



ASSOCIATION  
OF OPTOMETRIC  
CONTACT LENS  
EDUCATORS

November 2008  
Newsletter #29

## Newsletter Highlights

*AOCLE Officers*

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*2008 AOCLE Workshop Summary*

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*Awards*

### NECO Workshop Summary

The host of the 2008 AOCLE Workshop was the New England College of Optometry. This year's topic was **mentoring**: how can we effectively mentor younger faculty and benefit from mentoring ourselves?

### 2009 AOCLE Workshop

The date of the next AOCLE Workshop has been set for June 4-7, 2009. It will be hosted by University of Houston College of Optometry.

### Campus News

Lots and lots of school news.

### Awards:

Find out who received the George Mertz travel awards, the Lester Janoff award, and the AOCLE Faculty Development Grant

### Trivia

Play the first annual AOCLE Meeting Trivia Challenge!

### Faculty Development Grant

Want to apply for the Faculty Development Grant? Apply by writing to the Chair for more information...application deadline is March 1, 2009 for the 2009-10 academic year.

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### Message from the Chair

After so many years asking the chair for a message for the newsletter, I find myself humbled to be asked the same task. It has been a busy few months since the 2008 workshop in Boston in June. First and foremost, I would like to extend a huge “thank you” to the NECO folks for a wonderful workshop and their wonderful hospitality. A special thanks to **Ron, Marjorie and Jason** for a wonderful and educational workshop. I am confident that each and everyone attending took away a valuable lesson on mentorship as explored by the keynote speaker, Dr. **John Littlefield**.

Since June, the AOCLE has been hard at work on several projects. First, guidelines have been established for sampling of contact lens care products. The guidelines are available on the AOCLE website and all the schools are encouraged to use them as a template in establishing their own and bringing awareness to this issue with our students and patients.

Secondly, the productive 2007 workshop in Berkeley had as its theme “case report writing”. This endeavor proved to be very fruitful for AOCLE and for the visibility of the organization. I would like to thank **Michael Harris** for providing a summary of the outcomes of that workshop which appeared in the September issue of *Contact Lens Spectrum*.

Thirdly, the second edition of the **AOCLE Clinical CL Pocket Guide** is finally in print! We are very excited to bring this valuable teaching tool to all 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students, CL residents, and faculty at each of the schools/colleges. I would like to acknowledge the valuable collaboration of our industry sponsors in ensuring the accuracy of the information provided. Their assistance with this project has been tremendously valuable and appreciated and has added to the long history of continued collaboration that AOCLE has shared with industry over the past 30 years. Once the Pocket Guide is in use for several months, we will be following up with a survey to evaluate its effectiveness and improvements for the future.

So for now I would like to wish everyone a happy and healthy upcoming holiday season and I look forward to future projects to continue to move the AOCLE forward.

**Etty Bitton**  
Chair, AOCLE

2008 AOCLE Workshop Summary



The 2008 AOCLE Workshop, hosted at NECO by AOCLE Chair **Ron Watanabe**, **Marjorie Rah**, and **Jason Chin**, was a rousing success. The theme of the workshop was Mentorship, which was presented in various ways. Although some members were temporarily thwarted in their efforts to get to Boston due to the weather, most made it in on time to attend the Thursday night business meeting. (See business meeting notes near the end of newsletter.)



Friday morning the group was bussed to NECO at 424 Beacon Street where we were welcomed by President **Elizabeth Chen**. It must be noted that this building is absolutely stunning in its architecture and beautiful craftsmanship (see photo to the left).

After the president’s welcome, **Dr. Paul White** gave a historical overview of optometry in the U.S. and changes in the contact lens industry throughout the years. Paul is a founding member of AOCLE and shared some great insight into the profession. **Dr. Cliff Scott** followed with a discussion of “Future Trends” in eyecare, highlighting changes in technology and how they impact clinical teaching.



In keeping with the mentoring theme of the workshop, **Joel Silbert** and **Harue Marsden** hosted a spirited “Point-Counterpoint: Becoming an AAO Diplomate” session. The “point” made was that the diplomate process can be an important means of personal development in which one is closely mentored by someone who has gone through the process. Becoming a Diplomate can also have the added benefit of helping with academic advancement. For more information, please refer to the AAO website at

<http://www.aaopt.org/section/cl/diplomates/index.asp> and follow the Traditional or Refractive Technology links.



Over the course of two days, **Dr. John Littlefield** guided us through three sessions on mentoring, specifically, “How Should We Guide the Careers of Optometry Educators?” Dr. Littlefield is the director of the Academic Center for Excellence in Teaching at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. During the first session, AOCLE members were asked to look back and think about people who mentored us, and whether that mentoring (or faculty orientation and development) was a formal or informal relationship. During the second session, we were asked if optometry should be concerned about faculty orientation and development. Finally, we were asked to think about the barriers that inhibit creating a supportive faculty development environment.

