President’s Message

As I sit down to write my last President’s letter, I am reminded of a piece of advice I received recently from a good friend, “The role of presidency is basically a marathon with a few sprints thrown in the middle.”

My term started off rather calm and, while I hoped for a relatively peaceful year, that certainly was not to be the case. In 2013, organized optometry agreed to end the so-called “Eye Ball Wars.” That written agreement specified a clear definition of surgery, expressly prohibited optometrists from performing surgery of any kind including the use of lasers, and confirmed that optometrists were content with the 14 oral medications they were permitted to prescribe.

The optometrists apparently suffered global amnesia. This year they came back strong (over 2 million dollars strong) and sought authority to perform a vast array of surgeries and prescribe the entire PDR as well. To expose patients to even more danger, their legislation would have given the Board of Optometry, the “sole authority” to define the practice of optometry, regulate all aspects of optometric surgery, and determine what testing and qualifications optometrists needed in order to perform surgery. Talk about the fox guarding the henhouse! In essence, this dangerous bill that we were forced to contend with, would have ignored patient safety and inconceivably converted optometrists into ophthalmologists.

continued on page 2.

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2017 Legislative Session Recap
Masters in Ophthalmology 2017
Assisted Reading Solutions

Your quarterly newsletter dedicated to strengthening your ophthalmic practice.
with a stroke of a Tallahassee pen.

In order to protect patients, the Florida Society of Ophthalmology (FSO) had but one option, stop this dangerous legislation in its tracks. I am happy to report that that is exactly what we did. We ultimately were able to point out the serious dangers of this ill-conceived legislation and the bill died. In fact, while we were initially told otherwise, the bill never even made it out of the House, and was never heard by committee in the Senate.

So how did we do it, you might be asking? The answer is quite simple, we mobilized a very talented team and put in a lot of hard work. I don’t have enough room to thank everyone who helped in this tremendous effort, but I must mention a few. The FSO was very fortunate to have our highly-experienced management team, Compass Management and Consulting, skillfully guiding us down this treacherous path. The FSO’s General Counsel, Bruce May of Holland and Knight, provided a tremendous amount of expertise and guidance. Our top-notch lobbying firm, Ballard Partners, was also instrumental in our success. The American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) stepped up to the plate, in a very big way and provided much needed support and I cannot thank them enough. The Florida Medical Association, in an effort to strengthen relations between our two organizations, provided much needed support and I thank them very much as well. Of course, the FSO Board members went above and beyond to protect our members and our profession. Finally, all of the FSO members, who offered their time in Tallahassee, wrote letters and made calls to legislators, contributed to the FSO’s political committee, FOCUS, as well as the AAO’s Surgical Scope Fund. I am truly indebted to all of you.

As we turn our attention to the summer, I hope everyone has registered for our annual meeting Masters of Ophthalmology 2017 meeting that will be held in Miami on June 2-4. This will no doubt turn out to be another excellent meeting. Dr. Salinger and his dedicated crew have been working very hard to ensure the meeting will be a huge success. They have lined up an excellent group of speakers from around the country to share with you their experience and practical clinical pearls to be incorporated into your daily practice.

Our featured speaker this year is none other than Steve T. Charles, MD, FACS, FICS, who also happens to be my mentor and friend. Please, if you have not registered, do so now, online at ophmasters.com, so that you can enjoy this very worthwhile meeting. Please be aware that the venue was selected by the FSO several years prior to the 2016 election. When making your reservation for the meeting, please take into consideration that the FSO is contractually bound to this hotel and cancellation fees would be detrimental to the society. Thank you for your understanding, and we promise our meeting to remain free of the political issues.

In closing, I would like to thank everyone who has helped me be a better President. It was certainly a learning experience for me, and I am grateful to everyone for giving me the chance to serve you. I am also grateful for having been afforded the opportunity to work closely with such a talented and passionate group of people. I can reassure everyone that our incoming President, Krishna S. Kishor, MD, will hit the ground running and lead us through another successful year protecting our profession and allowing us to care for our patients.

Thank you.

Thank you for renewing your FSO membership!

Thank you for continuing your FSO Membership for 2017. The support and involvement of dedicated FSO members, like you, make it possible for the FSO to: Protect the interests of ophthalmologists across the state of Florida through advocacy in the state legislature; Offer world-class education programs for the you and your office staff; and Provide eye care to Floridians in need through collaboration with charitable vision-care organizations. Still need to renew your membership? It’s not too late. Visit MDEye.org to renew your membership today. Questions about your membership? Please contact FSO Membership Manager, Amanda East, at aeast@mdeye.org.
The number one goal of the Florida Society of Ophthalmology (FSO) is to protect our patients and our profession. We have established programs that enable the FSO leadership to educate the Florida Legislature on major issues affecting our profession and to help deter legislative encroachment by unqualified personnel. FOCUS is the FSO political committee (PC). In order to be successful in our legislative efforts, FOCUS needs support by way of financial contributions. If we are not working to elect candidates who are friendly to the profession of ophthalmology, someone else will support candidates who may not be interested in protecting the integrity of our medical license.

