



# NFOS SCHOOL NEWS

MAY 2017

## NATIONAL FEDERATION OF OPTICIANRY SCHOOLS

### Special points of interest:

- *President's Message*
- *HCC students give back*
- *City Tech College Bowl Victory*
- *Ogeechee Technical College*

### A Word from our President

Our spring meeting in Savannah, GA was a tremendous success with 24 NFOS faculty attending the OAA Leadership Conference. The OAA was very pleased to have us for a second year in a row. As I mentioned previously, the Leadership conference is a perfect venue for our spring meetings. This gives our organization a chance to meet with all the state societies and other organizational leaders. This year, the NFOS leadership consisting of Randy Smith, Kimberly Strickler, Bill Underwood and myself presented a workshop on "Opticianry as a Profession, Why formal education and How to start an Opticianry Program." The lecture was very well received and states like Iowa, Vermont, New Hampshire, Montana, Alaska, Ohio, Kentucky, South Carolina and Massachusetts are all interested in starting opticianry programs. The NFOS will continue to provide guidance to these interested states.

Prior to the start of our meeting, we all took a moment to remember our good friend and colleague, Mike Szczerbiak. Many attendees that have worked with Mike over the years, had a chance to share their memories of him. He will be missed from our NFOS family.

At next year's conference, I hope to add additional breakout sessions for NFOS members regarding curriculum development and other topics of interest to our members. At some future date, I will send out a survey of what our members would like to discuss at those meetings. This would give us an opportunity to discuss some ideas on teaching pedagogy. In the past many members have shown interest in how other schools present their subject material.

During my President's report, I announced that Richard McCoy was hired as the program director at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College. In addition, Kristi Green was hired as an Assistant Dean in the School of Health at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College. I want to wish Richard and Kristi all the success in their new positions. As President of the NFOS, I appointed Janet Acara from Erie Community College to the NCLE board. I also appointed Maryann Santos from Goodwin College as our appointee to the ABO. Our Vice President Kimberly Strickler, New York City College of Technology will be stepping down from her seat on the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation. Mary Seguiti from Hillsborough Community College will be our NFOS appointee to serve her first three-year term.

This year, the OptiCon Conference will be held in Disney World on October 6-8, 2017. As you are aware, the NFOS College Bowl is held at this event. This is the time of year where the NFOS gets to showcase their students. I hope to see many of you at the convention this year. As more information becomes available, I will send periodic emails out to keep everyone regarding the latest developments about the convention. Please keep in mind that we will need the name of your student representative by May 15, 2017. Kimberly Strickler will chair the NFOS College Bowl and Rebecca Soto from Goodwin College will be our student ambassador. She will contact the students during the summer and give them the latest updates on the convention. Rebecca has done a great job over the last couple of years.

I hope everyone enjoys the summer and if anyone has any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [rrusso9117@aol.com](mailto:rrusso9117@aol.com) or Randy Smith at [rsmith@nfos.org](mailto:rsmith@nfos.org)

Best,

Robert J. Russo  
President, NFOS

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## LATEST NEWS FROM GOODWIN COLLEGE

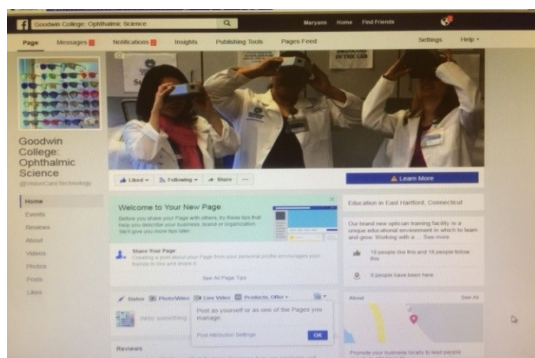
### Accreditation Update

The Commissioners voted to award to the Ophthalmic Science Program at Goodwin College accreditation for a period of six years, retroactive to the initial accreditation date. This accreditation classification will be in effect May 23, 2016 and expiring May 22, 2022

### Name Change

Ophthalmic Science is changing its name to Vision Care Technology effective in the fall of 2017. After in-depth discussions with our many stakeholders, including faculty, staff, current students, the general public and most critically prospective students, we believe changing the program name is appropriate.

Research of other accredited optical programs has revealed a trend away from that term toward more easily understood titles using the words “vision” and “care.” We believe that Vision Care Technology will engage, rather than confuse, and that the valuable time our faculty and admission officers currently spend correcting misunderstandings can more effectively be used to explain career benefits to prospective students.



