21st century docs

With spring upon us, things are definitely buzzing for everyone as we once again focus on our core responsibility of training and educating optometrists for Canada.

I’m sure we all remember from our time as students, the anticipation end of term brings. Such activity also brings a reminder that while the patterns of life continue, we must also change to match the progress in educational and clinical life. It is exciting to see the new scope of practice being established for optometrists in Alberta and Saskatchewan, and we congratulate our colleagues in these provinces for leading this advance in how we provide the best clinical care for our patients.

Indeed, it is exciting to see how the profession of optometry in Canada has changed since the establishment of the School of Optometry and Vision Science at the University of Waterloo in 1967. Optometrists are now the key provider of primary vision care, and have extended their scope of practice to treat ocular disease. The School has worked hard to ensure that the Doctor of Optometry program it delivers is at the forefront of these changes, to safeguard the high quality of training and to meet the changing professional work environment.

But we also know that there is more to do! Over the last year we have had close discussions with the University on developing appropriate funding for the physical changes needed to the Optometry building while we have continued our development of the new curriculum. We are seeking to combine these two threads of work into a scheme that visualizes the training needed to produce the Doctor of Optometry for the 21st century.
These are lofty goals, but essential for the School to continue to provide the best for students, alumni and fellow optometrists across the country. The changes will allow us to transform the clinical teaching experience for OD students, as well as expand the number of residencies that the School can provide, and promote better interprofessional vision care for patients.

Progress is being made in many areas — our Vision Science graduate program has received approval for its revised curriculum, which incorporates new core course requirements for all students. Then the Optometry Clinic went ‘live’ with its electronic medical record system Visual-Eyes, from an Alberta software company. In support of this change, we have added people power, bringing on a new Clinic Manager, Marion Canning and a Communications Co-ordinator, Natalee Blagden. Laura Bredahl has also joined us in the Witer Learning Resource Centre as our new Librarian.

There is a lot more to come in the next year which makes this an exciting time of transformation for the School of Optometry and Vision Science. We are grateful for the strong support that you, our alumni and partners, give to us — it is very encouraging to feel that we can rely on so many others as we make these important changes!

Paul Murphy, FCOptom, PhD, FAAO, FBCLA, FEAO

ALUMNI

As many of you know, there is new Canadian anti-spam legislation which took effect on July 1, 2014.

We want to ensure that we are connecting with all of our valuable alumni and friends in the most effective way and as the School works toward expanding our online presence, there will be more opportunities for you to stay connected!

If you would like to receive emails from the School of Optometry and Vision Science about events, continuing education, alumni services (Witer Learning Resources) and news, please visit our website and complete the “Keep your alumni information up to date” form: uwaterloo.ca/optometry-vision-science/alumni-and-friends

Or you may email Andrea Carthew at acarthew@uwaterloo.ca.

We are respectful of your information and are committed to only sending out emails with relevant information.

Thank you to all who have already filled out the form and indicated that you want to stay connected with the Waterloo School of Optometry and Vision Science!

» uwaterloo.ca/optometry-vision-science/alumni-and-friends

stay connected!

EDITOR
Natalee Blagden

PRODUCTION
Marketing and Strategic Communications
Creative Services | University of Waterloo

Special thanks to all those who contributed items for the newsletter.
WATERLOO’S PRESENCE AT THE

American Academy of Optometry

On Friday, November 14, the School of Optometry and Vision Science and the Centre for Contact Lens Research hosted a reception to provide alumni with a place to connect and mingle during the American Academy of Optometry Conference.

The evening’s highlights included recognizing University of Waterloo’s award winners, and an overview of school initiatives such as: faculty hiring, comprehensive curriculum renewal, and transformation of our 33,000-square-foot clinical space to enhance teaching experiences.

We are proud to have a tremendous complement of exceptional students, faculty, staff and alumni whose efforts are regularly recognized by colleagues and the profession. We would like to take a moment to acknowledge the Academy’s 2014 Award Recipients:

Dr. Lyndon Jones
GLENN A. FRY LECTURE AWARD
The award is given to a distinguished scientist or clinician scientist in recognition of the quality, significance, impact, and relevance to optometry of his or her current research contributions. Dr. Jones is Director of the School’s Centre for Contact Lens Research (CCLR).

Dr. Kristine Dalton
BETA SIGMA KAPPA RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP
Awarded to support an individual early in their career whose academic curiosity leads them to seek answers to a vast variety of professionally-based questions covering a wide area of vision science, clinical practice, or eye related public health. Dr. Dalton’s research is focused in the area of Sports Vision and she has also recently launched a Sports Vision Clinic at the University of Waterloo School of Optometry and Vision Science.

Dr. William Ngo
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF OPTOMETRY EZELL FELLOW
Each Fellow is chosen for their exemplary research progress toward trying to answer a range of questions in front of the optometric healthcare sector. Dr. Ngo graduated with his OD from Waterloo in 2011 and is now working with the CCLR. His research focus is “Contemporary diagnosis and management of dry eye.”

