

YOUNG
GRADS
ISSUE

6 Steps to Starting a Practice Fresh Out of the Gate

So Close, Yet So Far:
Two Young Alumni Look Back

Service for Sight at Princeton Elementary
ICO Library: New and Improved
Rosenbloom Center: Nearly Complete



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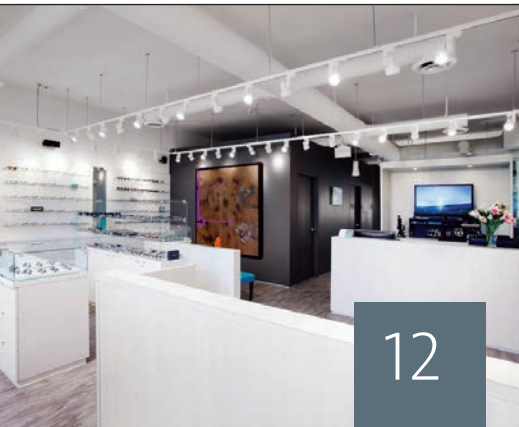
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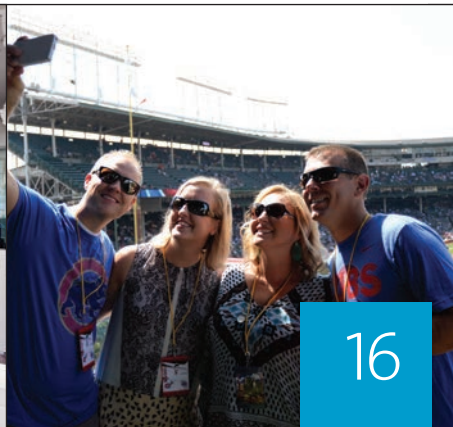
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Michael Yu, OD '10, opened his Alberta, Calgary-based clinic, Montreux Family Eyecare and Gallery, in May 2014.

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Datebook

BACK COVER

Last Look



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In 1998, **Karen Hennesy** was working as a high school math teacher when some students directed a laser pointer toward her eye. The incident left her disabled, and she sought treatment at the Illinois Eye Institute. Since 2007, Karen has given \$24,500 to the IEI.

How she came to the IEI:

I had terrific eye pain from light sensitivity. I had double vision. I was falling down, and I was bumping into things. I was living in the dark. I couldn't watch TV, and I couldn't have lights on in the house. I went to many, many doctors, at least 50, and they kept saying that they couldn't do anything. They also said that they weren't seeing anything in the tests they gave me. I did a program through DORS [the Illinois Department of Rehab Services], where they were trying to rehabilitate me to do another type of job. My counselor said, 'No one's going to hire you—you're a hazard at work. You're not getting treatment you need.' So he sent me to Derrald Taylor, OD '68.

On the care she received:

Dr. Taylor diagnosed my condition and sent me to Dominick Maino, OD '78, who works with double vision patients. I got into binocular vision therapy. I went twice a week for a year and a half. They treated me and helped me to see one image instead of two. I was able to function without falling as much. They gave me special glasses for the light sensitivity, and then I could go outside. It made a world of difference. By the time the year and a half was up, I'd conquered a lot of the disabilities.

Why she gives:

During treatment, I wasn't working and didn't have any income coming in, and the IEI gave me a grant that paid for most of my care. I was very, very grateful. After eight years of arbitration between my employer and me, it was determined that my employer had to start paying me, including the eight years of back pay. So when I got that money, I wanted to give back to the IEI, because they did a lot for me. I feel like there are other people out there that can use this kind of help. I know what it's like when you don't have money and you have severe eye problems. If I can help someone else, it makes me feel just a little bit better about what I went through.

GIVE TODAY

Earlier this year, I had the privilege of being inducted into the National Optometry Hall of Fame. In my remarks at the ceremony, I reflected on the 47 years I've been in the profession. I've had the good fortune to work not only with colleagues in three states, but also with organizations throughout the country. Together we have worked to change the practice of optometry and the education of optometrists, determined to benefit the eye and vision care of every citizen.

The inspiring professionals I've encountered throughout the course of my career are numerous and I was unable to mention most of them by name in my remarks. One person I was able to acknowledge by name, however, was Dr. Alfred Rosenbloom. Himself a member of the National Optometry Hall of Fame, Dr. Rosenbloom's mark on the profession and the Illinois College of Optometry cannot be overstated, and it's one that continues to this day, with the establishment of the innovative Alfred and Sarah Rosenbloom Center on Vision and Aging at the Illinois Eye Institute.

With the holiday season upon us, I need your support for the finishing touches to the Rosenbloom Center, which we will celebrate with a dedication ceremony on January 18, 2015. Please be generous when you make your end-of-the-year contribution to ICO and designate it to the completion of the center.



Arol Augsburger, OD
President

A Message From the President



It's About More Than Just The Eyes



In September, the IEI launched the “It’s About More Than Just The Eyes” campaign, intended to raise awareness about the value of comprehensive eye care by skilled and caring IEI doctors and staff, and the importance of taking care of one’s eyes as it relates to long-term health. The featured subjects—George, Sanopeia and her daughter, and Karen—drive home these

points and simultaneously convey how the IEI treats the individual needs of each patient. The campaign is featured both inside and on the exterior of the IEI, and also ran on 30 CTA green line rail cars and 65 CTA buses throughout October. Additionally, you can see the patients’ stories at Illinoiseyeinstitute.org/more-than-just-the-eyes/ and youtube.com/icooptometry.



A Conversation with The Vision Council’s New CEO

*On Oct. 1, **Mike Daley** began his tenure as CEO of The Vision Council. The organization represents the manufacturers and suppliers of the optical industry. Previously, Daley worked for Essilor for 34 years, retiring in 2008 as president and COO of the company’s Lens Division. Daley has served on ICO’s Board of Trustees since 2010.*

What does The Vision Council do?

Our overall mission is to be the global voice of vision care products and services. We represent laboratories and manufacturers of optical lenses, frames, equipment, sunglasses, readers, low-vision materials—just to name a few. Our job is to advocate for our members to help the industry overall and make their business stronger by helping to grow the industry.

You served as board chairman of The Vision Council prior to your appointment as CEO. Can you discuss both your history with The Vision Council and your professional history in general?

I actually joined the association back when it was the Optical Manufacturer’s Association. I’ve been involved for a long time. I believe in the need for businesses and companies to belong to associations. You need to have that unified perspective, you need to have that network.

I went to Ferris State, which had a two-year health optics degree. So I went there for two years, really liked it, and graduated in ’73. I went on and got my business degree through Michigan State, and then I was called back to Ferris to teach in ’75 and ’76. Then I interviewed with and got hired by Varilux in 1976 and worked there for more than 30 years, rising up through the ranks with Essilor.

Consumer outreach is a big part of what The Vision Council does. How do you go about this?

Think About Your Eyes is a campaign that was started by the industry and has now been taken on by The Vision Council. TAYE is our major marketing and member-support program. The American Optometric Association now is on board, and Alcon, Essilor and Luxottica are big contributing partners as well. We’re

trying to go to the consumers with the message that the best way to take care of your eyes is to see your eye doctor and have a comprehensive annual eye exam. Everybody wins: If the consumer takes better care of their eyes by getting annual comprehensive eye exams, they not only benefit but so do those in the profession and also our members.

What are your members thinking about right now?

Technology, including the internet—how eyeglasses are dispensed and delivered online. We don’t speak for the optometric profession, but we partner very closely with the American Optometric Association and the American Academy of Optometry. We want to know what’s going on in their world that will benefit our members, and figure out how we can advocate together for the best possible policies to create growth for the industry and take care of the consumer.

Technology also includes the new wearables. There’s so much right now going on outside of the mainstream eyeglasses, frames and contact lenses. All these wearable technologies, as well as smart phones and tablets, affect how people use their eyes. Vision is becoming critical to the success of these new technologies—being able to see and use these products in a way that doesn’t harm the eye.

ICO at AOA

Members of the ICO community were certainly feeling the brotherly love in Philadelphia in June, as several were honored during Optometry's Meeting. ICO President **Arol Augsburger, OD**, was inducted into the National Optometry Hall of Fame, and faculty members **Yi Pang, MD, OD, PhD**, and **Janice Jurkus, OD '74, MBA**, each received awards.