An important insight that came out of these sessions was that, while some schools have strong programs for orienting new optometric faculty members to academia, most programs are



more informal than formal. For instance, while there are structured programs to address a new faculty member's introduction to an academic institution, in some schools new faculty are left to struggle on their own, and according to one AOCLE member, "...not even know who to contact to get keys." **Latricia Pack** shared that at Northeastern State University there is a contact list that new faculty are given to address these issues, such as who to contact for IT problems, who to contact for AV help, etc.



More importantly, few clinical programs are as structured as research programs where mentoring is a made priority to ensure that a faculty

member is on track for tenure. Often it seems clinical faculty are left to flounder, putting their time and energy into efforts that will not help toward academic advancement, or are overloaded as a new faculty member to fill holes in the program. It became clear as the workshop went on that, generally, clinical faculty are not mentored in a systematic way, and that for many, this leads to frustration and dropping out of academia (often after only a few years, as cited in **Sally Dillehay's** research.) There appears to be a need to make mentoring a core value and to develop an action plan for formal optometric clinical faculty orientation and development, and an AOCLE committee may be formed to address this issue by the next workshop.

Later we had a tour of the New England Eye Commonwealth clinic (NEEC), a newer facility that houses several different professional clinics, which impressed Dr. Littlefield, who thinks that health care will become more integrated as time goes on, especially with the expanding use of electronic medical records.



After the NEEC tour we went on a **DUCK Tour of Boston**. The DUCKs are authentic World War II amphibious landing vehicles, renovated for sightseeing. On Friday evening, two DUCKs were commandeered to take AOCLE members to view such sights as the State House, Bunker Hill, Boston Common, Copley Square, Quincy

Market and other significant sites. The tour directors, or ConDUCKtors (what else?), narrated the tour, giving us many facts about Boston and her heralded history. Quack Quack! (Pizza, pizza!)



At the end of the tour we got to splash in the Charles River and experience a different perspective of the Boston skyline. It was important to pay attention; there was a pop quiz later during the workshop. At the end of the evening, we had dinner at the **Union Oyster House**, *the oldest restaurant in continuous service in the US*.



Saturday night found the AOCLE gathered at the **Marriot Boston Long Warf** for dinner. Always the educator, at the end of the evening **Ron Watanabe** hosted a trivia contest covering Boston history (see DUCK Tour, above), the Celtics, the Red Sox, the Patriots and that hockey team. Midwesterner **Neil Pence** TORE UP the Celtics category, clearly dominating the field and winning coveted Boston Red Sox baseball caps for his team.



Toward the end of the workshop, new Chair **Etty Bitton** put into words the feeling that most of us have for the AOCLE. In essence, the peer to peer mentoring that most of us experience during the annual workshops is invaluable, even therapeutic for most of us as we try to figure out how to become better contact lens educators and eventually mentors to those who follow us.

### First Annual AOCLE Meeting Trivia Challenge

#### Questions:

1. During the trivia contest, **Mark André** correctly answered the question regarding Ben Franklin's quote about beer. What is that quote?

2. Which AOCLE member has been quoted saying: "You can never have enough beer?"
3. What is the name of "the hockey team?"
4. Patriots quarterback Tom Brady is not considered to be "all that" outside of New England.
5. What is the oldest restaurant in continuous service in the US?

#### Answers:

1. "Beer is proof that God loves us and wants us to be happy."
2. We won't say who, but her initials are JS.
3. Boston Bruins
4. Okay, this is not really a question, more like a statement. Just sayin'.
5. Haven't you been paying attention???

We also want to thank our corporate sponsors who attended the meeting and provided support for the event.

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### Business Meeting Highlights

#### *Mertz Travel Award*

The Mertz Travel Award is a grant provided to a young contact lens educator to attend the AOCLE meeting as an “extra” person from a school. This year’s Mertz award recipients were **Nicky Lai** (TOSU), **Eunice Myung Lee** (SCCO) and **Mika Moy** (UCB). Congratulations!

#### *Dr. Lester Janoff Award*

An award in memory of Dr. Lester Janoff has been established to recognize an educator for excellence in publishing papers on contact lens topics. The first ever recipient of this new award was **Gina Sorbara** (Waterloo). Gina received a plaque and \$1,000 award.



#### *AOCLE Faculty Development Grants*

This year, two awards were given: one to **Etty Bitton** (Montreal) for travel support to the BCLA meeting to present work from her sabbatical; and the other to **Jan Jurkus** (ICO) for her sabbatical expenses in Scotland and Australia.

### 2009 AOCLE Workshop

The next AOCLE meeting will be at the University of Houston College of Optometry, June 4-7. Mark your calendars for what will surely be another memorable event.

