



# THE VISIONARY

FALL 2016

*OPTOMETRY  
GRADUATES  
LOOK TOWARD  
THE FUTURE*

# It's time to get published!

Tell us your stories and see your name in *The Visionary*.

Please let us know if you have

- been promoted or accepted a new professional position
- had a major article or book published
- been appointed to a committee or board of directors
- conducted research
- received any special awards or recognition

We want to read about your achievements, so please submit your information by email by February 13, 2017. If possible, include a high-resolution, original photo in a jpeg or tiff format.

So we can continue to send you *The Visionary* and other important college and alumni information, please update your contact information regularly by emailing us.

We look forward to hearing from you.

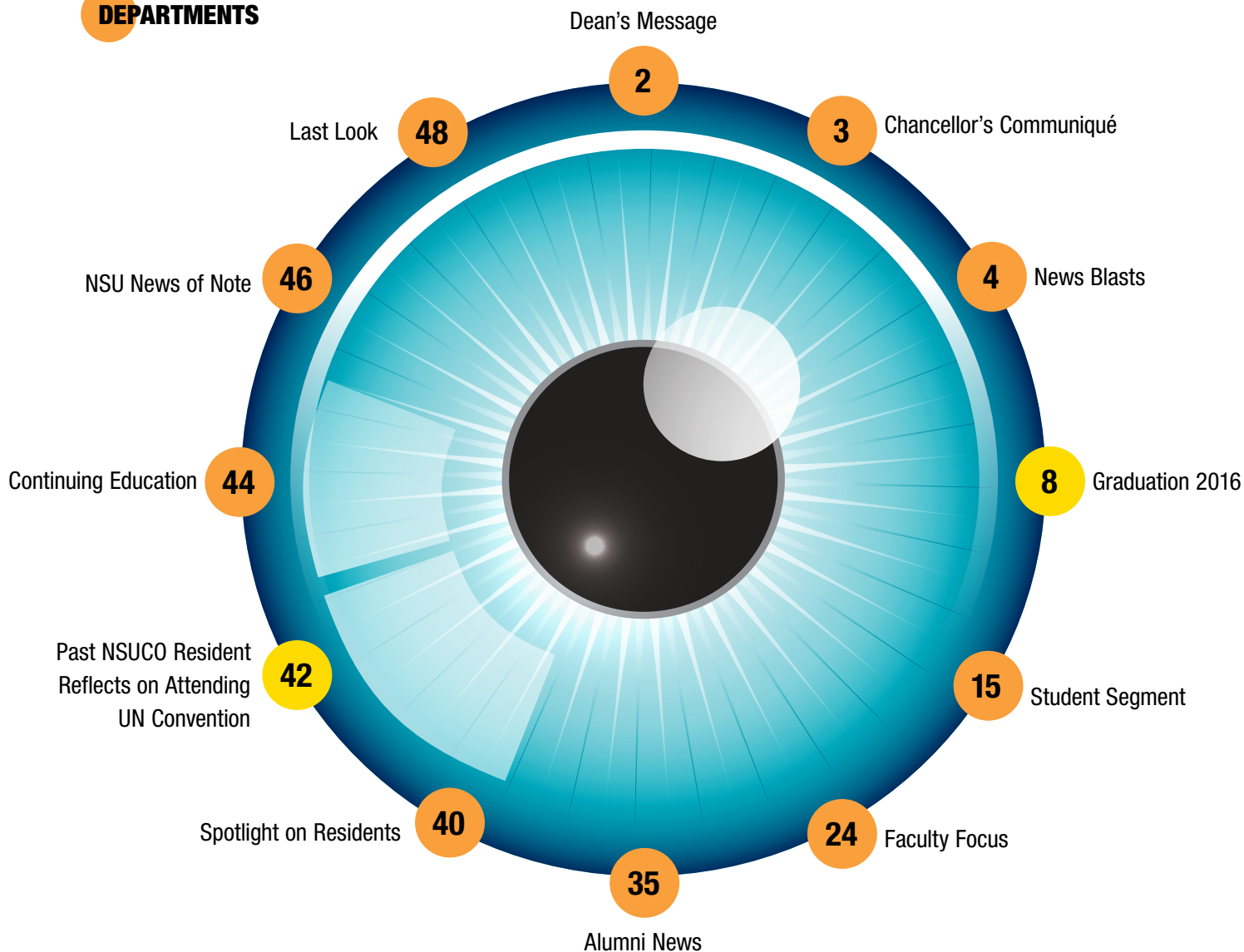
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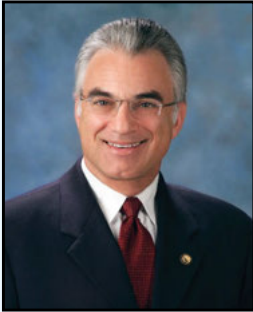
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## Dean's Message



The growing legacy of the NSU College of Optometry (NSUCO) continues to surpass expectations. From my many years of experience in higher education and in this profession, I believe that optometric physicians have served, and will continue to serve, a vital role in today's health care system.

From our inaugural entering class in 1989, through our current curriculum, NSUCO has kept ahead of the pace in optometric training, ensuring that our graduates are leaders in the profession. Our mission is to prepare, educate, and train optometric physicians to practice at the highest level of proficiency, integrity, and professionalism and to provide a multidisciplinary environment that encourages scholarly activity, service, and life-long learning.

NSUCO is an integral part of the NSU Health Professions Division, reflecting the interdisciplinary direction current health care incorporates. We embrace the newest teaching modalities with the use of iPads, ebooks, and videos. In addition, we are striving to enhance student education through grants and donations that will allow us to acquire simulation equipment and renovate our laboratories.

Students receive a portion of their clinical training in The Eye Care Institute, which consists of five clinical sites, state-of-the-art equipment, and a diverse patient population. Our students, who are trained in all areas of optometry, also have the opportunity to select from clinical sites throughout the United States and in China for external clinical training.

Additionally, the college has increased its research by acquiring grants from several sources, including the National Institutes of Health, NSU, and private

industry. A number of the grants involve multiple optometry faculty members who contribute their specific expertise. Faculty members are publishing in peer-reviewed journals and are presenting papers and posters at professional meetings as well. Significant progress is also being made in developing the research skills of the optometry faculty members, who are able to enroll in the college's Master of Science in Clinical Vision Research program at a reduced cost.

We continue to build our alumni network through *The Visionary*, alumni receptions at annual optometry meetings and conferences, and continuing education classes offered by the college at a reduced cost to NSUCO graduates.

Scholarships make it possible for us to attract and retain an exceptional, diverse student body and develop the next generation of outstanding optometric physicians. I encourage you to make a contribution to the college to assist current and future students with their educational costs. Your support will enhance the college now and sustain its excellence in the future. If you would like to initiate a pledge or make a one-time donation, please visit [realizingpotential.nova.edu/give/](http://realizingpotential.nova.edu/give/).

On a similar note, I would also like to express gratitude to our alumni and faculty and staff members who generously donate to the college. We were recently recognized by the NSU Division of Advancement and Community Relations for exceeding our goal regarding the number of faculty and staff members who give. Every gift, regardless of the amount, assists in our continuous growth as a premier optometric institution.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David S. Loshin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "L".

David S. Loshin, O.D., Ph.D., FAAO  
Dean, College of Optometry  
Nova Southeastern University

# THE VISIONARY

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## Chancellor's Communiqué



During the summer months, the NSU Health Professions Division (HPD) welcomes thousands of eager new students into its myriad programs. This moment of accomplishment is preceded annually by an exhaustive admissions process that allows us to select what we hope are not only the best and the brightest, but also the most compassionate and capable health care professionals of the future.

The HPD admissions process is very unique in terms of today's academic mind-set, because we interview every applicant who is accepted into one of our programs. This process follows the admissions philosophy of Morton Terry, D.O., the founder of the Health Professions Division, who always said, "You can't tell a person's ability or potential just by looking at grades or standardized test scores."

We live by this credo, which I think effectively serves the health care professions and the people who are cared for by the health professionals who graduate from our programs. What gives me great pride is that in looking at the graduates who went through our admissions process, their selection centered on humanistic criteria and not just on their grade point averages and standardized test scores. They were chosen based on an interview that helped the interviewers gain deeper insights about each applicant.

I believe our admissions process plays a major role in explaining why we have such a variety of people providing health care services at the highest administrative level throughout the United States and globally. Our graduates are serving in diverse roles, ranging from directors of trauma centers and county health departments to distinguished pharmaceutical research directors. Whether it be an alumnus who is serving as president of one of the largest pharmacy corporations, or an alumna who is improving the health care outcomes of everyone from stroke victims to impaired veterans, our alumni are having a positive impact in all areas of health care.

These are the elements that make up a great university. NSU has evolved into an academic institution that serves as a paradigm of educational diversity and excellence due to the integrity, quality, and capability it provides its students and graduates.

Frederick Lippman, R.Ph., Ed.D.  
Chancellor, Health Professions Division  
Nova Southeastern University

# News Blasts



## NSUCO Receives Three STUEY Nominations

NSUCO was acknowledged in three categories at the 17th Annual Student Life Achievement Awards, most commonly referred to as the STUEYS. The awards ceremony is an annual celebration of NSU's best in regards to the core values of academic excellence, student centered, integrity, innovation, opportunity, scholarship/research, diversity, and community.

During the event, held at NSU's Rose and Alfred Miniaci Performing Arts Center, students, faculty and staff members, corporate partners, and alumni are honored for their contributions toward building a greater sense of community and campus life.

Listed below are the individuals from NSUCO who were nominated for a STUEY.

- Cocurricular Adviser of the Year Finalist  
**Julie Rodman**, O.D., M.Sc., FAAO
- Professor of the Year Finalist  
**Nicole Patterson**, O.D., M.S., FAAO
- NSUCO Student of the Year  
**Kelsey Moore** ('16)



Left to right: Julie Rodman, Nicole Patterson, and Kelsey Moore, all with NSU President and CEO George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D.