During his 47 years in optometry, Dr. Augsburger has not only left his mark on ICO, where he has been President since 2002, but also The Ohio State University College of Optometry and the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry. While at ICO, he has advanced student performance on National Board Examinations, expanded the clinic program to include an electronic health care record system and additional patient care clinics in communities surrounding the college, and provided leadership for the long-term investment in the college's assets by overseeing the addition of an enhanced learning center, state-of-the-art Lecture Center and library, and the Alfred and Sarah Rosenbloom Center on Vision and Aging.

His awards include Ohio Optometrist of the Year (1985), National Optometrist of the Year (1986), H. Ward Ewalt Medal for Service to Optometry (1993), Alabama Optometrist of the Year (2000), Carel C. Koch Award (2001), Illinois Optometrist of the Year (2007), and the American Optometric Association's Distinguished Service Award (2008).

In his remarks during the June 26 induction ceremony, Dr. Augsburger said: "I have had the good fortune in optometry to work with colleagues in three states, and indeed within optometry and other health professional organizations throughout the country.... [I]t has been a privilege to work with you when opportunities

existed to change the practice of optometry and the education of optometrists, and to share with you the infectious enthusiasm which comes from working on noble causes, and savor the determination you have shared with me to change this profession and benefit the eye and vision care of every citizen."

ASCO conferred upon Dr. Pang its inaugural Rising Star Award. She has been a faculty member at ICO for nine years and served as assistant dean for research for five. ASCO recognized her work as a teacher, administrator and particularly as a scholar.

In her time at ICO, Dr. Pang has authored 25 publications and 42 scientific presentations; her work has appeared



Dr. Augsburger and his wife Stephanie at the National Optometry Hall of Fame induction ceremony.

in such journals as *Optometry and Vision Science*, *Journal of American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology*, and *Strabismus and Investigative Ophthalmology and Visual Science*. She serves on three editorial boards and is a manuscript reviewer for nine scientific journals; additionally, she initiated ICO's annual Research Symposium.

The AOA also honored Dr. Jurkus with its Contact Lens and Cornea Section Achievement Award. Dr. Jurkus is

an internationally noted contact lens lecturer and over the course of her 40-year-career has been honored with the Association of Optometric Contact Lens Educators' Lester Janoff Award (twice) and Vision Monday's 50 Most Influential Women in Optical.

Research Symposium

This annual event took place Nov. 7 in the gym, where faculty, residents and students showcased 71 research posters. **Jennifer Harthan, OD '06** took home the prize for most posters. **Dan Roberts, OD, PhD**, and **Barclay Bakkum, DC, PhD**, shared the title for most publications, with two apiece. Event organizer **Yi Pang, MD, OD, PhD** received the student mentor award. **Sarah El-Khazendar '17** had the most popular student poster, "Expression of a Mutant Cx46 Leads to Changes in Lens Fiber Ultrastructure." The most popular faculty poster, "Preservation of Vision in Harlequin Ichthyosis," was created by **Tracy Matchinski, OD '95**.



Sarah El-Khazendar '17 discusses her award-winning poster.

LIBRARY RENOV

Following four-and-a-half months as a hardhat zone, the renovated library was unveiled
design firm Jensen & Halstead transformed the two-story space to include more study



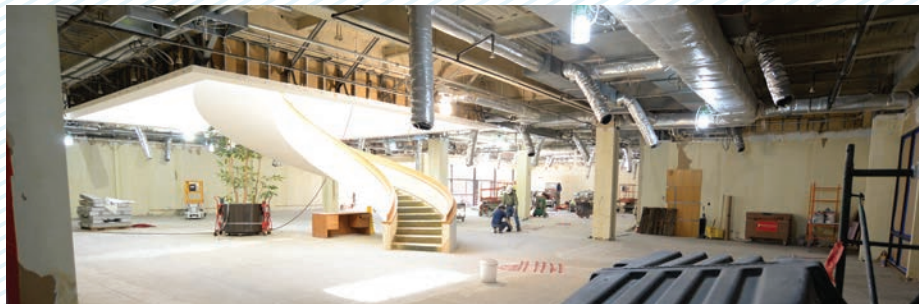
BEFORE



AFTER

ATION COMPLETE

in August—just in time for the class of 2018's arrival. Chicago-based architectural and interior areas on the first floor, and administrative offices and meeting rooms on the second floor.



DURING



ICO CLASS OF 2018



454 INTERVIEWED

164 ENROLLED

1,181
APPLICANTS

71%
FEMALE
(116)

29%
MALE (48)

MAJORS



9% PSYCHOLOGY

2% CHEMISTRY

5% HEALTH SCIENCES

9% OTHER

23
MEAN
AGE
AGE RANGE
20-36MARRIED 4%
(6)

MINORITY 51% (83)
 ASIAN/ASIAN AMERICAN 43% (71)
 MULTIRACIAL 4% (6)
 HISPANIC/LATINO 2% (4)
 AFRICAN-AMERICAN 1% (2)

2

FOREIGN COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

34

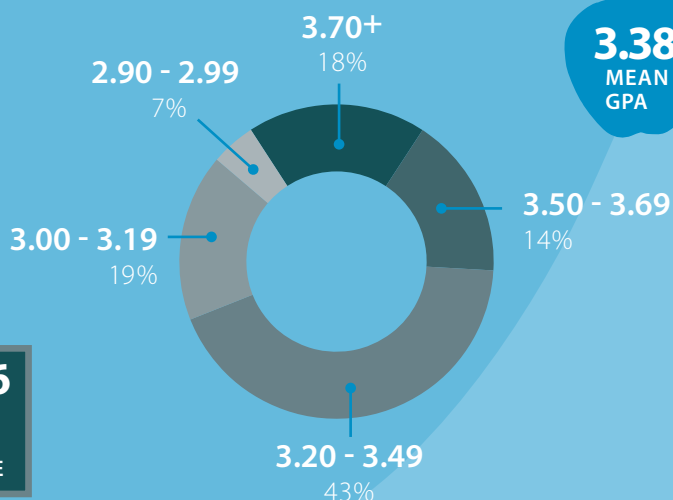
CANADA


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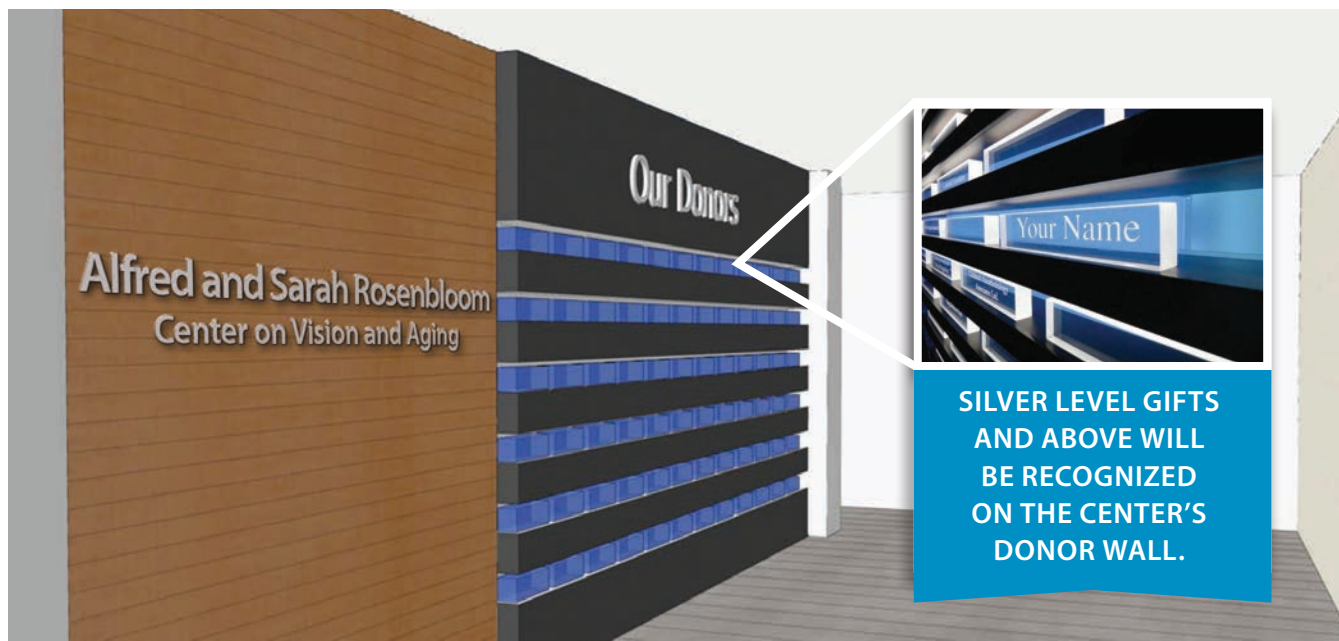
CHINA