Please consider making a one-time donation or sign up for an automatic monthly deduction on your credit card. All contributions to FOCUS are used to further the legislative agenda of the FSO. Please complete the form below to make your contribution today. Without support from the PC, the ophthalmology profession is at risk in Florida.

CONTACT INFORMATION
First ________________________ Last__________________________ Degree ________
Address____________________________________________________________________
City __________________________________________ State ___________ Zip_________
Country _______________________________ Phone______________________________
Occupation________________________________________________________________
Email_____________________________________________________________________

ONE-TIME CONTRIBUTION AMOUNT

☐ $365 ($1/day) ☐ $500 ☐ $1,000 ☐ other $_______

MONTHLY CONTRIBUTION AMOUNT*

☐ $84/month for 12 months ☐ $167/month for 12 months ☐ other monthly amount $______/month

PAYMENT INFORMATION

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ AMEX ☐ Check (please make checks payable to: FOCUS)
Name on Card ________________________________ Card Number ________________________________
Exp. Date (mm/yy) _____________ Security Code_______________

PLEASE RETURN FORM
Fax to: 904-998-0855
Mail to: The Florida Society of Ophthalmology
6816 Southpoint Parkway, Suite 1000
Jacksonville, FL 32216

Some of you are not opted-in to receive emails from the FSO. If you are interested in getting emails from the FSO, please check the box below. You can opt-out at any time, by contacting the FSO office at 904-998-0819. If you do not wish to opt-in, please follow the FSO on Facebook and Twitter to stay updated on FSO news and events.

☐ I would like to opt-in to receive emails from the FSO.

Refund Policy: Contributions made to FOCUS are non-refundable. PC contributions are voluntary. Every member of the FSO is encouraged to make a contribution to FOCUS each year to solidify and strengthen our overall political strategy. A contribution at any level is welcome. Contributions to PCs are not deductible for federal income tax purposes.
There is still time to Register for the Masters in Ophthalmology 2017 Meeting

NEW PROGRAM ADDED:
This year’s will also feature a 2-hour Young Ophthalmologist’s Seminar on Saturday, June 3. The Young Ophthalmologist Seminar will cover important topics such as practice building, work-life balance, management of medical-legal issues and personal finance. Sign up to attend this seminar when you register for the meeting.

Learn More About:
- Complex Retinal Detachment Surgery
- What’s New in Giant Cell Arteritis
- Cataract Surgery in Glaucoma Patients
- Orbital Imaging Studies

Professional Development Courses:
- Coding & Reimbursement Program
- Certified Ophthalmic Assistants Program
- Ophthalmic Office Administrators Course

FEATURING FACULTY

MELVIN L. RUBIN, MD AWARD LECTURER
RETINA-VITREOUS
Steve T. Charles, MD, FACS, FICS
Clinical Professor of Ophthalmology
University of Tennessee College of Medicine
CEO/Founder, Charles Retina Institute
Memphis, TN

NEURO-OPHTHALMOLOGY
Larry P. Frohman, MD
Professor of Ophthalmology and Neurosciences
Rutgers New Jersey Medical School
Executive Vice President
North American Neuro-Ophthalmology Society
Newark, NJ

GLAUCOMA
Leon W. Herndon Jr., MD
Professor of Ophthalmology
Duke University School of Medicine
Durham, NC

OCULOPLASTIC
William R. Nunery, MD, FACS
Professor of Ophthalmology
University of Louisville School of Medicine
Clinical Professor of Ophthalmology
Indiana University
Louisville, KY

CORNEA/REFRACTIVE SURGERY/ANTERIOR SEGMENT
Steven G. Safran, MD
Eye Physician and Surgeon
Cornea and External Disease
Lawrenceville, NJ

ophmasters.com
2017 Annual Meeting Supporters & Exhibitors

The FSO would like to recognize all of the supporters and exhibitors that will be joining us June 2-3 for the Masters in Ophthalmology 2017 meeting at the National Doral Miami in Miami.

