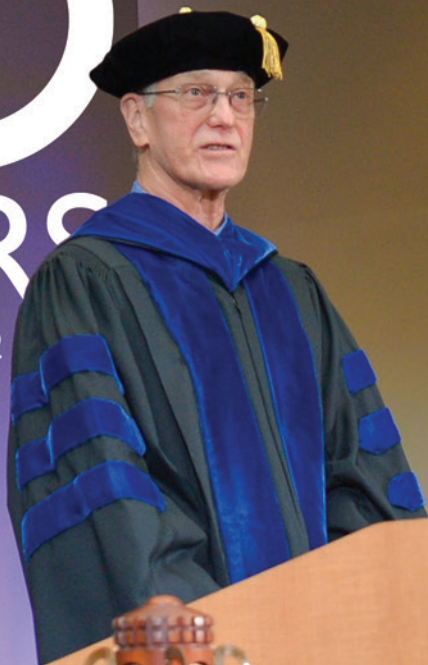


# ICO MATTERS

SUMMER 2021 • V20 ISSUE 2



ILLINOIS  
COLLEGE OF  
OPTOMETRY

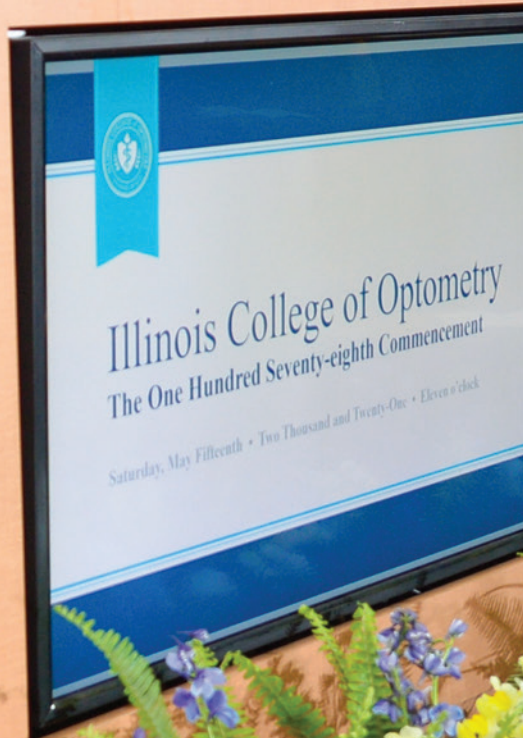
## Commencement 21

An On-Campus Event



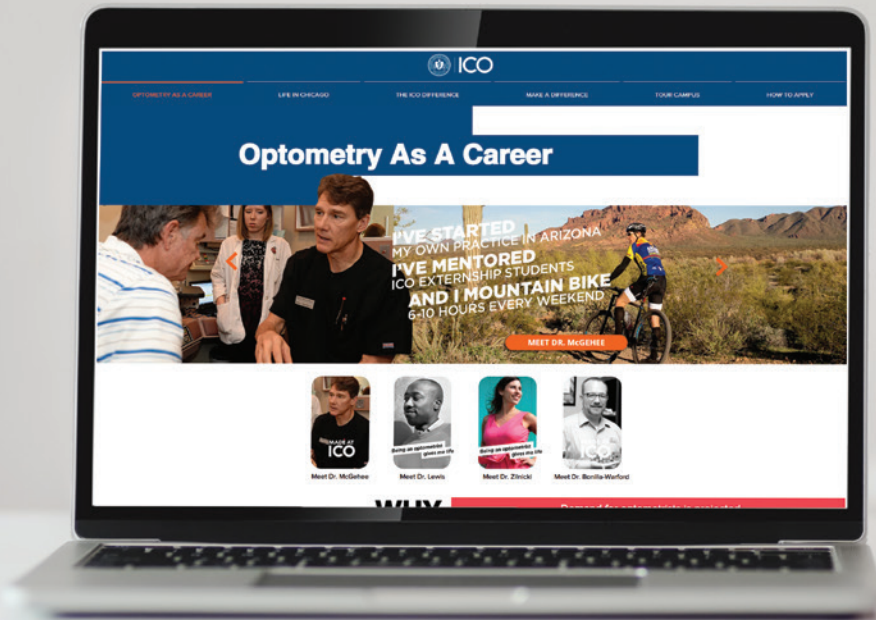
Annual Report

Dr. Schlange Retirement



MAGAZINE OF THE ILLINOIS COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY





# why.ico.edu.

ICO has added an exciting addition to our family of websites, **why.ico.edu**. Created to attract, engage and educate prospective students, our newest website is full of helpful information and tools for those aspiring to become doctors of optometry.

## EXPLORE:

- Optometry as a Career
- Life in Chicago
- The ICO Difference / ICO's Program and Clinic
- Making a Difference / The Impact Students Have on the Community
- 360 degree Virtual Tour of Campus

The website is full of interesting videos of ICO students and alumni who share their experiences and helpful tips. Patient testimonials are also featured.

And the 360 virtual campus tour is a must-see. It will definitely bring back memories of campus life!

**If you know anyone who might be interested in optometry specifically, please lead them to [why.ico.edu](http://why.ico.edu) for lots of great info.**



## Features

### 8 Commencement

See all the highlights from ICO's 178th Commencement.

### 12 Reflections

Dr. Schlange reflects on his 56 years at ICO.

*Stephanie Messner, OD recognizes this year's valedictorian Claire Elizabeth Skorseth.*

On the Cover: Gary A. Leshner, Ph.D. addresses the Class of 2021

# ICO MATTERS

SUMMER 2021 • V20 ISSUE 1

#### EDITORIAL

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Contact *ICO Matters* at [communications@ico.edu](mailto:communications@ico.edu)

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#### ADMINISTRATION

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**Senior Director for Development and External Affairs**  
Vince Brandys, OD '90

**Senior Director of Alumni Development**  
Connie Scavuzzo, MA

## Departments

**03** President's Message

**04** In Focus

**18** Trending

**20** Essentials

**28** Class Notes/In Memoriam

**32** Vault

**IBC** Datebook

**BC** Last Look



# ICO

## ANNUAL REPORT

[www.ico.edu/annual-report](http://www.ico.edu/annual-report)



# President's Message

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As we approach these summer months, having just hooded the Class of 2021 to begin their journey as Doctors of Optometry, we have an opportunity to reflect on the many things that shaped this year. From a global pandemic to heightened awareness of social issues that continue to impact our nation and world, the past year has presented many challenges and opportunities to gain new perspective.

As a clinical program, there was no option to conduct classes fully online. As a result, our students had the opportunity to learn how to safely pursue their clinical education alongside faculty and administration who were also learning how to navigate a global pandemic. Our faculty and students honored their commitment to our patients at the IEI, and their externship sites, and showed remarkable skill at adapting to continuing changes to guidance and protocols as the pandemic advanced. They recognized and responded to the fact that our patient community was both at higher risk of Covid-19, and that sight-threatening conditions could not wait until "things got better." I am incredibly proud of the work that our frontline staff, students, and doctors did in ensuring that the Illinois Eye Institute continued to serve our patients well throughout the pandemic. In the uncertainty of a pandemic, it was only natural for fear to creep into the equation, but the Illinois Eye Institute team used science to mitigate that and meet the needs of our patients even when that meant finding new and creative ways to deliver service via telehealth visits or even curbside pickups for prescriptions and glasses.

Our faculty and staff ensured our students did not experience delays in their program and came up with ways to ensure that a hybrid option would keep everyone on track in a hybrid learning environment. We found ways to continue serving our students and carrying out daily business, first virtually and then returning to in person. Our facilities team did a tremendous job of keeping our environment safe by leading the charge with all the expanded sanitizing requirements.

Being able to conduct an in-person, on-campus Commencement for the Class of 2021 was a tremendous undertaking but provided a wonderful opportunity for us to send our newest doctors forth from the Lecture Center where their ICO education began.

In a year where stewardship of resources became even more important, our community came together to ensure effective and efficient uses of resources and close budget management and fiscal responsibility. Because of this, ICO was able to carry forward its mission to its full extent.

Our newly formed DEI committee has begun its work on campus as we seek to recognize ways to be more inclusive and responsive to the needs of every member of our community. I am excited to see their work unfold in the months ahead.

During this year, our community came forward and did whatever it took to ensure that we continued to serve our mission safely and effectively. I am inspired by their commitment.

To our Alumni, I look forward to the opportunity to welcome you back to campus as travel again becomes more possible. I look forward to opportunities to reconnect with you in person as professional meetings and conferences resume. I also invite and encourage you to mentor the young people you see in your practices and help cultivate in them the understanding that their dreams are within their reach. It takes a community working together to make a difference, and I am proud to count you as members of our community.

Warmly,  
Mark Colip, OD '92



Mark K. Colip, OD '92

## Alumni Director Retires



**Connie M. Scavuzzo, MA, Senior Director of Alumni Development, has announced her retirement as of June 30th.**

I've been blessed to have had a 36-year career in higher education, including 17 years at ICO. I am thankful for all of the friendships I've made throughout my time at ICO, especially the wonderful relationships with alumni. I admire your willingness to serve others and the love and passion you have for optometry. Each of you is making a difference in your patients' lives every day. Your dedication to the profession and your patients continues to inspire me.

I would like to thank ICO for providing me with the opportunity to meet so many amazing people. I am thankful to be part of an institution that has provided so many of you with the education you needed to live your dream, to give back to the community, and to love what you do every day. It is my hope that you will continue to serve as role models for new graduates, to be mentors for current and prospective students, and to be positive, enthusiastic ambassadors for ICO and the profession. Please keep supporting your Alma Mater in any way you can. YOU are ICO's greatest resource.

I now plan to spend more time with my family and to use my degree in counseling to help others. My husband and I share similar volunteer interests and will, hopefully, continue making a difference in the lives of others moving forward.

I hope our paths will cross again someday. May you live enriched lives and continue to do what gives you purpose. And may God bless you richly.

*Connie*

For information on becoming an ICO Alumni Ambassador, please go to [www.ico.edu/alumni-ambassador-program](http://www.ico.edu/alumni-ambassador-program).





## Vaccine Clinic at ICO

April 22nd was a historic day for optometry as the first group of ODs in Illinois received their vaccine certification. "There was applause as each OD successfully completed their training. It was one of those moments I will remember my whole life," says **Sandra Bury, OD '95** (pictured in black scrubs with lab partner **Leonard Messner, OD**). She was one of the first ODs to receive certification.

