**Speaker Bios**

**Janet Acara**
Janet Acara is an assistant professor for the Vision Care Technology program at Erie Community College. She is also the contact lens fitter at Eye Sight Medical Center, an ophthalmology practice in Buffalo, NY. Janet is a New York State licensed optician, a CLSA Fellow member, and past member of the CLSA Board of Directors. She has also served as president of the Contact Lens Society of New York. She is ABO and NCLE-Master certified.

**Melissa Barnett**
Dr. Melissa Barnett is a Principal Optometrist at the UC Davis Eye Center in Sacramento, California. She is internationally recognized as a key opinion leader, specializing in anterior segment disease and specialty contact lenses. Dr. Barnett lectures and publishes extensively on topics including dry eye, anterior segment disease, contact lenses and creating a healthy balance between work and home life for women in optometry. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry, a Diplomate of the American Board of Certification in Medical Optometry (ABCMO) and serves on the Board of Women of Vision (WOV), Gas Permeable Lens Institute (GPLI), Ocular Surface Society of Optometry (OSSO) and serves as President of the Scleral Lens Education Society (SLS). Dr. Barnett is a spokesperson for the California Optometric Association and a guest lecturer for the STAPLE program. In her spare time, she enjoys cooking, yoga, hiking and spending time with her family, Todd Erickson, also an optometrist, and two sons, Alex and Drew.

**Jaysun Barr**
Jaysun Barr is a Senior Lens Finishing Consultant with Santinelli International. He got his start in the optical industry in 1998 working in a wholesale lab in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 2006, he relocated to the Midwest and joined Santinelli covering Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana. Jaysun also represents Santinelli at Special Olympics “Opening Eyes” local, state, and national programs as part of a corporate initiative. At these events, he orchestrates an impressive high volume mobile on-site finishing lab operation, providing Rx eyewear for hundreds of athletes in need. He also served three years as an executive board member with the Optometric Institute and Clinic of Detroit, and has developed his own urban outreach program teaching many at-risk youths in the Metro Detroit area the “craft of lens finishing,” some of whom as a result, now hold jobs as lens finishing technicians. Jaysun also proudly served a term as a board member with the Opticians Association of Ohio, and most enjoys helping others take their own optical skill set to exciting next levels via an introduction to In-Office Finishing.

**Rachel Behdadnia**
Rachel Behdadnia, FCLSA specializes in fitting and management of complicated medical and therapeutic cases in adult and pediatric patients. Rachel is proficient in pediatric aphakia, keratoconus, post refractive and corneal transplant, corneal refractive therapy and trauma. Rachel is a Fellow member of Contact Lens Society of America (FCLSA), National Academy of Opticianry (FNAO). Rachel is certified by the American Board of Opticianry (ABOC) and has earned the Master of National Contact Lens Examiners (NCLEM) designation. Rachel has been in the industry and fitting contact lenses for over a
decade. She is also on the Advisory Board of GLPI. She currently works as a Contact Lens Specialist at Eye Consultants of Atlanta.

**Tracy Bennett**

Tracy Bennett is a North Carolina Licensed Optician, nationally certified by the ABO and NCLE. She has over 17 years of experience in the optical profession. After nine years in retail Opticianry she became an instructor at COA accredited, Durham Technical Community College. She is actively involved in a variety of Opticianry subjects, the majority of which are focused on manufacturing concepts that range from the abstract to the practical. Tracy is proud of her work as an optician and as a teacher. She finds fulfillment in the accomplishments of her students as they become professionally certified and licensed dispensing opticians. With every interaction her hope is that, in the end, the student has learned more than what they have read in books or learned in practice. Her hope is that they have a deep appreciation for their chosen profession.

