Meeting the Call

Recent events pertaining to our profession in both Alberta and British Columbia have brought a swarm of e-mails asking, “Is the School going to respond?” These emails made me realize that while alumni from one province may know what the School has done to support their efforts, many may not know what we do to support the efforts of the profession nationwide. So, in this message, I’d like to provide you with a brief synopsis of just a few of the things that UWSO has done in the past couple of years to meet the call of our profession across the country.

In the fall of 2008, the Canadian Association of Optometrists and the Ontario Association of Optometrists called and asked if we could help to raise the profile of the profession among the 3,000 family physicians and nurse practitioners attending a Family Medicine Forum held by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada in Toronto. Meeting the call, Dr. Chris Hudson of our faculty presented a very well-received and authoritative clinical talk to this group entitled “The Forgotten Role of Optometry in the Primary Health Care of Patients with Diabetes”.

Throughout 2009, UWSO met the call to provide documentation and commentary to the Regulatory Advisory Council that was appointed in Manitoba pursuant to that province’s Optometry Amendment Act. The purpose of this Council was to reach agreement on a set of regulations that would initially govern TPA privileges in Manitoba, including identification and definition of a range of medical laboratory tests that could be ordered by qualified optometrists.

In November 2009, in response to a request from the Alberta College of Optometrists, UWSO met the call to provide extensive documentation of the extent to which our curriculum covers clinical laboratory testing and relevant radiological studies that an optometrist might need to order in TPA practice. We also provided both context and authoritative content for the letter written by the Alberta College of Optometrists to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta regarding this issue.

Just last month, in support of efforts in BC to allow optometrists to make direct referral to medical subspecialists, UWSO prepared a series of clinical examples, with authoritative evidence-based citations, that would make it intuitively logical for an optometrist to directly refer to a medical subspecialist, rather than a family physician or ophthalmologist. Examples included referral of a patient with Hollenhorst plaques to a cardiologist and referral of a patient with a changing and worrisome pigmented lesion on the face to a dermatologist for biopsy.

Several of our faculty, including Drs. Barbara Robinson and Des Fonn, have been actively involved in completing a COETF, Essilor, and CNIB sponsored study on the prevalence of uncorrected refractive error in Canada. And, of course, in the past few weeks, the School has developed an extensive evidence-based response to the recent ruling of the Minister of Health in British Columbia regarding sight-testing and the unregulated sale of medical devices. We also helped to guide the letter of concern sent to the Minister in British Columbia by the Canadian Association of Optometry Students. This letter was co-signed by over 200 students.

These are but a sampling of the things that UWSO has done recently in support of the profession. Providing an authoritative, evidence-based answer for the challenges
facing our profession is a natural and logical part of our mission, most especially in our unique position as the only anglophone optometry school in the entire country.

Another way we support the profession is through our Continuing Education programs, including our annual CE Weekend and reunion dinner in June. Both of these events are highlighted in this issue. This year we are especially pleased to offer an intensive glaucoma subprogram featuring founding members of the Optometric Glaucoma Society and renowned glaucoma specialist Dr. Rand Allingham from Duke University Eye Center, who will also present the annual Woodruff Lecture. Please join us for this year’s program and also consider joining us on our 3rd CE on the Sea cruise next January. As always, don’t hesitate to write or call. We want to hear from you.

Calendar of Events

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<th>Event</th>
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<td>April 7 2010</td>
<td>Official opening of Health Sciences Optometry Clinic</td>
<td>Waterloo Health Sciences Campus, Kitchener, Ontario</td>
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<td>May 6 2010</td>
<td>OAO–UWSO Alumni Reception</td>
<td>Delta Meadowvale, Mississauga</td>
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<td>May 27-30 2010</td>
<td>BCAO-AAO Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 4-6 2010</td>
<td>CE Weekend</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 5 2010</td>
<td>Alumni Dinner</td>
<td>University of Waterloo School of Optometry</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 22-24 2010</td>
<td>Vision Institute of Canada Fall Conference and Trade Show,</td>
<td>Markham, Ontario</td>
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<td></td>
<td>featuring the Aboriginal Vision Health Lecture Series (for which more information is available at <a href="http://www.visioninstitute.optometry.net">www.visioninstitute.optometry.net</a>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall 2010 (date TBD)</td>
<td>Open House for Health Sciences Optometry Clinic</td>
<td>Waterloo Health Sciences Campus, Kitchener, Ontario</td>
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Stay Connected

Moving or retiring and want to stay in touch?
To ensure that you continue to receive the newsletter and get invited to UWSO events please update your information by visiting www.optometry.uwaterloo.ca/alumni
You can also email us at alumni@optometry.uwaterloo.ca or call Andrea Carthew at 519-888-4567, ext. 36319.

