

Spring 2009

Visionary Spring 2009

College of Optometry

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NSUWorks Citation

College of Optometry, "Visionary Spring 2009" (2009). *Visionary*. Book 4.
http://nsuworks.nova.edu/hpd_opt_visionary/4

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the **Visionary**

Spring 2009

Vol. 3, No. 1

**SVOSH Travels to
Guatemala**

cover story page 15

Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry

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Editor-in-Chief

N. Scott Gorman, O.D., M.S., Ed.D.,

Associate Editors

Scott Colton, B.A.

Barbara Karpel, M.S.

Contributors

Michael Bacigalupi, O.D., M.S.

Annette Bade, O.D.

Rachel A. (Stacey) Coulter, O.D.

Mike D'Eugenio, B.B.A.

Barry J. Frauens, O.D.

Janet L. Leasher, O.D., M.P.H.

Ken Ma, B.A.

Pamela R. Oliver, O.D., M.S.

Linda S. Rouse, O.D.

Josephine Shallo-Hoffmann, Ph.D.

Lori Vollmer, O.D.

Albert D. Wood, M.S., O.D.

Amanda Woodie (class of 2010)

Art Director/Graphic Designer

Brandee Evans

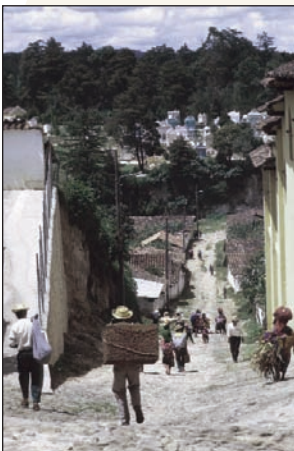
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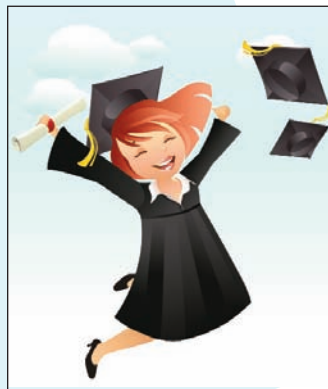
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The Visionary Editorial Team



Dr. N. Scott Gorman



Barbara Karpel



Scott Colton

DEAN'S MESSAGE

David S. Loshin, O.D., Ph.D.

Over the years, I have had the pleasure of telling you about the evolutionary changes we have seen at both the College of Optometry and the university. We are ever engaged in growth in so many areas: new buildings and physical facilities, the most technologically advanced equipment, new practice specialties, far-reaching educational relationships, new programs, and more. In this issue of *The Visionary*, I want to focus on the hallmark of NSUCO by showcasing the ways in which we display our inventive and innovative spirit. I'm sure you will agree there is no other optometry school quite like NSUCO!

A few years ago, the College of Optometry unveiled two pioneering programs: the Extended O.D. degree program and the Master's in Clinical Vision Research (MCVR). Unique among the optometric educational community, the extended program curriculum spreads the traditional four-year O.D. course of study over five years. Some extended program students have remarked that were it not for this opportunity, they would not be able to realize their dreams of becoming an optometrist.

Another groundbreaking program is our Master's in Clinical Vision Research, which to date has graduated nine students. The MCVR prepares professionals to develop, perform, analyze, and evaluate clinical research studies. All this is accomplished using a Web-based distance learning technology that allows health care professionals to remain in their current location and employment—anywhere in the world.

Both of these programs, once new and untested, have taken root and become the wellspring from which two new and equally remarkable programs have emerged. As an adjunct to our O.D. degree programs, we have initiated a Preparatory Optometry Program, which is a one-year course of study that prepares the future O.D. student for the rigorous work ahead. With this novel program, we are able to recognize a student's potential and dedication to the profession of optometry and provide an opportunity to succeed in the field.

A natural progression from the MCVR program is the equally noteworthy HPD Ph.D. Core. This program comprises the foundational core courses that are common to all Ph.D. programs at the Health Professions Division. After completing the core coursework, continuing students matriculate into their individual Ph.D. programs. This unique, multidisciplinary approach creates academic synergy among students and instructors. The Ph.D. Core is now in its second year and is expected to expand as more HPD colleges develop their own Ph.D. programs.

Most recently, the college joined forces with the H. Wayne HuiZenga School of Business and Entrepreneurship to develop two new programs designed to provide more in-depth business skills and knowledge to optometry students—in addition to the practice management courses they already have. The elective Certificate in Business



Management, a “mini-MBA,” will be offered for the first time this spring. It is a 40-hour course taught by business school faculty comprising such topics as accounting and finance, business strategy, selling and negotiating, and management techniques. Imagine how well prepared these students will be when they enter practice.

Additionally, those students who desire to attain the Master's in Business Administration will soon be able to matriculate into a combined O.D./M.B.A. program, also in conjunction with the business school. Students will take their optometry courses as extended program students, leaving time for the M.B.A. courses. The entire program will run five years, and dual degrees will be conferred at graduation. An M.B.A. enhances or improves business decisions for future practitioners. Our assistant dean for student affairs polled the students, and they were overwhelmingly in favor of such a program. We hope to have all the details arranged in time for matriculation in August 2010.

Our international exchange programs continue to thrive. In addition to our students completing six-month externships at several medical universities in China, we now reciprocate by hosting several visiting scholars. We are hoping to expand such mutually beneficial educational relationships to Latin America and Russia in the future.

In the classroom, technological advancements have provided creative methods of both imparting information and then testing whether that information has reached the students. For example, some of our instructors are now using the Tegrity system, which is a technology that has been installed in several lecture halls. This system enables instructors to record their lectures and their PowerPoint slides for later viewing. Also used in the classroom setting is Turning Point. With this teaching tool, students are issued remote control devices that provide instantaneous feedback to both instructors and students after quizzes or just as a check for student understanding during a lecture.

NSUCO's innovative spirit can also be seen as we develop new clinical specialty areas within The Eye Care Institute. One notable specialty area is the recently developed and implemented Neuro-Optometric Visual Rehabilitation service that focuses on visual problems associated with head injuries and strokes. Additionally, all our clinical sites have implemented electronic medical recordkeeping.

As you can see, NSU's College of Optometry is an optometric institution that always looks—and steps—forward. We are uniquely poised to provide our students the most advanced educational experiences due to our unique programs. We do this within a unique interdisciplinary environment, in a unique setting, and with faculty members that bring unique expertise and knowledge to their work.

NSUCO is a definitely step apart from all the rest.

CHANCELLOR'S MESSAGE

Frederick Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D.

Throughout the years, I've frequently discussed the changing paradigm of the health care delivery system that exists in the United States. This is an especially timely topic now that a new administration has taken control of the White House.

Over the past decade, health care consumers have become acutely aware of the difficulties they face when it comes to the issue of access of care. Even individuals who are covered under some sort of health insurance program are often anxious and confused due to the overriding restrictions private insurance carriers, Medicare, and Medicaid have imposed upon the country's health care practitioners, which prevent them from providing patients with the care they so vitally need.

As a result, what you have is an extremely frustrated and confused health care consumer population that is longing for change. This confusion, along with the interests of the general public, corporations, organized labor, and others in regard to the availability of health care, is going to result in a major change in our health care system within the next few years. I personally believe we're going to have some sort of universal health care system that will be administered by the private sector through major insurance entities (e.g., United Healthcare, Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Kaiser Permanente). These insurance providers will become the managers—the agents for the federal government if you will—to administer a universal health care program that will provide coverage for all individuals in our country.

Currently, over 50 million Americans are uninsured—and that number is projected to rise significantly in the near future due to the escalating unemployment rate. As we all know, the uninsured population needs to receive health care. Unfortunately, under the current system, the health care services they receive are the most costly because they end up in the system at the highest level of morbidity. Consequently, those of us who have insurance are indirectly paying for the uninsured through rising premium costs.

People understandably want to know why their health insurance premiums are skyrocketing annually. But it's basically the same situation that applies to our homeowners' insurance costs when a hurricane hits South Florida and all premium rates rise even though many policyholders didn't have any property damage; it's because you're paying for everyone else's damage, even though nothing may have happened to you. This may seem like an overly simplistic way to explain our current health care scenario, but that's just the way it is.



That's why I believe we're going to have a national health product that is going to be mandated by the U.S. Congress and will be bid on by the private sector, which means you are not eliminating the profit motive. In addition, there will be negotiations with all the various professional organizations and advocacy groups such as AARP. Medicare costs are going up, and retirees are having a tough time paying for Medicare Part B. I also think there will be a change implemented that will allow the federal government to negotiate lower purchasing costs for Medicare Part D with the pharmaceutical companies concerning prescription drugs for the general public as it already does for the U.S. armed forces and V.A. hospitals.

As I mentioned earlier, everybody is already paying for everybody else's health care in the United States. People like to blame others —especially the poor—for their health care costs. But the fact is it's all about numbers. The bottom line is the greater the number of people that are insured, the cheaper the cost per unit is going to be. The goal is to insure all children in the United States as well as provide coverage to all adults who are unable to afford it on their own or receive it through their employers. Under this scenario, the numbers will become so large that there is an actuarial hope that the insurance we all carry will not increase in cost. When you add over 50 million people to the rolls and start to apply certain standards of health in relation to prevention and wellness, you will minimize the use of emergency rooms as their primary care entry into the system. You will also inhibit them from using the highest cost of health care by the fact that you prevent a good deal of hypertension and obesity and diagnose ailments such as cancer, diabetes, and coronary vascular disease earlier through regular screenings.

There are some very interesting health care program permutations being offered to Congress at the present time. That's why I feel there will be a collegial and bipartisan communication process that will result in a universal type of health care system. There's even talk of bringing all the Medicaid programs under this proposed universal health care umbrella.

It certainly appears to me that the nation is demanding some sort of restructured health care program. I am looking at this situation from a realistic point of view and not through a crystal ball. When all is said and done, the elements of health care reform will be predominantly emanating from the U.S. Congress in association and agreement with the White House.

College Announces “Mini-M.B.A.” Program for Optometry Students

By Michael Bacigalupi, O.D., M.S., FAO
Assistant Professor of Optometry and Assistant Dean for Student Affairs

Nova Southeastern University is fortunate to have the H. Wayne Huizenga School of Business and Entrepreneurship on its campus because it prides itself on offering real-world experiences and applications to tomorrow's business leaders. In conjunction with NSU's College of Optometry, the Huizenga School faculty created a five-day, 35-hour course focused on the business aspects of optometric practice. Optometry students who have just completed their third year of professional education will be taught by experienced business school faculty members in the following areas:

- 14 hours of accounting and finance for small business owners and non-financial managers
- 7 hours of business strategy including strategic thinking and long-term planning
- 7 hours of selling and negotiating techniques including personal and professional marketing
- 7 hours of small business management including human resources, leadership, and decision making

This unique opportunity for NSU College of Optometry students will further serve to prepare them for the many challenges they will face upon graduation. Timely business education from leading experts in the field adds to the potential strength of this new program. Mounting educational debt, a struggling economy, and growing competition must all be managed effectively for new optometrists to have success in practice.

The Future of Optometry at NSU College of Optometry

By Michael Bacigalupi, O.D., M.S., FAO
Assistant Professor of Optometry and Assistant Dean for Student Affairs

The future of optometry is bright at NSU's College of Optometry. I want to share with you some statistics with regard to our outstanding professional students.

In 2008, our students achieved a 93 percent passage rate on their first attempt at taking Parts I and II of the NBEO examination. On Part III of the examination, our students attained a 98 percent passage rate. The class of 2009 achieved a 98 percent passage rate on Part II of the NBEO examination, which was administered in December 2008. The Florida Optometry Board examination consists of both written and practical components, and our students achieved a 91 percent passage rate compared to non-NSU graduates that recorded a passing percentage of 82.6.