### Campus News

#### **Montreal**

The Montreal school hosted VISION 2008 in July, a symposium attracting over 1200 attendees from all over the world on low vision and rehabilitative services. There was huge media coverage and optometry gained some recognition as a valuable player in the field of low vision and rehabilitation.

Part of the clinic (the optical services, reception area, and waiting room) underwent a major renovation this summer due to a generous

contribution from IRIS, the second largest optometric group in Canada. The updated modern design and facilities will improve patient flow and efficiency of the patient reception area.

### **Indiana University**

The School of Optometry clinic is moving into its new building in December and should be open for business January 5, 2009.

### **InterAmerican University of Puerto Rico**

The college is searching for a new Dean. Our past dean, Dr. **Hector Santiago**, was appointed Dean of the new school of optometry at Midwestern University in Arizona. Dr. **Andres Pagan**, Dean of Academic Affairs, is acting as Interim Dean.

The Vision Care Institute recently inaugurated a satellite center at the Universidad de La Salle, Colombia. With this satellite center and the one at Inter American University, TVCI plans to train optometrists from Latin America and the Caribbean in the fitting and management of contact lenses and contact lens-related complications. Last August, J&J Latin America invited optometrists from Colombia, Venezuela, Mexico, Chile, Costa Rica, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Ecuador, Panama, and Puerto Rico to Jacksonville to prepare the modules that are going to be taught at these centers. Dr. **Manuel Conde-Seijo**, Patient Care and Contact Lens Services Director at Inter American University of Puerto Rico, was part of the faculty who met for three days at TVCI. The program developed would be very similar to the program TVCI has for 3rd and 4th year students of North American Schools.

### NECO

**Marjorie Rah** has left the college for a position at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary.

### NOVA

**Perla Najman**, OD was runner up in “The Biggest Loser” competition at Nova. Over a period of a few months she lost a significant amount of weight the old fashion way: diet and exercise. (What a concept!). She was interviewed on local television and written up in the local newspaper. In addition, Perla received a golden apple award from the graduating class of 2008 for the best CL preceptor. Nova is very proud of her recent accomplishments!

### PUCO

Congratulations to **Jennifer Smythe**, OD, on her selection as Dean of the College of Optometry.

### SCO

The college recently welcomed **Lewis Reich**, OD, PhD, into his new position as Vice President for Academic affairs. Dr. Reich served as Assistant Dean for Student Affairs at NOVA before coming to SCO. **John Mark Jackson** received an award for Teacher of the Year from the first-year class.

### Waterloo

The Centre for Contact Lens Research (CCLR) celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year, founded in 1988 under the stewardship of Professor **Desmond Fonn**.

The past 20 years has seen the CCLR grow from a staff of only 4 people to one of over 50, with numerous publications and presentations given annually at meetings all over the world. This year has been a busy one for CCLR faculty and students, with a number of them being

recognized for their contributions to contact lens research.

At this year’s BCLA meeting in Birmingham, UK, **Desmond Fonn** was awarded the BCLA’s highest honor, the BCLA Medal, which recognizes an individual’s outstanding achievement in the field of contact lens research.



At the same meeting the CCLR’s first Post-Doctoral Fellow, Dr. **Rachael Peterson**, gave the invited Irving Fatt Memorial Lecture, an award aimed at recognizing a significant contribution made by someone at the start of their career in contact lens research.

Two graduate students, **Nancy Keir** and **Sruthi Srinivasan**, were awarded their PhDs. Two other CCLR students also won awards this summer: **Lakshman Subbaraman** was awarded an AOF Ezell Fellowship for the 2nd year running by the American Academy of Optometry, and Summer student **Alex Hui** won a Rising Stars of Research Award from the University of British Columbia and a Beta Sigma Kappa Award for his work on drug delivery using contact lens materials.

Finally, Associate Director **Lyndon Jones** will be taking over as Chair of the Research Committee of the American Academy of Optometry in October 2008.

### Other News

#### Congratulations to:

*New AAO Fellows:*

Frederic Gagnon (Montreal)  
Dennis Pardo (Vistakon)  
Dave Sattler (Alcon)  
Patrick Samard (Montreal)

*New AAO CL Diplomate:*

Colleen Riley (Vistakon)

#### Upcoming Meetings:

Alcon Educators Meeting  
January 8-10, 2009

Vistakon Educators Meeting  
February 5-8, 2009

Ciba Educators Meeting  
March 12-15, 2009

BCLA Meeting  
May 28-31, 2009

#### Women of Vision Membership Drive

In celebration of its Fifth Anniversary in 2009, *Women of Vision* (WOV) is launching a massive membership drive. All optometrists, optometry students and interested individuals are invited to join. As part of the anniversary celebration, WOV has **waived dues**, effective Oct 2008, thanks to a grant from CibaVision.

**For a limited time...your membership is free.**  
Join today by visiting [www.wovonline.org](http://www.wovonline.org)