

# NFOS SCHOOL NEWS

NOV 2015

## NATIONAL FEDERATION OF OPTICIANRY SCHOOLS

### A Word from our President

Once again, OptiCon in Nashville TN was a huge success and we had a great representation from many of the NFOS schools. I hope in the future that more schools will plan to attend this important event. It was also nice to welcome Ms. Lilianna Rodriguez, new program director from Miami Dade. As in the past, the ABO/NCLE and member organizations provided a great venue for education, organizational business meetings and a chance for the NFOS faculty to showcase their talents. It is my understanding that the NFOS courses were very well attended.

Special points of interest:

- *President's Message*
- *Educator of the Year*
- *Friends of NFOS*

The pre-convention activities started on Wednesday, with the Opticianry Summit Collaboration. As many of you are aware, opticianry is trying to find common ground where all the organizations can work together for the advancement of opticianry. At the meeting on September 3, twenty two optician leaders participated in the forum. Representing the NFOS were Randy Smith, Executive Manager of the NFOS and myself. In summary, participants identified initiatives for potential alignment and collaboration. These issues involved the following: mobility of opticians from state to state, formal education access to opticians in unlicensed states via college programs and facilitating continued regular communication between all organizations. Regarding formal education, I presented to members of the collaboration committee that the NFOS is committed to helping unlicensed states start college degree programs for opticians. Presently, we have a number of states that are looking into starting new degree programs. These states include, California, Iowa, Kentucky and Ohio. Other interested states include Montana, Alaska and New Hampshire and Massachusetts. A new program at Central New Mexico Community College in Albuquerque, NM started in Fall, 2015.

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On Thursday, September 24, the NFOS had its business meeting in Nashville. At the meeting, I gave a brief update regarding the Ophthalmic Essentials book by Dr. Roy Ferguson. Hopefully, this manual will be updated by NFOS faculty and edited by Roy and an NFOS subcommittee. It is a great opportunity for NFOS educators to add new educational material for our students in preparation for their ABO/NCLE national certification examinations. As with many of our fall meetings, preparation for workshops, lectures and the NFOS college bowl were the main topic items.

This year our NFOS College Bowl attendance had a huge turnout. The NFOS College Bowl was chaired by Kimberly Strickler from New York City College of Technology and a new NFOS College Bowl format was developed by Randy Smith. This year, Ashley Ramos from Roane State Community College was our college bowl winner. I want to congratulate Mike Goggin and his school for a job well done. In fact, all the school contestants were just terrific and represented their prospective programs with great pride. We should all be proud of all our student participants. As many of you are aware, Kimberly got very sick with an internal infection, but managed to present her lecture at the convention but had to leave early. She was out on medical leave for five weeks but returned during the first week in November. I want to thank everyone for sending best wishes while she recovered. She was missed at the college during that time.

Prior to the start of the NFOS College Bowl, I presented the Dennis Tilley – “Educator of the Year Award” to Patrick Goughary, Camden Community College. Pat has committed himself to promoting formal opticianry education for over thirty years and the award was well deserved and long overdue. Congratulations to Pat for this prestigious honor. I would also like to thank the committee consisting of Lynn Coffman, past recipient, Janet Acara and Daniel Banks.

In closing, I want to wish everyone a happy and joyous holiday season and a healthy new year. I hope to see everyone in San Antonio, TX in January 2016.

Best,

Bob Russo  
President, NFOS



**Hillsborough Community College** celebrated 40 years of the Opticianry program.

Guests and speakers included;

**Distinguished Opticianry Alumna** Janet Cruz-Rifkin  
Florida State Representative.

**Honored Guest** April Lufri Mrs. World 2012-13 April continues to raise awareness for Retinitis Pigmentosa to hopefully find a cure.

