

# ICO MATTERS

PROD. MISSION: CAREER

SCENE

ICO

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2

DIRECTOR:

YOU

DATE:

NOW

## Second Act

Not everyone arrives at  
ICO straight out of  
undergrad.

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Commencement 2013 pg 10

Alumni Link to the '85 Bears pg 20

Also Inside: Everything You Need to Know About Homecoming

Let's Go Cruisin' on the Spirit of Chicago!



# HOMECOMING 2013

Sept. 27-29 • ALL ALUMNI ARE INVITED!

Register for Homecoming Online Today!  
[www.ico.edu/alumni/homecoming2013](http://www.ico.edu/alumni/homecoming2013)

Registration questions may be directed to director of alumni development  
Connie Scavuzzo at 312-949-7080 or [alumni@ico.edu](mailto:alumni@ico.edu).

## HOTEL INFORMATION

A limited number of rooms will be held until **Sept. 12** at the **Hard Rock Hotel Chicago**, located at 230 N. Michigan Ave. Hotel reservations can be made online at [hardrockhotelchicago.com](http://hardrockhotelchicago.com) or by calling 312-334-6767. Use group code **COLL092613** to receive the **ICO special discounted rate of \$199 per night**. Room availability is limited, so be sure to make your reservation soon.

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

5 - 6:30 p.m.  
Leadership Circle Reception  
*President's Board Room*  
(by invitation only)

6:30 - 9 p.m.  
Blind Spot Barbeque Kick-off Party  
*ICO Courtyard*

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

9 - 10:30 a.m.  
50 Year Club Breakfast  
*Byrdland/Firebird Room*  
*Hard Rock Hotel*  
(by invitation only)

11:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Shuttle service provided to/from Hard  
Rock Hotel and campus

12 - 4 p.m.  
Campus Tours

1 - 2 p.m.  
The Business Aspects of Optometry  
Richard S. Kattouf, OD '72, DOS  
*ICO Lecture Center (non-CE)*

2 - 4 p.m.  
Student/Alumni Mingle  
Reception featuring networking,  
exhibitors and raffle prizes  
*ICO Gym*

5 - 10:30 p.m.  
Shuttle service provided to/from Hard  
Rock Hotel and Navy Pier

5:30 - 10 p.m.  
Class Reunion Reception and Dinner  
Cruise and Alumni Association Awards  
*Spirit of Chicago, Navy Pier*

### SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

4 HOURS OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

8 - 9 a.m.  
Continental Breakfast and Sign-in  
*ICO Lecture Center Foyer*

9 - 10:40 a.m.  
Blue Collar Billing and Coding: The Work  
Smarter Not Harder Approach  
Christopher J. Borgman, OD '10, FFAO  
*ICO Lecture Center*

10:40 - 11 a.m.  
Refreshment Break

11 a.m. - 12:40 p.m.  
Protect Yourself from a Malpractice  
Lawsuit  
Stephen H. Eap, OD '90, JD  
*ICO Lecture Center*

12:50 - 2 p.m.  
Campus Tours

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PARTNER IN EDUCATION



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*One of the best partnerships in the NFL did their work off the gridiron.*

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[www.ico.edu](http://www.ico.edu)



## OVERBOARD

*After weeks of obsessive studying, the class of 2014 took NBEO Part I in early March. Their diligence paid off: ICO's pass rate for first-time takers was 96.6 percent, and the college's overall pass rate was 95.3 percent. In comparison, the national overall pass rate was 79 percent. Siva Meiyeppen reflects on the collective experience of the class—it will surely conjure memories for many alumni!*

The highlighters are askew. The pen caps are lost. The bump on your pinky finger, a side effect of hours of writing notes in your now uncoiled coiled notebook, has grown in size and stature. You've watched endless minutes tick by: 3 a.m., 4 a.m., 5 a.m. Your family members are but distant memories, as is your razor, which has not seen the light of day in three weeks.

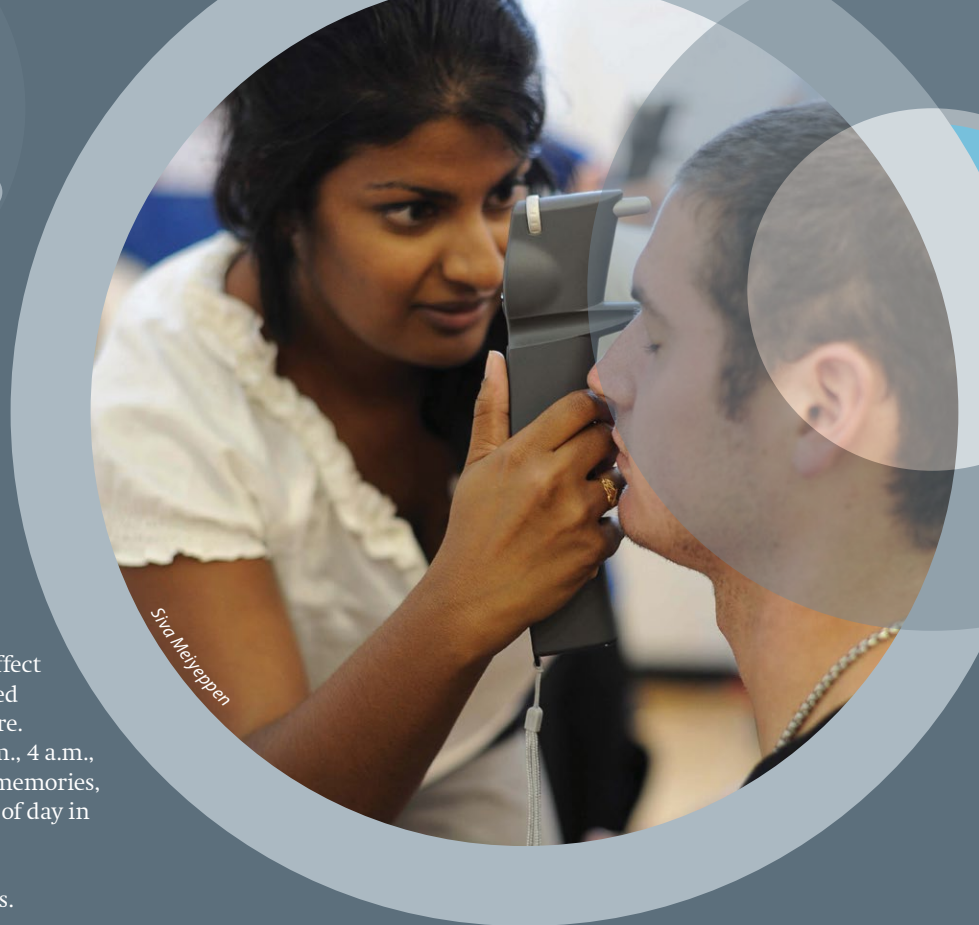
Yes, ladies and gentleman, it's time for boards.

The National Board Exam of Optometry, more affectionately known by the third year class as "Ugh," was never far from our minds, even during first and second year. As professors demonstrated hemiballism by flailing on the lecture stage, put up clicker questions at the end of class ("I've got one for you!"), or drew a rod photoreceptor's spatial summation proving their amazing sensitivity but poor resolution ("There's no such thing as free lunch!"), the thought that the subject at hand may be an important concept for boards always lurked.

Thoughts, however, sometimes fail to progress into action. To an alarming degree, it was only in the final three weeks of boards prep that we grasped concepts that we probably should have learned at an earlier point in our optometric education—say, two years ago. But anxiety, an innate desire to please our parents, a terrifying fear that we'd have to do this again, or maybe even the desire to become a better clinician drove the class of 2014 to study.

We filled the library like it'd never been filled before. We got to know Remington and Adler on a first name basis. We nestled next to that electric fireplace like it was our job. We consumed coffee in such a way that our stomach linings will never recover.

Did you know you can study under the tables in the cafeteria



Siva Meiyeppen

when the library closes? Yes, yes you can.

Did we crawl on our hands and knees to find the box labeled "first year" to prove to our colleagues that the lens zonules arise from the pars plana, not the pars plicata? We did indeed.

Did we burst into tears for no reason at all, but then stop because we began to think about potassium ions? More than we'd like to admit.

But we took the exam. And on March 20, we handed in our fourth page of Scantron bubbles, pocketed our free calculator and not one but two complimentary pencils, and celebrated.

ICO has prepared us for boards—three years of didactic and clinical excellence, thousands of lectures, hundreds of hours practicing retinoscopy and cursing the elusive scissor reflex, fearing for the state of our corneas as classmates suctioned on the three-mirror gonio lens and it wouldn't come off, and maybe even doing case history on a strabismic amblyope with eccentric fixation and anomalous correspondence who also has diabetic retinopathy, a macular hole, a history of strokes, trauma to the orbit, and a recent bout of mumps.

And one more thing: Don't study on the cafeteria floor unless you want to scare your friends.

Read more of Siva's musings at [blog.ico.edu](http://blog.ico.edu).

In the past few months, I've made advocacy trips to Washington, D.C., and to the Illinois State Capitol in Springfield. Every time I make one of these visits to our seats of government, it reminds me of the degree to which optometry is a legislated profession. The collective advocacy work of so many optometrists during the last three decades has changed and enhanced the profession, and allows us to provide outstanding patient care to an ever-expanding pool of patients. While anxiety swirls in anticipation of the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, there is great opportunity for the primary eye care provided by optometrists to be even more widely recognized by national and state regulatory agencies. To wit: Optometrists are now defined as physicians under both Medicare and Medicaid.

ICO has recently hosted two elected officials who are well known for their concern and care for our nation's veterans. Illinois governor Pat Quinn has visited and comforted hundreds of families of those in the armed services who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in defense of this country. While touring campus this spring, he expressed his appreciation for the treatment optometrists provide in veterans' hospitals all over the country. Optometrists provide more than 70 percent of the primary eye care to our veterans.