To date, over 148 optometrists have begun the certification course and over 125 are now certified to provide COVID vaccinations.

"I am bursting with pride for our great profession. It would be great to see all of us step up to the challenge," says Dr. Bury.

In response to the declared public health emergency, in March 2021, at the direction of Governor J.B. Pritzker, the IL Dept. of Financial and Professional Regulation and IL Dept. of Public Health passed a proclamation to grant ODs the authority to administer the COVID-19 vaccination.

To assist in the certification process, ICO is partnering with the Illinois Optometric Association to provide a training course to Illinois-licensed optometrists to verify competency in the administration of COVID-19 vaccinations.



The course is free of charge and includes a three-hour online didactic course followed by a one-hour hands-on practical course. The practical course will be delivered at various sites throughout Illinois and conducted by ICO faculty with oversight from a practicing healthcare professional who is licensed to perform intramuscular injections.

"I'm so proud of the joint efforts of ICO and the IOA to train ODs to become vaccinators. It is an honor to help us all try and end this pandemic together," says **Lindsay Sicks, OD '10** (pictured to Dr. Bury's right), who was instrumental in developing the certification course.

## Students Honored at Capstone Awards

Over 85 scholarships and awards totaling more than \$100,000 were presented during the Class of 2021's Capstone Program held on Friday, May 15th. Visit ICO's Flickr page to see more photos.



## New Board of Trustee Members Elected

During the ICO Board of Trustees' May meeting, they elected three new members to the Board. All three are distinguished ICO alumni. We look forward to their service and welcome their input and insights.



**Kevin Danahey, OD '91**, of Mishawaka, Ind., practices full scope primary eye care specializing in ocular surface disease, with a strong emphasis on contact lenses, pre- and post-operative care, and the treatment and management of ocular disease.

In 2003, he joined Michiana Eye Center LLC, an equally owned OD/MD practice model. Michiana Eye Center was the first practice in the state to create this unique medical model. Dr. Danahey grew the practice from one location to six locations throughout north central Indiana, providing employment for 80 employees. He is an externship preceptor for the Illinois College of Optometry, offering a strong clinical environment that fosters the growth and development of its students. In 2015, he created the first regional comprehensive Ocular Surface Disease Clinic, bringing advanced diagnostics and treatment options to the Michiana area. Treatments include microblepharoexfoliation, vectored thermal pulsation (LipiFlow), Intense Pulse Light Therapy (IPL), autologous serum, and neurostimulation. In 2017, he started an annual continuing education program at the University of Notre Dame. The program, titled Earn a Degree in OSD, is committed to bringing in nationally recognized leaders in dry eye disease and providing the latest research and continuing education to optometrists and ophthalmologists.



**Sandra Bury, OD '95**, of Oak Lawn, Ill., has spent her life in service to her profession, community, and humanity. She is the owner of Complete Vision Care, a full-scope, independent, three-doctor legacy practice founded in 1951. She has served the profession in many leadership

roles, including President of the Illinois Optometric Association and the Chicago South Suburban Optometric Society. She has worked with numerous legislators and national and state-wide leadership to expand the scope of practice for optometrists and to improve access to care. She has also served as a Senior Clinical Examiner for the National Board of Examiners in Optometry, assisting with the administration of the Part III exam and supervising examiners to ensure an accurate testing environment. Dr. Bury's service to humanity includes her leadership as President of the Illinois Chapter of VOSH, providing organizational support for foreign and domestic missions, fundraising, and public relations. Providing eyecare and visual needs to people in underserved countries, she has participated in 18 mission trips thus far, including trips to Bolivia, Mexico, Ecuador, Grenada, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Peru. Additionally, Dr. Bury has served her community by providing leadership as the Mayor/Village President of Oak Lawn since 2013. She recently completed her 2nd term as Mayor.



**Timothy Tsang, OD '06, FFAO**, of Vaughan, Ont., is the owner of Upper Thornhill Eye Clinic, a primary care private practice with an emphasis on diagnosing, treating and managing ocular disease and emergency conditions. He received clinical honors throughout his externships and subsequently completed his residency in primary care and ocular disease. He became an Assistant Professor of Optometry at ICO, receiving the Clinical Educator of the Year award in his first year of teaching. In 2009, Dr. Tsang moved back to Canada, practicing in an ophthalmology practice, a long term care center, and the Vision Institute of Canada before opening his own practice.

He continued his interest in teaching at the University of Waterloo School of Optometry as an Adjunct Clinical Lecturer. Dr. Tsang has served as a clinical examiner for the Canadian Examiners of Optometry as well as Director of the Board and Lead of Education for the Ontario Association of Optometrists. He has lectured at optometric conferences and has been published in several peer-reviewed journals. He served as an editorial reviewer for several journals and has been a representative on the Eye Health Council of Ontario. He currently serves on the Quality Assurance - Clinical Practice Committee of the College of Optometrists of Ontario.



# Practice Opportunities Symposium Goes Virtual

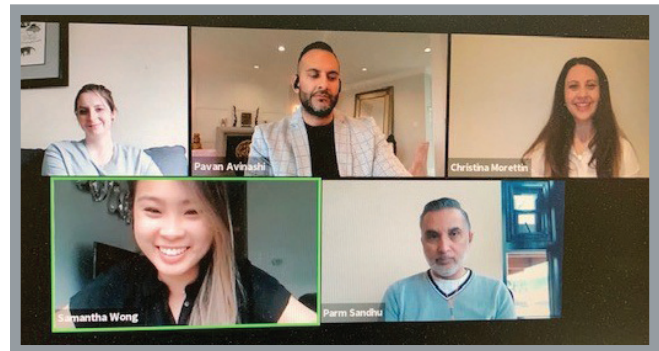
The 24th Annual Practice Opportunities Symposium was held virtually on April 8th and 9th. It is a required event for students as part of the College's practice management curriculum. The Symposium consisted of 8 panel discussions, each consisting of several ODs and highlighting a different mode of practice, as well as an opportunity to network with industry exhibitors and sponsors.

In total, there were 542 attendees, including 422 students, 32 panelists, 7 moderators, 9 exhibitors and 5 sponsors.

"I'm very pleased with the engagement that the students had this year, especially with the event being virtual for the first time," says **Daphne Anderson**, ICO's Director of Career Development.

**Thomas Bobka, OD '82**, who participated on the corporate practice panel, had high praise for the event. Says Dr. Bobka, "ICO is ahead of the curve on providing information on all forms of practice opportunities to students. Well done!"

For more details about the event, or if you are interested in sharing your experiences during next year's symposium, please contact Daphne at [danderson@ico.edu](mailto:danderson@ico.edu).



## Seeing is Believing

This May, **Drs. Lester Efanayi '21** and **Jeff Villena '21** returned to campus to unveil a mural that they envisioned and produced along with designer Christopher Donley.

The "Seeing is Believing, Black Doctors Matter" mural was created to inspire young people within our own community to see that becoming a doctor is within their reach. Having role models who share values and experiences is important, and Drs. Efanayi and Villena wanted to increase awareness of optometry for young people of color.

This mural is intended to show that these young people do have role models who look like them, who have achieved their goals, and who are here to mentor the next generation to join the ranks of doctors of optometry in service of their community.





# COMMEN

THE ILLINOIS COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY HELD ITS 178th COMMENCEMENT ON MAY 15th FOR 132 STUDENTS WHO BECAME DOCTORS DURING THE COLLEGE'S FIRST ON-CAMPUS CEREMONY.





# CEMENT



# 2021



# IN PERSON



(Above) The Doonaree Pipe Band plays "Scotland the Brave". (Right) Students are hooded and conferred the degree of Doctor of Optometry.



After a long year of many hardships, it was with much joy that we welcomed ICO's Class of 2021 back to campus for Commencement. While adhering to pandemic restrictions meant we could not invite families and guests, the entire ceremony was live-streamed to allow everyone a chance to share in the excitement of the day.

"It was wonderful to see everyone back on campus," said **Mark K. Colip, OD '92**, ICO's President. "I'm delighted that we could hold a ceremony for these students who have persevered through so many challenges."

It has been four years since this class sat together in the lecture center to receive their white clinic coat at the beginning of their 1st year. Now receiving their doctoral hood, the room was brimming with nervous excitement. In a show of ICO spirit, Class of 2021 and ICO facemasks were part of this year's regalia. As an in-person, and live-streamed event, every member of this class was recognized, even if they were unable to join us on campus.

Dr. Colip welcomed everyone "It is such a culmination and celebration of so many accomplishments in everyone's lives. Certainly for the Class of 2021, but also for the loved ones, relatives, and friends who have supported you each

and every step of your journey," he began. "You persevered. No one ever told you that it would be easy...and yet, here you are today. The sacrifices have been many, but doesn't that make the celebration that much sweeter? The rewards will be even more abundant and will span the rest of your lives."

Class of 2021 requested that the commencement address be given by **Gary A. Leshner, PhD, FAAO**, Professor Emeritus who taught pharmacology at ICO for over 35 years. These were the last students that Dr. Leshner taught before his retirement in 2019. A professor of pharmacology and toxicology and Assistant Dean for Didactic Education, Dr. Leshner taught more than 5,000 students the many nuances and complexities of pharmacology.

His commencement address did not disappoint those who remember Dr. Leshner's love for national parks, his drug-related cartoons and "drug of the day" questions, and his "Jeopardy" game at the end of each year. He even used a PowerPoint presentation to "quiz" the members of the graduating class during his speech.

Dr. Leshner congratulated the class for excelling in every aspect of their education. "During this pandemic, you have adjusted, adapted, pivoted, and simply done whatever you





(Clockwise from top left)  
Dr. Hogan welcomes the Class of 2021 into the Alumni Association; Dr. Lesher gives the commencement address; students recite the optometric oath.

needed to do to continue your training in the face of unprecedented difficulties." He continued, explaining the importance of pharmacology, especially now that COVID-19 vaccines are available. "In no time in history has it been more apparent that understanding pharmacology is critical to our everyday lives," he said.

Dr. Lesher concluded his message with these words of encouragement: "You can be the best. Keep learning. Work to improve your clinical skills. Treat each patient as an individual, and respect everyone."