**Surprise Guest Performance** "Cupid" who sang the Cupid Shuffle as we danced the night away.

The fun weekend included tours of the program and a picnic sponsored by the Association of Professional Scholastic Opticians-APSO





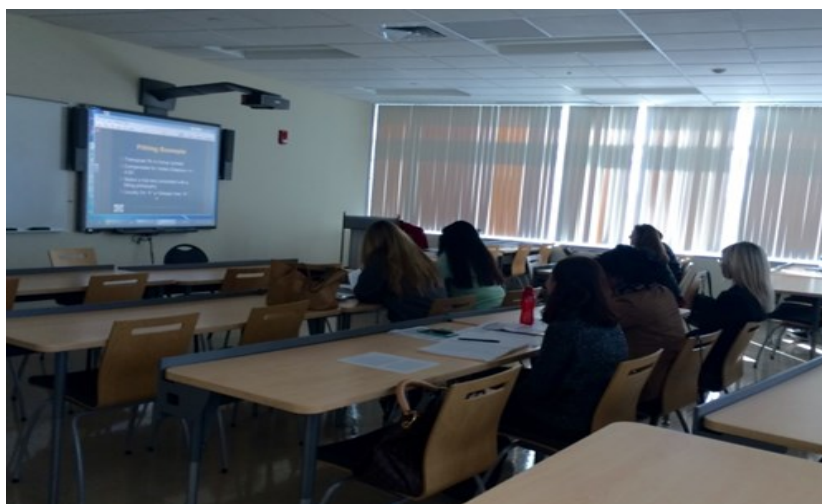
Maryann Santos

Rebecca Soto

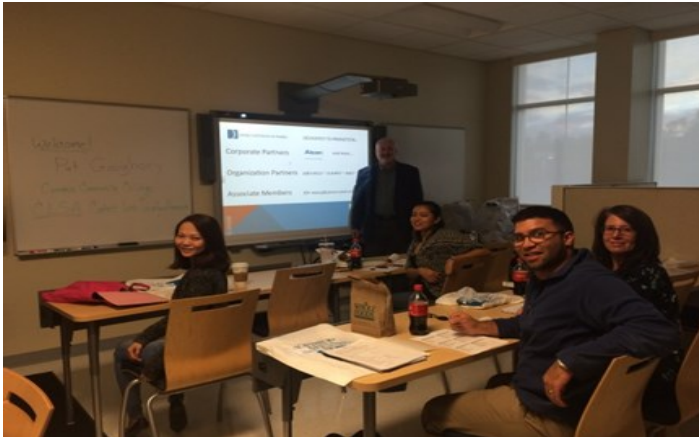
Linda Conlin







Besides having first and second year students for the first time (they are doing terrific), Goodwin College of East Hartford, CT is excited to share that we had a wonderful turnout for our first ABO/NCLE Review class that was held on Sunday, October 18, 2015. We had three weeks to pull it together and had a good response. In lieu of \$\$\$, guests were asked to bring non-perishable food items or an unwrapped toy. We collected over 125 pounds of food and a bunch of great toys. With a generous grant from our friends at the Optician's Association of America (OAA), we were able to provide meals for our attendees (some traveled from out of state) for this all-day event



This fall, we were grateful for the opportunity to sign-up for the Contact Lens Society of America 2015 Opticianry Schools Program sponsored by Alcon. Since 2013, CLSA has partnered with industry to offer the CLSA Opticianry School Education Program.

**Patrick Goughary** of Camden Community College came up to lecture and teach a hands-on Contact Lens program. We all learned a lot from a smart, humble and top-notch optical educator. In addition, before class that evening, we toured Goodwin College's Community Garden with Patrick. Not only did we learn about the art of fitting contact lenses, we are more knowledgeable of food gardening and horticultural from a Master Gardener.

The Ophthalmic Science program at Goodwin team: Maryann Santos, Program Director and Rebecca Soto, FT faculty, and Linda Conlin Adjunct faculty. Please help us spread the word of what an optician is by visiting and sharing this website: [www.WhatsAnOptician.com](http://www.WhatsAnOptician.com). Maybe we'll get some guest bloggers...

## News from Seattle Central College

Lori Fender



We have lots of exciting things to announce. First off, Matthew Maddox, student from the SCC Opticianry Program represented Seattle Central College in the 2015 NFOS College Bowl Competition in Nashville. He returned to Seattle with a great experience and lasting connections. Thank you Matthew for participating!