U.S. Rep. Tammy Duckworth presented a compelling message to graduates and guests at our annual commencement ceremonies on May 18. Prior to her election to Congress last fall, representing Illinois' 8th congressional district, she served as Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. In 2004, the helicopter she was flying in combat during the Iraq War was shot down, and she lost both her legs. Duckworth shared the inspiring story of how her vision was saved thanks to the polycarbonate lenses her optometrist, Michelle Jurkovic, OD '93, insisted she wear. Later, as Duckworth was recovering at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Dr. Jurkovic overnighted her glasses to replace the pair that had been damaged in combat.

Dr. Jurkovic's treatment of Duckworth is a shining example of the profound effect ICO graduates can have on people all over the world. At the end of her address, Duckworth said, "Your decision to study optometry will serve your country in ways you can't even imagine." As doctors practicing under the evolving regulations of the ACA blaze new trails for the optometrists who follow, this statement rings true now more than ever.



**Arol Augsburger, OD**  
President

## ADVOCATING FOR OUR PROFESSION

### A Message From the President



## First Optometrist Appointed to State Board of Health

**Valarie Conrad, OD, MPH**, ICO's vice president of compliance and community-based services, was appointed to the Illinois State Board of Health by Gov. Pat Quinn. She is the first optometrist to be named to the advisory group.

The board's responsibilities include advising the department director on public health policy, emergencies, and control of health hazards; reviewing department rules and program proposals; and recommending solutions to public health issues.

"It's important for doctors of optometry all over the state to be represented on this very broad-based health board," said Dr. Conrad. "The board is instrumental in developing rules concerning the legislation of health matters and in the implementation of health laws."

The Illinois State Senate approved Dr. Conrad's appointment in March and she attended her first meeting shortly thereafter. Board members meet quarterly via video-conference from Chicago and Springfield. In Chicago, board members convene at the

Department of Public Health offices in the Loop.

"The scariest thing about it is that the meetings are recorded, and the dialogue is published verbatim on a public website," said Dr. Conrad with a chuckle, following her first meeting. "Every 'um' or 'ah' is there. If I say, 'Oops, I spilled my coffee,' it will be published. So everyone makes a lot of hand motions."

Dr. Conrad, who practiced optometry for 21 years, has worked at ICO since 1988 and has served as a vice president since 2003. Her department ensures that ICO's programs fulfill regulatory and ethical expectations and manages outside legal counsel and auditors. The 20-member state board includes a registered nurse, veterinarian, chiropractor, dentist and medical doctors. Her term will run until Feb. 15, 2016.



## Illinois Governor Visits IEI and ICO

On April 1, **Gov. Pat Quinn** visited the IEI and ICO before catching the White Sox Opening Day at U.S. Cellular Field, where the South Siders faced off against the Kansas City Royals. Quinn toured the pediatrics service area and spoke with representatives from the Illinois Optometric Association, IEI and ICO leadership, and students Allie Morales and Kyle Klute in President Augsburger's office, where he briefly addressed Medicaid and the SMART Act. The SMART Act was recently passed by the governor to help make Medicaid more sustainable so that low-income individuals and families in Illinois can continue to receive health care.

"I had the opportunity today to tour the Illinois Eye Institute, a clinic on

Chicago's South Side that plays a critical role in providing eye care to Illinois Medicaid patients," said Quinn. "During the visit I saw firsthand the critical Medicaid services they provide to some of our most vulnerable citizens. My administration has worked very hard to put the Medicaid program on sound footing so that it is there to serve those who need it most."



Gov. Pat Quinn greets young patients at the IEI.

## ICO Board Approves New Strategic Plan

The ICO strategic planning process, which began in September 2012, culminated in board approval at the Board of Trustees meeting in Columbus, Ohio, on Feb. 8. Once the plan was approved, it was turned over to ICO's leadership team to develop priority objectives and outcome measures to support the approved strategic goals.

"The strategic plan was designed to be a document that we can use to guide us in our decision-making moving forward," says **Stephanie Messner, OD**, Strategic Planning Committee chair.

Dr. Messner says the new strategic plan will give ICO graduates a solid position to practice in a rapidly changing healthcare environment. There are three stand-out objectives that she viewed as the thrust of the plan: interprofessional education, physical plant and student recruitment.

"We need to put students in environments where they are working with more than optometrists and ophthalmologists. We can explore interprofessional education opportunities with other specialties (that are germane to optometry)," says Dr. Messner. "We also need to rethink our current facilities—right now we are bursting at the seams in the IEI. We need to ensure that space is being used as efficiently as possible across the institution."

Student recruitment and enrollment is also critical to the institution's future success. "It is important that we determine what we need to do to continue to fill each class with quality individuals," says Dr. Messner.

The 2013-18 strategic plan was steered by an appointed group of faculty, staff and representatives from the board, academic administration, alumni council and the student body.

"The process was really interesting," says Dr. Messner, "and I enjoyed hearing different perspectives from committee members and seeing the different paths to tackling an issue and gaining consensus."

The strategic plan can be viewed online.

## Thank You to the Strategic Planning Committee

### President's Administrative Cabinet

Stephanie Messner, OD, FAAO  
Leonard Messner, OD, FAAO

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Kelly Frantz, OD, FAAO, FCOVD  
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Jenni Gaster Sopko

### Student Body

Kevin Cassin '14  
Andrew Ritter '15

## Student Awarded Schweitzer Fellowship

As if the life of a student weren't busy enough, **Rachel Berkowitz '15** is taking on a massive service project for the 2013-14 school year. Such projects are the centerpiece of the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship program, which awards graduate students in health disciplines the opportunity to partner with community-based organizations to identify unmet health needs, and design and implement yearlong, 200-hour service projects to serve these needs. Only one ICO student, Kevin Jacobs, OD '99, has been awarded the fellowship previously.

In considering the program, Berkowitz was particularly drawn by its interdisciplinary nature, as well as by its mentoring aspect. "I was excited to meet a cohort of people who share an interest in working with underserved communities, and it seemed like a great opportunity to get resources and network and meet people," she says. "Also, they have a really strong mentoring component, so I'll have several mentors as I work on my project and that just seemed like a really valuable opportunity."

Berkowitz will have four mentors: one at her project site, one on the Schweitzer Board, a student who has completed a Schweitzer Fellowship, and an academic mentor. The last role will be filled by faculty member Sandra Block, OD '81, with whom Berkowowitz has worked closely at ICO's school-based clinic. "As

a mentor, my biggest role is to help her find the right road to go down," says Dr. Block, "like if she has questions, knowing who to send her to in order to find the answers." Currently, she's serving as a sounding board as Berkowitz finalizes her project. "She's bouncing ideas off of me and trying to determine what's doable with the amount of time she has available," says Dr. Block.

Berkowitz is planning to work with either a homeless shelter or a community clinic, or perhaps a combination of the two. She intends to provide a variety of services: "One is an education component where I'll be teaching about the importance of regular exams and also how systemic conditions can affect them and how people should be getting eye exams," she says. "The second piece will be making referrals and making connections and providing resources and information so that low income patients and clients can go get those exams. Then I'm hoping to possibly organize some vision screenings for the community I'll be working with."

Once the final project is determined, Dr. Block is confident that Berkowitz will execute it with focus, determination and compassion. "To me, Rachel is the perfect person for this opportunity," she says, "because she has the drive, she has the passion, and she has the empathy to complete this project."



## "Thrift Opt" Goes Viral

In March, **Jonathan Dong '16** got together with fellow first year **Rich Miller** and several dozen additional members of the class of 2016 to film "Thrift Opt." A parody of the Macklemore and Ryan Lewis hit "Thrift Shop," the video was entered into the University of South Carolina School of Medicine's Memmys competition (as of publication, results had not yet been announced). One of the prizes will be awarded to the entry that garnered the most likes on YouTube, so Jonathan put it on the video-sharing website as well. Much to his surprise, "Thrift Opt" went viral, inspiring hundreds of shares



and dozens of tweets. Through late June, the video had more than 65,000 views and 1,000 likes! We sense a multi-hyphenate career in Dong's future.



Meet Your  
New Director  
of Career  
Development



Alumni and students have a new go-to for professional services: In April, **Daphne Anderson, MS, MDiv**, was named director of career development. Before joining ICO, she was in a similar role at Robert Morris University, where, as the graduate career consultant, she helped graduate students and alumni of the graduate program with career matters. Prior to Robert Morris, she worked at the outplacement firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas, traveling the country providing outplacement services to employees who had been displaced from their positions.

"I wanted to work with people prior to them getting so involved in their career," she says of her move to higher education. "What I found was that the clients I was working with had been in their jobs for about 20 years, and they didn't know what to do next. In working with them I found that they'd gotten away from their true career desires. I asked myself how I could help prevent that, and education seemed like the way to go—to get them to go for their passion early on rather than getting so engulfed in a given profession."

At ICO, she's looking forward to engaging students earlier in their academic careers. "I know that the program is grueling," she says. "But what we find throughout career services, no matter what the institution is,

is that students tend to wait until that last year, or even after their degree is in hand, to think about what's next. So we'd like to start working with students even in their first year. It's never too early to start thinking about the ultimate career goal. Sometimes it's just as simple as getting down that 30-second pitch when you're networking."

Additionally, Anderson hopes to further connections between students and alumni. "We also want to enhance the mentoring program," she says. "We have alumni who are doing some awesome things across the globe, and we encourage them to mentor students who want to do the same and really make an impact on the world of vision."

And for alumni who are seeking career shifts of their own, be it from private practice to an industry position, or pursuing a residency mid-career, she emphasizes that ICO's resources can always be drawn upon. "A lot of times when people want to make transitions in their careers, they tend to forget about career services at their educational institutions," says Anderson. "I often try to remind people who are searching for a new opportunity to reach back to the institution that provided them with the foundation they have. It's very important for alumni to remember that we're always here."