### Did you know that the Ophthalmic Science program is on Facebook and LinkedIn?!?! WE SURE ARE!

Be sure to click the links below and LIKE our pages. By connecting with each other on social media, we can help promote opticianry.

Looking forward to seeing you on social media!

Facebook:

[Goodwin College: Ophthalmic Science](#)

LinkedIn:

[Goodwin College: Associates degree in Ophthalmic Science](#)



NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY  
**CITY TECH**

## City Tech Student Andrew Paul Wins First Prize in College Bowl



***Andrew Paul is flanked by Professor Kimberly Strickler (left), Chair, Vision Care Technology, Professor Robert J. Russo, President, NFOS, Randy Smith, NFOS Executive Director and Danne Ventura, Essilor of America (right)***

Andrew Paul, a graduate in vision care technology at City Tech, walked away with the \$500 first prize in the National Federation of Opticianry (NFOS) Schools College Bowl. This was the fourth time in six years that City Tech won the top prize, beating out students from colleges in, Florida, New Jersey, Georgia, New York, Tennessee, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Michigan, Washington State, New Mexico and North Carolina.

The competition was held on October 2, 2016 at the OptiCon Conference in Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, Florida, Sponsored by Essilor of America, the event is modeled on the television show “Jeopardy” and features questions in anatomy and physiology, ophthalmic dispensing, ophthalmic fabrication, contact lenses and optics.

# HCC Opticianry Students Giving Back



HCC Opticianry students, faculty and alumni joined a team of more than 70 (over two weeks) international humanitarians from all over the USA and Canada (and beyond) that traveled to Jamaica to be a part of the annual i-CARE vision project. The team helped up to 3,000 or more Jamaicans by providing them with full vision exams; fitting them for prescription glasses, readers, and/or sunglasses; generating referrals for advanced eye care surgery; and providing blood pressure and blood sugar screening. In the areas where we worked there are no public health optometrists and only two public health ophthalmologists for over 1/2 million people. This is why our services are so greatly needed. “I was honored that the students made this commitment to take time out of their busy lives to join this mission of love – helping those in great need”, said Mary Seguiti. Students work throughout the year making glasses for many charities.





TCI College of Technology announces the appointment of Yan Gao to the faculty of Ophthalmic Dispensing. Originally from Maracaibo, Venezuela, Yan graduated from Universidad Rafael Belloso Chacin with a bachelor's degree in Computer Engineering and a master's degree in Marketing Management. Upon the completion of his degrees, Yan taught marketing at the Instituto Universitario de Education Especializada. In 2010, Yan moved to New York City where he earned an Associate of Applied Science in Ophthalmic Dispensing. Today, in addition to his position at TCI, he is working as a full-time optician at Warby Parker in the Meatpacking District of Manhattan. Welcome, Yan!



Some facts about Highline College and opticians in Washington State:

Highline College has been the only school that provides classes for apprentice opticians in the state of Washington. The "program" is struggling to survive. We have been down to five or six students recently.

The state licensing agency is the Department of Health. It requires no formal education for apprentice opticians, just three years of on-the-job experience. Most apprentices who take the licensing exam after three years of experience don't pass the exam on the first try.

The state of Washington has over one thousand licensed opticians and over eight hundred registered apprentices. Less than one fifth of licensed opticians are members of the Opticians Association of Washington. A significant number of licensed opticians are within a few years of retirement.

The only full-time associate's degree two-year program for opticians in the state of Washington has been at Seattle Central College. They have usually had twenty or thirty new students per year but are currently scheduled to close due to lack of funding and students.

The "program" at Highline is an apprenticeship that is approved by the Department of Labor and Industries of Washington State just like apprenticeships for electricians and plumbers. As such, students pay half the regular tuition rate. But there is no agency that administers this group. It is managed by a committee of volunteers from the optical industry. There is no paid staff or budget. And with no requirement of classes for apprentices by the state, it is difficult to attract students.

Add all of the above elements and it is clear that the processes used to educate and credential opticians in Washington State are in trouble.

Submitted by: Dennis Prescott, LDO, HFOAA, Chairman- Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee



Roane State's first-year student Sarah Letsinger attended this year's OAA State Leadership Conference in Savannah Georgia, as one of their scholarship recipients. She completely enjoyed the entire experience and met many "great people"! She says she wants to go back again next year. Sarah will also be representing Roane State this October at Disney's Contemporary Resort, as our NFOS College Bowl competitor. Way to go Sarah!