Commercial Supporters
(as of May 2017)

**Bronze**
Bausch + Lomb
Ophthalmic Mutual Insurance Company (OMIC)

**Other**
Genentech-A Member of the Roche Group
Johnson & Johnson Vision
Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals
Regeneron Pharmaceuticals

Sponsorship Supporters
(as of May 2017)

**Platinum**
Alcon, a Division of Novartis
Allergan, Inc.

**Gold**
Legally Mine

**Silver**
EyeMD EMR Healthcare System, Inc.
New World Medical

**Other**
Ellex
Johnson & Johnson Vision
Ophthalmic Mutual Insurance Company (OMIC)

Exhibitors
(as of May 2017)

Alcon
Alimera Sciences
Allergan, Inc.
Ambler Surgical
Bausch + Lomb
BioDOptix
Bruder Healthcare Company
CareCloud
Diopysys, Inc.
Ellex
EyeMD EMR Healthcare Systems, Inc.
For Eye Care Foundation, Inc.
Glaukos Corporation
Heidelberg Engineering
IRIDEX
JCAHPO
Johnson & Johnson Vision
Lions Eye Institute for Transplant and Research
Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals
Marco
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Optos, Inc.
Optovue, Inc.
PINE Pharmaceuticals
Regeneron Pharmaceuticals
Shire
SightLife Surgical
Sun Ophthalmics
TearLab Corp.
Topcon Medical Systems
Wolter Kluwer
ZEISS
Conference Venue

National Doral Miami
4400 NW 87th Avenue
Miami, FL 33178
1-800-713-6725

The FSO room block cutoff has been extended, please call the hotel at: 1-800-713-6725 to inquire about room rates.

Special Events

Welcome Reception with Exhibitors
Friday, June 2 | 6:15–7:45 PM
Join your fellow colleagues and the exhibitors for an opening reception on Friday evening in the exhibit hall. Beer and wine will be available as well as hors d’oeuvres, and a chance to visit with over 50 exhibiting companies.

This reception is included in the attendee registration fee. Guests and children are welcome to attend with the purchase of a guest badge.

Leadership Luncheon
Saturday, June 3 | 12:00–1:10 PM
The Leadership Luncheon has been organized by the Florida Society of Ophthalmology and designed to update members on current events and politics related specifically to the state of Florida. The luncheon is free for members; however, all attendees and guests are welcome to attend. FSO members must RSVP on the registration form.

Tickets for non-members and guests are $100/person and may be purchased when registering.

Dessert Reception with Exhibitors
Saturday, June 3 | 1:15–1:55 PM
Conclude lunch the right way...with dessert! Join our exhibitors in the exhibit hall for your final opportunity to learn about their company and products while enjoying a delicious dessert reception. An array of sweet delights will surely please the masses.

This reception is included in the attendee registration fee. Guests and children are welcome to attend with the purchase of a guest badge.

Saturday Evening Reception
Saturday, June 3 | 6:30–7:30 PM
After the program concludes on Saturday, join your friends and colleagues for a relaxing reception by the Royal Palm Pool. Enjoy the company of friends and colleagues, while having a drink and some delicious hors d’oeuvres.

This reception is included in the attendee registration fee, but you MUST RSVP to attend this event. Guests and children are welcome to attend with the purchase of a guest badge.
Six Reasons to Choose OMIC

1. Highest dividend returns among peers averaging 20% during past decade.
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3. No subsidizing of higher risk medical specialties by multispecialty carriers.
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6. First look at new patient consent forms and risk management resources.

OMIC has declared dividends 24 of 30 years.

The average Florida ophthalmologist has received more than $40,000 in dividends since inception.

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$1400 Discount for FSO Members! Average based on individual coverage
The Florida Legislature finally adjourned “Sine Die” on May 8, 2017, and I’m proud to report that we were successful in protecting the health and safety of all Florida patients.

In 2013, after a protracted legislative battle, the FSO signed an agreement, with the Florida Optometric Association (FOA), to end the so-called “eye ball wars.” The FSO took this signed document, witnessed by the House and Senate leadership, as a commitment of good faith from both parties. However, the optometrists backed out of their commitment and filed sweeping legislation for the 2017 Session (HB 1037 and SB 1168) that would have allowed them to perform a broad array of surgeries and prescribe virtually all oral medications including opioids. Furthermore, the legislation would have given the Board of Optometry, the sole authority to define the practice of optometry and determine what testing and qualifications optometrists needed in order to perform surgery.

As Dr. Katz explained in his President’s Message, we helped the Legislature see through this dangerous legislation and the bills ultimately died. This could not have happened without your support and direct involvement. Indeed, many of the FSO Board members and other members took time out of their busy schedules to come to Tallahassee to lobby and testify against these bills, including: your President Adam Katz MD; Darby Miller, MD; Mark Michels, MD; Nathaniel Ruttig, MD; resident Ryan Smith, MD; Jaime Membreno, MD; Krishna Kishor, MD; Chirag Patel, MD; Navid Vahidi, MD; and Kurt Heitman, MD from the American Academy of Ophthalmology. We also heard compelling testimony from Florida Medical Association Legislative Committee Chair, Douglas Murphy, MD.

