilitation at All Ages Vision Care in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Jilma Ellison, O.D. (’06) and Donald Ellison, O.D. (’06) welcomed their daughter, Isabelle Rosalie, into the world on August 21, 2009. Also, they are proud to announce that they have opened a new practice in Oviedo, Florida, called Trinity Eye Associates.

Massimo Gramanzini, O.D. (’07) celebrated his 11th year in private practice in Plantation, Florida, and opened a second office in Dania Beach in 2007. He lives in Plantation Acres with his wife, Alycia, and their children Katelyn (6), Gianna (4), and Vince (2).

Kristi Johnson, O.D. (’07) and Kyle Barnes, O.D. (’07) welcomed their son, Griffin, into the world on April 22, weighing in at 6 pounds, 12 ounces. Their private practice, Barnes Vision, is located in Dandridge, Tennessee.

Andrea (Scott) Keele, O.D. (’06) and her husband, Gabe, welcomed their daughter, Maren Gabrielle, into the world on December 31, 2009. Andrea practices at Insight Eyecare Specialties in Kansas City, Missouri, specializing in pediatrics and vision therapy.

Mark Marciano, O.D. (’98) has thrown his hat into the political arena and is a candidate for the Florida House of Representatives in District 83. His campaign is supported by his wife, Brandee Owens Marciano, O.D., and their sons Adam (8) and Thomas (5).

Ryan Meffley, O.D. (’01) was appointed to the professional staff of the Cleveland Clinic in Ashland and Mansfield, Ohio, on January 1.

Maritza Nickerson, O.D. (’05) and her husband, Nathan, are expecting the arrival of their second child, a baby boy, in September.

Barton Parker, O.D. (’97) was installed as president of the Palm Beach County Optometric Association on May 1 at The Breakers in Palm Beach, Florida.

Heather Long Riemann, O.D. (’08) and her husband, Mike, are the proud parents of Mikayla Marie, who was born on January 21 and weighed in at 6 pounds, 10 ounces.

Tina Smrkovski, O.D. (’07) and Jeffrey Smrkovski, O.D. (’07) purchased an optical shop in December and combined it with Jeff’s practice (optical shop lease). The practice, Reed Optical, is located in Claremont, New Hampshire, and is doctor-owned and patient-focused. Tina and Jeff welcomed their first daughter, Lindsey, in mid-November.

Jennifer Tabibzadeh, O.D. (’09) appeared on the San Diego CW television network news on May 15. The news segment was five minutes in duration and covered the topic of “UV Protection and Eye Health.”

Marc B. Taub, O.D., M.S., FAAO, FCOVD (resident ’04) successfully defended his master’s thesis entitled “A Comparison of Three Clinical Tests of Accommodation to Hofstetter’s Norms to Guide Diagnosis and Treatment.” His thesis was supervised by Josephine Shallo-Hoffmann, Ph.D. Dr. Taub was officially awarded the degree of Master of Science in Clinical Vision Research by Nova Southeastern University on May 29.
In the years following graduation from optometry school, most optometrists rely on continuing education and journal articles to stay up to date with advances in research and technology. For 25 years, Terry Moehnke, O.D., M.S., FAAO, followed this ritual to both maintain his license and his clinical skills.

Advances in computer technology have greatly increased the diagnostic ability of the clinical practitioner, but it also has uncovered disease processes that were suspected but undocumented until instrumentation was developed to assist in the management of the patient.

Acknowledging that advancements in the practice of optometry were occurring at a rapid pace that sporadic educational sessions couldn’t possibly cover, Dr. Moehnke enrolled in the Master’s in Clinical Vision Research (MSCVR) program at NSU to help stay abreast with the profession’s advancements.

Challenged for the first time in several years to read, analyze, and participate in structured educational sessions was a rewarding experience that resulted in a research project looking at optic nerve changes associated with migraine patients, which was later published in a peer-reviewed optometric journal. Interacting with a top-notch faculty provided a stimulating educational experience that fulfilled the goal of staying current with the advances in optometry and patient care.

The pace of the MSCVR program is designed to keep the student enthused and interested in the educational progress. The weekly demands of reading and writing seem overwhelming at first glance, but with proper time management, practitioners can easily work it into their schedules. During the time frame that Terry was working on his degree, he remained in private practice and stayed involved in community activities.