After the Doctor of Optometry degree was conferred upon the graduates, they received a warm welcome into the ICO Alumni Association by the Vice President of the Alumni Council, **Casey Hogan, OD '97**. "May you always look to ICO as I do, with a smile and a fondness that guides you back to visit and stay connected, not only with your classmates and friends, but the many other colleagues you have yet to meet, those who have sat in these seats here before you and those who will do so after you," she stated. "As time passes, you will reflect on your years at ICO and realize that the foundation this College has given you is truly invaluable."

Congratulations, Class of 2021!

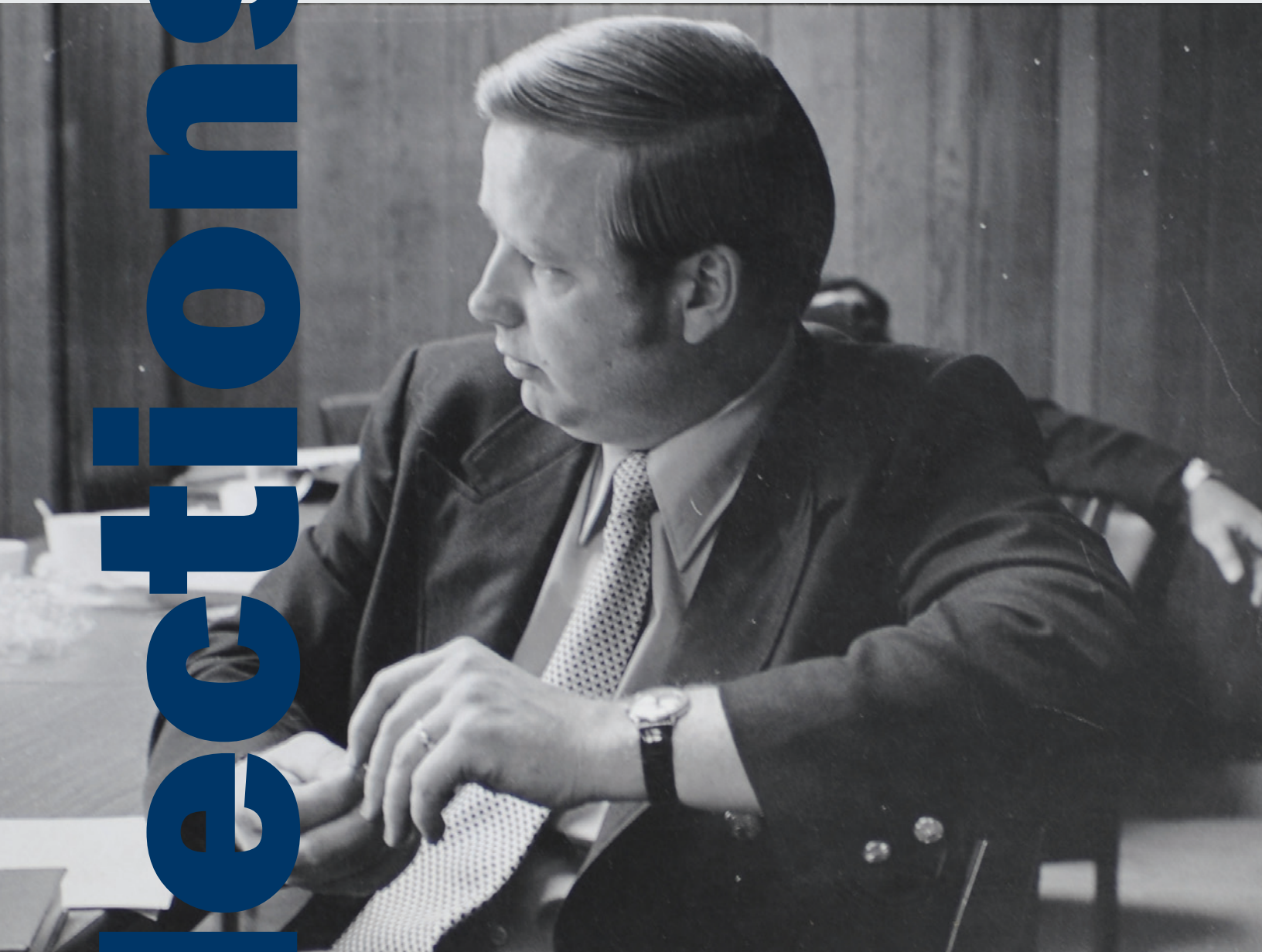


Relive Commencement on  
ICO's You Tube Channel.



Download over 300 photos  
on ICO's Flickr page.

# Reflections



## from ICO's Longest Serving Faculty Member

Darrell Schlange, OD '64, DOS, FAAO

Interview by: Connie Scavuzzo, MA



**G**RADUATING AS VALEDICTORIAN OF HIS CLASS IN 1964, Dr. Darrell Schlange began teaching at ICO after completing his residency in 1965. Now retired after 56 years of service to ICO, he reflects on his chosen path and the importance of giving back.

**Tell us about your background and how you eventually chose to pursue the field of optometry. Was there someone who influenced your decision?**

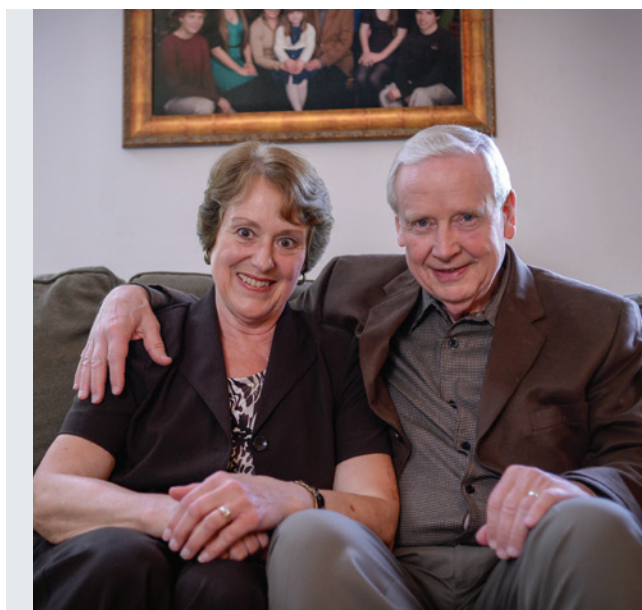
I grew up in a loving family with five siblings on a farm in rural southeast Nebraska. Our lives were dedicated to strong family and Christian values, an intense work ethic, and strong commitment to our extended family and community. Our parents broke with rural traditions and gave me and my siblings the opportunity and support to attend college. Education was encouraged as essential for self-actualization, pursuing our dreams, forming our own values and ideals, having independence, working towards a productive and satisfying life-chosen career, and being a productive and contributing member of society. The importance of giving back began to strongly resonate in me.

I was initially interested in some form of teaching or ministry and as such, enrolled at Wartburg College (in Waverly, Iowa), a Lutheran affiliated college. At Wartburg, however, my favorite and most enjoyable courses were in the health and medical sciences. On college break, I visited our local optometrist in Auburn, Nebraska because of a suspected vision problem.

**Patrick Crotty, OD '55** recommended contact lenses. The experience of having clear vision, gaining insight from the enjoyable office experience, and learning about the benefits and satisfying quality of life with a career in optometry... collectively, it began to intensely capture my attention.

I actively pursued a career in optometry during my third-year of college and began checking out the various colleges of optometry. ICO was the obvious first choice because it was the closest location; however, the thought of moving to Chicago was formidable, to say the least! Dr. Crotty continued to encourage me to consider ICO and

**A huge part of my final decision to enter ICO was realized when I visited Chicago and the ICO campus.**



*Dr. Schlange with his wife of nearly 60 years, Ruth.*

all of the fabulous events and activities that Chicago had to offer. His extensive involvement in the local community presented him as a socially involved person who lived a life of giving back. Dr. Crotty was a cherished mentor who helped me sort out my career choices and continually encouraged optometry as the best choice of all.

A huge part of my final decision to enter ICO was realized when I visited Chicago and the ICO campus in April 1964, meeting with **Hyman Wodis, OD '40**, **Alfred Rosenbloom, OD '48**, **Eugene Strawn '40**, and a few students. Given acceptance, I shared the good news with my bride-to-be, Ruth.

Ruth grew up in a small city in southern Minnesota. We anticipated a “cultural shock” moving from small-town life to a life in Chicago.

While the loneliness and challenges could be intense and overwhelming at times, our resilience, teamwork, family support, and love for each other carried us through. We met **Jack Roggenkamp, OD '63** and his wife, Jan, who were living in a mobile home village in Blue Island. Ruth and I were married August 13, 1961 and moved our new 8'x'42' mobile home to Blue Island as I began my studies at ICO later that month. Jack and Jan were a great comfort for us as the stress of isolation from family was often unbearable. Counting the coins left in our pocket was a common ritual, just before Ruth's next payday.



*Dr. Schlange with his wife Ruth, mentor Alfred Rosenbloom, OD '48, and David Hansen, OD '71.*

I am reminded of these challenges we faced as I mentor our ICO students, some who may be going through financial hardship or experiencing the excruciating pain of loneliness, anxiety, uncertainty... searching for the support and stamina to achieve their goal. Sharing insights and strategies has been helpful for invigorating the passion and internal resources needed to "keep our eye on the prize" amid societal challenges and stressful circumstances.

### **Who was most influential to you during your time at ICO? How important was having a mentor(s) throughout your educational journey?**

**Alfred Rosenbloom, OD '48** often invited faculty and student groups to his home in Hyde Park for wonderful and enjoyable social functions. These events provided powerful mentoring experience for both faculty and students. Dr. Rosenbloom was a quintessential mentor regarding patient care, education, national and local leadership, and effective teaching, research and reading. He often sat in on my lectures and gave valuable feedback. I had the opportunity to observe him in teaching and clinical settings and used these experiences as a model for my own development. His profound love for teaching and mentoring students was inspirational.

**E. Richard Tennant, OD '45** had an amazing, yet gentle, command of the lecture room, always communicating that he cared for you and wanted you to be the best optometrist. My most vivid memories with Dr. Tennant were discussions about having a healthy balance in life, among family, work, and community. My love for teaching and student mentoring was flourishing in me, and I truly began to understand the joy and passion for working with students as I observed in both Dr. Rosenbloom and Dr. Tennant. Their mentoring was ongoing during our years on the faculty — readily available, always willing to talk, both providing constructive comments, some complimentary and others needing improvement.

