

ICO MATTERS

SPRING 2017 • V16 ISSUE 1

Love of Little Ones

Charities for
Children in Need

Associate Hiring Tips

LGBT - Friendly Practice

Annual Report 2016

MAGAZINE OF THE ILLINOIS COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY



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Features

◀ 8

Children's Charities

These individuals were inspired by major life events- some happy, some tragic- to help kids survive and thrive.

12

Close Up

An LGBT-friendly practice in Chicago's Andersonville neighborhood is filled with *Star Trek* collectibles, rescued pets, and respect for all.

16

Associate Hiring Tips

Advice from a practice management consultant will help you find the right associate- even in a candidate shortage!

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Contact *ICO Matters* at communications@ico.edu

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EDITORIAL

Senior Director of Communications
Jenni Gaster Sopko, MA

Editor/Manager of Digital Content
Lauren Faits

Senior Graphic Designer/Creative Services Specialist
Brian Holloway

Contributing Artists
Reese Holloway (age 8)
Tessa Holloway (age 6)

ADMINISTRATION

President
Arol Augsburg, OD

**Vice President for Student,
Alumni and College Development**
Mark Colip, OD

Senior Director of Alumni Development
Connie Scavuzzo, MA

Departments

03 Talking Heads

04 In Focus

20 Trending

22 Essentials

24 Class Notes/In Memoriam

28 Vault

IBC Datebook

BC Last Look

Meet **Your** Alumni Council

Who They Are and What They Do for ICO

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Student Representative

1



They attend events and network with students.

2



They march in ICO's Commencement Ceremony.

3



They raise funds for the Alumni Association Scholarship.

4



They present Alumni Association Awards.

5



They recruit other alumni to be Ambassadors for ICO.

Interested in becoming a member of the Alumni Council?

Contact Connie Scavuzzo, Senior Director of Alumni Development, at alumni@ico.edu.

Talking Heads

This year, ICO is celebrating its 145th anniversary. We are proud of our legacy as the nation's oldest, largest, and most popular optometry school. As more optometry schools open their doors, more eyes are on the profession than ever before. **What are some of the advantages of such a long-standing school, and why do you think ICO has thrived for so many years?**

Arol Augsburg, OD



HOWARD WOOLF, OD '67

What are the advantages of ICO? I may well be a good person to ask! My mother, father, and son all graduated from ICO (**Ina Gray Woolf, NICO '39, Gerson M. Woolf, NICO '40, Brian Woolf, OD '99**). We have had very successful careers in Optometry, leading the profession in Maryland. Optometry has changed quite a lot since 1939, when my mother was the only woman in her class, but the college has always adapted to these and many other changes.

Optometry started in jewelry stores. Today, optometrists must be medical managers as well as treating eye disease. Experienced, practicing professors and a farsighted Board of Trustees have allowed ICO to adapt.

With changes and innovation based on experience... that is how ICO has thrived.

HOWARD WOOLF, OD '67



PHILIP HASLER, OD '86

The landscape of optometry schools in the United States is varied, evolving, and expanding. Advantages setting ICO apart are history, tradition, and location. Personally, I look at this from a three-generational perspective. My father, **James B. Hasler, NICO '48** is a graduate. I graduated from ICO in 1986, and my daughter, Rachel, will graduate this May. This does not happen without the strong historical significance of ICO. Future optometrists look to the role models that have shaped their lives, and are drawn to a school that graduates personable, academically outstanding clinicians.

I can't think of a better location than Chicago for a young, aspiring professional to test their mettle. Chicago is a major metropolitan melting pot of students pursuing medicine, law, business, and the arts. They are all maturing, learning, and sharing their experiences. ICO's specific location also offers access to a patient base in great need of professional eye care. There is a reason why ICO graduates the most prepared clinicians!

A simple equation for excellent optometrists: an outstanding education from a historically significant institution located in one of the greatest cities in America.

PHILIP HASLER, OD '86



AROL AUGSBURGER, OD President of ICO:

ICO has thrived for 145 years because of our tradition of excellence. We have an award-winning faculty and scores of robust extern sites around the globe. Our world-class students continue to best the National Board average pass rate year after year. Our widely-distributed alumni- more than any other optometric institution- are outstanding advocates for ICO and optometry.

ICO has been one of the economic engines which has contributed to the revitalization of the near south side of Chicago. Our faculty and students provide outstanding vision care with a spirit of benevolence to those in our community with highest need. ICO has a tradition of making a difference in the lives of people. Millions of patients have been well cared for within the Illinois Eye Institute, and millions more in our 158 extern rotation sites and charitable missions around the world.

»» Editor's Note



Lauren Faits, Editor

"Then what?"

At ICO, I occasionally hear from students as they make the journey to OD. One question I hear often is, "Then what?" As in, "I become a doctor, then what?"

ICO's vast alumni network offers many answers. You can become a doctor, then open and expand a private practice. Start a family. Choose a cause and create societal change. Stay near, travel far. Live humbly, live large.

In this Spring 2017 issue of *ICO Matters*, the answer to, "Then what?" appears to be, "Whatever you want!"

- Alumni help children survive and thrive in our feature on kids' charities.
- One doctor practices inclusivity in *Close Up* with an LGBT-friendly office and a condo filled with rescued pets.
- A practice management consultant offers tips for recruiting associates- even during a candidate shortage.
- In *Essentials*, a doctor returns home to transform a vintage building into her dream practice.

Enjoy the magazine... then what? That, dear reader, is up to you!

Corneal Innovations in the IEI

The Illinois Eye Institute recently introduced not one, but two new procedures for patients in the Cornea Center for Clinical Excellence. The first of these is called **corneal cross-linking**. This treatment benefits patients with conditions like keratoconus or ectasia. Previously, the available transplants came with long recovery time and risk of rejection. Corneal cross-linking is non-invasive, using riboflavin drops and UV light instead of surgery. Patients recover within days.

Dr. Osvaldo Lopez, Chief of Ophthalmology at Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center, ordered ICO's Avedro cross-linking system within a week of its FDA approval. "ICO is a tremendous partner in this," he says, "because of their reputation and the way they can reach out to the optometric community like no one else can."

Even with cross-linking available, some patients may need scleral contact lenses to truly improve their vision. That is where **EyePrintPRO**, the second new technology, comes in. EyePrintPRO creates a 3-D model of a patient's entire ocular surface, giving a truly individualized fit. The result is a prosthetic scleral cover shell- a solution for keratoconus, irregular astigmatism, dry eye, deformed eyes, and chemical burns. All of the providers in our Cornea Center are certified EyePrintPRO practitioners. We waited on a 3-year waitlist for EyePrintPRO, and now, the Illinois Eye Institute is the only location in Chicago to offer it.



New Myopia Study Begins

In October, the Illinois College of Optometry signed an agreement with the Dr. Newton K. Wesley Foundation to support a new research project. ICO is studying the effects of orthokeratology on slowing the progression of myopia. This study hopes to expand potential application of orthokeratology to a novel population, African American school-aged children.