The class of 2012, which began our professional program in August 2008, entered with impressive undergraduate credentials. These include:

- Average GPA: 3.39
- Academic average on the OAT: 333
- Total science on the OAT: 340
- Entering with bachelor's degree: 92
- Entering with graduate degrees: 4
- States represented: 26
- Florida students: 44
- Canadian students: 9
- Average age: 23.39

Each year, we have continued to see improvement in our optometry school applicants. In fact, in 2008, NSU's College of Optometry had almost 800 applicants for the 100 seats available within the entering class. As a result, our college ranked third in the nation in the number of applicants behind Illinois College of Optometry and Pennsylvania College of Optometry. Our applicant-to-matriculant ratio of almost 8:1 was second only to State University of New York College of Optometry.

As you can see, NSU College of Optometry's future is bright because of the outstanding students that have entered our professional program. We are focused on preparing this next generation of optometric physicians to practice at the highest levels of proficiency, integrity, and professionalism.



American Optometric Association President Visits Nova Southeastern University

In October 2008, Peter Kehoe, O.D., president of the American Optometric Association (AOA), visited Nova Southeastern University's College of Optometry. Dr. Kehoe, who heads the nation's largest association of optometrists, came to the college to speak to faculty and students about the profession and current issues.

His message for students was to focus beyond their classes and exams by looking at the big picture of how optometry has evolved over the years, and how they are going to play a vital role in the profession's future. He also encouraged faculty members to play a larger role in developing students for the future. "As role models, they are molding and shaping the future of the profession by interacting with students everyday," said Dr. Kehoe, whose own daughter, Alexandra, is an NSU College of Optometry student.

Dr. Kehoe encouraged more students and faculty members to join the American Optometric Association, an organization that represents approximately 36,000 doctors of optometry, optometry students, and paraoptometric assistants and technicians. The AOA sets professional standards that help its members conduct patient care efficiently and effectively, lobbies government and other organizations on behalf of the optometric profession, and provides research and education leadership.



Peter Kehoe, O.D., president of the American Optometric Association (fifth from far left in the second row) has lunch with College of Optometry faculty members and Dr. David S. Loshin, O.D., Ph.D., the college's dean (second from far right, second row).

College of Optometry Signs Memorandum of Understanding with Universidad Santo Tomás in Bucaramanga, Colombia

By Janet L. Leasher, O.D., M.P.H., FAAO, Assistant Professor of Optometry
North American Coordinator of the UNESCO Chair
in Visual Health and Development at NSU

Dr. David Loshin, dean of NSU's College of Optometry, met with Maria Mónica Uribe Mantilla, dean of Santo Tomás University in Bucaramanga, Colombia, at SECO in March 2009 to formalize a memorandum for a cooperative relationship that will promote an academic exchange and research collaboration between the two institutions.

NSU has had an informal relationship with Santo Tomás University for five years, as both schools are Associated Centers for the UNESCO Chair in Visual Health and Development and collaborate on international development projects in Latin America. The schools are both founding members of ALDEFO, the Association of Latin American Educators and Faculties in Optometry, and work together to improve the quality of optometric education in the region.

The optometry school at Santo Tomás University is one of seven optometry schools in Colombia—the country with the most advanced optometry scope of practice in the region and with diagnostic and topical pharmaceutical privileges similar to that of Florida. The curriculum emphasizes strong prevention and visual health promotion while graduating optometrists with a humanistic and scientific yet holistic approach to eye care. For more information about Santo Tomás, please visit www.ustabuca.co.edu.

Both deans agreed to support the development of faculty exchange and research collaboration as well as promote opportunities for advanced student training.



Faculty members from the Santo Tomás University College of Optometry in Bucaramanga, Colombia.

STAFF APPRECIATION:

Celebrating the College of Optometry's Unsung Heroes

By Scott Colton, B.A., Associate Editor, *The Visionary*

Each day, hundreds of important tasks are performed by diligent staff members whose efforts make the various departments and programs at the College of Optometry run smoothly. Whether it be answering phones, scheduling appointments, handling accounting tasks, assisting the students, or processing travel requests, these essential – and frequently unsung – individuals serve as essential contributors to the college's success.

To acknowledge their invaluable contributions to the college, *The Visionary* editorial team asked the staff members to provide individual profiles that summarized their job duties, provided some insight into their personalities, and allowed them to share the reasons they enjoy working at the College of Optometry.



Standing (from left) are Julicia Blount, Chennel Williams, Jeanne DeCaro, Lorena Lizausaba, and Barbra Karpel, M.S., director of administration. Seated are Jessica Weaver, Rachelle Russell, and Yennifer Ceron.

JULICIA BLOUNT/ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Primary Responsibilities: Maintaining compliance records, ordering office supplies, assisting the director of administration

Why I enjoy working at the college: The College of Optometry is an outstanding workplace due to the wonderful relationships that exist between the staff, faculty, and students. The enthusiastic environment motivates me to go beyond my job duties.

Three words that best describe me: Adventurous, determined, and compassionate.

YENNIFER CERON/RECEPTIONIST (OPTOMETRY AND OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE)

Primary Responsibilities: Assisting with various clerical tasks, answering phones, and assisting students, faculty, and visitors who come to the main reception area

Why I enjoy working at the college: I enjoy working at the college because I get to interact and work with a diverse group of people. This job is a great learning experience and has taught me to become better at multitasking.

Three words that best describe me: Hardworking, well-organized, and kind

JEANNE DECARO/COORDINATOR OF STUDENT SERVICES

Primary Responsibilities: Dealing with registrar functions

Why I enjoy working at the college: The staff members I work with are wonderful—each and every one. We are truly a team. I also enjoy working with the students.

Three words that best describe me: Patient, dedicated, and caring

LORENA LIZAUSABA/COORDINATOR OF CONTINUING EDUCATION AND ALUMNI AFFAIRS

Primary Responsibilities: Assisting in planning and implementing all arrangements for conferences, supervising continuing education staff, serving as a liaison between the office and corporate contacts, optometric practitioners, local/state professional societies, and approval agencies

Why I enjoy working at the college: I enjoy working at the college because I am able to interact with my fellow colleagues and faculty members and make connections with outside organizations and individuals. In addition, I am able to help run continuing education (CE) conferences alongside Dr. Scott Gorman. Running CE conferences can be very exciting and quite a task to accomplish; however, I enjoy a good challenge.

Three words that best describe me: Compassionate, imaginative, and focused

NADINE LOUIS-CHARLES DORCELY/ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Why I enjoy working at the college: What I enjoy about working at the College of Optometry is the genuine care and affection we all have for each other. It feels like a big family, where we all share each other's joy and pain as we strive to deal with life's challenges. Keeping a pleasant and healthy work environment is also our priority. From the dean and administrators to the faculty and staff, we all seem to share the same vision in making the college a safe, pleasant, and welcoming work environment.

Three words that best describe me: Hardworking, straight-forward, and dedicated

ROCIO QUESADA • ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST

Primary Responsibilities: Processing all accounts payable items for the college's clinic accounts and supporting my coworker.

Why I enjoy working at the college: I am grateful that my supervisors are so supportive of my career path, which includes my current pursuit of a master's

continued on next page

Staff Appreciation

degree in speech and language pathology here at NSU.

Three words that best describe me: Funny, kind, high-energy

RACHELLE RUSSELL • ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST

Primary Responsibilities: Providing financial information to college administration for budgeting purposes, processing day-to-day financial transactions, reconciling payments and charges

Why I enjoy working at the college: I enjoy working at the college because it's a stable environment and I get along well with everyone.

Three words that best describe me: Funny, efficient, and hardworking

JESSICA WEAVER • COORDINATOR OF ACADEMIC SERVICES

Primary Responsibilities: Providing administrative support to the associate deans, coordinating student academic services, assisting the director of administration in the day-to-day operation of the administrative offices

Why I enjoy working at the college: I am surrounded by interesting people on a scenic campus. As both a student and employee at NSU, I really feel like I am part of a close-knit family.

Three words that best describe me: Friendly, hardworking, and determined

CHENNEL WILLIAMS • ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Primary Responsibilities: Assisting department chairs with the administrative aspects of their jobs, tracking and processing faculty leave requests, coordinating the faculty candidate interview process, assisting with coordinating clinical schedules

Why I enjoy working at the college: The primary reason I enjoy working at the College of Optometry is that it is a genuinely good working environment. I feel the administrative staff is like a family—and that is something I don't take for granted.

Three words that best describe me: Calm, curious, and kind

Eye Care Institute Staff Personifies Teamwork

By Linda S. Rouse, O.D., Assistant Professor and Chief Operations Officer of The Eye Care Institute



Article on the next page...

The clinic administrators and staff work together to promote teamwork and enhance the work environment. Productive and fun staff retreats and training sessions have been implemented to promote efficiency and heighten morale. The Eye Care Institute (TECI) staff is engaged and enjoys interacting as coworkers and as friends.

Clinic Supervisors

Ana Abugazaleh, managing optician, has been an NSU employee for almost 13 years. She appreciates the support of the optometry administration, enjoys working with a wonderful team of clinic staff, and finds it gratifying to teach the optometry students.

Terry Simmons, clinic operations administrator, has been employed at TECI for almost two years. She enjoys working at TECI because everyone from the administration to the front desk personnel is so friendly and supportive. She also appreciates the educational benefit NSU offers.

TECI Staff

Jill Cabana, manager of third-party contracts and marketing services, works at the Davie location and has been an NSU employee for over three years. She enjoys the people she works with, likes her job, and especially enjoys working in an educational setting.

Helen Capote, vision therapy coordinator, works at three of TECI's locations and has been employed at NSU for almost four years. She enjoys working in a professional environment where the doctors are friendly, always willing to teach, and very easy to work with.

Renay Kinloch, administrative assistant, has been employed at TECI for over a year. She enjoys working at NSU because of the benefits.

Jay Mosner, optical merchandiser and buyer, has been employed at TECI for over seven years. He enjoys working with many of the outstanding doctors and staff members and is happy to have the opportunity to pass on his optical knowledge to others.

Josie Toussaint, low vision assistant, has worked at TECI for almost 16 years. She enjoys working at NSU because it is fun.

Patient Access Representatives

Catherine Dowe has been employed at the Broward Boulevard location for almost two years. She loves her job, coworkers, interacting with people, and working at TECI. She enjoys that everyday is a new experience.

Michelle Merida has been employed at the Davie location for over eight months. She originally applied because of the wonderful school benefits but enjoys working at TECI because she loves the environment and her coworkers.

Latoya Oliphant has been employed at the Broward Boulevard location for almost a year. She loves working with people, and her coworkers make it a more enjoyable experience because they are always there to help.

Krystie Orjuela has been employed at the Davie location for over two years. She enjoys working at TECI because she learns something new everyday and feels it is a good place to work.

Anabella Palencia has been employed at TECI for over three years and is currently working at the North Miami Beach location. She enjoys working at TECI because of the great coworkers that are always helpful and make any day fun.

Albany Peguero has been employed at the Davie location for over eight months. She enjoys working at TECI because her coworkers help each other, the patients are nice, and the kids coming into the Pediatric Service are always fun.

Richard Perez has been employed at the Davie location for over three years and is currently the patient access coordinator. He enjoys working at TECI because it enables him to improve his interpersonal, communication, and problem-solving skills. He also enjoys the environment in which the staff works together with the faculty to create a great atmosphere for the patients.

