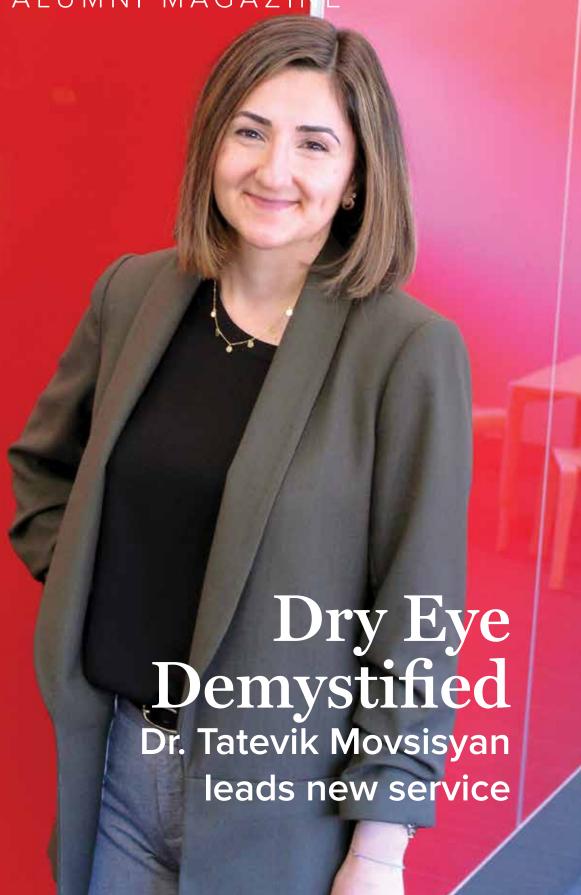
# BUCKEYE OPTOMETRY ALUMNI MAGAZINE

6 Dr. Shane Foster has an eye for talent

19 Pupils to Pints virtual happy hour

26 Hill Lecture 2021



Spring 2021

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On the Cover: Dry Eye Service Chief Tatevik Movsisyan (OD/MS'16) Photo credit: Kerri McTigue

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# Dean's Message

"Commitment is an act, not a word."

– Jean-Paul Sartre

I'm working at home with a bad head cold that I got when my 16-month-old grandson returned to preschool, feeling really sorry for myself. On Saturday I managed to look presentable enough to participate in our "Second Look Day" for the students who have committed to the Ohio State Optometry Class of 2025. I welcomed the students and their guests and expressed my love for Ohio State and vision for their OD program—emphasizing leadership and the ability to forge a great career in optometry after graduation. My plan was to jump off the Zoom call after that and retire to my sick bed.

Instead, I stayed. I got to listen to alumnus **Jay Lytle (OD'14**) weave a rapid-fire, fascinating history of the college. He lifted my spirits.

Our first-year faculty, Vondolee Delgado-Nixon, PhD, **Tim Fries (OD'04, MBA, MPH)**, Don Mutti, OD PhD, Tom Raasch, OD PhD, and **Jeff Walline (OD, MS'98, PhD'02)**, talked about their teaching philosophies, the culture of the college, and their own focus on student success. Their enthusiasm was contagious (pun intended).

Students Audree Bass Davis ('21), Josh Canavan ('23), Aaron Deese ('24), and Steph George ('24) took time out of their busy schedules to talk about where to live, how to park, studying, and work-life balance. I learned a lot from them.

The event was organized by our extraordinary Office of Student Services: Jen Bennett, MSEd, Becca Roby, MLHR, Shawn Gilbert, MA, and Candace Johnson, MBA, along with our Admissions Committee co-chairs **Mike Earley (OD/MS'88, PhD'92)** and **Nicky Lai (OD/MS'03)**. Their energy transcended the virtual format.

Two hours later, the program included many breakout sessions, including a virtual tour of The Optometry Clinic and the opportunity for students to visit specific topics that dovetailed with their interests. I have it on good authority that the event solidified the Class of 2025's connection to Ohio State Optometry. They know they made the right choice in both optometry and our college, and they are confident they can succeed in our challenging program.

As for me, I renewed my own deep commitment to The Ohio State University College of Optometry. I've been "limping" along following my knee replacement in January and have been feeling a little sidelined. Watching our students, staff, and faculty "show off" our college to our future colleagues in the Class of 2025 was commitment in true action. Go, go BuckEYEs.

#### Karla Zadnik, OD, PhD

Dean

Glenn A. Fry Professor in Optometry and Physiological Optics



# President's Message

Greetings BuckEYEs,

"There are certain things in this world we all have in common such as time. Everybody has sixty seconds to a minute, sixty minutes to an hour, twenty-four hours to a day. The difference is what we do with that time and how we use it." – Lou Holtz

Time sure has a different meaning to a lot of us, one year into the pandemic. It's easy to look back on the past year and dwell on all the chaos, uncertainty, and stress. I hope that all of you can choose the "glasses are half full" route and think of the positives that came out of your own past year. Whether it's a business improvement, a personal accomplishment, or just the slow-down in time to allow more growth in life, think of it as time well spent.

We tried beer glasses full this winter with **Christian Benner** (**OD'78**) and his son, Land-Grant Brewing Company founder/president Adam Benner, a graduate of Ohio State's Fisher College of Business. It was a fun virtual happy hour learning about Adam's journey into the brewing industry with an optometry spin. See the full story on page 19. If you get a chance to stop by their Columbus location, you will not be disappointed with their wide selection of beers and may even find some optometry names thrown into future brews. We hope to add more alumni virtual events to keep us all in touch. With summer ahead, hopefully we can stage some outdoor socially distanced fun, too.

I am personally happy to bid the snow farewell and move on to sunshine and flowers. Spring is an exciting time for Ohio State Optometry as students prepare for graduation. Celebrations may not be traditional this year; however, the accomplishments of the students won't go unnoticed. As alumni these events should trigger great memories in our optometry journey, so if you get the chance please congratulate the students on these accomplishments. Our time at Ohio State Optometry should reflect pride in our shared background now as alumni. I hope to see all of you this fall – even if virtual – but better yet, let's hope for some interaction in our wonderful new clinic building!

Time and change will surely show How firm thy friendship ... OHIO!

Stephanie M. Baxter (OD'08)

President

The Ohio State University College of Optometry Alumni Society

# An "Eye" for Talent

**Shane Foster** (**OD'08**) Exemplifies How Alumni Play a Vital Role in Recruiting the Best and Brightest Optometry Students

By Sarah Cupples, MA, Director of Marketing and Communication



Year after year, Ohio State Optometry's incoming class statistics reveal a clear theme: excellence. A prospective student pipeline composed of well-positioned, respected alumni who recognize high-caliber talent is vitally important to the recruitment process. It's no stretch to say that **Shane Foster** (**OD'08**) is one of Ohio State Optometry's top talent spotters. Although Dr. Foster owns a busy, thriving private practice in Athens, Ohio, he always makes time to lead promising prospective students in the right direction – straight to Ohio State Optometry. Here, he explains his thoughts on the process.