Morgan Welburn, student
J. PAT CUMMINGS SCHOLARSHIP
This award is given by the American Optometric Foundation to a second- or third-year optometry student at each of the North American Schools and colleges who best demonstrates the ideal eye care standards of practice, achievement in both academic performance and extra-curricular activities, and participation in other professional pursuits such as internships, community service, and other volunteer activities.
Transformation CAMPAIGN

We have now launched our ambitious clinic transformation project, through which we plan to completely rebuild and reorganize our clinical facilities and operations. This $11 million initiative comes at a critical time of change in both the profession and our program as we contend with the introduction of TPAs in Ontario, expanded scope of practice, and an evolving curriculum in an aging building. Our clinic is at the heart of our program and we hope you will consider making a donation to this important project.

Thank you for your support!

Yes, I can help

I/we wish to support excellence in education at the School of Optometry and Vision Science by supporting the clinic transformation campaign.

Name __________________________
Mailing Address __________________________
Phone __________________________

Gift/Pledge Amount: $ __________________________
Pledge Period: ________ years
Start Date: __________________________

Donate online » uwaterloo.ca/support

Please detach and return this form to:
Andrea Carthew, Associate Director, Advancement School of Optometry & Vision Science University of Waterloo 200 University Ave. West, Waterloo ON N2L 3G1

Charitable Registration Number: 11926 0685 RR0001
Alumni of Honour Awards

Call for nominations
The School of Optometry and Vision Science has many alumni who are outstanding contributors to both optometry and their communities, going above and beyond to make a difference. To recognize some of these outstanding individuals for their efforts and achievements the School is pleased to present the biennial Alumni of Honour Awards.

For the first time, this year there will be two categories:
» The Young Alumni of Honour Award — for graduates from 1995-2015.
» The Distinguished Alumni of Honour Award — for graduates from 1994 and earlier.

We invite you to nominate a graduate from either our Optometry or Vision Science program, who has made significant and proven contribution(s) in one or more of the following areas:
» Professional Achievement — recognizes the professional accomplishments of a Waterloo Optometry and/or Vision Science alumnus.
» Contributions to Community — recognizes the accomplishments of a Waterloo Optometry and/or Vision Science alumnus in volunteer leadership, humanitarian endeavours, and community and public service.

A nomination form must be completed, including all mandatory fields. Please provide as much detail as possible. Letters of reference will also be accepted.

You may make nominations online at uwaterloo.ca/optometry-vision-science or send a hard copy by fax to 519-725-0784 or mail to:
School of Optometry & Vision Science
Attn: 2015 Alumni of Honour Awards
University of Waterloo,
200 University Avenue West
Waterloo, ON N2L 3G1

Awards presentation
The Alumni of Honour Awards will be presented during the biennial Canadian Association of Optometrists Congress in Fredericton, New Brunswick, July 15-18, 2015.

Recipients will also have their biographies and pictures featured in the Waterloo School of Optometry and Vision Science newsletter, on the School’s website, and will have their names and pictures added to a permanent plaque that will be displayed in the School.

Past recipients
» Dr. David McKenna and Dr. Dorrie Morrow, 2009
» Dr. Gordon Hensel, 2011
» Dr. Dave Dobbelsteyn and Dr. Dan Hayhoe, 2013

For more information about these outstanding individuals please visit: optometry.uwaterloo.ca/alumni/awards.

Awards process
Awards selection will be made by a committee composed of senior faculty and staff at the School of Optometry and Vision Science and will also include the President of the Canadian Association of Optometrists or designate. All applications will remain active for two award cycles.

The nominees must hold University of Waterloo Optometry and Vision Science degree(s) (OD, MSc or PhD). Self-nominations will not be considered.

PRIVACY STATEMENT: The University of Waterloo respects your privacy and that of the person you are nominating. Our full privacy policy is online or you may contact Andrea Carthew.
This form will be used to identify candidates for the School of Optometry and Vision Science’s 2015 Alumni of Honour Awards. Please provide as much detail as possible. Point form is encouraged. Nominators may need to attach a separate sheet in order to provide full details or can complete the nomination online at uwaterloo.ca/optometry-vision-science. Required fields are marked*.

1. PERSONAL INFORMATION OF NOMINEE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Given name(s)*</th>
<th>Last name*</th>
<th>Year of graduation*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Address* (full address if known)  □  Home  □  Business

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phone number(s)*</th>
<th>Email address*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Practice name/employer*

2. PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT (recognizes professional accomplishments, or contributions to the profession or to vision science) — 250 word maximum, point form is encouraged.

What makes a good entry? Successful career/professional achievement(s) or contributions to the profession:
» Exemplary career success, visibility
» Significant other roles (Board of Directors, advisory groups, association committees)
» Senior leadership
» Known beyond industry segment
» Leadership that has impacted the direction of the profession or vision science, affected policy, etc.