Our testimony focused the fact that the legislation compromised patient safety and exposed patients to unnecessary medical costs. The testimony also dispelled the optometrists’ claims that patients lacked eye care by showing that there are over 1,497 ophthalmologists licensed and currently practicing in Florida, and no patient in the State is more than 20-minutes from a practicing ophthalmologist. Ultimately the truth and your commitment to patient safety prevailed and I’m happy to say that HB 1037 and SB 1168 were defeated.

I will give a more detailed summary of this legislative battle when we gather at the annual meeting next month. Meanwhile, we expect that the optometrists will refile their surgery bills in a few short months when we begin preparing for a Winter Session in 2018.

We need to prepare now! Please consider making a contribution to FOCUS, the FSOs, Political Committee online at: mdeye.org/support/contribute. We are facing a huge challenge to your practice and your patients’ welfare. We implore you to:

• Contact every colleague you know, let them know we expect this legislation again for 2018.

• If colleagues in your region are not members of FSO, encourage them to join now.

• If you or any colleague has not paid your annual dues, please pay them now.

• Ask all your colleagues to contribute FOCUS. We suggest a minimum of $1,000.
• Make a donation to the AAO Surgical Scope Fund. We suggest a minimum of $1,000. The Academy’s support is vital to our success.

• Contact your legislators, meet with them this summer to discuss why the optometric legislation is absurd and dangerous. Find them online at: myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/myrepresentative.aspx

• Keep the conversation going with your patients, encourage them to contact their legislators too.

Join Your Colleagues
AAO 2017 November 11 – 14
Subspecialty Day November 10 – 11
AAOE Program November 11 – 14

Registration Opens
June 28 Academy and AAOE Members
July 12 Nonmembers
Register by August 9 and save
Watch the preview video: aao.org/2017
Third Party Liaison Committee Update

Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS)
The Quality Payment Program began in January 2017 and it will be relatively easy to avoid penalties.

The grading scale for MIPS final scores is:

- 0 points: 4% penalty on 2019 Medicare payments
- 3 points: no bonus and no penalty
- Over 3 points but under 70 points: small bonus
- 70-100 points: modest bonus

The scores will be based on Quality (60%), Advancing Care Information (25%), and Clinical Practice Improvement Activities (15%).

LCD on Scanning Computerized Ophthalmic Diagnostic Imaging
A draft local coverage determination (LCD) on the use of scanning computerized ophthalmic diagnostic imaging is in the 45-day comment period at the time of this writing. Similar draft LCDs for this service have emerged in various jurisdictions around the country. The American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO), various subspecialty groups, and the FSO are aware of the situation and responses are being generated.

LCD on Noncovered Services
First Coast Service Options, Inc. has added 0464T, visual evoked potential testing for glaucoma, with interpretation and report, to its draft LCD for noncovered services (L33777). This LCD is also in the 45-day comment period.

Audits. It’s not a matter of if, but when. The question is how prepared are you when the request for records arrives. Due to high volume claim submission, ophthalmology is under the microscope from federal and commercial payers.

We’ve all heard horror stories of audits gone awry. To help you avoid the pitfalls more than a few of our colleagues have experienced, this article will focus on Medicare Part B documentation requirements for the office visit to determine the need for surgery since that is typically the payer of the majority of our cataract cases.

Rule 1: Do not apply one payer’s requirements or perceived requirements to all payers. When the individual payer has a policy, it will be published on their website including any preauthorization requirements if necessary.

Rule 2: For paper charts the physician’s signature must be identifiable, and for electronic health records (EHR) the physician’s signature must be secure. It is worth your time to take the five-minute physician tutorial on the First Coast website medicare.fcso.com/Medical_documentation/180170.asp. Without compliance to signature rules, the auditor simply requests a refund and the chart note will not even be audited.

Rule 3: You are held to the documentation requirements for the policy that is in place at the time of surgery. L33808 is the current policy in place for First Coast Service Operations, Inc. For more information visit medicare.fcso.com.

Rule 4: There is not a national coverage determination (NCD) that has a visual acuity requirement of 20/50 or worse before cataract surgery is indicated. Visual acuity requirements, if any, vary by payer.

Check List for the Office Visit to Determine the Need for Surgery
Let’s dissect First Coast’s local coverage determination (LCD) requirements.

1. The patient’s chief complaint conveys symptoms such as blurred vision, visual distortion, reduced contract sensitivity or complaints of glare associated with functional impairment.
2. A lifestyle complaint unique to the patient is documented. The VF-14 or VF-8R activities of daily vision scale and the visual activities questionnaire is completed, one for each eye.

3. Is the best corrected visual acuity worse than 20/40?

4. Does your examination confirm that the cataract is responsible for the reduced visual acuity?

5. For patients with best correct vision 20/40 or better, the complaints and exam findings are the same as for patients with acuity of 20/40 or worse, and documentation supports a visual impairment such as fluctuation of visual function because of glare or reduced contrast sensitivity, which can be supported with the use of, but not limited to, glare testing, brightness acuity testing (BAT), complaints of monocular diplopia or polyopia; or anisometropia.