I believe that teaching is incomplete without mentoring. During my career, I have had many special experiences through the mentoring of current and former students; sharing their happiness and joys; comforting them through their losses; joining in the love for a new child or a special accomplishment; even the rare and unique duty (many years after their graduation) when called to testify on their behalf in a court of law. Mentoring can be a lifelong adventure and friendship, and it's a rewarding way to give back.

### **How did your interest in treating children begin? Was there a specific experience that impacted you?**

Early on in my career, I was very interested in my young patients' school performance. I would send vision reports, communicating with teachers and parents about vision problems and the potential to improve a child's reading and classroom performance through VT and other services. Eventually, I was asked to speak to parent and teacher groups. In turn, we invited these groups to ICO for presentations and tours of our clinic, especially the VT room. This resulted in referrals from teachers, reading specialists, psychologists, counselors, occupational therapists, nurses, and parents. We began to develop clinic sessions specifically for young patients as well as patients with learning, behavioral, school achievement and developmental problems.

I was frequently asked to speak with parents, educational groups, and agencies interested in pediatric eye problems, including vision-related learning problems. This was in the late 60s and early 70s when schools did not have legally mandated programs for helping children with vision disabilities, learning problems and secondary behavioral issues (ADHD). Frustrated parents formed child advocacy organizations like the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities and became politically active at the local, state, and national level.

I served on the advisory boards of many child advocacy groups and organizations, which led to more optometry referrals and positioned an optometrist as a good resource for helping children with functional, developmental, and visual-related learning disorders. Some parents, frustrated with the lack of relevant school services, formed their own school, for instance, the Beacon Therapeutic School in the Chicago Beverly neighborhood. I was one of Beacon's founders. Beacon was developed to provide educational, counseling, behavioral, and social services with a multidisciplinary approach, covering the full spectrum of disabilities and learning problems that children have.





During this time, I was invited to participate in the national White House Conference on Children and the Illinois Conference on Children. Several Chicago area organizations had similar conferences on unmet needs of children. Eventually, the public and educational and medical specialties were successfully educated on the importance of vision in learning and early development. ICO initially adjusted to this increase in pediatric services by establishing clinics for infants and special needs populations, vision therapy, and developmental disabilities. These are now consolidated as the Dr. Robert and Lena Lewenson Center for Pediatrics and Binocular Vision within the College's Illinois Eye Institute.

### **Why is conducting research important to you? Are there any studies that you are most proud of or excited about?**

Research has always been an enjoyable experience as is working with students as they conduct some very amazing research studies. Collaborating with others and collectively contributing to the scientific body of knowledge is another form of giving back to our profession which is very important to me. Many of my research studies have investigated eye movements, related to either reading or more complex problems like nystagmus and ocular muscle disorders. One of the most rewarding aspects of research is sharing and defending your results with other investigators at research meetings, including international meetings with worldwide attendees.

One of my most enjoyable faculty advisory experiences with significant research outcomes was the King-Devick Test. There are many other similar student research projects, although none as significant nor successful as

King-Devick. One of my most challenging experiences was a large cohort of patients with post-concussion syndrome, referred from a neurologist at Northwestern Medicine. Most were adults with traumatic experiences that profoundly changed their lives. This was an excellent research experience with interprofessional collaboration, providing a model of effective patient care management, including the use of narrative medicine. These patients received various forms of treatment and advice, and, in many cases, we saw remarkable improvements, giving them functional skills and a quality of life similar to their life prior to the concussion.

In addition to the research that I have personally conducted, Ruth and I have supported ICO's research

**My love for teaching and student mentoring was flourishing in me, and I truly began to understand the joy and passion for working with students, as I observed in both Dr. Rosenbloom and Dr. Tennant.**



program by establishing the Brittany Research Award several years ago in memory of our first grandchild, Brittany, born with congenital heart problems. She participated in infant heart research conducted at Hope Children's Hospital in Oak Lawn, Ill. Even though Brittany is not with us, we know that she contributed to the development of life-saving treatment procedures that have enhanced the life of many infants born with heart problems. The Brittany Research Award has supported numerous ICO research studies over the years. Ruth and I believe that the educational process at ICO is very dynamic and far-reaching. We believe that supporting ICO and its research programs is consistent with our values of giving back and paying it forward.

### While a faculty member, you were also in private practice. Tell us about your private practice experiences.

Private practice experiences are an opportunity to gain more clinical experience, also to keep me 'grounded' by experiencing more directly the entire doctor-patient relationship from beginning to end. This is different than in an educational institution where clinic introductions and billing matters are the sole responsibility of the non-clinical staff. **Ernest Havrilla, OD '52**, who practiced in the Mount Greenwood area of Chicago, was my first private practice mentor. In his practice, I provided vision therapy services and had my first opportunity to provide pediatric eye exams.

Later, during the early 1970s, I established a private practice near my home in Palos Heights, Ill. This was an excellent opportunity for me to establish working relationships with multiple medical specialists in the southwest suburban area. During this time, I also began to collaborate with **Floyd Woods, OD '51** on his brilliant vision for Midwest Eye Professionals, an OD-MD integrated medical office. I joined Complete Vision Care, Dr. Woods' Oak Lawn office, in 1998. Now owned by **Sandra Bury, OD '95**, I continue to see long-time patients. This has been a delightful and personally rewarding clinical experience; I consider my patients as good friends. I also provide mentoring and shadowing experiences at the office for ICO students and undergraduate students interested in optometry which is another fulfilling way of giving back.

### What are some of the most impactful changes that you have experienced in the profession during the last 56 years?

The evolution of our optometric profession during the last 56 years has been astounding. I have observed and participated in many of these astonishing changes, transitioning optometry from drugless eye care with severe practice limitations, to having a highly respected role



in the national health care system, offering full scope medical eye care, including the use of pharmaceuticals and surgical procedures.

The results of these dynamic developments have had enormous health benefits to our patients. One example is in pediatric optometry. We currently examine, treat, and manage childhood amblyopia and strabismus. In 1964, we were expected to send these “medical” cases directly to the ophthalmologists. Another example is the astounding change in the management of glaucoma patients. We now examine, treat and manage glaucoma at the highest level. However, 56 years ago, any patient with elevated Schiotz tonometry readings or suspected glaucoma needed referral to a “medical specialist.” Numerous examples of these incredible changes are ever-present, reminding us of our incredible history.

The many astonishing advancements in optometry are the result of many heroic efforts. Honorable and significant among these impactful changes is ICO’s consistently strong, unwavering, and visionary leadership. I am grateful to have been a part of these astonishing changes in our profession, guided by the leadership, teamwork, and collaboration of many: six ICO presidents, eight academic deans, 21 board chairpersons, hundreds of faculty colleagues, an outstanding support staff, and thousands of ICO alumni. Truly it can be said that we stand on the shoulders of the many who have gone before us, contributing to our success in this challenging journey.

### **Over the years and decades, what were the lessons that you learned along the way that had a significant impact on you and your outlook on life — either personally or professionally?**

Seek balance between compassion, empathy, and objectivity in medical care, within a framework of comprehensive narrative and integrative medical care. Seek to treat each patient as an individual, respectful of their needs, feelings, and fears. Look beyond any disability or impairment, identifying their unique qualities, strengths, and potential for meaningful quality of life. Provide state-of-the-art eye care by coordinating patient care and interdisciplinary communication with other medical providers and serving as an essential member of the health care team. Be an advocate for optometry and

**One of the most rewarding aspects of research is sharing and defending your results with other investigators at research meetings, including international meetings with worldwide attendees.**

the importance of healthy and efficient visual care, enhancing overall potential for learning, career development, ocular health, and quality of life.

And lastly, be involved. Many of our profession’s accomplishments and increased clinical opportunities started as grassroots efforts by thousands of ODs in their local communities — collaborating with other medical specialties, with their schools, parents, and colleagues,

doing what they are trained to do, enriching quality of life for all. Beyond this, with the collective efforts of organizations like AOA, AAO, IOA, COVD, and OEP, we share expertise, promoting our profession of optometry, and advance the well-being of many.

### **Now that you have retired, and as you reflect on your career, what words of wisdom do you have for your colleagues and future colleagues? What are your plans for the future?**

“Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful.” Albert Schweitzer

I remember this quote as it expresses the joy and happiness I always had during my long career. Truly I am grateful for this opportunity to serve and be part of the amazing ICO family! Another Schweitzer quote, equally meaningful to me is, “The purpose of human life is to serve and to show compassion and the will to help others.” I am profoundly honored and privileged for the opportunity to serve ICO, our students, and our patients for over 5½ decades.

What do I plan to do after retirement? Together, Ruth and I will plan and chart out this new journey in our lives, with family time of foremost importance. We are blessed to have more time together and spending time with our three children, seven grandchildren and Maisie Marie, our great-granddaughter. I plan to continue some involvement as Associate Professor Emeritus, participating in the ICO community through writing, research, patient care, mentoring, and serving as a champion for optometry and ICO’s mission.

I am reminded of the words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, “What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.”

# Trending



**January 1**

Happy New Year!

We are always thankful for our incredibly strong community, but this year has brought us a new appreciation of the true importance of family, friendships and togetherness. We are happy to have you as a part of our "ICO Family". Thank you for helping to move this institution forward each and every day.



**January 18**

Let us all take a moment today to remember, as optometrists, the oath we took to right the wrongs where we see them, uphold quality of care in our daily practice, and put our patients health above all else, regardless of race, gender, or political affiliation.

You bring light where there is darkness by upholding the traditions we have embedded in our mission and vowed to uphold in our work.



**February 17**

As part of Black History Month, we asked a collection of students to share their own stories. **Alexis Abernathy '23** serves as both a mentor and a liaison not only as an academic coach but also as the president of ICO's BSU.

She says, "Black students can do anything they put their mind to. They can excel in any route. They don't just have to do what they see others doing."