Professionally, he became a Fellow in the American Academy of Optometry and serves as a COPE reviewer for continuing education. He also was the driving force behind the creation of Veterans Memorial Park in Fort Dodge, Iowa, and has been recognized as the club, district, region and national Sertoman of the Year 2009 for his work in the community.

In addition, he was recently named a Hero of the Heartland by the Red Cross for his community impact and is currently developing a Feeding America Backpack Program with the community school district to supply food to children on weekends when they are away from school. He also is researching juvenile macular disorders utilizing retinal tomography to detect the subtle retinal cell changes found in these disorders.

The goal of obtaining advanced education in optometry should be considered by all optometrists for their personal growth as clinicians. Dr. Moehnke feels the MSCVR program is an excellent method to achieve this goal and the rewards are worth the time invested to receive it.

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**In Memoriam: Hannon Smith, O.D.**

Dr. Hannon Smith, 39, of Port Saint Joe, Florida, passed away in his sleep at his Panama City home on June 27 of a sudden illness.

A graduate of Port Saint Joe High School, he obtained a Bachelor of Science degree from Florida State University, and received his Doctor of Optometry degree from Nova Southeastern University in 1998.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Jack and Thetis Smith of Guntersville, Alabama, and Frank Hannon of Port Saint Joe. He is survived by his parents, Roy and Frann Smith, his brother, Andy Smith, and his grandmother, Dorothy Hannon, all of Port Saint Joe, and was loved by a very special friend, Nicky Zurback. Additionally, he is survived by numerous other loving aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins, and his classmate and best friend, Dr. Michael Williams (’99).

He was a member of Kappa Alpha social fraternity. His family and friends were his treasures. A man of quick wit and quiet humor, Dr. Smith spread a feeling of warmth and caring on all he met.

The funeral was held at Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Port Saint Joe on July 1.

According to Dr. Mark Marciano (’98), “Hannon always had a love of life and was liked by everyone. His welcoming smile always made those around him happy. And his wrinkled shirts and ties always brought a smile. He will be missed.”
Attendees Relive Fond Memories at Alumni Reunion

BY JACQUELINE RODENA, O.D.
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF OPTOMETRY, VICE PRESIDENT COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY ALUMNI CHAPTER

The Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry Alumni Chapter is pleased to share some highlights from our recent Annual Alumni Reunion weekend and banquet honoring the class of 2000. On May 14-16, 2010, the college presented its annual Eye Care Conference, which this year provided 22 hours of continuing education courses on topics such as practice management, nutrition, and pre/postoperative management of cataract surgery. Approximately 200 optometrists attended the courses over the weekend, including many that were alumni from all of the optometry classes that have graduated over the past 17 years. The weekend format enabled these alumni, colleagues, and friends to reconnect, reminisce, and catch up with present accomplishments.

An alumni chapter business meeting was held on Saturday at the Terry Building on NSU’s main campus in Davie, with lunch provided by the college. The chapter president, Dr. Sherrol Reynolds, was excited to welcome the alumni back on campus and discuss the benefits of being a chapter member. The main purpose of the annual business lunch is to vote on a slate of officers for the coming year. The officers voted in for the incoming year are Drs. Sherrol Reynolds ’94 (president), Jackie Rodena ’04 (vice-president), Arnie Patrick ’93 (treasurer), and Perla Najman ’99 (secretary).

Every year, the alumni chapter and the college celebrate the 10-year reunion of a graduating class. This year, we celebrated the class of 2000—the eighth class to graduate from the college. At the business lunch meeting, each alumni member that attended from the class of 2000 received a gift from the alumni chapter and a graduation composite picture.

The major highlight of the weekend was the alumni banquet held at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino on Saturday evening. This year was the first time professional photos were taken as alumni entered the ballroom. Alumni took prom-like pictures with their significant others, as well as with their fellow classmates. In fact, it felt like the Eyeball all over again. Dr. David Loshin, NSUCO dean, greeted alumni with a warm welcome. Several faculty members that the class of 2000 recognized from their days in the classroom and clinic were in attendance: Dr. Sherrol Reynolds, Dr. Greg Black, Dr. Julie Tyler, and Dr. Scott Gorman. Other faculty members who attended included Dr. Melanie Crandall, Dr. Barry Frauens, Dr. Annette Bade, Dr. Lori Vollmer, and Dr. Jackie Rodena, all of whom joined the college after the class of 2000 graduated.

