



AMERICAN ACADEMY
of OPTOMETRY



WORLD COUNCIL
OF OPTOMETRY

For Immediate Release
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Academy 2019 Orlando and 3rd World Congress of Optometry Education Program Announced

ORLANDO and ST. LOUIS – April 10, 2019 – The World Council of Optometry and the American Academy of Optometry have partnered to present an impressive education program taking place at Academy 2019 Orlando and the 3rd World Congress of Optometry, October 23-27, 2019. This joint meeting will bring global optometry together to offer a wide array of clinically relevant CE courses and cutting-edge research in the clinical and vision sciences. Attendees from around the globe can choose from over 450 hours of lectures and workshops, Section and Special Interest Group (SIG) symposia, hundreds of scientific papers and posters, an expansive exhibit hall, and several memorable social events featuring international optometry.

This year's Plenary Session from 10 AM – 12 Noon on Wednesday, October 23 is titled, "Today's Research, Tomorrow's Practice®: WHO World Report on Vision, : Opportunities for Optometry to Make an Impact," and will discuss the World Report on Vision on the distribution of eye disease and blindness across the globe and the disease burden these eye conditions pose on nations and regions. Additionally, the human resource requirements of eyecare providers needed to address this public health crisis will be covered. Optometric representatives, specifically the session speakers, played an instrumental role in developing the report. They will discuss the findings and their implications for optometry internationally and for North America respectively. The keynote speaker from WHO will give attendees an overview of the organization's efforts to tackle the extensive disease and blindness burdens on society throughout the world and where optometry fits into this effort. Speakers include Kovin Naidoo, OD, PhD, FAAO, Sandra Block, OD, MPH, FAAO, and a speaker from the World Health Organization.

The Monroe J. Hirsch Research Symposium is titled, "Gene Therapy for Ocular and Neurologic Disorders." Contemporary issues in gene therapy will be discussed including Leber's Congenital Amaurosis, animal models of glaucoma, and Leber's Hereditary Optic Neuropathy. Speakers will include Stephen Russell, MD, Abbott Clark, PhD, and Byron Lam, MD.

Ezell Fellows Present is a symposium where three investigators at different stages of their careers, who were supported early on through the Foundation's Ezell Fellowships, present their research. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the symposium and is titled, "Public Health / Epidemiology Potpourri." Included in this session will be discussions on anterior segment infectious eye disease and US national health datasets used to assess vision impairment. Speakers will be Nicole Carnt, BOptom, PhD, FAAO, Charlotte Joslin, OD, PhD, FAAO, and Dean VanNasdale, OD, PhD, FAAO.

The World Council of Optometry President's Forum is titled, "Optometry's Role in Addressing the Changing Face of Technology, Public Health and Clinical care." This invitation-only event provides a platform wherein the highest level of decision makers and key partners of our profession come together to discuss the current development of optometry and the desired impact that it envisages in the broader health agenda across the world.

The Global Summit on Optometric Education, co-sponsored by the World Council of Optometry, American Academy of Optometry, and the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry, will provide educators from optometric educational programs from around the globe the opportunity to share education philosophies/teaching methods and to discuss challenges facing institutions.

The meeting will take place at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida. Registration and housing open on May 6, 2019. For more information, visit www.aaopt.org/2019 or www.worldcongressofoptometry.org.

About the American Academy of Optometry

The American Academy of Optometry (AAO) enhances excellence in optometric practice by fostering research and disseminating knowledge in vision science through its journal, *Optometry and Vision Science*, and the continuing education presented at its annual meeting. Fellows of the Academy are committed to the premise that learning is a lifelong obligation of a professional, as is the commitment to expand the profession's knowledge base through ongoing fellowship and exchange. For more information, visit the website: <http://www.aaopt.org>.

About the World Council of Optometry

The WCO's vision is of a world where optometry makes high quality eye health and vision care accessible to all people. To achieve its vision, the WCO's mission is to facilitate the development of optometry around the world and support optometrists in promoting eye health and vision care as a human right through advocacy, education, policy development and humanitarian outreach.

Having celebrated its 90-year anniversary in 2017, the WCO now collectively represents more than 200,000 optometrists in more than 60 countries through almost 300 affiliate, country, corporate and individual memberships across six world regions. The WCO is the only optometric body in official relations with the World Health Organization. For more information, visit <http://worldcouncilofoptometry.info/>.

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