*The Eye Care Institute staff members from the five clinical locations work hard on event day to ensure that the Optical Style Show is a success. Pictured are staff members from the Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus location.*

## Puttin' on the Ritz at the Optical Style Show

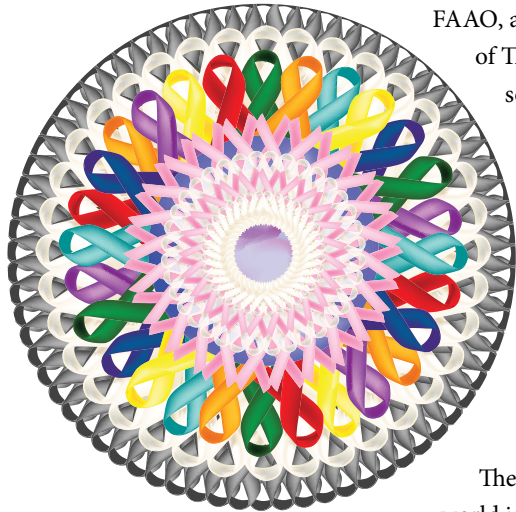
On March 30, The Eye Care Institute hosted its annual Optical Style Show, which featured a roaring 20s theme, complete with feathers, pearls, raffles, music, food, and fun. The show's sponsoring frame vendor was Luxottica, which showcased full collections of its top brands, including Michael Kors, Burberry, Dolce & Gabbana, Coach, Prada, Tory Burch, Ray-Ban, and Oakley.

The style show has served as a successful way to promote The Eye Care Institute clinics to their surrounding communities via radio ads and invitations, as well as through campus-wide promotion for NSU students and faculty and staff members. The Optical Style Show has been a success from its inception thanks to the efforts of Linda S. Rouse, O.D., FAAO, assistant dean of finance and operations and chief operations officer of The Eye Care Institute; Ana Abugazaleh, managing optician; Michelle M. Morgado, B.S., manager of marketing; and The Eye Care Institute staff members. ♦

# News Blasts

## Hungry for a Cure

On April 15–16, NSUCO participated in the Relay for Life Plantation at Plantation Central Park for the second consecutive year. Led by team captains Linda S. Rouse, O.D., FAAO, assistant dean of finance and operations and chief operations officer of The Eye Care Institute, and Lori Vollmer, O.D., FAAO, associate professor and director of residency programs, the team of faculty and staff members, residents, and students surpassed its goal of raising \$2,500.



During Relay for Life, the community comes together to honor cancer survivors, remember loved ones lost, and fight against cancer. Relay for Life teams camp out overnight and take turns walking or running around the track. The event lasts for 24 consecutive hours for a symbolic reason. Because cancer never sleeps, each team is asked to have at least one participant on the track at all times.

The theme for this year's walk was children's books. Because the world is hungry for a cure, the college chose *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle. ♦

## *Holiday Drive Benefits Kids In Distress*

During the 2015 holiday season, NSUCO participated in the Kids In Distress Holiday Drive. Thanks to the generosity of the faculty and staff members, 10 children were given the gift of clothes, shoes, and toys. ♦



From left: NSUCO staff members Rachel Snell, Maura Cohen, Marlem Aleman, and Kelly Duke proudly display some of the items they collected for the annual holiday drive.





## Three Residents Awarded Allergan Travel Fellowships

Three NSUCO optometric residents—Casey Hamm, O.D.; Tamara Mendez Romero, O.D.; and Leticia Rouso, O.D.—were awarded Allergan Eye Care travel fellowship grants to attend the American Academy of Optometry meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, on October 7–10, 2015. The academy’s Residents Day Committee evaluated the applicants by assessing their curriculum vitae, National Board of Examiners in Optometry scores, and fellowship essays.

Hamm (top) received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Illinois Wesleyan University in 2011 and her Doctor of Optometry degree from the University of Missouri—St. Louis College of Optometry in 2015. Her area of specialty as an NSUCO optometric resident is primary care with an emphasis on ocular disease.



Romero (center) received her Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Maryland in 2009 and her Doctor of Optometry degree from the Pennsylvania College of Optometry at Salus University in 2015. Her area of specialty as an NSUCO optometric resident is primary care with an emphasis on pediatrics and binocular vision.



Rouso (bottom) received her Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Florida in 2011 and her Doctor of Optometry degree from NSUCO in 2015. Her area of specialty as an NSUCO optometric resident is primary care with an emphasis on ocular disease. ♦

## Resident Awarded CooperVision Travel Fellowship

Stacy Zubkousky, O.D., an NSUCO optometric resident, was awarded the CooperVision Cornea, Contact Lenses, and Refractive Technologies Resident Travel Fellowship to attend the American Academy of Optometry meeting held October 7–10, 2015, in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Zubkousky received her Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Central Florida in 2010 and her Doctor of Optometry degree from the New England College of Optometry in 2015. Her area of specialty as an NSUCO optometric resident is primary care with cornea and contact lenses. ♦





# Graduation 2016

In May, the class of 2016 graduates marked the beginning of their journey as NSUCO alumni and health care providers. We are confident they will continue to surpass expectations in all the opportunities they choose to embark upon. We wish them the best of luck in their careers as optometric professionals who will practice at the highest level of proficiency, integrity, and professionalism.





## EYE ON THE PRIZE

Graduation 2016 Awards of Distinction



**JAY HARRELSON**

**Chancellor's Award**

Presented to the student who best exemplifies the characteristics of a fine optometric physician—a combination of scholarship, leadership, integrity, humanity, and loyalty to the profession



**EMILY KORSZEN**

**Beta Sigma Kappa  
Silver Medal**

Presented to the graduating chapter member who attained the highest cumulative grade point average

**Dean's Award**

Presented for academic excellence to the student graduating with the highest scholastic achievement



**NATALIE DIAZ**

**Luxottica Award**

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated excellence in clinical pediatric care and vision therapy

**William Feinbloom Low Vision Award**

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding clinical application of low vision treatment



**JESSICA KING**

**Marchon Practice Management Award**

Presented to a graduating student for excellence in clinical optometric practice management

**Dan and Hoffman Extern of the Year**

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated an outstanding work ethic and overall excellence in patient care



**EMILY KORSZEN**

**Humana Specialty Benefits, VCP Faculty Choice Award**

Presented to a graduating student who best represents the ideals of the faculty

**Dr. Lester E. Janoff Scholar Award**

Presented to a fourth-year optometry student for outstanding performance in a scholarly activity, such as teaching, research, or optometric journalism, in memory of Lester E. Janoff—a renowned educator, researcher, and pioneer in the area of cornea and contact lenses, as well as a gentleman and a scholar who exemplified lifelong learning



**TIMOTHY WISE**

**Milroy Optical Scholarship Award**

Presented to a graduating student for excellence in ophthalmic optics materials knowledge and dispensing

**Dan and Hoffman Clinical Excellence Award**

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated exceptional clinical skills and excellence in diagnosis and treatment of ocular disease



**NAOMI CLAY**

**Good-Lite Pediatric and Binocular Vision Clinical Excellence Award**

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated excellence in pediatrics and binocular vision



**JESSICA DARBY**

**Low Vision Award of Excellence**

Presented to a graduating student who has excelled in the low vision areas of patient rapport, clinical decision making, patient management, and patient education



**ANGELA DIAMANTAKOS**

**Southern Council of Optometry Award for Clinical Excellence**

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding clinical performance



**STEPHANIE DRNEK**

**GP Clinical Excellence Award**

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated eagerness to learn more about gas-permeable lens design, materials, and fitting techniques



**JONATHAN AKLE**  
**Vistakon Award of Excellence**

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated excellence in contact lens care



**THARANIE AMAR-  
 AWARDANA**  
**College of Optometrists  
 in Vision Development  
 Award of Excellence**

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated strong interest and clinical skills in the area of vision therapy



**RYAN AMBROSE**  
**X-Cel Contact  
 Lens Award**

Presented to a graduating student for excellence in fitting RGP contact lenses



**OSVALDO CABRERA**  
**Arán Eye Associates  
 Excellence in Ocular  
 Disease Award**

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated exceptional understanding and care of patients with ocular disease



**BRIAN HARRIS**  
**OEP Clinical  
 Curriculum Award**

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated strong interest and clinical skills in the areas of pediatrics, binocular vision, and vision therapy



**CHUAN HU**  
**Braverman Eye Center  
 Extern of the Year**

Presented in recognition of a superior work ethic, clinical acumen, and excellence in patient care



**KAITLYN KELLEY**  
**Pediatric and Binocular  
 Vision Clinical Excel-  
 lence Award**

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding clinical skills and patient care in the Nova Southeastern University pediatrics and binocular vision service



**CRISTINA LA ROSA**  
**Lombart Instruments'  
 Optometric Award**

Presented to the individual who demonstrated excellence in the optometric theory and methods courses



**SHELLY LOMAX**

**Volk Ocular Disease Excellence Award**

Presented to a student for excellence in ocular disease care



**CANDICE MANSITO**

**CooperVision Excellence in Contact Lens Award**

Presented to a graduating student for excellence in corneal and contact lens clinical care



**SAMANTHA McINTOSH**

**Optelec Excellence in Low Vision Award**

Presented to a graduating student who has expressed a desire to provide low vision services and excels in clinical skills



**BRENNAN NELSON**

**Contact Lens Practice Management Award**

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated excellence in contact lens practice management as the house officer



**SOPHIE ROBINSON**

**Module Directors' Award**

Presented to that individual who has demonstrated clinical excellence in the area of primary care, including disease management and diagnosis, visual and refractive care, and patient interaction



**STEPHANIE SAROSI**

**Eschenbach Award of Excellence in Low Vision**

Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding clinical application of low vision treatment



**BRIDGET STAAB**

**Heine Award of Excellence in Optics**

Presented to the graduating student who has demonstrated excellence in optics



**PAM THEOPHILOPOULOS**

**Pioneer Instruments' Primary Care Award**

Presented to a graduating student for excellence in primary care performance



**JAY HARRELSON and JORDAN PARRISH**

**Beaver-Visitec International Dry Eye Award**

Presented to two graduating students who have demonstrated strong interest and clinical skills in the area of dry eye management



## Beta Sigma Kappa Honor Students

Back row, from left: Kyle Bettis, Jonathan Akle, Jay Harrelson, Timothy Wise, Christopher Hamilton, Naomi Clay, Nima Tajalli, and Ryan Ambrose

Third row, from left: Brennan Nelson, Brian Harris, Miranda Ranieri, Jessica Lynn Darby, William Roberts, Bridget Staab, and Jordan Michael Parrish

Second row, from left: Natalie Diaz, Shelly Lomax, Linnett Molina, Samantha McIntosh, Brittany Wright, and Cristina La Rosa

Front row, from left: Puja Giri Koirala, Emily Korszen, Sheena Patel, Angela Diamantakos, Stephanie Drnek, and Sophie Robinson

Not pictured: Joy Poonvongprasert

*Linnett Molina takes a fun selfie with classmates at the commencement event.*



## Gold Key International Optometric Honor Society

Back row, from left: Natalie Diaz, Caleb Saint Jean, Sophie Robinson, and Jonathan Dizon

Front row, from left: Micaela Crowley, Emily Korszen, Angela Diamantakos, Nicole Ardura, and Alyssa Keating



# Student Segment

## *Eyeball Offers Innumerable Activities*



*Excited students board the yacht for a fun-filled night.*

The Student Government Association (SGA) hosted its Eyeball event on April 8 on the *Lady Windridge* yacht, which cruised along Fort Lauderdale's scenic Intracoastal Waterway. It proved to be a wonderful night filled with great friends, food, music, dancing, awards, and even an engagement.