Sarah Letsinger of Roane State Community College



Raritan Valley Community college went through a COA accreditation visit in late 2016. The report was quite favorable and we await the commission's final decision on our accreditation status. The New Jersey State Board of Ophthalmic Dispensers conducted their biennial examination at our facilities in October of 2016 as well. The college was recently voted the number one community college in New Jersey by Best Colleges.com



Erie Community College student David Dauoheuang and his wife are pictured above as Dave is awarded the Eyewear by ROI Scholarship.

Erie Community College Vision Care Technology faculty member Janet Acara was appointed to the NCLE Board as an NFOS Representative.

Program Department Head John Godert was elected as chair of the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation at the April 2nd semi annual commission meeting John had recently served as co-chair.

For more information on the COA please see <http://coaccreditation.com/>



OTC students have hosted speakers from Younger Optics, Essilor and Alcon so far this semester. We are looking forward to having BW Phillips from the Contact Lens Association and Cher Guy from Vision Ease next month. Also, we will be touring Essilor Optical Lab in Norcross Georgia and Robertson Optical Lab in Loganville.



Sarah Heisler represented OTC in the Quiz Bowl and at the Leadership meeting in Savannah and developing as a leader in our profession. Above is a picture of her at her new job, with John Furner the CEO of Sam' Clubs.

Pictured below: Graham Postel of Essilor presents at Ogeechee Technical Community College.





The Commission on Opticianry Accreditation (COA) met on April 2 at Vision Expo East.

The COA is excited to have Mary Seguiti from Hillsborough Community College to serve as an NFOS Commissioner appointee beginning July 1, 2017. She replaces Kimberly Strickler, whose 6 year term has come to an end. Doug Nunes has accepted OAA's appointment to serve, after having served on the Commission already for 6 years and a one-year period off.

One important item to mention to COA accredited programs – Program Directors have probably noticed COA's tougher stance on including a plan of action when any of the required statistics submitted fall short of 100%. Not including a plan of action in the Annual Report will most likely result in non-acceptance of the Annual Report, with a request for further information.

Commissioners voted to accept a By-Law change that states a Commissioner may be voted off of the COA after 3 missed meetings. As the COA only meets twice per year, attending meetings is obviously important.

A few minor changes to the Essentials have been approved to send out for third party comment. Program Directors will receive this via email in the near future.

The annual fee for accredited programs will increase by 3% (to \$1519.50) for the 2017/18 accreditation year. This is the end of a 5-year period involving a 3% increase each year. The Commissioners will vote on the 2018/19 annual fee at the fall 2017 meeting (at Opticon).

There are 2-3 on-sites that will take place fall 2017. The COA is always looking for new on-site evaluators. Simply enjoy the On-site Evaluator's Workshop found on our website, submit answers to the short quiz at the end, and you will be placed on the evaluator's list. If anyone already on the list is interested in helping with a fall 2017 visit – please contact me!

We are proud to announce that your very own John Godert was voted as the new COA Chair, beginning his term July 1, 2017.

Respectfully submitted ~ Debra White

# OAA 2017 Leadership Conference Perspectives

The OAA Leadership Conference, February 9-11 was a great success. The Student Leadership Grant Program sponsored by OAA, enabled opticianry students and apprentices to participate in many educational workshops and activities. Here are take away thoughts from attendees!

## **David Doyle**

*Even more pride in my chosen profession*

*A sense of the tight knit community*

*Most important a group of people that are POSITIVE and FUN*

## **Sarah Heisler**

*There are so many amazing people that feel truly passionate about opticianry*

*Professional organizations in opticianry are accessible and want others to get involved.*

*Our pursuit of education and innovations encouraged and valued*

## **Andrea Babcock**

*The friendships with people with my same passion.*

*The knowledge from the experienced amazing leaders*

*The possibilities that are endless, when you look far people have come.*



***Ward Delbridge-Moiles***

*Anything is possible. I am realizing that there is no limit to what I can be involved in*

*Diversity-The networking possibilities and the friendships developed. I was here last year and reconnected and formed even new friendships*

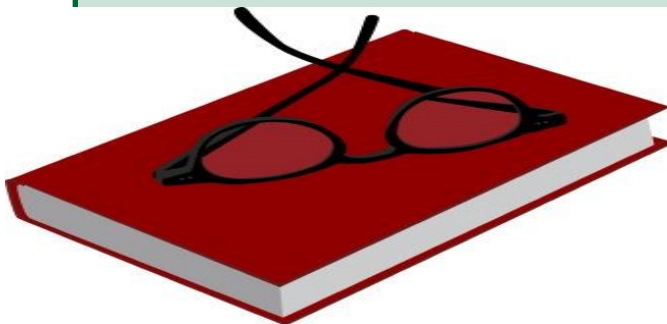
*Courage—I was asked to do/instruct a breakout session and was so nervous. But once I was in the moment it was amazing. Unbelievable moment...*