Thank you for staying connected!
This past November, family members, leaders from the OAO, faculty, staff, students, and friends braved the cold and rainy fall weather to attend the official dedication ceremony of the new Witer Learning Resource Centre (WLRC). Guests gathered around the WLRC, located on the second floor of the recent addition, to celebrate and enjoy the bright and modern new space.

The event recognized the gracious donation of 1979 alumna Marta Witer and her husband Ian Ihnatowycz. Their gift of $500,000 is the largest we have ever received from an alumnus and is a symbol of their vision, passion, and dedication to optometry and its future.

Dr. Marlee Spafford, Associate Director of University of Waterloo School of Optometry, began the ceremony by discussing this new and inspiring environment for optometric education and described the joy students experienced when they first walked into the WLRC in the fall of 2009. “With the School’s recent 50 per cent increase in enrolment, the focus of the planning for this addition was to create spaces that were student centred,” she said. “The Witer Learning Resource Centre is a major focal point of this initiative and has already become a central hub for student learning.”

Marta Witer praised the School of Optometry as a leader in optometric education and reminisced about her time as a student. “I remember the dark and cramped study carrels,” she said with a laugh. “Congratulations to those who designed and built this beautiful space. The welcoming environment you have created invites students, faculty, and staff to learn individually or collaboratively, as required.”

The old learning resource centre was indeed as dark and cramped as Marta remembers. It was only 1,800 square feet, which included space for all four library staff as well as the necessary journals and textbooks.

Through the extraordinary support of Marta and Ian, the WLRC is a bright, fresh, and uplifting environment. The new 4,100 square foot space features a lounge area, a dedicated room for quiet study carrels, and three group study rooms that are enclosed behind glass doors, giving more students the opportunity to work together on projects than ever before. This space is an integrated learning environment, allowing library staff to work more efficiently and increase their ability to support the different learning styles of Optometry students.

Kathy MacDonald, Liaison Librarian for the WLRC, was also on hand to describe the latest features and services of the new space. “We can now hold in-house instructional sessions where faculty and students can participate in hands-on tutorials,” she said. “Our new computer terminals also provide a venue to use Primo, our new library search interface, and Refworks, our bibliography management software.”

Meg Beckel, Waterloo’s Vice-President, External Relations, thanked Marta and Ian for their gift on behalf of the University. “We rely on every one of our donors so we can continue to make amazing things happen through innovation, creativity and discovery,” she said. “Marta and Ian are strong advocates of philanthropy and this wonderful gift is a prime example of their passion for optometric education.”

UWSO would like to extend its sincerest thanks and gratitude to Marta, Ian, and their family for their leadership gift and remarkable commitment to optometry and its future. Such significant support and generosity will help us continue a tradition of excellence and help ensure that our vision for the future of optometric education becomes a reality.
With the addition complete and plans under way for significant renovations, we still have an overall fundraising goal of $12.4 million. This campaign is essential to fund our ambitious expansion and renovation project. We are asking our alumni to stand by us during this time of growth and need by making a donation toward this important project. It is only through your involvement that we can continue to meet the demands of excellence in both optometric education and the profession.

**Gift/Pledge Form**

I/we wish to support excellence in education at the UW School of Optometry by supporting the expansion and renovation campaign.

Name ____________________________ Phone ____________________________

Mailing Address ______________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

Gift/Pledge Amount __________ Pledge Period __________________ Years Start Date ________________________

Project: UW School of Optometry – Building Expansion and Renovation Project

Method of Payment

☒ I/we have enclosed an initial payment of $________ and wish to pay the remainder in installments.

Please send me periodic reminders:

☒ Yearly ☒ Semi-Annually ☒ Quarterly ☒ Monthly

☒ Cheque (Payable to: The University of Waterloo – School of Optometry)

☒ Post-dated cheques (Please attach all cheques to pledge form)

☒ Credit Card

☒ Visa ☒ MasterCard ☒ American Express

Card Number ____________________________ Expiry Date ________________________

☒ Other ______________________________________________________________________

Signature ____________________________ Date ________________________________

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Thank You For Your Support!

Charitable Registration Number: 11926 0685 RR0001

Please return this form to:

Andrea Carthew, Associate Director, Development and Alumni Affairs – School of Optometry, University of Waterloo

200 University Ave. West, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G1
Institutional Transformation – Andrea Carthew

As you know, UWSO and professional optometric practice is truly in the midst of a transformation with the national inclusion of therapeutic legislation. As the role of the optometrist changes, it is essential that we take critical steps to ensure that our graduates are prepared for their responsibilities as both eye and health care providers. We are pleased to say we have already implemented a number of key initiatives over the last few years to ensure that we are continuing to stand by the profession.