*SGA officers check in attendees.*

*Continued on page 16*

*The SGA impressed guests by displaying a remarkable ice sculpture.*





During the Eyeball, a number of faculty members were honored for their teaching excellence by the classes of 2019, 2018, 2017, and 2016.

#### CLASS OF 2019

OPTOMETRY TEACHER OF THE YEAR: **Gregory Fecho**, O.D.

BASIC SCIENCE TEACHER OF THE YEAR: **Cheryl Purvis**, Ph.D.

PRECEPTOR OF THE YEAR: **Nickelle Kellough**, O.D.

#### CLASS OF 2018

OPTOMETRY TEACHER OF THE YEAR: **Joseph Sowka**, O.D., FAAO (Dipl.)

BASIC SCIENCE TEACHER OF THE YEAR: **Edwin Murdock**, M.D., M.P.H.

PRECEPTOR OF THE YEAR: **Laura Falco**, O.D., FAAO

#### CLASS OF 2017

OPTOMETRY TEACHER OF THE YEAR: **Chandra V. Mickles**, O.D., M.S., FAAO

PRECEPTORS OF THE YEAR: **Diana Shechtman**, O.D., FAAO, and **Jessica Steen**, O.D., FAAO

#### CLASS OF 2016

PRECEPTOR OF THE YEAR: **Julie Rodman**, O.D., M.Sc., FAAO

In addition, the NSUCO student body presented the Administrator of the Year Award to **Michael Bacigalupi**, O.D., M.S., FAAO. ♦



# Student Segment



*AOSA members celebrate the conclusion of another rewarding World Sight Day Challenge.*



*From left: Cycle for Sight board officers Aaron Thomas (past AOSA trustee); Melissa Zaleski (AOSA trustee); Mahdi Hedayat (AOSA treasurer); Paven Korotana (AOSA trustee-elect); Shelby Rockwell (AOSA secretary); and Sara Rasekhi (AOA/PAC liaison and Florida Optometric Association president)*

## Cycle for Sight Focuses Attention on Visual Impairment

The college's American Optometric Student Association (AOSA) chapter did an excellent job of bringing the NSU community together by participating in the World Sight Day Challenge for 2015—Cycle for Sight. World Sight Day is an annual awareness event held on the second Thursday of October to focus global attention on blindness and vision impairment.

The event is coordinated by the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness as part of the VISION 2020 Global Initiative. It is supported by eye health organizations around the world, including Optometry Giving Sight, and is included on the official World Health Organization calendar.

The AOSA's mission is to promote and advance the professional education and ideals of optometry students, to support and strengthen its members on the local and national level, and to ensure measures necessary for meeting the future needs of the association and the profession. ♦



*The team of volunteers included 24 optometry students and 4 faculty members.*

## Serving the Underprivileged in the Dominican Republic

NSUCO's Student Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity (SVOSH) chapter served 1,360 patients in the province of San Pedro de Macorís in the Dominican Republic during spring break in March. The volunteer team included 24 optometry students, 5 optometrist physicians, and 1 optician.

Seven different stations were coordinated—case history, prelims, retinoscopy, refraction, tonometry/blood pressure, dilated fundus examination, and optical. The patients, who lined up hours in advance to be seen by the hardworking team, rotated through each station as deemed necessary by the triage optometrists. In addition to identifying significant uncorrected refractive errors, 1 out of every 12 patients had significant ocular pathology.

SVOSH's main goal is to provide primary eye care to individuals who do not have access to such care due to either geographical or financial reasons. SVOSH members collect thousands of used glasses, including many from the Lions Club and local optometrists, and prepare them for distribution to third-world countries. For most of the patients who receive assistance, SVOSH's services may be the only form of eye health care they will ever receive. ♦



*Students perform retinoscopy on patients in the Dominican Republic.*

# Student Segment

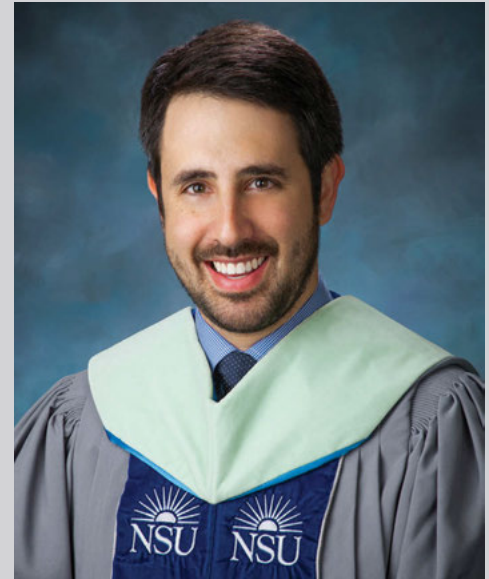


From left: Class of 2019 students Jin Chiu, Jemila Abdulgabbbar, Annette Elakatt, and Irina Silva, and class of 2018 student Ashley Noble

## *Students Lend Support at Health Fair*

On June 4–5, NSUCO’s National Optometric Student Association (NOSA) participated in the Smiley’s Voice Foundation Seventh Annual Health Fair and Family Fun Day. During the event, the participating students educated people about the importance of having comprehensive, dilated-eye examinations and the relationship between three silent killers—hypertension, diabetes, and high cholesterol—and vision loss.

NOSA is the student branch of the National Optometric Association (NOA), which was founded in 1969 in Richmond, Virginia. The recruitment of diverse students for the schools and colleges of optometry, and their placement into appropriate practice settings upon graduation, are two basic NOA concerns. Coincident with these concerns is the delivery of effective eye and vision care services to the community. The association also promotes strong community involvement locally and internationally through vision screenings, mission trips, and health fairs. ♦



## NSUCO Student Receives National Scholarship

Class of 2016 student Jeremy Chartash received a \$5,000 Dr. Pat & Patrick Cummings Scholarship from The AOA Foundation—the charitable organization of the American Optometric Association (AOA). The AOA Foundation administers numerous scholarships that encourage students to make a difference in their communities and in the optometry profession.

In tribute to father and son, both of whom passed away in separate tragic accidents, the Dr. Pat & Patrick Cummings Memorial Fund was established through Optometry Cares and generously funded by numerous individual donors, as well as through a large contribution from Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc.

Because the senior Cummings was a dedicated philanthropist in his profession, the scholarship requires recipients to write an essay about their goals in the area of public health and leadership roles in optometry. ♦

## Celebrating NSUCO's Student Fellows



Twenty-two NSUCO students completed the requirements to become Student Fellows at the American Academy of Optometry's 95th annual meeting, November 9–12, 2016, at the Anaheim Convention Center in Anaheim, California.

The Student Fellowship program provides an excellent opportunity for students to engage in cutting-edge knowledge and technology through activities that include lectures, workshops, and posters. Additionally, it is geared to help students develop their skills as optometric or vision science professionals.

Following are the NSUCO students who achieved Student Fellow status:

**Ryan Ambrose, Callista Belles, Erica Benson, Ekaterina DeBello, Adriana Escobar, Adesola Fadeyi, Chelsea Heck, Parisa Jalalat, Samantha Kayser, Lori Kennon, Justin Knuckles, Emily Korszen, Cortez Lewis, Brandon Marshall, Linda Nguyen, Sylvester Nguyen, Bhavisha Patel, Jennifer Pathiyil, Sophie Robinson, Azifah Salla, Summer Sayers, and T'Sani Watson. ♦**

# Student Segment

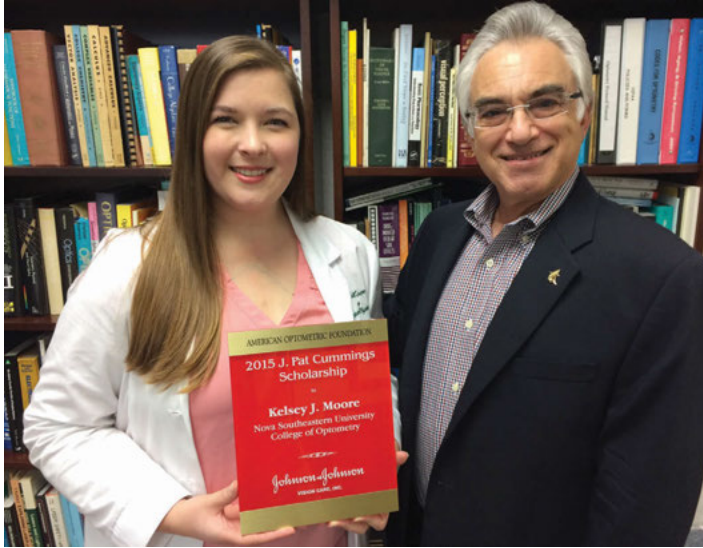


Class of 2018 student **Monica Finberg** was interviewed by WPLG Local 10 regarding her work with Southeastern Guide Dogs. The segment, which aired on May 5, featured Finberg, who is training a guide dog, Thresa, on campus while attending classes.



Class of 2018 students **Samuel Petro** and **Kristin Barnes** attended the sixth annual Private Practice SOLutioN (Student Optometric Leadership Network) Conference in Denver, Colorado, June 9–12, 2016. The national conference helps leaders from each optometry school's private practice club learn how to enhance their club's activities.





Class of 2016 student **Kelsey J. Moore** was selected as the 2015 recipient of the J. Pat Cummings Scholarship from the American Optometric Foundation, which is conferred to students who best demonstrate the ideal eye care standards of practice. To qualify, the recipient must demonstrate achievement in both academic performance and extracurricular activities. The scholarship is generously sponsored by Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc.



Class of 2016 students **Sophie Robinson** (right) and **Shelly Lomax**, left, received the 2015–2016 Vision Service Plan/American Optometric Foundation Practice Excellence Scholarship. They received their plaques and travel grants during the VSP Global reception at the American Academy of Optometry meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, in October 2015.

In April, five contestants—

**Heather Gauger**

(class of 2017),

**Mitchell Paradis**

(class of 2017),

**Jordan Petrosky**

(class of 2018),

**Brandon Powell**

(class of 2018), and

**Cara Smith** (above, class of 2017)—battled to be the best in this year's Quiz Bowl Challenge. Smith, who emerged triumphant, went on to represent NSUCO on June 30 in the Varilux Student Bowl at Optometry's Meeting in Boston, Massachusetts.