3. CONTRIBUTIONS TO COMMUNITY (recognizes accomplishments and involvement in volunteer leadership, humanitarian endeavours, and community and public service, within or outside of optometry) — 250 word maximum, point form is encouraged.

What makes a good entry? Community Service/Humanitarian endeavours:
» Significant, sustained involvement, volunteerism, philanthropy
» Highly visible involvement that is clearly recognized
» Multiple leadership roles
» Proven impact (could be local, regional, national, international)

4. UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO INVOLVEMENT

Current donor, involvement on committees, volunteering, etc. — 250 word maximum, point form is encouraged.

5. OTHER INFORMATION

The candidate’s CV, résumé and/or biography including awards, journal articles, popular press articles, etc., will also be accepted and considered. Letters of support are also encouraged.

6. PERSONAL INFORMATION OF NOMINATOR

Name of nominator*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address:*</th>
<th>□  Home  □  Business</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phone Number*</th>
<th>Email address*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Are you a UW Optometry alumnus? If yes, what year?*  Relationship to nominee*

Please state why you are making this nomination (100 word maximum)*

Please send completed forms to:
School of Optometry & Vision Science, University of Waterloo, 200 University Avenue, West, Waterloo, ON, N2L 3G1
or fax: 519-725-0784
BE THERE!

Alumni Reception at Ontario Association of Optometrists Symposium

The School will host our annual Alumni Reception as part of the OAO Symposium in Toronto. Please join us to visit with your colleagues, hear School news and meet some of our new faculty members!

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2015 | 4:30 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.
Sheraton Centre, Toronto, City Hall room, 2nd floor

MAY 29-31 | 2015

Continuing education

The School of Optometry and Vision Science is pleased to present its annual continuing education program May 29-31. The 2015 weekend will offer 19 hours of contemporary optometric continuing education. Topics include: management of anterior segment eye disease, innovations in contact lenses, myopia control, glaucoma and diabetic eye disease. Presentations will be from a range of health care professions: optometry, ophthalmology and pharmacy. Information will be practical and contemporary and will be valuable to clinicians in all areas of optometric practice, for new graduates as well as those with a long-standing career in optometry.

This year we will once again present the Distinguished Clair Bobier and Dr. Emerson Woodruff lectures. The Bobier award this year has been awarded to Dr. Earl Smith III of the University of Houston and the Woodruff award has been awarded to Dr. Ian Bailey of UC Berkeley.

FEATURED SPEAKERS
» Ian Bailey
» Mile Brujic
» Nadine Furtado
» Beth Irving
» David Kading
» Sarah MacIver
» Chryssa McAlister
» Jeff Nagge
» Earl Smith

Information will be added to our website as it becomes available. Please check regularly for updates at uwaterloo.ca/optometry/alumni-and-friends.
WLRC now offers UpToDate

The University of Waterloo School of Optometry and Vision Science now has access to the evidence-based point-of-care (POC) tool UpToDate to support clinical decision-making. Covering more than 10,000 clinical topics, UpToDate is a popular resource used by medical doctors, and it is the only POC tool available through Library Services for students, faculty, and staff at University of Waterloo.

UpToDate content includes broad coverage of areas such as immunology, cardiovascular medicine, critical care, infectious diseases, neurology, obstetrics, gynecology, pediatrics, primary care, psychiatry, and, most importantly for us, vision science. Drug names in UpToDate entries link directly to Lexicomp drug monographs, providing smooth access to this important source of drug information. As the University of Waterloo Library already subscribes to Lexicomp, this integration of resources provides an enhanced experience when you search for clinical and drug information.

An example of an UpToDate topic is “Optic Neuritis: Pathophysiology, clinical features, and diagnosis,” which includes synthesized clinical information and evidence pertaining to epidemiology, pathogenesis, differential diagnosis, management, and more. In addition to synthesized clinical information, this tool provides medical calculators, images, plain-language information summaries for patients, and additional references for further research.

Be sure to check it out, and if you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Witer Learning Resource Centre at wirc@uwaterloo.ca.

FACULTY UPDATE

Introducing new faculty: Ben Thompson

The School of Optometry and Vision Science is delighted to announce the appointment of Dr. Ben Thompson as our newest associate professor. Thompson’s work is concerned with human cortex development and plasticity, especially in brain-based visual disorders. This led to an interest in amblyopia, and the development of two new and highly promising approaches to treatment.

So far, Thompson has seen “striking effects”, even with adult patients who were previously considered untreatable. “It’s really exciting for me, as a scientist, to discover something that can translate into a treatment,” says Thompson. “For many years the restoration of binocular vision was considered impossible in adults with amblyopia.”

Thompson completed a BSc and PhD in experimental psychology at the University of Sussex, UK. He then took a postdoc position in UCLA’s Psychology Department where he used MRI and non-invasive brain stimulation to study visual learning. After that, Thompson moved to the Ophthalmology Department at McGill (McGill Vision Research) where he started to study amblyopia.