For instance, in order to enhance our curriculum, we launched a comprehensive review and identified the necessity to introduce patient care earlier in the Optometry program. We have also completed an analysis of our clinical operation and its preparedness for upcoming legislative and program changes. This study will help us address changing clinical education needs with the introduction of therapeutics and help ensure clinical access for increased student and patient numbers.

UWSO has opened a satellite teaching clinic at the Health Sciences Campus in Kitchener and built a relationship with an on-site family health team there and with the Michael G. DeGroote School of Medicine, fostering a collaborative culture based on the co-management of patients and creating synergies between the professions.

We have increased student enrolment by 50%, creating the necessity for additional resources, and have begun to meet the educational needs of our larger student body through the completion of a 40,000 square foot student-centred addition and the ongoing hiring of new faculty.

You may notice that the common theme among all of the School’s new initiatives is the impact it all has on our clinic and on clinical education. For these reasons, our upcoming renovation or “renewal” of our on-site optometry teaching clinic is truly at the heart of UWSO’s institutional transformation. These renovations are necessary due in part to the age of the facility and the inefficient layout that was state of the art when it was built in the 70s.

But the story we have to tell is much more compelling than that. Factor in that we now have 50% more students and intend to introduce patient content earlier in the program. That equals an additional 150 students who need an efficient, effective clinical environment in which to learn and care for more patients. Then consider the impact of changes we will have to make in clinical education brought on by the passing of therapeutics regulations in Ontario, as well as our clinic and curriculum reviews; we are truly looking at a reinvention, a transformation.

The $4-5 million renewal of our on-site teaching public clinic will create an efficient teaching and eye care environment that will enhance educational and patient experiences. By integrating our services we will see more collaboration amongst specialty services as well as enhance our ability to accommodate more patients for our increased student numbers.

This is an exciting time of change and growth at University of Waterloo School of Optometry and with the clinic at the “heart” of optometric education, we feel that this next phase of our expansion and renovation project is a critical piece in ensuring that we continue to meet the demand of the profession.

Through the support and generosity of our alumni, corporate partners, and friends, we have already raised over $8 million toward our $12.4 million expansion and renovation campaign goal. Your support to date has helped us build a new $13 million student addition. As we set our sights on the future and plan a complete overhaul of the clinic, we hope that you will continue to stand by us again as we work toward enhancing clinical education here at the School. The planning for the renovation of has already begun and we look forward to sharing more details with you as they evolve.

CURES Update – Andrea Carthew

The Canadian Uncorrected Refractive Error Study (CURES) is a collaborative project between researchers from University of Waterloo School of Optometry and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. The primary objective of the pilot study was to determine the prevalence of uncorrected refractive error and visual impairment in a representative sample of the Canadian population in Brantford, Ontario. Secondary objectives included identifying factors that increase the risk of uncorrected refractive error. Such a study had not been conducted in this country before.

Researchers from UWSO include Dr. Barbara Robinson (Lead Investigator), and Dr Yunwei Feng, as well as Dr. Desmond Fonn and Dr. Craig Woods from the Centre for Contact Lens Research (CCLR). CNIB investigators include Dr. Deborah Gold and Dr. Keith Gordon.

The pilot study was completed in the fall of 2009 and 768 people were screened, with the first being Mr. Walter Gretzky! Data from this study was used to develop a proposal for a much larger Canadian study. The research proposal was submitted to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) in January 2010. The development of this proposal was supported by a grant from CIHR.

Preliminary results of the pilot study were presented at the Canadian Ophthalmological Society meeting in June 2009 and at the American Academy of Optometry meeting in Orlando in November 2009. An abstract of the completed pilot study was accepted for presentation at the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology meeting in May of this year.

Funding for the pilot study was provided by CNIB’s Baker Foundation, Essilor Canada, Canadian Association of Optometrists and COETF, New Brunswick Association of Optometrists, Quebec Association of Optometrists (Fondation Quebecoise pour la santé visuelle), Alberta Association of Optometrists, and Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists. In-kind contributions were also provided by the CCLR, CNIB, and Innova Medical Ophthalmics.
This winter, Essilor Canada kindly donated Visioffice, their latest technology and advanced measuring system, to the UWSO Clinical program to ensure that our students have the opportunity to learn with state-of-the-art resources. Visioffice is an all-in-one device that takes the patient through the entire fitting process: measurement taking, lens and frame selection, and ordering.

Alan Birrell, VP Central Region, Essilor, and, Dr. Thom Freddo, School Director, observe third year students Amanda Kunowski and Aaron Chan as they practice using Visioffice and learn the benefits this system provides both practitioner and patient.
Have you noticed the new search interface?
PubMed has a new look, as of the fall of 2009, and a few things have changed. The tabbed layout has disappeared and many of the functions listed on the tabs now reside elsewhere. For instance, access to the Limits and Details page is now located at the very top of the page beside the search box. The Limits function allows you to further narrow your search by selecting an age range, gender, document type (clinical trial, editorial, review) or language within a set of search results or as part of an advanced search. The Search History can now be seen part way down the advanced search page or on the right side of the results page. The Clipboard, designed as a temporary place to save search results of interest or hold selected items for export to email or bibliographic software, is now embedded in the results page under the Send To link on the top right side of the search results section.