Class of 2017 student **Vy Pham** was awarded the \$5,000 first-place prize in the National Vision, Inc., 2015–2016 optometry grant program in March. To be eligible, third- and fourth-year students submitted essays or videos describing their perspectives on the need for affordable primary eye care in today's changing health care landscape.

# Faculty Focus

## *Time Spent Lecturing in China Proves Enlightening*

Nadine Girgis Hanna, O.D., FAAO, assistant professor of optometry, reflects on her time spent lecturing at He University in Shenyang, China.

NSU's College of Optometry has established an amazing educational partnership with He University in Shenyang, China. Each year, He University sends one or two optometrists to do vision research at NSUCO. Bin Zhang, M.D., Ph.D., FAAO, an NSUCO professor, serves as their mentor while they work on research and attend classes taught by the college's renowned faculty members.

Last year, the visiting Chinese scholars—Ziming Liu, M.D., and Yuwen Wang, M.D.—attended my weekly Anomalies of Binocular Vision course and enjoyed gaining hands-on experience while learning about the binocular and accommodative system functions and dysfunctions. We kept in touch, and six months later, I found myself being invited to Shenyang, China, to lecture and hold workshops in my specialty area.

My husband and I had visited China as tourists in 2011, spending time in Beijing, Xi'an, and Shanghai, but Shenyang was a much different city, because it is located in the northeast section of China, which is very close to Russia. Shenyang is well known throughout China for many things, two of which we were fortunate enough to experience—its famous dumpling house, named Lao Bian Dumpling, and He University.

Privately owned and funded, He University was established by Wei He—a successful doctor and businessman who used his wealth to build the university. He University is characterized as a dynamic institution at the forefront of ophthalmology and vision science education in China, although it is not just an eye university and also houses nursing, clinical medicine, and medical imaging programs.

The main campus is 20 miles outside Shenyang; however, the university's Eye Institute is in the heart of Shenyang.



We were given a private tour of the Eye Institute, which featured a vast optical area with every type of eyeglass frame imaginable. The exam lanes were all automated, and there was even a small vision therapy room with Brock strings, vectograms, and Hart charts.

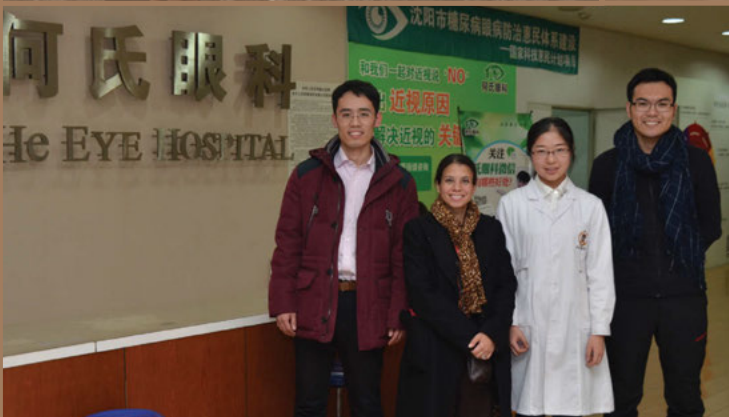
I was constantly surprised by the generosity of the students and faculty and staff members during my time at He University. We had dinner with the dean of the university's optometry program, Ling Xu, and were always surrounded by their knowledgeable faculty members. We were so spoiled that one of our previous visiting scholars was with us all the time to drive us around, show us the city, and take us to the all-important dumpling house.





Photos clockwise from top on opposite page: Ling, dean of He University College of Optometry, third from left, along with some faculty members, welcomes Nadine Girgis Hanna. The city offers so many wonders to explore. Girgis Hanna demonstrates specialty binocular vision testing. Girgis Hanna lectures to 60 Chinese optometrists and optometry students. The He Eye Hospital was one of the stops on the trip. A farewell dinner was set up at the President's Faculty Club at He University.

Photos courtesy of Michael Hanna



a large turntable in the middle so people do not have to pass the food around.

You just turn the

table and choose what you would like from each plate. The turntables always featured rice, vegetables, fruit, multiple fish dishes, and some other meat dish. Everything was fresh and contained few preservatives.

The attendees appreciated my training videos, which were provided courtesy of Gregory Fecho, O.D., assistant professor. The students were extremely attentive, asked insightful questions, and seemed eager to learn. After I completed my presentations, we toured additional areas of the university and witnessed how diverse the faculty truly is. Some serve as clinicians, while others do pharmaceutical, eye mask, and filter research.

When people hear that I went to China to lecture, the first question they ask is, "How was the food?" Most people know that the standard Chinese food they order as takeout in the United States is not true Chinese food. My husband and I found that out firsthand.

The Chinese like to eat family style, and it was novel, yet intuitive, how the tables are set up. They are round with

Even though it was very cold when we were there, we did have some time to do walking tours in Shenyang and visit one of only two existing royal palaces in China—Gugong Palace. The most well-known palace is the Forbidden City in Beijing, where emperors lived, worked, and housed their families from 1420 until 1912. Gugong Palace served the same purpose for a shorter time period, from 1625 through 1644 and then off and on until 1917.

Shenyang was and still is an important part of Chinese culture. I am fortunate to have had the chance to lecture there, learn from my Chinese colleagues, and explore their facilities and city. I hope to have the opportunity to go there again so we can exchange ideas, teach one another, and continue the fruitful partnership between He University and NSU's College of Optometry. ♦

# Faculty Focus

## Researcher Earns Noteworthy National Designation



**Ava K. Bittner**, O.D., Ph.D., FAAO (Dipl.), associate professor, was awarded Research Diplomate status in the Low Vision Section of the American Academy of Optometry (AAO) at the organization's annual meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, in October. Approximately 7 percent of AAO Fellows have achieved Diplomate distinction, while less than 10 percent of practicing optometrists are AAO Fellows.

"Becoming an American Academy of Optometry Research Diplomate is one of the highest honors I have earned as a researcher in the field of low vision," said Bittner. "It is very meaningful to receive this honor from my peers, and

I am grateful for the support NSU has provided me to be able to achieve this level in the optometry profession."

Professionals who become Fellows must complete a rigorous candidacy process that includes submitting extensive written work and passing an oral examination. A panel of leading optometrists and vision scientists must approve both the written work and oral examination.

"Nova Southeastern University is proud to have researchers of Dr. Bittner's caliber on our faculty," said David Loshin, O.D., Ph.D., FAAO, who serves as NSUCO dean. "Reaching this stature in her career is a testament to her remarkable work in the field of optometry."

Bittner, who joined the NSUCO faculty in 2014, received her optometry degree from the Pennsylvania College of Optometry in 2001 with clinical honors in pediatrics and low vision. She earned a Ph.D. in Clinical Investigation from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in 2011. Bittner completed a clinical research postdoctoral fellowship at the Johns Hopkins Wilmer Eye Institute's Lions Low Vision Research and Rehabilitation Center from 2002 to 2007 and then joined the Wilmer Eye Institute faculty before coming to NSU.

Her research interests include the psychophysical assessment of the healthy and diseased visual system, both to increase the understanding of this system and to develop tools to monitor disease and therapeutic outcomes. Bittner is also interested in complementary and alternative approaches to sight preservation and disease/symptom attenuation in retinal degenerations.

In addition, Bittner has received funding from the National Institutes of Health (K23 and R21 awards) through the National Eye Institute and is currently working on research evaluating electro-acupuncture and transcorneal electrical stimulation as potential

interventions to improve ocular-retinal blood flow and visual function in retinitis pigmentosa.

Bittner has served as a coinvestigator on multicenter clinical trials of devices for patients with retinal degenerations, including VisionCare's implantable miniature telescope for age-related macular degeneration, Optobionics' Artificial Silicon Retina for retinitis pigmentosa, and Second Sight's Argus II retinal prosthesis for retinitis pigmentosa. She has also served as a consultant for QLT, Inc.-sponsored international clinical trials evaluating treatment for patients with inherited retinal disease.

In 2010–2011, Bittner received the American Academy of Optometry William C. Ezell Fellowship. Additionally, she has been a member of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) since 2002 and served on the ARVO Annual Meeting Program Committee from 2011 to 2014.

Bittner, who was inducted into the Phi Beta Kappa academic honor society in 2011, has published 25 peer-reviewed articles in highly regarded scientific journals, such as the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, *The Lancet*, *Investigative Ophthalmology and Vision Science*, the *British Journal of Ophthalmology*, *Retina*, and *Optometry and Vision Science*. ♦

## Research Study Focuses on Vitreomacular Adhesion



**Julie Rodman, O.D., M.Sc., F.A.A.O.**, associate professor, is the principal investigator of “The Prevalence of Vitreomacular Adhesion in Patients 40 Years and Older (VAST)” research study. Funded by ThromboGenics, Optovue, Carl Zeiss Meditec, and Nova Southeastern University, the research team includes NSUCO faculty members, as well as those

from Indiana University College of Optometry, Pacific University College of Optometry, and nationwide private optometry and ophthalmology practices.

As a person gets older, the vitreous gel—the clear gel between the lens and the retina—in the eye commonly separates from the retina. Vitreomacular adhesion (VMA) is a condition in which, instead of separating, the vitreous gel adheres to the retina in an abnormally strong manner. This can distort a person's vision and result in vitreomacular traction (VMT), which can cause eye damage. Early VMA detection can help prevent damage and improve a person's visual prognosis.

VAST is a prospective, cross-sectional study looking at the prevalence of VMA and VMT in a diverse group of subjects over the age of 40. Secondary analyses will include correlations between the presence of VMA/VMT and gender, ethnicity, or refractive error.

Identifying the prevalence of vitreomacular adhesion and its associated complications will yield valuable, new epidemiologic data, leading to improved diagnosis and management of patients with this condition. During the past two decades, with the emergence of high-resolution scanning devices, such as optical coherence tomography imaging systems, there is a greater understanding of the pathophysiology of the disorders of the vitreomacular interface and their role in the development of various maculopathies.

Detection, management, and proper treatment are crucial steps in securing an optimal outcome for patients. Historically, there have been limited epidemiological studies reported in the literature on the prevalence of vitreomacular adhesion, resulting in a significant gap in the literature regarding this entity. ♦

# Faculty Focus



## Low Vision Research Team Wins Envision Competition

Envision awarded a \$10,000 research prize to a multidisciplinary team led by Ava K. Bittner, O.D., Ph.D., FAAO (Dipl.), associate professor, to fund a one-year investigation into the preliminary efficacy of telerehabilitation. This will be accomplished by using HIPAA-secure videoconferencing to deliver follow-up low vision services to visually impaired individuals who live in remote areas or otherwise have difficulty getting to a specialist's office.