**January 22**

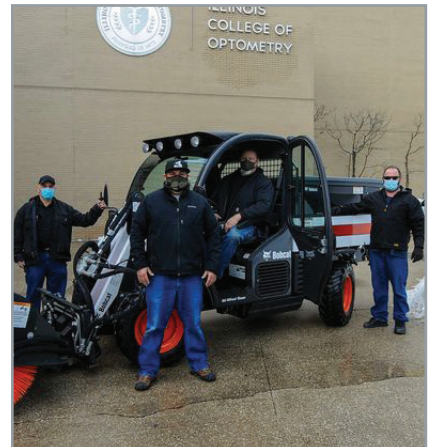
By the second year, students are already learning foreign body eye removal techniques! Make sure to check out @chieyes to learn about the entire process which includes the use of a drill to rid the eye of rust remains from metallic foreign body objects!



**February 1**

For those of you who have been in Chicago these last few days, you know how snowy it has been! It's times like these when you come to appreciate just how dedicated EVERYONE at ICO is. The facilities team stayed over night just to make sure the IEI parking lot was accessible to patients this morning.

Thank you **Gonzalo, Roy, Paul and Scott** for all the great work you do!



**March 8**

A Message from **President Colip**:

The Illinois College of Optometry stands in solidarity with our Asian and Pacific Islander sisters and brothers against all the acts of violence, bigotry and hatred; particularly, those that have been committed in recent days and weeks.



**March 16**

Today marks the start of NBEO exams for third years. Class of 2022, we are sure these last three years have prepared you well to do great on the exams. Study hard and make sure to get enough rest. We can't wait to see you being one step closer to your OD! We wish all of you the best of luck!





**March 18**

We just wanted to take a quick minute to send a very warm congratulations to our very own **Tam Tran '21**, the recent winner of ASCO's 2021 Student Award in Clinical Ethics.

His winning essay, "The Ethical Muddle of Sick Notes: Can We Do Better?" will be featured in the Journal of Optometric Education. Great job, Tam!



**April 12**

Congratulations to all of our future residents! We are so excited to have you either continue at ICO or to welcome you to the ICO family! ICO, let's welcome **William Skoog** (ICO) to Cornea and Contact Lenses/ Ocular Disease, **Thomas Collins II**, **Randi-Jo Francis**, **Alyssa Lancaster**, **Olivia Nichols**, and **Janette Perez** (all ICO graduates) to Ocular Disease/ Primary Care Optometry, **Jeress Pendleton** (OSU) and **Kelsey Trast** (UHCO) to Pediatrics Optometry/ Vision Therapy and Vision Rehabilitation, AND **Melissa Caceres** (ICO) and **Nitasha Merchant** (IAUPR) to Vision Rehabilitation/ Geriatric Optometry/ Ocular Disease.

Welcome everyone!! We're excited to have you here! Let's give them a big warm ICO welcome!



**May 13**

Join us on May 13th at 4:30pm as we unveil a mural by **Lester Efanayi '21**, **Jeff Villena '21**, and designer Christopher Donley.



**May 17**

You handled externships in the middle of a pandemic, you adapted and pivoted as sites had to be made and changed as the pandemic escalated.

Even with the cancellation of boards \*hours\* before you were to take it, you still performed WELL above the national average.

In the midst of a pandemic, you provided care to an at-risk patient population that desperately needed you.

And then, one last time, you came back to us.

Congratulations again Class of 2021. You deserve every bit of our praise and well wishes.

We can't wait to see what the future brings.



**April 1**

Take a tour of ICO's Residential Complex. Located directly across the street from campus, the RC is a great place to find quiet spaces for study as well as lounge and relax with friends with outdoor sporting events, movie nights, and social lounges.



**May 22**

What's that you say? Our very own Dean of Student Affairs participated in a talk show all about community health and eye health??

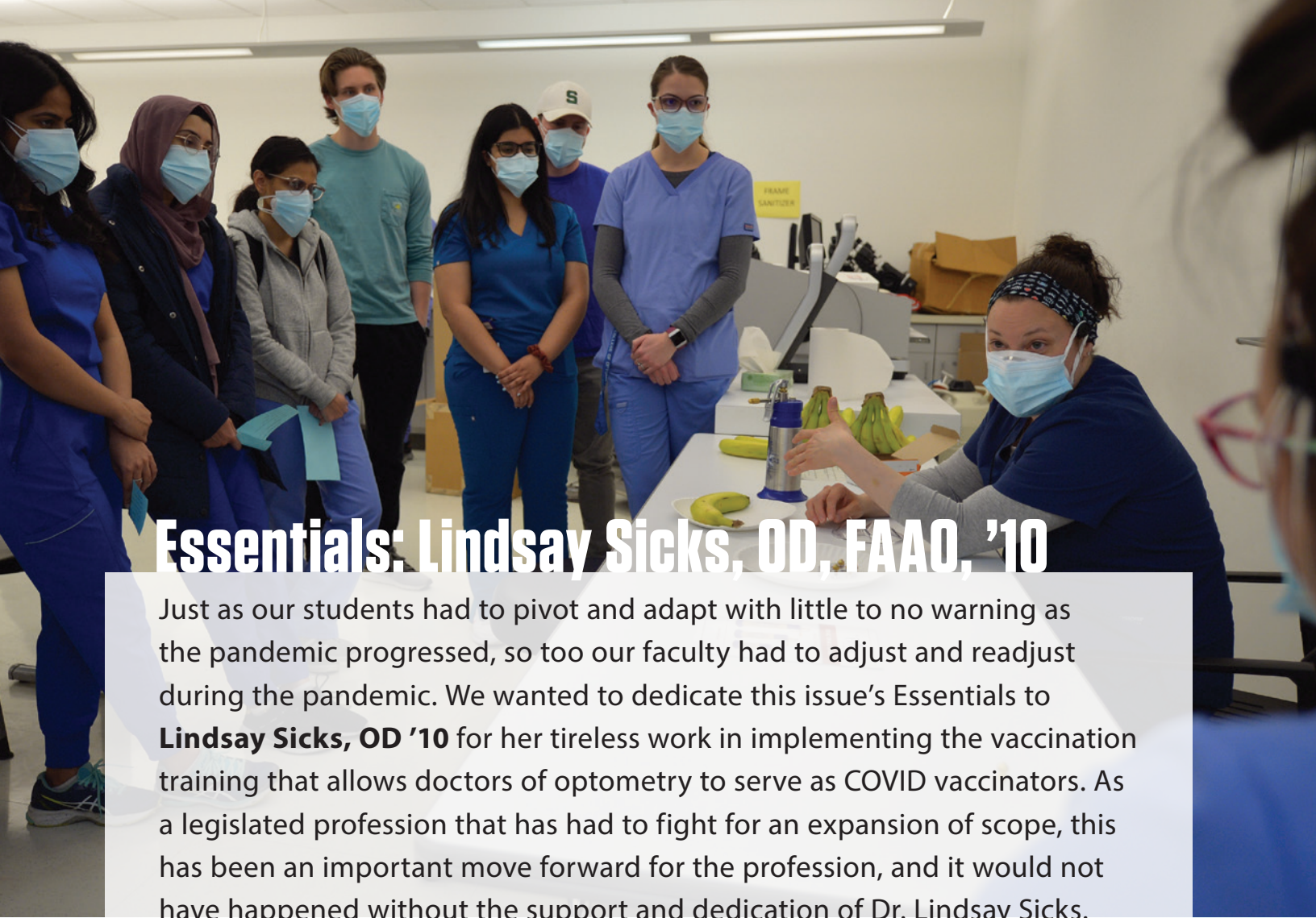
Make sure to watch the live stream when you have a chance and congrats **Dr. Mothersbaugh!**



**May 28**

Yesterday, we held the second unveiling of **Dr. Efanayi's, Dr. Villena's** and designer Christopher Donley's "Seeing is Believing" mural. By placing this mural in the KLEO Center, a community center in the Bronzeville community, we hope that youth in the community can also take inspiration from this mural.

A special thank you to **Rev Torrey Barrett** for allowing this mural to be placed in the Center.



## Essentials: Lindsay Sicks, OD, FAAO, '10

Just as our students had to pivot and adapt with little to no warning as the pandemic progressed, so too our faculty had to adjust and readjust during the pandemic. We wanted to dedicate this issue's Essentials to **Lindsay Sicks, OD '10** for her tireless work in implementing the vaccination training that allows doctors of optometry to serve as COVID vaccinators. As a legislated profession that has had to fight for an expansion of scope, this has been an important move forward for the profession, and it would not have happened without the support and dedication of Dr. Lindsay Sicks.

Growing up in Orland Park, Dr. Sicks has always known where her heart lies — in the Midwest and in Chicago. Choosing a small central Illinois town for undergraduate, her transition to Chicago for graduate school gave her the opportunity to explore 'the big city'. "I was really nervous going to my interview at ICO, but the second I walked in Anthony Barone was there to greet me, and it just felt like home." As a student she heard the sounds of the city from her apartment as the train whizzed by, "It was a really fun phase of my life. I loved every second of being in optometry school."

After optometry school, she went on to do a residency in Oklahoma and then taught at Midwestern University before returning to ICO in 2013. Her path from ICO student to ICO Associate Professor and a specialist in cornea and contact lenses was not always straightforward, but she found her way with the help of mentors and those who believed in her, and we are so thankful she did. Here are a few of her essentials.



## THE POWER OF YES

When I first arrived at ICO, I was sure I wanted to specialize in pediatrics, but the more time I spent in the peds clinic the more I realized it wasn't my thing. Even after doing my third year research project specifically on kids, I could feel it was not the right place for me. After one of my original externship rotations was cancelled, I signed up with Chicago Cornea Consultants and I just loved it. Every day was so fun, the patients were challenging, it was so fast paced — every day there was something new. It totally changed my view of what I wanted to do.

**Jennifer Harthan, OD '06** and **Janice M. Jurkus, OD '74, MBA** really encouraged me to do a residency, but I definitely had a bit of imposter syndrome. Cornea residencies, after all, there are only a few residencies, and I just didn't know if I was good enough. I had thought I would want to continue at ICO, but the cornea and contact lens faculty encouraged me to explore options beyond ICO, and so, I did my residency in Oklahoma and I just loved it!

I am where I am today because others believed in me, and I leaned in and said "yes."