Alumni Inducted  
to NAP

The Illinois Eye Institute's senior director of government and external affairs, **Vince Brandys, OD '90**, along with fellow alumni **Timothy Wingert, OD '79** and **Pete Kehoe, OD '84**, have been inducted into the National Academies of Practice. They were installed April 6 during the NAP Membership Banquet and Induction Ceremony in Alexandria, Va. Dr. Wingert serves as associate dean for academic affairs at the University of the Incarnate Word Rosenberg School of Optometry in San Antonio. Dr. Kehoe has been president of Kehoe Eye Care for 27 years and is a consultant to the eye care industry; he also served as president of the American Optometric Association in 2008-2009.

The NAP is a nonprofit professional organization of distinguished practitioners

and scholars from 10 health disciplines, including optometry. Only 150 members may be elected to each of the 10 academies. The NAP advises public policy makers on health care issues from the perspective of experts across numerous disciplines.

"Working with all health care providers is necessary to provide the best care for each and every patient," says Dr. Brandys. "The NAP enables providers to share information and educate ourselves on the latest public health and clinical research. Acting as a unified voice in Washington reinforces our commitment to our patients and their families."

Other ICO inductees in recent years include Christine Allison, OD, Arol Augsburg, OD, Sandra Block, OD '81, Janice Jurkus, OD '74 and Dominic Maino, OD '78.

## Practice Opportunities Symposium

On April 5, more than 50 optometrists and 250 students gathered for ICO's annual Practice Opportunities Symposium. Following a VIP lunch for OD panelists and sponsors, the panelists headed to classrooms and divided into groups according to area of expertise: Canadian practitioners, corporate practice, externship preceptors, practice management, private

practice, specialty/multidisciplinary practice and residencies. The panelists fielded questions from students and addressed such subjects as hiring staff, expectations of externs and working in VA hospitals. Following the panels, students networked with panelists and representatives from more than 20 companies at the exhibitor fair in the gym.



## Student Discusses New Prescription Legislation in Florida with Alum



David Rouse, OD '92

In May, **Ben Emer '16** spoke with Florida Optometric Association president **David Rouse, OD '92** about Florida Senate Bill 278, which authorizes optometrists in the state to prescribe ocular pharmaceutical agents. Florida governor Rick Scott signed the bill into law on April 19. The conversation between Emer and Dr. Rouse was originally published on *OptometryStudents.com*, a website devoted to informing current optometry students and undergrads about schools and the profession. The site was founded in 2009 by Dr. Matt Geller, a 2013 graduate of the SUNY College of Optometry. Emer's involvement dates to 2012, and he will assume leadership responsibilities this year. In the last 12 months the site has expanded rapidly and OS representatives have also appeared on behalf of the site at such professional events as Optometry's Meeting, Vision Expo East and the forthcoming Vision Expo West.



Ben Emer '16

### What does it take to get something like this from just an idea, to the law that it is today?

This was a grassroots effort, and by continually engaging the legislative process over the last few decades we became successful. The FOA was hyper-focused in this year. There has to be a "need" for legislation and the "need" was [that] patients did not have the proper access to care and the eye care that was delivered was inefficient and costly. Also geographically, (as in many other states) there are not a lot of ophthalmologists in rural areas, so patient symptoms were actually getting worse before they could be seen by an ophthalmologist. Next, this becomes an advocacy issue by lobbying and educating legislators for this bill. Through grassroots efforts, optometrists and students educated all their local representatives and senators on the issue and its merit. All this snowballed, leadership got involved and here we are today... This is a great thing for Florida. The law will give its citizens a greater access to care and provides a savings to the health care system.

### Any advice to students on why they should get involved, and how they can do it?

Here's a great example: We have NOVA Southeastern students here in Florida, who

played a very important role in this bill getting passed. They formed phone trees, traveled to Tallahassee and visited with local representatives to make sure that these reps could realize the issue was important, and reassure them that we do have the training and education necessary to safely and effectively prescribe oral medication. Having the students side-by-side with us helped the point come across in a big way. The old saying is true, educate before you legislate!

No matter where you practice, or go to school, you should be indoctrinated into the legislative process, because once you graduate, regardless of the state, you will have a legislative issue. I think it's the responsibility of all the schools to take it upon themselves to educate the students on that process, because it will serve them well once they get out.

### What got you into the legislative side of optometry, and led you to be in the position you are today as president of the FOA?

A local OD who was actively involved took me to lunch and told me what organized optometry is all about. He invited me to a local society meeting, I went to the meeting and saw how optometrists work together as a team, and I became a member. Eventually, I ran as a local society trustee, then became local society president. Later I was nominated to be on the state board, then worked my way up. So after about 15 to 20 years of being involved in local optometry, I ascended to the ranks of president. It was my natural interest in making the profession better and the inherent fight in me that wanted to make sure we're never taken advantage of that led me to this position.

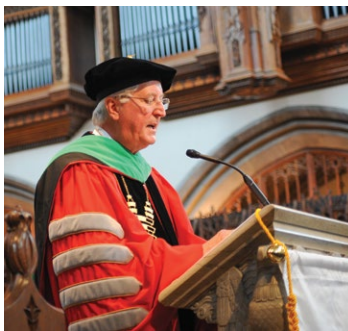
### Anything else to add?

I'm thrilled for the opportunity to treat our patients in the state of Florida and in the most advanced way we possibly can. This bill that passed is good for the citizens of Florida, but it's not just an optometry bill. It's really going to streamline the health care delivery system for our patients, and I'm thrilled that we can do this for them.

# CONGRATULATIONS, CLASS OF 2013!



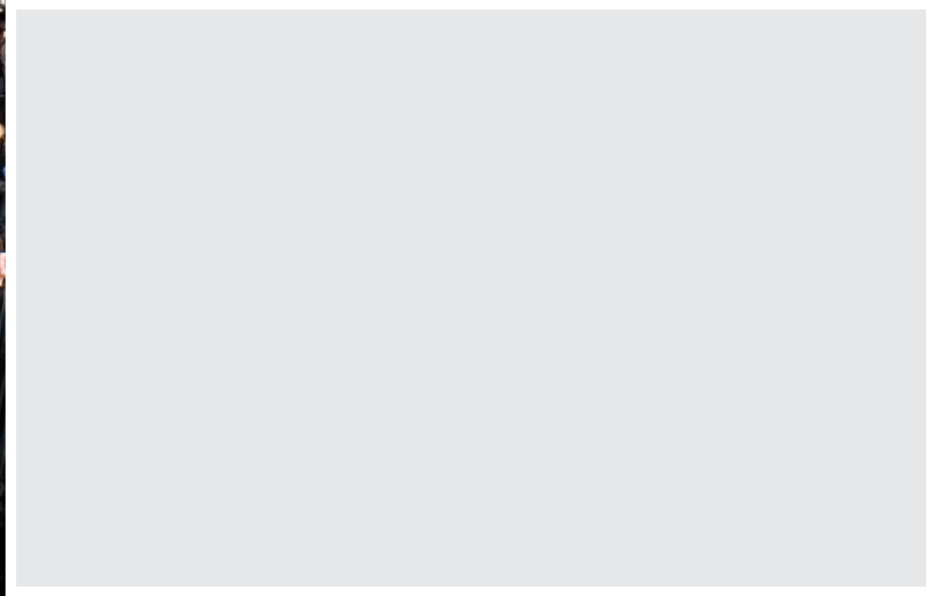
**C**hange and resilience. In his commencement remarks on May 18, those were the two words ICO president Arol Augsburger, OD, said came to mind when he thought of the class of 2013. He went on to cite examples like the profession's rapid implementation of electronic health records, ICO's launch of the Chicago Vision Outreach program, the Lecture Center renovation and optometry's shifting scope of practice—all of which the graduates experienced first-hand while at ICO.



Of course, some things remain the same, and for the 36th time in 37 years, the ceremony took place at Rockefeller Chapel, in all its Gothic splendor, on the campus of the University of Chicago. Another familiar aspect of the day was the palpable excitement felt by the 159 graduates. "Words can't express how happy and ecstatic we all are to be here right now," said new grad Dr. Danny Nguyen before the ceremony.

Dean Stephanie Messner, OD, honored Dr. Ashley Roehl as class valedictorian. In all, 34 percent of the class graduated with high honors. Another class highlight: Forty-eight graduates—a school record 30 percent—are going on to further their education in residency programs.

Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth, the U.S. Representative from Illinois' 8th district, was awarded the honorary degree Doctor of Humane Letters by ICO's Board of Trustees chairman, Richard S. Kattouf, OD '72, DOS. The Iraq War veteran then proceeded to give an inspiring keynote address, recounting the attack on her Blackhawk helicopter in 2004 that took both her legs. She noted that her eyes were saved thanks to her longtime optometrist, Michele Jurkovic, OD '93, who insisted Duckworth get glasses with titanium frames and polycarbonate lenses before heading into combat.



“I said ‘No, I wear a ballistic face shield on my helmet,’” Duckworth recalled. “It’s supposed to help stop bullets. I’ll be fine.’ And she said ‘No, this is what you’re going to go with.’ She insisted. I now to this day have shrapnel all around my eye sockets, but not a single one penetrated my glasses.”



While Duckworth was recovering at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, she was in tremendous pain and felt disoriented—a condition that was exacerbated by the fact that her glasses had been damaged in the blast and she couldn’t see clearly. “It made my discomfort even greater,” she said. Her husband asked about how she could get new glasses, and was told that it would take three to four weeks. He called Dr. Jurkovic, and the next day Duckworth received a new pair in the mail.

“Her dedication to her patients—the dedication that she learned here, that you have learned here; the dedication that she developed over a lifetime of dedication to her patients—made everything different for me, and made everything more manageable,” Duckworth told the graduates. “And so I thank you, and I hope you join that great tradition.”



# A FAMILY AFFAIR

Whether they were hooded by parents, siblings, aunts or uncles, or spouses, having a family member do the honor made Commencement day that much more special for 12 graduates.