Clinical Queries
PubMed makes it easy to find clinically relevant research. Although this feature has been around for a while, it is worth reviewing. On the New PubMed home page there is a link to the Clinical Queries page. There are a number of search options on this page, two of which will be described here. One search option finds clinical studies and the other finds systematic reviews. These search options automatically add supplemental terms to your search in order to find the best and most clinically relevant research.

The Search By Clinical Study option allows you to narrow your search to a particular aspect of a condition, such as etiology, diagnosis, therapy, prognosis, or clinical prediction guidelines. You may then choose either a narrow search or a broad search. A narrow search finds only the highest quality studies for the aspect you have selected. For example, if you select therapy, then a narrow search would find only randomized control trials (RCT). If you select a broad search, it would find studies that were RCTs or clinical trials, or ones with terms such as “random allocation” or “therapeutic use” in their titles or abstracts.

The Systematic Reviews search option finds only systematic reviews by looking for the term “systematic” in the title or abstract. This is an excellent way to find a review of the literature that has systematically found, appraised, and often pooled the data (meta-analysis) of existing high quality research on a particular question. There are also more narrative reviews in PubMed, but those would be found through a general search of PubMed.

Additional features
There is also a Topic-Specific Queries link at the bottom of the Advanced Search page. This provides a pre-programmed search of PubMed to identify a subset of results focused on a specific topic, such as cancer, complementary medicine, health literacy, or toxicology. Simply add the aspect of the topic of interest and the search runs with a preset collection of limits (additional search terms).

General PubMed searching
If you obtain no search results or find nothing of interest using the search options described, then you should initiate a search in the general or advanced PubMed search box at the top of the home page. For the most part you do not have to worry about the search terms you use because PubMed has automatic mapping functionality. Automatic mapping means that if you type “childhood arthritis” it will also add the official index term “juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JRA)” to your search to ensure you find everything related to JRA. Remember to consider the key concepts you’re interested in and combine those terms with upper case ANDs or ORs. For example, you might type “juvenile rheumatoid arthritis AND iritis AND (therapy or treatment)”. For more details see the PubMed tips sheet, which is located on the Alumni page of the WLRC website and on our blog at http://optometry-learning-resource-centre.blogspot.com/

Using the Medical Subject Heading (MeSH) database as a search tool
You may also want to explore the MeSH database as a way to search specific details of a topic, such as epidemiology, physiopathology, prevention and control, enzymology, diagnosis, ethnology, genetics, history, etc. For more details see the PubMed Tips sheet.

Tips sheet topics include:
• search strategy tips, such as key concept approach, PICO, and using the MeSH database
• saving your articles
• saving your searches or search strategies for future use
• setting up topic specific Research Alerts

Remember you may contact the WLRC staff through optlib@uwaterloo.ca for assistance.
2010 CONTINUING EDUCATION

Optometric Assistants And Staff Program – Marilyn Smith, RO

We are pleased to offer the 8th Annual Optometric Assistant and Staff Continuing Education Program at the UW School of Optometry Continuing Education weekend on June 4-6 2010.

Saturday morning starts with Dr. Lyndon Jones, a favourite speaker, presenting two lectures, “What’s New & Sexy in Contact Lenses” and “The Common Patient Complaint Of Dry Eye”. We are delighted that Dr. Michelle Steenbakkers has joined the UWSO faculty in 2010, and she will offer another terrific interactive lecture, “ABCs of Ocular Anatomy...Get Ready For A Round Or Two Of Jeopardy!” Joyce VanRooyen will present two topics requested from your 2009 CE program comments, “Setting Expectations with PAlS” and “Children’s Vision: Getting Down To Their Level”. Dr. Natalie Hutchings will demystify what the ODs are looking for when viewing those pictures and images on devices such as OCT, HRT, Visual Fields, etc. It should be an enjoyable and informative day of OA lectures!

For the final lecture hour on Saturday, optometric assistants and staff are invited to the Distinguished Bobier Lecture at 4:45 pm with the ODs in room 347. Dr. Eli Peli will be the speaker.

The annual Industry Information Trade Show and Luncheon will be held in our brand new addition this year. Over 30 vendors with new information about lenses, contact lens, frames, and all forms of technology will be there to get you up to date with what’s new and exciting out there! A luncheon of delicious finger foods and goodies will keep you moving through the trade show area. The chocolate fountain dessert will be back too!