The research proposal, "Feasibility of Telerehabilitation for Low Vision," was the result of a research application development seminar held during the 2015 Envision Conference in Denver, Colorado. The project was selected from multiple entries submitted for Envision's inaugural Research Proposal Competition—an initiative sponsored by the Envision Research Institute (ERI) in Wichita, Kansas.

"We believe the future of low vision research lies in the power of collaboration, and we are delighted to be funding this team," said Laura Walker, Ph.D., who serves as ERI's executive director. "The research itself is incredibly important for advancing rehabilitative vision care. The most exciting part, however, is how this team has organized to carry it out so effectively."

"I am absolutely thrilled to receive this award," Bittner said. "I have wanted to do a study like this for some time, but needed some pilot funds to get under way. I am really excited to work with the research team and to meet others in the area of low vision rehabilitation who have a mutual interest. It is truly wonderful that Envision is supporting low vision research in this way."

The ERI solicited proposals for projects involving low vision clinical practitioners, educators, and

researchers from varying backgrounds to highlight the multidisciplinary nature of the Envision Conference. Applications were evaluated based on innovation, feasibility, team strength, and diversity and impact.

"The Envision Conference provides a unique opportunity for specialists with different degrees and areas of interest to exchange information, further their education, and approach vision issues from new perspectives," said Michael Epp, manager of professional education at Envision. "To underscore this mission, we introduced an intensive course on how to develop and successfully submit a research project proposal. We encouraged participants to create multidisciplinary teams to execute their proposed projects, and it was truly inspiring to see how eagerly they embraced that objective."

Assisting Bittner as coinvestigators in the study are

- Tony Succar, Ph.D., a research fellow at the Envision Research Institute
- John D. Shepherd, M.D., a board-certified ophthalmologist and assistant professor at the University of Nebraska
- Angie Bowers, M.O.T., OTR/L, a licensed occupational therapist employed by Alphapointe—a Kansas City-based agency providing rehabilitation and education for people with vision loss
- Vernon Odom, Ph.D., a professor of ophthalmology and adjunct associate professor of psychology at West Virginia University
- Patrick Yoshinaga, O.D., M.P.H., a chief of low vision rehabilitation services and assistant professor at the Southern California College of Optometry at Marshall B. Ketchum University

In addition, Andrew Jacobson, a sales engineer at Black Box Network Services—a technology solutions provider—will serve as wireless consultant on the project. Amy Nau, O.D., an optometrist in the Boston-based offices of Korb & Associates, will act as a telerehabilitation consultant, while Nicole Ross, O.D., M.Sc., FAAO, assistant professor at the New England College of Optometry in Boston, Massachusetts, will serve as project manager. ♦

## Farewell to a First-Rate Professor



**Jay M. Rumsey, O.D., FAAO**, who worked as an NSUCO faculty member since 1993, retired in January 2016. Rumsey, who held the rank of associate professor, had teaching assignments that included Optometric Theory and Methods Labs, as well as sections of the Geometric and Physical Optics Labs. He also served as webmaster for the NSUCO website, web-board administrator, faculty and student resource page editor, listserv

moderator, Technology Advisory Committee member, and faculty adviser for computer software and web pages.

Rumsey received his Doctor of Optometry degree from the University of Houston College of Optometry (UHCO) in 1979. In the ensuing years, he practiced full-scope optometry, with particular emphasis on primary care, contact lenses, and clinical education.

Before entering the optometric profession, Rumsey worked as an aerospace engineer for six years. After receiving his O.D. degree, he was in private practice in Missouri City, Texas, and provided part-time faculty support to UHCO until 1984, when he joined the college as a full-time faculty member.

Initially, he became a clinical instructor with responsibilities in the primary care and contact lens clinics. Additional responsibilities included serving as an assistant professor in the health science test and procedures courses for the upper-level professional students. While associated with UHCO, Rumsey provided instruction in multiple diagnostic and therapeutic continuing education programs in Texas and surrounding states.

In 1993, Rumsey left Houston to accept a position as an assistant professor at NSU's College of Optometry. During his NSUCO tenure, he developed several software programs, which are being used for enhanced student learning, research activities, evaluation, survey, and administrative needs. Additionally, he was involved in the initial design and continuing maintenance of the Optometry Tests and Procedures website, which provides educational materials and resources for the optometric education of individuals, ranging from new students to postgraduate practitioners.

NSUCO extends its heartfelt gratitude to Rumsey for his numerous contributions to the college and the optometric profession. ♦

# Faculty Focus



**Rachel A. (Stacey) Coulter**, O.D., M.S.Ed., FAAO, FCOVD, professor, served as a reviewer for the NIH Investigator Loan Repayment program in April. She was also chosen by the Research Committee of the Faculty of Medicine at the American University of Beirut as a distinguished expert to review research proposals for intramural funding. In addition,

she coauthored the research paper, “Eye Examination Testability in Children with Autism and in Typical Peers,” in *Optometry and Vision Science*. She coauthored the article with colleagues **Annette Bade**, O.D., M.S., FAAO; **Yin Tea**, O.D., FAAO; **Gregory Fecho**, O.D.; and **Jacqueline Rodena**, O.D.



Clockwise from top left: Annette Bade, Yin Tea, Jacqueline Rodena, and Gregory Fecho

**Ava K. Bittner**, O.D., Ph.D., FAAO (Dipl.), associate professor, was invited to serve as an associate topical editor for *Optometry and Vision Science* and had her article, “Variability and Errors of Manually Digitized Goldmann Visual Fields,” published in the journal. She also served as an expert reviewer for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Evidence-Based Practice Center Program report, “Retinal Prosthesis in the Medicare Population.” Additionally, she received a \$15,000 research grant from Adaptive Sensory Technology for the study, “Test-Retest Variability of Quick Contrast Sensitivity Function Testing.”

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**Jessica Steen**, O.D., FAAO, instructor, published an article in the July 15 edition of *Review of Optometry*, “The Dilation Dilemma: Advances in Imaging Have Allowed for Greater Patient Convenience and Satisfaction. But Are They a Substitute for the Tried-and-True Practice of Dilation?”

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**Leon Nehmad**, O.D., M.S.W., FAAO, associate professor, was installed as secretary of the Broward County Optometric Association on May 14.





**Janet L. Leasher, O.D., M.P.H., FAAO**, director of community outreach, was recently promoted to the rank of full professor. In addition, she coauthored two articles: “Global Visual Impairment Due to Uncorrected Refractive Error: 1990–2010” in *Optometry and Vision*

*Science* and “Global, Regional, and National Burden of Diseases and Injuries Among Children and Adolescents Between 1990 and 2013: Findings from the Global Burden of Disease 2013 Study” in *JAMA Pediatrics*.



**Josephine A. Shallo-Hoffmann, Ph.D., FAAO**, professor and associate dean for academic affairs, toured India and provided lectures to faculty members and students at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. Her lectures included, “Fixation Eye Movements” and “Ocular Oscillations Associated with Disorders and Disease.”



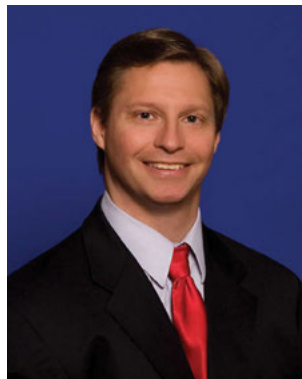
**Sherrol A. Reynolds, O.D., FAAO**, associate professor, had her article, “Are You Clear on Your Macular Function Screening Responsibilities? How the Latest Technologies Can Change How You Practice,” published in *Review of Optometry*.



**Diana Shechtman, O.D., FAAO**, professor, was named a visionary by Vision Expo for being an inspirational professor. “I love teaching, and I feel lucky to be able to share my passion with others,” she said. “It is humbling to know that perhaps I have a small influence on the future of our profession.”



**Lori Vollmer, O.D., FAAO**, associate professor and director of residencies, had her article, “No Insult to Injury: Treating Corneal Trauma,” published in *Review of Optometry*.



**Joseph Sowka, O.D., FAAO**, professor, along with former faculty member Alan Kabat, O.D., had an article, “Stye vs. Stye: Tips on Managing Both External and Internal Hordeola,” published in *Review of Optometry*.

## Spotlight on New Faculty Members



### *Jasleen Jhajj, O.D., FAAO*

Jasleen Jhajj, O.D., FAAO, assistant professor of pediatrics and binocular vision, practiced full-scope optometry in Cornwall, Ontario, Canada, for several years after graduating from the University of Waterloo with her Doctor of Optometry degree. Jhajj then went on to complete her pediatrics and binocular vision residency at the Illinois College of Optometry in Chicago.

In addition to being involved in clinical teaching at The Eye Care Institute, Jhajj's interests include pediatrics, binocular vision, vision therapy, vision-related learning conditions, and traumatic brain injury. She also works as a guest lecturer within the pediatric and binocular vision clinics and provides lectures at optometric continuing education events.

Jhajj, who is an active researcher with the Convergence Insufficiency Treatment Trial and the Pediatric Eye Disease Investigator Group, is an active member of the Miami-Dade Optometric Physicians Association and the College of Optometrists in Vision Development. ♦

### *Beata Lewandowska, O.D. (Dipl.)*

Beata Lewandowska, O.D. (Dipl.), assistant professor, previously worked at a multi-subspecialty, tertiary care referral private practice with multiple locations throughout Broward and Miami-Dade counties. She comanaged patients presenting with a broad range of ocular pathology and provided presurgical counseling, as well as postsurgical care. She also had an opportunity to screen patients seeking refractive surgery and participate in their postoperative care.

Prior to joining NSUCO as a full-time faculty member, Lewandowska occasionally worked at commercial settings providing primary optometric care and basic contact lens fittings. She also served as an NSUCO externship director and residency coordinator.

Lewandowska earned her Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from the University of Florida and her Doctor of Optometry degree from The Ohio State University. In 2005, she completed a residency in ocular disease at Aran Eye Associates in Coral Gables, Florida. She is a Diplomate of the American Board of Optometry and a member of the Miami-Dade Optometric Physicians Association, the Florida Optometric Association, and the American Optometric Association. ♦



## ***Cristina Llerena Law, O.D., M.S., FAAO (Dipl.)***

Cristina Llerena Law, O.D., M.S., FAAO (Dipl.), associate professor, who graduated from NSUCO in 2006, completed her residency training in pediatric optometry at the State University of New York (SUNY) College of Optometry. In addition to serving as a didactic and clinical faculty member at SUNY from 2007 through 2015, she completed a Ph.D. in Vision Science from SUNY's Graduate Center for Vision Research in 2016.

Her responsibilities as an NSUCO faculty member include acting as the instructor of record for Ophthalmic Optics I and II and providing clinical supervision of the interns and resident optometric physicians at The Eye Care Institute.