316
MEAN
OAT
SCORE

GPA DISTRIBUTION


3.38
MEAN
GPA

ETCH YOUR PLACE IN HISTORY



**SILVER LEVEL GIFTS
AND ABOVE WILL
BE RECOGNIZED
ON THE CENTER'S
DONOR WALL.**



Construction of the **Alfred and Sarah Rosenbloom Center on Vision and Aging** at the Illinois Eye Institute is nearly complete. The center was established in 2012 by past ICO president Alfred Rosenbloom, OD '48, and his wife, Sarah, to provide unparalleled care to the aging population and patients with visual impairment. In addition to offering onsite care for the aging population and visually impaired, the Rosenbloom Center focuses on educational outreach programs, community healthcare services and research.

We invite you to join in the Rosenblooms' vision by contributing to the center. We're just 13 percent away from our \$1.82 million goal, with only \$235,000 left to raise. Help push us over the edge! Silver Level gifts and above will be recognized on the center's donor wall. The Rosenbloom Center will be dedicated on Jan. 18, 2015, and we hope to see you there.



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Includes membership in ICO's prestigious Leadership Circle for two years

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Please note that gifts of all amounts are gratefully received and will be appropriately recognized.

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Flying the Nest



Siva Meiyeppen, OD '14,
a resident at The
Eye Institute of Salus
University, reflects on
life away from ICO

Want to know a little secret? Graduation is the most fun you'll ever have, and post-graduation is the most confused you'll ever be. Where to practice, what to practice, who to practice with, who to practice for, and what to call yourself all become questions of paramount importance.

Most of these things you'll figure out quickly. For some, corporate is the way to go. Pay off your loans and look good doing it. For others, residency holds the keys to their future, and with it the prospect of academics and specialty niches. For others still, the family practice beckons them home, ready to bring a new generation and legacy to the business. For some it might be straight-up denial that four years have come and gone and you still aren't good at scleral depression. Oh wait, that's just me.

Regardless of your post-graduation plans and where your battered suitcase chock-full of entrance tests take you, one way or another you will end up meeting other optometrists.

When you introduce yourself, be prepared to add an addendum to your name. No matter whether you're practicing on the corner of Roosevelt and State, the shores of Miami Beach or the vistas of Vancouver, there's one thing you'll get asked over and over again.

What school did you go to?

It's as defining a characteristic as any you possess, and one that speaks volumes about how you were brought up in the world of optometry.

I'm currently knee-deep in a pediatric and binocular vision residency and it has already afforded me more opportunities than I had dreamed possible. The exposure I have received in every facet of the profession has been, no pun intended, eye-opening. This is where I would make an exophthalmometry joke, but it seems too easy.

One of the lecturers who spoke to the new residents a few months ago described very eloquently the bond you feel with your alma mater versus the one you feel with your residency school.

The school you attended for your optometry degree is your blood family, she said. I can't help but agree. I feel like we all share a chromosomal connection that spans the centuries and unites all ICO graduates. Even the classes that were a few years ahead or behind me all kind of mesh together and we become a motley crew of brothers and sisters. If you know the feeling of getting a pink addendum for Dr. T's notes in your mailbox the week before the final, or did the arm dance with Dr. Messner when learning about nerve palsies, you and I are connected in some visceral way.

In contrast, the school you do your residency with is your married family, she said. You chose them, they chose you. There is cake.

My ICO genes have served me well.

ICO taught me so much beyond the scope of optometry. It taught me how to be a clinician, how to be a professional, even how to politely cut someone off when their case histories took an awkward and unexpected turn.

ICO taught me so much beyond the scope of optometry. It taught me how to be a clinician, how to be a professional, even how to politely cut someone off when their case histories took an awkward and unexpected turn. As a student, I remember thinking every detail was the most critical I could record. Now as the provider, I realize that my earnest younger self was perhaps a touch too eager.

I remember thinking the world was run the ICO way, and while the ICO way has served us all very well, it's worth noting that there are in fact different ways to skin a cat, or rather peel an epiretinal membrane.

Even things as silly as pronunciation (the infamous Midwest/East Coast gonio/GOH-nio debate comes to mind) are small reminders that just because we learned it one way at ICO doesn't mean the rest of the world runs that way.

However, having that ICO connection is somewhat invaluable. I can't tell you how many text messages have been sent with the hopes that someone else remembers what the second line of the third paragraph was in Dr. Frantz's strabismus notes.

Of course, learning new ways of doing things, exploring new ideas, and meeting new people is critical in all aspects of life.

But there's something about family, isn't there? The people who witnessed your childhood tantrums (first year Ocular Anatomy), teenage rebellions (not wearing tights or a tie to clinic, just once), collegiate supremacy (fourth year return to campus) and who ultimately saw you venture into sure-footed adulthood (OD following your name as you crossed the stage).

It still feels a little awkward to introduce myself as Dr. Meiyeppen, but it's getting easier with every patient. Signing off on a chart no longer feels as terrifying as it first did. Even the longer white coat is starting to feel more natural, although it grazes the floor and makes me look like I'm playing dress-up.

I hope to see you all soon at various optometry events in the future—and if someone out there knows, please teach me what the exact pronunciation of gonioscopy is so we can end that feud once and for all.

me) montreux

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TUESDAY	9:00 - 5:00	9:00 - 5:00					
WEDNESDAY	9:00 - 5:00	9:00 - 5:00					
THURSDAY	9:00 - 5:00	9:00 - 5:00					
FRIDAY	9:00 - 5:00	9:00 - 5:00					
SATURDAY	10:00 - 4:00	10:00 - 4:00					
SUNDAY	CLOSED	CLOSED					

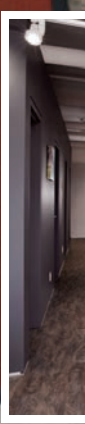
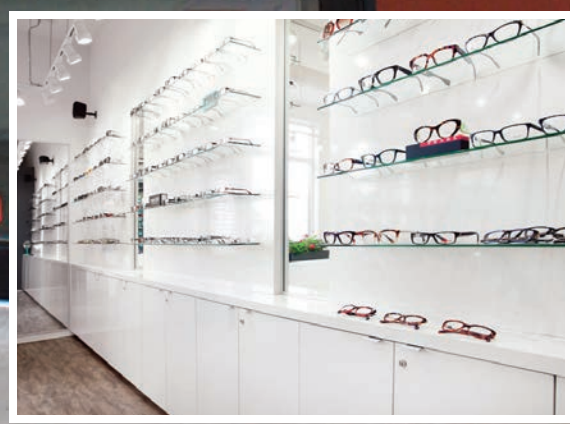
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DOIN' IT FOR THEMSELVES

BY BOB COOK

YOUNG GRADS
OFFER ADVICE
ON STARTING
A PRACTICE
RECENTLY OUT
OF SCHOOL

Ryan Lang, OD '12, says that upon graduation from ICO, "all of us, when we leave, want to do our thing." Yet the "vast majority" of his classmates, he says, are working for someone else, mostly in retail settings. And that's what Dr. Lang did—for a little while.