Lissette Rivero has been employed at the North Miami Beach location for almost two years and is currently the patient access coordinator. She enjoys working at TECI because of the staff, patients, and her job responsibilities.

Roy Rodriguez has been employed at the Davie location for over eight months. He enjoys working at TECI because the people and the environment are friendly. He also enjoys the opportunity to learn new things.

Rozaliya Shimonova has been employed at the North Miami Beach location for over eight months. She enjoys working at TECI because all the employees work well together. She also enjoys the field of optometry and helping patients.

Alexandria Weston joined the TECI team in 2008. She enjoys working at NSU because it is an enjoyable environment and the people are really pleasant.

Mable White-Jones has worked at the Broward Boulevard location for almost 15 years. She enjoys working at NSU because she is able to help others and at the end of the day people are happy.

EMR Technicians

Sophia Cameron has been employed at TECI for over five years and currently works at the Broward Boulevard location. She enjoys assisting the students, staff, doctors, and patients in the clinic. Each day, she receives personal gratification from helping new and longtime patients that depend on good, caring service.

Jennifer Capote has been employed at TECI for over three years at the North Miami Beach location. She loves working with the doctors, students, and her fellow coworkers. Everyday she learns new things and has enjoyed the advantages and opportunities her position offers.

Cynthia Farrell has been employed at TECI for over eight months at the Davie location. A few of the many reasons she enjoys working at TECI includes teaching the students, her supervisor, and the many things NSU offers the staff.

Billing and Collection Specialists

Will Escarment has been employed at the Davie location for over seven months. He likes working with the wonderful staff and finds his position to be challenging. He also enjoys assisting patients with their bills and insurance.

Camille Washington has worked at the North Miami Beach location for over a year. She enjoys working at NSU because of the opportunities it offers and the educational benefits it provides.

Janice Williams has been employed at the Broward Boulevard location for over four years. She enjoys working at NSU because she loves the area, patients, and her coworkers. Sometimes she forgets she is working because everyone makes it a great experience.

Licensed Opticians

Jane Hidalgo has been the lead optician at Davie for over four years. She loves working at TECI because of the atmosphere and the benefits. The students are always very friendly, and she hopes she makes an impact on their future optometric careers.

Maria C. Orozco has been the lead optician at North Miami Beach for almost four years. She enjoys interacting with the students and sharing with them all the knowledge she has acquired from her experiences in private practices. She also appreciates the benefits offered by NSU.

Christine Williams has been employed at TECI for over three years and is currently the lead optician at the Broward Boulevard location. She enjoys working at NSU because of the support she receives from her supervisors, who help further her career. She also enjoys the friendships, new challenges, the opportunity to grow, and the fact that every day is different.

Ophthalmic Technicians

Shalonda Dauphin McCullum has worked in the North Miami Beach Optical for over eight years. She enjoys working with patients and appreciates the opportunity to pursue higher levels of education at the university.

Christopher Joseph has worked in the Davie Optical for almost three years. He enjoys the friendly atmosphere amongst the staff members since it is similar to being with family members. He also appreciates the opportunity to attend school as a benefit.

Anthony Stewart has been employed at the Broward Boulevard Optical for almost two years. He enjoys working at TECI because he learns many new things while working and his job has broadened his horizons in the optical field.

Ophthalmic Bench Technicians

David McCullough has worked in the North Miami Beach Optical for over six years. He enjoys his job responsibilities and working with the other staff and faculty. He also appreciates the benefits offered by NSU.

Christina Pantoja has worked in the Davie Optical for almost six years. She enjoys working at TECI because it is not a stressful environment and the work hours are good.

Contact Lens Technicians

Leidy Gutierrez has worked in the Contact Lens Service at North Miami Beach and Davie for over seven months. She enjoys working with the other staff in a friendly and very organized environment. She also appreciates the good benefits NSU offers the staff. She also likes the spirit of teamwork at TECI and the many nice things NSU offers the staff.

Ashley Hehir has worked in the Contact Lens Service at Davie for almost a year. She enjoys working with the students, preceptors, and patients in an academic environment.

“Each One, Reach One” (EORO) Campaign Join the ASCO Career Promotion Corps!

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

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

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

Join Now!

It’s easy to become a member of the “Each One, Reach One” Career Promotion Corps and promote your profession to the optometrists of tomorrow. Just go to the ASCO Web site at www.opted.org and click on Career Promotion Corps or contact Paige Pence, director of student and professional affairs, at ASCO at ppence@opted.org.



Alumni Chapter President's Message

Annette Bade, O.D., FAAO, Assistant Professor of Optometry
College of Optometry Alumni Chapter



It is my pleasure to address you again in the spring 2009 edition of *The Visionary*. Thank you for the privilege of serving as the president of the Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry Alumni Chapter. As president, I have had the opportunity to meet our graduates and discover the impact that NSU alumni have had

not only on optometry as a profession but also within the community.

Many of these outstanding individuals were recipients of the college's Distinguished Alumni Award, which is presented annually at the university's Celebration of Excellence dinner gala that honors recipients selected from each NSU college. More information about this year's College of Optometry honoree is available in this issue of *The Visionary*. Attending the event truly was inspirational because it illuminated the picture of NSU united as a whole university instead of as separate colleges.

During these difficult economic times, unifying with other alumni to lead the community and profession is imperative. Consolidation will serve optometry as a profession and NSU as an academic institution as well as enable individuals to prosper. Bonding together will also protect the future of our profession and individual practitioners as well as benefit the College of Optometry. Realizing that NSU is not only you but **US** is a message to take to heart.

The university supports interdisciplinary referrals and research. For example, students are encouraged to observe in other clinics, while undergraduates visit the different Health Professions Division colleges frequently. In addition, many functions occur on the campus to raise money and awareness for causes such as autism, heart disease, and cancer. These functions perpetuate the comingling of the colleges by allowing students to interact. In this manner, they learn about the other professions and the classes studied, which helps expand their awareness of each other and the various professions.

As a graduate of the College of Optometry, I urge you to remain engaged with NSU by enhancing your understanding and knowledge of our programs and taking advantage of opportunities offered at the university. Discover the changes that have occurred and determine how you can contribute. Learn about the

continued on page 11

Dr. Mary Underberg Charbonneau Receives NSU Distinguished Alumni Award

By N. Scott Gorman, O.D., M.S., Ed.D., FAAO, Professor of Optometry and
Director of Continuing Education, Alumni Relations, and Development



Every year, NSU honors a graduate from each of its 16 centers, colleges, and schools with a Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award. This year, Mary Underberg Charbonneau, O.D., was selected as the 2008 Distinguished Alumni Award recipient for the NSU College of Optometry. This award is given to graduates who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and service to the university and the community, as well as a record of distinction and accomplishment in their field.

Dr. Charbonneau has been an optometrist for the Nicolitz Eye Consultants in Jacksonville, Florida. She served as president for the Northeast Florida Optometric Society and is a member of the AOA Paraoptometric Advisory Board and FOA Charities Board.

Her love for vision care led her to teach at Florida Community College Jacksonville and The Vision Care Institute—a division of Johnson and Johnson. In addition, she volunteers with Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity (VOSH) and has completed four mission trips to provide eye care to the needy people of Central and South America.

Her future goals include speaking at state and national conferences, developing paraoptometric educational lectures, and writing articles as well as possibly a book.

Newly married to husband Charles, who is in the U.S. Navy and stationed in Bota, Spain, Dr. Charbonneau is the proud mother of daughter Allison Elizabeth. As a family, they are living in Bota for the next two years, after which she hopes to return to Florida.

We honor Dr. Mary Underberg Charbonneau as our Distinguished Alumni of the Year and hope her service and commitment to the profession serve as an inspiration to others. She has involved herself in her professional optometric association as well as her community and is truly devoted to advancing the profession.

Alumni Chapter President's Message

university and provide us with suggestions for improvement. Graduating better optometrists improves the profession, thereby enabling optometry to solidify its position in the health care system.

I also urge you to create or join a local alumni chapter. These chapters can provide excellent networking opportunities; in fact, you may be surprised at the number of graduates who are currently living in your area.

Thank you for your support in the past. NSU will continue to graduate exemplary optometrists because of alumni contributions. Those contributions are not only financial, but can also include recruiting new applicants and educating the community about services optometrists provide. I look forward to seeing and hearing from you in the future.

ALUMNI NEWS

By N. Scott Gorman, O.D., M.S., Ed.D., FAAO, Professor of Optometry and Director of Continuing Education, Alumni Relations, and Development

Alan S. Bishop, O.D. ('98) was honored with the Maryland Optometric Association's 2007 Young Optometrist of the Year Award and serves as president of the Eastern Shore Optometric Society. He is sole owner of Easton Eye Care, a private practice with two locations. His son, Porter, is 16 months old.

Katie Brauss, O.D. ('06) and **Andy Jensen, O.D.** ('06) were married on October 18, 2008.

Justine Chen, O.D. ('96) and Ryan Hargreaves, O.D., welcomed their first baby, a boy, in March 2009.

Marlon Demeritt, O.D. ('04) is an examiner for the National Board of Examiners in Optometry. He became a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry last October.

Donal Ellison, O.D. ('06) and **Jilma Ellison, O.D.** ('06) became fellows of the American Academy of Optometry last October.

Michelle Gonzalez, O.D. ('03), who completed her NSU residency in primary care/cornea and contact lens in 2004, joined CorrectVision Laser Institute in 2008, which is an ophthalmology practice with offices in Weston and Pembroke Pines. She practices full-scope optometry with an emphasis on refractive surgery and specialty contact lenses.

Parres Harris-Roberts, O.D. ('07) completed a residency in geriatrics and low-vision rehabilitation at The University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry, Birmingham VAMC in June 2008. She has presented several lectures and presented several papers as part of her residency program.

Andrea Scott Keele, O.D. ('06) is a member of the Greater Kansas City Optometric Society and serves as a member of the Missouri Optometric Association's Affiliated Organizations Committee. Last year, she began providing vision therapy services to patients at Insight Eyecare Specialties in Kansas City, Missouri. She is an InfantSee provider and recently gave a lecture to the North Kansas City Schools' nurses at their winter in-service on "What You Need to Know About Vision Therapy."

John Marcev, O.D. ('02) and **Deborah Marcev, O.D.** ('02) are keeping very busy in their practices, Eye Examiners, Inc. and VisionWorks. They have three children, Nathan (age 5), and Aaron and Andrew (twins—ages 2½).

Adrienne Manzo, O.D. ('04) works for a large ophthalmology/optometry practice in Buffalo, New York. She was recently engaged and is planning an October wedding overlooking Niagara Falls.

D. Duane Mohon, O.D. ('98) was appointed for a second term on the Alabama Optometric Association Board of Directors. He was also appointed for another term as the Carrier Advisory Committee Member (Medicare Liaison) for the state of Alabama. Additionally, he serves on the Southern Educational Congress of Optometry (SECO) Logistics Committee 2009.

Steve Newman, O.D. ('96), who is a board-certified nutrition specialist, practices nutritional optometry in Miami and Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He recently published a book titled *Feel More Alive Now*.

Barton Parker, O.D. ('97) lives in Lake Worth, Florida, with his wife, Paula, and their two children, Ryan (age 7) and Jill (age 2). He celebrated his fifth year in private practice and is secretary of the Palm Beach County Optometric Association.

Jeanne Ruff, O.D. ('05) lives in Williamsburg, Virginia, where she has been in solo practice since 2007. She is a member of the AOA and Virginia Optometric Association as well as the Williamsburg Lions Club.

Rebecca Lynn Schoonover, O.D. ('04) played a key role in the creation and implementation of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Optometric Society's Web site. She is very active in the Junior League of Scranton, Pennsylvania, and serves on its board of directors. She also helps raise much-needed funds that benefit local causes, such as St. Joseph's Center and the Women's Resource Center in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

Cristina Sicoia (Davis), O.D. ('99) joined a British eye team in Romania in September 2008, helping over 400 people receive eyeglasses.

Tracey (Dublirer) Sinoway, O.D. ('96) was on Fox News in January discussing an article on the effects of outdoor play on myopic children.

Kevin Smith, O.D. ('99) has acquired two practices, South Tampa Eye Site in April 2008 and Optical Effects in March 2009.

Adam Stelzer, O.D. ('07) was named executive director of The Laser Center of Coral Gables, Florida. Working closely with the center's medical director, Dr. Alberto Aran, he plans and manages refractive laser and implantable lens procedures. He also instructs and lectures to optometry students from NSU and several other optometry schools as part of The Laser Center's tertiary care externship program at Aran Eye Associates.

Marc B. Taub, O.D., NSU residency class of 2004, became a fellow of the College of Optometrists in Vision Development at the COVD Annual Meeting in Palm Springs, California, in October 2008.

Giving Back to NSU

By Mike D'Eugenio, B.B.A., NSU Director of Annual Giving

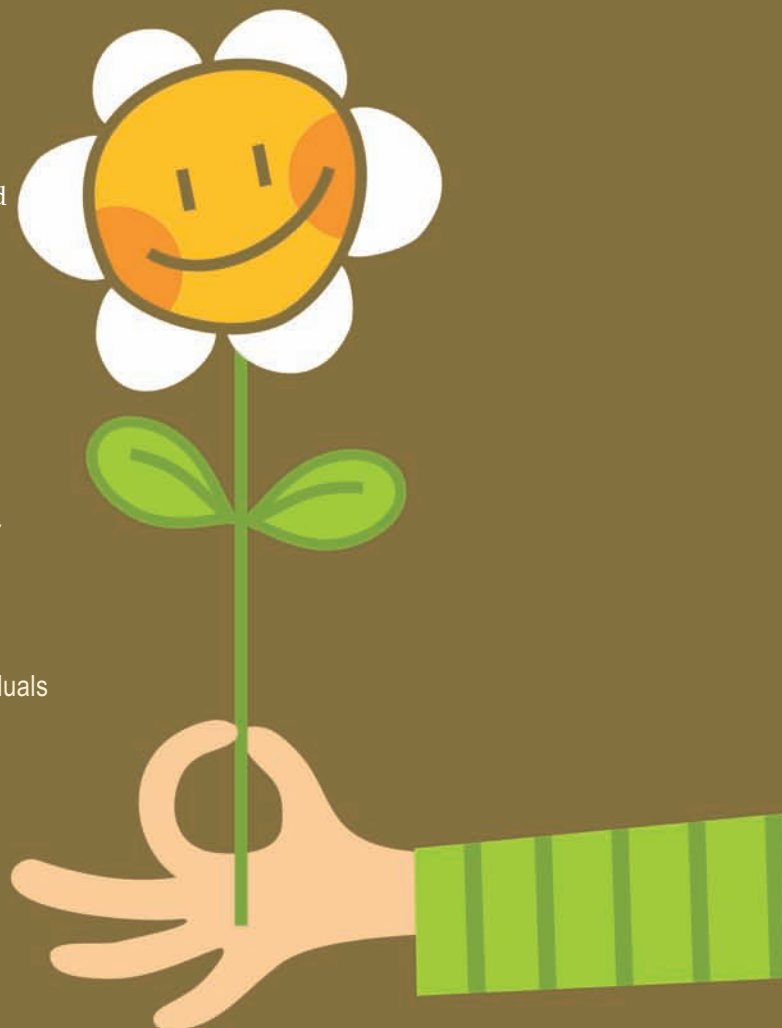
The quality education that students receive in the College of Optometry is a direct result of philanthropic support from alumni and friends in the community. Students are able to learn from exceptional faculty in a multidisciplinary environment so they can practice at the highest level of proficiency. However, the depth of an education cannot be covered by fees and tuition alone. The Nova Southeastern University Annual Fund provides a vehicle for alumni and friends to make an immediate impact on current College of Optometry students.

The Annual Fund provides the College of Optometry with unrestricted dollars to meet the emerging needs not covered by fees and tuition. Recruitment initiatives, faculty development, and scholarships are all examples of how annual gifts make a difference. The Jack Wolfe Scholarship Award and the

Terry Ingraham Student Activity Award are a direct result of support from alumni and friends. These scholarships, which are given to third-year optometry students, allow them to accomplish their dream of pursuing a career in optometry. Please consider making a gift to the College of Optometry's Annual Fund. You can truly enhance the NSU educational experience for College of Optometry students by ensuring they have the opportunity to accomplish their dream. Giving is only a click away. Visit www.nova.edu/giving and make your gift today.

The college is an exceptional institution today because of dedicated alumni who want to ensure that the college continues to excel in serving the optometric needs of the public by educating optometrists to the highest level of proficiency, integrity, and professionalism.

Besides giving back financially, there are other ways to contribute to your alma mater. The Optometry Alumni Chapter is a wonderful vehicle to reconnect with former classmates and faculty members. The chapter holds annual continuing education and networking events. There are several other volunteer opportunities available for NSU alumni. If you are interested in joining the Optometry Alumni Chapter or volunteering, please contact Sara DuCuennois in the Office of Alumni Relations at (800) 541-6682, ext. 22118, or alumweb@nova.edu.



Contributions

The College of Optometry recognizes the following individuals for their monetary contributions:

Dr. Lori Vollmer

Lester E. Janoff Scholars Award Fund

Walter S. Guerard, J.D., O.D.

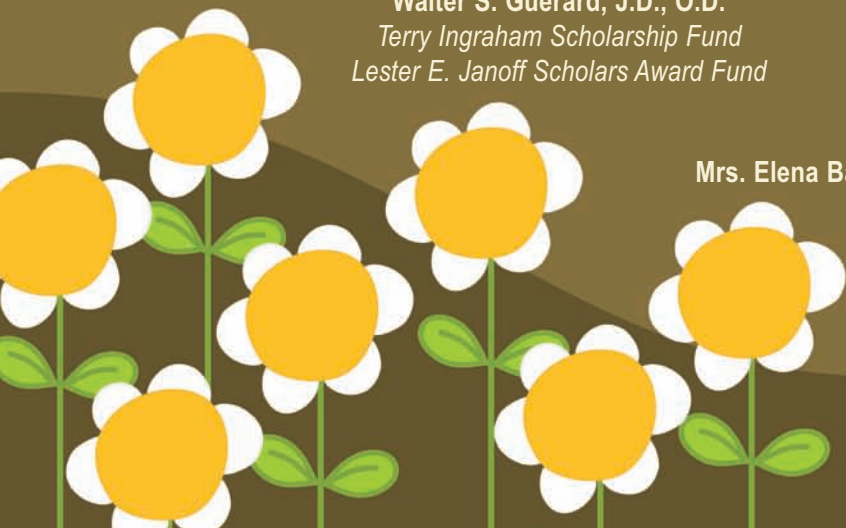
*Terry Ingraham Scholarship Fund
Lester E. Janoff Scholars Award Fund*

Mrs. Elena Barnabei on behalf of the Stefano LaSala Foundation

Lester E. Janoff Scholars Award Fund

Walter S. Guerard, J.D., O.D.

*Terry Ingraham Scholarship Fund
Lester E. Janoff Scholars Award Fund*



FEATURED FACULTY – DR. PAMELA OLIVER



Associate Professor of Optometry and
Diplomate of the American Academy of Optometry in Low Vision Rehabilitation

By Ken Ma, B.A., Associate Director of Public Affairs, NSU Office of Public Affairs

Pamela Oliver, O.D., M.S., FAAO, found the greatest joy of her life in the service of others. Whether it was organizing bread sales with the March of Dimes as a youngster or coordinating walkathons to raise money for cancer in high school, Dr. Oliver realized how much of an impact one person can make. Now, as an associate professor of optometry at Nova Southeastern University's College of Optometry, Dr. Oliver is continuing her quest to better the lives of those around her.

In her professorial role, Dr. Oliver educates NSU optometry students in the classroom about rehabilitative optometry and in the clinics about geriatric patients with low vision and primary care optometry. In her caregiver role, she provides top-notch optical treatment for patients at the NSU Health Care Centers. And when she's not doing either, Dr. Oliver is a researcher who is constantly unearthing new knowledge about low-vision rehabilitation, wavefront analysis, and other subjects.

"Optometry allows me to reach out to so many people," Dr. Oliver said. "I find great satisfaction in passing knowledge on to my students and helping my patients see well."

Dr. Oliver's journey to NSU began in Long Island, New York, where she is originally from. She grew up in a household that considered health care to be a family affair. Although her father and brother were both in medicine, Dr. Oliver decided to choose optometry after careful evaluation of all options because she thought it would fulfill more of her aspirations.

Her first exposure to optometry occurred when she was a college student. During her summer breaks from the University of Pennsylvania—an Ivy League university—Dr. Oliver worked as an administrative assistant at a Long Island optometry practice. "I felt there was a lot of camaraderie at the clinic, and the patients were very happy with the care they received from their optometrists," she said. "The work really appealed to me."

After earning a B.A. degree from the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Oliver went on to attend the State University of New York (SUNY) College of Optometry, where she earned her O.D. degree in 1990.

While at SUNY, she remembers seeing her first patient as a student optometrist. Before she could even diagnose him,

there was a problem; he only spoke Spanish. Luckily, there was a security guard in the building who could translate for her. "Since then, I've learned Spanish to speak to my patients," Dr. Oliver said.

In 1992, Dr. Oliver took a position as a clinical professor of optometry at Southeastern University College of Optometry before it merged with NSU. From 1993 to 2001, she served as the director of the low-vision rehabilitation and geriatric optometry clinical rotation and chief of The Eye Care Institute's Low Vision Service.

At NSU, Dr. Oliver created a variety of lecture, laboratory, and clinical courses, such as low-vision rehabilitation, optometric theory and methods, and case conference. She also joined the pediatric and binocular vision faculty when she was needed.

What she likes most about being an educator is when her students really grasp the concepts she is trying to teach them. Optometry is a complicated mix of science, theory, and real-world application that is sometimes not the easiest subject to master. "I love seeing students get it—when that light bulb goes off and they understand a hard concept they can apply in the clinic," Dr. Oliver said.

Outside the classroom, Dr. Oliver spends about two to three days a week at NSU's Eye Care Institute, where she compassionately treats patients and oversees student optometrists. One of those patients was a young boy whose grades fell in school because of his low vision. The boy suffered from ocular albinism, which is the lack of pigmentation in the eye.

"After a thorough exam and talking to his teacher, I provided him with special glasses that magnified objects," Dr. Oliver said. "He was eventually able to catch up with the rest of his classmates and go beyond them."

That child is just one of many patients Dr. Oliver has treated for low vision. Her research in the area has brought her in contact with other professionals such as ophthalmologists, occupational therapists, psychologists, and social workers. That's because patients with low vision have other issues as their condition interferes with many aspects of their daily existence, including work, hobbies, and the ability to enjoy their lives. "When someone's vision cannot be corrected by surgery or medication, it's a painful thing to deal with," Dr. Oliver said. "People have trouble handling these problems."

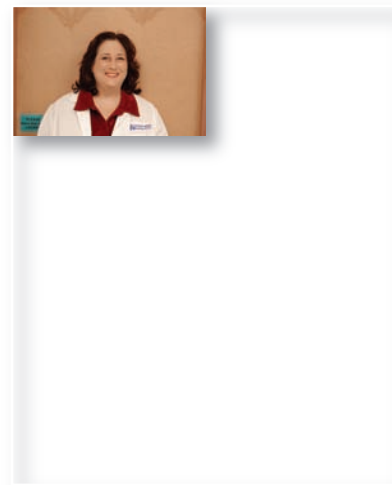


Because she is such a caring optometrist, Dr. Oliver obtained an M.S. in mental health counseling from NSU in 1998 so she could better deal with her patients' emotional as well as physical needs. "Pam puts her patients at ease with a positive, upbeat attitude," said Joseph Pizzimenti, O.D., FAAO, associate professor of optometry. "She explains complicated diagnoses and diseases, as well as solutions and treatments in such a way that her patients become empowered to live well despite their challenges."

In between teaching, researching, and providing patient care, Dr. Oliver founded Student Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity. This NSU organization brings NSU optometry students and faculty members to developing countries such as Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Peru, and Costa Rica each year to provide badly needed eye care. The group of volunteers provides eye exams and glasses to impoverished residents who have never before seen an optometrist.

Dr. Oliver also coordinates efforts throughout Florida to provide Special Olympians with eye exams in conjunction with their meets. As part of a project called Special Olympics Lions Club International Opening Eyes, she and other optometrists aim to increase access for these athletes and help students and other optometrists feel more comfortable working with them.

Making a difference in people's lives is not easy. But for a person who aspired to do that her entire life, Dr. Oliver has succeeded well beyond her original hopes and expectations.



It's April in March... SVOSH Guatemala 2008

*By Albert D. Wood, M.S., O.D., FAAO
Associate Professor of Optometry*



Back in 1987, the SVOSH (Student Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity) chapter at NSU's College of Optometry was formed by Drs. Pam Oliver, Cliff Stephens, and yours truly. Since that first mission to Honduras, thousands of patients from South America and the Caribbean have been examined and given glasses, medications, and medical/surgical referrals as needed. And with each trip, no matter how well our team leaders plan and organize, there are always unexpected challenges that pop up. The SVOSH mission of 2008 to Guatemala was to be no different.

The 2008 team, headed up by third-year intern April Austing, had started planning for the Guatemala mission almost as soon as we had returned from the Trinidad 2007 mission. After looking at a series of different sites, it was decided that SVOSH would serve a small pastoral town in the mountains near Jutiapa, Guatemala. With a combination of excitement and anticipation, our team landed in Guatemala City just as the sun was going down on Saturday, March 15. If you have never tried to get 20 or so BIG boxes full of glasses and medications through the customs department of a foreign country, you are not

missing out on something you would want to do. But after enough questions to pass as a national board exam, we were at last past customs and out onto the official terra firma of Guatemala.

So here we were, 14 interns, a handful of doctors, one optician, and 20 some BIG boxes, out in the hustle and bustle of the road leading away from the Guatemala City International Airport. The only things missing were our Guatemalan hosts and transportation to Jutiapa—the town we would be staying at several hours outside of Guatemala City. Team leader Austing headed back into the airport terminal to call the number our hosts had given her, but there was no answer. After several more phone calls over the next hour or so, someone finally answered. Then came the shocker. While all the correspondence to Guatemala had clearly stated we were arriving on March 15, 2008, for some reason they thought we were coming in April. The only words we heard from our, now somewhat pale-looking leader, were, "But, my name is April!"

One thing I have learned through the years of working with our NSU students on SVOSH missions is when things

get tough, they rise to the occasion—and April Austing was to be no different. After the initial shock wore off, she and her co-leader, Brianna Rhue, immediately started working on how to keep the mission on track with our Guatemalan hosts so we could see the patients we had come to provide care for. Within several hours, we were all on a couple of buses, along with 20 some BIG boxes, heading out into the dark Guatemalan countryside. It was a little after midnight by the time we arrived in Jutiapa, but our hosts had already contacted people in the mountain town to let them know we were there to serve and that our clinic would start that Sunday. After a few hours of sleep, followed by a breakfast of colorful local fruit, we were off on another bus ride into the surrounding mountains to see for the first time our clinic site.

After an hour-plus of winding through the mountains and dodging enough wandering cows on the road to supply any McDonalds for a year, we arrived at our destination. The clinic site was just that—a public health clinic consisting of several small buildings cut into the side of a hill with several volcanoes quietly puffing off in the hazy distance. Down from the roofs of the two buses came our 20 some BIG boxes, and in a scene that can only be described as almost totally chaotic, we took over the entire clinic except one room reserved for medical patients. Within several hours we were seeing our first patients, and as the sun settled to the horizon that first day, we had seen, even with our bumpy start, several hundred patients.

Over the next several days, we saw over 900 patients. The vast majority needed glasses, and for many, this would be their first pair of eyewear. For the people who work out in the fields, the artificial tears and sunglasses we brought, even the “cat-eyes,” were a big hit. Because of the rugged living conditions in the mountains, where most people still walk, there were not that many cases of diabetes or hypertension, but the ones we did discover were referred to the medical clinic. An ophthalmologist from Guatemala City was one of our hosts and would return to the clinic site in the future to provide cataract surgery for the numerous patients we saw that needed it. There were even some neuro-eye cases to keep me happy and challenge the new third-year interns.

But not all the trip was work; our hosts had arranged for us to spend several days visiting some of Guatemala’s best sites. We spent time at Panajachel, a lively town on the shores of Lake Atitlán in the Guatemalan highlands. We hiked a volcano one day after seeing a good omen on our drive up—the puff of an ash cloud from an eruption. The good omen was that it was another volcano erupting, not the one we would hike. We spent our last night in Antigua, an old Spanish colonial town that was in full celebration with multiple processions of hand-carried floats through the city for Holy Week. And after just a week in Guatemala, it was time to leave—another successful NSU student-lead SVOSH mission accomplished.



SVOSH 2008 Guatemala Team

Doctors

- Dr. James Brauss
- Sandra Brauss (optician)
- Dr. Diane Calderon
- Dr. Michelle Caputo
- Dr. Pamela Oliver
- Dr. Albert Woods

Students

- April Ann Austing
- Teresita Aleida Bollar
- Derek John Bonacci

- Bupathi S. Dissanayake
- April Marie Gerhard
- Dina Iskander
- Diana Hong Phuc Nguyen
- Sonal V. Patel
- Brianna Christine Rhue
- Francisco Richardson
- Maureen Geeta Sawh
- Margot Shipley
- Oscar Villafana
- Chue-mai Yang
- Shirin Hejazi Yousefi

UNESCO Chair Completes Study on Visual Health in South America

By Janet L. Leasher, O.D., M.P.H., FAAO, Assistant Professor of Optometry
North American Coordinator of the UNESCO Chair in Visual Health and Development at NSU

Understanding accessibility to vision care requires an understanding of the social determinants of health and the factors contributing to sufficient number and distribution of providers. As part of an ongoing effort by the UNESCO Chair in Visual Health and Development, a situational analysis of visual health in South America was completed in 2008 utilizing a study protocol examining Visual Health Systems Around the World (*Sistemas de Salud Visual Mundial*, or SAVIM by its acronym in Spanish).

The SAVIM study, previously completed for Central America in 2004, looked at the socioeconomic, political, cultural, educational, environmental, and sector-specific factors contributing to accessibility to visual health in the South American countries of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Country-level indicators such as the population and economic statistics, Human Development Index, education indices, gender equity, and other socio-cultural data were evaluated with a specific eye toward the visual health sector indicators of

- human resource regulations
- professional type
- number and distribution
- educational centers
- health care systems
- cooperation projects of nongovernmental and governmental nature

Because visual health data of this nature do not typically form part of governmental statistics, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were utilized to obtain the information. Key informants from all countries collaborated in contributing data points.

A team of researchers lead by UNESCO Chair Director Laura Guisasola of the Chair headquarters in Barcelona, Spain, and Martha Liliana Hernandez, coordinator of the South American Associated Center at the Universidad de Santo Tomas College of Optometry in Bucaramanga, Colombia, along with Laia Olle, political scientist and researcher, conducted the study.

The results of the study were presented and further analyzed by all contributors in the first Forum on Visual Health in South America, held at the Santo Domingo Convent in Bogotá, Colombia, November 13-14, 2008. A strategic plan for visual health in the region achieved consensus.

This forum brought together experts in visual health from the 10 different countries, who represented all of the visual health professions (ophthalmology, optometry, opticianry, orthoptics, technologists, and technicians) as well as ministries of health and education, nongovernmental organizations working in visual health in the continent, the Pan-American Health Organization, and the UNESCO Chair in Visual Health and Development. A series of workshops and small-group planning sessions allowed these experts to develop strategic focus areas based on the findings of the study.

The strategic focus areas center on

- improving the accessibility and quality of eye care in the public system
- enhancing practitioner education and competencies
- guaranteeing vision care as a public service
- decentralizing the services to the rural areas and increasing coverage in these areas

The UNESCO Chair in Visual Health and Development is headquartered at the Polytechnic University of Catalonia in Barcelona, Spain. There are three regional Associated Centers—Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry hosts the North American Associated Center (coordinator Janet Leasher, O.D., M.P.H., FAAO); University of El Salvador hosts the Central American Associated Center (coordinator Astrid Villalobos, M.P.H.); Santo Tomas University of Bucaramanga, Colombia, hosts the South American Associated Center (coordinator Martha Liliana Hernandez, O.D., M.P.H.). The Chair's mission is to increase access for the most vulnerable populations of the world to quality vision care through actions of education, research, and cooperation projects for development.



In June 2009, the UNESCO Chair will hold the second Forum on Visual Health in Central America in El Salvador and is slated to launch the SAVIM study on the Caribbean nations in 2009. Nova Southeastern University will be the location for the Third International Congress for the Development of Visual Health in 2011.

For more information and to read the *Report on Visual Health in South America 2008*, please contact Dr. Janet Leasher at leasher@nova.edu or visit the UNESCO Chair Web site at www.unescovision.org.



The UNESCO Chair team celebrates the end of the forum. Pictured (left to right) are Janet Leasher (North American coordinator), Martha Liliانا Hernandez (South American coordinator), Laura Guisasola (UNESCO Chair co-director in Barcelona), Sophia L. (development specialist from France), and Laia Olle (political scientist and researcher in Barcelona).

Representatives from 10 countries, all visual health professions, ministries of health and education, nongovernmental organizations, and educational institutions join together for Visual Health in South America.





SPOTLIGHT ON THE RESIDENTS

Pictured (left to right) are Sonia Milena Fernandez, O.D., Ashley Zak Kimble, O.D., Ivette Gonzalez, O.D., Joan Bauernfiend, O.D., Eva Duchnowski, O.D., Helen Farjad, O.D., and Karina Marcovitch, O.D.

By Lori Vollmer, O.D., Assistant Professor, Director of Residencies

We are already well into our new residency year and our current class has been busy. I would like to introduce you to our 2008-2009 residency class members. They are: Joan Bauernfiend, O.D., Eva Duchnowski, O.D., Helen Farjad, O.D., Sonia Milena Fernandez, O.D., Ivette Gonzalez, O.D., Ashley Zak Kimble, O.D., and Karina Marcovitch, O.D.

Our residency program takes pride in providing a challenging clinical environment that encourages the attainment of each resident's personal learning objectives, as well as encouraging the development of "well-rounded" optometric physicians. For this reason, though primarily clinically based, the program contains many other didactic and scholarly elements.

Clinically, the residents perform patient care in a direct care setting as well as serve as preceptors for students in our third- and fourth-year clinics. This allows the residents to "learn by doing" as well as "learn by teaching." Many of our residents find this one of the most rewarding aspects of the program and continue in academia on a full- or part-time basis upon completing the program.

In addition to clinical training, the residents participate in weekly conferences that involve lectures on a wide range of topics, journal reviews, tutorials, and career counseling.

They are involved in instructing students in laboratories and conferences involving optometric procedures. They are also required to produce lectures and deliver grand rounds presentations during their residency year and are mentored in the development of papers for publication. We also acknowledge the importance of involvement in professional organizations, both politically and academically, and encourage their involvement in these organizations.

Many of our residents not only attend but present posters and lectures at conferences, such as the American Academy of Optometry (AAO), SECO International, and the American Optometric Association (AOA). Additional opportunities are also available in the form of specialty conferences in ocular disease, such as the Optometric Glaucoma Society and the Optometric Retina Society; in cornea and contact lenses, such as the Vistakon Residents' Meeting and the GPLI Cornea and Contact Lens Resident Educational Program; and in pediatrics with the College of Optometrists in Vision Development (COVD).

I would also like to share some statements from our current residents on their overall perception of their residency training at NSU as well as their favorite aspects of the program.

OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Dr. Fernandez: "The residency program has been a great choice for my career. It has given me the confidence I needed on decision making. It has allowed me to work with a variety of professors who have taught me and led me in the right path, and it has given me the opportunity to explore areas of optometry that were of high interest to me. Working as a preceptor under the program has been more rewarding than I expected. Not only did it require me to understand the topics I needed to teach, but it compelled me to research areas I was not familiar enough with."

Dr. Bauernfiend: "My pediatric experience has been a real "eye opener." Coming from a school where I had limited exposure with pediatric care, I had to really hit the ground running when I started at NSU. I tell the students all the time not to take their experience for granted. This residency has been invaluable to the development of my clinical skill in this area."

Dr. Farjad: "The residency in primary care with emphasis in ocular disease has been a fulfilling professional experience for me. I have had the opportunity to work in different clinics and work with knowledgeable doctors. I have had the opportunity to precept the optometry students, which expands my clinical experience from another perspective. I also have rotations with great ophthalmologists in the area and am exposed to all kinds of ocular problems. I believe doing a residency at NSU has provided me with a very unique clinical experience that has exceeded my expectations."

Dr. Duchnowski: "During the last few months, not only have I become a better clinician, but I also have become more comfortable in preparing posters, papers, and presentations. I have had the opportunity to deliver presentations during grand rounds and at the 2008 AAO meeting in Anaheim, California. These unique opportunities have helped me get over my fear of public speaking and have helped me improve upon my professional speaking skills. My residency experience has enabled me to grow both as an individual and a clinician and has allowed me to be more comfortable managing and treating many ocular conditions."

Dr. Kimble: "I believe that the best way to test your knowledge is to share that knowledge with someone else. I am fortunate to have that aspect in my training here at NSU. I also enjoy the unique experience at NSU of having primary care and pediatrics as a part of my residency. I am able to fully build my confidence as a practitioner for my future in optometric practice."

Dr. Marcovitch: "My residency is in primary care with an emphasis in ocular disease. This combined residency allows me to have a very diverse learning experience because I have the opportunity to work in a different clinical setting every day. I spend two days a week shadowing

ophthalmologists who specialize in specific fields such as retina and neuro-ophthalmology. On other days, I rotate through the NSU clinics based in Davie, Fort Lauderdale, and North Miami Beach as well as the specialty clinics for glaucoma, diabetes, and macular disease. These are such diverse clinical settings, and the patient populations are incredibly varied in terms of socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and ocular problems. Having come from another optometric institution, it has been valuable to me to learn from such a diverse faculty and gain a different perspective regarding optometric education, examinations, and treatment modalities. The faculty and staff at NSU have been very supportive in providing a positive learning environment and are always available to answer questions.

Dr. Gonzalez: "My overall residency experience has been great. I like that I am able to learn through many different experiences from directly working with patients to working with the students."

FAVORITE ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM

Dr. Fernandez: "The favorite part of my residency is working alongside professionals who are willing to answer my questions and are so knowledgeable in their chosen area that I feel lucky to have them guide me through patient care I may have otherwise not felt comfortable managing. I am also very happy with the flexibility of the program since it has allowed me to get involved with the pediatric department at both NSU and BPEI, giving me experience that on my own I would not have been able to gain. I highly recommend the residency program at NSU."

Dr. Bauernfiend: "My favorite part of the program is that while each resident has responsibilities to the clinics they are assigned to, there is some flexibility with the assignments. If you want more experience in a certain area or clinic, it can happen even if it does not necessarily fall within your particular residency position. You have options to really make the most of your year."

Dr. Farjad: "My favorite aspects of the program have been the opportunity to work with NSU students and seeing many glaucoma patients in the Glaucoma Service with Dr. Sowka."

Dr. Marcovitch: "One of the most challenging but best parts of the residency is precepting third- and fourth-year optometry students. The students are very eager to learn, and they always have challenging and interesting questions that push me to analyze my own knowledge and keep me on my toes."

Dr. Gonzalez: "My favorite aspect of the residency is working directly with the patients. I have the opportunity to see patients in pediatrics, primary care, and vision therapy. I enjoy the opportunity to expand my skills in all areas with the guidance of the top optometrists in their field."

As you can see, our residents all have individual interests and goals and enjoy the program for a variety of reasons. We are pleased that we are able to provide this learning environment and are very proud of all of our past and current residents.

A new addition to the program was our inaugural Residency Day held in February 2009. This event showcased residents throughout the state of Florida affiliated with Nova Southeastern University's College of Optometry. In all, we had 12 residents presenting lectures representing 8 of our residency sites; Orlando VAMC, Tallahassee VAMC, Lake City VAMC, Gainesville VAMC, Aran Eye Associates, Bay Pines VAMC, Daytona Beach VAMC, and Nova Southeastern University.

These residents presented interesting and challenging cases they had encountered during their residency training in the form of grand rounds to NSU faculty, fellow residents, and optometric students. The lectures covered topics in ocular trauma, orbital disease, glaucoma, retina, and neuro-ophthalmic disease. In addition to the excellent educational program, it also provided an opportunity for the students to interact with residents from various programs and learn more about residency training and the opportunities it provides. We were very pleased with the success of this event and look forward to future participation in years to come.



Residents Day presenters (from left) were Ashley Zak Kimble O.D., Beth Paternoster, O.D., Michelle Rivera, O.D., Laryn Adams, O.D., Anne Vollmar, O.D., Sonia Fernandez O.D., Marissa Adamson O.D., Elizabeth Garland O.D., Diana DeLaTorre, O.D., and Helen Farjad O.D. Pictured in the back row is Manuel Zambrano, O.D. (Not pictured: Hetel Bhakta, O.D.)

students' pages

Optometry Students Receive White Coats



The College of Optometry held its annual White Coat Ceremony on August 27, 2008, at the NSU Health Professions Division. The ceremony officially inducted the entering class of 118 students into the profession of optometry, allowing them to understand the mission and ethics of the profession, as well as the expectations of them in regard to patient care.

STUDENT AWARDS

The following awards were presented to graduating students at the Senior Awards Dinner/Dance at the Westin Diplomat on May 23, 2008:

Senior Awards

CHANCELLOR'S AWARD

Presented to the student who best exemplifies the characteristics of a fine optometric physician—a combination of scholarship, leadership, integrity, humanity, and loyalty to the profession

Johnlee Romero

DEAN'S AWARD

Presented for academic excellence to the student graduating with the highest scholastic achievement

Shawn Poitras

BETA SIGMA KAPPA SILVER MEDAL

Presented to the graduating chapter member who has attained the highest cumulative grade point average

Shawn Poitras

THE LESTER E. JANOFF SCHOLARS AWARD

Presented to a fourth-year optometry student for outstanding performance in a scholarly activity such as teaching, research, or optometric journalism—in memory of Dr. Lester E. Janoff, a renowned educator, researcher, and pioneer in the area of cornea and contact lenses; a gentleman and a scholar who exemplified lifelong learning

Robyn Russell

ALCON GLAUCOMA SERVICE AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated experience, clinical excellence, and compassion in the care of patients with glaucoma

Ani Baroni and Brenda Arnone

MARCHON PRACTICE MANAGEMENT AWARD

Presented to a graduating student for excellence in clinical optometric practice management

Steven Bussa

SOUTHERN COUNCIL OF OPTOMETRY AWARD FOR CLINICAL EXCELLENCE

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding clinical performance

Amanda Kirtley

PIONEER INSTRUMENTS PRIMARY CARE AWARD

Presented to a graduating student for excellence in primary care performance

Michelle Kubancik

VISION CARE INC. PRIMARY CARE CLINICAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated excellence in primary care

William Yu

JORDAN EYEWEAR MODULE DIRECTOR'S AWARD

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

Christine Manzella

ARÁN EYE ASSOCIATES EXCELLENCE IN OCULAR DISEASE AWARD

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated exceptional understanding and care of patients with ocular disease

Tamanna Towhid

BRAVERMAN EYE CENTER CLINICAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated superior clinical skills and excellence in diagnosis and treatment of ocular disease

Michael Nodland

BRAVERMAN EYE CENTER EXTERN OF THE YEAR

In recognition of a superior work ethic, clinical acumen, and excellence in patient care

Trey Stafford

LUXOTTICA AWARD

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

Ashley Zak Kimble

PEDIATRIC AND BINOCULAR VISION CLINICAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding clinical skills and patient care in Nova Southeastern University Pediatrics and Binocular Vision Service

Brian Oulman

ADVANCED MEDICAL OPTICS CONTACT LENS AWARD

Presented to the graduating student who attained the highest academic average in all didactic courses relating to contact lenses

Hoang Minh Nguyen

COOPER VISION'S EXCELLENCE IN CONTACT LENSES AWARD

Presented to a graduating student for excellence in corneal and contact lens clinical care

Aida Glatter-Gotz

VISTAKON AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated excellence in contact lens care

Johnlee Romero

WILLIAM FEINBLOOM LOW VISION AWARD

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding clinical application of low vision treatment

Jennifer Keiser

HEINE AWARD OF EXCELLENCE IN OPTICS

Presented to the graduating student who attained the highest academic average in all didactic courses relating to optics

Hoang Minh Nguyen

MILROY OPTICAL SCHOLAR AWARD

Presented to a graduating student for excellence in ophthalmic optics materials knowledge and dispensing

Kyle Benner

LOMBART INSTRUMENTS OPTOMETRIC AWARD

Presented to the individual with the highest overall grade in the optometric theory and methods courses

Vanessa Morales

WELCH-ALLYN AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Presented to a graduating student for outstanding performance in all areas of optometry

Robyn Russell

ALCON SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

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

Nathan Schramm

FLORIDA OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION PRESIDENTIAL AWARD (FOA)

Presented to a graduating student for academic performance, demonstrated leadership, and participation in volunteer activities

Nathan Schram

THE LENNY CHERDACK STUDENT LEGISLATIVE AWARD (FOA)

Presented to the student who exhibits professional 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.

Jeanine Hayen

The following senior awards were presented on May 22, 2008, at the senior luncheon:

STUDENT LIFE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD—OPTOMETRY

Presented to the graduating student who best demonstrated responsibility, leadership, integrity, and involvement

Erin Jenewein

COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS IN VISION DEVELOPMENT AWARD OF EXCELLENCE (COVD)

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated strong interest and clinical skills in the area of vision therapy

Ivette Gonzalez

ODYSSEY DRY EYE AWARD

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

Gloria Aguilar and Susan Barnett

X-CEL CONTACT LENS AWARD

Presented to a graduating student for excellence in fitting GP contact lenses

Eva Duchnowski

GP LENS INSTITUTE CLINICAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

Presented to the graduating student who has demonstrated eagerness to learn more about gas permeable lens design, materials, and fitting techniques

William Yu

CONTACT LENS PRACTICE MANAGEMENT AWARD

Presented to a graduating student who demonstrated excellence in contact lens practice management as the house officer

Bardha Fejzo

DAVID J. KERKO LOW VISION AWARD (AKA CORNING)

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated interest and participation in the area of low vision

Asim Prasad

ESCHENBACH AWARD OF EXCELLENCE IN LOW VISION

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding clinical application of low vision treatment

Kyle Edwards

ESSILOR CORNEAL REFLECTION PUPILOMETER AWARD

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated excellence in dispensing ophthalmic materials

Nicholas Le

OPTOMETRIC PHYSICIANS OF WASHINGTON'S STUDENT OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented to a graduating student in recognition of outstanding professional leadership, academic achievement, and public concern

Brian Oulman

Third-Year Student Awards

AMERICAN OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION STUDENT LEADERSHIP AWARD

Presented to a third-year student who has proven leadership and student government involvement

Erin Jenewein

THE JACK WOLFE SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Presented to a third-year optometry student for outstanding clinical performance—in memory of Dr. Jack Wolfe, a dedicated faculty member, teacher, and optometrist

Roger Davila

VISION SERVICE PLAN AWARD

Presented to two students who demonstrate excellence in primary care

Fredy Otalora and Naddia Barrios

VOLK OCULAR DISEASE EXCELLENCE AWARD

Presented to a student for excellence in his/her ocular disease courses

Erin Jenewein

AMERICAN OPTOMETRIC FOUNDATION-CARL ZEISS VISION FELLOWSHIP

Honors outstanding achievement with the highest level of commitment to clinical excellence and the independent practice of optometry

Gelea Ice





Thomas Spivey

Thomas Spivey, PhD, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor



Thomas Spivey, PhD, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor



John Dumas

NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

HEALTH PROFESSIONS DIVISION

COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY



Class of 2008



Elizabeth Elyse, Bachelor of Science

Richard Durr

Colleen Hines



Ben Brown

Maegan Blair

Yael Brown

Shantel Brown

Alan Brown



Sharon Cook

Elizabeth Carpenter

Sharon B. El-Haw

Carly Hinesworth

Jason C. Johnson

Spencer Johnson



James Ryan

James Ryan

Michael Roberts

Joseph Manning

Deborah Miller

Shirley Johnson



Michael Williams

Victoria Brown

Victoria B.

James Fagan

Michael Day

Christian Stewart



Van Nguyen

Michael Stewart

Shawn Brown

Shawn Vitell

Elizabeth Edwards

Spencer Johnson



Thomas Brown

Elizabeth

Olivia Johnson

Olivia Johnson

Shawn Stewart

Spencer Johnson



Shawn Day

Shawn Vitell

Shawn Brown



James Ryan

Christian Durr

Spencer Johnson



Sharon Cook

Shawn Stewart

Shawn Stewart



Shawn Stewart

Colleen Manning

Shawn Stewart



Michael Williams

Victoria Brown

Victoria B.



Van Nguyen

Michael Stewart

Shawn Brown



Thomas Brown

Elizabeth

Olivia Johnson

Olivia Johnson

Shawn Stewart

Spencer Johnson



and graduate
with the
Bachelor of
Science in
Optometry

Student Organizations' Report

By Amanda Woodie, Class of 2010

Student Government Association (SGA)

Student government is having an amazing 2008-09 school year of activity and growth. The executive board consists of Amanda Woodie (president), Meagan Steg (vice president), Pauline Thai (secretary), and John Hoffman (treasurer). The SGA has been working very hard to not only build school spirit and bring classes together, but to enhance student life for the students that will be here after we have graduated.



The year began with our inaugural Organization Fair, which introduced the OD1s to the many ways they can get involved and enrich their experience at NSU. Prior to the fair, students were given the new *Organization Booklet* featuring info on each club as well as information on how to join and officer contact information. The fair featured officers and members of all our organizations, each with displays in the Terry Atrium. Before the fair, the first-year students were also introduced to their second-year big brothers and big sisters so they could walk around the fair while they got to know each other. The second-year officers played a huge role in the event by planning the introductions of “bigs” and “littles” and arranging to have Cold Stone Creamery make everyone ice cream, which was partially sponsored by a donation from Keeler. A few weeks later, everyone was welcomed to our annual Markham Park picnic. Students from all four classes came out to have some fun in the sun and enjoy food, friends, and lots of fun.

The academic year also featured the annual Fall Equipment Fair, now in its third year of existence, for the first-year students. The purchase of equipment can be very daunting for students who do not initially know how to use it. Before the night of the big purchases, the OD1s were invited to attend a workshop hosted by upperclassmen in order to pre-educate students before they were faced with the decision of which equipment to purchase.

The SGA itself has undergone some changes to help foster smooth operation and efficient planning in the future. The SGA office has been renovated into a more convenient space for the members to work and student organizations to store various items. The SGA Constitution also underwent a huge facelift to help make processes such as creating new clubs and class voting procedures well regulated. The student body voted and passed the new constitution last October. Clubs and organizations also updated their own constitutions, and many have taken

advantage of making their information available on the student Web site. This year, two new clubs were debuted: The Optometric Student Association for Ocular Disease (OSAOD) and Gold Key International Optometric Honor Society. Yet another club was established last fall: the Canadian Association for Optometric Students (CAOS). The SGA is proud to welcome all three to the family and thanks the organizations' founders for all their hard work.

Other events hosted by the SGA included the Spring Equipment Fair on March 12 as well as the highlight of the year—the Eye Ball—held March 28 at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino. More information on these events will appear in the fall issue of *The Visionary*.

American Optometric Student Association (AOSA)

The AOSA was excited to kickoff the 2008-09 school year with 100 percent student membership, along with fresh new faces from the incoming first-year class. Pauline Thai (AOSA trustee) and Judy Posner (trustee elect) anxiously anticipated the annual Optometry Mini Super Bowl in late March to select our contestant for the Varilux Optometry Super Bowl at the annual AOA/AOSA meeting. This year, the annual meeting will be held in our nation's capital, Washington D.C. The AOSA hopes to encourage as many students as it can to attend this fun, exciting, and educational event.

The American Academy of Optometry (AAO)

The AAO exists “to enhance excellence in optometric practice by fostering research and disseminating knowledge in vision science through the continuing education presented at its annual meeting.” The Conversion of Students to Candidates program is an initiative by AAO board members that exists to recruit new graduates to apply for fellowship.

In October 2008, the academy meeting was held in Anaheim, California and was a great success. This year in Orlando, we hope to have the greatest student representation of all the schools in the country. As part of the AAO's Mentor Program, the plan is to have a local practicing O.D. who is a fellow come and speak to our students on how to apply for fellowship and the benefits of being a student member of the AAO. Thanks to all the AAO supporters and faculty members that encourage students to apply for fellowship; it is with your inspiration that they succeed.

Beta Sigma Kappa (BSK)

This year, Beta Sigma Kappa inducted approximately 30 new members across the 2009, 2010, and 2011 classes. In order to revitalize the tutoring program, the executive committee passed a new requirement this year mandating 20 hours of tutoring per year from all of its members. BSK is determined to help any and all of our fellow classmates in need of extra help, and the new requirements were instated to accomplish this goal. This semester, BSK held the Mock Preclinical Proficiency Examination for the 2011 class. The mock exam is a great way for students to calm their nerves and strengthen their confidence about the upcoming proficiency exam.

Canadian Association of Optometric Students (CAOS)

As the newest of our college's organizations, the CAOS intends to educate our Canadian students about the goals, objectives, and priorities of the CAO and the profession of optometry in Canada. Cofounders Lisa Cossetto and Christina Chan aim for the CAOS to provide our Canadian students with support for all the common issues they face as Canadians studying in the United States. This will encompass anything from issues with immigration papers, OSAP, obtaining a Florida driver's license, or writing the Canadian boards. The organization does not claim to have all the answers yet, but it strives to be the place for our Canadian students to come to get answers. The club's first meeting was held in January and was a huge success.

The College of Optometrists in Vision Development (COVD)

The COVD has been spreading the news about optometry's best kept secret—vision therapy. With approximately 50 new members joining, the COVD had a great turnout for the August 2008 introduction meeting. To motivate students about the field of vision therapy and share his success story, Dr. Rick Morris from the Center for Better Vision visited the school last October. The 38th annual meeting held in sunny Palm Springs, California, was very well attended by NSU students, faculty, and residents. The COVD would like to congratulate this year's recipients of a \$250 Wold SAFE Travel Grant: Drs. Joan Bauernfiend and Ashley Kimble, Catherine Dau, Sheena Jessee, and Jamie Scoggins. During the conference, students were able to attend lectures on a variety of topics including acquired brain injuries, therapeutic lens prescribing, autism, and managing children with reading difficulties. In January, the Tour de Optometry invited Dr. Jason Clopton to speak to students about his practice in Tennessee. Dr. Clopton has a unique practice incorporating vision therapy with many disciplines, including occupational therapy, physical therapy, music therapy, and nutrition. Through regular speakers and a new student-friendly Web site, the COVD will continue its mission to reach out to students and spark interest in the field of vision therapy and development.

The Florida Optometric Student Association (FOSA)

FOSA kicked off this school year with a very important assignment on the agenda—the 2008 elections. It was imperative for us to vote the candidates into office who would help expand the scope of optometry in Florida. Everyone knew this was going to be a close race for the candidates we supported, so all efforts were executed with unity, strength, and passion. The response was overwhelming as over 100 NSU optometry students fervently volunteered to stand at the polls and show their support throughout Miami-Dade and Broward counties. Michelle Levin, NSU FOSA president, said it was exciting to be part of a student body that is committed to making a difference for our profession.

This year, over 50 new student members joined the organization. We also want to make sure everyone marks their calendars for the Florida Optometric Convention in July at the Fontainebleau Miami Beach. The organization's goal is to increase the number of optometry students attending, which will place them in contact with many practicing optometrists.

Gold Key International Optometric Honor Society

The Gold Key International Optometric Honor Society, which is one of our newest organizations, welcomed 12 new members this past year. Ten of the members were students, and the remaining two were honorary faculty members. Membership in the organization is lifelong and recognizes leadership through service to classmates, college, and profession. At the senior congress in November 2008, a banquet was held to honor the following leaders: Smith Blanc, Jeff Cohen, Sara Gaib, D'aun Hajdu, Gelea Ice, Erin Jenewein, Lisa Martin, Willnella Patray, Erica Poole, Brianna Rhue, and Drs. Julie Tyler and Chris Woodruff. Our NSU chapter of Gold Key was founded by the 2007-2008 SGA executive officers.

Nova Optometric Practice Management Association (NOPMA)

Now in its third successful year as the practice management organization at NSU's College of Optometry, NOPMA is proud to announce the club has reached its goal of 100 members. This year, complementary personalized business cards were given along with registration to each member in hopes of piquing students' interests in making connections outside of optometry school. NOPMA features speakers and seminars on a monthly basis targeted toward students considering private or group practice as well as commercial practice as potential career goals. NOPMA also has speakers elaborate on other important issues such as billing and coding, marketing a successful practice, and how to start a private practice, just to name a few.