**Q** - Generally speaking, which attributes indicate potential success - in terms of applying to Ohio State, being a great student, and eventually becoming an outstanding optometrist?

**Dr. Foster** – Obviously, academic performance and grade point average are important, but I have found that passion for the profession and a genuine, innate interest in caring for others are what really make a great optometrist. In my office, we usually make hiring decisions based on the person and the personality, and we train the skills. I think the same could be said for optometry students. There are plenty of bright, talented, academically-successful individuals who would not thrive in optometry if they do not have an interest in physiology or optics. Conversely, there are students I have worked with over the years who have struggled a bit academically but went on to become amazing and talented clinicians because they had the necessary drive and ambition.

**Q** - When you chat with prospective students, what highlights about optometry do you share?

**Dr. Foster** – One of the greatest things about optometry is the vast diversity of career opportunities despite all of us sharing a common education and the same degree. You can pursue private practice, corporate practice, research, academia, or an industry role. You can even mix and match them all. For instance, I own and work in a private practice, and I do clinical research in my practice and educate

optometry students as an externship preceptor. You can practice optometry literally anywhere in the country, as there will always be people who need our services, whether they are living in a large metropolis or a small, rural town.

I also share that you can do as much or as little as you would like to do in our profession. You can work part time and still pursue other interests or dedicate more time to family. You can work 60 hours one week and take the next week off. You can commit a lot of time to the "extracurricular activities" of our profession, like volunteering in the American Optometric Association and state associations. Optometry truly has so many avenues that you can pursue, aside from the "Better with 1 or 2?"

**Q** - How do you guide prospective students through the process of exploring optometry, choosing Ohio State, and becoming an optometry student? Post-graduation, how does mentoring continue?

**Dr. Foster** – My practice is unique in that it is in a small town with a large university (Ohio University [OU]), so there are many opportunities to interact with potential optometry students. I have spoken with the OU pre-optometry club several times, and we have hosted the club for shadowing days in the office. We try to have at least one pre-optometry or pre-professional student on staff at all times. It is a great learning experience for them, and they are an asset to the flow of the office. They are quick learners and motivated to do well because

it is more than just a part time job - it is real world experience.

In my 13 years in practice, we have helped mentor and guide at least six Ohio University graduates to Ohio State Optometry [Matt Howell (OD'13), Mike Smith (OD'16), Alex Lamorgese ('21), Kinsley Gossard ('23), Nancy Hooper ('24), and Tik Wong ('25)] by employing them in our office part time. It has been incredibly rewarding to watch them grow and succeed and become colleagues. I love catching up with the new graduates at conferences and interacting with the current students at various college and AOA/Ohio Optometric Association functions. Each one is so talented, and they have and will continue to do amazing things for our profession.

Being an extern site for fourth-year students also has been very helpful to our local preoptometry students. The curriculum and enrollment process has changed so much since I graduated, so the current fourth-year students are able to provide recent first-hand accounts of the application and interview processes, which helps the undergraduate students feel better prepared and more at ease. The externs have certainly had a positive impact on those high school and undergraduate students who were thinking about optometry as a career.

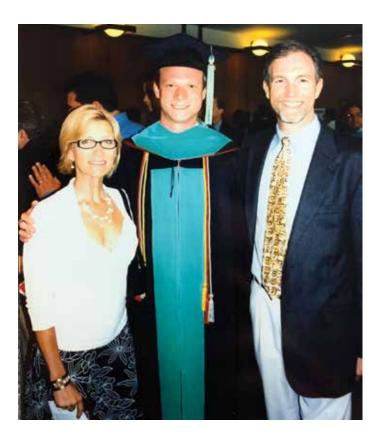
**Q** - Can you provide a specific example of a student you've guided to a career in optometry?

Dr. Foster - Nancy Hooper ('24) was a patient in my practice most of her childhood. As a teenager she developed an interest in optometry and shadowed the doctors in our office. While she was attending Ohio University, she was a subject in some of our contact lens studies and met with us to learn more about the profession. After she graduated from Ohio University, she decided to take a couple of years off prior to applying for optometry school. I hired her as a technician. She developed an interest in the optical as well and soon earned her optician's license. Nancy was also inspired by the externs from Ohio State who rotated through my practice at the time. She was able to get up-todate, real world information about optometry school that encouraged her to keep pursuing optometry as a career.

When Nancy decided to apply, it was late in the admissions process and Ohio State's class was full, but she was accepted to another school. She struggled greatly with the decision. Knowing that Ohio State was her first choice and knowing

"I think it is important for students at any point in their education to be open to new areas, different viewpoints, and possible changes, because optometry and other medical professions are such diverse fields and have so much to offer."

Shane Foster (OD'08)



that she possessed the skills and the talent to get accepted at Ohio State, I encouraged her to wait and re-apply during the next phase. She did, she was accepted, and she is now finishing up her first year! I am so proud of her accomplishments, and I have been able to watch her grow and flourish. She is so passionate about optometry, and she is already an advocate for the success of her chosen profession and for the health and safety of our patients.

**Q** – How does the advice you offer differ depending on the age of the potential student? For example, what advice would you give an enthusiastic eight-year-old who excels in STEM subjects, versus a high school junior who aced biology and chemistry?

**Dr. Foster** – For younger patients who express an interest in optometry or the medical field, I like to share fun facts about the eye and the visual system, and they really enjoy seeing high definition photos of their retina. Participating in the Ohio Optometric Association's Realeyes program allowed me to share that information with local elementary school students as well. At that age, I usually keep it general and encourage them to explore the options available to them and to continue working hard in school. With younger kids it's about showing them how fascinating the eye can be and how fun it is to work with people all day.

For high school-aged patients who show an





interest in optometry, I always invite them to shadow me in clinic for a day or two so they can see the profession from a different angle. I talk to them about the unique features of optometry and how it combines medical care, refractive care, fashion, and retail sales, which really sets it apart from other medical professions. I encourage them to explore other similar professions as well, so they can get an idea of what is most interesting to them. Above all else, I encourage students to keep an open mind. I remind them that they don't have to have a concrete career plan in high school or even early in their undergraduate studies. I remind them that I started college as a Spanish major but ultimately became an optometrist. I think it is important for students at any point in their education to be open to new areas, different viewpoints, and possible changes, because optometry and other medical professions are such diverse fields and have so much to offer.