Lee Wesley, DMin, president of the NKWF, signed the official document with **Dr. Arol Augsburger**. The individuals overseeing the project at ICO are **Drs. Yi Pang, Valerie Kattouf, and Jennifer Harthan**. Research is taking place in the Cornea Center for Clinical Excellence within the Illinois Eye Institute. We thank the Dr. Newton K. Wesley Foundation for its support. By keeping ICO at the forefront of optometric research, we are helping young patients thrive.



Students Spend Breaks Abroad

While many ICO students spend their breaks getting well-deserved R&R, some go on mission trips. Around 25 generous ICO students traveled abroad this year to offer eye care to the less fortunate. Last summer break, **Jessica Sathchakham '18** and **Jessica Chan '18** went to Guatemala City with trip leader **Alexandra Troy, OD '12**. Optometry wasn't the trip's only goal. The ICO group joined other medical professionals and home-building volunteers. The students saw 576

patients in a week, and referred particularly complex cases to the optometry school in Guatemala City. During the Fall quarter break week, students from the Class of 2018 traveled to Jalisco Tecalitlan, Mexico for a Student Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity (SVOSH) mission trip. These individuals were **Victoria Sin, Megan Chee, Chris Corzo, Jenny Lau, Andrea Yee, Alicia Wong, Annie Mak, Ngoc Tran, and Vaki Nadarajah**. The group was accompanied by optometry students

from Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane, Australia, as well as many other ODs. In just 8 days, the group saw over 3,500 patients with approximately 2,800 requiring glasses. The students were able to see advanced ocular diseases including glaucoma, severe cataracts, and AMD. Another mission trip will happen during the May break week, when approximately 10 ICO students will travel with trip leader, **Tracy Matchinski, OD '95**, to El Salvador.



IEI Opens Two New Areas

This winter, the Illinois Eye Institute opened two new service areas. The **Bronzeville Pharmacy** and **Diabetic Eye Center** are welcoming patients every day.

The full-service Bronzeville Pharmacy at Illinois Eye Institute is conveniently located on the first floor of the IEI. IEI patients can see an optometrist, then immediately get their prescriptions filled on-site. The Bronzeville Pharmacy isn't just for eye care, either. Patients as well as ICO students, faculty, and staff can use it for medications of any kind. Pharmacist Mitul Gandhi also offers home delivery and nutrition counseling. He has served over 200 patients since the pharmacy's debut.

The Diabetic Eye Center provides eye exams, visual fields, OCTs, and other specialized services to diabetic patients. The DEC is intended to be not only a medical service area, but also a place for education and bonding. Drs. Eileen Bush and Patricia Salazar are seeking participants for a monthly diabetes support group. Topics discussed range from healthy eating to the importance of knowing your A1C numbers. Patients and their loved ones are welcomed.

For more details on both new services in the IEI, visit www.illinoiseyeyeinstitute.org.



Bronzeville Pharmacy



Diabetic Eye Clinic

Board of Trustees Elects Newcomers

In October, the ICO Board of Trustees elected **Karen Eng, OD**, as Chairman of the Board. Dr. Eng has been a board member for six years, and succeeds **Donovan Crouch, OD, FAAO**, who served for three years. She is ICO's first female chairman.

Dr. Eng is the President and CEO of CSMI. She has focused much of her career on promoting STEM education for girls and women. This is especially relevant for ICO, where our student population is 70% female. "I am extremely honored and excited to have the opportunity to serve as the chairman," said Dr. Eng. "We have been striving to build diversity on

the board of trustees to represent our constituents, and I welcome the opportunity to champion this effort."

In addition to its Chairman, the Board also elected a new member in February. **Nana Owusu, OD '08**, hails from Winnipeg, Canada. He is an active member of the ICO Alumni Council. Dr. Owusu has expanded his practice to three locations, and offers scholarships to inner city students. He is passionate about family, travel, football, coaching, and his collection of Air Jordan shoes. We are honored to have both of these individuals serving the Illinois College of Optometry.



Karen Eng, OD



Nana Owusu, OD '08

New on YouTube

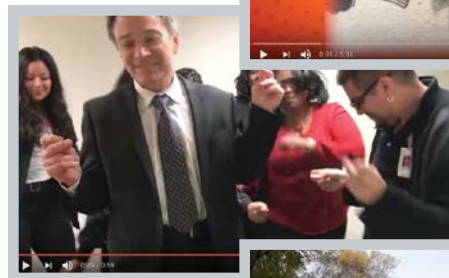
ICO has been finding new and creative ways to make our institution shine online. If you haven't seen our YouTube channel lately, visit www.youtube.com/user/ICOoptometry to view some of our latest videos.

- **The "Big 3" Campus Tour** takes prospective students on a quick walk through our Lecture Hall, Residential Complex, and the Illinois Eye Institute. It proves just how conveniently located all of ICO's amenities are.
- **ICO presents: The History of Optometry** chronicles our profession from the year 1267 to today. Of course, ICO plays a big role in optometry's evolution!
- **Dr. Leonard Messner**, joined by IEI staff, dances his heart out in the **Diabetes Dance Dare**. He donated to the American Diabetes Association after accepting this online challenge.
- **Made at ICO**, our ongoing campaign, celebrates three more of our esteemed alumni: **Lisa Young, OD '05**, **Erik Mothersbaugh, OD '12**, and **Tafadzwa "Taffy" Makoni-Savanhu, OD '11**. At the end of these videos, alumni are encouraged to join ICO's Ambassador Program.



The "Big 3" Campus Tour

The History of Optometry



Diabetes Dance Dare

Made at ICO



Giving Tuesday Inspires Generosity

Following Thanksgiving, ICO participated in **Giving Tuesday** for the third time. Funds raised on this international day of generosity went to our **Charitable Care Eyeglass Program**. This initiative provides eyeglasses to Chicago-area patients who could otherwise not afford them. A donation of just \$15 covered eyeglasses for one person in need. ICO's faculty and staff stepped up, with 98 donors raising over \$13,000. Together, we continue to show the world how deeply ICO cares for its community.



98 Donors
\$13,000 Raised



For the Love of Little Ones

Children's Charities
Developed and Supported
by the ICO family

BY LAUREN FAITS

One of the finest traits shared by ICO's people is a desire to give back. The spirit of generosity, especially toward younger generations, is strong within our graduates. Several kind-hearted individuals have made children's charity a permanent part of their lives. All were inspired by major life events- some happy, some tragic- to help kids survive and thrive.

Here are just three of the many children's initiatives created or backed by the ICO community. We thank them for their compassionate work. Children are our future, and organizations like these promise a better world:

ANSWERS FOR EMMETT

When **Jeffrey Frank, OD '03**, and **Kristy Marczewski-Frank, OD '04**, describe their son Emmett, it is clear he was a unique little boy. Both parents have dark hair and eyes; Emmett was born with pale, blonde hair and blue eyes. "He was such a happy-go-lucky personality," says Dr. Frank. "If you ever see him in a picture, he's either smiling or he's touching someone else... he was such a great little boy."