**Dr. Charlotte Ablott, hooded by husband, Eric Ablott, OD '11**



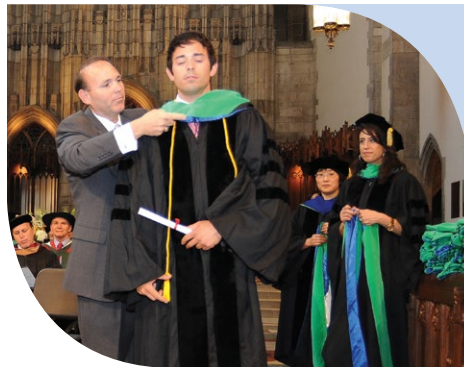
**Dr. Tristan Begotka, hooded by brother, Brandon Begotka, OD '09**

“I have always looked up to my brother and the things that he’s done. It’s helped to motivate me in my education through high school, college and graduate school here at ICO.”



**Dr. Betsy Berends, hooded by sister, Jill Germain, OD '07**

“My sister is the reason I came to ICO. She was a big promoter and she helped me all four years. If I had a question, I’d ask her—so my graduation is kind of like both of our graduations again.”



**Dr. Nicholas Blasco, hooded by father, James Blasco, OD '86**



**Dr. Michael Hwang, hooded by sister, Grace Pan, OD '06**

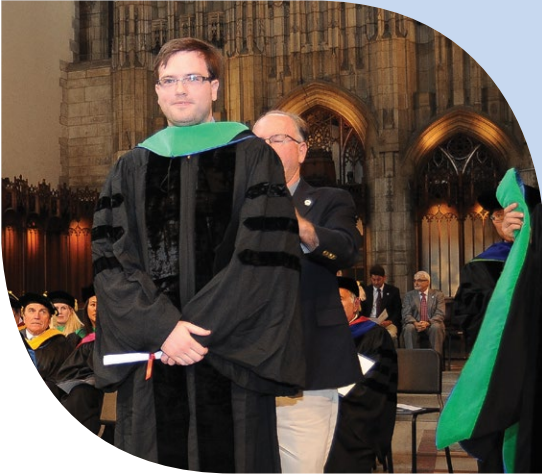
“I’m really honored to have my younger sister actually hood me during this ceremony. This is a career change for me, and she influenced me and helped me make this decision by sharing her experiences.”



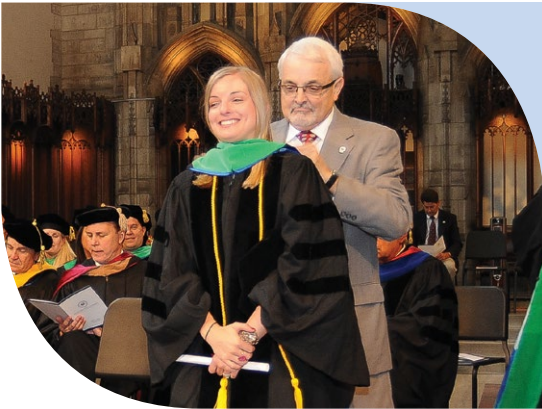
**Dr. Lauren Matzdorf, hooded by aunt, Susan Tesch, OD '87**

“Having family do it makes it a lot more special. She was the one who pushed me into optometry. She’s the reason why I’m here.”

**Dr. Kyle Otteson, hooded by father, Guy Otteson, OD '80**



**Dr. Vimal Patel, hooded by sister, Dr. Rita Patel, OD '99**



**Dr. Hillary Blumthal Schweihs, hooded by uncle, Robert Blumthal, OD '81**

“My uncle went to ICO as well as my grandfather. I was into science in high school, and he was always saying, ‘Do optometry. It’s a really good profession for women.’ He’s always been a part of my optometric education as a mentor, so it’s neat that he can be here to hood me.”



**Dr. Matthew Sipola, hooded by father, Don Sipola, OD '73**

“My father is ICO class of 1973. I started working for him in his office in northern Minnesota when I was very young. When I was in 10th grade, I declared optometry as my career path. His father, Les Sipola, was in the class of 1947. I am very honored to be hooded by my father to continue the third generation of optometrists and family practice.”



**Dr. Andrew Steinhauer, hooded by father, Thomas Steinhauer, OD '80**

**Dr. Lauren Wojcik, hooded by father, Robert Wojcik, OD '75**



# PIONEERING VISIONARIES

In 2008, ICO's director of admissions and marketing, Teisha Johnson, launched **Focus on Your Future**, a week-long summer program geared toward introducing under-represented minority groups to the college and the profession of optometry. "I think they were all very flexible in that they knew it was the first time around," says Johnson of the program's first 20 participants. "They knew that of course there would be kinks. But the group was very receptive and also very willing to give feedback and help us develop the program and make it solid."

Focus on Your Future has thrived in the last five years: It's a staple on the ICO admissions calendar, and the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry's Diversity and Cultural Competency Committee has awarded the program consecutive mini grants. From the inaugural session, three participants joined ICO's class of 2013: Agen Herring, Candace Hines and Laura Martinez. We spoke to the freshly minted optometrists about the program, the college, and their post-graduation plans.



**Dr. Agen Herring**

*On Focus on Your Future*

The organizers did a really great job of laying out what students need to get into ICO. They looked at students' transcripts and told us if we got a certain score in this or a certain score in that, we'd have a really good chance of getting in. It was also cool meeting some people ahead of [entering ICO]. And it was great to have the chance to go into some of the labs and classrooms.

*On experiences at ICO*

The first year I stayed in the RC, and I think I was really lucky in drawing my roommates. I made some cool friends. And the school has a lot of good events, like outings to Sox games. Being in the city and hanging out with classmates—I really enjoyed that.

*On post-ICO plans*

I'll be preparing for the North Carolina board exams until July, and then I'll be going into corporate practice with National Vision in Durham/Chapel Hill. I'll start hopefully in September.



**Dr. Candace Hines**

*On Focus on Your Future*

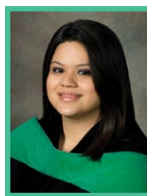
I learned a lot about what makes for a competitive applicant and what the admissions staff look for when deciding who to accept and who to decline. It impacted my decision to attend ICO in that it demonstrated to me that ICO values diversity in their institution and they are a college that puts resources toward putting action to rhetoric of increasing minority representation in the college. I wanted to be at that type of place.

*On experiences at ICO*

I can't even count the number of times that an African American patient who has been coming to the IEI for many years expressed to me the joy and comfort they felt just seeing me in the clinic because of how rare it is to be served by an African American student clinician. Especially with the school being situated in a historically African American neighborhood, it's only appropriate for the school to reach out and increase minority enrollment and staff employment. The patients really appreciate it.

*On post-ICO plans*

I will be moving to Atlanta with my husband who is going to be an internal medicine resident at Emory University Hospital. I'm currently in the process of looking for jobs in the Atlanta area. I hope to find something in corporate/retail optometry.



**Dr. Laura Martinez**

*On Focus on Your Future*

I feel this program confirmed my decision of attending optometry school and applying to ICO. As a minority student attending public schools and an undergrad with not much interest in optometry, I truly didn't attain this exposure. So students with our background have to figure it out on our own, and having this program helps in the understanding of the career, student life, and what ICO has to offer... At the same time, I feel this program would also be helpful if it reached younger minorities. A lot of times we don't have anyone leading the way or exposing us to these type of careers. I believe if young minorities are told they can also be doctors at a young age they can actually pursue it.

*On experiences at ICO*

Meeting the greatest group of friends has been the greatest highlight. ICO would have not been the same without my group of friends. [Another] one of my biggest highlights was that first eye exam I conducted on my first patient. I cannot express in words how wonderful that was. Knowing it was just the beginning, I felt I had reached my most precious goal of helping others.

*On post-ICO plans*

I will be pursuing a residency in pediatrics/primary care at NOVA Southeastern University.



# SECOND ACT

ALUMNI AND STUDENTS TAKE A WINDING PATH TO OPTOMETRY

BY JACQUI COOK



## SECOND ACT

**A**manda Junkin always knew she'd be a writer. She loved English and writing classes as a student, and parlayed that passion into a career as a deadline-driven, adrenaline-fueled newspaper reporter and editor. She figured that's what she was always meant to do... until she fell in love with optometry.

Junkin had eye issues from the time she was a child, so the optometrist's office was a familiar place to her. About 10 years into her journalism career, while working as city editor of the *Record-Courier* newspaper in Kent, Ohio, she took an interest in optometry as a career and started to wonder if maybe it was her second calling. For someone who had shunned science and math classes while earning a liberal arts degree in college, this was a big change. Rather than ignore that inner voice, though, Junkin took the leap of faith and resigned from the newspaper to return to school. She also became an optician so she could experience firsthand what it's like in an optometry office every day.

Fast forward a few years and she's now a full-time ICO student, preparing for her externship year and getting ready to face the world as an optometrist when she graduates in 2014 at age 40. Sometimes, even she is amazed at what she's doing.

"Coming from the liberal arts background like I did, I hadn't taken a math or science class since high school," says Junkin, who got her undergraduate degree at the College of Wooster in Ohio. "It isn't that a liberal arts education is easy, but it's a different type of thinking—essays, oral tests, papers. To do a 180 and be involved in math and science classes every day was quite a culture shock. There was definitely an adjustment."

While the majority of first year ICO students are in their early-to-mid 20s, each class typically has a few students who range from the late 20s to early 40s, says ICO's director of admission and marketing, Teisha Johnson. She says returning students generally do well in the program because they are more mature and they already know what it's like to have a professional career or more real world experience.

"When you have a career, you tend to be more stable and already have learned how to develop professional relationships with your colleagues," Johnson says. "But the admissions committee does speak to these students at length about what it's like to return to school and into such a tough program to make sure they are ready for the changes and demands of being a full-time professional student. For some, work life can be demanding, but generally you leave it at the office or have occasional projects that you bring home. In optometry school, you

always have projects and things outside of class that you have to do, such as studying. It's like having a part-time and a full-time job or a 50-hour work week."