**James (Jamie) Brady, ABOC, M.Ed.**

James (Jamie) Brady, ABOC, M.Ed., is a graduate of Ferris State University. Jamie holds an AAS in Opticianry, a BS in Business Management and a M.Ed. in Career and Technical Education. Jamie has worked in the optical industry since 1981 and currently teaches ophthalmic optics to the optometry students at the Michigan College of Optometry at FSU. Jamie has recently completed research on the topic of Quantifying the Effects of Aniseikonia and Stereacuity, surface reproducibility on digital progressive addition lenses. Most recently, Jamie has begun to investigate the surface powers of task specific (computer lenses).

**John Braun**

John Braun is currently an instructor of Vision Care Technology at Erie Community College in Buffalo, N.Y. John holds an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Ophthalmic Dispensing from Erie Community College and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education from Buffalo State College. John has been a licensed Ophthalmic Dispenser and Contact Lens Practitioner in New York State since 1984 having worked in both Optometry and Ophthalmology practices. He is certified by the American Board of Opticianry and the National Contact Lens Examiners. John is a member of the New York State Society of Opticians, the National Academy of Opticianry and the Optical Society of Western New York.

**Jane S. Buckland, FCLSA (H), NCLE-AC, FNAO**

Jane S. Buckland, FCLSA (H), NCLE-AC, FNAO has over four decades of experience as a contact lens fitter, consultant and clinician. Upon receiving her Optometric Sciences degree in 1971 she continued Ophthalmic technician training at the University of Florida Department of Ophthalmology. Tasks included clinical research with numerous types of contact lenses, surgical contact lenses and care systems. Jane holds Advanced Level Certification by the National Contact Lens Examiners, is a Fellow Ambassador and previous Board Member of the National Academy of Opticianry, Honored Fellow and previous Board Member, Fellow Exam Committee, Education Committee, Membership Chairman as well as and Speaker of the Year for the Contact Lens Society of America. She served on the VICA advisory committee and is a past President of the Pacific Coast Contact Lens Society. Previous and current capacities include guest faculty for: Baylor Contact Lens Course, Tulane Contact Lens Course, Vision
Expo, Contact Lens Society of America, Contact Lens Association of Ophthalmologists, National Academy of Opticians, Pacific Coast Contact Lens Society, OptiCon and SECO as well as numerous state and local organizations. Jane has presented thousands of hours throughout the United States and abroad and has authored numerous articles on contact lens fitting, design, and technology. She is presently Owner/Director of Contact Lens Consultants of N. Georgia.

**Paul DiGiovanni**

Mr. DiGiovanni is co-owner of two retail optical facilities in Philadelphia and New Jersey. He holds a BA in Finance from Temple University’s Fox School of Business and a MBA from St. Joseph’s University in Philadelphia. He is a Licensed Optician in New Jersey and is certified by the American Board of Opticianry and a fellow member of FANO. In addition, Mr. DiGiovanni does freelance writing for eye care industry magazines. He is currently the President of the New Jersey Optician’s Association.