Emmett was 16 months old when he passed away in his sleep. There were no signs or symptoms. Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC) affects 1 in 100,000 children. The condition differs from SIDS in that patients are over a year old. They can

walk, talk, and function normally. As of today, there are no commonalities between SUDC children- but families are trying to learn more.

Drs. Frank and Marczewski-Frank founded **Answers for Emmett** in hopes of settling some of their many questions. The organization is taking a "three-pronged approach" alongside the SUDC Foundation. Their goals are to spread awareness, create a patient registry, and raise funds.

In addition to providing social workers and counselors, The SUDC Foundation helps parents find one another. There are message boards and Skype sessions wherein specific populations can connect- fathers, mothers, even expectant parents. "I still talk to a guy who now lives in Florida about his son," says Dr. Frank.

The SUDC Foundation is "starting a database with major institutions like Stanford, Duke, New York University, and Mayo," says Dr. Frank. These health institutions are taking steps, such as patient genome mapping, to "determine if there are any genetic variants for the cause for why Emmett died." Scientists are

unsure if SUDC is cardiovascular, neurological, or something else. A registry like this one brings everyone closer to discovery.

Even with so much progress, problems in the US health system remain. When Emmett died, his parents had to go to court to get his blood banked. The coroner who performed Emmett's autopsy had no previous experience with SUDC. Thankfully, with the help of the SUDC Foundation, the Obama administration signed a bill demanding protocols for SUDC kids.

Answers for Emmett helps raise funds for the SUDC Foundation. "Less than a year after Emmett died, we had our first race," says Dr. Frank. The family set a goal of 500 runners for a date in May- the same month as Emmett's birthday. Somewhere between 650 and 700 participants showed up in Geneva, Illinois. They raised \$70,000. A second run took place in Batavia, IL, the next year.

For 2017, Answers for Emmett is going bigger. A patient of Dr. Frank's is putting together a major concert event. The organization is hoping to draw 10,000 people to River Edge Park in Aurora, IL, for an evening of music in May. Attendees will be able to purchase Chinese lanterns to float down the river at the end of the show.

For those unable to attend the concert, there are many more ways to help Answers for Emmett. A social media campaign called #Cartwheels4SUDC will be launching soon. Donations are also welcomed at www.Answers4SUDC.com. "My goal is to raise \$100,000," says Dr. Frank. "I actually think we can get there."

"If you ever see him in a picture, he's either smiling or he's touching someone else... he was such a great little boy."

- Jeffrey Frank, OD '03



WORLD PEDIATRIC PROJECT

Eric Johnson, OD '11, proposed to India Blevins on a mountaintop in Utah. They knew their life would be filled with a love of children. They have four kids between them, and India is a flight nurse for St. Louis Children's Hospital. Instead of registering for traditional wedding gifts, the couple chose to raise money for the **World Pediatric Project**.

The couple set a goal to sponsor one WPP child- \$5,000. They put up a donation website and started spreading the word on Facebook. Money began coming in. "The majority of it was local," says Dr. Johnson. "That's the best gift we could have gotten."

When it came time to choose a child to help, an incredible coincidence occurred. Dr. Johnson explains, "I was literally lying in bed and India came downstairs and said, 'I picked the kid today. Her name is Genesis. She's from Honduras and has tetralogy of flow.' My jaw just dropped because I had a sister who died from tetralogy of flow... I had never told her about it. She had no idea."

They raised \$5,000 before the wedding. So, they upped their goal to \$10,000. Melissa, their friend in the WPP "thought it was a huge deal," says Dr. Johnson. "She kind of blew it up." Melissa contacted media outlets. ABC broadcasted the story nationally, including in Los Angeles and Houston. Clock 2 News Washington even came to the wedding reception. After the wedding, the fundraising goal was raised to \$15,000.

Dr. Johnson and India chose a second child with tetralogy of flow, Rodrigo. The money raised for Genesis and Rodrigo included not only surgery, but also flights to and from the United States plus accommodations for the families. Many WPP surgeries are done pro bono, allowing more money to go toward transport. Says Dr. Johnson, "there is no way they can do these open heart surgeries [in third world countries.] They don't have the technology that these major hospitals have."

Genesis and Rodrigo have both successfully undergone their surgeries. "Two down, one to go!" Dr. Johnson exclaims. The couple is still collecting donations for the World Pediatric Project. They agree that "being generous always gives back."

To help a child receive a life-saving procedure from the WPP, visit Dr. Johnson's Crowdrise page: www.crowdrise.com/EricandIndia. The WPP will be hosting their 3rd annual "Rock 'n' Heal" event in St. Louis on June 2nd. They also accept direct donations: www.worldpediatricproject.org.



Eric Johnson and India Blevins with baby Rodrigo



Eric Johnson and India Blevins with baby Genesis

"My jaw just dropped because I had a sister who died from tetralogy of flow... I had never told her about it. She had no idea."

- Eric Johnson, OD '11



EMMA'S FOOTPRINTS

Joe Kowalisyn is the Information Technology Manager at ICO. Two years ago, at 31 weeks, his wife Amy gave birth to twins Alex and Emma. Doctors discovered that Emma had suffered a stroke in utero. Amy explains, "We made the decision to have Emma airlifted to Riley's Children's Hospital." For 3 weeks, the Kowalisyns drove back and forth between Valparaiso and Indianapolis, Indiana, to be with both babies. At 23 days old, Emma passed away.

While the twins were in separate hospitals, friends and organizations kept sending care packages. The Kowalisyns realized this feeling of care and support could be spread to others. Amy explains that, when Emma died, "in lieu of flowers, we asked people to bring items that we could put into care packages to deliver to the local NICU." What started as a one-time ask turned into an organization called Emma's Footprints.

Today, Emma's Footprints delivers anywhere from 10 to 200 care packages a month to 6 different hospitals. The Kowalisyns have

expanded the charity's goals from care packages into bereavement care and counseling. "We provide a lot of support and awareness to families that have lost an infant," Amy says. Monetary donations to Emma's Footprints help with everything from scholarships for bereavement retreats to the purchasing of CuddleCots.

ICO was one of the top supporters for an Emma's Footprints golf event in 2015. "Different individuals in the company have been big contributors," says Joe. "[ICO,] in general, has been so kind to our family and so supportive of our mission." He says he feels a "sense of family" within the institution. "That's one of the big reasons why I love working here."

Emma's brother, Alexander Michael, is now two years old. "Alex has been our saving grace, keeping our sanity," says Joe. The Kowalisyns are expecting twins this summer.

Even with babies on the way, Joe and Amy have kept Emma's Footprints as active as ever. They are constantly collecting clean diapers, clothing, stationery, toiletries, blankets, and snacks. They include gift cards to clothing stores and restaurants in their care packages, and rely on church groups and volunteers to help assemble and deliver.