Thompson’s first faculty position was in the School of Optometry and Vision Science at the University of Auckland where he taught vision science courses and conducted research into new amblyopia treatments, visual development in children, and the effect of events such as preterm birth on visual development.

In May, Thompson joined the University of Waterloo. He says “There are some incredibly strong researchers here and it’s a collaborative environment. I’m looking forward to becoming a bigger part of that. I try to give talks wherever I can, to forge connections.” Thompson is running a clinical trial of a new video game treatment for amblyopia. He plans to start new research programs in visual development and adult visual cortex plasticity soon.

“There are some incredibly strong researchers at Waterloo.”
Using video games to treat amblyopia

The Binocular Treatment of Amblyopia using Video Games (BRAVO) study is a randomized clinical trial of a new amblyopia treatment that aims to promote binocular vision.

The treatment is a modified version of the video game Tetris played on an iPod touch device. Different elements of the game are presented separately to the two eyes using red/green glasses. High contrast elements are presented to the amblyopic eye and lower contrast elements to the non-amblyopic eye so that patients can use both eyes simultaneously. As the game is successfully played, the contrast difference between the eyes is gradually reduced to promote binocular visual function.

The original research that led to this new treatment found that adults with strabismic and anisometropic amblyopia were able to combine information between their two eyes if the amblyopic eye saw high contrast images and the fellow eye saw low contrast images. This suggested that the connections within the visual cortex required for binocular vision were present in these patients but suppressed under normal viewing conditions.

Further research revealed that with training, the majority of patients no longer needed a contrast difference between their eyes and there were improvements in visual acuity (average of 0.26 LogMAR) and stereopsis (six patients recovered stereopsis having no measurable stereopsis pre-training). This was striking as amblyopia has traditionally been thought to be untreatable in adulthood.

Subsequent studies using the modified Tetris game have shown promising results. To date there have been over 100 published cases of adults and children treated with the video game approach. The average improvement in visual acuity is 0.24 LogMAR for adults and 0.16 LogMAR for children. Many of the children had plateaued in their response to patching prior to playing the Tetris game. Significant improvements in stereopsis have also been found for both groups.

If the results are positive, BRAVO will provide the evidence base required for the use of this new treatment in clinical practice within Canada and worldwide.

The BRAVO trial is an international collaboration led by the School’s newest faculty member, Dr. Ben Thompson. It includes trial sites at UWaterloo, McGill University, The University of Auckland, the Centre for Eye Research Australia, Melbourne and Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The development of this treatment is the culmination of several years of research into amblyopia conducted by Dr. Thompson and Dr. Robert Hess at McGill University.

Call for participants
Dr. Thompson is very keen to engage with members of the optometric community who may be interested in referring patients to the BRAVO study.

Patients eligible for the trial are provided with an iPod touch loaded with the video game and asked to play for one to two hours per day over the course of six weeks. Outcome measures are made at 3, 6, 12 and 24 weeks after randomization. To be eligible patients must be seven years of age or older (adults are welcome), have anisometropic, strabismic or mixed mechanism amblyopia and have an amblyopic eye visual acuity of 6/12 to 6/60 inclusive with normal acuity in the fellow eye.

Doctors interested in receiving more information on the trial and referral procedures may contact BRAVO trial co-ordinator at: bravoclinicaltrial@uwaterloo.ca or 519-888-4567, ext. 38651
Dr. Thompson can also be contacted directly at ben.thompson@uwaterloo.ca.
Advanced Primary Care Residency

BY DR. STACEY CHONG

I had the privilege of being the first Advanced Primary Care Resident at the Waterloo School of Optometry and Vision Science, and completed my residency training in August 2014. I was eager to dive into the position even though I was unsure of what I was getting myself into. Each day was full of surprises and no two days were alike! I encountered many learning opportunities, which some may refer to as challenges, and I was able to collaborate with all of the wonderful optometrists at the School. I spent my days examining and caring for patients, and I spent my nights reflecting on the cases I had come across and what I might have done differently. I am always trying to learn as much as I can to ensure that future patients receive the most up-to-date information and care.

The Advanced Primary Care Residency position encompasses refraction, binocular vision, ocular health, and sometimes even low vision. I had my hands full to say the least! With each passing day, I continued to learn new things and develop and hone my optometric skills and knowledge. I could not have been successful without the guidance of my mentors: Dr. Patricia Hrynchak, Dr. Tammy Labreche, Dr. Michelle Steenbakkers and Dr. Sue Leat. I’d like to encourage others to consider pursuing an optometry residency education, as this residency supports continuing learning, helping me to become the best optometrist I can be. For that I am so grateful.