The Sunday workshops are technology based. In Hour 1, you can use the hands-on devices created for PAL measurement accuracy in pantoscopic tilt, vertex distance, wrap, etc. Then you can try the new Essilor Visioffice automated measuring and dispensing tool in Hour 2. To follow up on Saturday’s imaging lecture, Dr. Hutchings and Dr. Marc Schulze will then guide everyone through a hands-on workshop on the various imaging machines.

All courses are accredited through the Canadian Association of Optometrists. Each OA will have an accreditation sheet that will be stamped throughout the day to verify attendance. All non-OA staff are also welcome to attend the CE lectures and workshops.

For further information and to register, please visit our website at www.optometry.uwaterloo.ca/ce

We look forward to seeing you at CE this June!

CSE Re-accredited – Graham Strong

The Centre for Sight Enhancement (CSE) has been awarded its fifth consecutive five-year accreditation by the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving People with Blindness or Visual Impairment (NAC). In its notification letter, NAC strongly commended the CSE for its continued “dedication and commitment to improving the quality of life for people with vision loss.” The CSE also was commended for its “impressive publications and presentations in research and service delivery programs both on national and international level and for providing comprehensive services in a client focused environment.”

The accreditation process begins with a comprehensive self-study document describing compliance with reference standards in areas of low vision services, administration, facilities, social work, high technology services, consumer involvement, and rehabilitation support. This self-study was reviewed and evaluated by an on-site review team appointed by NAC. The peer professionals selected for this on-site review were Drs. Hank Baud (researcher, author, educator, and former Executive director of the Cincinnati Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired) and Elton Moore (Director of the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) on Blindness and Low Vision at Mississippi State University). The team met with members of the CSE staff. They communicated directly with collateral agency representatives, as well as current and former consumers of CSE services.

Ongoing NAC accreditation signifies our dedication and adherence to the highest standards of service and administration for any agency serving people with impaired vision. The process is an onerous one that would not have been possible without a strong coordinated effort by every single member of the CSE team. I am especially thankful for the Herculean efforts of the members of the CSE Executive Committee who acted as the Self Assessment Committee in this process. They are Pauline Bevers (CSE Administrator), Ann Plotkin (CSE Associate Director and Head, Low Vision Clinic) and Tammy Labreche (Head, External Geriatrics Clinics).
2010 CONTINUING EDUCATION

Treatment And Management Of Anterior Segment Disease – With Emphasis On Glaucoma

TPA 20-hour Program

University of Waterloo School of Optometry is pleased to present our annual Continuing Education program on June 4-6 2010.

The overall program will still offer a 20-hour certificate. While the emphasis remains on TPA generally, the recent decision by the MOHLTC to include independent management of glaucoma in the scope of optometric practice prompted us to develop an intensive glaucoma sub-program within the 3-day event for this year.

Again this year, we present the Distinguished Dr. Clair Bobier and Dr. Emerson Woodruff Lectures. The Woodruff award this year has been awarded to Dr. Rand Allingham of Duke University Medical Center, while the Bobier has been awarded to Dr. Eli Peli of Harvard Medical School. Please join us at these very special events.

Optometric Assistants and Staff

We are pleased to welcome back optometric assistants and staff with their own 1½ day program, which includes a full day of informative lectures highlighting new contact lens information, imaging, dry eye, and more on Saturday. The 3-hour hands-on workshops for Sunday will help new and experienced OAs and staff hone their skills. All hours for Optometric Assistants CE are subject to approval for accreditation through the CAO.

Social Events

Join us for the annual School of Optometry Reunion Dinner on Saturday, once again held in our COETF Student Commons. Don’t miss this great chance to meet up with your classmates at your alma mater!

Trade Show

The Trade Show and lunch continues to be very well received by participants and exhibitors alike. This event, held in the Commons, will feature a variety of exhibitors highlighting various educational materials and equipment items on Saturday, from noon to 2pm.

Registration Information

Registration fees for CE 2010 are as follows:

- OD Full Program (3 days) $650
- OD Partial Program (2 days) $450
- OD Per day Program $300
- OA Lectures $120
- OA Workshop $120

The CE committee is happy to offer an online registration process. Please visit our website at www.optometry.uwaterloo.ca and follow the links to register yourself, colleagues, and staff for this year’s CE.

Come One, Come all, To The 6th Annual Reunion Dinner!

On Saturday, June 5 2010, as part of our CE weekend, the School of Optometry will host our 6th Annual Reunion Dinner immediately following the Distinguished Woodruff Lecture in the COETF Student Commons. We invite all alumni to join us for an evening of fun and camaraderie with classmates and colleagues. It will also be a great opportunity to see the new addition!

Have pictures? We traditionally put together a slide show that we have running throughout the evening. If there is something you wish to include, please send it in!