**Q** - What/who guided you to optometry? Did you have an optometrist who mentored you?

**Dr. Foster** – As a child, I was a patient of Drs. **Tom** (**OD'79**, **MS'81**) and **Susan Quinn** (**OD'82**). I developed an interest in optometry because it was the one doctor visit that I actually enjoyed and felt like the instant improvement they could provide to my vision was fascinating. My parents asked Drs. Quinn how I could learn more about the profession, and they invited

me to work in their office one afternoon a week while I was in high school. Being exposed to the office flow and doing a little shadowing kept me interested. When I was attending Ohio University (majoring in Spanish but trying to take the prerequisites for optometry school as well), they reached out to me again and asked if I would like to work part time in their office as a technician. I also ended up working in the front office and optical. That hands-on experience with patient care made me realize for certain that I wanted to pursue optometry as a career. I ended up shifting around my coursework and double majored in Biology and Spanish. The Quinns, of course, strongly encouraged me to attend Ohio State and wrote my letters of recommendation.

Since I joined their practice right after graduating from Ohio State, Tom and Susan continued to influence my optometric career and helped mentor me along the way as I explored my own professional path. We worked together as partners for several years, and we helped each other through the business aspects of optometry. Now that they have retired, I have taken the practice they opened cold, and I have molded it into my own, while continuing to grow and expand to meet the needs of my community. Just as Tom and Susan mentored me and guided me through the formative parts of my career, I am honored to have the opportunity to influence the next generation of **BuckEYE** optometrists

Opposite Page:
Susan Quinn (OD'82)
and Tom Quinn (OD'79,
MS'81) with Shane Foster
(OD'08) at his convocation
ceremony.

This page: Shane Foster (OD'08) and Mike Smith (OD'16)

Nancy Hooper ('24), Jen Brite, LDO, Shane Foster (OD'08), and Dana Gillum celebrated National Sunglasses Day.

# Recruiting During a **Pandemic**

By Shawn Gilbert, MA, Assistant Director of Admissions, and Candace Johnson, MBA, Admissions Counselor



Candace Johnson johnson.5380@osu.edu



Shawn Gilbert gilbert.351@osu.edu

The 2020-2021 recruitment cycle will be remembered as a memorable recruitment cycle in higher education history. While we have seen the impact the pandemic has had on industries that rely on in-person interaction (hospitality, cosmetology, travel, etc.), higher education's recruiting and admissions teams have felt the impact as well.

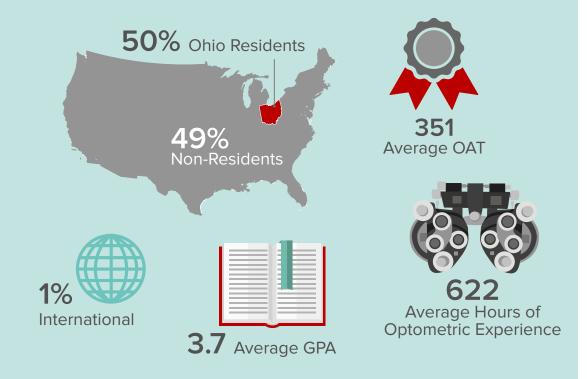
At Ohio State Optometry, we have been intentional about transitioning our in-person recruitment activities to a virtual environment, with the goal of translating the personable and intimate atmosphere we established in-person in a virtual space. Specifically, the recruiting and admissions team transferred all recruitment events and information sessions online. We transitioned our interview days to Zoom and designed the sessions to be as personable as possible. Although the format for how we develop relationships with our prospective students has changed, our core mission to admit high-quality students remains the same.

While this year's admissions cycle has been different than any in the past, we have seen great success in our recruitment efforts. This includes admitted student statistics that are comparable or even better than in previous years. In fact, this year has seen our yield rate (the percentage of students who matriculate into a program after being offered admission) of admitted students surpassing 75%, an improvement over recent years. This is due in large part to our commitment to ensuring that our interview process reflects the small, tight-knit, personal community a student will find here at Ohio State Optometry. Our interview days are capped at only eight students so we can give each applicant the personalized attention they need to make the decision that is best for their educational future, as well as their goals within optometry. The day also includes opportunities to interact with faculty, staff, and students, as well as a live virtual tour where they can ask questions and witness interactions among the members of our college community.

75% + yield rate of admitted students

8 Zoom
students each interviews for 20-21 recruitment cycle

# The Incoming Ohio State Optometry Class of 2025 at a Glance ...



Average GPA: 3.69 Nonresident Students: 49% Average OAT: 351 International Students: 1%

In-State Students: 50% Average Hours of Optometric Experience: 622

As the recruitment cycle comes to an end, the recruitment and admissions team will turn their attention to yielding our newly admitted first-year optometry Buckeyes. We look forward to partnering with our student affairs team to help new students join the program. We will hold virtual "office hours" to address any questions admits may have as well as introduce them to university resources. Newly admitted optometry Buckeyes will also be connected with current students to help build community and engagement.

While the pandemic has presented many challenges and has altered the traditional format of recruiting, we are proud of the progress we have made this year. We are thankful for the resiliency of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni like you. This recruiting cycle has proven the dedication, commitment, and support our community has for the optometry profession, students, and one another. We are proud to be a part of such a great college!

# Do you know a potential optometry school applicant?

As alumni, you are living proof of the excellence Ohio State Optometry has to offer. The Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry's annual survey of matriculated students indicates that prospective optometry students find practicing ODs to be one of the most important and influential sources of information about optometry school. Here are some tips you can use to help us recruit the future leaders of the optometry profession:

- Talk to prospective students about their academic performance
- Contact us for tips and tools (such as an admissions PowerPoint presentation)
- Think about who you are encouraging to pursue optometry

   diversity is critical to the future of the profession
- Share your school selection and career journey
- Help prospective students understand current issues in the optometry profession and share your thoughts about where optometry is headed in the future
- Connect prospective students with us right away!

# What's New for Dry Eye Patients?

By Bob Newcomb, OD'71, MPH



Dry Eye Service Chief Tatevik Movsisyan (OD/MS'16)

If you search our college's website, you will find we now have 12 specialty services located in our new main campus clinic building at 11th and Neil. All of these services have the dual purpose of treating a wide variety of patients while providing unique clinical experiences for our students. We feature one of these services in this issue of the BuckEYE alumni magazine: the Dry Eye Clinic.