Members of the class of 2000 had been asked to submit photos from their four years in optometry school so a slideshow could be created for everyone’s viewing pleasure. The slideshow displayed pictures of students interacting with their fellow classmates, preceptors, and staff during their fourth-year Broward clinic rotations, dressed to impress at the Eyeball, releasing stress after finals at local bars and restaurants, and enjoying their final gathering—a graduation trip to the Florida Keys. It sparked conversations of fun memories, laughs, and good times with their classmates. One of the gifts given by the alumni chapter was a flash drive that contained the slideshow presented at the banquet.

We are currently in the process of planning for the class of 2001 10-year reunion. The dates for next year’s Eye Care Conference and Alumni Reunion weekend are May 13-15, 2011, so please mark your calendars. We look forward to seeing you next year.
Congratulations to our residents on the successful completion of the Second Annual Residents’ Day Program for the NSU College of Optometry, which was held on January 31, 2010. This event showcased residents throughout the state of Florida and Atlanta, Georgia, affiliated with NSU’s College of Optometry. Nineteen residents presented lectures representing nine of our residency sites at the Orlando VAMC, Tallahassee VAMC, Lake City VAMC, Gainesville VAMC, Bay Pines VAMC, Daytona Beach VAMC, Aran Eye Associates, Clayton Eye Center, and NSU.

These residents presented interesting and challenging cases encountered during their residency training in the form of grand rounds to NSU faculty members, fellow residents, optometric students, and practicing optometrists. The lectures covered a wide range of anterior segment, posterior segment, and neuro-ophthalmic disease in the adult and pediatric population.

The Residents’ Day Program was initiated three years ago and continues to grow each year. In addition to providing an excellent learning opportunity for the participants as a component of their residency training, it provides COPE-approved continuing education to attendees as well as the opportunity for students to interact with residents from various programs and learn more about residency training and the opportunities it provides. We are very pleased with the success of this program and invite you to attend next year’s event.

BY LORI VOLLMER, O.D, FAAO, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF OPTOMETRY, DIRECTOR OF RESIDENCY PROGRAMS
The Orlando VA Medical Center (VAMC) is located on the site of what was once the Orlando Naval Training Center’s Hospital, while the surrounding residential area is now known as Baldwin Park. The center, which serves an area of nearly 90,000 veteran patients in East Central Florida, is one of seven members of the VISN 8 Healthcare System. The Orlando VA Medical Center includes the VAMC, the Community Living Center, the Residential Rehabilitation Program, the Viera Outpatient Clinic, the Daytona Outpatient Clinic, and four community-based outpatient clinics located in Clermont, Kissimmee, Leesburg, and Orange City.

The East Central Florida veteran population is slated to benefit from a new hospital that is scheduled to be built in 2012. This much-needed facility will make it easier for East Central Florida veterans to access the VA’s world-class medical center and relieve the burden of traveling long distances for their inpatient care.

The Orlando VAMC Eye Clinic has four residency-trained optometrists on staff. The optometrists provide primary eye care as well as management of chronic ocular diseases and ocular manifestations of systemic diseases. The staff optometrists are licensed practitioners credentialed and privileged to perform full-scope optometry, including the usage of topical and some oral medications based on their state of licensure to treat eye diseases. The optometrists also participate in low-vision exams for patients who are visually impaired and specialty contact lens exams and fitting. Optometrists are the only ones who will be supervising optometry students and optometry residents.

In addition, the Orlando VAMC Eye Clinic has four ophthalmologists on staff, including one retinal specialist and one cornea specialist. The ophthalmologists manage advanced chronic ocular diseases and ocular manifestations of systemic diseases as well as perform the following surgeries:

- Cataracts
- Trabeculectomy
- Strabismus
- Blepharoplasty
- Pterygia Removal
- Eyelid-Growth Removal
- Cryotherapy
- Focal Laser
- Panretinal Photocoagulation
- YAG Capsulotomy
- ALT/SLT
- Intravitreal Injections

With seven eye technicians on staff, including one who is dedicated to working in the visual field room each day, these highly trained individuals screen patients by performing a brief history, visual acuity assessment, autorefraction, and autorenometry. The technicians also do ancillary tests as directed by the doctor such as corneal pachymetry/topography, IOL
In the late 1990s, the VAMC Eye Clinic developed a teaching program involving fourth-year optometry students from Pennsylvania College of Optometry at Salus University in Philadelphia. As of the spring of 2009, the academic affiliation changed to Nova Southeastern University’s College of Optometry. There is currently one position available each quarter.