To RSVP for the Reunion Dinner you can either indicate your attendance on the CE registration form or contact Elizabeth Reidt at 519-888-4567, ext. 33177.
Dr. Bobier was born in Moosomin, Saskatchewan, and received his Diploma of Optometry in 1948 from the Ontario College of Optometry in Toronto (the predecessor to the School). During his first year of private practice, he began sharing his methodical, analytical approach to clinical practice with the students at the College. In fact, throughout his life, he retained a common sense, thoughtful approach to his home life and to his chosen profession – an approach he would quickly tell you, with a mischievous grin, that he learnt in a prairie town with an obscure name like Peapod, Saskatchewan.

Dr. Bobier was one of the first Canadian optometrists to undertake postgraduate research in vision science. For his MS degree, he studied at Ohio State University under Professor Glenn Fry. His exposure to this eminent optometric researcher shaped his view on the importance of the scientific approach to the optometric profession. Over his many years of dedicated service, he became instrumental in the development of a scientifically-based curriculum and research-oriented faculty in Canada.

Immediately after receiving the MS degree in 1956, Dr. Bobier returned to teach at the Ontario College and continued to do so at the new School of Optometry at University of Waterloo until his retirement in 1982. He was extremely influential in bringing Optometry to Waterloo. His ideals were passed along to university and government officials in many influential briefs, which did much to ensure the respect and funding necessary for the future growth of the profession.

The School of Optometry building itself embodies, in its interface of clinic and research facilities, Dr. Bobier’s concept of what the profession should be: excellence in modern vision care, built on a firm base of scientific understanding.

This year’s Bobier lecture is “Assisted Devices for Impaired Vision” and will be presented by Dr. Eli Peli.

On Saturday, June 5 at 4:45 pm, the 16th annual lecture to honour Dr. Emerson Woodruff will be presented. This tradition was established in 1994 to recognize Dr. Woodruff’s many contributions to the School of Optometry and the profession he loved.

Dr. Woodruff was a widely known and highly respected Canadian optometrist, educator and scientist before his passing in 2005. After practising optometry in southern Ontario from 1950 to 1962, he left private practice to teach and pursue a PhD degree in physiological optics at Indiana University. He joined the faculty at University of Waterloo School of Optometry in 1967. Dr. Woodruff was Director of the Optometry Clinic from 1967 to 1974 and Director of the School from 1975 to 1981. He was instrumental both in the formation and growth of the clinical program as well as the establishment of the MSc and PhD graduate programs in Vision Science.

Before his retirement, Dr. Woodruff published over 70 scientific and professional articles, mostly dealing with the epidemiology of visual anomalies. He served on a number of government agencies and commissions and received several awards from the profession of optometry.

This year’s Woodruff Lecture is “Exfoliation Syndrome: Unraveling a Global Disease” and will be presented by Dr. Rand Allingham.

Dr. Rand Allingham
Dr. Rand Allingham currently serves as the Richard and Kit Barkhouser Professor of Ophthalmology and Chief of the Glaucoma Service at Duke University Eye Center in Durham, North Carolina. Dr. Allingham completed his medical training at University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. He completed his ophthalmology residency at Eastern Virginia Medical Center and then went on to complete a two year clinical and research fellowship in Glaucoma with Dr. David Epstein at Harvard Medical School and the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary. Dr. Allingham’s principal research interests have been the study of genetic eye disorders, primarily the inherited glaucomas. He leads a large collaborative group of NIH funded investigators in studies directed at identifying the specific gene(s) responsible for glaucoma. In 1914, John G. Lindberg, a Finnish eye resident, began a research project to study Axenfeld’s syndrome. In the process he observed grayish material on the lens surface in older patients. He also found that individuals with this finding frequently developed glaucoma. What Lindberg described is what we now know as exfoliation syndrome (or “pseudoexfoliation”). Exfoliation syndrome is widely prevalent and constitutes the single most common identifiable cause of open angle glaucoma globally. Whether this syndrome is inherited or heavily influenced by environmental factors has been the subject of substantial debate. Recent genetic studies have identified the gene LOXL1 as a major determinant for developing exfoliation syndrome. The story of exfoliation syndrome, from past to present, and where recent discoveries will lead us in the future is a fascinating one to share.
On Monday, November 2 2009, UW School of Optometry hosted its second White Coat Ceremony, formally presenting white coats to 90 first year (class of 2013) Optometry students. This event, which is common practice in most health care professions, is a symbol of the students’ transition into the clinical portion of their training and their commitment to, and respect for, their future patients.

The event was held in the COETF Student Commons area of the new building addition. The area was transformed with 300 chairs and a stage for the event. Over 250 family, friends, and special guests were present, as well as faculty and staff from UWSo.