The Dry Eye Service is part of our Advanced Ocular Care (AOC) service, and its chief is **Tatevik Movsisyan (OD/MS'16)**. Dr. Movsisyan grew up in Michigan and received her undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Following her graduation, she completed a one-year residency in Vision Rehabilitation with emphasis in Low Vision and Ocular Disease at the Birmingham (Alabama) VA Medical Center, where she worked with another Ohio State Optometry alumna, **Bethany Martinez (OD'04)**.

Dr. Movsisyan notes that the patients she and her faculty colleagues manage in our Dry Eye Service have typically been diagnosed with dry eye disease already and have tried several therapies with no resolution of their problem. The initial dry eye assessment includes a thorough case history, followed by the Standardized Patient Evaluation of Eye Dryness questionnaire. She then conducts a battery of objective tests to determine if the patient has a tear deficiency problem, a tear chemistry problem, meibomian gland disease, or another ocular surface disease like keratitis. allergies, or epithelial basement membrane disease. Specialized testing procedures include measurement of tear production, tear osmolarity, meibography, and meibomian gland expression. Additionally, a careful slit lamp

examination with fluorescein is done to observe the patient's corneal surface, tear quality, and tear breakup time.

Treatment recommendations are tailored for each patient depending on the type and severity of their dry eye disease. For mild cases, some patients may only be recommended lid hygiene and over-the-counter artificial tears. More advanced cases may require a four-week course of a topical steroid to treat underlying inflammation, followed by prescription immunomodulators for longerterm management. Punctal plugs are another option to address aqueous-deficient dry eye. Severe cases may require the use of amniotic membranes or autologous serum tears. The management of patients with meibomian gland disease includes eyelid warming therapy with thermal mask and digital lid massage for at home therapy. In-office LipiFlow thermal pulsation therapy for more advanced cases has produced remarkable results for many patients.

The comprehensive nature of the evaluations conducted in the Dry Eye Service lead to the determination of the underlying cause of a patient's dry eye. This allows custom treatments to reduce or eliminate the distracting symptoms that can sideline a dry eye patient's daily routines. The field of dry eye disease management is constantly changing, so Dr. Movsisyan advises ODs to keep up-to-date by attending relevant continuing education courses and reading peer-reviewed journal articles. Another excellent resource for doctors and their patients is the National Eye Institute's website, nei.nih.gov.



# CooperVision Sponsors Contact Lens Service

To support the education of countless future eye care professionals, CooperVision has committed funding for The Ohio State University College of Optometry's new contact lens service.

"With the continuous advancement of contact lens technologies, it is more important than ever for optometry students to receive a thorough education specific to this area of optometry practice," said Michele Andrews, OD, Vice President of Professional & Government Affairs, Americas, CooperVision. "The college's investment in this state-of-the-art clinic will provide invaluable firsthand learning opportunities for these students while also providing top-quality care for its community. CooperVision is proud to be a part of it."

College of Optometry Dean Karla Zadnik, OD, PhD, observed, "Given my own early roots in the area of contact lenses and my career-long commitment to patient-oriented research in myopia, this significant gift from CooperVision delights me. Our students will learn about both fields in the best facility from the best people in the field."

CooperVision's support of Ohio State's new clinic is the first of several expanded partnerships with optometry programs across the nation.

# A Visual Tour of the Newest Clinic Updates















Opposite Page: The Cool Brutus theme continues throughout the Student Lunchroom.

Current Page: Warhol-inspired Cool Brutus graphics line the second-floor hallway. The scarlet glass surrounding the elevators continues on the second floor, creating a refined, elegant experience for patients and visitors.













# From Pupils to Pints Happy Hour

## Alumni Maintain Connections Virtually

The past 14 months have challenged us to think creatively, especially when it comes to maintaining meaningful connections with family, friends and colleagues.

Michael Haddock, MA, the College of Optometry's Assistant Director of Alumni Engagement saw an opportunity to optimize the typical Zoom happy hour when he learned that **Christian Benner's (OD'78)** son, Adam (a 2002 graduate of Ohio State's Fisher College of Business), was the co-founder of Land-Grant Brewing Company. The idea for "From Pupils to Pints: Happy Hour with the Ohio State Optometry Alumni Society Board & Land-Grant Brewing Company" was born, and a committee of individuals met virtually to plan the event and brainstorm optometry/beer puns.

"From Pupils to Pints" was a success. Much like a traditional happy hour, the event included trivia and great conversation. But unlike most happy hours, this event had **Stephanie Baxter (OD'08)**, President of the Optometry Alumni Society as the "bartender," a special curated mix-pack from Land-Grant, and even two Buckeye Bobs. Attendees learned that Dr. Benner enjoys practicing in the Carolinas, Adam inherited his entrepreneurial spirit from his dad, and **Travis Zigler (OD'09)** was one of Land-Grant's original Kickstarter donors.

If you have a creative idea for an alumni event, please contact Michael Haddock at haddock.15@osu.edu.

# Student Life During the COVID-19 By Jen Bennett, MSEd, Director of Student Services Student Life During the During the COVID-19 Pandemic

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the number one question I have been asked in my role as Director of Student Services is "How are students doing?" This question is actually quite difficult to answer, as the experience varies a great deal from person to person. During this time of rapid change and great uncertainty, each individual student has taken their own journey.

Although our students' resiliency and ability to adapt quickly has impressed us all, it is important to honor that students are also coping with loss in various forms: loss of the experiences or relationships they expected to have; loss of friends or loved ones; and/or cancellation or postponement of important family and personal celebrations. Students are also incredibly hopeful and have found perspective and meaning in their experience as they continue to progress through their education and towards their end goal of becoming an optometrist. Here is a first-hand glimpse into the everyday lives of our students during COVID-19.

## Megan Kieffer, OPT IV Class of 2021

The initial months after the beginning of the pandemic contained a lot of uncertainty. No one had ever encountered a situation quite like this before, and it took a lot of patience while our healthcare system tried to rebound and start

up care again. My first extern rotation started in June at the Hampton Veteran's Affairs Hospital and was only operating at 25% capacity. Although the patient load was light, my preceptors did an awesome job at making sure I learned as much as possible. We saw a lot of high-risk and urgent patient cases. Besides wearing masks, seeing a decreased patient load, and our start dates being shifted, extern rotations have not been too different.

It has been an adjustment meeting new attendings and colleagues without ever seeing their faces. With everyone wearing a mask, I've realized how much we depend on facial expressions to gauge how a person is feeling. This definitely comes into play while working with patients. I've had to be extra diligent to make sure patients understand what I'm telling them. Different personalities can be difficult to judge through a mask too, and I've had to be cognizant of this when working with a new group of people every few months. Although I believe this has helped me further develop my patient education skills, I'm looking forward to the day when we no longer have to wear masks and can

communicate more effectively with patients. Oh, and the lens fogging will be nice to say goodbye to as well!