Residencies available for 2015-2016

The number of residencies is expanding! We now offer four experiential training programs:

1. Pediatric Optometry and Vision Therapy Residency:  
   August 1, 2015 – August 13, 2016

2. Cornea and Contact Lens Residency: August 1, 2015 – August 30, 2016

3. Advanced Primary Care residency: August 24, 2015 – August 31, 2016


Our residencies provide optometrists with a program of concentrated, mentored clinical experience and education designed to produce practitioners with advanced knowledge, skill and judgment in a selected area(s) of optometric practice. This will enable them to deliver excellent clinical care, practice lifelong learning and educate members of the profession.

Learn more at: uwaterloo.ca/optometry-vision-science/residencies

Direct questions to: susan.leat@uwaterloo.ca

Primary Care Externship at Health Sciences Optometry Clinic

BY DR. MICHELLE STEENBAKKERS

Seven of our fourth-year interns enjoyed their spring term completing their OPTOM 458 “Primary Care Externship” at Health Sciences Optometry Clinic (HSOC) in Kitchener. Under the supervision of Dr. Sarah MacIver and Dr. Michelle Steenbakkers, the students had the opportunity to examine patients and manage their care in an integrated medical clinic. A big thanks to Gillian McKenzie-Yorke and Michelle Lamontagne for their assistance in co-ordinating this program.

Our student interns were:

JASMINE CHOW  SHIH (JEFF) LU
JESSIE CHU  SUZANNE MCNEIL
MATTHEW CRAIG  SHAUN RIDEOUT
SARAH HAGEDORN

Fourth-year Optometry students spend one term in private practice as part of their final year of education. Primary Care Externship rotations are seven or eight weeks in duration throughout the academic year. Optometrists interested in hosting an externship are invited to contact Marilyn Smith, OPT 458 course instructor, at marilyn.smith@uwaterloo.ca.
2014 HIGHLIGHTS

Reunion weekend

On Saturday, September 27 the School of Optometry and Vision Science joined the University of Waterloo’s 2014 Reunion and offered our alumni a variety of events to enjoy. It was a bright and sunny day, enjoyed by all who attended!

BY ANDREA CARTHEW, ADVANCEMENT

The School of Optometry and Vision Science hosted:
- Tours of the School given by Optometry students
- A BBQ run by our Vision Science graduate students
- The Reunion Dinner — hosted at Stone Crock in St. Jacobs
- Free Continuing Education lectures were given by faculty members:
  - Dr. Lyndon Jones, “Contact Lens Development 101: What Will the Future For Contact Lenses Look Like”
  - Dr. Daphne McCulloch, “Visual Development in Infants Born to Mothers Prescribed Methadone”

We had alumni from across Canada in attendance and we truly appreciate everyone who came from near or far to celebrate with us.

This includes Dr. Len Menzies, Class of 1952 from Saskatchewan who was visiting his grand-daughter Samantha, currently in her third year of the Optometry program. She is also the daughter of Class of 1986 alumnus Dr. Craig Menzies. It seems that vision care really is a family affair!

Others who made the trip to Waterloo include Dr. Joan Hansen from British Columbia, pictured with classmates from 1979, Drs. Carol Cressman and Daphne McCulloch.

In addition to the School’s events, alumni were invited to take part in some of the activities going on across campus such as:
- The Applied Health Sciences Fun Run
- Warriors football game and VIP tent
- A lecture by gold medal Olympian Heather Moyse
- The East Asian Festival
- St. Paul’s Pow Wow

This was the first time that the School has joined with University of Waterloo campus for Reunion weekend in order to offer our alumni more diverse options. The School appreciates having you back and we want to ensure we are providing you with opportunities to reconnect with classmates and your alma mater. We hope to see you again soon!

Our Reunion events are only possible thanks to the generosity of our sponsor:

**INNOVA Medical Optics**

They have graciously supported all our reunion activities since 2005 for a total investment of over $50,000.

Thank you INNOVA!

**SAVE THE DATE ➤ OCTOBER 3, 2015**

Are you celebrating an anniversary year in 2015?

If so, we hope you will consider making the School of Optometry and Vision Science’s Reunion part of the occasion. Look for more information on next year’s event in our next newsletter and on our alumni events webpage.

**Feedback**

As we start to think about planning our alumni activities for 2015 we would love to know what events you would like to see as part of your Reunion.

Complete our survey on our website at [www.surveymonkey.com/s/RVCGRXJ](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RVCGRXJ) or call Andrea at 519-888-4567, ext. 36319.
COETF Annual Awards

The Canadian Optometric Education Trust Fund (COETF) was created in 1976 by the members of the Canadian Association of Optometrists to assist programs in research, education and human resources development in the vision and eye care field in Canada.

Since inception, COETF has provided $1,869,423 in funding through its Annual Awards program to support students and faculty from Canada’s schools of optometry, as well as projects undertaken by independent practitioners or members of the public. Funding has been provided for:

» faculty development
» research and/or specialized education programs carried out by graduate students
» investigative projects

In 2014, COETF received 25 applications for their Annual Awards Program. Of those, 20 were granted at least partial funding, 16 of them from the University of Waterloo’s School of Optometry and Vision Science.