Attendees heard speeches by Dr. Feridun Hamdullahpurr, UW Vice President and Provost; Dr. Marlee Spafford, Associate Director (on behalf of Dr. Thomas Freddo, School Director); Dr. Kirsten North, President, Canadian Association of Optometrists; Dr. Murray Turnour, Registrar, College of Optometrists of Ontario; and Dr. lareina Yeung, UWSo alumnus, class of 2003.

White coats were presented to the students by UWSO faculty and representatives from the profession. The presenters were:

- Dr. Kirsten North, President, Canadian Association of Optometrists
- Dr. William Ulakovic, President, Ontario Association of Optometrists
- Dr. Deborah Jones, UWSO Clinical Lecturer and Clinic Director
- Dr. Ken Hadley, Head, UWSO Clinical Lecturer and Head, 3rd Year Clinical Internship
- Dr. Patricia Hrynchak, UWSO Clinical Lecturer and Head, Primary Care Clinic
- Dr. Lee Kolbenson, President, Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists
- Dr. Ann Plotkin, UWSO Clinical Lecturer and Head, Low Vision Clinic
- Dr. Lisa Prokopich, UWSO Clinical Lecturer and Head, Ocular Health Clinic
- Dr. Gina Sorbara, UWSO Assistant Professor and Head, Contact Lens Clinic
- Dr. Lisa Christian, UWSO Clinical Lecturer and Head, Binocular Vision Clinic and Ocular Disease Externship Program

Dr. Kolbenson had a special reason for attending: he presented a white coat to his daughter Rebecca, who is following in her father’s footsteps!

After receiving their coats, Dr. North led the students in a reading of the Code of Ethics, adapted from the Canadian Association of Optometrists, to reinforce the importance of not only their optometric education but also their responsibility to pursue excellence in the vision and health care they provide their patients.

The Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO) once again generously supported the ceremony through the purchase of the white coats for the students. These coats were embroidered with both the CAO and UWSO logos and left students smiling with pride.
It is with mixed emotions that we celebrate the retirement of Pauline Bevers in May 2010. Pauline began her long career with UWSo as a Library Assistant in 1981. To put this date in some historical context, MS-DOS 1.0 was released in August of the same year. By 1985, Pauline had become the Optometry Library Reading Room (OLRC) PC Network Coordinator. The PC network was really just early word processing and was very hard to use, so Pauline had to manually transcribe all references from new journals into library binders!

In September 1986, Pauline joined the Centre for Sight Enhancement (CSE) as a Low Vision Assistant/High Technology Assessment Worker. She obtained her Diploma in Business Administration from Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU) this same year. Her role at the CSE was to instruct low vision patients in the use of newly prescribed assistive devices and aids for daily living. Her formal training included a Low Vision Assistant Training Course at The Lighthouse in New York.

A novel feature of Pauline’s was her responsibility for conducting high technology assessments and administering a newly introduced computer leasing program for the Ontario Ministry of Health’s Assistive Devices program (ADP), a provincial program that funds up to 75% of the cost of suitably prescribed assistive devices for people with disabilities. At the time, the only available vision-adapted systems were either dedicated low vision computers or Apple computers with hardware embellishments and/or oversized display monitors. By 1989, Pauline had become the CSE’s Chief Cook and Bottle Washer (CCBW), although the university insisted on the more descriptive titles of Administrator, Centre for Sight Enhancement; Administrator of Sight Enhancement Equipment Pool and Assessment Centre (SEEPAC); and High Technology Assessment Coordinator. In her negligible spare time, she pursued part time studies at WLU and obtained a Bachelor’s degree in Communications in 1990.

The ADP has evolved considerably over the past 20 years, with ongoing changes in government policies, bureaucratic protocols, and bureaucratic accountabilities. Pauline’s wide-ranging experience with the program qualifies her as a significant authority with respect to this program. She is a past president of Ontario Chapter of the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER). Her knowledge of vision rehabilitation and adaptive technology is highly respected by everyone in the field. She routinely interacts with Waterloo faculty, staff, students, and a large cohort of people from outside the university (including patients, advocates, rehabilitation professionals, government personnel, industry representatives, university and college personnel, and personnel from other vision rehabilitation services). She has garnered universal respect for the quality of these interactions.

Pauline has served the CSE as an exemplary CCBW for over two decades, supervising an expanding cohort of outstanding vision rehabilitation professionals, high technology specialists, and support staff. CSE activities are primarily regulated by formal contracts with provincial government ministries, and Pauline has been the primary conduit in these interactions. She has been co-applicant and administrative lead for a continuous procession of contracts totaling over $48M. She has been instrumental in five consecutive CSE accreditations with distinction by the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving People with Blindness or Visual Impairment (NAC). She has also been co-presenter of numerous scientific papers and posters at international low vision conferences in China, England, the Netherlands, Australia, the United States, and Canada.