With the help of a National Institutes of Health (NIH) K23 grant, Law devotes most of her time to her primary area of research—neuroplasticity in adult amblyopia.



She is the principal investigator of several investigator-initiated studies involving the efficacy of binocular training (perceptual learning) techniques and varied-contrast dichoptic training for adults with amblyopia and strabismus. She also serves as a co-primary investigator for an NIH-funded clinical trial involving adult strabismus.

Law has published and lectured extensively on her research and her clinical experience in pediatrics and pediatric neuro-ophthalmic disease. She is the recipient of several awards recognizing

her work in the field, including the 2014 Mike Daley Ezell Fellowship, the 2015 John N. Schoen Ezell Fellowship, and the 2014 Minnie Flaura Turner Memorial Award for Impaired Vision Research. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry and a Diplomate of the American Board of Optometry. ♦

## ***Chandra V. Mickles, O.D., M.S., FAAO***

Chandra V. Mickles, O.D., M.S., FAAO, associate professor, received her Doctor of Optometry degree from the State University of New York (SUNY) College of Optometry in 2009, graduating in the top 10 percent of her class. After completing her residency training in cornea and contact lenses at the University of Alabama—Birmingham (UAB) School of Optometry, she earned a Master of Science in Vision Science from UAB. She then completed a postdoctoral optometric research fellowship at the Birmingham VA Medical Center in Alabama.

Prior to joining NSUCO, Mickles served as an assistant professor at the University of the Incarnate Word Rosenberg School of Optometry (UIWRSO) in San Antonio, Texas. At UIWRSO, she served as a didactic and clinical faculty member, as well as the chief of the Cornea and Contact Lens Service.

Mickles, who has lectured nationally, serves as a principal investigator of research investigations and has published on a variety of topics, including contact lenses and dry eye disease. In

addition to being a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry, she has authored a textbook chapter in the fourth edition of Bennett and Henry's *Clinical Manual of Contact Lenses* and received the George Mertz New Educator Travel Award from the Association of Optometric Contact Lens Educators. ♦



## Spotlight on New Faculty Member

### *Thuy-Lan Nguyen, O.D.*

Thuy-Lan Nguyen, O.D., assistant professor, received her Doctor of Optometry degree from NSUCO in 2002 and completed her residency training in primary care with an emphasis on cornea and contact lenses, also at NSUCO. In 2003, she was named NSUCO's Resident of the Year.

After completing her residency training, Nguyen became a clinical and adjunct instructor for the college in addition to owning and operating a private practice in South Florida. Over the years, she has participated as a sub-investigator in contact lens research and lectured on specialty contact lenses.

In addition to serving as an examiner for the National Board of Examiners in Optometry, Nguyen was honored as one of *Vision Monday* magazine's Optometric Business Innovators of 2014 and featured in *Women in Optometry* magazine in 2015. She has also written articles for *Contact Lens Spectrum* and the online *Review of Optometric Business*.

Nguyen, who volunteers with Vision Service Plan's (VSP) mobile eye clinics and serves as VSP's state professional representative for South Florida, is a member of the American Optometric Association, Florida Optometric Association, and Broward County Optometric Association. ♦



### *Jessica Steen, O.D., FAAO*

Jessica Steen, O.D., FAAO, instructor of ocular pharmacology and clinical instructor, received her Doctor of Optometry degree from the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada, and completed her residency training in primary care with emphasis in ocular disease at NSU's College of Optometry. Her primary clinical interests include neuro-ophthalmic, retinal, and anterior segment disease, with emphasis in medical and surgical management.

Steen, a peer-reviewed and published author in the field of retinal disease and retinal oncology, is a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry and a member of the American Optometric Association, as well as the Broward County and Palm Beach County optometric associations. ♦

# Alumni News

## Alumni Chapter President's Message



MARLON DEMERITT,  
O.D., M.B.A., FAAO

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
AND PRESIDENT,  
NSUCO ALUMNI CHAPTER

I am proud to discuss the recent developments that have occurred at NSU's College of Optometry (NSUCO). While I am sure many of you are aware of our glaucoma and diabetes and macular disease services at The Eye Care Institute, I am pleased to inform you of the addition of optical coherence tomography angiography (OCTA) to the clinics.

Clinically, OCTA evaluates static retina with movement, which is presumed to be red blood cells moving through the vasculature. It produces a contrast vascular map of the retina. Additionally, although OCTA is not meant to replace fluorescein angiography, it can be used in conjunction. It has been a great addition to The Eye Care Institute, because it augments clinical decision making for our patients and clinical learning for our students.

In addition, we have taken great strides to provide interprofessional education and interdisciplinary care. With the help of the HPD Connections Café, faculty members and students from the different HPD colleges are granted an opportunity to introduce their profession and discuss their skills and capabilities. This innovative interprofessional endeavor was organized by Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., M.S., R.D.N., assistant dean of research and innovation at NSU's College of Osteopathic Medicine (NSU-COM) and director of the NSU-COM Center for Interprofessional Education and Practice (CIPEP), and the CIPEP committee.

The pioneering efforts of alumni and faculty members such as Sherrol Reynolds, O.D., FAAO; Diana Shechtman, O.D., FAAO; and former faculty member Joseph

Pizzimenti, O.D., FAAO, along with the support of all our faculty members, have helped NSUCO develop relationships with various health care professionals and clinics within NSU. Consequently, this has led to increased referrals and has facilitated the true process of comanagement.

Under the initiation and direction of Surbhi Bansal, O.D., FAAO, a traumatic brain injury service was developed within the Pediatric and Binocular Vision Department in 2015, which has rapidly become a busy and well-established service that has benefited many patients. Meanwhile, Andrea Janoff, O.D., FAAO, and Chandra Mickles, O.D., M.S., FAAO, are in the process of developing a dry eye service at The Eye Care Institute.

During our annual alumni reception, which was held in May at the Margaritaville Hollywood Beach Resort in Hollywood, Florida, we celebrated the classes of 1996, 2001, 2006, and 2011. Turnout was high, and the alumni enjoyed having the opportunity to catch up with one another.

As always, we want to keep you apprised of the latest activities occurring at NSUCO by publishing this information in *The Visionary*. This includes keeping your classmates and all other alumni up to date about the personal and professional accomplishments happening in your life. If we do not have your current email address and contact information, please take a few minutes and provide us with that information at [nova.edu/webforms/alumni/index.html](http://nova.edu/webforms/alumni/index.html).

I encourage all alumni to support our incoming students with scholarship gifts of any amount. Finally, I want to thank Vanessa McDonald, M.S.; Arnie Patrick, O.D.; Sherrol Reynolds, O.D., FAAO; and Jackie Rodena, O.D., for their help over the past year.

You're the best!

# Alumni News

## *Meritorious Student Receives Alumni Scholarship*



*Yanara Barreras (left) with NSUCO's Alumni Chapter president, Marlon Demeritt, O.D., M.B.A., FAAO*

The NSUCO Alumni Chapter recently awarded its Alumni Chapter Scholarship to first-year student Yanara Barreras. The scholarship, now in its fifth year, was established to support an incoming optometry student who has demonstrated academic success, a history of outstanding leadership experiences, and a commitment to community service. The \$1,000 scholarship is a one-time award that can be applied toward the student's optometric education-related costs.

Barreras, who is from Miami, attended Florida International University and received a Bachelor of Science in Biology in December 2012 with a minor in chemistry. In addition to her outstanding academic performance, she has been involved with various leadership and community service projects. During her undergraduate studies, she served as president of the Biology Club and president and college buddy director of Best Buddies International. She was also a member of the Future Optometry Students of America, a peer tutor in various math courses, and an active volunteer in various community service activities.

Additionally, Barreras was the recipient of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship, President's Volunteer Service Award, Service Learning Award, and Student Life Community Service Award. She was also accepted into the honors program at both Miami-Dade College and Florida International University. Lastly, not only was she inducted into Phi Theta Kappa, but she was also placed on the dean's list while she attended Miami-Dade College and Florida International University, which is an honor bestowed on individuals who earn a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or more on the basis of 9 or more credit hours during a semester.

The NSUCO Alumni Chapter would like to thank all our alumni for their past support and encourage future giving. Together, we can take the College of Optometry to new levels of excellence, so please consider giving to the Alumni Chapter Scholarship Fund at [nova.edu/giving](http://nova.edu/giving). ♦



*David S. Loshin, O.D., Ph.D., dean of the College of Optometry, and Jennifer O'Flannery Anderson, Ph.D., vice president for Advancement and Community Relations, present Andrew Morgenstern (center) with the Distinguished Alumni Award.*

## NSUCO Honors Distinguished Alumnus

On November 12, 2015, Andrew Morgenstern, O.D., FAAO (Dipl.), a 1999 NSUCO alumnus, was one of 14 outstanding graduates honored at the NSU Distinguished Alumni Achievement Awards ceremony held at the Grande Oaks Golf Club in Davie, Florida.

The Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award, which is the highest and most prestigious honor NSU bestows on its graduates, recognizes alumni who are changing lives and changing the world by demonstrating a record of distinguished service and extraordinary achievement in a particular profession, discipline, organization, or community cause. The award also pays tribute to alumni who have great pride in their alma mater and are committed to advancing NSU's values and goals.

"There are many ways to determine the value of a university," said George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D, NSU president and chief executive officer. "I believe that one of the most important ways is by what our graduates bring to the communities across the country and around the world after graduation. These honorees make NSU proud."

Morgenstern was honored for his work with wounded warriors at Walter Reed National Military Medical

Center in Bethesda, Maryland, where his job is to fulfill the mission of the Joint DoD/VA Vision Center of Excellence as the optometric subject matter expert.

In regard to leadership, Morgenstern serves as chair of the American Optometric Association New Technology Committee and as president-elect of the Optometric Council on Refractive Technology and the Maryland Optometric Association. During the past three years, he has served as a Boston University Dean's Advisory Board member. Additionally, he received the Distinguished Service Award from the American Optometric Association in 2008 and the Distinguished Alumni for Service to the Profession accolade at the Boston University commencement ceremony in 2012.

"It is the people that made NSU great and impacted my career in a positive way," Morgenstern said. "Friends such as Drs. Steven Gorin, Ian Raden, and Bryan Rogoff made the school experience more fun than I could have ever hoped for. The professors were, and still are, world class. It was the total experience of all my classmates and professors that enabled me to achieve." ♦

## Class Specs



Four NSU alumni were installed as 2016–2017 Broward County Optometric Association board officers during the organization’s dinner banquet held on May 14 at the Pelican Grand Beach Resort in Fort Lauderdale. They are **Jaime A. Balaguer, Jr.**, O.D. (’04), president; **Brianna Rhue**, O.D., FAAO (’09), vice president; **Smith Blanc**, O.D. (’09), treasurer; and **Brandon Cornish**, O.D. (’07), immediate past president.