6. Documentation supports evidence of the existence of a cataract.

7. If applicable, the exam documentation addresses other factors such as retinal disease that requires a clear media, or lens-induced disease, phacomorphic glaucoma, phacolytic glaucoma or other lens-induced diseases that may require cataract surgery.

8. Documentation supports a reasonable expectation that removal of the cataract will improve the patient’s visual acuity.

9. Documentation indicates that glasses or visual aids do not provide satisfactory functioning vision and that lifestyle is compromised.

10. Documentation that risks and benefits were discussed with the patient.

11. Most importantly, documentation that the patient desires surgery.

12. Exam: When submitting CPT code 99204 or 92004 for a new patient the following are documented:

   a. A chief complaint and a minimum of four pertinent elements pertaining to the history of the present illness
   b. A review of 10 or more body systems with accompanying note of how patient is caring for any medical problems identified
   c. A past, family and social history
   d. All 12 elements of the exam performed through dilated pupils unless contraindicated
   e. A mental assessment
   f. Additional workup planned, documented by written order, delegating measurements for the intraocular lens (IOL) calculation. The IOL calculations contain the patient’s name and date, and surgeon’s initials
   g. Interpretation or IOL selection is noted
   h. Medical risk supported by patient’s desire to undergo elective major surgery with no identified risk factors

When submitting 92014 or 99214, the chief complaint and pertinent elements to the history of the present illness is documented as is the past history and pertinent review of systems. The exam is comprehensive and the medical decision is of moderate risk.

13. The physician signature is legible or for EHR, the physician signature is secure.

Please be aware that there is a new high volume surgical code, 99024, that has been added by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) beginning on January 1, 2017 which is unique to nine states, including Florida. This code is part of a project to determine the frequency of postoperative visits for 40 of the most high-frequency surgical procedures including cataract surgery. The use of the code is not mandatory until July 1, 2017. Florida has the largest population of states that are included in the project.

The impetus for the project is not clear but will likely be used to determine the actual number of postoperative visits performed for a procedure and the level of complexity. These issues are important in determining the value of a surgical procedure. We are still awaiting more information regarding the program such as how co-management and phone calls will be incorporated as well as the length of the project. Below are listed the targeted codes.

### Global Surgery Update

![Global Surgery Update](image)

- 65756 66761 67041 67229 67917 68840
- 65855 66621 67042 67255 67924 11200
- 66170 66982 67108 67800 68760 11440
- 66179 66984 67113 67840 68761 11441
- 66180 67036 67145 67900 68801 11442
- 66711 67040 67210 67904 68810 11443
About For Eye Care Foundation, Inc.:

We are the charitable arm of the Florida Society of Ophthalmology, an organization of ophthalmologists devoted delivering the highest standard of eye care throughout the state of Florida.

The For Eye Care Foundation, Inc., formed in 2010 by the Florida Society of Ophthalmology, assists other eye care organizations with community outreach and delivers important public service messages regarding eye care and disease.

For Eye Care Foundation, Inc. plans to use your generous contributions for:

- Public Education and Media Messaging
- Community Outreach and Screening
- Small Grants for Public Services

The Foundation would like to collaborate with organizations around a common agenda. To find out more about the Foundation, to volunteer or to share your ideas, please contact us at 904-998-0819.

The For Eye Care Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Donation Form

☐ My donation is enclosed.  ☐ Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.

First____________________________________ Last________________________ Suffix________
Address___________________________________________________________________________________________
City_________________________________________ State________________________ Zip_______________
Email_________________________________________ Phone________________________

Donation Amount ☐ $1000 ☐ $750 ☐ $500 ☐ $365 ☐ $250 ☐ $100 ☐ Other: $_______________
Payment Method ☐ Check ☐ Visa ☐ MC ☐ Amex

Credit card #_________________________________________ Exp. Date_________ Security Code___________
Name on Card____________________________________ Signature________________________

My donation is ☐ in memory of ☐ in honor of _________________________________________________________

Acknowledgements to:

First____________________________________ Last________________________ Suffix________
Address___________________________________________________________________________________________
City_________________________________________ State________________________ Zip_______________

For Eye Care Foundation, Inc.
6816 Southpoint Pkwy, Suite 1000 • Jacksonville, FL 32216
P: 904-998-0819   F: 904-998-0855
www.mdeye.org/patients
The For Eye Care Foundation (FECF) is working collaboratively with the Florida Association of Agencies Serving the Blind (FAASB) and the Lighthouse of Central Florida to develop a means for patients to get vision rehabilitation referrals. In the fall, the Lighthouse of Central Florida reached out to the Florida Society of Ophthalmology (FSO) to see if there was interest in working together to address this important referral issue, which continues to be a problem for both patients and physicians. The FSO has heard from members and even patients who struggle to find the right agencies to assist with vision rehabilitation services, so the FSO turned to the FECF and asked us to help with this project. We are looking forward to working together with these agencies to create an important and hopefully useful computer app or website to aid ophthalmologist in these very important low vision referrals.

