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PRESS RELEASE

IACLE makes its mark at BCLA 2019 to celebrate 40th year



The International Association of Contact Lens Educators celebrated 40 years of 'Exceptional Education. Exponential Impact' at the British Contact Lens Association Clinical Conference in Manchester, UK last weekend (30 May – 2 June).

More than 100 delegates took up the invitation to 'Make Your Mark' at the IACLE exhibition booth on a time wall of milestones in the association's history. Visitors also contributed ideas for the future of contact lens education.

Three of the Founding Members of IACLE who attended its very first meeting – in Monte Carlo, Monaco in November 1979 – were saluted at the IACLE / BUCCLE Education Day held on 29 May to coincide with the conference. The day was jointly organized with the British & Irish University & College Contact Lens Educators, and attracted 80 members and guests.

IACLE's Founding President **Dr Hilmar Bussacker**, first BUCCLE Chair **Richard Pearson** and former IACLE Vice President **Professor Des Fonn** described their experiences of the early days of IACLE and were awarded certificates to mark the 40th Anniversary. First IACLE Secretary **Dr John de Brabander** sent a video message to delegates.

Outgoing industry supporters **Dr Dwight Akerman** (recently retired from IACLE Platinum Sponsor, Alcon) and **Ian Davies** (formerly of IACLE Silver Sponsor, Johnson & Johnson Vision) were also acknowledged, with IACLE Awards for Outstanding Contribution to Contact Lens Education. **Professor Lyndon Jones** received the Lester Janoff Memorial Award 2019 from the Association of Optometric Contact Lens Educators. His colleague at the University of Waterloo, Canada, IACLE Assistant Secretary **Dr Luigina Sorbara**, presented the award.

40th Anniversary celebrations continued at the BCLA Conference on 30 May with a presentation from IACLE President **Dr Shehzad Naroo** during the International Perspectives session, followed by a reception and cake-cutting hosted with Vice President **Professor Philip Morgan** of the University of Manchester at the association's exhibition booth.

The 2019 IACLE Contact Lens Educators of the Year stepped up to the stage at the IACLE Awards Presentation in the main auditorium on 1 June. Receiving their certificates from **Dr Gary Orsborn** Vice President of Global Professional & Clinical Affairs at CooperVision, sponsor of the Educator Awards, were:

- IACLE Americas Contact Lens Educator of the Year
Dr Rubén Velázquez, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico City
- IACLE Asia Pacific Contact Lens Educator of the Year
Professor Craig Woods, Deakin University, Victoria, Australia
- IACLE Europe/Africa – Middle East Contact Lens Educator of the Year
Dr Fabrizio Zeri, Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca, Milan, Italy

Also receiving his certificate from BCLA President **Professor Sunil Shah** was one of five IACLE Travel Award recipients for 2019, **Joseph Afonne** from Mzuzu University in Malawi. The annual Travel Awards are funded by IACLE and all its corporate sponsors. All the awards presented were co-sponsored by the BCLA.

The Awards ceremony completed a very successful week for IACLE that saw its members and Fellows involved throughout the program at BCLA 2019, as they chaired sessions, joined panel discussions, and delivered lectures and workshops.

Judith Morris, IACLE Regional President for Europe / Africa – Middle East and organizer of IACLE / BUCCLE Education Day commented: 'The 40th celebration at the BCLA exhibition booth had such a buzz, and the events in the UK will help make 2019 a memorable episode in the life of IACLE. The Education Day also had a very positive atmosphere.'

IACLE's 40th anniversary events now move on to the Asia Pacific Optometric Congress (APOC) in Manila, Philippines (17-20 June). Celebrations will be held at two further major international meetings during 2019: the Colegio Federación Colombiana de Optómetras (FEDOPTO) Congress in Bogotá, Colombia (8-10 August), and Academy 2019 and the 3rd World Congress of Optometry in Orlando, Florida, USA (23-27 October). Many more national and local meetings around the world will mark the occasion.

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PICTURE CAPTIONS

TOP LEFT: IACLE member Dr Mohammad Abahussin from Saudi Arabia makes his mark on the time wall at the association's exhibition booth.

TOP RIGHT: IACLE President Dr Shehzad Naroo and Vice President Professor Philip Morgan (right) cut an anniversary cake at the 40th reception.

BOTTOM LEFT: Founding Members of IACLE (left to right), Richard Pearson, Dr Hilmar Bussacker and Professor Desmond Fonn, receive certificates to mark the 40th Anniversary.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Pictured at the 2019 IACLE Awards Presentation (left to right) are: IACLE President Dr Shehzad Naroo, Dr Fabrizio Zeri, Professor Craig Woods, Joseph Afonne, Dr Rubén Velázquez, BCLA President Professor Sunil Shah and Dr Gary Orsborn, Vice President of Global Professional & Clinical Affairs at CooperVision, sponsor of the IACLE Contact Lens Educator of the Year Awards.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. Click [here](#) for full details of the IACLE Contact Lens Educator of the Year and [here](#) to find out more about this year's winners.
2. Click [here](#) for full details of the IACLE Travel Awards and [here](#) to find out more about this year's recipients.
3. Information on all IACLE activities and membership benefits is available at www.iacle.org.

ABOUT IACLE

The International Association of Contact Lens Educators was established in 1979 and is a non-profit, non-political association. IACLE currently has 845 active members in 78 countries and welcomes contact lens educators from all eye care professions and related disciplines. IACLE is dedicated to raising the standard of contact lens education and promoting the safe use of contact lenses worldwide. It is the leading provider of educational and information resources essential to contact lens educators. IACLE is supported by leading global contact lens manufacturers: Platinum Sponsor Alcon, Gold Sponsor CooperVision, Silver Sponsor Johnson & Johnson Vision, Bronze Sponsor Bausch + Lomb and Donor Sponsor Euclid. IACLE is celebrating its 40th Anniversary with events around the world during 2019.