**Denise Burns-Legros**, O.D., FAAO (’05), received the Southeastern Congress of Optometry 2016 Young Optometrist of the South Award, which recognizes an optometrist in practice for less than 10 years who has already made a significant impact in the field of optometry.

**Adam Clarin**, O.D. (’08), and his father, **Bruce Clarin**, O.D., were featured in the article, “Father Knows Best: The Ties That Bind Dads and Sons Adds to the Fabric of These Successful Businesses,” which was published in the June edition of *Pinecrest Lifestyle* magazine.

**Alicia Groce**, O.D. (’14), had her article, “Why I Don’t Like to Use My Eye: A Case of Anisometropia, Anatomical Hypotropia, and Strabismic Amblyopia,” published in the September 2015 issue of *Optometry & Visual Performance* magazine.

**A. Blake Hutto**, O.D. (’13), of Family Vision Care in Alma, Georgia, described the satisfaction of returning to his hometown after optometry school and providing care to his community in the segment titled “Bring Your Optometric Skills Back Home” on the *Review of Optometric Business* website.





Please share your alumni news by emailing your information and photos to Michelle M. Morgado at [mm2094@nova.edu](mailto:mm2094@nova.edu).

*Opposite page, from left: Adam Stelzer, Michelle Levin, and Tad Kasonovich*

*Left: Nathan Schramm*

*Below: Bryan M. Rogoff*

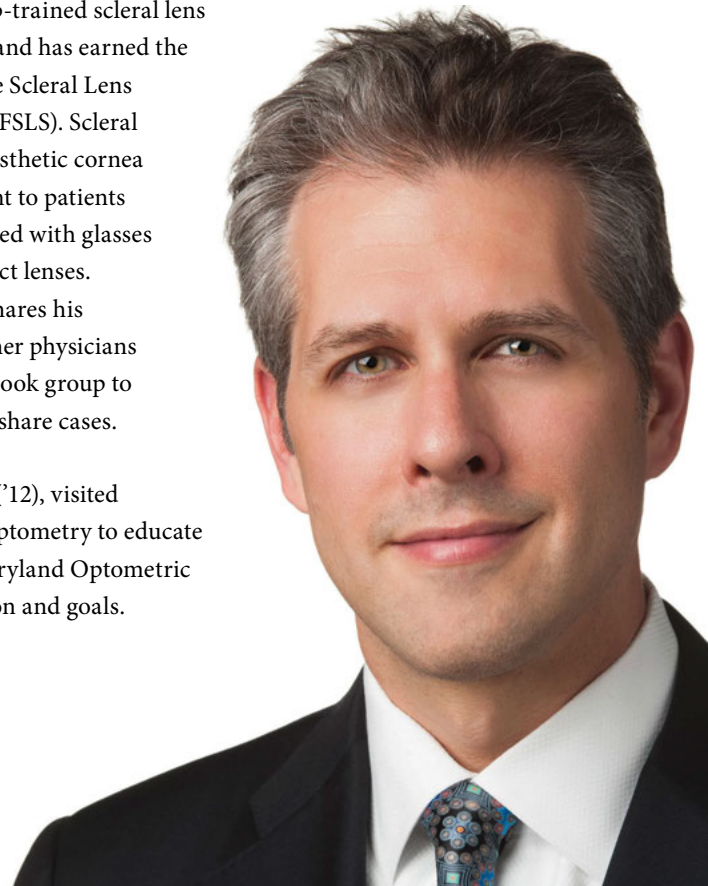
**Michelle Levin, O.D., FAAO ('11), and Adam Stelzer, O.D., FAAO ('07),** who serve as Florida Optometric Association (FOA) trustees, visited NSU's College of Optometry in January to commemorate the association's annual FOA Day. Tad Kasonovich, O.D., FAAO, who serves as FOA vice president, also attended. During their visit, Levin and Stelzer shared their insights and enthusiasm for the optometric profession in Florida.

**Meagan Lincoln, O.D. ('16),** was featured in the article, "First Full-Time Optometrist Sets Up Shop in Kotzebue," in the *Arctic Sounder*.

**Bryan M. Rogoff, O.D., M.B.A., CPHM ('99), and Dean Gogerdchi, O.D. ('12),** were installed as president and second vice president, respectively, of the Maryland Optometric Association Board of Directors.

**Nathan Schramm, O.D., CNS, FSLs ('08),** is one of 50 fellowship-trained scleral lens fitters in the world and has earned the title of Fellow of the Scleral Lens Education Society (FSLs). Scleral lenses are like a prosthetic cornea and can restore sight to patients who cannot be helped with glasses or traditional contact lenses. Schramm readily shares his knowledge with other physicians and created a Facebook group to educate others and share cases.

**Vicky Wong, O.D. ('12),** visited NSU's College of Optometry to educate students on the Maryland Optometric Association's mission and goals.



TERRY BUILDING

# Spotlight on Residents



*Optometric residents pose for a group photograph during Residents Day.*

In January, the college held its annual Residents Day at NSU's Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus. During the event, 35 outstanding optometric residents, representing 10 Florida programs affiliated with NSUCO, were showcased.

The participating residents presented an overview of the interesting and challenging cases they encountered during their residency training in the form of rapid-fire grand rounds sessions. Topics covered included a range of ocular conditions, such as binocular vision, anterior segment disease, posterior segment disease, congenital conditions, and neuro-ophthalmic disease. NSUCO students also had an opportunity to interact with the residents and learn more about residency training and the opportunities it provides.

Save the date for the next Residents Day, which will be held January 28–29, 2017. To learn more about NSUCO's residency programs, please visit [optometry.nova.edu/residency](http://optometry.nova.edu/residency), and be sure to view the testimonials for information on each residency position.

Listed below are the speakers who participated in Residents Day.

**Aran Eye Associates**

- Miriam Anglo, O.D.
- Stephanie Cortes, O.D.

**Bascom Palmer Eye Institute**

- Alison Bozung, O.D.
- Elliot Brafman, O.D.
- Nabila Gomez, O.D.
- Paul Hammond, O.D.
- Philip Kim, O.D.
- Leslie Small, O.D.

**Bay Pines VA Medical Center**

- Elyse Banister, O.D.
- Deepa Patel, O.D.
- Danny Shea, O.D.

**Braverman Eye Center**

- Shalonda McCallum, O.D.

**Clayton Eye Center, Georgia**

- Elizabeth Ellison, O.D.

**Lake City VA Medical Center**

- Lacy Alvarez, O.D.
- Nhan Le, O.D.
- Tri Nguyen, O.D.
- Brett-Ashley Palmer, O.D.

**Malcom Randall VA Medical Center**

- Yasmeen Awada, O.D.
- Shaun Brennan, O.D.
- Ausra Clifford, O.D.

**Miami VA Medical Center**

- Ann Le, O.D.

**Nova Southeastern University  
College of Optometry**

- Katie Green, O.D.
- Casey Hamm, O.D.
- Pinar Haytac, O.D.
- Almas Khan, O.D.
- Tamara Mendez, O.D.
- Leticia Rousso, O.D.
- Mona Ubhi, O.D.
- Stacy Zubkousky, O.D.

**Orlando VA Medical Center**

- Tisha Cabatana, O.D.
- Daniel Smith, O.D.

**Tallahassee VA Medical Center**

- Matt Biedron, O.D.

**William V. Chappell, Jr., Veterans  
Multi-Specialty Outpatient Clinic**

- Brenda Flores, O.D.
- Gopita Patel, O.D.
- Kim Patel, O.D.



Top, from left: Leticia Rousso, Pinar Haytac, and Shalonda McCallum

Center: Lori Vollmer, O.D., FAAO, director of residencies (far right), pictured with Residents Day attendees

Bottom, from left: Alison Bozung, Nabila Gomez, and Leslie Small

# Past NSUCO Resident

Reflects on Attending  
United Nations Convention



*Class of 2002 resident Bryan M. Wolynski, O.D., shares his experience from his time at the U.N. Ninth Session of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.*

In June, I had the privilege of participating in, and speaking at, the United Nations (UN) Ninth Session of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) at its headquarters in New York. The UN Division for Social Policy and Development started the CRPD in 2006 to promote, protect, and ensure full and equal human rights for people with disabilities.

Because people with disabilities make up 10 percent of the world's population, the CRPD also recognized that a change was needed on how the world viewed people with disabilities. Rather than having the view of sympathy, the CRPD promotes empowerment and respect. It also addresses, oversees, and helps implement plans on such issues as accessibility, personal mobility, health, education, employment, habilitation or rehabilitation, participation in political life, equality, and nondiscrimination. Currently, 166 CRPD party members have committed to the organization's goals of creating a more inclusive environment for all people with disabilities.

Last year, during the UN's 70th anniversary, the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes 17 goals, such as ending poverty, ensuring access to clean water, achieving gender equality, and providing quality education for all. The theme for this year's CRPD was Implementing the 2030 Development Agenda for All Persons with Disabilities: Leaving No One Behind.

Subthemes included

- eliminating poverty and inequality for all people with disabilities
- promoting the rights of people with mental and intellectual disabilities
- enhancing accessibility to information and technology and inclusive development
- celebrating the 10th anniversary of the CRPD's adoption

There were many events and panel discussions on disabilities, inclusivity, and human rights, such as

- "Access to Assistive Technology for Inclusive Development," which was organized by the International Disability Alliance
- "Leaving No One Behind: Including People with Episodic Disabilities in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda," which was organized by the Canadian Working Group on HIV and Rehabilitation
- "One Decade of the UN CRPD and Women and Girls with Disabilities," which was organized by the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations

I was invited to participate in a panel discussion called "Tec Talk: Brilliant New Designs in Assistive Technology, Ease of Use, and Multimedia" that

was organized by *ABILITY* magazine, which has a consultant status with the UN. The panel's purpose was to discuss increasing inclusivity in the community and work environments, and to present current and future products and ideas that contribute to leaving no one behind.

I represented OrCam and introduced the company's new wearable assistive technology device for people who are blind or visually impaired. In my talk, I educated the audience on the importance of assistive technology and inclusivity for people who are blind or visually impaired. I also discussed what an optometrist does in assessing patients for low vision aids, as well as the challenges and considerations related to companies creating assistive technology, and the eye care professionals who recommend it.

The talk was well received and attended by people throughout the world, including representatives from the World Health Organization. Additionally, I had the chance to speak with people from various countries who are working toward the mutual goals of inclusive design; the need, support, and advancement of assistive technology; and access to information for all with disabilities.