We are happy to share that the FECF has offered to sponsor a new addition to the Masters in Ophthalmology 2017 Meeting: a Young Ophthalmologists (YO) Seminar. The YO Seminar will be held on Saturday, June 3 from 4:00-6:00 PM at the National Doral in Miami. Drs. Darby Miller, Joseph Nezgoda, and Courtney Bovee heard about the great YO program that the Georgia Society of Ophthalmology put together and wanted to offer a similar program for young ophthalmologists here in Florida. The 2-hour seminar will cover topics on private practice vs. academics, business in the early practice, structuring your clinic and operating room, physician employment agreement, and advocacy. More details on this new program can be found in the annual meeting program or on the meeting website at ophmasters.com.

We are planning to continue our pediatric vision screening events throughout the new year and hope to have the participation of our members throughout Florida. If you are interested in volunteering in such an event in your area or would like to contribute to the Foundation, please contact us or contribute using the form or online at mdeye.org/support/contribute.
American Academy of Ophthalmology, Lighthouse Guild and Bookshare® partner to empower individuals with assisted reading solutions; provide access to vast library of digital books

Visually Impaired Students to Benefit from Collaboration Among Ophthalmologists and Leading Vision Service Organizations

SAN FRANCISCO – Visually impaired students across the United States now have an opportunity to experience the joy of reading through the use of assisted technology. These individuals, who otherwise might run the risk of low performance in the classroom, will benefit from a collaboration announced today by the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO), Lighthouse Guild and Bookshare®. This program will empower these students with tools needed to explore all that the world of books has to offer.

While the ability to engage in book-based learning is a significant challenge for visually impaired students, braille, large-print reading devices and other technology can help them overcome this obstacle. Accessing these resources, however, can be difficult because of lack of awareness that they exist or not having the financial resources to access them. This program will help tear down these barriers and provide the students greater access to digital reading materials.

As part of an initiative to support visually impaired patients, AAO encourages ophthalmologists to refer affected individuals to services that help lessen the impact of their low vision, and potentially improve their overall quality of life.

“Living with vision loss is never easy, but patients can learn how to maximize their potential by using assistive devices and techniques,” said Philip R. Rizzuto, MD, a spokesman for the American Academy of Ophthalmology. “Vision rehabilitation is now the standard of care for patients who are visually impaired. This initiative supports ophthalmology’s commitment to helping these individuals in every possible way.”

In supporting this program, AAO member ophthalmologists will certify the visual impairment – visual acuity less than 20/40 or partial loss of vision – and refer the student into the program. Students will be eligible to receive free access to Bookshare’s library of more than half a million e-books. Bookshare®, a Benetech initiative, is the world’s largest online library for people who are blind, visually impaired, have a physical disability, or a learning disability that interferes with reading. The Bookshare library is accessible via Spotlight Gateway, an e-reading application specifically designed for people with low vision. The Spotlight Gateway app offers a variety of special functions to assist visually impaired students, including high-quality, text-to-speech voice, digital braille and enlarged fonts.

This assisted-reading solution is designed for use with iPads. In observance of Low Vision Awareness Month in February, Lighthouse Guild in New York and Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired in San Francisco will distribute a limited number of tablets locally and through participating vision agencies across the country. This will help make the online library available to students who do not otherwise have access to an iPad. This effort is supported in part by a grant from Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

“Reading should not be a privilege,” said Mark G. Ackermann, executive vice president and chief operating officer for Lighthouse Guild. “Books document our history, mark our present and inspire our future. We’re pleased to join in establishing this program to break down barriers and open a world of possibilities to students who are visually impaired.”

Ophthalmologists are encouraged to share the details of the program with eligible patients. They can learn more about this initiative on the Academy’s website. Members of the public interested in learning how to participate can find out by visiting the Spotlight Gateway’s website.
2017-2018 Nominating Committee Recommendations

The FSO Nominating Committee, chaired by Adam Katz, MD, recommends the following slate of candidates for officer positions for the 2017-2018 term. The membership will vote on this slate during the Annual Business Meeting to be held on Saturday, June 3, 2017 in conjunction with the Masters in Ophthalmology 2017 Annual Meeting.

President-Elect: Darby Miller, MD
Vice President of Advocacy: Joseph Nezgoda, MD
Vice President of Education: David Eichenbaum, MD
Vice President of Outreach: Stacey Kruger, MD
Secretary-Treasurer: Kara Cavuoto, MD
Note: Krishna Kishor, MD will assume the position of President, Adam Katz, MD, will assume the position of Immediate Past-President along with Brad Oren, MD.