## COVID COOKING

COVID's silver lining for me was absolutely being able to spend time with my husband and my kids. To get to see my son grow from five months to eight months and be with my kids every single day was such a blessing. It was such a joy to be able to just breathe and take time to do what we often don't have time to do. Our lives are so busy — I drive an hour each way to ICO, and we often don't have dinner until 8PM. To be able to shut our computers down at 5PM, to go for a walk and then cook dinner together — it was just so nice to have them so close around me those three months.

During COVID, we got a weekly meal kit delivery and we would cook lunch and dinner every day. That's how I taught myself to cook! Whether it's sautéing an onion or arranging a charcuterie board, so much of cooking is an act of love, and I'm grateful to have had the time to cook for my family.



## THE POWER OF A MENTOR

I remember one specific instance while I was a 4th year student working with **Jennifer Harthan, OD '06** in the Cornea Center for Clinical Excellence. We were seeing a patient with high astigmatism and were going to design a bitoric lens. I was SO nervous because I wanted to make a good impression, but my first response was "I don't know what to do and I can't remember anything about bitoric lenses!"

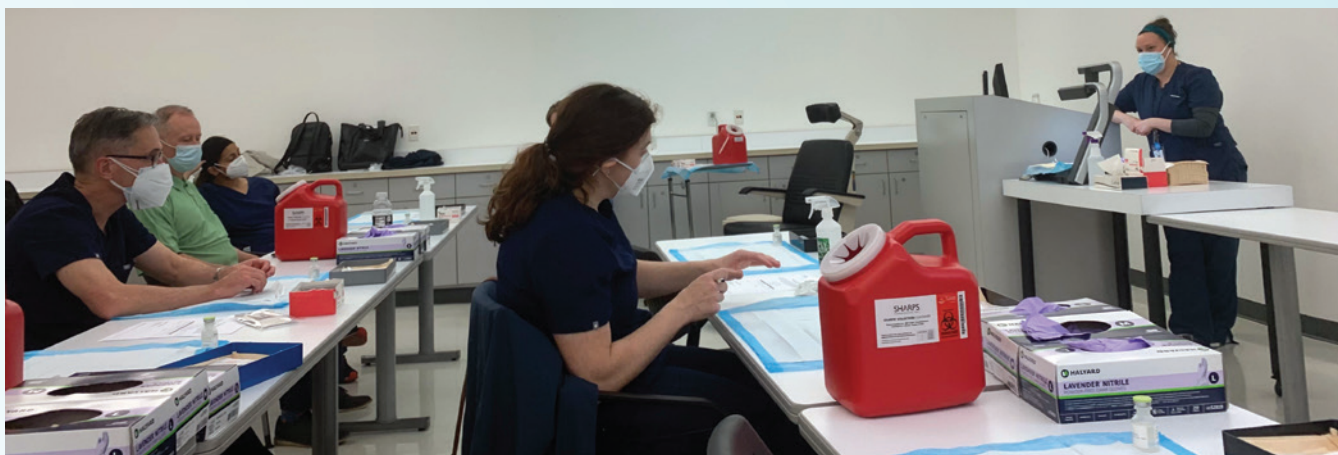
So, Dr. Harthan sat down with me and starts off with "I know you know this" and then walks me through the Mandell Moore calculations. To have someone take the time to be an effective preceptor and walk me through step by step... it just really meant a lot to me. It still does today.

I really try to take the same active role in teaching students. I also think it's pretty remarkable that our administrative team still works in the clinic seeing patients. They still remember what it's like to be in clinic for the first time, to be nervous and not know the answer. They can provide that perspective to students.

## A GROWING ICO FAMILY

I have two kids, Grace and Ben. They have been such a joy to me, especially this last year with so many things going on. My daughter always jokes with me, "I'm going to come do work with you." She'll sit beside me when we get ready and play on her tablet or write in her notebook. In the morning, she always tries to put on her contacts.

I brought them for eye exams recently. They're usually pretty shy kids, but they LOVED the Class of 2021. Ben was only five months old when we went into lockdown so he really hasn't been around many strangers. This was his first exposure to other people, and right away, he ran over to our students. It was so fun to see my two families merge.



## ENDING COVID

**Leonard Messner, OD** made this initiative a top priority for ICO and really championed the quick rollout of this course. **Elizabeth Wyles, OD** and I worked together to develop the course and wet lab. The IOA also wanted to train vaccinators, so we partnered together to offer this to Illinois ODs. I've enjoyed teaching this wet lab to ODs in the same way I enjoy teaching advanced procedures to students. Because this is a new subject, sometimes they're nervous, but they're also so excited. To see these ODs then become successful, to see them learn something that had never before been part of their practice, to share in that success, it's just really fun. It was also inspiring to see that many ODs step up. I got to meet ODs from all over the state and train some of my mentors. I got to be the teacher for those who have taught me so much. It was just such a great experience.



## A POWERFUL ALUMNI NETWORK

Optometry is such a small community. You never know who will connect you to your next job. Our alumni are ALL over the country. I knew this as a student, but I didn't realize the impact of it until I moved beyond the walls of ICO.

I want to encourage both alumni and students to advocate for the profession. As a legislated profession, we need to stand up for our expertise. Injectables, lasers, these are things we CAN do and we make sure our students are proficient in these skills before they leave ICO.

We should all stand up for our career and legacy. We're not just glasses and contact lenses — we restore people's sight; we help people function and live more meaningful lives. That is why I show up for work every day, because I know how much of an impact our alumni and students are making.





# Announcing the 2021 Alumni Association Scholarship Recipients

## Alumni Association

**Scholarships** are available to 4th year students each year. Essays describing their service and leadership as a student and plans to continue their involvement as an alumnus were required as part of the scholarship criteria. The students with the top essays were chosen by the ICO Alumni Council as this year's scholarship recipients. Your donations to the scholarship fund have helped make these scholarships possible.

## Thank you!

Here are the essays from this year's Alumni Association Scholarship recipients.



## LESTER EFIYANAYI, OD '21

One of my motivating factors for becoming an optometrist, outside of my family history of glaucoma, has been the racial disparity of African-American physicians in healthcare, especially in communities of color. This disparity is also evident in optometry both as a profession and institution. I've come to understand the importance of representation. I have been reminded, on what seems like a weekly basis, just how excited, proud, and comforted many patients are when they see a face they can identify with and relate to.

Optometry has provided me with a platform, and I will continue to use it to reach and inspire young Black men and women to pursue a career in optometry. A familiar face goes a long way. I illustrate this in my blog post, "Bridging the Gap: Diversity in Optometry," as I talk about my life experiences during my presentation as a classroom guest speaker for my former middle school teacher, Elizabeth Reilly. I was ecstatic to be invited back the following year!

In addition to working as a student blogger, as a means to stimulate minority interest in optometry, I also serve on the board and am an inaugurating member of the nation's first optometric Black Student Union (BSU), started here at ICO! BSU serves to support students of African diaspora academically, culturally, and socially in addition to providing leadership and service opportunities to optometry students while encouraging those at the undergraduate level to pursue optometry as a career. My colleagues and I work directly with the "Focus on Your Future" program and are proud to say there are a number of former program participants that have matriculated into ICO and are currently involved with BSU.

Another one of my passions lies in service to humanity projects and organizations. One of my biggest accomplishments to date is the success of the Ebga Village Vision Screening in Edo State, Nigeria in December of 2018. With the help of friends and family, classmates, faculty, as well as strangers, I led and orchestrated a team of local Nigerian optometrists and optometry students to fulfill a lifelong goal of providing eye care to my Grandfather's village and surrounding

**Optometry has provided me with a platform, and I will continue to use it to reach and inspire young Black men and women to pursue a career in optometry.**

Lester Efiyanayi, OD '21

communities. In total, 242 individuals received vision screenings and education on the importance of eye exams. We also provided access to sun and prescription glasses as needed. Additionally, I served as a board member for the National Optometric Student Association and volunteered as a student clinician for the Eye Health Institute and performed general eye exams, pre-and post-operative surgery consultation in Negril, Jamaica.

As an ICO alumnus, I will continue to use my platform and what makes me unique: to reach others in a way that few people in the program can while inspiring others to positively influence and mentor youth in underrepresented communities towards becoming the next generation of health care providers.



### **KIMBERLY FAZIO, OD '21**

My most lived by quote was first spoken by my father: "Be an eagle, not a sparrow." I have grown to interpret this simple 6-word quote as, be a leader, not a follower. In my time at ICO, I have tried to embody this to the best of my ability.

I am currently referred to as the "Immediate Past President of Student Association." During my active time as president in my 3rd year, I had a laundry list of responsibilities that were both handed down to me from past presidents as well as ones that I created on my own. I began this process as class representative for my 2021 first year class. In my second year serving as President-Elect under Fran Mangahas, I successfully planned ICO Olympics, Casino Night and Eyeball. While planning Eyeball, I was able to take the student association account out of debt and implement a list of protocols for budgeting and planning for future presidents to ensure successful events in the future. In my 3rd year as active President I worked to oversee the planning of these events with my then president-elect Bryce Boente. In both years, I sat in on and contributed to numerous Board of Trustees and Alumni Association meetings and conference calls where I served as the voice for ICO students to my elders. I provided feedback, opinions and insight into what student life is like at ICO and made

## **I have grown into a professional and a confident leader, all thanks to my mentors here.**

Kimberly Fazio, OD '21

sure that I advocated for the best decisions on behalf of my colleagues. I have come to understand what it truly means to be as professional as you can be in a room full of people who are years and years ahead of you. I am lucky that I was given this opportunity because it allowed me to find a voice in many situations where I was not at all in my comfort zone. By far one of the most humbling experiences was getting to sit in on the House of Delegates meeting at the AOSA conference in St. Louis as a delegate for ICO. I was able to surround myself with thousands of representatives from each state across the country and learn what it was to be a voice for something much bigger than myself.

In addition to my expected responsibilities, I decided to add more to my plate and help ICO's business office create a new system for charging students. As difficult as it was to take away the "Monopoly Money" mentality from my fellow students, I did my best to co-create a system with Cheddar Up that I believe meets the needs of both students and staff. There was never very strong communication between the business department and the fundraising section of clubs at school, but I believe I have left this system better than it was when I started.