**TO DO A 180 AND BE INVOLVED IN MATH AND SCIENCE CLASSES EVERY DAY WAS QUITE A CULTURE SHOCK. THERE WAS DEFINITELY AN ADJUSTMENT.**



## AN OFFICER AND A DOCTOR

**J**ohnson notes that in many cases, returning students often have to give up a comfortable life and leave or uproot their families while they are studying at ICO. That was the case with Gary Partnow, OD '13, who graduated in May at the age of 41. He and his wife, Kellie, sold their four-bedroom house in Colorado and moved to a studio apartment in Chicago while he studied at ICO. He also left behind an 11-year career as an officer in the Colorado Springs Police Department.

Dr. Partnow's father had a prosthetic eye, so he was always intrigued by optometry and vision health. But after graduating from college in Long Island, N.Y., the Brooklyn native decided to head west to Colorado. He spent time as an EMT and with a land-based ski patrol before pursuing his dream of being a pilot. He decided the path to doing that would be to become a police officer and obtain training to fly police helicopters in Colorado Springs.

After several years, though, he began to think there may still be something else out there for him. He got an inkling of what that might be at his wife's optometry appointment.

"It was a combination of things that put me on the path to ICO," he says. "It was my father's prosthetic eye, how intrigued I've always been about the eye, and when I went to my wife's appointment one day, I looked around and thought it seemed like a nice environment," Dr. Partnow says. "I started off with one class just to see where I was. I got good grades, so I took two classes. When I decided to apply to optometry schools, I took a look at ICO and was impressed with their reputation and the location and board scores, so I chose them."

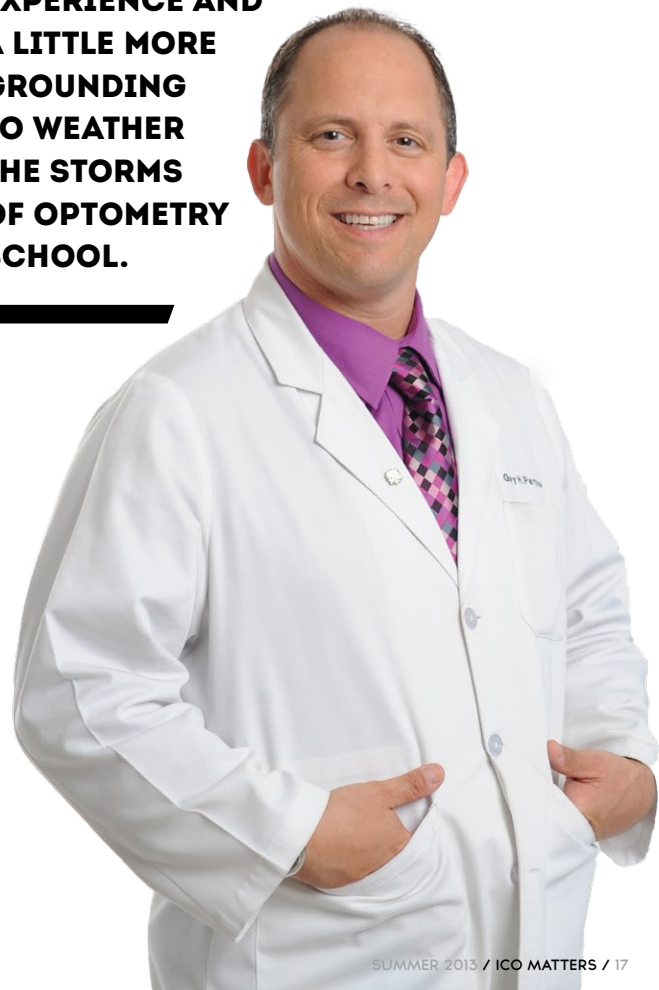
He says being an older student made it easier for him to focus on the big picture and remember why he was in such a challenging program. He also says his experience as a police officer was excellent training for working with—and caring for—people of every age, socioeconomic level and ethnic background.

"Being an older student, you have experience and a little more grounding to weather the storms of optometry school," he says.

He says the ICO community was very supportive of him and his goals, though he admits it was tough to return to a demanding professional program at 38, more than a decade past the typical ICO student's age.



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## SECOND ACT

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“The whole thing is a challenge,” he says. “We essentially left our life and had to really start over. It was a little painful, and being a poor student again is challenging. I never could have done it without my wife. She is my rock.”

As he holds his new optometry degree—and prepares to head back to Colorado with Kellie and their new baby girl—he has no doubts the experience was worth any sacrifices they had to make. He says anyone who feels intrigued by a new career should take some time to explore that calling, even if it’s just to test the waters with a class or two, as he did before he came to ICO.

“Try to live without regret,” he says. “I prayed a lot. Giving my resignation and packing up and moving to Chicago was huge. You have to do what your heart wants you to do and live without regret. But before you do it, be sure you’re prepared for the challenges. It was much harder than I thought.”

### SAME BUT DIFFERENT



For some returning students, becoming an optometrist is an evolution from what they were doing, rather than the radical change it was for Junkin or Dr. Partnow. That was the case for two alumni, Ramona Baumfalk, OD '06, and Andrea McCann,



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**I WAS  
LONELY IN  
THE LAB. I  
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I WANTED TO  
SHARE MY  
EXPERTISE.**

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OD '04. Both were research chemists before they came to ICO, and each cited a need to combine their love of science with the desire to be around people for making the change from laboratory to doctor's office.

Dr. Baumfalk graduated from Missouri State University with a degree in cellular and molecular biology and a minor in chemistry. Her plan was to do research into cancer and genetics, so she began working as a research assistant at a lab in Kansas City. One of her primary goals was to get published in a research journal, and that happened just two years out of college with an article in *Infection and Immunity*. So she was then left with the question of “What’s next?”

She answered that by taking a position as an associate research chemist at Quintiles Inc., testing the efficacy of new cancer drugs prior to clinical trial. After three years, that “What next?” question presented itself again when her employer asked her to pursue a PhD in chemistry. This time, the answer was a lot less clear.

“I was lonely in the lab,” Dr. Baumfalk says. “I wanted to talk more. I wanted to be able to share my expertise.”

Around that same time, she decided to get a part-time job for extra money toward her upcoming wedding. That job was selling eyeglasses—and that’s when her new career began presenting itself.

“I met some doctors and they asked why I didn’t go into optometry,” she says. “I noticed the doctors I worked with had such a wonderful bedside manner. When you go to your regular doctor, you have maybe five to seven minutes with the doctor. At an optometrist’s office, you easily have 20 minutes of face-time with that doctor. That’s something you don’t see in a lot of fields.”

She narrowed it down to dermatology and optometry, but optometry won out because of her experience with the doctors in that practice and also the family flexibility it affords.

“I only applied to ICO,” Dr. Baumfalk says. “I had heard from a lot of different doctors I worked with that ICO was the best school. I reviewed the pass rate for board exams and was impressed at the high pass rate at ICO. I knew I had to apply there.”

Dr. Baumfalk, now 38, was 26 when she got to ICO and finished her residency at 31. She says intellectual curiosity made it an easy fit, no matter how old she was, and of course her science background helped a great deal.

“I love learning, so it was phenomenal for me,” she says. “It was great to have my life experience, but overall it was the feeling I was still growing. As an optometrist, you have to

always have that thirst.”

Now back in Kansas City with her husband, Barry, and their three children ages five, three, and two, she is a primary care optometrist in a hospital-based MD/OD practice. She says she has no regrets about how her career path developed.

“I think my past in research really helped me find my niche and helped me become closer with different staff members,” she says. “There are so many things you can do if you have an interest, but you have to make it happen.”

Dr. McCann echoes that same sentiment when she recounts how she came to ICO from a position at the University of Calgary Institute of Environmental Toxicology, researching the presence of PCBs and pesticides in the environment and in human breast milk. She was a week away from starting a master’s program when she put the brakes on and decided it was not for her.

“I kind of had a breakdown and realized I didn’t want to do that anymore,” she says. “I didn’t want to spend my life in the lab, fighting for grants. I wanted to talk to more than the seven other people in my lab.”



When thinking about her options, she recalled meeting an optometrist at a Women in Science event she participated in as an undergraduate student at the University of Guelph in Ontario.

**IN OPTOMETRY, YOU CAN DO RESEARCH, YOU CAN DO PATIENT CARE, YOU CAN DO BUSINESS. THAT REALLY PUT THE BUG IN MY EAR.**

“She was talking about her career and at the time I thought it sounded interesting,” Dr. McCann says. “In optometry, you can do research, you can do patient care, you can do business. That really put the bug in my ear. When I started looking for alternatives to a career in research, I thought it was worth a look.”

She came to ICO in 2000 at the age of 27. The hardest part was adjusting to life in a dorm again, with a roommate and no income. The rest came easy.

“My time away made me appreciate the education aspect of it more,” she says. “I was there to go to school. I had been through the party phase. I already had a tight group of friends. I was there for my education. I was much more comfortable and confident in myself. I had already worked and had time to think about what I wanted to do. There was a different maturity.”

She loved ICO from the moment she arrived for her interview. She canceled all her other interviews and stayed on after graduation to teach until she and her husband, Ryan Haiar, also OD '04, returned to his native South Dakota. She recently started a new position partnering with seven MDs, running a general disease and urgent care clinic, while her husband is in private practice. She continues to serve and stay connected to ICO by being secretary-treasurer of the Alumni Council.

Dr. McCann, now 40 with a three-year-old son and a baby on the way, says anyone considering a significant career change has to do their research first to be sure. Almost any career can be researched thoroughly online, and often professionals in that field will let you shadow them to see if it’s right for you.

“As an older student, you’re in a different phase of your life and taking on a heavy debt load and responsibility,” she says. “You want to be sure that’s what you want to do. You don’t want to do it a third time.”