However, even before they graduated, Dr. Lang and his wife, **Laura (Galvin) Lang, OD '12**, planned for the day they would open their own practice. They found a lender, a city, a building, consultants, equipment and staff, and opened Lang Family Eye Care on May 4, 2013, in New Berlin, Wis., about halfway between his hometown, Appleton, Wis., and hers, Evergreen Park, Ill. They took on \$200,000 of new debt on top of their student loans, and they had to face the challenges of starting in a new community from scratch—but he says it's all been worth it. "I was scared in the beginning," says Dr. Ryan Lang. "But from there it's been amazing."

It's difficult for anyone to get a practice started: Various surveys, including those from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, find that fewer than 25 percent of optometrists own an independent practice. However, what's increasingly being noted is that for the 50 to 60 percent of optometrists who work in those practices, the opportunity to buy a share of the practice, take it over, or branch off into their own practice is being viewed more and more as a near-impossible task, especially for those only a few years out of school. Industry reports from investment firm Bain and Company and Jobson Medical Information (the latter commissioned by the American Optometric Association) indicate that optometry is facing increasing pressures to consolidate—mainly, the need to gain greater efficiencies and offer more services to patients, and to respond to competition from retailers. That pressure is making owning a practice less of a reality, the reports said.

However, surveys have found that the majority of optometry students want to someday own a practice. They might believe it will take a long time to fulfill that dream, if it ever happens at all. But there are young optometrists like the Langs who are proving you can do it, and you don't have to wait as long as you'd think. It's not easy, they say, but it's fulfilling. "All you have to do is put in the time and take your licks," Dr. Ryan Lang says.

Here are six tips from young optometry practice owners on how someone recently out of school can start his or her own practice:

1. START PLANNING AS SOON AS YOU CAN

The Langs began thinking about owning their own practice when they reached their fourth year at ICO. But that's not the case for everyone. **Michael Yu, OD '10**, began his planning when he took a retail job that he realized he didn't want to keep, in part because he was constantly bouncing from location to location on Vancouver Island in British Columbia, Canada. **Nadia Rutayisire, OD '09**, began thinking about independent practice when, after a year of working in retail optometry, she went to Johns Hopkins University to earn her masters of public health with the idea of learning more about health management, perhaps with an eye of someday working in programs in her native Ivory Coast.

The point of planning early, they said, is that it will take at least a year or two to get everything in place needed to open a practice: business loans, a practice site, a build-out of that site, insurance credentials, marketing plan, equipment and staff. You need time to find the right attorney, real estate agent, architect and consultants to help guide you through



Dr. Michael Yu, OD '10, just opened his practice in May of this year

the process. You need time to figure out where you want to practice—whether taking into account the taxes and overall economic climate, the need for optometry in the region, or if you simply want to be back where you grew up (as Dr. Yu did when he located his practice in his hometown of Calgary, Alberta) or somewhere you just like being. And you need time to network with your professors, professional mentors and classmates to help answer questions and keep you sane.

2. DON'T SWEAT MORE DEBT (IF IT'S THE RIGHT KIND)

It might seem foolish to take on another \$200,000-\$500,000 in debt to start up a practice when you still have a long way to go on your student loan payments. But young optometrists who have opened their practices say while no doubt that's a big chunk of change, it's more manageable than you would think. Plus, says Dr. Laura Lang, "it's easier to max out [debt] at the beginning than to pay it off and then go back for more. We already had the debt of student loans, so what's more on top of it?"

Not every bank is going to consider loaning money to you, but if you come to a lender with a plan for how your practice will develop and grow, it will work to get you terms you can handle. Dr. Rutayisire, for example, was able to get a deferment on her student loans as she began opening her practice right outside of Baltimore. The Lungs didn't get a loan from the original bank they worked with, but it did put them in contact with another one happy to help them.

However, they said in exchange you need to keep a handle on what you spend in your personal life. While you might still be able to buy a car and house and new clothes, don't overextend yourself. "Let the business get started first," Dr. Ryan Lang says. Keeping spending to a minimum also ensures that your credit score is as high as possible—which then

reduces the interest rate on your loan, which itself becomes easier to get, with more money available.

3. EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

At every point in the process of opening a practice, and even once it's up and running, you'll be confronted with surprises. A lot have to do with how much everything costs, and you'll have to make decisions once you're confronted with the bill. "You think a bill [related to office renovations] will be \$10,000, and then you see it's \$50,000," Dr. Rutayisire says. Buying equipment that connected directly to an electronic health record "was a lot more money" than she expected—the price tag was \$40,000. "Before I opened the door, I maxed out my initial loan" of \$200,000, she says. She relied on her own cash and credit cards to pay an additional \$40,000-\$50,000 in startup costs: "I didn't want lots of new requests on my credit."

"There are things that aren't accounted for," says Dr. Yu, "even something as simple as garbage bags."

The unexpected comes, too, after you've opened your practice. Dr. Yu found staff turnover to be high early on as he tried to get the right number and fit of people for his practice. Also, you might think you've designed a practice that targets a certain population, but that might not be who shows up. Dr. Yu thought his practice would serve all ages, and he sent out mailers, set up his website and used social media to market to a general population. But it turns out that his patient base is skewing toward children. As a result, Dr. Yu, who just opened Montreux Family Eyecare and Gallery in May 2014, says he's adjusted his marketing, his office decor and his optometric services to be more kid-centric.

Dr. Rutayisire figured when she opened her practice, Vision Iconique, in 2012 that the higher-income clientele in her practice's Baltimore neighborhood

wouldn't necessarily choose a practice based on what insurance it accepted, so she thought she would do herself a favor and take none. After three months, she realized insurance is an important factor even for those with higher incomes, so she started accepting it.

The moral of the story, they said, is not that you have to abandon your dream. It just might end up looking slightly different than you thought, so you need to be ready to adjust.

4. KEEP A SIDE JOB FOR A WHILE

Nobody opens a practice cold and has it full of patients five or six days a week. That's why young optometrists recommend keeping another job until the practice grows enough to support your being there full-time.

Dr. Yu continues to work in another optometry office a few days a month—down from a few days a week when he started. Dr. Rutayisire works two or three days a week in her office, and two or three days a week for other people. Dr. Ryan Lang worked full-time for other practices and retail sites while his wife got theirs going, and he's recently been able to convert to working just at their practice.

Side work, Dr. Rutayisire says, "keeps the cash flow going." Her goal is to go full-time in her own practice in 2017. "You have to be patient," she says. "You have to be here for the long haul."

5. ALWAYS BE MARKETING

There's no better way to build a reputation than to offer great care to patients. Of course, first you have to get them in the door. Getting on insurance panels is one way young optometrists with their own practices say you can start building a patient base; if nothing else, someone will pick you because you're on their

plan and have appointments available quickly. They also recommend sending postcards announcing your practice, and using email, website and social media marketing to connect with potential patients.

Dr. Laura Lang says her practice has had great success with a 'live where you work' marketing strategy. "We see patients at our church, at the grocery store," she says. "People like to see you as a normal part of the town."

6. ENJOY YOUR FREEDOM

The young optometrists all said they went to school with the dream of practicing optometry the way they envisioned. By owning their own practices, they can. "It's great to practice optometry on your own terms," Dr. Laura Lang says.

Her husband says despite what it looks like coming out of school, it's also easier to take the risk when you're young, rather than wait. Dr. Ryan Lang says the birth of their first child, a girl, in October 2014 has put that into perspective; he's not sure they would have had the time and energy needed to open and grow their practice if they started now. "You should open your own practice while you're young," he says. "It's going to get harder as your life gets busier."

Nadia Rutayisire, OD '09,
opened Vision Iconique in
Baltimore in 2012



AWARD RECIPIENTS

**Alumnus of the Year Award
(posthumous)**
Donald J. Bush, OD '79

Young Alumnus of the Year Award
Jennifer S. Harthan, OD '06, FAAO

Lifetime Service Award
C. Clayton Powell, Sr., OD '52,
MPH, DOS

Professional Achievement Award
Peter A. Russo, OD '87, FAAO

Excellence in Education Award
Yi Pang, MD, OD, PhD, FAAO

Humanitarian Award
Ruth S. McAndrews, OD '79, FVI

Distinguished Friend Award
Essilor of America, Inc.