The CRPD conference was a memorable event and a great learning experience. It was also an honor to speak at the United Nations, not just for myself, but also as an optometrist who was representing and educating others on what we do every day. ♦

To learn more about the CRPD, please visit [un.org/development/desa/disabilities/](http://un.org/development/desa/disabilities/).

# Continuing Education

The year 2016 proved to contain a whirlwind of activity for the NSUCO Continuing Education Department, which coordinated a record-breaking number of continuing education events throughout the southeastern United States. Locally, the college's 20th annual Eye Care Conference and Alumni Reunion had more than 150 graduates participate in the weekend event, which culminated with an all-encompassing experience at the Margaritaville Hollywood Beach Resort in Hollywood, Florida. ♦



*Graduates from the class of 1996*



*Graduates from the class of 2006*



*It was all smiles at the alumni reunion in Margaritaville.*



## 2017 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### January 28–29

Residents Weekend  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

### March 18–19

West Coast Spring Conference  
Fort Myers, Florida

### April 28–30

21st Annual Eye Care Conference  
and Alumni Reunion  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

### July 28–30

Nova SEE Beach  
St. Simons Island, Georgia

### September 9–10

Interprofessional Conference and  
Glaucoma Update  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

### December 2–3

Orlando Super Weekend  
Orlando, Florida

For additional information about  
the upcoming events, please visit  
[optometry.nova.edu/ce](http://optometry.nova.edu/ce).



# NSU News of Note



## *Hospital to Be Built at Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus*

On May 17, Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration submitted its final approval for HCA East Florida to relocate Plantation General Hospital to Nova Southeastern University's Fort Lauderdale/Davie Campus.

"This will propel us toward achieving NSU's Vision 2020, providing the highest-quality health care to our community and opening the doors for countless teaching and research opportunities," said NSU President George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D.

The 200-bed community hospital will serve South Florida and will eventually become a teaching and research facility integrated with NSU's clinics, research centers, and clinical trials. This milestone addition, coupled with this year's opening of NSU's Center for Collaborative Research, will provide students and faculty members with expanded opportunities for research and training.

NSU and HCA East Florida will provide additional information on groundbreaking, construction, and estimated completion of the hospital as it becomes available. ♦



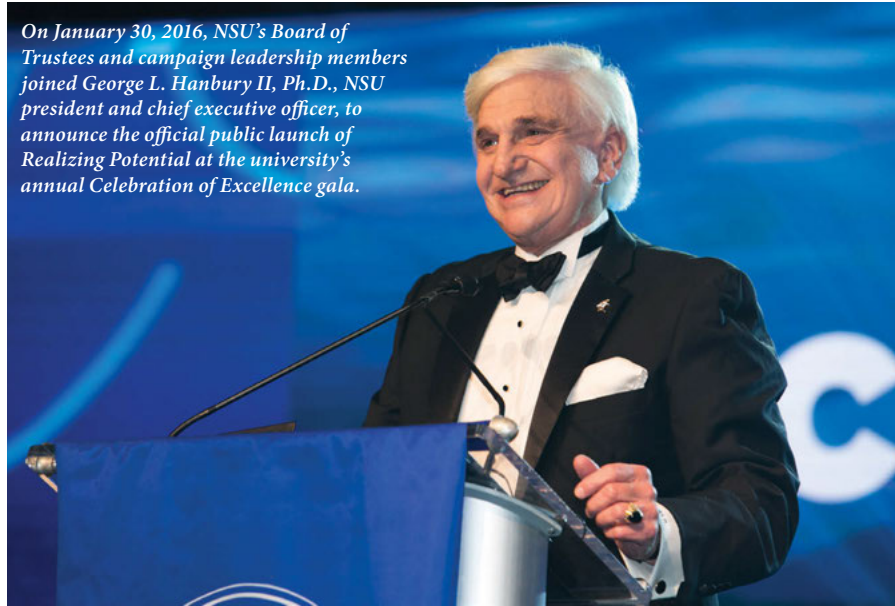
## NSU Aims to Raise More Than \$500 Million by 2020

NSU has several goals set as it launches its **Realizing Potential: The Campaign for Nova Southeastern University** philanthropic crusade. Goals include scholarships and research opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds; breakthrough stem cell research; new therapies for patients with cancer and autism; and interprofessional collaboration in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics, to name a few.

The campaign is the largest philanthropic effort in the university's more than 50-year history and in the history of Broward County. During the campaign, officials plan to raise \$250 million, with another \$300 million secured through sponsored research, service, and training projects.

NSU seeks to raise the \$250 million by December 2020 to support excellence for its students, faculty members, and

*On January 30, 2016, NSU's Board of Trustees and campaign leadership members joined George L. Hanbury II, Ph.D., NSU president and chief executive officer, to announce the official public launch of Realizing Potential at the university's annual Celebration of Excellence gala.*



21st-century educational initiatives. Coupled with the university's goal of raising another \$300 million, this campaign is part of NSU's Vision 2020 goal to raise more than \$500 million in external funding. NSU has already raised more than half of the support in both philanthropy and sponsored projects since launching the silent phase of the campaign in July 2008. ♦

## Dental College Kicks Off National Gives Kids A Smile Program



*Class of 2017 dental students Sarah Sweetnam and Jay Ghiya prepare to perform an exam on a pediatric patient.*

NSU's College of Dental Medicine provided pro-bono dental services to 750 schoolchildren and special-needs patients in South Florida on February 5, 2016, to help kick off the American Dental Association (ADA) Foundation's Give Kids A Smile Day program. The children received examinations, cleanings, oral health education, and preventive and restorative services, which were valued at more than \$300,000, at no cost.

The ADA Foundation selected NSU, from among 1,500 sites throughout the United States, as the Give Kids A Smile Day national launch site due to the university's leading efforts since the program was launched more than a decade ago. ♦

# Last Look



*Class of 2016 students Angela Diamantakos (left) and Nicole Ardura (right) pose for a photograph with a group of Jamaican children.*

NSU is a group of faculty and staff members, students, and alumni that shares a common identity and purpose and engages with the university's external circle through diverse services, clinical programs, and community-based research and resources. Our reach extends into professional, intellectual, and geographical domains that support, and are the focus of, our educational mission.

The College of Optometry supports community activities by engaging students, as well as faculty and staff members, in addressing visual health concerns and issues that affect the visual health of neighborhoods throughout South Florida and the world. Through The Eye Care Institute, NSUCO provides quality, low-cost eye care services by serving diverse populations at five permanent clinic sites in Broward and Miami-Dade counties. Fourth-year clinical externs provide care at 59 clinics across the United States and 1 in China, while optometric residents rotate through 12 sites in the region.

Students and faculty members provide humanitarian vision care in underserved areas of developing countries through three organizations—the student chapter of Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity (SVOSH), the Fellowship of Christian Optometrists (FCO), and the National Optometric Student Association (NOSA). Teams of NSUCO volunteers actively participate in delivering visual health information at health fairs, health talks, and other events.

Volunteers support advocacy and raising awareness for visual health-related issues by participating in fun walks and fund-raisers in solidarity with those affected by visual impairment and health-related concerns. ♦

## 2015–2016 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- American Cancer Association
- American Diabetes Association
- American Heart Association Heart Walk
- Babies “R” Us Toys for Vision Development
- Broward 4-H
- Broward Health
- Children’s Services Council of Broward
- Council on American-Islamic Relations
- Dillard High School
- FCO optometric mission to Nicaragua
- Florida Heiken Children’s Vision Program at the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind
- Fort Lauderdale Lions Club
- Fort Lauderdale Seventh-Day Adventist Church
- Foundation Fighting Blindness VisionWalk
- Hendry County Health Department Rural Health Fair
- Holy Cross Hospital and Medical Group
- InfantSEE
- Kids In Distress, Inc.
- Lakeside Elementary School
- Lighthouse of Broward
- Macula Vision Research Foundation
- Memorial Healthcare System
- Mourning Family Foundation—Zo’s Family Health & Wellness Groove
- NOSA interdisciplinary health mission to Jamaica
- NSU A Day for Children
- NSU-COM Lifelong Learning Institute
- Optometry Giving Sight World Sight Day
- PBS KIDS (WPBT Channel 2)
- Seussfest at the NSU Alvin Sherman Library
- Southwest Focal Point Community Center
- Special Olympics Opening Eyes/Healthy Athletes
- STEM education for third through sixth graders at the NSU Alvin Sherman Library
- Stranahan High School
- SVOSH optometric humanitarian mission to the Dominican Republic
- Walk Now for Autism Speaks
- WPLG Local 10 News



## NSUCO ACKNOWLEDGES BENEVOLENT DONORS

NSUCO would like to thank the following alumni, faculty and staff members, friends, and partners in education for their generous financial contributions during the 2015–2016 fiscal year. Their gifts enable the college to educate and prepare the next generation of optometric physicians.

### **\$10,000+**

Alcon  
Luxottica  
National Vision

### **\$1,000–\$9,999**

Allergan USA, Inc.  
Diopsys, Inc.  
Essilor of America, Inc.  
I-Care  
Drs. David and Mary Loshin  
MIBO Medical Group  
Modern Optical International  
NovaBay Pharmaceuticals, Inc.  
Oasis Medical  
Dr. Nathaniel Roland  
Dr. Josephine A. Shallo-Hoffmann  
Southern Council of Optometrists, Inc.  
Vision Group Holdings  
Vision Service Plan  
Weave Communications, Inc.

### **\$500–\$999**

ABB Optical  
BioD, LLC  
Carl Zeiss Meditec, Inc.  
Cooper Vision  
Icare USA  
Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc.  
PentaVision, LLC  
Stanton Optical

### **\$50–\$499**

Ana Maria Abugazaleh  
Advanced Eyecare Specialists  
Marlem Aleman  
Dr. Michael Bacigalupi  
Dr. Annette Bade  
Drs. Terry Boeckel and Yin Tea  
Dr. Denise Marie Burns-LeGros  
Dr. Melanie A. Crandall  
Dr. Chauntel E. DaSilva  
Dr. Barry J. Frauens  
Dr. April L. Jasper

### **\$50–\$499** *(continued)*

Dr. Cristina Maria Llerena  
Dennis R. McMahon  
Michelle Merida Morgado  
Dr. Huan V. Ngo  
Dr. Robert Angelo Orsillo  
Dr. Leonard Rand  
Dr. Jennifer M. Smith  
Dr. Joseph Sowka  
Dr. Heather L. Trapheagen  
United Way of Broward County, Inc.  
Volk Optical, Inc.

# Partners in Education

We thank our Partners in Education for their continuing support of the college's students, faculty members, alumni, and continuing education programs.