The SCC Opticianry Program is almost finished with the first quarter of its new hybrid program model where students take most of their lecture/theory classes online and come in for longer blocks of time for their lab instruction. So far, it has been great!

To better serve students and to build a lasting and strong program, we now have two program, co-directors, Lynn Coffman and Christiaan van Vliet.

Great things are to come!

The student organization, Scholastic Opticians Society is hosting a Comedy Night/Fundraiser to help students attend state and national educational conferences. We have local comedy radio personality, Jubal Flagg from Seattle's MOVIN 92.5FM radio station and Jet City Improv coming in to make us laugh our butts off! We are super excited about this event!

During the weekend of October 22-25, students and faculty volunteered for the Seattle/King County Clinic providing over 1,300 people in the community with much needed eye care. Custom prescription eyeglasses will be dispensed by volunteers in December. The clinic was a challenging and rewarding experience for all who participated. Thank you volunteers!

Instructor, Amy Sabella-Malone and former student, Janet Stixrud led a two week iCare mission in Jamaica as part of Great Shape humanitarian action. Their team of eyecare professionals gave over 3,200 eye exams, performed 36 cataracts surgeries, and dispensed over 2000 eyeglasses and gave sunglasses to every patient seen. The following week in Jamaica, Amy led yet another mission, See Better. Learn Better, a mission in partnership with The Rotary of Negril, Mission of Sight and Cornerstone Jamaica. This project helped approximately 500 young school children to get much needed eye care to ensure a better, brighter future.

We are looking forward to continuing with our mission to give the best and most comprehensive formal opticianry education we can provide and foster community involvement with current and past students.

## News from The Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI)

**Sheri O. Red Shirt**

Albuquerque, NM. – The Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute's (SIPI) Vision Care Technology Program has earned Re-accreditation from the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation (COA), for its program providing ophthalmic education for students. The Vision Care Technology Program is one of 21 other nationally accredited programs and the program met both the requirements of the Essentials of an Accredited Two-year Degree for Opticianry and the Essentials of an Accredited Certificate Program for Ophthalmic Laboratory Technology.

SIPI's Vision Care Technology Program focuses on educating American Indians and Alaskan Natives about vision care technologies and environmental safety, focusing on issues and topics current in the ophthalmic industry. The Vision Care Technology Program is one of 22 programs offered at SIPI. The Vision Care Technology program began in 1971 and is one of the original Associates Degree Programs at the college. The Vision Care Technology Program also has a robust, state of the art ophthalmic laboratory for both Ophthalmic Laboratory Technicians and Ophthalmic Assistants, including local, state, national and international recognition by the National Federation of Opticianry Schools (NFOS), the Opticians Association of New Mexico (OANM), and Seva Foundation for providing quality education to future eye care professionals.

Seven students of the program and instructor attended a Tribal Collaborative Employability Training to provide professional development for students. In October, students of the program attended a one day training session designed to encourage students to fine tune soft skills for future employment. Students learned valuable tactics of how best to network and seek opportunities related to volunteerism that may later assist in gaining employment (see photo).

Photo: Isleta Golf Course/ S. Red Shirt

Attendees in Photo- L to R: Nolan Pino (Laguna); Morgan Antonio (Acoma); Akia Alonzo (Ramah Navajo); Terrance Benally (Navajo); Cassandra Maestas (Navajo); Vinton Begay (Zuni/Navajo); Anthony Morgan (Acoma)

The program also hosted the 23rd Annual Education Conference for the Opticians Association of New Mexico during October. Student had an opportunity to attend both ABO and NCLE CEC lectures offered by Nationally Recognized educational speakers, Mike Gzik and Laurie Pierce. The conference was held on the SIPI campus with various local and state eye care professionals in attendance.





## Hillsborough Community College

Mary Seguiti

Hillsborough Community College Opticianry students and instructor Mary Seguiti went on an iCARE mission trip to Jamaica. We were able to help close to 1,500 Jamaicans in one week providing Eye exams, nursing, Rx glasses, sunglasses & readers.