The pandemic has opened the door to some great conversations with patients. Topics regarding virus transmission, our healthcare system, the mental health of doctors, and vaccines are all topics I have discussed with patients during my extern rotations. I value patient education and am always happy to take a few extra minutes to answers any questions they may have. Patients also have been grateful for the increased efficiency of their exams. Most practices are trying to limit the number of people in their offices, and this results in shorter visits. Patients feel their time is more valued and have commented on this often.

## Eriq Hall, OPT III EYE President, Class of 2022

The first days of the pandemic were a whirlwind of emotions. I was talking to my family daily, seeing how they were doing, and managing everything back home.

Knowing the potential disease severity, I wanted to make sure that they were safe and well. I knew this was serious after Ohio State made the call to shut down classes and clinic. Initially, I thought we would be headed back much sooner than we did, and everything became more uncertain as new information was delivered daily.









Megan Kieffer ('21)

Erig Hall ('22)

Josh Canavan ('23)

tephanie George ('24)

At first, the most challenging change for me was learning how to study and manage my time due to classes being virtual. I was so accustomed to the routine that in-person classes provided that it was difficult to figure out how to properly learn through online instruction. Though difficult initially, I was able to figure out how I study best and plan my weeks accordingly to help maximize my time. Another challenge for me has been the limit on social gatherings. I missed having tailgates for home games, being a part of alumni events, and attending optometric conferences.

Since Epsilon Psi Epsilon (EYE) sponsors a lot of social gatherings and networking opportunities with alumni, we have had to adapt quite a bit. We had to cancel a lot of the events EYE typically has hosted due to the pandemic. College game days just weren't the same without the planting of the Cool Brutus flag by EΨE alumni. We were able to make some events virtual; this year we partnered with the Lion's Club to hold a virtual 5K fun run for the Pilot Dogs foundation. We had good participation, and overall, it was a great opportunity to raise awareness and money for Pilot Dogs! We also held a virtual trivia night that allowed our members to actually interact and have a great time with one another. Lastly, we have had time to divert more time and energy to EYE house repairs. Currently, we have almost completed an exam room in the basement of the house to allow current and future students to better develop their skills while living at the house.

We were very excited to begin seeing patients in the new clinic building. It has lived up to and beyond the hype! The main changes we had to make in the exam rooms were sanitizing everything before and after doctor-patient interactions. The most frustrating part was keeping our phoropters and fundoscopy lenses from fogging up during the exams. Like we have done with everything else this past year, we adapted and learned how to minimize inconveniences thrown our way.

I have learned a lot about myself, the college, and optometry throughout this pandemic. I have come to realize how important social gatherings truly are. I am truly missing making memories with my classmates and friends. Seeing pictures of us the same time last year doing those events does not make things any easier. Those events have always allowed us to cope with some of the stress that school creates for us. I have also realized how important they are for the college and for the first-year students. The College of Optometry has done a great job at trying to get the students to engage with one another the best they can during a pandemic. However, talking to some firstyear students, they have not gotten to know some of their classmates and future colleagues as well as classes before them have. Hopefully, when social gatherings become a norm again, these first-year students will have the ability to experience the fun and excitement that EYE has been able to bring to us and our alumni!

### Josh Canavan, OPT II Class President, Class of 2023

I was home for spring break when the message went out that all classes would be online upon return. My initial concern was about classwork, wondering how we would

be able to do certain assignments or take exams and proficiencies. As time went on, I began to worry about my classmates. We had just spent one and a half semesters getting to know each other, and it had been easy and natural. Then suddenly, we needed to work on new ways to socialize and support each other. My class had always relied on our group chat for some communication prior to the pandemic, but once we were no longer able to socialize in person every day, online communication was pretty much all we had. The group chat naturally became more active, and I never lost that sense of being part of group going through this together. Now that we are have clinic and labs together, we see each other more often. We still have not all been gathered together since before that 2020 spring break, but the sense of unity in the class seems strong. The virtual chatter is no substitute for the real thing, but it was a good substitute for when we could not be together.

One of my motives was to make our class group chat a place for fun and socialization instead of just a place for talking about schoolwork. I brainstormed with some of my other classmates to think of ways to get everyone involved in the chat. We have had different ways for people to contribute like "Meme Mondays" and "Meal of the Month" where people can show off their cooking and meme-making skills. My personal goal is to make sure that no one is feeling isolated, and I think trying to get everyone involved helps. I also just need to be attentive to everyone's concerns, and I like to share an occasional positive message.

One benefit is that I have been in contact with my family members more often. I am from out of state, so visits from my family were few before the pandemic, and they became out of the question once it started. But the pandemic has encouraged everyone to check in more with their loved ones, and the normalization of large group video calls has made that easier too. So, now I am more used to chatting with my family on a regular basis, which keeps me in the know about their lives and provides a significant mental health boost to me!

Despite all the challenges, I have still learned plenty about optometry, which speaks to the college's response to the pandemic. I feel confident that the quality of the education we are receiving has not dipped at all because of how well our professors have adapted. The adjustments created some challenges early on, but now that everyone seems used to learning and teaching under these conditions, each day is packed full of knowledge, as it should be. Even though we now only interact through screens and behind masks, I am extremely grateful to be where I am, surrounded by the students, faculty, and staff who make Ohio State Optometry so special.

## **Stephanie George, OPT I Class of 2024**

I spent the first few days of the pandemic in my apartment with my college roommate, contemplating the end of our senior year. We didn't understand fully how the pandemic would affect life as we knew it,

and honestly, my initial reactions were pretty selfish. I was upset that my Club Tennis team wouldn't be able to play at Nationals after we worked so hard to qualify. I was upset because I didn't know I attended my last class of undergrad on a mundane Friday afternoon, and I was upset at the possibility of graduation being canceled. I spent those first few days thinking it wasn't fair that I worked so hard throughout undergrad, only for the celebrations to be taken away. My frustration quickly shifted to fear once I saw the devastating effects of COVID-19, and I soon realized the pandemic was far bigger than myself.

I didn't feel like I was starting optometry school. I felt like I was taking classes remotely, kind of like an extension of my undergraduate classes. Because we didn't have the in-person festivities and we couldn't meet our classmates in-person, it just felt like a ramped-up continuation of my remote education that ended in April. The classes were certainly a lot harder, and I've had opportunities to get to know some of my classmates safely, but it's still odd that I'm in a program with 67 other students, many of whom I still wouldn't recognize if I saw them walking on the street.

I usually wake up around 9 a.m., watch the lectures for the day, and spend the rest of the day reviewing material and completing assignments. Thanks to 2x speed, I can usually finish lectures around early afternoon, so I have plenty of time to review and study. I usually have a meeting and/or club event that'll break up my studying. Some days I take a nap, talk on the phone with friends or family, and when it's nice out, I go running.

The isolation has been very difficult considering the caliber of our classes. I enjoy my alone time, but the pandemic has taken this to another level. It's extremely difficult motivating yourself to give your classes your all every day when it seems like there's no "reward" or light at the end of the tunnel. The weekends feel the same as the weekdays. There are no nights out, no post-exam celebrations, and no commiserating in person with your classmates after a tough exam.

I've learned that I am a lot more adaptable than I originally thought. Granted, I didn't have much of a choice, but I'm proud that, given the circumstances and unconventional learning methods, I can still be successful in a challenging program. I also realized that the college is learning right along with us; we're all doing the best we can with the resources at our disposal. We just need to give ourselves and each other grace because it's the only way we're going to get through this.

## **Optometry and Early Head Start** Collaborate to Improve Vision

Strong vision and overall eye health are essential in childhood development, but one in five preschoolers has a vision problem.

Cayti McDaniel (OD/MS'08), Associate Professor of Clinical Optometry and Chief of Ohio State's Binocular Vision and Pediatrics Optometry Service, understands this challenge all too well. That's why she's so appreciative of funding from the 2020 Healthy Eyes Healthy Children (HEHC) Community Grant Program to raise awareness of prevention, early detection, and treatment of vision problems in children. HEHC's goal is to spread awareness and increase vision services to address uncorrected refractive error in children across the country. This grant is made possible by the generous support of founding sponsor Essilor Vision Foundation, Healthy Eyes Advantage, and EyeCare Partners.

The \$5,000 EYE Can See Grant has allowed our pediatric optometrists from The Ohio State University to provide comprehensive eye exams and glasses to infants and toddlers living in low-income neighborhoods located throughout Columbus, Ohio. The collaboration with the university's Early Head Start Program focuses on increasing the outreach of high-quality vision services to underserved children six months to four years

old, an age group often overlooked for vision

assessments.

Thus far, this collaboration has provided eve exams to 27 children and much needed glasses to five of those patients. Dr. McDaniel has already received great feedback from the teachers at the Early Head Start Programs. One teacher expressed appreciation by speaking of her two-year-old student who showed aggression towards other children and other behavioral concerns. After receiving his glasses, he had a drastic improvement in his behavior and was a totally different child.

In addition to providing comprehensive eye examinations for the children enrolled in these programs, Dr. McDaniel has provided educational lectures and webinars for the teachers and parents of these children.

She stresses the importance of early vision evaluation and intervention as a part of the already established early intervention strategies employed by the Early Head Start Programs.

"We are grateful for the Essilor Vision Foundation's support and our Healthy Eyes Healthy Children grant. Healthy eyes and strong vision are one of the most important tools young children need to learn and grow," said Dr. McDaniel. "The EYE Can See project strategically aligns with the college goals to provide optimal, comprehensive vision, and eye health care for all patients."

The HEHC grant program, awarded by The American Optometric Association (AOA) and Optometry Cares - The AOA Foundation, provides awards of up to \$5,000 for innovative projects with a focus on collaborations between optometrists and community partners to boost awareness and access to vision care for children. The EYE Can See grant was one of only 15 awarded in the nation.



Kelly Morgan (OD/MS'19) examines children as part of the Eye Can See initiative

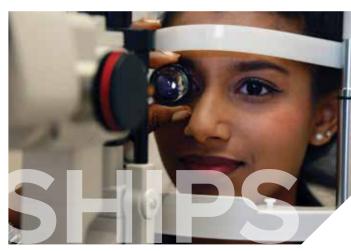
# Student Scholarships

**Our Next Campaign Priority** 

By Rachel Childress, Director of Development







Now that the "The Optometry Clinic" is complete, it's time to turn our fundraising focus to other important goals. Student scholarships is the next top priority. In the university's current campaign, our college's scholarship goal is \$5 million, and we've raised just under \$1 million. While this is a large gap, we know how much you believe in our students and want to support them on their academic journey.

Endowed and current-use scholarships are important to the college. More scholarship dollars mean less debt, giving our students greater freedom to choose their career path after graduation – whether that's joining a practice, making their way in the corporate world, or staying in academia.

**Right now, we are in need of generous gifts to our general scholarship fund.** This current-use fund is used to recruit top prospective students and to supplemental smaller endowed scholarship awards for our second-, third-, and fourth-year students. Because of our push for facility gifts in the last couple of years, our general scholarship dollars have a seen a dramatic decrease.

**How can you help?** Head over to this website to make a gift supporting our scholarship fund - **go.osu.edu/optgift**. You have the option to make a one-time gift, or you might consider the monthly option, giving you greater flexibility to make a larger impact.

Thank you for supporting our students. We know we can always count on you.

In future editions of the magazine we'll take a more in-depth look at how endowments work, interesting award criteria beyond simple need and merit, and providing for students through your estate plans we will also highlight some scholarship donors and recipients. Please reach out to Rachel Childress to learn more about how you can get involved at 614-292-2100 or childress.35@osu.edu.

### Scholarships by the Numbers

- \$170,000 The average student debt of the class of 2020, which does not include any additional debt incurred from undergraduate years.
- \$2,500 The average annual award amount for those that receive scholarships.
- 36 The number of top prospective students who interviewed with us in 2020 and chose to attend another optometric institution. Many of them were offered larger scholarship packages than we had available.
- 593 The number of our alumni and friends who have supported scholarships since the beginning of the campaign in October 2016.
- 43 The current number of endowed optometry scholarships, providing approximately \$200,000 in scholarship awards.
- 10 The number of current-use scholarship or award funds, with \$120,000 contributed in 2020.

# Research Roundup

By Karla Gengler-Nowak, PhD, CRA, Grants and Contracts Administrator

Stacey Choi, PhD, was awarded the \$60,000 Allergan Foundation Research Grant from the American Academy of Optometry for her project, Characterization of inner retinal changes in glaucoma suspects in comparison to glaucoma patients and age-matched controls through adaptive optics retinal imaging. Her adaptive-optics-optical coherence tomography (AO-OCT) system allows her to image individual retinal ganglion cells (RGCs) in living human eyes. She and her collaborators will use the system to image and quantify parameters of individual RGCs as well as nerve fiber bundles in the eyes of glaucoma suspects and compare them to those in primary open angle glaucoma patients and healthy controls. Specifically, they will measure subtle cellular structural changes that would not be observable by standard clinical examination. This research will directly impact clinical management of glaucoma.