**Diane Drake**

With over 40 years in the Optical business, Mrs. Drake is an approved speaker for ABO and NCLE as well as an advanced course approved speaker and lectures both locally and nationally. She is also an approved speaker for Paraoptometrics and is approved for JCAHPO. She is also approved as a COPE speaker. She was president and owner of ALL ABOUT EYES VISION CENTER in Griffin, Georgia for over 19 years. She is a Licensed Optician in Georgia, advanced certified by both the American Board of Opticianry and the National Contact Lens Examiners and also has received her Master in Ophthalmic Optics Certification by the ABO and Masters in Contact Lens Technology from the National Contact Lens Examiners. She is a Fellow of the National Academy of Opticianry. She is the current President for the National Academy of Opticianry. She is currently completing her term as a commissioner of the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation of which she served as Vice Chair. She is a Past President of the Opticians Association of Georgia as well as the SouthEastern Opticians Conference. She is a 1995 graduate of the OAA Refractometry program. Mrs. Drake was selected the Optician of the Year for Georgia in 1992, and was honored with the prestigious Beverly Myers Achievement Award by the National Academy of Opticianry in 1996. She was honored in 1997 as the Outstanding Optician in the Southeast, receiving the Galen B. Kilburn award. She received the annual Eric Muth award in 2000 for outstanding achievement in technical writing and the pursuit of excellence in ophthalmic optics. She was honored as being one of the 50 most influential women in Optical in 2004 by Vision Monday. She received the Dan Gosnell award by the SouthEastern Opticians Conference for outstanding optician in 2005. She received the Joseph Bruneni Memorial Education Achievement award from the NAO in 2009. She co-authored the COA Evaluators’ Workshop. A regular contributing writer for Vision Care Product News, she has authored numerous articles for other publications as well. She co-authored the Advanced Opticians Tutorial which was commissioned by the American Board of Opticianry and was updated in 2015 as well as courses for the National Academy of Opticianry. She co-authored the Basic Opticians Tutorial for the National Academy of Opticianry which was updated in 2015. She authored “Beginning Your Life as a Contact Lens Technician” which is a review book for the NCLE, now in its second edition. She co-authored the update of the Ophthalmic Career Progression Program (a home study program) for the National Academy of Opticianry, which was completed in 2015. She regularly guest lectures for high schools, colleges and universities in her area. She is also active in her local community with local charities.
**Johnna Dukes**

Johnna Dukes is an ABO certified Optician and owns her own Optical Boutique. She has experience in Big Box Retail and private practice. She has written for 20/20 Magazine and is an ABO approved speaker. She sits on boards for the Opticians Association of Iowa and Opticians Association of America.

**Daniel Feldman**

Daniel Feldman is the CEO of dba designs & communications, a Colorado based marketing consulting company and Managing Partner of The Visionaries Group, an optical consulting firm. Daniel has spent his professional life marketing companies large and small. His resume is a career of impressive results creating marketing and advertising strategies for large companies including The Shane Company, the University of Phoenix and Sports Authority as well as dozens of optical shops across the US and in Canada. Daniel’s expertise ranges across all forms of online and offline marketing platforms including website development, social media, broadcast advertising, direct mail, print advertising, outdoor advertising, catalogues and newspaper. He is a contributor to Invision Magazine, The Optical Vision Site, and Vision Plus Magazine. His websites have been nominated several times and won a DARE Award from Vision Monday.

**Roy Ferguson**

In an earlier life Dr. Ferguson was a Scout helicopter pilot in Vietnam. After tiring of playing dodge-the-tree in Southeast Asia, he returned to civilian life where he pursued a career as an Optician. During the following years he has owned and operated 20/20 Optical located in Sevierville, Tennessee. This is a small town, but fortunately it’s the home of Dolly Parton who’s numerous, nearsighted relatives populate the area. During his optical career he made time to earn a Bachelors of Science in Business Management, a Master of Arts in Management, and a PhD in Administration/Management. He was the Program Director of an Opticianry program in a state college for seven years and has served as adjunct faculty with the University of North Carolina in North Carolina and Florence-Darlington Technical College in South Carolina. As the President of The Learning Curve, he has developed, validated, and now administers an Opticianry practical licensing examination in several states. He is the author of the ABO Certification Review, and Ophthalmic Essentials, available through the OAA Press and co-author of Optical Formulas Tutorial, 2nd Ed. In his spare time, Dr. Ferguson works as a SAR TECH I Search Specialist along with his K-9 Apache. Apache is nationally certified in Area Search Live Find and Human Remains Detection Land, Shoreline, and Open Water. Dr. Ferguson’s specialty is keeping professional audiences awake while presenting optical topics in an entertaining, informative manner.

**Wendy Ford, FCLSA, COMT, NCLEM**

Wendy Ford, FCLSA, COMT, NCLEM attended Old Dominion University/Eastern Virginia Medical School Ophthalmic Technology Program in Norfolk, Virginia, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Ophthalmic Technology. Throughout her career, she has worked in private practice cornea and general ophthalmology settings, and is currently employed by Eye Consultants of Northern Virginia, PC as a Contact Lens Specialist and Clinical Administrator. She is a past JCAHPO COT Skills Evaluator and currently assists with the Georgetown University Ophthalmic Medical Training Program in Washington,
DC. She is also Editor-in-Chief of the CLSA Eyewitness and serves on the CLSA Board of Directors as President-Elect.

**Mohamed E. Ganem, LDO, ABOC, NCLEC**
Mohamed E. Ganem, LDO, ABOC, NCLEC is the regional Director/ Corporate Trainer for Eye Doctors Optical Outlets. He is licensed to practice in the states of Florida, Georgia, and Vermont. Mohamed has been practicing Opticianry in the United States and internationally for over 25 years. Mr. Ganem has created multipole successful training programs that have been implemented and being practiced on a wide scale. He has presented over 500 lectures, both nationally and internationally on topics that ranges from customer service, employees' development, business growth and leadership.

**Patrick Goughary**
Mr. Goughary is on the faculty of the Vision Technology Program at Camden County College in Blackwood, New Jersey, teaching courses in contact lens fitting, anatomy of the eye, optics, and writing. He has an AAS in Ophthalmic Dispensing from Erie Community College, a BS in Liberal Studies from the State University of New York, and an MA in English from Rutgers. He is a Licensed Optician in New Jersey and New York, designated a Master Optician by the ABO, a Master in Contact Lens Technology by the NCLE, and an Honored Fellow of the CLSA. Patrick currently serves as NCLE Chair for the NCLE Board of Directors.

**Jason Jedlicka**
Dr. Jedlicka is an Associate Professor at Indiana University School of Optometry, and the Director of the Cornea and Contact Lens Service. He is a Diplomate in the American Academy of Optometry's Cornea, Contact Lens, and Refractive Technologies Section, a past President of the Scleral Lens Education Society, and a Fellow and board member of the Contact Lens Society of America.

**Timothy O. Koch, FCLSA, COT**
Timothy O. Koch, FCLSA, COT is a noted author, educator and Clinical and Training Consultant. Tim is a Certified Ophthalmic Technician and is a Fellow of the Contact Lens Society of America. Tim has served on the Board of Directors of the Contact Lens Society of America and sat on the National Contact Lens Examiners Board. Tim has been a clinical administrator at a large, multi-discipline eye clinic and has been on staff at Paragon Vision Sciences, SynergEyes Inc. and served as a Consultant to Contamac US. He has developed and delivered educational presentations and seminars and created contact lens fitting guides/tools and devised sales force product training programs., Tim hired and co-coordinated a tertiary level contact lens consultation team. Mr. Koch has lectured all over the world and is highly sought for his knowledge, experience and educational skills in the Eye Care field, specializing in contact lenses.

**Deborah Kotob**
Deborah Kotob is a Master Optician, with twenty plus years in optical experience. Having owned her own independent optical shops, she relates to the challenges that practice owners and opticians face on a daily basis. Her driving force is her love of training and education. Her favorite topics are Light the Eye
and the Brain, the effect of light on vision; both in the production as well as the destruction of sight. She has authored numerous ABO seminars on all optical related topics and has been published in national trade magazines and Opticians Handbook. As an ABO Advanced level speaker Deborah has presented courses at such national venues as Vision Expo East and West as well as OptiCon. She is currently the ECP Education Facilitator for Vision Ease where she is a trainer and content developer for computer based learning modules, continuing education courses and optician training eLearning tools as well as live and webinar trainings.

**Lynn E. Lawrence**

Lynn E. Lawrence is currently a national lecturer and an ophthalmic technician for Mills Eye and Facial Plastic Surgery. He is an approved speaker for the American Optometric Association, American Board of Opticianry, and Joint Commission for Allied Healthcare Personnel in Ophthalmology. He retired after 30 years of service in the United States Air Force. During his military career he was promoted to Chief Master Sergeant and worked directly for the Air Force Surgeon General's Office. It was then that he was appointed by the Air Force Surgeon General as the Ophthalmic Career Field Manager for 540 Optometry/Ophthalmology technicians at 90 locations and overseeing quality control for 133 optical stores world-wide. He develops training, compliance, and staff development materials because of his passion to see others grow in their professions and advance in certification. Lynn has been a COPE approved speaker since 2008 and has had the opportunity to speak to student optometrists at the Pacific University.

**Richard McCoy**

Richard McCoy has been a Licensed Optician in the State of Florida for over 36 years and is board certified in contact lenses. He is an instructor and site coordinator for the Opticianry program of Hillsborough Community College on the campus of Florida Southwestern State College in Fort Myers, Florida. In addition, he is the program coordinator and an instructor for the Ophthalmology Assistant program at Florida Southwestern State College. A published author, McCoy's articles have appeared in 20/20 magazine, Vision Care Product News and Optical Laboratory Supplement. Richard McCoy is formerly a chapter president and a state director for the Professional Opticians of Florida. In addition, he conducts ABO review classes in a number of states on behalf of the National Federation of Opticianry Schools. An accomplished speaker, Richard lectures across the United States on a variety of optical subjects and conducts numerous popular hands-on training classes.

**Warren McDonald**

Dr. MacDonald is an internationally recognized educator, consultant and practitioner. He is currently Professor and Chair of the Department of Health Care Administration at Methodist University, Fayetteville, North Carolina. He is also Chief Executive Officer of McDonald and Associates, LLC, a consulting firm dedicated to the optical industry and related professions. He is a Registered Optician in the State of North Carolina, and serves as a consultant to a number of ophthalmic and general health care organizations in the areas of staff training and development, and practice management. His academic background includes undergraduate degrees in Opticianry and Management. He holds graduate degrees in Health Care Management, Education and the Doctor of Philosophy in Health Sciences, as well as a number of professional certifications, including the prestigious Master of Ophthalmic Optics, and Advanced Certification in Contact Lenses from the National Contact Lens
Examiners. He is a member of the Class of 2005 at the Institute for Management and Leadership in Higher Education at Harvard University, and holds a Graduate Certificate in Health Care Risk Management from the University of Florida. Additional faculty appointments include Contributing Professor in the School of Health Sciences at Walden University where he teaches in the Master of Health Administration program, and mentors doctoral students. He is also serves on the adjunct faculty at Logan University in the Doctor of Health Professions Education program. Prior to joining the faculty at Methodist University he held senior-level administrative positions in the University of North Carolina system, and regularly consults with a number of institutions in the implementation of online and off-campus degree and continuing education programs. He remains active in the optical industry through his work in continuing education and consulting.

**Caroline Miller**

Caroline practiced Opticianry in Canada for fifteen years as a licensed Optician and contact lens fitter, having graduated with an Associate Degree from Georgian College in Barrie, Ontario. Moving from practice to the regulatory environment, Caroline became the Chief Executive Officer for the Board of Opticianry in Ontario. For more than a decade she developed and directed continuing education, regulations, standards of practice and national examinations for Opticians in Ontario Canada. Caroline worked closely with the Board to integrate refraction competencies into Opticianry education and enact standards of practice for Optician performed Refractions in Ontario. An active participant in national and international vision care issues, Caroline worked closely with the Opticians Council of Canada (OCC) in the development of national best practices, a national branding and public awareness campaign and the identification of emerging trends in vision care. As a member of the National Association of Canadian Opticianry Regulators (NACOR), Caroline, as part of the team, developed national competencies for Opticianry, quality-assurance benchmarks relating to Opticianry accreditation standards and processes by monitoring and investigating common issues related to accreditation and mobility of Opticians, both nationally and internationally. In 2010, being an avid learner, she returned to school to obtain her degree in Adult Education. Caroline joined forces with Maggie Sayers in 2015 to form Success by Design, an executive leadership, coaching and consulting company focused on possibilities and results.

**Jackie O'Keefe, ABOC**

Jackie O’Keefe, ABOC is licensed in Virginia and has been practicing Opticianry since 1981. She is a contributing writer for Vision Care Product News, a Senior EDGE Consultant for Gateway Provider Network, on Essilor of America’s Speakers Bureau and consults in the Virginia Beach, VA area. She has written, published and presented numerous courses and lectures on a variety of optical topics. Jackie is a second generation Optician along with her two sisters and has been active in the International Association of Lions Clubs, a volunteer for Maine's Prevention of Blindness Programs, Inc. and is on the speakers' bureau for the Suicide Prevention Awareness & Resource Council. Jackie is Past President of the Opticians Association of Virginia and a founding member and Past President of the Opticians Association of Maine.
**B. W. Phillips, Jr.**

B. W. Phillips, Jr. is a Past President of the Contact Lens Society of America, Past Chairman for the NC State Board of Opticians, and an RGPLI Advisory Board Member. Manager of Duke University Eye Center’s Contact Lens Service from 1991 thru early 2008. Specializing in keratoconus, post-surgical corneas, traumatic injuries and pediatric contact lens fitting, he presently serves as Director of the Contact Lens Service for 3 Ophthalmology Clinics in the Raleigh/Durham area. He continues as a frequent educator/ lecturer to ophthalmologists, optometrists and opticians on both national and international fronts, and is published regularly in leading contact lens newsletters and magazines, most recently B. W. was appointed by OAA to the Board of Directors for the National Contact Lens Examiners.

**Frank Pigner**

Frank is a skilled facilitator who balances technological advancements with practical business sense. He uses his industry experience to help his audience gain new perspective of product and practice performance. Frank has 19 years of experience in the Retail, Ophthalmology and Optometric Practice and Lens Manufacturing areas of the Optical Industry. His career began in 1996 as an apprentice under a Master Guild Optician. Following his apprenticeship Frank earned his ABO Certification in 1998, became an ABO Approved Technical Speaker in 2006 and earned his ABO Advanced Certification in 2009. Frank joined Essilor in 2006. Frank is currently the lead facilitator of the Dispensary Manager Program for ECP University and also a member of the Professional Relations Team working closely with the Schools and Colleges of Optometry, Schools of Opticianry as well as State and Industry Associations. Frank has helped hundreds of practices achieve new levels of success and has also helped dozens of Essilor employees to prepare for and pass the NOCE. Frank is the Vice-Chair of the North Texas Opticians Association, enjoys volunteering for various organizations and spending time with his wife Kristina and two sons Michael and Sebastian.

**Buddy Russell**

With over thirty-five years’ experience fitting contact lenses, Buddy is currently an associate of the contact lens service at Emory University Eye Center in Atlanta, Georgia. Buddy is a clinical instructor in Emory’s Ophthalmic Technology Program and teaches students and ophthalmology resident’s contact lens technology. He has been certified by JCAHPO since 1986 and is a Certified Ophthalmic Medical Technologist. Buddy is also a Fellow of the Scleral Lens Society. He lectures at national and international meetings on contact lens related topics. Buddy has written articles for various publications, two chapters for CLSA’s advanced training manual and is a peer reviewer for the Cornea and Eye and Contact Lens publications. He is also a contributing editor for CLSA’s Eyewitness journal. Buddy is also the National Contact Lens coordinator for the Infant Aphakia Treatment Study. His current areas of research include monocular pediatric aphakia and ocular surface disorders. In addition, he joined the faculty at TVCI in 2006 and given emeritus status in 2012.

**Robert Russo**

Professor Russo is the chairperson of Vision Care Technology and the anatomy and physiology, contact lens and business course coordinator. He is certified by the American Board of Opticianry, the National Contact Lens Examiners, the Opticians Association of America in Refractometry and is licensed in the states of New York and New Jersey. Professor Russo is currently the President of NFOS (National Federation of Opticianry Schools). He is a past Commissioner for the Commission on Opticianry
Accreditation, a past member of the board of directors of the Contact Lens Society of New York State and past chapter president of New York State Society of Opticians. In addition, Professor Russo has served on the faculty for the Opticians Association of America, Vision Expo East and West, EyeQuest and the ABO/NCLE Education Conference. He has published several articles on contact lenses and speaks frequently at the national and state level. Professor Russo received an Associate Degree in Ophthalmic Dispensing from New York City Community College, a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management from The City University of New York, and a Master of Arts Degree in Education from New York University. Professor Russo was named “National Federation of Opticianry Schools “Educator of the Year” in 2009, “Optician of the Year” by the New York State Society of Opticians in 2012 and received the National Academy of Opticianry’s Joseph Bruneni Memorial Education Achievement Award in 2015.

**Maryann Santos**

Maryann Santos is a Licensed Optician in Connecticut, ABOM and NCLE certified and Program Director of the Ophthalmic Science Program at Goodwin College in East Hartford, Connecticut. She holds an Associate’s degree in Ophthalmic Design and Dispensing, a Bachelor’s degree in Business Management, and is pursuing a Master’s degree in Education concentrating on curriculum and instruction. In addition to working at Goodwin College, Maryann works part-time as a Licensed Optician at Madison Optical fitting and dispensing eyeglasses and contact lenses. Maryann has worked in the optical industry for over three decades in the lab, dispensary and fitting contact lenses. Most recently owns and operates Optical Concepts, an Optical Dispensary Training Service throughout Connecticut. Maryann’s teaching philosophy is to motivate so each student may reach their greatest potential. To help students recognize what they have within themselves so they may persevere towards their goal. She works on providing support and encouragement by delivering content in an engaging way, so the student “gets it.” She’s committed to help develop students to be critical thinkers and life-long learners. Visit www.WhatsAnOptician.com and follow Maryann on Twitter @WhatsAnOptician.

**Maggie Sayers**

After receiving her degree in Opticianry from Heinrich Kleyer Schule in Germany, Maggie began her career in the optical field with a family business in Frankfurt, Germany. Moving to the USA, she continued in her chosen vocation and obtained her Florida license. She learned from Optometrists, Ophthalmologists, leaders in the corporate world, and studied refraction with Prof. Joe Sollecito. She went on to earn a Master’s in Ophthalmic Optics, where her Master’s paper on Designing Iseikonic Lenses was awarded the Eric Muth award. In 2008, being an avid learner, she returned to school to become a life coach. She studied Energy Leadership with Bruce Schneider, and became certified in Leadership Development and Business Coaching. She joined the Opticianry Summit in 2013 to lead a Mastermind group in a study on how important refraction is for the future of Opticianry. The results clearly indicated that refraction is at the heart of everything Opticians do. Ms. Sayers has been part of a national effort to provide refraction education, embrace new technology, and expand Opticians’ scope of practice. Maggie believes very strongly that refraction is part of the dispensing process. Her passion is supporting Opticians, encouraging them to become and remain relevant in the 21st century. Maggie joined forces with Caroline Miller in 2015 to form Success by Design, an executive leadership, coaching and consulting company focused on possibilities and results.
Jim Slightom
Jim Slightom is a Fellow in the Contact Lens Society of America, and a Master Optician certified by the American Board of Opticianry. Jim has been an optician and contact lens technician for over 38 years, owned his own optical business for the first 18 years, was the Contact Lens Clinical Director at the University of Missouri Kansas City Ophthalmology Department for 8 years, spent three years as a Clinical Specialist teaching and consulting with practitioners on how to fit Paragon’s Corneal Refractive Therapy lenses, and is currently a Contact Lens Consultant at ABB Optical Group. ABB is the largest North American distributor of all brands of soft lenses, and major lens manufacturer of GP and specialty soft lenses. Since 1991, Jim has specialized in contact lenses only.

Mark Soper
Mr. