



NFOS NEWS

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NOVEMBER 2009

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF OPTICIANRY SCHOOLS

A Word from our President

Special points of interest:

- *President's Message*
- *In Memoriam*
- *Educator of the Year*

NFOS Presidents Report November 2009 for Newsletter

Hi Everybody:

I hope your semester is going well. I was very pleased with our meeting in Cincinnati. I have heard many compliments on the courses presented by NFOS faculty. I really appreciate everyone's help in making the Skills Challenge a success. We reached a couple of conclusions during our meeting. The first was that being a part of the ABO-NCLE Education Meeting provided great exposure for the NFOS to all Opticianry organizations. It also greatly reduced our meeting costs compared to NYC. To that end, we have decided to move the College Bowl to the ABO-NCLE Education Meeting for 2010. The meeting will be held September 16-19th in Cincinnati.

We then considered locations for our spring meeting. Our choice was beautiful Buffalo NY with Erie Community College serving as our host. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 21-23, 2010. Several members have expressed a desire to return holding one meeting per year at sites not connected to a major conference. It will give us an opportunity to complete some committee work and conduct important business. We will hold elections at the May meeting. As Chair of the nominating committee, please e-mail me if you are interested in serving as an officer.

I hope you have a happy holiday season and will look forward to seeing you in Buffalo. Please contact me bunderwood@hccfl.edu if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Bill

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In Memoriam

Victor Baratto, Retired Erie Community College professor

Victor Baratto, age 74, of Buffalo, NY died Wednesday, November 11, 2009.



A Buffalo native, Mr. Baratto studied to be an optician at Erie County Technical Institute. He served stateside in the Army as an optician for a couple years before returning to school to earn bachelor's and master's degrees.

As a licensed optician, he began teaching optical technology at Erie Community College in the early 1970s. Mr. Baratto retired in the late 1990's. During his 24 year tenure at ECC he touched the lives of many Ophthalmic Dispensing students.

Ed Rauch's Passing



The Ophthalmic Dispensing Profession in New York State has lost a giant. Ed Rauch, one of the founders of the City Tech program passed away in late September. To honor Ed and his many contributions to the field, a Scholarship Fund has been set up.

If you would like to contribute to the program Ed devoted himself to, please send a donation to: New York City College of Technology. Checks should be made to: NYCCT Foundation with a memo: Edward Rauch Scholarship Fund.

Ed Rauch with Chair Bob Russo at last spring's 40th Anniversary Celebration.

NFOS SCHOOL NEWS

Raritan Valley Community College/Brian Thomas

RVCC received a grant to purchase a new Essilor Kappa pattern less edger for their Optical Clinic. They will also be adding a corneal topographer this year to their contact lens program. A second year student, Abdallah Islam, was one of the top five winners of the Transition scholarship. Abdallah had a fabulous experience at the ABO/NCLE conference in Cincinnati.

Erie Community College/ John Godert

ECC Distinguished Alumni Award is presented to Ophthalmic Dispensing graduate Art Salas

Art Salas graduated from the Ophthalmic Dispensing Program at ECC in 1977. He worked at Opti –Vision in Syracuse, NY, Sterling Optical in Olean, NY and Cole National Optical (Sears Optical) in Buffalo, NY before heading out west. He attended the University of Arizona from 1985 – 1989 earning a Business Administration Degree while working at Santa Cruz Optical in Tucson.

In 1989, Art began working at Costco Wholesale and has been instrumental in bringing Costco's optical operation from the ground level it was at that point to the award winning business it is today. Currently, Art holds the title of Assistant Vice President for Costco Optical & Hearing Aids. Costco Optical is the 4th largest optical company in the U.S. with over \$500 million in sales while Costco Hearing Aids is the 6th largest retailer in the world with over \$100 million in sales – both under Art's control. He oversees the entire optical division which includes 700 employees, 392 locations and two state of the art laboratories. Costco Optical has been the recipient of the J.D. Powers and Associates Award as Best U.S. Optical Company three times in a row.

As an executive with Costco, Art has been involved in many of the charitable organizations that Costco works with. The United Way and Children's Miracle Network are just two of the many organizations that benefit from the millions of dollars donated annually by Costco.

Art and his wife, Terri, are strong supporters of the arts in the Seattle area. Art is also putting 3 needy students through college – one in Argentina and two in the U.S.

Professor Russo receives The National Federation of Opticianry Schools “2009 Educator of the Year Award”



Mr. Bill Underwood, President and Professor Robert J. Russo

At the ABO-NCLE National Educational Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio on September 10, 2009, Professor Robert J. Russo, chair of City Tech's Department of Vision Care Technology since 2003, received the Dennis Tilley – Educator of the Year Award. The award was presented by the National Federation of Opticianry Schools and is presented to a faculty member in recognition of his/her distinguished service to opticianry education. In addition, a National Federation of Opticianry Schools award plaque will be shipped to the college for one year to be displayed and show all the previous winners from the past years.

NFOS Fall Meeting Highlights September 10-12, 2009

Once again our Fall meeting in Cincinnati was a tremendous experience for students and faculty. The ABO-NCLE Education Conference continues to be a great venue for NFOS members to showcase optical skills. This year's addition of the Transitions 10 minute skills challenge was highly popular. The interaction among challengers and NFOS faculty was exciting.



NFOS Fall Meeting Highlights September 10-12, 2009



COA update Fall 2009

This past April the Commission held its semi-annual meeting in Durham, North Carolina. Among the items accomplished at the meeting:

Reaffirmation of accreditation was granted to:

The Ophthalmic Science program at Camden County College in Blackwood, NJ.

The Vision Care Technology program at Tyler Junior College in Tyler, TX.

The Ophthalmic Dispensing Program at TCI College of Technology, in New York City, NY.

The Commissioners congratulate the program directors and faculty on their excellent programs.

The ***Essentials*** for the Laboratory Certificate programs was reviewed and proposed changes are now available for comment by any interested parties. If you would like to review the proposed changes to this document, please contact me at Ellen@COAccreditation.com or at the address below.

A change was made to the ***Essentials*** for the Opticianry degree program to bring this document into compliance with a requirement of CHEA (Council for Higher Education Accreditation). This change requires that the accredited programs publish program outcomes. By September 21 all programs must report to the COA on how they are implementing this requirement.

The Commissioners reviewed the COA mission statement, and adopted the following: “The mission of the COA is to foster excellence in opticianry education by setting standards, assessing educational effectiveness, and identifying those academic programs that meet the standards, in order to aid programs to produce competent graduates who will provide professional services to the public.” The Commissioners will be reviewing the goals and objectives at the fall meeting.

This fall there will be one reaffirmation of accreditation visit and one initial accreditation visit. During 2010 there will be four reaffirmation of accreditation visits.

The Commission continues with its application for recognition by CHEA (Council for Higher Education Accreditation). CHEA is now the organization of choice for accrediting agencies that do not need recognition by the US Department of Education for federal funding. Information about CHEA, including those regional and programmatic accrediting agencies that it recognizes, is available at <http://CHEA.org>. On November 21

COA update Fall 2009 (continued)

Jayne Weinberger (Commission Chair) and I will be present before the CHEA Committee on Recognition to discuss the Commission's petition for recognition. In late December the Commission will be notified of the results of the hearing.

The Commission's website has been updated. Please visit the website at <http://COAccreditation.com>. All the same information is there, but the look is a little more streamlined.

ABO/NCLE donated booth space to the Commission at their convention in Cincinnati, and I was there with information about the Commission for anyone with questions. The Commission raised \$860 in donations at the convention. Mike Goggin won a drawing for a \$250 gift certificate to Best Buy; the drawing was from the names of those who donated at least \$50 to the Commission at the convention.