Golden Gavel Award
presented to alumni who have completed nine years of leadership and distinguished service to ICO and have served as president of the Alumni Council
Charles W. Harrill, OD '74
Pamela A. Lowe, OD '88, FAAO
Dominick M. Maino, OD '78, MEd, FAAO, FCOVD-A
Jeffrey R. Varanelli, OD '98, FAAO, Dipl. ABO, ABCMO



Members of the 50 Year Club in attendance included (clockwise from top left) Darrell Schlange, OD '64; Roger Hanson, OD '56; Arthur Young, OD '64; Roger Bakewell, OD '64; Roger Truax, OD '64; William Earnstein, OD '64; Robert Schmidt, OD '64; Floyd Mizener, OD '48, MCO; Donovan Crouch, OD '63; C. Clayton Powell, OD '52, CCO; Gary Morgan, OD '64; Gilda Berkman Preskill, OD '56; Michael Kacere, OD '49, NICO; and Alfred Rosenbloom, OD '48, NICO.



Dr. Augsburger presents Eileen Bush, OD '08, Elizabeth Bush, OD '12, and Sara Bush with the Alumnus of the Year award, which was conferred to Donald J. Bush, OD '79, posthumously.



Louise Sclafani, OD '89, and Pamela Lowe, OD '88, shoot a selfie at the class reunion dinner and awards ceremony.



Members of the class of 1974 attend the Cubs rooftop outing (clockwise from front): Drs. Scott Mescher, Greg Jones, Charles Harrill (with wife Jean-Meredith) and Greg Prudhon.



GOING GREEK

BY ERIN ENGSTROM

MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO'S DELTA GAMMA WOMEN'S FRATERNITY LEND A HAND AT THE ILLINOIS EYE INSTITUTE'S SCHOOL-BASED EYE CLINIC AT PRINCETON ELEMENTARY

It's 9:30 on a Friday morning, and about 30 third graders from Tonti Elementary School, in Chicago's Gage Park neighborhood, have just arrived to the Illinois Eye Institute's school-based clinic at Princeton Elementary. Clad in their uniform mustard-yellow polo shirts, the students have taken a five-mile bus ride to the clinic to receive eye exams.

Seven student clinicians and three staff doctors care for the eight- and nine-year olds at a variety of stations set up in a second-floor classroom. About six kids gather around a young woman as she gives their classmate color vision and depth perception tests.

"What shapes do you see?" she asks the little boy. He identifies the x and the o on the page. "Good job!" she exclaims.

The woman stands out from the other adults in the room, as she's not wearing a white or gray coat over her sleeveless chambray button-down. That's because she's not a doctor or ICO student—**Rachel Lander** is a sophomore at the University of Chicago. A member of the Delta Gamma women's fraternity chapter at U of C, she and her sisters volunteer at Princeton once a week. It's one of the service activities the chapter partakes in to fulfill Delta Gamma's philanthropic focus, Service for Sight.

SERVICE FOR SIGHT

Headquartered in Columbus, Ohio, Delta Gamma is one of the largest Panhellenic women's organizations in the U.S. and Canada, with over 200,000 members worldwide and 147 chapters. Delta Gamma's philanthropic mission and foundation go by the same name, Service for Sight, and the foundation was the first established by a sorority in the U.S. Historically the foundation has granted funds toward vision-focused organizations, genetic research, low-vision adaptive devices and more.

Delta Gamma has been recognized by the American Foundation for the Blind and Prevent Blindness America for its work on behalf of the visually impaired. In 2012, the organization partnered with the Department of Defense and Veterans Administration to launch the

Service for Sight: Joining Forces Program, aimed at improving eye injury clinical care and vision research for men and women in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Delta Gammas must fulfill a certain number of Service for Sight volunteer hours, averaging about 150,000 annually. "We're on the quarter system, and each member of our chapter is required to do four service hours for every quarter we're in school," says **Sydney Reitz**, a University of Chicago senior. "So that means everyone does 12 service hours each school year. And we have a 120-person chapter, so that amounts to 1,440 hours. So we need quite a few opportunities for service, especially because all of our service opportunities have to be directly benefitting the blind and the visually impaired."

As vice president of foundation, Reitz is responsible for coordinating all philanthropic programming for the chapter. She's organized on-campus Delta Gamma events devoted to collecting used sunglasses, and informing students about the importance of eye protection during the summer.

U of C Delta Gammas also work with local non-profits Second Sense and the Chicago Lighthouse, as well as the Blind Service Association. Their activity with these organizations runs the gamut from administering surveys to fundraising to serving as guides for visually impaired people at special events. Reitz's predecessor identified the Princeton opportunity in 2012 and reached out to clinic director **Sandra Block, OD '81**.

"These young women come in with the willingness to do anything they can here at Princeton," says Dr. Block. "They're engaged, always pleasant and work hard. They help with entrance testing, they help move kids around, they work with the opticians and help call patients when glasses are ready."

When Lander was rushing, all of the sororities presented information about their philanthropic pursuits; the Delta Gammas spoke about working at Princeton and showed pictures in a slideshow. Lander appreciated



U of C Delta Gammas Meri Kushner '16 and Rachel Lander '17 perform entrance testing with a student at Princeton

the clinic's proximity to U of C—about two miles away, and accessible by public transportation—from both a convenience standpoint as well as having the opportunity to serve in her immediate community.

DELTA GAMMAS AT ICO

Service for Sight was a major draw for **Kerry John, OD '00**, as she was considering sororities as an undergraduate at Indiana University. She found the alignment of her professional interests with Delta Gamma's philanthropic mission a serendipitous coincidence. "One of the main reasons I joined was that I knew I wanted to go into optometry," she says, adding that the chapter's high GPA and prime location on campus were secondary lures.

"I think sororities get a bad rap for the most part," says Dr. John, who today works as a staff optometrist at Skowron Eye Care in Elmhurst, Ill. "A lot of people don't realize that they actually have a foundation—there's something philanthropic that they're working towards. And as much fun as it is, there's a lot of work that goes into it, too."

Luciana Coscione Dixon, OD '06, was a Delta Gamma at the University of Michigan. Today she owns L'Optique Optometry, a full-service clinic in Rochester Hills, Mich., and is also a staff optometrist at the Detroit Veterans Hospital. Among the DG volunteer activities she participated in was reading books on tape for visually impaired students, and taking visually impaired children horseback riding. Additionally, she and her sisters engaged in a variety of fundraising efforts to benefit organizations dedicated to vision research and service for the visually impaired.

When she first began her studies at Michigan, Dr. Coscione was uncertain of a career path; she actually started out in the engineering school. She wouldn't

entirely attribute her decision to pursue optometry to her Delta Gamma experience, "but it definitely helped." Her DG volunteer activities also instilled in her the desire to continue to give back: She was a member of SVOSH while at ICO and went on a mission trip to Honduras.

The Delta Gammas are engaged, always pleasant and work hard. They help with entrance testing, they help move kids around, they work with the opticians and help call patients when glasses are ready.

Sandra Block, OD '08, clinic director, IEI at Princeton

Lori Latowski Grover, OD '90, now dean at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry at Salus University, was a Delta Gamma at Albion College in Albion, Mich. The organization shares a rich history with the liberal arts college—the campus is the site of the first Delta Gamma house established by a chapter.

Dr. Grover has kept up with Delta Gamma since graduating in 1985, and she's encouraged by the expansion of the organization's service and philanthropic focus. "Back then, our philanthropy was called 'Aid for the Blind,'" she says. "It's nice that they have a broader approach. Less than three percent of the population is what we would consider blind."

Partnerships such as that between Delta Gamma and the IEI are mutually beneficial, says Dr. Grover. "If we as a profession can help to increase awareness about the need for comprehensive eye care with outside organizations, then it's a win-win. Because then they'll be able to identify and morph their philanthropic focus, and it will just help us."

A FULFILLING VISION

Neither Lander nor Reitz anticipate pursuing a career in vision care—Lander will probably declare a major in math and is still considering postgraduate possibilities, and Reitz intends to pursue a PhD in neuroscience. But their volunteer efforts at Princeton have been an unexpectedly soul-satisfying byproduct of Greek life.

"I absolutely love the clinic," Reitz says. "Everyone loves it. I think it's one of the coolest resources available. It's really cool to have a hands-on opportunity like that."