In March 2007, the Orlando VA Medical Center developed a hospital-based primary care optometry residency program that was granted funding by the VA Central Office. At that time, NSU agreed to become the academic affiliate for the residency program. Upon its inception, the residency program received candidacy pending status from the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE). The first optometry resident started July 1, 2007. The ACOE conducted a site visit in May 2008, and the Orlando VAMC residency program received full ACOE accreditation status based on that visit as of November 20, 2008.

The optometry resident will see approximately 6-to-10 full exams per day and also will deal with follow-ups or walk-ins as needed. Traditional optometric encounters include routine comprehensive examinations as well as a high percentage of patients with diabetes with/without retinopathy, cataracts, AMD, glaucoma, and ocular manifestations of systemic diseases. The resident also will be seeing low-vision patients and those needing specialty contact lenses as well as those at external optometry rotations (private contact lens practice, private optometrist actively involved in pre-/postoperative cataract/refractive surgery care).

Opportunities to observe ophthalmologists performing surgical procedures are available, and there will be additional time spent doing observations of primary care providers, dermatologists, neurologists, and radiologists. External ophthalmology rotations include a private retina specialist, a private cornea specialist, and a private neuroophthalmologist.

The optometry resident actively participates in the weekly Friday afternoon Optometry Conference, which includes a journal club, a lecture by staff optometrists, and case reviews. The resident actively supervises the optometry student during the fourth quarter of his/her residency year and conducts a weekly slide quiz. Additional activities include presenting at two different VISN 8 Optometry Resident Grand Rounds as well as at NSU’s Optometry Resident Grand Rounds. The participating resident also is required to attend one major educational meeting (i.e., AAO, AOA Congress, SECO) at his/her own expense during the year and meetings of the Central Florida Society of Optometric Physicians. A publishable quality paper or academic meeting-worthy poster also is required as part of the residency program.

Our primary goal is to provide quality eye care to our nation’s veterans. Another goal we have is to provide a quality learning experience for optometry students and residents. We hope the skills and clinical information you learn here can be used for many years to come in whatever mode of practice you end up choosing.

“Our primary goal is to provide quality eye care to our nation’s veterans.”

DR. SPALDING

Master, OCT testing, HRT testing, digital optic nerve photography, digital fundus photography, and digital fluorescein angiography. Additional equipment includes A and B scan ultrasound machines, dynamic contour tonometers, hand-held slit lamp, and tonopen.

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Partners in Education

We thank our *Partners in Education* for their continuing support of the college’s students, faculty, alumni, and continuing education programs.

We also wish to thank the following companies and organizations for their support of the college’s continuing education programs during 2009-2010.

Alcon

The Vision Care Institute, LLC

Owen Business Systems

VSP

Aran Eye Associates

The Laser Center Of Coral Gables
2010-11 Calendar of Events

October 8-10, 2010
Fall Symposium (CE), NSU Health Professions Division, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

October 21, 2010
Keratoconus Irregular Cornea Workshop (CE), NSU Health Professions Division, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

November 19, 2010
Alumni and Friends Reception, American Academy of Optometry, San Francisco, California

January 30, 2011
Residents Day, NSU Health Professions Division, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

March 4, 2011
Alumni and Friends Reception, SECO International 2010, Atlanta Marriott Marquis, Atlanta, Georgia

March 10-13, 2011
Therapeutic Optometry (CE), Royal Senesta Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana

May 13-15, 2011
15th Annual Clinical Eye Care Conference and Alumni Reunion, NSU Health Professions Division, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

June 17, 2011
Alumni and Friends Reception, Optometry’s Meeting, Salt Lake City, Utah

June 2011
Florida Board of Optometry Examination Review Course, NSU Health Professions Division, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

July 7-16, 2011
Therapeutic Pharmaceutical Agents Certification Course, NSU Health Professions Division, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

August 12-14, 2011
Primary Care Update (CE), The King and Prince Beach and Golf Resort, St. Simons Island, Georgia

October 14, 2011
Alumni and Friends Reception, American Academy of Optometry, Boston, Massachusetts

We are in the process of compiling information for the winter 2011 issue of The Visionary and invite you to submit suitable news and photos to TheVisionary@nsu.nova.edu.

Also, please be sure to update your contact information regularly so we can continue to send you The Visionary as well as other important college and alumni information. You may update your contact information at https://www.nova.edu/webforms/alumni/.