To help Emma's Footprints build care packages for hospitals, check out their Amazon Wishlist via Facebook*. They also accept monetary donations at www.legacyfdn.org. "You can find your way again," Amy says to parents suffering loss. "You may not be the person that you were before, but you find a new way of looking at life. There is a way to find joy."

**Please note: If you search for Emma's Footprints on Facebook, you may find a strikingly similar organization with the same name. This group also lost an infant named Emma; both families know and support each other. The name is a coincidence.*



Joe and Amy Kowalisyn with baby Alex

"[ICO,] in general, has been so kind to our family and so supportive of our mission."

- Joe Kowalisyn



Close Up: Michael Ciszek, OD '93

It's no surprise that **Michael Ciszek, '93**, loves Star Trek. The sci-fi show is famous for bringing diversity and inclusivity to television. In turn, Dr. Ciszek brings these principles to his everyday life.

Visionary Eye Care, which has two locations in Chicago, has been proudly LGBT-owned for 20 years. Dr. Ciszek shares this responsibility with **Joe Warner, OD '00**. Their practice has a reputation of openness and respect for all. Dr. Ciszek hosts externs from ICO, which has resulted in multiple alumni

hires. Visionary's staff now includes **Jamie Johnson, OD '10**, and **Fatima Ibrahim, OD '16**.

Dr. Ciszek lives in Andersonville with his husband, Randall. They enjoy riding motorcycles, going on mission trips, and doting on their rescued pets. From the gym to the dog boutique, it seems like the entire neighborhood knows this family!

Here's a Close Up look at a day in Dr. Ciszek's enterprising life:



*Interview by Lauren Faits
Photos by Brian Holloway*



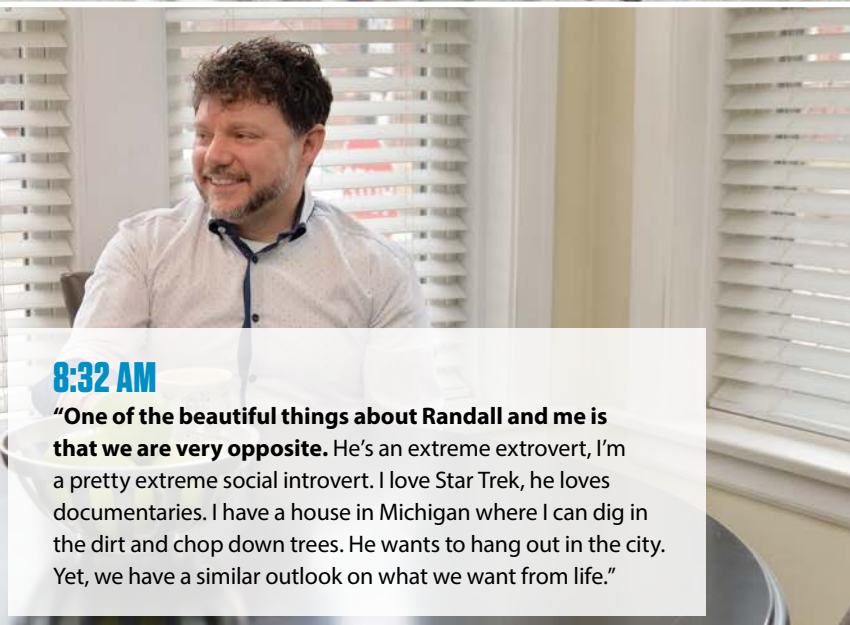
8:03 AM

"We went to PAWS... I saw this shih-poo in a cage. Porsche was so matted that they'd shaved off her hair. Randall said, 'We have to save her.' Then, last summer, we kept running into this couple we know. One of the women, her father died. He had a shih-tzu. They brought Missy all the way from Kansas City to Chicago."



8:18 AM

"I take the dogs on the same route every day. Along Ravenswood, there's a community garden where I volunteer. I try to walk them through that to watch my plot and see if anything needs to be weeded. I have an anemone plant; nobody else has been able to grow those!"



8:32 AM

"One of the beautiful things about Randall and me is that we are very opposite. He's an extreme extrovert, I'm a pretty extreme social introvert. I love Star Trek, he loves documentaries. I have a house in Michigan where I can dig in the dirt and chop down trees. He wants to hang out in the city. Yet, we have a similar outlook on what we want from life."



9:00 AM

"Probably twenty years ago, I started going to the gym and realized it was a fun place. I've worked with four different personal trainers at Cheetah Gym. Both of my parents have diabetes, have had heart surgeries. I'm going to stay healthy."



10:00 AM

"We're really busy in the morning. When I get to the office, most times the extern will take the first patient and I'll look at my schedule for the day and see if there's anything weird going on with it."



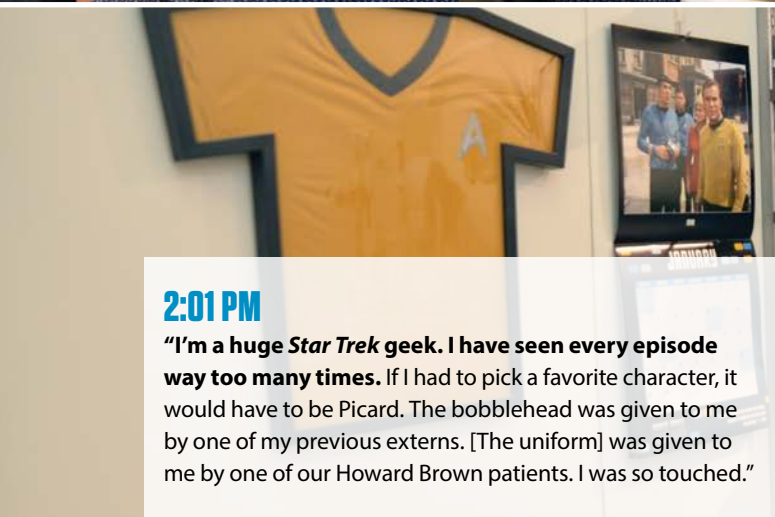
10:50 AM

"[Visionary] has become a place where the LGBT community knows they can come and be welcomed and well taken care of. When we did our expansion, we had to have two ADA bathrooms. I refused to mark them 'man and woman' or whatever. We're all human beings. We just have two bathrooms. Use one of them."



12:05 PM

"If there's any slow time in the middle of the day, I'll spend some time answering e-mails or doing some work for VOSH. I have been on five VOSH trips. I have two albums from two different trips. Giving back just gives you a very good sense of accomplishment."



2:01 PM

"I'm a huge Star Trek geek. I have seen every episode way too many times. If I had to pick a favorite character, it would have to be Picard. The bobblehead was given to me by one of my previous externs. [The uniform] was given to me by one of our Howard Brown patients. I was so touched."