***Andrea Parisee***

*I met remarkable people over the last few days. Successful role models to fellow apprentices and students. We were able to share great stories and gain friendships that will last for years to come. I look forward to the future in this field with amazing people.*

*The break-out sessions were very useful. I was able to break out of my shell and gather ideas with fellow students.*

*I learned and became more aware of the possibilities in this field. The sky is the limit! I can become (licensed optician) what I want to be and exceed that. Then I can help others begin their own journey and we can share our accomplishments for years to come.*



**Katie Kaminski**

*Everyone is very accepting and helpful*

*Don't be shy or scared to follow your dream*

*There are so many opportunities to grow in our field*

**Tim Blandina**

*The opportunities that have presented themselves and how many paths have opened to me.*

*Realizing that even though there is one path to leadership, it is ever changing.*

*Knowing that I'm not alone, no matter what path I take.*



**Moses Nawlo**

*The relationships I've formed with fellow opticians, leaders and ECP's.*

*The realization that the industry is a massive one and continues to grow and expand*

*All the associations available to help opticians meet their goals by providing the means needed to achieve them.*

**Pablo Brito**

*Networking*

*Mentors*

*Leadership*

**Randy Healey :** *The ability to spark the drive in the first year students just by having conversations about my success in the last year and what I have accomplished after having been here once already*

*The humbling feeling that comes from having multiple people, students and mentors alike that tell you “You have inspired me” It was/is simply profound of a feeling to be able to do that for someone.*

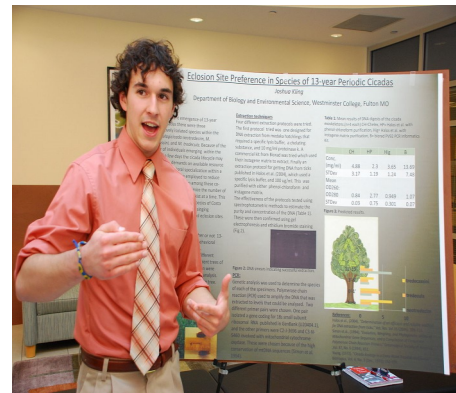
*The immense sense of pride hearing how in just 1 year how much has been accomplished along with hearing how excited and driven the people that were in my shoes are proud to be an optician. Proud to be among everyone here. In short I cannot be more thankful to be a part of this family. I can also only imagine just how much more can happen in the year to come. That is great to think about.*

### **Abigail Robinson**

*Meeting the people who helped write my text books.*

*Learning about new volunteer opportunities (VOH)*

*Learning from Europa about unique frame designs with manufacturing based in the U.S.*



### **Walid Bengadem**

*The leaders started at bottom just like us.*

*They were helped by others and now they are helping us.*

*Our mission is to pass the torch to the next generation so we all can succeed.*



**David Ellis**

*My time at leadership has empowered me to be involved in the optical field outside of my job. Achieving a management position inside of the optical shop that I work for was an excellent starting point, but I now know I can do more for the world of optics with the help of my local leaders.*

*Leadership has made me realize how important the fundraising programs in place are.*

**Christine Chaisson**

*To come out of my comfort zone and try new things*

*That I will learn from my mistakes so don't be afraid to fail*

*There are many people in this profession who are always willing to help...just ask*

**Raymond Hooley**

*Our profession has a growing voice*

*There is value in licensure*

*The Essilor/LUX merger may potentially not be as bad as everyone thinks it is or as I previously thought.*

**Kenford Brown**

"Tremendous hard work goes on behind the scenes by OAA Board of Directors

I have grown as a person and a leader

I have networked with and met many people



**Martin Tran**

*Going to places like The Ghost Tours with each other shows that we are willing to try and feel comfortable around each other.*

*We are all different and we all come from different backgrounds, yet we all have the same goal to achieve.*

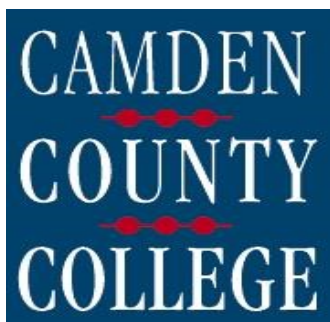
*Networking is key to success*

**Elizabeth Resi**

*Step out of my comfort zone/take risks*

*Have more confidence/knowledge/ability*

*Do not forget WHY these conferences are essential to the optical community. (What makes us opticians-Our love for people & knowledge)*



**DURHAM TECH**





NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY  
**CITY TECH**