In September, NOPMA featured Drs. Ben Gaddie and Scot Morris in its Student Practice Management Symposium. NOPMA also hosted a Student Practice Management Conference and invited student practice management leaders from across the country to South Florida. The conference aided the start of new practice management clubs at other optometry schools around the nation. As it stands, 9 of the 17 optometry schools in the United States have student practice management clubs, and NOPMA President Meagan Steg strives to have every school involved to some extent by 2010.

The National Optometric Student Association (NOSA)

NOSA, along with Drs. Sherrol Reynolds, Michael Bacigalupi, Greg Black, and Noel Henry, participated in the NSU College of Osteopathic Medicine Medical Mission to Jamaica with other Health Professions Division colleges to visit Jamaican cities such as St. Mary and Kingston in June 2008. NOSA screened over 500 patients for refractive error, diabetic retinopathy, hypertensive retinopathy, advanced cataracts, glaucoma, and sickle cell retinopathy, which are the causes for most low vision and blindness seen in the Jamaican population.

There were 25 NOSA members present at these sites providing comprehensive eye examinations to patients ranging from 4 months of age to 80 years old. A wide range of people with diabetes and hypertension were seen, including some who had developed early or late ocular sequelae of those conditions. Many of them were educated about their conditions and referred to osteopathic medicine for medical treatment. Every branch of the Health Professions Division from osteopathic medicine to

dentistry played a role in providing standard health care to the individuals that were seen. Due to the joint effort among NOSA members and the other health professions, the medical mission trip was a success. These efforts increased the efficacy and quality of health care provided to the Jamaican communities we visited.

Optometric Student Association for Ocular Disease (OSAOD)

After a year of planning and paperwork, the Optometric Student Association for Ocular Disease (OSAOD) has finally become a reality. Founded by third-year students Mike Rebarchik and Ivana Obradovic, the club was unveiled at the Organization Fair last fall and was received with overwhelming interest. Currently, the OSAOD has approximately 60 members spread across the 2009-12 classes.

During the fall semester, the OSAOD presented Drs. Joseph Sowka, Emilio Balius, and Steve Newman, who spoke on a wide range of topics including how and why to operate an ocular disease practice, disease case presentations and differentials, how to market yourself to potential employers, and patient communications. In the upcoming semester, the OSAOD is planning on hosting two or three more presenters to speak on myriad topics, including residencies, alternative treatment methods, and special considerations necessary to open a practice that primarily treats ocular disease. The OSAOD is hopeful that this club will continue to gain support and is confident it will provide its members with expanded knowledge of how to implement ocular disease treatment into their everyday practice of optometry.

STUDENT ORGANIZATION FAIR AT NSU



SPECIAL OLYMPICS

By Pamela R. Oliver, O.D., M.S., FAAO (Dipl.), Associate Professor of Optometry

The Special Olympics started a program over 10 years ago to provide health care to individuals with intellectual disabilities called the Special Olympics Lions Club International Opening Eyes (SOLCIOE) program. Few of the 7.5 million people with intellectual disabilities receive adequate eye care, and many have never visited an eye doctor.

The SOLCIOE was created in response to the fact that this vulnerable population needed quality vision care but was often denied treatment or had limited access. Special Olympics found a correlation between the hands-on training and profound insights that health care providers gain through the Healthy Athletes program. The students and faculty members of Nova Southeastern University stepped up to the plate within a year of the SOLCIOE program being initiated in Florida. Faculty member Dr. Pamela R. Oliver became a clinical director for Florida in 2003 and an executive clinical director for the state in 2006 to help promote the program at NSU and throughout the state.

While providing a comprehensive 15-station vision and eye health evaluation, refractions and free prescription eye glasses, and/or sport safety goggles when needed, the NSU optometry students learn firsthand the urgency of overcoming discrimination and neglect in health-care training and services. The experience these students gain through their personal interactions with Special Olympics' athletes also inspire them to care for special-needs patients in their own communities, and to involve their medical colleagues in Healthy Athletes. Alumni have continued to volunteer with this program, and two have gone on to become clinical directors for their state—Dr. Nicole Dillavou ('00) in North Dakota and Dr. Denise Smith ('01) in Texas.

Over the years, NSU students have helped to evaluate hundreds of athletes and have played a part in educating the athletes, parents, and coaches about the importance of regular eye care while also enlightening and altering the attitudes of eye care professionals about the vision care needs of people with intellectual disabilities. In fact, one parent remarked that her child had never received such "an amazing eye examination."

The SOLCIOE is a program of Special Olympics International, in conjunction with the American Optometric Association, and is sponsored by private donations. Special Olympics International founder, Mrs. Eunice Kennedy Shriver, was the 1998 recipient of the American Optometric Association's Apollo Award, which is given to a non-optometrist for his or her efforts to promote quality eye care. NSU students will continue to fulfill Mrs. Shriver's vision of breaking the barriers of uneasiness on the part of practitioners and bringing competent and caring volunteer health care to this underserved population.



NSU Investigating Treatments for Convergence Insufficiency

By Rachel A. (Stacey) Coulter, O.D., FAAO, FCOVD, Associate Professor of Optometry and Chair of the Department of Optometric Sciences

NSU alumni may be interested to learn of the university's role in clinical research. An example of this is the Convergence Insufficiency Treatment Trial (CITT), a multi-center clinical trial for which NSU served as a clinical center. The NSU CITT team, led by Stacey Coulter, O.D., worked with researchers across the country to determine which treatment works best for convergence insufficiency. NSU was well-prepared to recruit and retain patients due to its large pediatric patient base, as well as its relationship as a referral center for local eye care practitioners.

The study also involved eight other universities, eye institutes, and medical centers including Bascom Palmer, the Mayo Clinic, Salus University (formerly known as Pennsylvania College of Optometry), and Ohio State University. NSU received a \$387,764 grant from the National Eye Institute for the project. Dr. Coulter completed this project with seven other NSU College of Optometry faculty members:

- Annette Bade, O.D.
- Jackie Rodena, O.D.
- Mary Bartuccio, O.D.
- Yin Tea, O.D.
- Deborah Amster, O.D.
- Greg Fecho, O.D.
- Tanya Mahaphon, O.D.

"This study has sparked a lot of interest because people are concerned about conditions that can impact learning," Coulter said.

Traditionally, the majority of eye care professionals treated children diagnosed with convergence insufficiency using some form of home-based therapy. This study concludes that office-based treatment by a trained therapist along with at-home reinforcement is more effective. The research, reported in the October 13, 2008, issue of *Archives*



of *Ophthalmology*, was funded by the National Eye Institute, which is part of the National Institutes of Health.

The 12-week CITT study found that approximately 75 percent of those who received in-office therapy by a trained therapist plus at-home treatment reported fewer and less severe symptoms related to reading and other near work.

The CITT, which included 221 children ages 9 to 17, is the first to compare three forms of vision therapy

and a placebo therapy option. The first therapy was the current treatment standard known as home-based pencil push-up therapy—an exercise in which patients visually followed a small letter on a pencil as they moved the pencil closer to the bridge of their nose. The goal was to keep the letter clear and single and to stop if it appeared double. The second group used home-based pencil push-ups with additional computer vision therapy. The third attended weekly hour-long sessions of office-based vision therapy with a trained therapist and performed at-home reinforcement exercises. The last group was given placebo vision activities designed to simulate office-based therapy.

After 12 weeks of treatment, nearly 75 percent of children who were given the office-based vision therapy along with at-home reinforcement achieved normal vision or had significantly fewer symptoms of convergence insufficiency. Only 43 percent of patients who completed home-based therapy alone showed similar results, as did 33 percent of patients who used home-based pencil push-ups plus computer therapy and 35 percent of patients given a placebo office-based therapy.

A 12-month follow-up study is being conducted to examine the long-term effects of these convergence insufficiency treatments. Further information about the reported trial, NCT 00338611, can be found at <http://www.clinicaltrials.gov>.

Research and Scholarship

Submitted by Josephine Shallo-Hoffmann, Ph.D., FFAO, Professor of Optometry and Chair of the Department of Research and Graduate Studies

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Grants

Coulter RA. U-10 Grant: Convergence Insufficiency Treatment Trial Year 04, funded by the National Eye Institute. Year 04: \$19,028. Total: \$377,852.

Jiang B. NSU-HPD Research Grant: Accommodative Responses Under Different Visual Field and Color Conditions. \$2,500.

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Janoff AM. The Safety of Corneal Reshaping Contact Lenses: A Retrospective Multicenter Study. \$245.

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Florida Optometric Association Update

By Barry J. Frauens, O.D., FAAO, Assistant Professor of Optometry and Chief of Primary Care Service
The Eye Care Institute at North Miami Beach

In July 2008, the new Florida Optometric Association (FOA) Board of Trustees was elected to office by the membership.

After a productive year as president and many years of loyal service, Dr. William D. Tanke of Palm Bay assumed the role of chairman of the board.

The leadership of the Florida Optometric Association, especially Dr. Wiles, would like to acknowledge and thank the strong relationship NSU has enjoyed with the FOA, especially the student involvement. This past year has seen numerous students become actively involved in volunteering at the annual convention as well as on several political campaigns. Approximately 15 students also made the trip to Tallahassee for the annual legislative luncheon held every March. The students are the future of our

profession, and it is so important to engage them very early on in their training. It is refreshing and encouraging to see such enthusiasm.

Preparations are being made for the annual convention that will be held July 23-26, 2009, at the newly renovated Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami Beach. Please try to make arrangements to attend. Over 20 hours of education will be offered in addition to an expansive exhibit hall and numerous social events all within an amazing property.

As I conclude my second year as trustee, the learning curve has been exponential. The leadership is dedicated to serving the membership, and I would encourage all who feel they have something to contribute to become involved. Your service will help better our profession for all of us, including our students and the patients we serve.

THE CURRENT LEADERSHIP CONSISTS OF:

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Dr. R. Andrew Wiles of St. Augustine

President Elect

Dr. Emilio H. Balius of Coral Gables

Vice President

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Secretary-Treasurer

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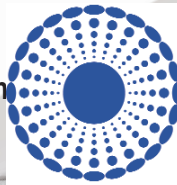
Josephine Shallo-Hoffmann, Ph.D., professor and chair of research and graduate study programs

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It's Time to Send Us Your News!

As *The Visionary* continues to evolve and grow, our goal is to make it a truly informative publication that details the accomplishments of our alumni, faculty, students, and staff.

We are in the process of compiling information for the spring 2010 issue of *The Visionary* and invite you to submit suitable news and photos.

Please keep us apprised if you have

- purchased a practice
- been promoted or accepted a new professional position
- had a major article or book published
- been appointed to a local, state, or national committee or board of directors
- conducted noteworthy research
- received any special awards or recognition
- gotten married or had a baby

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.

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2009 Calendar of Events

May 15-17, 2009

13th Annual Clinical Eye Care Conference and Alumni Reunion

May 21, 2009

Senior Luncheon

May 23, 2009

Senior Awards Dinner/Dance–Westin Diplomat, Hollywood Beach, Florida

May 24, 2009

Graduation–Bank Atlantic Center, Sunrise, Florida

June 13-14, 2009

Florida Board of Optometry Examination Review Course

June 26, 2009

Alumni Reception–American Optometric Association, Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center, Washington, D.C.

July 24, 2009

Alumni Reception–Florida Optometric Association, Fontainebleau Hotel, Miami Beach, Florida

August 22-23, 2009

Glaucoma Update 2009 and Neuro-Optometry Program

Fall 2009

100-Hour Therapeutic Pharmaceutical Agents Certification Course–10-Day Compressed Course, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

October 17-18, 2009

Anterior Segment Program and Contact Lens Program

November 13, 2009

Alumni Reception–American Academy of Optometry, Orlando World Center Marriott, Orlando, Florida