2:43 PM

"When we redesigned, I was very adamant that we had the computers so that I could see both the screen and the patient at the same time. I also think we did a really good job of storing trial lenses. I put a picture of that when we first did it on Facebook, and got over 850 likes."



3:20 PM

"I've been precepting now for fourth year students from ICO for five years. It's important to me. I've been wanting to give back, to show the students what a private practice can look like."



4:10 PM

"Andersonville feels like a little tiny village inside the city of Chicago. The people here are very, very supportive of small businesses. There's a lot of pride in the neighborhood. People know each other. They still reach out and say, 'Hi.'"



5:13 PM

"Jameson Loves Danger is a local pet boutique. They've been a really great resource when we have questions about the dogs or training or food. ...and they're super nice people."



6:30 PM

"This is Lady Gregory's, an Andersonville Irish Pub. Randall and I like our wine. We'll typically have a glass or two at the end of the day."

WHERE ARE ALL THE ASSOCIATE ODS?

RECRUITING AND HIRING IN A CANDIDATE SHORTAGE



BY STEVE VARGO, OD '98



**“There are too many
optometry schools!”**

“The job market is saturated!”

**“It’s going to be hard to find
a job in optometry!”**

WRONG!

We can debate whether the marketplace is oversaturated with options for consumer access to eye care. Some believe this is accelerating the increase of new optometry schools, or vice-versa. In my consulting work, though, I am consistently hearing from practice owners that it is difficult to find associates- not just good associates, but any associate! When you consider the multitude of employment options- private practice, ophthalmology, commercial entities, big box, Internet vendors opening brick and mortar locations, even drug stores- the pool of available ODs is shrinking.

According to Brad McCorkle, founder of the online job site Local Eye Site, 75% of his company’s ad volume comes from organizations looking for ODs. “In our thousands of conversations with administrators, recruiters, HR managers, and doctors,” he says, “the overwhelming feedback is that it’s difficult to recruit ODs, especially in rural markets.” Lauren Simon, founder of the ophthalmic recruiting firm The Eye Group, states that in 30 years of recruiting optometrists, they currently have the most job openings and least amount of candidates they have ever had.



My personal experience as a practice management consultant is consistent with these examples. Having done hundreds of consultations on HR issues alone, one of the most common challenges I hear from our members is how difficult it is to find an associate OD. **Here are a few things to consider when hiring an associate OD:**

AM I READY FOR AN ASSOCIATE?

The decision to bring on an associate OD is usually driven by patient demand. Do you have a large enough backload of patients to keep the associate busy? Hiring an associate before patient demand exists usually results in the associate seeing patients that the owner could have seen. This will not translate into higher revenues for the practice- just a higher payroll.

A secondary consideration is whether you desire to work less and transfer more patients to the associate. Trading income for more personal time is a common strategy for many practice owners.

WHERE DO I FIND ASSOCIATES?

There are several places you can advertise positions for associate ODs. Some examples are optometric job boards (Local Eye Site, Covalent Careers, etc.), social media forums like the ODs on Facebook group, schools of optometry (ICO,) and even recruiting firms such as The Eye Group. Spread the word among colleagues and sales reps that you are looking to hire. Considering the limited supply of candidates, it benefits you to cast a wide net.

WHAT KIND OF CANDIDATE FITS MY BRAND AND CULTURE?

Even in a tight job market, you should use discretion in your hiring decision. If you have built a successful practice, odds are you have strived to create a certain culture and brand. As an employer, I think it's a fair expectation that an associate would adapt to the office culture that you have worked hard to build. Hiring the wrong "culture fit" can lead to tension in the workplace and patient dissatisfaction. Successfully transferring established patients to the associate (if that is a goal) will go more smoothly if the patients receive the consistent level of care and service they have come to expect.

WHAT COMPENSATION CAN I OFFER?

There remains a fairly wide range of salaries for employed optometrists. Salary does not always reflect the clinical abilities or years of experience an OD brings to a practice. As many parts of

the country, especially rural, are experiencing a shortage of available associates, supply and demand is often the biggest factor driving compensation. For this reason, the average pay for an associate OD has risen in many areas.

Keep in mind that an associate OD has the potential to generate hundreds of thousands of dollars for the practice. I've seen practice owners balk at hiring an OD who wanted moderately (or even slightly) more money than the employer was willing to offer. Before declining negotiation, consider the full return-on-investment of the associate. Aside from salary, the only significant costs to the practice are increased cost-of-goods and staffing (if necessary.) If patient demand supports the hire, it's usually not difficult for the associate to produce enough revenue to cover their costs and generate a profit.

HOW CAN I "SELL" THE JOB OFFER?

As you negotiate pay and benefits, you may hear from the potential associate that they are making (or could make) X dollars at another practice or location. This may be more than you are willing or able to offer. Consider if there are other, non-monetary factors that could make your offer superior. Some examples are flexible hours, the ability to practice a wide scope of care, professional development opportunities, ownership potential, and even quality of life considerations.



DO YOU HAVE A LARGE ENOUGH BACKLOAD OF PATIENTS TO KEEP THE ASSOCIATE BUSY? HIRING AN ASSOCIATE BEFORE PATIENT DEMAND EXISTS USUALLY RESULTS IN THE ASSOCIATE SEEING PATIENTS THAT THE OWNER COULD HAVE SEEN.

In a tight job market, you can't just offer a job- you have to sell it! Make a list of all the great reasons to work at your practice. Most of the job ads I see focus on everything an employer requires of someone working for them, but very little about why the opportunity is good. Ask the candidate what they like and dislike about their current or previous position. The OD may be willing to accept less pay if the entire package is more attractive than alternative offers or the their current employment situation.

SHOULD I EMPLOY AN ASSOCIATE OR A FULL PARTNER?

Carefully consider the decision to sell equity in your practice. While a partnership can be financially beneficial for some situations, it does require you to relinquish some ownership and control. In some cases, you'll end up spending more money than if you'd just employed an OD and paid them a fair market rate.

If you choose the partnership route, analyze the numbers closely. Make sure the OD you are considering partnering with shares a similar business philosophy and vision for the practice. I've worked closely with

practices that failed to consider this, and it led to a great deal of tension and turmoil between the partners.

WHAT EXPECTATIONS SHOULD I SET UP FRONT?

There are certainly strategies to increase motivation in the workplace. That said, we need to consider that the mindset of an owner/entrepreneur is often different than that of an employee. Instead of expecting your associate to be "motivated," you'll have better success setting clear expectations. Then, meet with your associate on a regular basis- monthly or quarterly- to review these metrics.

These can be sensitive conversations. Steer the dialogue away from "selling," and focus on the value of educating and informing patients on the best eye care options for their specific needs. It just so happens that people frequently spend more money when they realize the full value of the products and services they are considering.

HOW CAN I BE THE CEO OF MY PRACTICE?

Hiring an associate OD is a true turning point for many practices. Often, the greatest obstacle to

success is time. As a practice grows, the doctor becomes increasingly occupied with patient care and managing the day-to-day operations of the practice. This leaves little time to work "on" the business. As a result, many private practices plateau at an early stage.