Throughout her career, Pauline has been a compassionate and eloquent advocate for quality vision rehabilitation services, for the professionals who provide these services, and, above all, for the people for whom these services exist. Most people enter the field of rehabilitation seeking to make a difference. We celebrate the retirement of Pauline Bevers because she has so compellingly succeeded in making a difference. We are privileged to bask in the glow of her many significant achievements.
Eye Care And The Homeless Community

– Dr. Deborah Jones, Clinic Director

On November 3 2009, a team from the university’s Optometry Clinic set out to spend a day examining the eyes of a group of residents at the Cambridge Shelter. The team consisted of three optometrists (Drs. Debbie Jones, Tammy Labreche, and Jim Dippel), three final year students, and six Year 3 interns.

The incentive for the day was provided by the Communities and Partnerships Division of the Homeless Partnering Secretariat, who had approached the Clinic for support in a pilot project. The purpose of the project was to provide eye care to a small section of the homeless community and to assess the impact this would have on that subset of the population. A similar pilot project has also taken place in Montreal.

The shelter provided the necessary space to set up five examination lanes, such that five patients could be examined simultaneously. A separate room was used for ocular health assessment. An optician from the UW clinic, John Haney, was on hand to measure up the patients for their new glasses and to help them select frames and choose the most appropriate lenses for their needs. The spectacles were delivered and dispensed to the patients two weeks later.

By the end of the day, 32 patients had been examined, with each receiving a full eye examination, including a dilated fundus examination. Of the patients examined, 28 had spectacles prescribed and all chose their new glasses that day. The patients chose frames from a selection provided by Centennial Optical, and the lenses were supplied by A.N. Optical. Some of the patients were referred to the UW Optometry Clinic for further clinical assessment. One patient was referred to an ophthalmologist for an assessment of his diabetic eye disease.

It was a long day and a very busy one. The students enjoyed the experience in a unique setting, and the patients were very appreciative of the care that they received.

Data from the project were sent to the Secretariat for their consideration. It is unknown whether the government will be looking to include eye care in its proposals for funding the Homeless Partnering Secretariat. There is certainly a need and a demand for eye care in the homeless community.

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(Services contingent upon continued funding)
On February 26 2010, leeanna Pendergast, MPP for Kitchener-Conestoga, came to Waterloo to announce more than $20 million in grants from the Ontario Research Fund’s Research Excellence program for six Waterloo-based projects. This included $2.5 million for Dr. Chris Hudson’s project, Retinal Oxygen Saturation, Blood Flow, Vascular Function and High Resolution Morphometric Imaging in the Living Human Eye.

This ambitious project also involves our own Dr. John Flanagan and eight other researchers from UW and the University of Toronto, as well as two corporate partners. “Vision loss robs individuals of their quality of life and costs the Canadian economy an estimated $15.8 billion a year,” says Dr. Hudson.

The projects outlines that while the majority of vision loss is preventable, better tools are needed to combat the pending epidemic. Hudson and his team of researchers are developing retinal imaging instruments that will allow the early detection and improved management of the three most common causes of age-related vision loss: macular degeneration, glaucoma, and diabetic retinopathy.

The funding will pay for 14 additional doctoral students, 5 postdoctoral students, and some summer students over a 5 year period, plus an administrator to help co-ordinate this significant research thrust into non-invasive retinal metabolic imaging.

“Funding world-class research is part of Ontario’s Innovation Agenda,” said a statement from Pendergast, referring to “the McGuinty government’s plan to build an innovation economy that turns new knowledge into new jobs, better health care, a cleaner environment, and endless possibilities for Ontario families.”

On December 11 2009, it was also announced that Waterloo researchers have received more than $20 million from the Ontario Research Fund’s Research Infrastructure program. This included $125,000 in support for Dr. Vivian Choh’s research project, Vision Physiology and Cell Biology laboratory. This project examines how the lens and retina interact to control eye growth and considers whether these structures play a role in the development of various vision difficulties. Dr. Choh and her team will look at the cellular and molecular factors affecting eye growth and ocular functions, such as focusing on nearby objects. This funding will enable further investigation into how biological processes at the cellular level regulate ocular functions and bring about abnormal eye conditions.

“This research will help in the development of strategies for myopia prevention and treatment,” says Choh. “It could be important for future studies on how to prevent or delay myopia and other optical problems such as presbyopia and cataract development”.

The projects supported in the current round of funding have also received federal support through the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI), as announced in January 2009. The money comes from CFI’s Leaders Opportunity Fund, a fund meant to assist universities in attracting and retaining top faculty.

“Provincial funding of this magnitude is significant for the UW School of Optometry and speaks volumes to the quality of research being conducted here and the innovative approaches our researchers have to important vision issues,” says Dr. Thomas Freddo, School Director.
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The UWSo faculty and staff members who will accompany you look forward to welcoming you and to enjoying our time together in the warm waters of the Caribbean!

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