FSO Membership Spotlight

Have you ever wondered about your fellow members?

The Florida Society of Ophthalmology (FSO) is looking for members that are interested in sharing stories of giving back. So many of our members are volunteering their time and services in their communities as well as internationally. We want to hear from you and give you the opportunity to share your experiences. Spotlighted members will appear in the FSOs quarterly newsletter - The Florida Ophthalmologist, online at mdeye.org and potentially in print/media communications.

Step into the Spotlight!

This is a great opportunity for you to share your story with your colleagues. All members are encouraged to submit their names or nominate a colleague to be spotlighted. To be considered, please email fso@mdeye.org.
The demand for Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP) is high while an available, skilled, and qualified workforce – specifically ophthalmic assistants and technicians is low! The Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology (JCAHPO) and the Association of Technical Personnel in Ophthalmology (ATPO) are launching a nationwide project to recruit new eye care team members and we invite you to join us in our initiative.

Our research shows that a top reason why AOP select this profession is because they have a family member or know someone with an eye condition – and they want a “rewarding career that helps people.” This initiative focuses on building awareness of the profession and recruiting new employees with our patients and customers.

JCAHPO and ATPO will provide you with a Recruiting Toolkit in this patient awareness-building campaign. The Toolkit includes:

- A poster to display in your practice’s waiting room that has flyers for your patients to take for more information. The poster and flyers (attached to a wall or standalone) contain a brief overview of the ophthalmic assisting profession and links to a career website with more information.

- A Recruiting Toolkit web page with resources for use to refine your practice’s recruitment techniques in finding and hiring good technicians.

- A Job Candidate Recruiting web page to be added to your clinic’s website to encourage people to consider a career in eye care. The AOP career website contains in-depth information and connections to veteran technicians in the profession who can answer career questions.

There is no cost to you and your practice for your involvement and participation! We ask you to display the poster and flyers, connect to the web sites, and to provide first-hand information to your patients when they ask about finding a new, rewarding career!

If you are interested in receiving the Recruiting Toolkit, please contact Tim Chase at 1-800-284-3937 x224 or tchase@jcahpo.org.

We know that AOP serve a vital role to Ophthalmologists and that good employees are hard to find. We look forward to working with you on this Recruitment Initiative.
ADP TotalSource - 15% Discount

In an arrangement between the Florida Society of Ophthalmology and ADP TotalSource, FSO members utilizing ADP will be provided with the freedom of outsourced human resources. Each FSO member new to utilizing ADP services will receive a 15% reduction from the standard administrative fees for the initial term of their services agreement. Additionally, for each full-time employee enrolled in ADP’s services, FSO receives between $50.00 and $100.00 annually.

LifeLock - 20% Discount

LifeLock is a comprehensive identity theft protection company that protects against more than just credit fraud. Their advanced protection system has broader coverage for both credit and non-credit-related identity threats. FSO members will receive a 20% discount on identity theft protection services with LifeLock. To enroll, visit www.lifelock.com, click Enroll Now, in PromoCode Section, change PromoCode to FSOFLA20, then click APPLY.

OMIC Ophthalmic Mutual Insurance Group (OMIC) - Up to 10% Discount

OMIC insured’s can earn a risk management premium discount by registering for the annual FSO meeting and attending this cosponsored program. Participants must also turn in an attendance form at the OMIC seminar along with their email address. Participants no longer have to complete the online part after the meeting as OMIC has concluded that they can contact you to survey and determine the effectiveness of the risk management education. OMIC insured’s who are current FSO members can receive a 10% discount for attending live OMIC course at the Masters in Ophthalmology meeting. Non- FSO members earn a 5% discount. These insurance premium discounts are applied upon renewal with OMIC. For further information call (800) 562-6642.

Recruit New FSO Members and Save $100 or more on Your Annual Dues!

As a Florida Society of Ophthalmology (FSO) member, you already know the value that membership brings to you, your career and your patients. From top-notch educational programs to legislative advocacy in Florida’s capitol, membership in the FSO provides you with access to lifelong learning and professional integrity in order to provide the best possible patient care.

As a member, you are the best advocate we have to recruit new FSO members. With nearly 1,400 board-certified ophthalmologists in Florida, there is a lot of room for growth in our society. As you know...there is **strength in numbers.** When more ophthalmologists come together and speak with a unified voice, we can achieve great things, both on a state and national level.

In order to help recruitment efforts, we are offering a $100 **discount to you** on your FSO annual membership dues for **every new member** that joins based on **YOUR** referral. Recruiting a few new members could bring significant savings to you on the value that FSO membership brings.

**How It Works...It’s Simple!**

Contact your fellow ophthalmologists whom you may know or are located in your area. We can assist you with contact information if needed. Share with them the benefits of FSO membership and encourage them to join to help further the profession and strengthen their own career development. If they choose to join, simply have them fill out an online application at mdeye.org/join and where it says “Recommending Member” have them fill in your name and we will take care of the rest!