*Jacqui Cook is a freelance writer in Chicago. She may be reached at [jacquicook@comcast.net](mailto:jacquicook@comcast.net).*

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# DOUBLE TEAM

**ONE OF THE BEST PARTNERSHIPS IN THE NFL  
DID THEIR WORK OFF THE GRIDIRON.**

**BY KWAME SHORTER**

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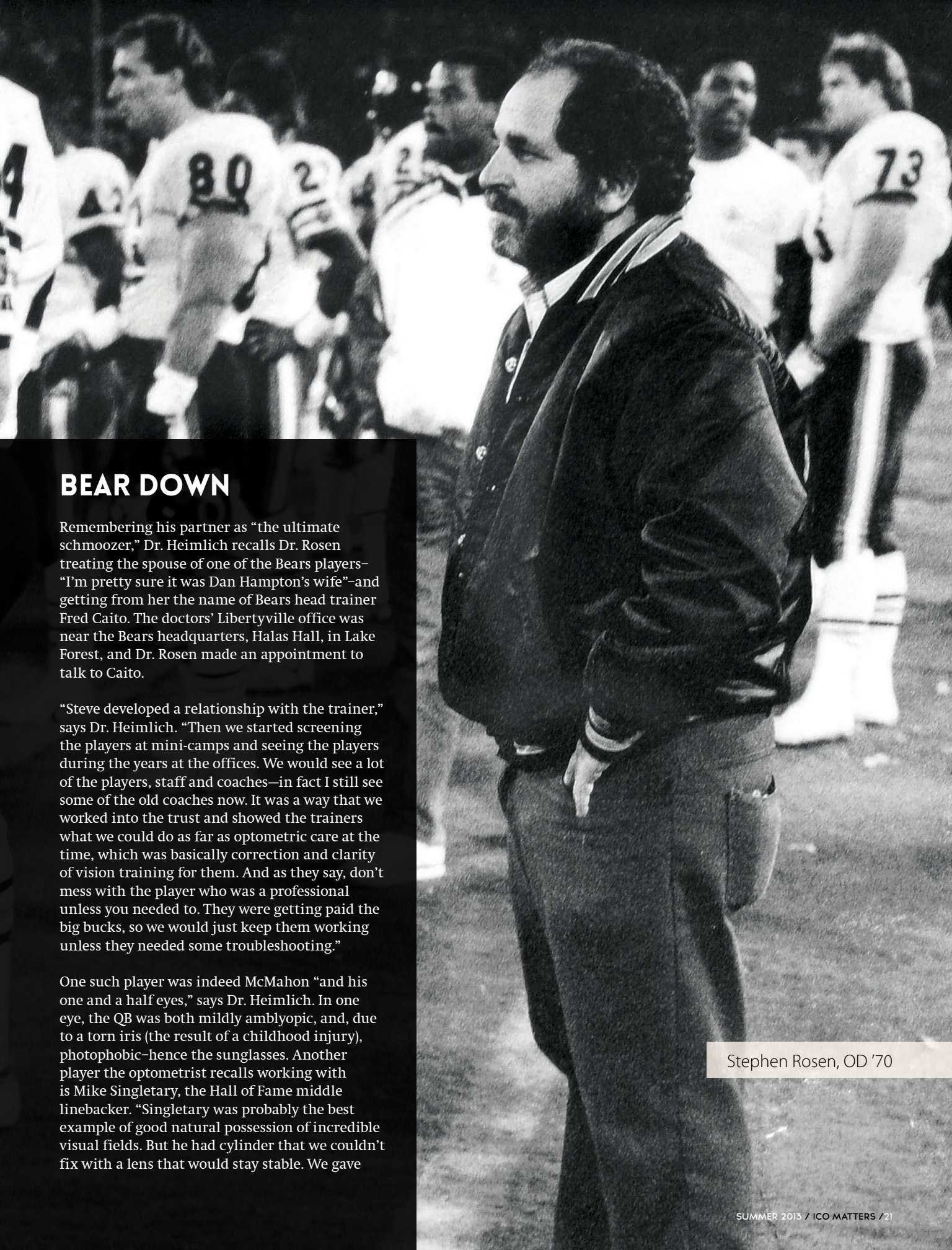
“It was a medical necessity as well as a fashion statement.”

That’s what Marvin “Mel” Heimlich, OD ‘81, says about former Chicago Bears quarterback Jim McMahon’s habit of wearing sunglasses night and day. And Dr. Heimlich would know: He and his partner, the late Stephen Rosen, OD ‘70, served as the first team optometrists for the Monsters of the Midway, from 1984 to 1999. Together, the two of them operated two offices, in suburban Libertyville and Buffalo Grove.

(Dr. Heimlich still runs both today.)

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## BEAR DOWN

Remembering his partner as “the ultimate schmoozer,” Dr. Heimlich recalls Dr. Rosen treating the spouse of one of the Bears players—“I’m pretty sure it was Dan Hampton’s wife”—and getting from her the name of Bears head trainer Fred Caito. The doctors’ Libertyville office was near the Bears headquarters, Halas Hall, in Lake Forest, and Dr. Rosen made an appointment to talk to Caito.

“Steve developed a relationship with the trainer,” says Dr. Heimlich. “Then we started screening the players at mini-camps and seeing the players during the years at the offices. We would see a lot of the players, staff and coaches—in fact I still see some of the old coaches now. It was a way that we worked into the trust and showed the trainers what we could do as far as optometric care at the time, which was basically correction and clarity of vision training for them. And as they say, don’t mess with the player who was a professional unless you needed to. They were getting paid the big bucks, so we would just keep them working unless they needed some troubleshooting.”

One such player was indeed McMahon “and his one and a half eyes,” says Dr. Heimlich. In one eye, the QB was both mildly amblyopic, and, due to a torn iris (the result of a childhood injury), photophobic—hence the sunglasses. Another player the optometrist recalls working with is Mike Singletary, the Hall of Fame middle linebacker. “Singletary was probably the best example of good natural possession of incredible visual fields. But he had cylinder that we couldn’t fix with a lens that would stay stable. We gave

Stephen Rosen, OD '70



Marvin "Mel" Heimlich, OD '81

him a good enough spherical equivalent so he had his entire field visual abilities... So I always used to take credit, those were my eyes," Dr. Heimlich laughs. "He had a buck, buck and a half of cylinder, if I remember correctly. But it was plenty for him to see what he needed to see, and his play showed it."

Singletary's peepers also stand out in the memory of Caito, who was the Bears' head trainer from 1973 to 1997. In particular, he recalled an eye-popping habit of the linebacker's when he tackled another player. "When he would hit somebody, his eyes would go wide open," says Caito. "I had a lot of problems because Mike would lose contacts all the time when he would hit."

Prior to working with Drs. Rosen and Heimlich, Caito says the Bears did not have an optometrist who organized vision care for the entire team. "A lot of people said, 'Well I got [my contacts] from my colleague's guy.' 'I got mine from my parents.' [The players] were all kind of responsible for their own contact lenses. It became a problem for me because they'd lose them at the game and I'd say, 'Where's your extra? In the locker? This is ridiculous.' The first thing Dr. Rosen and I did was get everybody that was wearing contacts fitted in all-new lenses. Then I had an ample supply right there on the sidelines, in case one guy lost his and we're not spending 10 or 20 minutes looking on his jersey or on the grass for a damn contact lens."

As the city's last-and only-Super Bowl champions, the '85 Bears still occupy a mythical place in the minds of most Chicagoans, cementing themselves in the collective memory of the nation with the "Super Bowl Shuffle." "I mean, those guys were amazing," says Dr. Heimlich. "Those guys had swagger and confidence that was just unbelievable."

That confidence extended off the field, too, and some players considered themselves impervious to health maladies. "Some of them were very scary, like, 'Okay. Yes, sir. We won't touch you. You're fine,'" Dr. Heimlich remembers. "Walter Payton, especially. He would not come to physicals half the time. He was in such phenomenal shape. I think the one time we did screen him, there no reason for him to be there. He was just an incredible specimen of health and physical abilities."

## MORE THAN A MENTOR

The professional partnership between Drs. Rosen and Heimlich developed because of their friendship. Though Dr. Heimlich graduated more than a decade after Dr. Rosen, they already had a longstanding relationship by the time Dr. Heimlich was out of ICO: Dr. Rosen's wife was a teacher at Dr. Heimlich's high school, and he became a patient of Dr. Rosen's through her.



“He had just graduated,” says Dr. Heimlich. “He opened a small private practice in Libertyville. I went to him my senior year in high school to have him fit me with my first pair of PMMA hard lenses.” The two kept in touch while Dr. Heimlich was enrolled at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he began his college career as a music major. “I switched over to pre-med/bio after my first year because I saw music wasn’t going to be my vocation,” he says. “A violinist with a bad back is not a good thing. I knew my career was going to be short-lived.”

All the while, Dr. Rosen was encouraging Dr. Heimlich to consider optometry. “He was always dropping hints like, ‘Here, look at this book.’ He was a wonderful collector of old books and equipment. So he would give me little things that were sort of cute like little schematic eyeballs and stuff like that.”

Following graduation, Dr. Heimlich hoped to start his career outside of the Chicago area, and he and his wife left briefly. But they were sidetracked by a stumbling economy. “The recession of ’81 was not kind to a lot of people,” he says. “We wound up moving back to Chicago after about half a year. I didn’t want to let on that I was back in the area because [Dr. Rosen] had already hired an associate, but he found out I was back in town about six or seven months after we got back.” Wryly, Dr. Heimlich remembers that Dr. Rosen “requested my presence at the office.”

“We became partners a couple of years after that,” he says. The partnership continued until Dr. Rosen’s untimely death of renal failure in the early ’90s. He left behind a wife and three children, and it’s a loss Dr. Heimlich still feels acutely. “We had more of a family relationship than a partnership.”

## EQUIPPED FOR SUCCESS

Drs. Rosen and Heimlich are only two of many ICO alumni who have pursued sports vision in their careers. The field has evolved from the somewhat hands-off approach of the 1980s and ’90s to a cutting-edge, high-tech specialty. **James K. Ellis, OD ’69**, has served as the team optometrist for the University of Cincinnati’s athletic department since 1979 and has conducted extensive research on sports vision training and equipment. Notably, he has beta-tested devices and software produced by the West Chester, Ohio-based company Dynavision with athletes from UC and The Ohio State University.