CLASS NOTES

1945

Marilyn Brenne Heinke, NICO, was named the Wisconsin Optometric Association's 2014 Optometrist of the Year at the WOA's annual meeting in September.



photo courtesy Wisconsin Optometric Association

1965

Lee Jacobson received a Wisconsin Optometric Association Life Membership award at the 2014 WOA annual meeting.

1967

Wayne Wall received a Wisconsin Optometric Association Life Membership award at the 2014 WOA annual meeting.

1968

Robert Fait received a Wisconsin Optometric Association Life Membership award at the 2014 WOA annual meeting.

1969

William Molin received a Wisconsin Optometric Association Life Membership award at the 2014 WOA annual meeting.

Robert P. Rutstein, professor at UAB School of Optometry for 33 years, has published an electronic atlas on binocular vision for students and practitioners in optometry and ophthalmology.

1974

Stan Appelbaum and his son, **Bryce Appelbaum, OD '09**, were featured in the article "Seeing Success," published in the September/October 2014 issue of *Bethesda Magazine*.

1976

Steven Devick attended a meeting at the White House with President Obama on May 29. The event addressed sports-related concussions in children.

1977

Joan Stelmack was named the 2014 Optometrist of the Year by the Armed Forces Optometric Society.

1978

Sunny M. Sanders has been appointed founding dean of the Midwestern University College of Optometry in Downers Grove, Ill.

1980

Peter M. Agnone, Jr. received the American Optometric Association's Optometrist of the Year award in June in Philadelphia at the organization's annual meeting.

James Chapman has been appointed assistant dean of clinical affairs at the University of the Incarnate Word Rosenberg School of Optometry in San Antonio, Texas. He supervises the clinical operations of the school's six clinical facilities.



1981

Sandra Block has been named the Alumni Council liaison to the ICO Board of Trustees. This is a new three-year-term position.

1982

J. Eric Paulsen was elected president of the Wisconsin Optometric Association at WOA's annual meeting in September. He will assume the office in January. He is pictured with immediate past president **Michael Tashner, OD '93**.



1985

Victoria Haynes has joined Northwestern Medical Group's ophthalmology team. She will continue seeing patients in her Lake Forest and Grayslake, Ill., offices.

1987

Larry Van Daalen has been elected president of the ICO Alumni Council.

1988

R. Scott Wooley was named the Illinois Optometric Association's OD of the Year. He was also named an at-large member of the American Board of Optometry's Board of Directors.

1990

Renee Dunlap was awarded the Platinum Practice Award from Texas State Optical at the Vision Quest conference this past year.

1996

Dominick Opitz welcomed his third child, Noah Byron, on Aug 21.

1997

Jason Schmit has joined Vance Thompson Vision in Sioux Falls, S.D., where he's been instrumental in creating the clinic's Dry Eye Center of Excellence.

1998

Christine Janikowski is practicing at Advanced Eyecare Clinic in Lake in the Hills, Ill.

Paul Stauder was elected president of the Illinois Optometric Association.

Steve Vargo was appointed vice president of optometric consulting at Prima Eye Group.

2000

Steven P. Clancy has joined Pine Creek Vision Clinic in Colorado Springs, Colo. He recently retired from the Air Force as lieutenant colonel.

2001

Callie Enyart was elected president-elect of the Wisconsin Optometric Association at the WOA's annual meeting in September.

2002

Brad Kehler has been appointed Vice President, Applied Clinical Informatics at Hospital Corporation of America.



2003

Raman Gill and Sukh

Takher '04 welcomed their second child, son Sahib Takher, on Jan. 29.

2004

Sara Fredrickson recently joined Northwest Eye Clinic in Fosston, Minn. She specializes in head trauma, brain injuries, stroke and motor vehicle accident injury.

Andrea McCann has been elected president-elect of the ICO Alumni Council.

2005

Brandy Morrow has joined Eye-Site by Howlin's Vision in Sioux Falls, S.D.

2006

Katie Foreman welcomed son Noah Charles on July 18.



2007

Tessa Sokol was awarded 2014 Young OD of the Year by the Wisconsin Optometric Association. She is pictured with the 2013 recipient, **David Hammes, OD '04**.



2010

Chris J. Borgman had three articles published in August and September of this year: "Putting Patients at Ease" in *Optometry Times*, a case report on dacryocystitis in *Optometry Vision Science*, and a CE article on neovascular glaucoma in *Review of Optometry*.

Desiree Carrillo-Owen welcomed son Miles Emmett on Dec. 12, 2013.

Jessica Condie welcomed a daughter, Macy, on July 14.

Benjamin D. Crawford purchased Accurate Vision Clinic in March and was married in May.

Amanda Hoffmann recently merged her private practice with a local ophthalmology practice in Wausau, Wis., and welcomed her first baby, both in June.

Diana Colon Stewart and Shane Stewart welcomed their first child, Elisa, on Aug. 25.

Michelle Zickel was voted 2014 Preceptor of the Year by the class of 2015 at New England College of Optometry. She says that every day she's proud of the clinical education she received at ICO.

2011

Robert E. Chun was recently appointed clinical assistant professor of ophthalmology at Loyola University in Maywood, Ill.

Katie Goodman-Thomas bought Carlinville Eye Care in Carlinville, Ill., from **John Lapp '76** in March 2013. She bought the building in January of this year.

Catherine Loughrin welcomed a son, Bennett Matthew, on Sept. 21. He joins big sister Aven Lilly.

Nicholas Lillie was married on April 26 to Ashley Zandbergen.

Nicole Vasilnek Jensen married ICO classmate **Steven Jensen** and is currently the editor of the Illinois Optometric Association's journal.

Emily Walters welcomed her second child, Jace Matthew, on Sept. 4.

2012

Eric Coy has joined Family Optical Centre, which has locations in Rockford and Belvidere, Ill.

Trichelle Jackson has joined **Donald Furman, OD '92**, as a partner of Family Eye Care Center in Forest City, Iowa.

Viktoria Milunas Loydall was married Nov. 2, 2013, and is practicing in Joliet, Ill., at Cutler Eye Care and C & C Vision Gallery.

2013

Rosaline Cha has joined Plainfield Ophthalmology in Plainfield, Ill.

Lauren Walter Hallum and her husband, Zach, welcomed a baby boy, Cole Bradley, on Sept. 15.

Nicholas Olberding completed his residency at St. Louis VAMC and is now back in his home state of Iowa, working at Eye Associates of Iowa City.

Charmi Patel-Solanki was married on Aug. 16.

Carly Rose welcomed a new baby on July 31.

Kassandra Wedeking is practicing at Loveland Eyecare in Cromwell, Conn.

CLASS NOTES

2014

Daniel Ahrens has joined Meyer Eyecare in Blue Island, Ill.

Chad Parks has joined Northwest Eyecare in Freeport, Ill., and was just recently engaged to his girlfriend of six years, Shira Lambert. He says he can't thank the faculty and administration at ICO enough for preparing him for his optometric career.

Ashley Roth is working with her father, **David Roth, OD '89**, at Roth Eye Care, as well as part-time at Lenscrafters Optique in Miami.

Lauren Sanchez married Sammuel Tillich in June. She practices at Michiana Eye Care and Facial Plastic Surgery, an OD/MD practice in Mishawaka, Ind.

FRIENDS & FAMILY

R. Michael Daley, member of the ICO Board of Trustees, started as CEO of The Vision Council on Oct. 1.

Andria Pihos, OD, gave birth to her third child, Nikitas Vasilios Vatianou, on Aug 6. He joins two brothers, Kosta and Markos.

ERRATA

In the Second Look feature of the Summer 2014 issue, we misspelled the name of **Greg Actipes, OD '91**, and, in the same article, misidentified former ICO professor **Dr. Susan Cotter**. We regret these errors.

PLEASE SHARE ALUMNI NEWS WITH ICO

SEND INFORMATION TO:

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Senior Director of
Alumni Development
312-949-7080
cscavuzzo@ico.edu or
alumni@ico.edu

IN MEMORIAM

1939

John N. Schoen, NICO, Owatonna, Minn., May 30. He practiced optometry in Owatonna for 50 years, retiring in 1989. He was a member of the Rotary Club of Owatonna since 1941, life member of the Medford Knights of Columbus and was named to the KC Hall of Fame in 2002. He was also active in Owatonna Elks and the American Academy of Optometry.