## Erie Community College Contact Lens Laboratory Updates

Janet Acara

John Godert



ECC contact lens labs received equipment updates this Fall. Support was provided by Carl Perkins Grant Funding and New York State Education Department.





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### **Professor Robert Russo Receives National Academy of Opticianry 2015 Joseph Bruneni Memorial Education Achievement Award**



At the September 28 OptiCon National Convention held in Nashville, TN, Professor Robert Russo, chair of City Tech's Department of Vision Care Technology, received the National Academy of Opticianry "Joseph Bruneni Memorial Education Achievement Award. The award is presented to an individual in recognition for outstanding service to the field of opticianry education. As the current President of the National Federation of Opticianry Schools, Professor Russo has been working with national organizations and state societies in developing formal college associate degree programs around the country.

## **Patrick Goughary receives The National Federation of Opticianry Schools “2015 Educator of the Year Award”**



**Professor Robert J. Russo, NFOS President and Mr. Patrick Goughary**

At the OptiCon National Convention in Nashville, TN on September 26, 2015 Patrick Goughary of Camden Community College, 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.





## National Federation of Opticianry Schools

### NFOS COLLEGE BOWL CONTESTANTS - 2015 NASHVILLE, TN



(Centered) Ashley Ramos, Roane State with Danne Ventura, Essilor, Director of Professional Relations with NFOS College Bowl Contestants, Ben Fritzke, Erie Community College, Ziphion Jones, Hillsborough Community College, Matthew Maddox, Seattle Central Community College, Gisele Soares, Ben Franklyn, Yanet Yanes, Miami Dade, Danielle Caldwell, Ogeechee Technical College, Susan Li, New York City College of Technology, Andrea Wood, Baker College and Jennifer Naczkowski, Goodwin College



(Left to Right) Professor Russo, NFOS President, Ashley Ramos, Danne Ventura, Essilor, Director of Professional Relations, Mike Goggin Program Director

## Roane State Community College Student Ashley Ramos 2015 College Bowl Champion



From left to right Sally Stokes, faculty, Ashley Ramos, Mike Goggin, Program Director

Congratulations to Ashley Ramos and Roane State Community as 2015 College Bowl Champions. Ashley was presented with a \$500.00 award and College Bowl trophy which will be displayed at her school for the following year. The competition was held at the ABO-NCLE OptiCon Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. Sponsored by Essilor of America, the NFOS College Bowl is modeled on the television show “Jeopardy” and features questions in anatomy and physiology, ophthalmic dispensing, ophthalmic fabrication, contact lenses and optics.



The Commission on Opticianry Accreditation met at Opticon, in Nashville on September 28, 2015. The COA is pleased to announce that two programs have submitted applications for initial accreditation: Goodwin College in CT, and Wiregrass Georgia Technical College. Their on-sites are in 2016, as well as two programs for reaccreditation. This necessitates 4 NFOS educators to be part of an on-site team. Please let me know if you are interested and available for a spring, early summer and/or fall on-site. At the Nashville meeting, it was voted on to strictly enforce sending a 3-person team to all on-site visits. Lastly, there has been some discussion on the sample agenda for on-site visits. Mainly, is it important or necessary for the team to meet with administrators of the college on day 2, in the am. The team meets with administrators at the start and end of the on-site, so is this 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting necessary? Any comments can be sent to: [director@coaccreditation.com](mailto:director@coaccreditation.com).

Best wishes for the holidays to come! Debbie White, Director.

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## **Congratulations to Thomas Blair, Jr.**

Thomas Blair, Jr. of GA Piedmont Technical College was awarded 2015 Ophthalmic Optician of the Year by the SAO Society to Advance Opticianry

**Last but not Least...**

## **The General Jackson**



ABO-NCLE members spent a memorable evening of dining and entertainment aboard the General Jackson Showboat during 2015 Opticon in Nashville, TN



## Friends of the NFOS



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