In an effort to recognize some of the projects and research being done by COETF award recipients, the Awards Committee will publish project reports in the Canadian Journal of Optometry (CJO) so that members across the country can learn more about the high calibre of exciting optometric research that COETF supports.

For more information, contact info.coetf@gmail.com.

Congratulations to the 2014 COETF Awards recipients:

**School of Optometry and Vision Science, University of Waterloo**

Alghami, M. (PhD program) “Vision training to improve mobility and prevent falls”

Babu, R.J. (postdoc fellow) “Measurement of suppression in amblyopia and training using an iPod based game platform”

Cheung, S. (master’s degree program) “Covalently binding a novel proteoglycan to enhance the wettability of commercially available hydrogel contact lens materials”

Dalton, K., Hutchings, N., Simpson, T. “Investigation of the validity and repeatability of a novel system designed for the measurement of dynamic visual acuity”

Dantam, J. (postdoc fellow) “Impact of contact lens care solutions on bacterial adhesion to different contact lens materials”

Haines, L. (master’s degree program) “Retrospective study of scleral contact lens fitting”

Iley, M. (master’s degree program) “Investigation of the effects of mild traumatic brain injury on visual function, visual-motor co-ordination and postural stability in children”

Labhishetty, V. (master’s degree program) “Accommodation and myopia”

Labreche, T., Steenbakkers, M. “Development of visual risks for falls questionnaire”

Ngo, W. (master’s degree program) “Imaging meibomian glands with OCT”

Omali, N.B. (postdoc fellow) “Morphological changes of meibomian gland cell orifices in normals and in patients with meibomian gland dysfunction”

Phan, C-H (PhD program) “In vitro uptake and release of natamycin using cyclodextrin functionalized contact lens materials and hydrogel contact lens materials”

Raveendran, R.N. (PhD program) “Eye movements in strabismus”

Walther, H. (PhD program) “In vitro cholesterol uptake on daily disposable contact lenses”

Won, G-J (PhD program) “The development of an antibody-directed enzyme prodrug to target and soften the crystalline lens in vivo”

**École d’optométrie, Université de Montréal**

Hanssens, J-M “Shelf life of diagnostic ophthalmic drops in an optometry clinic”

Kergoat, H., Irving, E.L. “Convergence insufficiency and Parkinson’s disease”

Lacroix, Z., Leger, S. (optometry students) “Comparison of eyelid warming devices”

**Vision Institute of Canada**

Chiarelli, C. “Office-based vision therapy clinic”

Yang, M. “Lipid layer thickness pre and post lid scrubs with tea tree oil wipes”

Research and academic support are vital to the advancement of our profession. COETF provides important funding.

Congratulations Optometry Rack Pack!

BY DR. MICHELLE STEENBAKKERS

2014 TEAM MEMBERS

Alexis Keeling
Andrea Carthew* 
Britney Hewitt 
Ayden Labreche 
Brooklyn Labreche 
Cody van Dijk 
Debbie Clermont* 
Dylan Labreche 
James Davidson* 
Jenn Elkin 
Jessica Bylsma 
Jessica Yang* 
Josephine Woolley* 
Karen Denys* 
Kristen Snell* 
Kyra Caplan 
Laura Bredahl 
Lynn Erlingsson 
Marie Amodeo* 
Marilyn Smith* 
Marlee Spafford* 
Michelle Steenbakkers* 
Morgan Welburn 
Nancy Friessen 
Natalie Hutchings* 
Nathan Labreche* 
Patricia Hrynychak 
Patrick Kenney 
Rachel Berger 
Sarah Guthrie 
Stephanie McCoy 
Tammy Labreche* 
Victoria Lomax 
Wendy DesChamps*

*returning team member

2014 was a stellar year for the Optometry Rack Pack team, which completed the CIBC Run for the Cure in October to support the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation. In their second year as a team, there were 34 team members consisting of optometry faculty, staff, students, and family and friends of University of Waterloo Optometry and Vision Science. We all walked or ran the one kilometre or five kilometre race at Conestoga College, Doon Campus, in Kitchener.

The Optometry Rack Pack raised over $9,000 through various events through the year — Caffeine for the Cure, Curry Lunch for the Cure, Cookies for the Cure, 500 Cupcake Challenge and the Think Pink Jewellery Sale. Team members and supporters also dressed in pink on Friday, October 3 for the School’s annual Pink Ribbon Day.

The Rack Pack was honoured with the Post-secondary Team Challenge Award for the institution with the most funds raised to support the cause.

The Run for the Cure was inspiring to all who attended — so watch for more events! Fundraising for 2015 is well underway and ongoing through the year.

Donations to the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation through the Optometry Rack Pack can be sent to our team online. To donate, go to www.runforthecure.com and search “Optometry Rack Pack.”
Dining in the Dark
Imagine waking every morning without being able to see the sunrise. Taking a class but needing someone else to write your notes because you can’t see as far as the board. Slowly losing your sight and knowing that in your country help is not available for you.