### **Research Reorganization**

In the midst of a particularly challenging year, The Ohio State University College of Optometry research enterprise reorganized. The reorganization was made necessary by the new clinic building and remodel of the sixth floor of Fry Hall, which presented an opportunity to reestablish adjacencies that had been shuffled through years of evolution.

Prior to the reorganization, sub-zero freezers for storage of biospecimens were located in public hallways. Now they are located in a separate room with improved electrical connections and ventilation. The move also improved storage facilities for the basic science laboratories.

The Data Coordination and Analysis Center was relocated from the sixth floor of Fry Hall to the fifth floor, allowing for easier collaboration with investigators whose offices are located on the fourth and fifth floors. The laboratory of Stacey Choi, PhD, and Nathan Doble, PhD, as well as the laboratory of Dion Yu, PhD, were spread over multiple floors. Now all of their laboratory spaces are on the same floor, closer to their offices.

The biggest change to the research space related to moving pediatrics research to the former Binocular Vision and Pediatrics Service and the Innovation in Vision and Eyecare Research Group (iVERG) to the former Low Vision Rehabilitation Service on the first floor of Fry Hall. The move placed research at the front door of the college, making it easier for participants to find and providing a space for people to wait for appointments. The new space also includes a community research examination lane for graduate students, desk space for PhD students, and a private room for study monitors who ensure the integrity of data in large-scale clinical trials.

All of this comes at a time when research productivity is on the rise. Grant applications increased 55% over the past five years, and the number of publications is up 11% over that same period. Research funding was \$2.3 million in fiscal year 2020, and is already over \$3.5 million for the first half of fiscal year 2021. We're on track for the highest amount of research funding over the past 10 years.

Research at the college continues to answer important clinical questions and push innovation through basic and translational science. We have 43 students in the graduate program: nine PhD students; two Advanced Practice Fellows; and 31 Combined OD/MS students. Heather Anderson, OD, PhD, is the new Chair of Research and Graduate Studies, and she is currently preparing 12 students to graduate this year, while recruiting more students to continue the strong tradition of graduate studies at The Ohio State University College of Optometry.

### fast facts: research

11%

increase in publications over past 5 years \$3.5 million
Research funding

Research funding for first half of fiscal year 2021 **55**%

increase in grant applications over past 5 years



# Dr. Maureen Maguire is 2021 Hill Lecture Series Honoree By Bob Newcomb (OD'71, MPH) and Jeff Walline (OD, MS'98, PhD'02)

In 2015, Dean Emeritus Richard and Mrs. Leonora Hill established an endowment fund at The Ohio State University College of Optometry to sponsor an annual lecture in vision science and research. This year, we honored Maureen G. Maguire, PhD, from the University of Pennsylvania. Her virtual presentation on March 10 was titled "Conducting Clinical Trials When Industry Is Not On Your Side." Her connection to Ohio State Optometry is in the area of pediatric vision, and she worked for many years with our own Distinguished Professor, Marjean Kulp (OD'91, MS'93), and Professor Emeritus Paulette Schmidt (OD'73, MS'76).

Dr. Maguire received her PhD degree from the Department of Biostatistics at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and is currently a Professor of Ophthalmology with a secondary appointment in the University of Pennsylvania Department of Biostatistics, Epidemiology and Informatics. She is an internationally-known expert in the design and conduct of multicenter clinical trials research in ophthalmology and has directed coordinating centers for several national studies. Dr. Maguire's work is recognized in the areas of prevention and treatment of age-related macular degeneration, preschool

vision screening, dry eye disease, corneal transplantation, and diabetic retinopathy. She has served on and chaired many Data Safety Monitoring Boards for clinical trials sponsored by both the NIH and by industry.

Dr. Maguire regaled us with a story of persistence. She directed the data coordinating center for the Comparison of Age-Related Macular Degeneration Treatments Trial (CATT), a randomized clinical trial comparing the safety and efficacy of two treatments and two treatment schedules for subfoveal neovascular age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Dr. Maguire told of a complete study redesign because an innovative drug was developed, as well as a substantial controversy related to the influence of a Federally-funded study using a drug approved by the Food and Drug Administration and covered by Medicare for the study-intended use. She also told harrowing stories of several attempts to share the financial burdens of the study by the Center for Medicare Services or the drug companies, but lawyers and politicians extended the decision by a year before CATT was finally funded. Even masking of the treatment, something that doesn't seem very controversial, resulted in several failed attempts before finally reaching a practical solution. In the end, CATT showed that

Previous honorees of the Richard and Leonora Hill Lecture on Frontiers in Vision Research include:

Dr. David R. Williams (2015)

Dr. Chris Johnson (2017)

Dr. Don Hood (2019)

Dr. Barbara Klein (2016)

Dr. Eli Peli (2018)

Dr. Austin Roorda (2020)



Lucentis and Avastin provided similar benefits when prescribed in a similar fashion, despite a significant difference in cost. The results changed how AMD is treated around the world. The lessons learned from Dr. Maguire's story are that science isn't always about science and persistence pays! Keep fighting the good fight, and you will succeed. That is a lesson that Dr. Hill has lived many times over the years, so he deeply appreciated the message delivered.

Dr. Maguire is the President-Elect of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO). She has served as a member of the editorial board of *Ophthalmology, IOVS*, and four other major journals; and has more than 300 peer-reviewed publications to her credit.

She has received many prestigious awards and honors during her career, including the Senior Achievement Award for distinguished service from the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the Singerman Award for Clinical Trials from the Macula Society, and the JDM Gass Award from the Retina Society. And now, she is also a recipient of our prestigious Hill Lecture Series Award. Congratulations Dr. Maguire!

2021
College of Optometry
Homecoming
Weekend



The College of Optometry's Development and Alumni Engagement Office is already hard at work planning Homecoming Weekend 2021, which is scheduled to be held from Thursday, October 7 to Saturday, October 9. We are partnering with the Ohio Optometric Association to sync our Homecoming festivities with the EastWest Eye Conference in Columbus the same weekend.

All plans for Homecoming Weekend are tentative, due to continuing health and safety considerations related to the pandemic. At this time, we are unable to share specific logistics of events until local, state, and university authorities have given approval to move forward. We will be in touch with reunion information as we know more.

While all alumni are encouraged to attend (if possible), Ohio State Optometry would like to extend a personalized invitation to those classes celebrating milestone reunions this year and those who were unable to gather last year! In the coming months, Michael Haddock and Francesca Fuerman will be reaching out to class leadership and past reunion planning volunteers for the years listed below about next steps.