Along with my responsibilities as SA president, I have also dabbled in co-running a research project investigating the value of telehealth in the optometry setting, serving as a tutor to fellow colleagues and holding the position of Vice-President of Gold Key Society. But since my physical time at ICO has come to a close, I made it my ultimate goal to display myself as the strong leader and professional that ICO taught me to be, while on externship. In my most recent externship at the Wyomissing Optometric Center in Pennsylvania, I was put to the test. After a month at this clinic, I had earned my respect but I wasn't done. One of the Doctors at the practice was blindsided by a career pausing bicep tendon tear. He was rushed into surgery and was instructed to not use his arm for anything, something that proved difficult with a full patient schedule. I was pulled aside by my preceptor and tasked with the goal of being this Doctor's "right hand man." Essentially, I was to take on his entire patient schedule, 20-25 patients per day all on my own, for the last two months at this site. Obviously, I



was offered support and instruction from the conference room, but I took this as an opportunity to mimic the real world. I made the effort to request as little assistance as possible, and only ask for help when I truly was stumped.

I am now seeking a residency position, primarily in the VA setting. In my residency interviews these past few months, I was able to brand myself as a motivated clinician and leader. My favorite point to highlight is all that I have learned from my time at ICO as a student leader. I began as someone who took pride in setting the rules and having people follow them. I thought taking on other people's responsibilities when they were not willing to do so was a positive trait, however as I grew as a leader, I came to realize I had a lot to work on. I had to become a successful delegator and teammate. I learned how to highlight my team's positive traits and help them succeed for the greater good of the group. I learned that the best leaders need to double as strong teammates. I believe this is a trait that will make me a wonderful resident and future independent clinician.

I have grown into a professional and a confident leader, all thanks to my mentors here. My only promise going forward, is that I will continue to be the eagle.



### **RABAB RAFIQUE, OD '21**

We've made leadership about changing the world, and there is no world. There's only six billion understandings of it.

And if you change one person's understanding of it...if we can redefine leadership like that, I think we can change everything." These were

the words of Drew Dudley in his TEDx Toronto talk in 2010. Dudley's words bring to light that we are all capable of being leaders. No matter what one's title, leadership is about what one makes of it; how one interacts with the people around them and impacts their understandings. I have been fortunate to serve in leadership positions during my time at ICO that I believe have allowed me to impact this community and others in a meaningful way, and my spirit of service and leadership will continue to thrive as an alumnus.

My leadership experiences at ICO began when as a front desk assistant at the residential complex, I took every opportunity to uplift my colleagues in times of stress and self-doubt. This continued as a library assistant in my third year. I also held a number of positions that allowed me to represent my passions and interests, and present others with opportunities to be a part of them as well. I have served on the executive boards of SVOSH, the AAO chapter, and the Low Vision Club, playing an active part in board meetings, presenting creative ideas and helping in any capacity needed to plan and execute events and initiatives. I was also a remote intern with VOSH/ International, which allowed me to act as a liaison between the national organization and the school chapter. In second year, I organized the resources and volunteers required for the video contest entry that won first place at the VOSH meeting in Montreal, Quebec, where I had the honour of representing ICO, and became a student fellow of VOSH/ International. I have also attained Student Fellowship with AAO and served as the OptoPrep representative for my class during our preparation for board exams. As an RC ambassador for prospective students and a student alumni ambassador during homecoming events, I positively represented the school for incoming students and alumni alike. I also demonstrated leadership by volunteering at various vision screenings when additional help was needed.

All of the roles that I had during my time here demonstrate the versatility of a good leader. Each of the positions that I have held define me as a leader in the ICO community,

**I also hope to continue making an impact within the ICO community by joining the Alumni Ambassador Program and attending events as an alumnus.**

Rabab Rafique, OD '21

and I hope that my involvement and service within this community has made an impact, big or small, on my colleagues and their “understandings” of the world. I also hope to continue making an impact within the ICO community by joining the Alumni Ambassador Program and attending events as an alumnus. My next venture will hopefully be a residency year during which I will continue to develop the skills needed to be a leader in the advocacy of medical optometry and vision rehabilitation, two areas in which I have special interest.



### **RANDI-JO FRANCIS, OD '21**

My involvement began in first quarter of first year as I was class representative for both the Private Practice and Sports Vision Clubs, positions which I held until third year. I was also the workshop coordinator for the Cornea and Contact Lens Society in third year, where I helped organize our annual STAPLE contact lens workshop as part of our Contact Lens curriculum.

Other organizations in which I am a member include the Canadian Association of Optometry Students (CAOS), Optometric Extension Program (OEP), Black Student Union (BSU), Multicultural Association (MCA), National Optometric Student Association (NOSA), and Student Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity (SVOSH). Being a member of SVOSH, I received the amazing opportunity to travel to Jamaica with the Eye Health Institute to provide eye care to those in need. The Eye Health Institute has invited me to join their team after graduation, and I'm excited to continue my journey of service!

I am honoured to have held the role of ICO's Trustee for the American Optometric Student Association for 2 years. In my position, I was able to put forth ideas and be part of project teams working to advance the AOA and AOSA's missions on a national level. Locally in this role, I've successfully executed our slumber party themed quiz bowl, secured travel grants for students to attend Optometry's Meeting, and organized a number of fundraisers including the yearly briefcase and white coat embroidery sale.

**There are no words for the impact this community has had on my educational career, but I can only hope for more opportunities to stay part of it.**

Randi-Jo Francis, OD '21

In other ways, ICO has provided more opportunities to stay involved. I've been a part of Homecoming and Practice Symposium for multiple years. I was also appreciative to be interviewed by the communications department twice about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the changes being implemented through our institution — a topic of extreme importance to me. In addition, I've tutored continuously since starting in second year, have been a lab TA for first to third year students, and held multiple other work-study positions throughout campus.

I currently serve as president of the Gold Key International Optometric Honours Society for 2020-2021. Being elected on the board of a prestigious society as this was a true reward for these past 4 years. My proven involvement and commitment to the ICO community will not cease post-graduation. In the future, I look forward to continuing this engagement whether that be on a committee, participating in campus events, or speaking to the next generation of future leaders. There are no words for the impact this community has had on my educational career, but I can only hope for more opportunities to stay part of it.

**If you would like to donate to the Alumni Association Scholarship fund, please go to [www.ico.edu/](http://www.ico.edu/) make-a-gift and select the Alumni Association Scholarship from the drop-down menu.**



# ICO HOMECOMING 2021



## UPDATE



## Come celebrate with us in 2022!

Earlier this year, a survey was emailed to all 2020 and 2021 reunion classes to seek input regarding their class reunion event. The consensus among these responses was to reschedule this year's Homecoming and combine it with next year's when travel is easier/safer, and masks will be a thing of the past.

**Homecoming 2020 and 2021 will be rescheduled and combined with Homecoming 2022. Reunion years will be all class years ending with 0, 1, 2, 5, 6, or 7.**

In addition to the 2022 class reunions, it is also ICO's **150th Anniversary!** ICO is the first optometric institution to reach this milestone!

**Please join us in 2022, as we plan an incredible year of celebrations!**



### Archived Class Photos on ICO's Flickr Site

To "relive" your previous class reunions, as well as view your class composite photos from your graduation, please enjoy the photo galleries from our Flickr site.

We hope these photo albums bring back great memories of your time at ICO.



[www.flickr.com/photos/icophotos/albums](https://www.flickr.com/photos/icophotos/albums)

# Class Notes

## 1970s

### 1973

**Steven Levin** received the 2021 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Indiana Optometric Association. In 50 years, the award has been given to only 15 people.

**Gary R. Pabalís** has spent 30 years in the Indian Health Service (IHS), serving as the IHS chief optometrist for five years. In 2003, he moved to Boise, Idaho, where he joined an OD/MD practice and is now working two days per week. Five years ago, he learned to fit scleral lenses which he considers an extremely rewarding subset within optometry.

### 1978

**Joseph Maino** photo illustrated a book, *Star Chaser*, which was authored by **Mark Scheel, OD '85**.

## 1980s

### 1981

**Sandra Block**, who serves as the World Council of Optometry's (WCO) Public Health Chair, received the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB)'s Vision Excellence Award. Awardees are recognized for their outstanding contributions to advocacy, innovation, program implementation, institution-building, and disease control during the twenty years since VISION 2020 was established.

### 1983

**Susan Cotter**, was named a recipient of the 2020 Theia Awards of Excellence on Oct. 15, 2020. She was recognized for her outstanding contributions to the profession in the category of education and research.

### 1985

**Mark Scheel** authored the book, *Star Chaser*, which was photo illustrated by **Joseph Maino, OD '78**.

**Deborah Zelinsky** was named a recipient of the 2020 Theia Awards of Excellence on Oct. 15, 2020. She was recognized for her outstanding contributions to the profession in the category of innovation.

### 1988

**Pam Lowe's** practice, Professional Eye Care Center, in Niles, Ill., was named one of the Nation's Best Practices by CooperVision after a nationwide search.

## 1990s

### 1995

**Tracy Matchinski** received a Vision Excellence Award from the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness VISION 2020, recognizing her contributions and voice for the low vision community and her leadership and service in VOSH/International.

## 2000s

### 2004

**Andrew Makela** released his debut solo album, *Drubiquitous*, available wherever you stream your music.

### 2006

**Commander Christopher DeAngelis** was selected as the 2020 Navy Optometrist of the year. He currently serves as the Associate Director for Public Health and staff optometrist at Naval Hospital Okinawa, Japan.

### 2009

**Joseph Aaron Ledford** opened Inlet Eye Associates in Murrells Inlet, S.C., providing comprehensive primary eye care.

## 2010s

### 2010

**Michael Landy** joined Chautauqua Eye Care in Jamestown, N.Y.

### 2011

**Lexi Derry** joined the Center for Eye Care at the Watertown Regional Medical Center in Watertown, Wis.

### 2014

**Mark Buboltz** and **Susie (Hemann) Buboltz, OD '15** welcomed their baby, May, in October 2020.

**Daisy Mendez** celebrated the grand opening of Perspective Eyes, LLC, on January 27, in Winnetka, Ill.



**Caitlin Miller** was named Young Optometrist of the Year by the Arizona Optometric Association.

## 2015

**Alyssa (Bartolini) Parz** welcomed daughter, Kaylee Margaret, into the world on January 21.

**Katie Green** has received ASCO's 2021 Rising Star Award. She is currently an Assistant Professor at Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry and serves as Nova's Director of the Acquired Brain Injury Visual Rehabilitation Clinic.