Hiring an associate OD allows you to spend more time managing and growing the practice- not just maintaining it. It also allows you to spend more time away from your practice. It's easy for busy practice owners to get caught up in the daily grind and lose sight of one of the main reasons they chose the ownership route - a better quality of life!

Steve Vargo, OD '98, serves as IDOC's Optometric Practice Management Consultant. A published author and speaker with more than 15 years of clinical experience, he is now a full-time consultant in practice management and office operations.

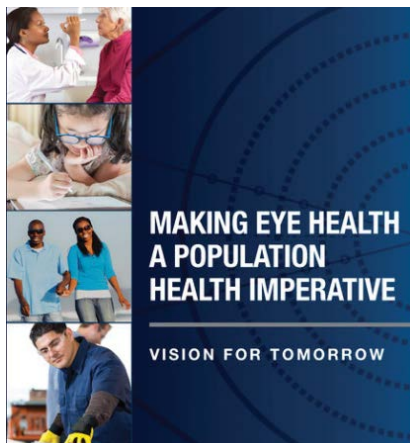


Trending



September 16

ICO's own **Dr. Sandy Block** plus alumni **Drs. Lori Glover** and **Susan Cotter** all played vital parts in this NAP report:



October 7

Entertainer @SullivanLive is performing today at 2 p.m. in the Lecture Center for #InfantSee. Healthy beginnings begin with healthy eyes!



October 11

With the rise of smart phones and other digital devices, we must ask ourselves about blue light and its effects on human vision. ICO's **Dr. Christine Allison** weighed in on the (lack of) current research for MakeltBetter.net.



October 13

For #WSD2016, ICO students and the IEI at Princeton partnered with Our Children's Vision and MLB Players' Trust. We traveled to Gary, Indiana along with former Major League Baseball stars LaTroy Hawkins and Kenny Lofton. We provided vision testing and glasses to help improve both learning and athletics for young patients. #MyWSDStory



October 31

For the first time ever, ICO faculty and staff dressed up for Halloween!



November 3 (RT from @ChicagoCubs)

Today is our day. #FlyTheW



November 21

Today, **Dr. Leonard Messner**, Executive Director of the IEI, accepted the #DiabetesDanceDare from Jenna Archuleta. He danced, donated to the American Diabetes Association, and now challenges three colleagues.



November 29

Giving Back in Chicago with PAWS!





December 9

Congratulations to **Jamie Blavat, '17**, and **Emily Hutchins, '17**, on receiving the American Optometric Foundation and VSP Vision Care Practice Excellence Scholarship!



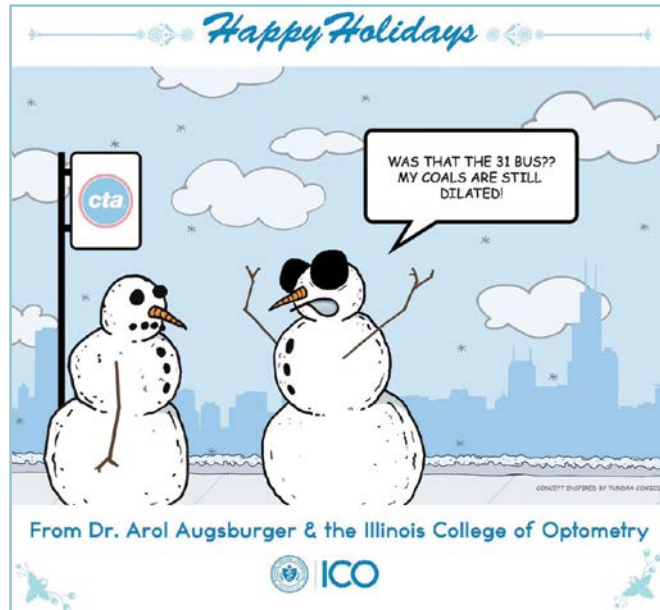
December 20

Santa Visited the Illinois Eye Institute on December 12, 2016, to surprise some special children. Several Chicago-area kids received bicycles or other gifts thanks to an employee fundraiser. Santa also read a story, and of course, shared cookies with our VIP guests. Happy Holidays to all!



December 25

May you and yours have a warm, safe, and happy holiday season- from all of us at the Illinois College of Optometry.



January 6

Everyone at ICO is excited about *Sight: The Story of Vision*, an #optometry #documentary airing this week on @PBS.



January 18

Today, we celebrate the second anniversary of the Alfred and Sarah Rosenbloom Center on Vision and Aging. Time has really flown! The RCVA saw over 10,000 patients in 2016 for primary care, surgical co-management, low vision, occupational therapy, and electrophysiology. Six of these patients were over 100 years old.



January 30

ICO has conferred upon **Gary A. Leshner, Ph.D.**, the title of Professor Emeritus. We are honored to have him as part of our history.



Essentials: Gerianne Mulanix, OD '10

TIME TO REFLECT

"Our patients have been bringing in vintage mirrors for us to grow our mirror montage. It resides above a refinished church pew from down the road."

LOCAL DESIGN

"We carry an independent optical frame line, Article One, that is designed nearby in Flint, Michigan. The community has really embraced it."

MOTIVATIONAL MANTRA

"Courage is not the absence of fear; it is the making of action in spite of fear, the moving out against the resistance engendered by fear into the unknown and into the future." - M. Scott Peck



There's no place like home! ...At least that's what **Gerianne Mulanix, OD '10**, would say. ICO diploma in hand, she returned to Linden, Michigan, to serve patients in her hometown. Dr. Mulanix saw potential in a pre-1900s building. Renovations and updates were intense, but Linden Family Eye Care opened its doors at last in October. It is a modern, private practice with lots of vintage charm.

"I am very intentional in creating an unexpected experience," says Dr. Mulanix. "This place truly is an authentic outflow from my heart." Here are the Essentials Dr. Mulanix needed to bring eye care home. Heart, brains, courage, and...



ALUMNI BACKUP

"Robert Steinmetz, OD '03, and Eric Baas, OD '06, from iCare Advisors were indispensable throughout the process. From securing financing to deciding which optical frame lines to carry, their wisdom was a great resource. To know I could reach out to them at any time was priceless."

HIRING FOR CHARACTER

"Steve, my managing optician, has been fundamental to the success of the practice. With over 20 years of optical experience, he can tackle anything the day throws at him. My take-away when it comes to HR is to hire for strength of character first. Yes, he's an amazing optician, but most important to me is that he is an amazing person."



SPACE TO UNWIND

"The best way to unplug is spending time with my two children, Ezra and Judith Grace, and Bryan, my husband of 13 years. We are out in the fresh air as much as possible- hiking, walking to the local Shiawasee River, and attempting to cultivate a kitchen garden."