The Commission depends on donations for about 1/3 of its annual budget. Donations to the Commission are deductible on your tax return as charitable donations. Donations by check are always welcome; the Commission also now takes credit card donations through Pay Pal from the website. The Papal link for donations is https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=5334897

Respectfully submitted,
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PRESS RELEASE

Florence, Indiana; November 1, 2009

On October 24, 2009, the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation (COA) met in Durham, NC for the semi-annual business meeting.

The Commissioners reaffirmed the accreditation of the Miami-Dade College's Vision Care Technology/Opticianry program in Miami, FL, and of the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute's Vision Care Technology degree program and Optical Laboratory Technology certificate program in Albuquerque, NM.

During this meeting the Commissioners approved changes to the Degree *Essentials*, the Certificate *Essentials*, the Commission's Policies & Procedures, and the Accreditation Guide. The updated documents are all available on the Commission's website. The *Essentials* is the document containing all of the standards that a program must meet in order to be accredited by the COA.

At this business meeting the Commission's decision-making body was observed by a representative of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA, <http://CHEA.org>). The CHEA Board of Directors has determined that the COA is eligible for recognition review by CHEA, a national advocate and institutional voice for self-regulation of academic quality through accreditation.

The Commission on Opticianry Accreditation (COA) accredits two-year opticianry degree programs and one-year ophthalmic laboratory technology certificate programs. There are ten members appointed by the NAO, OAA, and NFOS, plus two public members.

The Commission is a not-for-profit charity under the IRS rules for 501(c)(3) corporations. Donations to the COA are tax deductible. Donations may be made through the website, <http://COAccreditation.com>. Any questions about the Commission may be directed to the Director, Ellen Stoner, Ellen@COAccreditation.com.

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contributions to COA are tax deductible

Pay Pal link to contribute to the Commission:

https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=5334897

Transitions Optical, Inc. is now accepting applications for its 2010 Students of Vision Scholarship!



This year's program asks students to create projects in any format that demonstrate a **Focus on Children's Vision**. Projects can include, but are not limited to, research papers, presentations, videos, posters or community outreach. We encourage your students to get creative as they explore their role in care for patients 18 years old and under.

Projects will be judged in three categories: Multi-media, Activity/Event, Other. Category winners will receive \$1,000; additional winners will receive \$500. The Top Five Opticianry students will win a trip to ABO-NCLE Conference to be featured in the poster session. Encourage your students to apply today!

All students currently enrolled in your program are eligible to apply. Projects should be submitted to education@transitions.com or via mail to Students of Vision Scholarship c/o Euro RSCG Worldwide PR, 4 PPG Place, 2nd Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. **Applications must be postmarked by March 10**, please include 1) Name 2) Phone Number 3) e-mail 4) Mailing Address 5) School 6) Category Being Entered.

Scholarships will be judged by a panel of eyecare and optometry experts and winners will be announced by April 15.

Go to www.HealthySightForLife.org for more information.



Congratulation to the winners of the 2009 Transitions Students of Vision Scholarship

Top Winners/ABO-NCLE Conference Attendees:

- First place: **The Optician's Role in Healthy Sight Counseling Throughout a Lifetime**, Ellen Gelsen, Hillsborough Community College
- Second place: **Healthy Sight Counseling**, Jelena Cakic, Cuyahoga Community College
- Third place: **Eyes and Computers**, Kate Jacobs, Camden County College
- Fourth place: **There's More to an Eye Exam than Vision Correction**, Abdallah Yeslam, Raritan Valley Community College
- Fifth place: **Bilingual Healthy Sight Counseling**, Carole LoVerso, Erie Community College



Pictured above: (L to R) Carole, Ellen, Jelena, Abdallah, Kate

2009 NFOS Alumni Reunion



Happy and Healthy Holidays to our NFOS Families and Friends!