1947

Peter Pappas, MCO, Palos Heights, Ill., Oct. 6. Throughout his long career, he was known for putting the needs of his patients before his own and providing optometric services to patients with lower incomes.

1948

Wilbur "Mason" Isiminger, NICO, Moundsville, W. Va., Sept. 28. In 1941, he joined the Air Force and served as a courier under General Harold "Hap" Arnold in the Pacific theater. After the D-Day invasion, he served in France and was in combat during the Battle of Bulge. He practiced optometry for 53 years before retiring in 2001. He served on the West Virginia State Board of Optometry and was the past president of the West Virginia Optometric Association.

William A. Putnam, NICO, Simpsonville, S.C., June 2. He served in a special unit during World War II. He provided optometric services to upstate residents for over 50 years and donated his time to help children without access to vision care. He also enjoyed playing chess and was the South Carolina Master Chess Champion in his mid-60s.

Eugene E. Rood, NICO, Green Bay, Wis., May 27. He practiced in Green Bay for 48 years, retiring in 1990. He was a member of the American Optometric Association for more than 60 years.

1949

Donald Adler, NICO, Memphis, Tenn., June 20. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II. He spent his entire optometric career in Meridian, Tenn., and was a life member of the Mississippi Optometric Association. He practiced for over 50 years and often provided optometric services to those who could not afford it. He was a stalwart at the Meridian Bridge Club, a life master in contract bridge and participated in many bridge tournaments throughout the south.

Robert A. Halfacre, NICO, Boaz, Ala., May 29. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II as an aviation radioman. He practiced optometry for over 50 years.

Paul Hughes, CCO, Wheaton, Ill., Oct. 10. He served in the Army Air Corps during World War II, where he received the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Marvin Kasik, NICO, Owings Mills, Md., Jan. 16. He served in the Medical Corps during World War II. In 1967, he earned a master of education degree from Loyola College. He practiced in Westminster, Md., for 45 years and served as adjunct professor at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry. He was on staff at Sinai Hospital of Baltimore and an optometric consultant for the Veterans Administration Hospitals in Maryland. He served as a professional mentor to his daughter, Karen Norman, OD '77.

Charles George Metcalf, NICO, Cherryville, N.C., Aug. 22. He died on his 91st birthday. He joined the U.S. Navy in 1942 and achieved the rank of lieutenant junior grade. He served in the Pacific and in the northern Atlantic during World War II. He practiced optometry for 40 years.

Donza Worden, NICO, Parkersburg, W. Va., Oct 4. He joined the U.S. Navy at age 17 and served during World War II. He founded Optometric Physicians of Parkersburg. In 1976, he was elected to the West Virginia legislature, where he served four terms. One of his biggest accomplishments was the passage of the bill allowing optometrists to prescribe medications for their patients, making West Virginia the first state in the nation to allow this practice. This achievement was acknowledged by the American Optometric Association as “the fourth most momentous achievement in the practice of optometry.”

Theodore Touru “Ted” Yenari, NICO, Mandeville, La., May 17. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II in the Philippines and Okinawa after attending the Military Intelligence Service language school. He was assigned to the 11th Airborne Division and was in the first unit that landed in Japan after the surrender. In 1991, at the age of 72, he won a gold medal in weight lifting in the Senior World Weight Lifting Competition in Germany. He was inducted into the Louisiana State Senior Olympic Hall of Fame in 1997.

1950

Melvin Balsom, NICO, Buffalo, N.Y., Sept. 11. He served in the Army Air Corps during World War II and was a decorated veteran. He practiced optometry for more than 60 years and was a pioneer in the use of visual training to help children with learning disabilities.

1951

Henry Berardi, CCO, Bridgeport, W. VA., Aug. 15. He served in the U.S. Army from 1939 through 1969, serving both in World War II and the Korean War and retiring as colonel. He was awarded the Military Order of Merit by Syngman Rhee, South Korea's first president. After retiring from the military, he opened a private practice in Bridgeport.

Joseph B. Ebbesen, NICO, DeKalb, Ill., Sept. 7. He enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps at age 18 and served in World War II. Shortly after graduating from NICO, he merged practices with two other optometrists, forming DeKalb Optometric, the largest eye care practice in DeKalb County. He served as mayor of DeKalb from 1965-69. In 1972, he was elected to the Illinois General Assembly and served six consecutive terms in the Illinois House of Representatives. He also served five years on the Illinois State Board of Regents for Higher Education and was a former ICO Board of Trustee member.

Robert Leonard Strait, NICO, Eau Claire, Wis., July 23. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. In 1962 he opened a practice in Cornell, Wis., where he practiced until his retirement in 1996.

John K. Trumbo, NICO, Naples, Fla., Jan. 13. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He practiced optometry in Wisconsin before retiring to Florida.

1952

Jack C. Chase, CCO, Scott Bar, Calif., March 9.

1954

Robert W. Ebbes, CCO, Bartlett, Tenn., Sept. 29. He began his career as an optometrist in the U.S. Air Force. After retiring from service as a major, he joined the faculty at Southern College of Optometry.

1956

Norbert T. Patterson, Harvard, Ill., Oct. 3. After serving for six months in the National Guard, he opened his practice in 1958, where he practiced until his retirement in November 2013. He was an active member of the Harvard Chamber of Commerce & Industry and the town's Milk Days committee. He was also a member of the Harvard Rotary since 1959, and achieved 50 years of perfect attendance.

1959

Norman W. Jackson, Canfield, Ohio, April 3. He served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. He was one of the first doctors of optometry to be selected to the Gesell Institute of Child Development in New Haven, Conn. He authored *Understanding Your Child's Mind* and was working on another publication about child development.

1964

S. Brian McPhail, New London, Wis., Nov. 22, 2013. He practiced in New London for 40 years. He was a member of both the Wisconsin Optometric Association and the American Optometric Association. He also served as president of New London Family Medical Center, the St. Joseph Nursing Home board and the New London Chamber of Commerce.

1972

Michael D. Caplia, Boca Raton, Fla., March 31. He provided eye care for over 20 years in Freeport, Grand Bahama Island, and was known as the “Island Eye Doc.”

1977

Kenneth Purdue, Viroqua, Wis., Sept. 17. He practiced in Viroqua for 35 years. He married his high school sweetheart, and they recently celebrated their 40th anniversary together.

1983

Martin P. Davilli, Agawam, Mass., July 3. He owned a private practice, Ludlow Eye Associates.

Danny Nguyen, OD

CURRENT POSITION:

Staff optometrist at ABBA Eyecare in Colorado Springs; owner Marcus J. Meyer, OD '78, maintains 15 offices in Colorado

FAMILY LIFE: Has a girlfriend, Annie

ICO CLASS OF: 2013

THEN

How did you decide to pursue a career in optometry?

I had just graduated high school. With no desire for college immediately, I decided to get a job. My cousin, who was an optometry office manager, asked, 'Hey, Danny I'm moving, do you want to take this job?' I simply replied, 'Okay,' so I started working in the field as an office manager. And I did that for the next nine years. At first it was just a job. However, I fell in love with the industry and with the patients that make it all happen. It dawned on me that I could absolutely do what the doctor was doing, and possibly do it better because of my unique background as optician and office manager. So while continuing to work full-time, I started taking night classes at the local community college. It took nine years to finish undergraduate—seven years at a community college and two at the University of California, San Diego. Looking back, I don't regret taking the scenic tour of college, because it stirred a passion inside and gave me the experience and confidence of the optometrist I am today.

What brought you to ICO as you were considering different programs?

ICO was the one that my best friend [Michael Tran, OD '12] was at. We are both from San Diego, born and raised, and grew up together. When he got accepted to ICO, I was still trying to finish up my bachelor's degree. We shared many milestones together including elementary school through high school, our first girlfriends and driver licenses, even our

first jobs. It was only fitting that we shared an unforgettable experience as optometry school in Chicago. ICO became my number-one choice. Even better than having your best friend of 20 years attending the school is ICO's amazing clinical program—and you only fully realize it when you leave, when you see how prepared you are for the real world. The first time I ever got that feeling was during fourth year externships, when I finally had the opportunity to meet students from other programs. My fellow classmates and I recognized that our clinical knowledge and skills were unparalleled, because of the IEI and because of the wonderful professors.