AN EYE FOR ANTIQUES

"My grandfather is an antiques dealer. He found a 1920s gun cabinet hiding in the garage of a historic home in the area. We refinished it, added glass shelving, and installed LED lights. Now, it houses some of our beautiful frames! The warmth of the wood makes the office feel homey and warm."



ART IN THE FAMILY

"My mother has been the local middle school art teacher for over twenty years. My grandmother, 'Mungie' Awrylo, is an artist. At 77 years old, she spent weeks up on an 8-foot ladder creating this masterpiece, Wall."



HISTORIC APPRECIATION

"We had to be careful about renovating a pre-1900s building. From paint colors to the design of our signage, every choice had to be examined by the Historic District Commission for appropriateness."

UPWARD MOMENTUM

"You'll never feel 100% 'ready.' If you wait until you're sure, you'll never do it. I started thinking of [opening my practice] as a challenging athletic pursuit, just like one of my other favorite hobbies- rock climbing."



Class Notes

1940's

1949

William Work, Jr. (CCO) of N. Falmouth, Mass., retired on Nov. 14, 2016, after 67 years of practice. His father opened the practice in 1906.

.....

1950's

1955

Laurence Chadwick was honored by the IOA for 50 years of membership during the 118th Annual Illinois Optometric Association Convention in Sept., 2016.

1957

Sylvio Dupuis was recognized as a New England Notable by the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Granite State College for his professional accomplishments.

.....

1960's

1961

Brent Nielsen was honored by the IOA for 50 years of membership during the 118th Annual Illinois Optometric Association Convention in Sept., 2016.

1964

Bob Schmidt was honored by the IOA for 50 years of membership during the 118th Annual Illinois Optometric Association Convention in Sept., 2016.

1965

John Costello, Sr. retired from his practice in Oneida, N.Y., after 51 years.

.....

1970's

1972

Brian Caden celebrated his 40th Fellow Anniversary and received a pin to honor his achievement and continued involvement in the Academy during AAO 2016.

1979

James Faron was appointed to a five-year term as a trustee on the Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District in 2016. He retired after 33 years in practice at the Carle Clinic in Urbana, Ill., and continues to be involved in his real estate company, Faron Properties, LLC.

.....

1980's

1980

Dwight Akerman received his MBA from the University of Texas, graduating summa cum laude, in Dec., 2016.

1981

Sandra Block was appointed as Chair of the National Academies of Practice in Optometry during AAO 2016. Additionally, she was honored by Special Olympics Illinois with a 2016 Hero Award for her contributions to the Special Olympics Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes program since 2001.

.....

1990's

1994

Teresa Myers relocated to Complete Family Eye Care in Carbondale, Ill.

1997

Patricia Winters joined Northwest Eye in Wayzata, Minn.

1998

Michelle Cazett returned as the owner of the vision center of the Newton, Iowa, Walmart Supercenter. She also owns the vision center in Marshalltown, Iowa.

1999

Charles Donlea published his first novel, *Summit Lake*, in 2016, which was named Best Debut Novel of 2016 by *Suspense Magazine*. His second novel, *The Girl Who Was Taken*, will be released in 2017 and has already sold in six countries. He practices at Premier Eye Care & Surgery in the Chicago suburbs.

Paul C. O'Donnell joined the St. Lawrence Health System medical staff, working with Canton-Potsdam Hospital Eye Care in Potsdam, N.Y. Additionally, he is a USA Hockey Level IV coach and an AAU Level I coach.

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2000's

2000

Melissa Sigler was honored by Special Olympics Illinois with a 2016 Hero Award for her contributions to the Special Olympics Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes program since 2001.

2002

Candi Kimura was installed as a new trustee of the California Optometric Association by fellow alumnus **Tommy Lim, OD '77**.

2004

Kathryn Mulder married Daniel DeJonge on Nov. 5, 2016. She owns West Coast Eyecare in Holland, Mich.

2007

Beverly Lezondra-Wheatley and her husband welcomed their second child, Carter Anthony Wheatley, on Sept. 30, 2016.

Katherine Narbone was installed as an officer of the Executive Board of Oak Lawn (Ill.) Chamber of Commerce.

2009

Kristina Dimova is the new owner of the Westerly Eye Care in Westerly, R.I.

Jeffrey Guthrie was elected as the President of the Ontario Association of Optometrists in Nov., 2016. He practices in Bancroft, Ont.

Stephanie Lyons expanded the vision therapy segment of her practice, Lyons Family Eye Care, in Chicago, now with four vision therapists on staff.

2010's

2010

Gerianne Mulanix opened Linden Family Eye Care in her hometown of Linden, Mich. in Oct., 2016. She specializes in ocular disease and low vision rehabilitation.

Lindsay Sicks and her husband welcomed Grace Antoinette Tuttle, 7 pounds, 14 ounces, on Feb. 5.

Ashley Speilburg and her husband welcomed their second child, Matilda (Mattie) Claire, 9 pounds, 3 ounces, on Jan. 19.

Angela To and husband **Alan Labrum, OD '13**, welcomed Wesley Finn Labrum, 7 pounds, 3 ounces, on Dec. 3, 2016.

2011

Marian Longo became engaged on Dec. 15, 2016. Her fiancé surprised her with a proposal on the Goodman Theatre stage during her family's annual trip to see *A Christmas Carol*.

2012

Jessica Albers received the Wyoming Young Optometrist of the Year award from the Wyoming Optometric Association during its winter convention. She practices at the Cheyenne and Laramie Vision Clinics.

2013

Alan Labrum and wife **Angela To, OD '10**, welcomed Wesley Finn Labrum, 7 pounds, 3 ounces, on Dec. 3, 2016.

2014

Katie Davis received the Optometric

Horizon Award from the South Carolina Optometric Physicians Association for her initiative and involvement in the organization and community within five years of graduation.

2016

Richard Miller was named President of the Anne Arundel County Optometric Association, a subgroup of the Maryland Optometric Association.

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The following abbreviations denote predecessor names of the Illinois College of Optometry.

*CCO: Chicago College of Optometry
MCO: Monroe College of Optometry
NICO: Northern Illinois College of Optometry*

ICO 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Financial Summary
Operating Revenue
Operating Expenditures
Lifetime Giving
Annual Giving
Legacy Society
Leadership Circle

FIND IT HERE:

[HTTP://WWW.ICO.EDU/GIVING/ANNUAL-REPORT-2016/](http://www.ico.edu/giving/annual-report-2016/)

In Memoriam

1930's

1938

Thomas R. Pilot (NICO), Notre Dame, Ind., Oct. 2. He served in the U.S. Navy and became a carrier pilot on the USS Saratoga, flying fighters and dive bombers in the South Pacific in World War II. Second only to his family, flying was the love of his life. Following the war, he established a highly successful optometry practice in South Bend where he practiced for 36 years. He ran the Boston Marathon at the age of 53, was an accomplished dancer, and enjoyed golfing.

.....

1940's

1945

Ida F. Pacina (NICO), Tucson, Ariz. She practiced in Pocatello and Boise, Idaho during her career, and served as the Executive Director for the Northern Nevada Optometric Association.