Over 600 million people are vision impaired because they do not receive proper eye care. Optometry Giving Sight works to change all of that. It is a global initiative that seeks to provide diagnosis, care, and treatment for those with sight problems in developing countries.

On September 26, 2014, the University of Waterloo School of Optometry and Vision Science held its 3rd annual “Dining in the Dark” fundraiser as a part of this global initiative.

Attendees enjoyed a three course meal, live music, amazing door prizes, and a silent auction, all while blindfolded. This experience helps to bring the difficulties of impaired sight to the forefront of the community’s mind, while at the same time raising money to help this issue. Darcy Dennis, one of the organizing students from this year, says “It was incredibly rewarding to see how all of the planning, donations, and generosity of our sponsors, attendees and volunteers came together into a successful event.”

Dining in the Dark raised $7,238.66, which is $19,976.51 to date, and it hopes to continue raising funds for years to come. All proceeds from the 3rd annual Dining in the Dark support Optometry Giving Sight in providing eye care programs, vision centres, training, and affordable exams and glasses in developing countries.

Originally posted on uwaterloo.ca/community-relations

$7,238.66 raised in 2014
$19,976.51 raised to date
CONGRATULATIONS

IOBP celebrates its 10th anniversary

The International Optometric Bridging Program (IOBP) began at the School of Optometry (as it was named then) in 2005. This year, we will be celebrating ten successful years of providing bridging education to internationally-trained eye care professionals so that they can become registered or licensed to practise optometry in Canada. Those ten years have seen a lot of changes to the program. The IOBP team thought that this would be an appropriate opportunity to provide some information about the current and future status of the IOBP.

In January 2013, the Canadian Optometric Regulatory Authorities made a decision to vest the responsibility of conducting academic credential assessments with the College of Optometrists of Ontario temporarily until a national credential assessment body could be developed. The result of this change meant that the regulatory bodies have had direct control of the minimum academic qualifications necessary for candidates to move forward in the process. More recently, this responsibility has been transferred from the College to a national credentialling body. A second significant change is the transition from a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) to an Evaluating Examination (EE). The PLA was originally modeled on the entry to practice examination, and was designed to assess candidates’ knowledge, skill and judgment relating to the practice of optometry. As the saying goes, the only constant is change. A decision was made to transform the PLA into an Evaluating Examination led by the College of Optometrists of Ontario. The final administration of the PLA took place in February 2015, and the inaugural administration of the EE is scheduled for June 2015. These two changes — transferring accountability for the academic credential assessment and the development of an EE — mean that the IOBP is able to concentrate its efforts on bridging education activities.

Changes within the IOBP itself have also been significant. Currently, two programs are offered. Bridging One is tailored to candidates with relatively minor gaps in knowledge, skill and judgment. The Bridging One program includes didactic and clinical components. Students who meet the eligibility qualifications participate in classroom lectures and clinical laboratory exercises most of which are taught by faculty members at the School. Successful completion of all examinations is a prerequisite to participation in the clinical component (externship) of the Bridging One program. Students are placed in optometric practices across Canada, and during this primary care externship period are assessed on a number of clinical skills and professional behaviours by their site supervisor. Students who successfully complete their externship are given a Certificate of Completion from the IOBP, and this makes them eligible to challenge the entry to practice examination administered by the Canadian Examiners in Optometry.

Bridging Two is a longer program that offers students a broader range of classroom and lab experiences as well as longer externships. As with the Bridging One program, successful completion of all didactic and laboratory courses is required before students are permitted to participate in their primary care and ocular disease externships. Externship supervisors evaluate students on the same clinical skills and professional behaviours. Bridging Two students who are successful on their externships are given a Certificate of Completion and become eligible to challenge the entry to practice examination.

From its inception, the IOBP has been sensitive to the language and communication needs of its students. For this reason, we have partnered with the English Language Institute (ELI) at Renison College to provide language testing and, where appropriate, training for students enrolled in either the Bridging One or Two programs. For testing purposes, ELI has developed an Optometric Specific Language Assessment (OSLA) that assesses speaking, listening, reading and writing communication skills. All candidates applying to the IOBP are required to participate in the OSLA.

What will the next ten years hold for the IOBP? No one on the IOBP team has a crystal ball, but Ontario’s new direction for immigration is designed to attract highly skilled workers and their families, support diverse communities, and grow a globally-connected economy. What we can say is that if immigration policy continues along this same path, the IOBP and the School of Optometry and Vision Science will assist qualified individuals to practise optometry in Canada!

The IOBP receives funding from the Province of Ontario and the Government of Canada. Additional details about the IOBP can be found at uwaterloo.ca/international-optometric-bridging-program or by emailing iobp@uwaterloo.ca.
Continuing Education conference highlights

The University of Waterloo School of Optometry and Vision Science hosted its annual Continuing Education (CE) conference across the first weekend in June, 2014.