If you're interested in helping coordinate your classes gathering (in-person or via Zoom), please reach out to your corresponding class lead:

Michael Haddock haddock.15@osu.edu Class of 1976, 1980, 1986, 1991, 1995, 2000, 2005, 2011, 2015 Francesca Fuerman fuerman.4@osu.edu Class of 1975, 1981, 1985, 1990, 1996, 2001, 2006, 2010, 2016

# Colleagues Work Together to Advance Knowledge

By Sarah Cupples, MA
Director of Marketing and Communications

Ann Morrison (OD'14, MS'16) and Phil Yuhas (OD/MS'14, PhD'19) have always made a spectacular team, first as optometry classmates and now as educators working with the best and brightest future optometrists at The Ohio State University College of Optometry. Recently, they took their teamwork to the next level by writing the article, "Kids and Screens: Debating the Dangers," which was chosen to be the cover story in the January 2021 edition of *Review of Optometry*.

The article came about after Dr. Morrison and Dr. Yuhas gave a joint lecture titled "Tots, Teens, and Screens" for

the 2020 American Academy of Optometry meeting that was originally supposed to take place in Nashville, Tennessee. The meeting and lecture ended up being virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The irony was not lost on us that we were lecturing on the potential implications of screen time while people tuned in on their computers," said Dr. Morrison. "All of us have certainly experienced more screen time as we are forced to work more remotely. We decided to do a joint lecture on the topic because it allowed us to mold our clinical and research backgrounds into one talk. I work with pediatric populations and am often asked by concerned parents about the implications of screen time, as parents are worried that screens are causing damage to their children.

Dr. Yuhas has a background in retinal physiology and is well versed in blue light and the effect it has on our visual system, as blue light and screen time have become hot topics in our field. The talk was well received, and *Review of Optometry* reached out asking if we would write an article that summarized the topics discussed in our lecture."

Explaining complicated topics effectively is second nature to these dedicated educators, whether they're working with patients, students, or fellow optometrists.

"Part of the job of being a doctor is disseminating accurate information to your patients," said Dr. Yuhas. "When the topic at hand is complex, that can be a difficult task.

"The irony was not lost on us that we were lecturing on the potential implications of screen time while people tuned in on their computers."

Ann Morrison (OD'14, MS'16)

The issues of blue light exposure and screen time are multifaceted, and there are not straightforward answers to questions like, 'Are screens bad for my eyes?' or 'Is the hype about blue light real?' I am proud of the article because I think that it synthesizes a complex set of questions into a form that our colleagues can use to educate their patients on the effect that screens and blue light have on the eye and visual system. That means that patients are the ultimate consumers of the information that we presented, which is the biggest reward of putting together the article."

"I thoroughly enjoyed working with a fellow Ohio State

Optometry alumnus and current coworker," said Dr. Morrison. "While Dr. Yuhas and I both see patients and perform clinical research at the College of Optometry, our areas of focus are different. We were able to bring different perspectives and backgrounds to address an area of concern that all of our patients have. I believe that in order to practice to the best standards, we often have to work collaboratively. Our article is a perfect example of how collaboration can enrich our profession. On a more personal note, it was fun working on something like this with a friend. We do work in the same building, but because we are working from home more often and because we both have busy schedules, we do not see each other and catch up as often. This was a great excuse to stay in better touch with each other."

The feedback that Dr. Morrison and Dr. Yuhas have received has been positive.

"On the day that the article was published, Dr. Morrison and I received an email from an optometrist in California," said Dr. Yuhas. "He was appreciative of the information that we presented and complimented our interest on the effects of screen usage. We both have received texts and calls from acquaintances and friends in the field, all of which have been very positive. People seem grateful to have another arrow in their quiver when fielding questions about screen time from their patients."

Read the full *Review of Optometry* article by Dr. Morrison and Dr. Yuhas at **go.osu.edu/KidsAndScreens.** 



## Welcome, Francesca Fuerman!



Francesca Fuerman joined the Ohio State Optometry Development and Alumni Engagement team on November 23, 2020. She is a graduate of Indiana University and has served as a board member for the alumni chapters in Boston and Columbus. Francesca adds immediate value to the team in fundraising, alumni affairs, stewardship, and event planning experience.

Francesca replaced Denise Turner as Program Assistant and CE Coordinator. Denise was an integral part of our team for more than three years but has returned to school to pursue a degree in Diagnostic Cardiovascular Sonography. We wish her all the best!

### **EYE ON ALUMNI**

## Alumni Notes

1 1964/1968 Jim Bieber (BS'64, OD'68) celebrated 5 10 2017 Kelsey Krempasky (OD'17) and Ben Doering his 80th birthday with festive yard greetings from his colleagues at Northwest Eyecare Professionals. Dr. Bieber established Northwest EyeCare Professionals in the Tremont Center in Upper Arlington in 1968, and he officially retired in 2019.

1987 Christine Beiling-Sheerer (OD'87) and Medina Vision Centre, Inc. have partnered with Midwest Vision Partners.

1989 The Sidney Historical Society recognized John Beigel (OD'89) for opening his practice on December 23, 1995.

**2001 Jeff Hackleman (OD'01)** was named the Georgia Optometric Association OD of the Year for 2019.

> **2009** Katie Greiner (OD/MS'09) has joined the IDOC board of directors.

**2011** Robin (OD'11) and Jeff (OD'11) Parnell have opened a new practice together in South Point, Ohio.

- **2013** Brittany Lemke (OD'13) and her husband are proud to announce the arrival of Marshall James Lemke. born on June 23, 2020. He joined big brothers Miles and Carter.
- **2014** Ann Morrison (**OD'14**, **MS'16**) married Colin Ullom-Morse on November 20th, 2020 at the Columbus Museum of Art with their immediate family by their sides.

(OD'17) were married with Scott Hussing (OD'89) officiating on October 24, 2020.

**2019** Kelsey Sanata (OD/MS'19) has started a new role as Clinical Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

**2019** Bryce St Clair (OD'19) has started a new role as Assistant of Ophthalmology at Johns Hopkins University.

**2020** Lydia Pickrell (OD/MS'20) has joined the team at Place Eye Care in LeRoy, New York.

### In Memoriam

**1954** Paul Gamertsfelder (BS'54), age 92, passed away on December 14, 2020.

**1956** David C. Kelly (BS'56), age 87, passed away on February 22, 2021.

1963, 1968 David Dreffer (BS'63, OD'68), age 79, passed away on March 12, 2020.

**1977** Robert D. Weathers (OD'77), passed away on October 10, 2020.

Christine Trujillo, Emeritus Dean Fred Hebbard's longtime administrative assistant, passed away on December 24, 2020.



## Alumni News Updates

Sharing your alumni news has never been easier! Visit go.osu.edu/ShareYourNews

to submit a news item for the BuckEYE Alumni Magazine.













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