If you have questions regarding the recruit a member program, please contact Membership Manager, Amanda East at aeast@mdeye.org.
UPCOMING EVENTS

REGIONAL SOCIETY MEETINGS

Tampa Bay Ophthalmological Society
mytbos.com/meetings/tbosmeetings.php

May 23, 2017
Eddie V’s

June 7, 2017
TBD

Palm Beach County Ophthalmology Society
pbcos.org

May 18, 2017
Capital Grille

June 22, 2017
TBD

Be on the lookout for more regional society events in your area!

More information here:
mdeye.org/advocacy/regional-societies

STATE AND NATIONAL MEETINGS

Masters in Ophthalmology 2017
ophmasters.com
June 2, 2017-Coding and Reimbursement Course
June 2-3, 2017-JCAHPO Ophthalmic Technician Program
June 3, 2017-Ophthalmic Office Administrators Program
June 2-4, 2017-Scientific Sessions
National Doral Miami
Miami, FL

Florida Medical Association 2017 Annual Meeting
August 2-4, 2107
Loews Sapphire Falls
Orlando, FL
celebratemedicine.com

AAO 2017
November 11 – 14, 2017
Ernest N. Morial Convention Center
New Orleans, LA
Raise your expectations. Deliver theirs.

Now you can give your patients the best of both worlds with the first and only hybrid designed monofocal-multifocal IOL.

IMPORTANT PRODUCT INFORMATION FOR THE ACRYSO® IQ RESTOR® FAMILY OF IOLs

CAUTION: Federal (USA) law restricts this device to the sale by or on the order of a physician.

INDICATIONS: The AcrySof® IQ ReSTOR® Posterior Chamber Intraocular Lens (IOL) is intended for primary implantation for the visual correction of aphakia secondary to removal of a cataractous lens in adult patients with and without presbyopia, who desire near, intermediate and distance vision with increased spectacle independence. The lens is intended to be placed in the capsular bag.

WARNINGS/PRECAUTIONS: Careful preoperative evaluation and sound clinical judgment should be used by the surgeon to decide the risk/benefit ratio before implanting a lens in a patient with any of the conditions described in the Directions for Use labeling. Physicians should target emmetropia, and ensure that IOL centration is achieved. Care should be taken to remove viscoelastic from the eye at the close of surgery.

Some patients may experience visual disturbances and/or discomfort due to multifocality, especially under dim light conditions. As with other multifocal IOLs, visual symptoms may be significant enough that the patient will request explant of the multifocal IOL. Spectacle independence rates vary with all multifocal IOLs; as such, some patients may need glasses when reading small print or looking at small objects.

Clinical studies with the AcrySof® ReSTOR® lens indicated that posterior capsule opacification (PCO), when present, developed earlier into clinically significant PCO. Prior to surgery, physicians should provide prospective patients with a copy of the Patient Information Brochure available from Alcon for this product informing them of possible risks and benefits associated with the AcrySof® IQ ReSTOR® IOLs.

Studies have shown that color vision discrimination is not adversely affected in individuals with the AcrySof® Natural IOL and normal color vision. The effect on vision of the AcrySof® Natural IOL in subjects with hereditary color vision defects and acquired color vision defects secondary to ocular disease (e.g., glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, chronic uveitis, and other retinal or optic nerve diseases) has not been studied. Do not resterilize; do not store over 45° C; use only sterile irrigating solutions such as BSS® or BSS PLUS® Sterile Intraocular Irrigating Solutions.

ATTENTION: Reference the Directions for Use labeling for a complete listing of indications, warnings and precautions.
Florida Society of Ophthalmology
6816 Southpoint Pkwy, Ste 1000
Jacksonville, FL 32216

• Learn about the newest procedures, treatments and therapies
• Hear from national experts in ophthalmology
• Attend breakout sessions tailored for the subspecialist
• Customized educational tracks for each member of the ophthalmic practice
• Connect with colleagues and industry during social functions

NATIONALLY FEATURED FACULTY

**Cornea/Refractive Surgery**
- Vance M. Thompson, MD
  - Sioux Falls, SD

**Glaucoma**
- Leon W. Herndon, Jr., MD
  - Durham, NC

**Neuro-Ophthalmology**
- Larry P. Frohman, MD
  - Roseland, NJ

**Oculoplastics**
- William R. Nunery, MD, FACS
  - Louisville, KY

**Retina-Vitreous**
- Steve Charles, MD, FACS, FICS
  - Germantown, TN

**Melvin L. Rubin, MD lecturer**

Visit ophmasters.com for more information.

June 2–4, 2017
National Doral Miami • Miami, FL

REASONS TO ATTEND

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