1948

Edward M. Jacobson (NICO), Rice Lake, Wis., Feb. 19. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1942-1945. He was assigned to the Field Marine Force in the Pacific Theater in WWII. He served in the 9th Regiment of the 3rd Marine Division on Guadalcanal and was later based in Guam.

Leonard Klein (MCO), Las Vegas, Nev.

1949

Yale C. Knight (NICO), Milwaukee, Wis., Sept. 13. He practiced in West Allis, Wis. for 64 years until his retirement at age 91.

.....

1950's

1950

Edward Elliott (NICO), Portage, Wis., March 2. He served his country as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II, and continued his love of flying after the war. He was a life member of the WOA, and a charter member of the Contact Lens Section of the AOA. He practiced optometry in both Janesville and Portage, Wis.

Edward S. Gates (CCO), Rockaway Township, N.J., Oct. 29. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1943 to 1946. He established an optometric practice in Dover, and later in Succasunna, N.J. He was the President of the Tri-County Optometric Society, and was honored by the New Jersey Society of Optometric Physicians with the prestigious Nurock Award for distinguished dedication to the profession of optometry. He was born in a Model T Ford, and remained an antique car enthusiast his entire life.

1951

Allan H. Larson (NICO), Merced, Calif., Aug. 6. During World War II, he served in the U.S. Navy Air Corp., stationed in the Aleutian Islands. He opened his practice in Merced in 1955 and was an established real estate investor.

1953

William Biglow (NICO), Ashland, Wis., Nov. 26, 2014. He was a U.S. Army Veteran who served in Germany in World War II. He practiced in Ashland until his retirement after 42 years. He was a member of the Presbyterian Congregational Church for 89 years, and served on the Board of Trustees and as an Elder. He was an accomplished musician, playing saxophone and clarinet with the Northernaires dance band.

1954

Marshall H. Petersen (NICO), West St. Paul and Inver Grove Heights, Minn., Oct. 13. He practiced optometry in West St. Paul for 60 years. He was a Diplomate of the Contact Lens Section of the AAO, and Regional Admittance Chairman for over 20 years.

.....

1960's

1962

Quentin D. Zimmerman, Jamestown, N.D., Jan. 11. He served in the U.S. Army for two years during the Korean War. He practiced in Jamestown until his retirement in 1987. In his retirement, he enjoyed the outdoors, pheasant hunting, traveling in his RV, eating German/Russian food, and going to coffee at 10 and 3 every day.

Mark your calendar for **ICO's biggest event ever!**

ICO HOMECOMING & AAO'S ACADEMY

CHICAGO

OCTOBER
13 - 14

ICO'S HOMECOMING

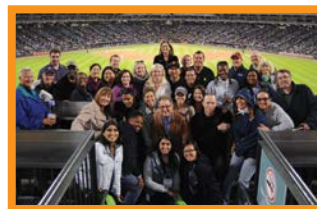
Class Reunions
VIP Reception with Donors
Alumni Awards
Activities in Chicago

OPTOMETRY IN ILLINOIS OPEN HOUSE

Taste of Chicago Food Booths
Wine Tasting
Externship Preceptor Meet & Greet
IOA and IL - AAO Presentations
Campus Tours

AAO's Academy will be in Chicago during Homecoming weekend. When you get a break in your convention schedule, stop by and celebrate with us! There will be complimentary shuttles to campus departing from McCormick Place Convention Center.

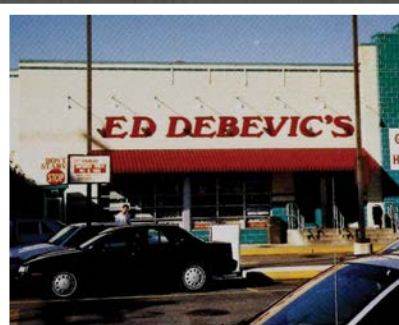
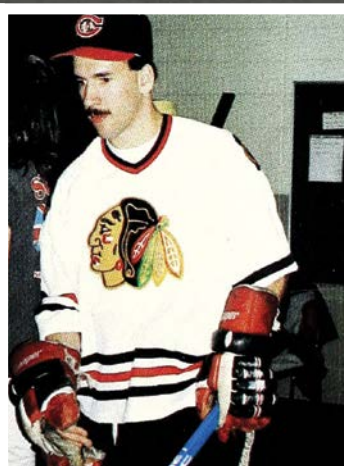
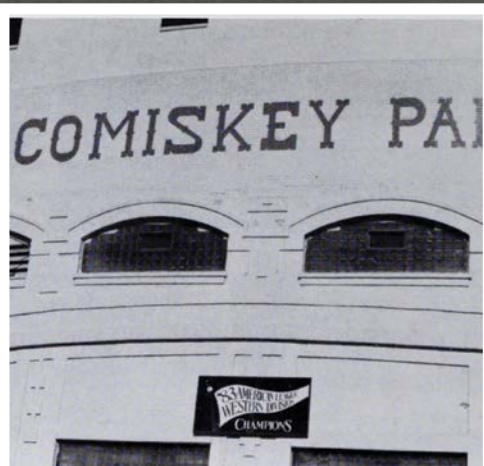
More details coming soon!



Hosted by the Illinois College of Optometry, the Illinois Optometric Association, and the Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Optometry.

Vault

There's no better place to live, work, and study optometry than Chicago. We cheer for champion sports teams, engage with world-class art, and dine on the best pizza and hot dogs in America. The lake is unforgettable, the skyline iconic. For over a century, ICO has been synonymous with all The Windy City has to offer. So, we pulled a set of Chicago-style photos from our Vault.



Datebook

**PRACTICE
OPPORTUNITIES
SYMPOSIUM**
April 7

APRIL

April 7

20th Annual Practice
Opportunities Symposium
ICO Campus

April 23

Continuing Education Program
6 hours, tested
ICO Campus

MAY

May 6-13

Final Exams

May 17

Capstone Program
ICO Campus

May 20

Alumni Council Meeting
ICO Campus

May 20

ICO Commencement
Rockefeller Chapel

May 22

First Day of Summer Quarter
Classes

May 27-29

Memorial Day Holiday
Campus/Clinic Closed

JUNE

June 3

Admissions Open House
ICO Campus

June 23

AOA - Optometry's Meeting
Alumni and Friends Reception
Washington DC

June 26-30

Focus on the Future
Summer Program
ICO Campus

JULY

July 3-4

Independence Day Holiday
Campus/Clinic Closed

July 29-Aug. 5

Final Exams



ICO

Illinois College of Optometry

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www.ico.edu

Last Look



This year marks the Illinois College of Optometry's 145th anniversary. Our institution prides itself on being the oldest optometry school in the United States. It has been a long and wonderful journey, from Dr. Henry Olin's Chicago College of Ophthalmology and Otology to today. This striking collage shows how our name, logo, and legacy have changed over time.