The initial product offered by Dynavision, which was founded by retired Canadian Football League linebacker Phil Jones, was the Dynavision 2000. The purpose of the machine was to train and measure reaction times to visual cues, but what made it unique was its programmability and its increased surface area, enabling it to test a wider field of vision. The company’s latest offering, the D2 Sports Vision Trainer, now plays an important role in college and professional sports vision programs throughout the country. A visuomotor training device, the D2 is designed to train and assess athletes’ reaction and tracking abilities, peripheral awareness and cognitive processing; it also serves as an evaluation tool for head injuries, concussions and visual field deficits.



Dr. Ellis based UC’s sports vision training program largely on the one used at the U.S. Air Force Academy, the brainchild of sports vision director Al Wile, a recipient of an American Optometric Association Eagle Award. Noticing Wile’s success with the Air Force baseball team, which in 1994 placed first in the nation in collegiate batting average and slugging percentage, Dr. Ellis contacted his counterpart in Colorado Springs. Together, they implemented a regimen at UC that utilizes near/far training, saccadic eye movement and tachistoscope exercises and strobe glasses—and the D2.

The results have been impressive. A study conducted by UC professor of neurology and athletic trainer Joseph Clark, PhD, and co-authored by Dr. Ellis, found that during the 2010-11 season, the first under the new vision training program using the D2, the batting average of UC’s baseball team was .285—up from .251 the previous year. The team’s slugging percentage also increased by .033, while the remainder of the Big East’s slugging percentage dropped by 0.082 from the previous year. These results are made even more significant considering that in 2010, the NCAA changed bat regulations, resulting in the lowest batting statistics college baseball had seen in 30 years.

# CLASS NOTES

## 1950

**C.J. Jankovsky**, NICO, received an Outstanding Service Award from the Northeastern Junior College Alumni Association in Sterling, Colo.



## 1969

**Robert Rutstein** recently retired from the University of Alabama at Birmingham's School of Optometry after 33 years as a faculty member. Shortly before his retirement, he was honored by UAB students with a teaching award for his dedication and excellence in clinical instruction.

## 1973

**Don Sipola** and his wife, JoAnn, recently launched a new endeavor, Duluth Glides, a Segway tour company in Duluth, Minn. Dr. Sipola also runs three eye clinics: two in Duluth and one in Virginia, Minn. His son, **Matthew Sipola**, graduated from ICO in May (see page 13).

## 1974

**Ward Ransdell** received the Distinguished Service Award from the Lexington, Ky., Division of Police for significant, long-term, outstanding acts directly associated with and in support of the organization's operations.



## 1978

**Dominic Maino**, ICO professor of pediatrics/binocular vision, was one of four keynote speakers for the second annual American Conference on Pediatric Cortical Visual Impairment, sponsored by the Children's Hospital in Omaha, Neb.

## 1979

**James F. Faron** retired from Carle Clinic in Urbana, Ill., on Nov. 30, 2012. He practiced at Carle since 1979. Dr. Faron plans to focus on his real estate company, Faron Properties, in Champaign, Ill.

**Mark Hanson**, one of the founding partners of Eye Care of Iowa, finished the Boston Marathon in 3:45.



**R. Mark Hatfield**, OD, MD, was honored with the Distinguished Alumnus Award by the Illinois Eye and Ear Infirmary of the ophthalmology and visual sciences department at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Dr. Hatfield is a retinal surgeon and partner with Retina Consultants PLLC in West Virginia.

## 1980

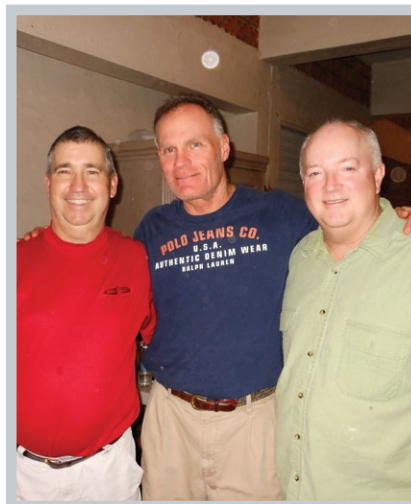
**Dwight Akerman** has been appointed head, global professional affairs, for Alcon's Global Vision Care Franchise and is responsible for creating the

vision, strategy and roadmap for professional affairs globally (see page 28).

**James Chapman** has been appointed director of clinics for the University of the Incarnate Word Rosenberg School of Optometry in San Antonio. He is also responsible for the externship, residency and community outreach programs. Dr. Chapman retired from the U.S. Air Force in 2009 after 28 years of active service.



**Pete Emer** (pictured below, center) and classmate Pat Niebrugge (left) along with Jeff Thomas '86 (right) participated in a Lion's Club-sponsored eye mission trip to Sabana Yegua in the Dominican Republic in January.



## 1981

**Sandra Block** won an award for best poster presentation during the European Academy of Optometry and Optics' annual conference, which took place in Málaga, Spain, in April.

## 1985

**Sandra Bury** was victorious in her race for mayor of Oak Lawn, a southwest suburb of Chicago. She previously served as president of the Illinois Optometric Association, director of the local Chamber of Commerce, and president of the local Rotary Club.

## 1986

**Colonel Philip J. Hasler**, Commander, 115th Medical Group, has retired from the U.S. Air Force after 27 years of service and is excited that his daughter, Rachel, has been accepted into ICO's fall 2013 entering class.



## 1987

**Jay Petersma** was named OD of the Year by the Iowa Optometric Association.

## 1991

**Janis Winters** co-authored the article "Reducing the Risk of Diabetes Complications through Diabetes Self-

Management Education and Support," which appeared in the April issue of *Population Health Management*.

## 1996

**Diane M. Houtman** was named vice president of professional relations for Advanced Vision Research, serving as the medical and clinical lead for all AVR projects and as corporate liaison to the medical community.



## 1997

**Scott Bowker** was elected president of the Iowa Optometric Association.

**Stephen Mazur** joined a private practice in his hometown of Winnipeg, Manitoba after 12 years in corporate optometry.

**Richard Pascucci** has joined the Eye Care Centers of Central New York.

## 2003

**Pavan Avinashi**, who practices optometry in North Vancouver and West Vancouver, was named Young Optometrist of the Year by the British Columbia Optometric Association.



**Jarod Kastl** and his wife, Laura, welcomed their third child, Sylvia Kateri, born Feb. 9. Her siblings are Andrew (three years old) and Dominic (17 months).

**Dave Maze** became an adjunct professor at Illinois College of Optometry.

## 2005

**David Martin** oversees the newly added Vision Therapy Program at the Tillers Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Oswego, Ill.

## 2006

**Jaime King**, of Advanced Rockford Eye Care in Rockford, Ill., received the National Practice of the Year Award. Vision Source recognized the practice over a field of 5,000 as the top eye care practice in North America.



## 2007

**Suzanne Birnbaum** and her husband, Lee, welcomed a baby boy, Evan Jacob, on Feb. 11.

**Shana Brafman** gave birth to a baby boy, Jacob Leo, on Feb. 12.



## 2008

**Heidi (nee Bartell) Nash** and her husband, George, welcomed their second child, Jacey Joy, on Nov. 18, 2012. Jacey joins big brother, Jacob Allan.



## 2010

**Bridget (nee Steere) Bollman** and business partner **Matthew Pollastrini OD '93** recently opened Pollastrini and Bollman Eye Care with locations in Waverly and Sumner, Iowa.

## ERRATA

*In the annual report that ran in the Spring 2013 issue, Robert Lewenson, OD '80, was listed as graduating in 1978 rather than 1980. Additionally, he is a member of the Silver Level Leadership Circle, rather than the Bronze Level. We regret these errors.*

## 1940

**H. James Hulburt**, MCO, Monona, Wis., June 10. Following graduation, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served in a medical unit in the South Pacific. He practiced optometry for more than 40 years in Madison, Wis.

## 1941

**Roy T. Drummond**, NICO, Ames, Iowa, May 23. A longtime resident of Ames, he opened a practice there in 1943 and saw patients until his retirement in 1980. He was a member of the Iowa Optometric Association and the American Optometric Association.

## 1943

**Elizabeth "Betts" Collier Carton**, NICO, Vista, Mass., Feb. 22. She was married to Warren "Brook" Carton, NICO '43, who died in 1976. They married after graduation and opened a joint practice in Pittsfield, Mass., and moved to Great Barrington, Mass., in 1950. Dr. Carton retired just shy of 35 years in practice.

## 1947

**LaVerne M. Smith**, MCO, Monroe, Wis., March 1. An avid humanitarian, she was a longtime volunteer with the Lions Club, where she was recognized with the Melvin Jones Fellow Award for Dedicated Humanitarian Services. She was also a member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs for over 50 years and was recognized for her service with the Green County Crimestoppers Program.

## 1948

**William H. Knapp**, NICO, Aurora, Ohio, Nov. 8, 2012. He served as an officer in the U.S. Navy during World War II and dedicated his time to giving free eye examinations at local elementary schools. He practiced for more than 55 years, first in Cleveland and then in Aurora.

**Richard Stratton**, NICO, Springfield, Ill., March 7. He served during World War II in the 8th Army Air Force as a staff sergeant. He practiced optometry for over 40 years in Springfield, both privately and as an assistant professor at Southern Illinois University's School of Medicine; he retired in 1998.

**Lawrence "Larry" Vogel**, MCO, Villa Park, Ill., Feb. 25. A veteran of World War II, he founded the West Suburban Optometric Society and was a member of the Optometric Four Horsemen and Cavalry, who together played a key role in establishing vision standards for all Illinois motorists.

**Irving W. Yaross**, NICO, Evanston, Ill., Jan. 25. He practiced optometry until he was in his 80s.

## 1949

**Phyllis Henderson Borchardt**, NICO, Willow River, Minn., March 1. She practiced optometry for 42 years while serving on the Willow River school board, as a Sunday school teacher, a 4-H leader and as a member of Hope Lutheran Church.