**Zachary Holland** and **Joelle (Jaros) Holland, OD '16**, welcomed their second child on January 18, Brooklynn Stone.

## 2016

**Macy Dieleman** joined McFarland Clinic's optometry department in Boone, Iowa.

## 2019

**Jacqueline Anne Julio** joined Shepherd Eye Center in Las Vegas, Nev.

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## 2020s

### 2020

**Ryan W. Eisel** joined Scullion Vision Clinic in Lisbon, Ohio.

# Got alumni news? Please share.

#### ONLINE:

[icomatters.ico.edu/  
submit-a-class-note](https://icomatters.ico.edu/submit-a-class-note)



#### CONTACT

Alumni Development  
[alumni@ico.edu](mailto:alumni@ico.edu)



**Lester Efiyanayi, OD '21** and **Jeff Villena, OD '21's** mural "Seeing is Believing, Black Doctors Matter" includes the names of ICO Alumni that have impacted their lives and education at ICO.

# In Memoriam

## 1940s

### 1943

**James David Miller** (NICO), Cleveland Tenn., Feb. 7. He served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps in WWII. He worked at Chappel Hamrick for 17 years before owning a private practice for 50 years.

### 1945

**Marilyn Heinke** (NICO), Seymour, Wis., Feb. 1. She proudly began practicing in Manitowoc, Wis., the day before VJ Day in 1945. Seventeen years later, she opened a new practice in Seymour, Wis., helping thousands of children using vision therapy for 70 years. An accomplished public speaker, she knew Dale Carnegie personally and lectured on VT over 1000 times. In 2015, she was awarded OD of the Year from the Wisconsin Optometric Association.

### 1948

**Harry Eugene (Gene) Horner** (MCO), Buffalo Grove, Ill., Aug. 28, 2020. He served in the U.S. Navy during WWII as a Hospital Apprentice First Class SV6 at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station, often working in communicable disease quarantine situations. He practiced in Round Lake Beach, Ill., for 40 years. During retirement, he was a member of Seniors and Law Enforcement Together (SALT).

### 1949

**James Elton Lanier** (NICO), Orange, Texas, Oct. 5, 2020. He served in the U.S. Navy during WWII. He remained stateside, serving at stations in Calif. and Texas. He practiced optometry in Texas for 30 years, servicing TSO clinics in Orange, Port Arthur and Beaumont. He retired in 2005 due to the aftermath of Hurricane Rita.

**Alvin Zohn** (NICO), Perrysburg, Ohio, June 3. He was in the U.S. Army during WWII, serving as the chief cook for field artillery battalions in Europe. He opened his first practice in Point Place, Ohio, in 1950. He also served on the Board of VSP and the Toledo Eye Center. After more than 60 years in practice, he retired in 2011.

## 1950s

### 1950

**Irving D. Fudenberg** (CCO), Leawood, Kan., Aug. 22, 2020. He served in the U.S. Army during WWII, serving first in Europe and later in the Philippines. Later in life he was a the oldest member of the Kansas City chapter of Jewish War Veterans and the only WWII veteran. He retired from optometry at the age of 87, after practicing for over 50 years.

**George Glaeser** (NICO), Pinellas Park, Fla., Dec. 24, 2020. He served in the U.S. Navy during WWII.

**Stanley Malashock** (NICO), Omaha, Neb., Jan. 29. He opened his practice in 1950 in a dedicated space within his family's jewelry store. Fifteen years later he changed the name to Malbar Vision, and the practice grew to a multi-doctor, five-location practice in the Omaha metro area. It became part of the AEG Vision group in 2017. He was an early innovator of franchising in optometry. In 1973 founded the Omaha-based International Contact Lens, which developed practices in seven states.

### 1951

**Richard G. Blake** (NICO), Fullerton, Calif., Oct. 2020.

**William DeSart Grange** (NICO), Papillion, Neb., Dec. 29, 2020. He served in the U.S. Navy during WWII, stationed in the South Pacific on the USS Curtiss for ten months in Okinawa, Japan and China. He practiced optometry for 45 years and was recognized by the Nebraska Optometric Association and the American Optometric Association for his dedication to the profession.

### 1953

**Duane Wallaker** (NICO), Northfield, Minn., Mar. 21. He served three years in the U.S. Navy during WWII. He practiced in Austin, Minn., for many decades.

### 1954

**Frank E. Baldwin** (NICO), Sun Prairie, Wis., Nov. 18, 2020. He served in the U.S. Navy in WWII. He started his lifelong private practice in Sun Prairie in 1955. He worked as a consultant for the Department of Public Instruction Bureau of Handicapped Children. He was named Wisconsin OD of the Year in 1986.



**Frank "Chich" DeMarino** (NICO), Bridgeport, W. Va., May 8. He was a U.S. Army veteran, having served with the Seventh Army at the 5th General Hospital in Stuttgart, Germany in the 1950s.

## 1957

**Richard Charles Wolken**, Columbia, Mo., Dec. 25, 2020. He moved to Columbia in 1961, where he was in private practice until his retirement. He was past president of the Missouri Optometric Association, the Missouri Optometric Foundation, and the Central Missouri Optometric Society.

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# 1960s

## 1960

**Donald Martin Borsand**, Bloomfield Hills, Mich., Nov. 27, 2020. He opened a private practice in Michigan in the 1960's and became business partners with **George Graham, OD '48**, in 1974. By 1987, they expanded into a 14,000 square foot "Super Vision Center," which became one of the largest private optometric facilities in the U.S. They began franchising independent optometry practices, creating "First Optometry Eyecare." He retired in 2004 and sold First Optometry, now known as Henry Ford OptimEyes.

**Walter Joseph Hey**, Fish Creek, Wis., March 19. He served in the U.S. Army as a light weapons infantryman during the Korean Conflict with the 245th Tank Battalion in Chun Chon, Korea. He opened an optometric practice in Sturgeon Bay, Wis., where he practiced until his retirement in 2000.

## 1961

**Col. Donald D. Dunton**, Hartsville, S.C., Oct. 27, 2020. He served in the U.S. Air Force for 24 years. He was assigned Chief of Optometry under the Surgeon General, with command of over 225 military optometrists stationed in 114 locations around the world. He also served as President of the Armed Forces Optometric Society. He received numerous service medals and awards and is honored annually by the presentation of the USAF Col. Donald D. Dunton Ophthalmic Senior NCO of the Year award and the USAF Col. Donald D. Dunton Outstanding Civilian of the Year award. He retired from the Air Force in 1985 and embarked on his second career as a practicing optometrist in Hartsville.

**John Kolesar**, Fort Dodge, Iowa, April 10. He practiced in Fort Dodge for 44 years until his retirement in 2005.

## 1962

**Robert G. Nesom**, Grosse Pointe Woods, Mich., April 8. He served in the U.S. Army, as a medic stationed in Germany during the Korean War. He practiced in Grosse Pointe Woods for 40 years. He served as a volunteer providing optometric care at the Special Olympics in Mount Pleasant, Mich., and at the Optometric Institute and Clinic in Detroit.

## 1966

**Edmund Arthur Schneider, Jr.**, Lincoln, Neb., May 2. He served two years in the U.S. Air Force, assigned to Goodfellow AFB in San Angelo, Texas. He opened Lincoln Vision Center, and for many years also practiced at Saunders County Clinic in Wahoo, Neb.

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# 1970s

## 1972

**Rod "R.D." Schuller**, LeMars, Iowa, Dec. 19, 2020. He joined the Gilfillan Medical Clinic in Bloomfield, Iowa, until moving to LeMars in 1980. He purchased the LeMars Optometric Center, where he practiced until his retirement in 2010.

## 1976

**Joseph Sullivan**, Wichita, Kan., April 23. He practiced for 45 years, specializing in vision therapy. He received the Kansas Optometric Association's Distinguished Service Award twice, for his role in the development of the See to Learn Program and for his work related to children's vision research.

## 1977

**David L. Kjelland**, Mineral Point, Wis., Dec. 21, 2020. He practiced with his father at the Kjelland Vision Clinic and created New Vision Ministries, a non-profit eye care organization which provided eye care to people in need in Honduras and Mexico. In 1996, he joined Davis Duehr Dean, where he continued to practice until his retirement.

**John C. Engstrom**, Villa Park, Ill., Jan. 11. He opened Rolling Meadows Eye Care in 1977, where he practiced for 43 years. He was a charter member of the AOA's InfantSEE program.

## 1979

**Jack Marx**, Lone Star, Texas, Aug. 21. He practiced in Dallas and served as a Rotarian for 35 years.



# Vault

ICO's Commencement ceremony is steeped in traditions, some reaching as far back as the middle ages. In line with academic customs, the presidential medallion incorporates the College's seal, our predecessor institution's emblems, and the names of each president. The medallion is worn on official occasions with academic regalia and symbolizes the authority of the high office of college president.





# Datebook

**ACADEMY**  
**NOV 3-6**

## SEPTEMBER

**September 17-18**  
Illinois Optometric Association  
Golf Classic & Gray Cup  
and House of Delegates  
Hoffman Estates and  
Schaumburg

## OCTOBER

**October 23-30**  
Fall Quarter Final Exams

## NOVEMBER

**November 3-6**  
AAO – Academy  
Boston, MA

**November 13-14**  
Continuing Education Program  
12 hours of CE – hybrid format

**November 15**  
First Day of Winter Quarter

**November 25-28**  
Thanksgiving Break

## DECEMBER

**December 7 & 9**  
NBEO Part 2

**December 22-January 2**  
Holiday Break

## AUGUST

**August 3**  
NBEO Part 1 Exam

**August 8**  
Continuing Education Program  
6 hours CE – virtual live format

**August 12-15**  
Class of 2025 Orientation

**August 16**  
First Day of Fall Quarter

**August 21**  
ICO Olympics

**August 28**  
Parents' Orientation,  
President's Welcome and  
White Coat Ceremony  
ICO Campus

## JULY

**July 9-11**  
NOA Annual Convention  
Virtual

**July 12-16**  
Focus on Your Future Program  
ICO Campus

**July 31-August 7**  
Summer Quarter Final Exams



# ICO

**Illinois College of Optometry**

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## Last Look



*The Doonaree Pipe Band has been a highlight of ICO's Commencement for decades.*