Blair Lonsberry, a Waterloo alumnus, now based in Portland, Oregon, started the weekend with an interactive presentation on ocular imaging. The audience was provided with handsets to answer questions presented throughout the talk. Blair stayed for the whole weekend and shared his knowledge on ocular emergencies and also presented a two-hour Grand Rounds session. His final presentation of the weekend discussed the diagnosis and treatment of corneal degenerations and dystrophies. All of his presentations contained an interactive element using handsets; the audience remained engaged throughout.

Our own Waterloo faculty were well represented with Susan Leat discussing low vision management in patients with age-related macular degeneration and a second presentation on assessment and management of patients with developmental disabilities. Nadine Furtado presented an overview of posterior vitreous detachment and its potential for ocular pathology. Marlee Spafford provided a review of clinical electrophysiology and Michelle Steenbakkers provided a comprehensive review of anatomy and physiology involved in gonioscopy and showed examples of the use of gonioscopy in clinical practice. Lisa Prokopich brought the audience up to date on the latest therapeutic news with new drugs that have been introduced to optometrists as well as new applications for existing therapeutic agents. Marilyn Smith shared with the audience some ways to retain our patients in our practices in the Internet age.

Richard Maharaj, also a Waterloo alumnus, discussed in-office non-surgical clinical treatments for dry eye disease and also reviewed the latest advanced diagnostics for assessment of the ocular surface.
Continuing Education conference highlights

Dennis Ruskin, president of the College of Optometrists of Ontario reviewed the strengths and weaknesses of the age-related eye disease studies (AREDS and AREDS2 studies) and discussed take-home messages for our patients related to the outcomes of the research trials.

Hugh Jellie, a local ophthalmologist and Medical Director at TLC Waterloo wrapped up the weekend with a presentation on current refractive treatment options for our patients.

Awards

The recipient of the distinguished Bobier Lecture for 2014 was Dr. Graham Trope, Professor of Ophthalmology at the University of Toronto and Senior Scientist at the University Health Network. His presentation was entitled Socioeconomics of Vision Loss in Canada — Implications for Glaucoma Treatment.

The distinguished Woodruff Lecture was awarded to Dr. Jeffrey Jutai, a professor in the University of Ottawa’s Interdisciplinary School of Health Sciences and Assistant Director of Graduate Studies and Research. His talk was titled Assistive Devices; reimagining outcomes research.

As the weekend drew to a close, the attendees left with information related to management of anterior segment disease, management of glaucoma, management of the low vision patient, management of patients with special needs, management of dry eye disease and options available for our patients who are interested in refractive surgery. Monday morning was just around the corner and attendees were eager to bring CE learnings into their clinical practice.

EXPANDING BORDERS

Lions Eye Centre seeks donations

Greetings from the Philippines,

I am Dr. Carmen Abesamis-Dichoso, an optometrist from the Philippines. Exactly 20 years ago, in 1994, I had the rare privilege to be a recipient of the IACLE (International Association of Contact Lens Educators) Educator Fellowship Program at the School of Optometry of the University of Waterloo.

The invaluable experience that I had from the Fellowship Program has made me become a better optometric educator and practitioner in the Philippines. I have seen how North American optometric education and technology is far in advance of where Philippine education and practice is up to now.

We have been recently given the opportunity by the Lions Club District 301D1 to occupy a space at their building to be used as an open clinic to serve indigent patients in a community with a population of more than 2.7 million. The volunteer optometrists offer their professional services at no cost to the patients. The lack of ophthalmic equipment and resources has made it difficult for us to provide primary eye care service to this very deserving population.

The Philippines ranks the third highest for prevalence of blindness in the world. Almost 70 per cent of the blindness is avoidable.

The Lions Eye Center is also a training center where optometry students from both Centro Escolar University and Cebu Doctors’ University rotate for their externship program.

I am writing to ask if you have in your clinics any old ophthalmic instruments or “gadgets” that you may donate to the center. We are in need of old or used trial lenses, phoroptors, retinoscopes, ophthalmoscopes, slit lamps, topographers, visual field apparatus, fundus cameras, tangent screens, charts for regular and low vision patients, pediatric charts, prism bars, Maddox rods, transilluminators, pinholes, tonometers, fixation targets, color vision tests, etc.

Your contribution will be very helpful and rest assured will be properly acknowledged through our newsletter and website that are both under construction.

Looking forward to your most favorable reply.

Carmen Abesamis-Dichoso, OD, MAT, FPCO, FIACLE, FAAO
Chairman, Doctors OnSight, Inc., Philippines
carmen.dichoso@gmail.com
A PROUD SUPPORTER OF CANADIAN OPTOMETRY

INNOVA

Canada-wide: 800.461.1200 | @: info@innovamed.com | Web: www.innovamed.com | Follow us: Facebook