**Milton Mootz**, NICO, Prior Lake, Minn., Jan. 22. He served in the military from 1942-46 in the 29th Infantry Division Signal Corps. He officially retired in 2011, with the distinction of being the oldest licensed optometrist in the state of Minnesota, attending continuing education classes until the age of 88.

**Emory Powers Smith, Jr.**, NICO, Claxton, Ga., March 19. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II and practiced in Claxton for 46 years until his retirement in 1996.

**Judd R. Storey**, NICO, Sycamore, Ill., Jan. 24. He served in the Naval Air Corps from 1944-1947. He practiced optometry in DeKalb, Ill., for 38 years before retiring in 1988. He was a member of the DeKalb Elks Club,

American Legion and American Optometric Association

**Warren C. Thurow**, NICO, Oconomowoc, Wis., Dec. 23, 2012. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II and was a member of the American Legion Cudworth Post.

**Robert W. Wilson**, NICO, Valdosta, Ga., Nov. 9, 2012. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He operated practices in numerous locations in Georgia, including Adel, Albany, Atlanta and Valdosta. In 1958 he was named the state's Optometrist of the Year. He was an active member of the VFW Valdosta Post 1777, American Legion Valdosta Post No. 13, Elks Club and Lions Club.

**Walter "Tom" Wright**, NICO, Madison, Wis., April 9. He joined the U.S. Navy in World War II, where he served in the Pacific theater, installing some of the first radar sites. Dr. Wright was also a community leader, serving as a board member of the Toledo State Bank, the local library board, the country club board and the local Masonic Temple.

## 1950

**James C. Myers**, NICO, Manitou Beach, Mich., May 15. He served in World War II and practiced optometry before entering the field of education. He worked as a special education teacher for Lenawee Intermediate School District until his retirement in 1982 and was instrumental in establishing the Onsted Community Foundation, an organization that awards students with scholarships toward higher education.

**William Speir Selby**, NICO, Pigeon, Mich., May 16. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II. In 1954, he moved to Cass City, Mich., and opened his practice, retiring in 1986.

**Marvin Wides**, CCO, Paramus, N.J., Dec. 30, 2012. He was a member of the Paramus Lion's Club and

Jewish Community Center, and he volunteered with the community's Ambulance Corp.

## 1951

**Terrence Hayes**, NICO, Green Lake, Wis., April 23. He served in the Korean War for two years and was stationed in Whittier, Ala. Following his military service, Dr. Hayes opened his practice in Hales Corners, Wis., where he practiced for 35 years. He was a life member and former president of the Wisconsin Optometric Association and was appointed to the Wisconsin State Board of Examiners by the then-governor Warren Knowles.

**James A. Lane**, NICO, Casper, Wyo., June 19, 2012. He practiced in Newcastle, Wyo., for over 40 years until his retirement. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II on a destroyer in the Pacific. An active community member, Dr. Lane served on the local school board, the local Methodist church board, as a Lions Club officer and a member of numerous other community organizations.

## 1960

**James D. Barrs**, Mableton, Ga., April 15. He was a veteran of the U.S. Army, where he also served as an optometrist. After being discharged, he opened three practices throughout metro Atlanta before retiring in 2011.

## 1965

**James M. Ulesich**, Menomonie, Wis., April 5. He served in the U.S. Army, where he was an optometrist in Ft. Rucker, Ala., for two years before being honorably discharged as a captain in 1968. He built Menomonie Eye and Optical Clinic in downtown Menomonie in 1989 and retired from practice in 2007.

## 1968

**Michael S. Levis**, West Lafayette, Ind., May 27. He practiced in Lansing, Ill., and Hebron, Ind.

## 1969

**James A. Darling**, Dubuque, Iowa, Jan. 24. He practiced in Dubuque and Galena, Ill., for more than 43 years.

## 1980

**David W. Kupke**, Virginia Beach, Va., Dec. 1, 2012. He retired in 2009 after 28 years of practice in Virginia Beach.

**Greg Leadingham**, Roswell, N.M., April 4. He was a life member and past president of the New Mexico Optometric Association.

## 1990

**Mark D. Dunahugh**, Bettendorf, Iowa, Feb. 22. He owned Dunahugh Eye Care Associates in Davenport and Burlington.

## 2009

**Josh Bernot**, Kelowna, British Columbia, April 22. He died from injuries sustained from a skiing accident in Glacier National Park. He loved skiing, hiking and camping with his wife Kim (nee Smith) Bernot '08.

PLEASE SHARE ALUMNI NEWS WITH ICO

SEND INFORMATION TO

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alumni@ico.edu

# SECONDLOOK

Dwight H. Akerman, OD, FAAO, FIAACLE, FBCLA

**CURRENT POSITION:** Head, global professional affairs, at Alcon

**FAMILY LIFE:** Married to Anita Keller-Akerman

**ICO CLASS OF:** 1980

THEN



### How did you decide to pursue a career in optometry?

My father (Dr. Dwight M. Akerman, MCO '44, who died in 2010) practiced optometry over 60 years in Illinois.

He had a practice in La Salle, as well as a practice in Streator. And I'll never forget, in my junior year of high school my father and I would go out to dinner from time to time, just the two of us, to catch up. And he started talking to me one night about careers and he asked me if I'd given any thought to what I wanted to major in in college. And I told him that I really hadn't thought about it, but I did know that I wanted to be in health care. He didn't push me. My senior year, he made the comment at one of our dinners that he was very

much in favor of going into health care because when you're in health care, whether you become an optometrist or a physician or a dentist, it's a licensed profession. And he told me that he very much supported that because no matter what ever happened with the economy, and no matter where you live in the United States, you could always provide for your family because a licensed profession implies scarcity. And then it was really after my second year of college that I decided that optometry was the profession that I wanted to pursue.

### What are some of your favorite memories from your days at ICO?

I think one of the memories that really sticks out most to me is my first day in clinic. You know, when I was in school, you didn't reach clinic until

your third year. Now it's much earlier in the curriculum. But I remember being so nervous to see my first patient. I think that first eye exam took about an hour and a half, which is kind of embarrassing as I think back on that. It was just such a great feeling to finally reach the point where I knew enough that I could begin examining patients.

### How have you stayed connected to ICO throughout the years?

I've stayed very connected to ICO since I graduated in 1980, through not only personal contacts with President Augsburg, Drs. Colip and Messner, but also the faculty members. Many of the faculty members are personal friends of mine, such as Drs. Jan Jurkus, Neil Hodur, Gary Gunderson, Renee Reeder. I've also stayed connected just through my interest in furthering ICO. I've attended many events at ICO—many educational events, fundraising events over the years. In fact, two years ago I was privileged enough to be elected to ICO's Board of Trustees. So I am now very deeply involved in the governance of ICO and also in the fundraising to ensure ICO's future.

NOW

### What did you do immediately following graduation?

I was very privileged that when I graduated from ICO, Dr. Jurkus recommended me to a legend in optometry, Dr. Robert Koetting. Dr. Koetting was the founder and owner of the largest contact lens practice in the United States and he practiced in St. Louis. He was an innovator, he was a pioneer, he was an excellent communicator, and he had just a wonderful practice. During my fourth year of optometry school, I determined that I really wanted to specialize in contact lenses. I had done an externship at Dr. Koetting's practice while I was in my fourth year, and then upon graduation, I asked Dr. Koetting if he'd consider hiring me as an associate optometrist, and he did. I practiced in St. Louis for three years as an associate of Dr. Koetting's, and it was just a fabulous experience that has benefited me my entire career.

### How did you begin working with Alcon?

After working with Dr. Koetting, I opened my own practice. But after about 10 years, I decided to leave private practice and to enter industry, because I felt that I had other skills beyond my clinical skills that I wanted to expand and utilize. In 1991, I moved to Chicago and joined Wesley Jessen, where I worked in both clinical research and professional affairs. In late 2000, Wesley Jessen was acquired by Ciba Vision. So I moved from Chicago to Atlanta, where Ciba Vision was headquartered, and I lived in Atlanta from 2001 through 2011. And then two years ago, Ciba Vision's parent company, Novartis, acquired Alcon, and they merged Ciba Vision with Alcon.

### What does your present position entail?

Now I work at the Alcon headquarters in Fort Worth, Texas, where I'm head of global professional affairs. I'm a member of the vision care global franchise team that is responsible for all strategic planning and business aspects within the vision care

division. We're responsible for supply chain, we're responsible for pricing, we're responsible for the product positioning, we're responsible for medical support. My specific role is to provide the strategy with regard to our interaction with eye care professionals. I also work a lot on the educational programs that we provide on a global basis through the Alcon Academy for Eye Care Excellence, and then I also work very closely with the other global franchise directors who have direct product responsibility. I work with them to provide medical and clinical support for our products—to differentiate our products and to ensure that eye care professionals truly understand the clinical benefits for their patients.



# DATEBOOK

## JULY

### July 8-12

Focus on Your Future Program  
ICO Campus

### July 27-August 3

Summer Quarter Final Exams

## AUGUST

### August 6-7

NBEO Part 1 Exam

### August 8-11

Class of 2017 Orientation

### August 12

First Day of Fall Quarter

### August 17

ICOLympics

### August 24

Parent Orientation, President's Welcome  
and White Coat Ceremony  
ICO Campus

## SEPTEMBER

### September 20-21

Illinois Optometric Association Convention  
Westin Chicago NW, Itasca, Ill.  
ICO Exhibit Booth

### September 27

Alumni Council Meeting  
ICO Campus

### September 27-29

ICO's Homecoming  
*(details on inside front cover)*

## OCTOBER

### October 19-22

Fall Quarter Final Exams

### October 25

AAO - Academy  
ICO Alumni Reception  
Seattle





# ICO

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## LASTLOOK



First year student Jonathan Dong's top-10 entry to the American Optometric Student Association's third annual photo contest.

Clockwise from left: Scott Gabreski '16, Alex Choy '15, Abby Richie '16, Ravi Shukla '15, Josh Rogers '16, Jeremy Morris '16, and Michelle Auyeung '15