Did you have any favorite classes or professors?

Dr. John Baker for first year Optometry. He taught us refraction. Come to think of it, I almost failed the class, and yet he's still my favorite. The class was so difficult—the tests were built for mental acrobats who fully grasped refraction. I did not. The only reason I passed was because I passed the final exam, barely. I remember the retinoscopy and refraction practical that Dr. Baker himself proctored. I also remember bombing it so bad that my colleagues in the next room could hear my groans of misery as Dr. Baker shook his head in disappointment. The 20-minute timer couldn't end soon enough. But this speaks volumes on how much of an impact Dr. Baker had on his students. His passion for optometry and love for his students is almost tangible. And now thanks to him, I can perform refractions in the deepest of food comas.

NOW



Given that you spent so much time working in an optometry office before entering the profession, you must have had a pretty good idea of what practicing as an optometrist would look like. How do those expectations and your professional reality today align? It's almost identical. I'm still in a private practice setting, so I get to spend time with patients and practice full-scope optometry.

I moved to Colorado for the promise of outdoor adventure, but also to get a little more professional happiness—the saturation of optometrists and the scope of practice in California has its limitations. Working alongside an optometrist as an office manager, I received a great deal of respect from the community. Now, to actually be the person on the other side of that exam room, there is a lot of undeserved respect.

You're working in private practice now. While you were in school, was this what you hoped to do upon graduation? Yes. That has always been the ideal situation, but it's not the reality. Upon graduation, the surge of optometrists looking for jobs heavily outweighs what the private practice industry can

deliver. Initially, I was going to open up my own practice right out the gate with my best friend Mike Tran, but then I received this opportunity with ABBA Eye Care. Dr. Meyer has 15 locations and he macromanages all of them. I thought this would be the perfect opportunity to learn and see what it takes to build an empire, while still working in a private practice setting. So I said, 'Hey Mike, open up your practice. I'm going to go to Colorado and try to learn what I can, and when I come back to San Diego we can put all our knowledge together and run with it.'

What are some of the things you know now that you're out in practice that you didn't learn in school?

It's all about location. Dr. Meyer puts so much thought, effort and research into opening up a specific location. Also, structure. Everything is protocol, protocol, protocol. From the second a patient comes in to the second they leave, all of them have the same experience. He has taught me that as a business owner, staffing will always be an issue. In order to be successful, you need the right staff, which can only be found through diligence of training and the understanding of mutual respect. Putting the patient first will always create a successful practice.

DATEBOOK

DECEMBER

December 12

Resident Rounds Continuing Education Program
1 hour, non-tested
ICO Campus

December 22-January 3

Winter Break

JANUARY

January 9

Resident Rounds Continuing Education Program
1 hour, non-tested
ICO Campus

January 18

Dedication of the Alfred and Sarah Rosenbloom Center on Vision and Aging
ICO Campus

January 19

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
College/Clinic Closed

January 23

Resident Rounds Continuing Education Program
1 hour, non-tested
ICO Campus

FEBRUARY

February 7-14

Final Exams

February 16-21

Break Week

February 22

Continuing Education Program
6 hours, tested
ICO Campus

February 23

First Day of Spring Quarter

February 27

Resident Rounds Continuing Education Program
1 hour, non-tested
ICO Campus



APRIL 10

Practice Opportunities Symposium

MARCH

March 13

Resident Rounds Continuing Education Program
1 hour, non-tested
ICO Campus

March 17, 18

NBEO Part I Exam

March 27

Iowa Optometric Congress
ICO Alumni Hospitality Suite
Des Moines Marriott

APRIL

April 3-5

Spring Break
Campus/Clinic Closed

April 10

Practice Opportunities Symposium
ICO Campus

April 12

Continuing Education Program
6 hours, tested
ICO Campus

April 17

Resident Rounds Continuing Education Program
1 hour, non-tested
ICO Campus



ICO

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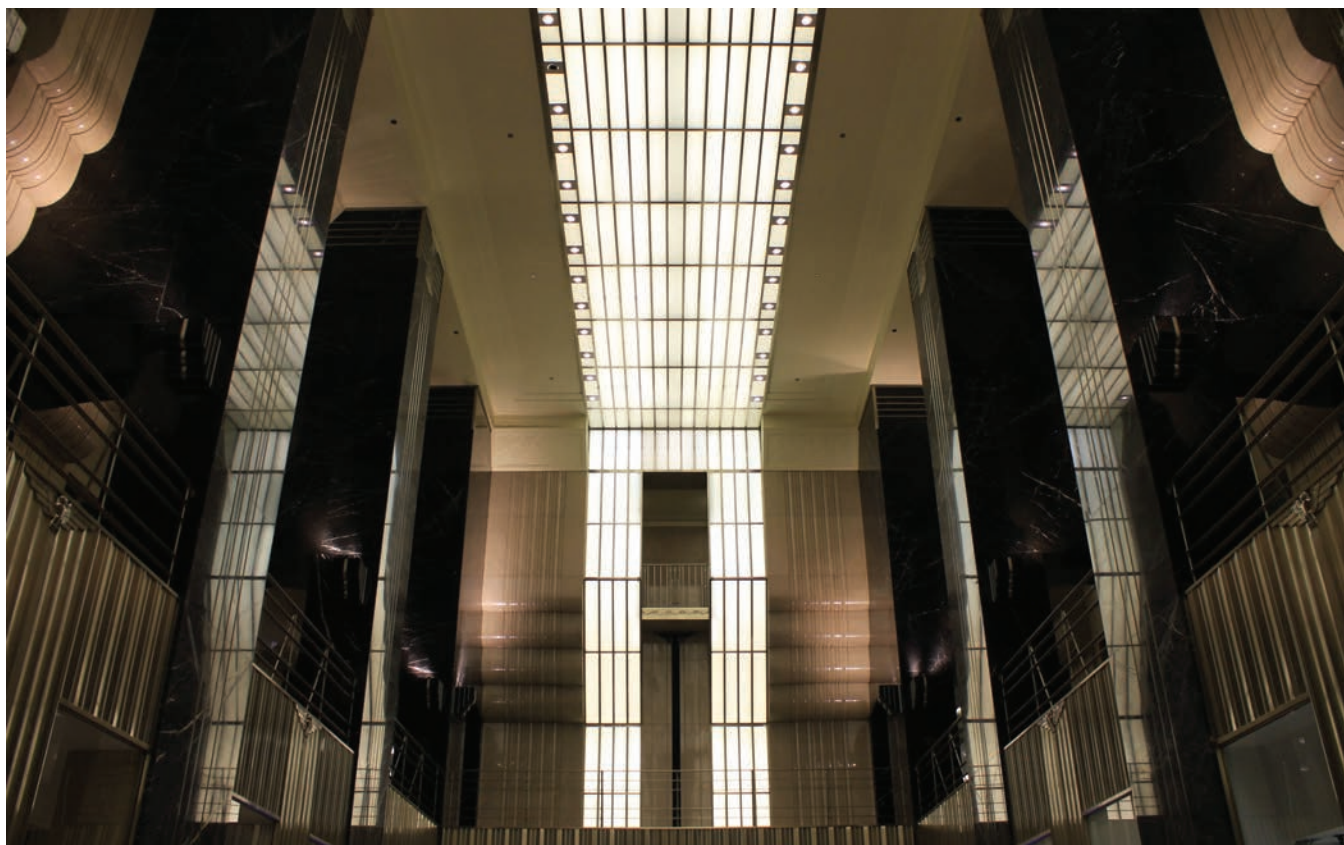
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LASTLOOK



The entrance of the Chicago Board of Trade reflects the Art Deco style in vogue at the time of the edifice's construction in 1930. Now a National Historic Landmark, the 44-story building was the city's tallest until 1965. The image was captured during the fourth-annual Open House Chicago, a free public festival offering behind-the-scenes access to more than 150 buildings across the city.

Photo by Chris Bugajski, '15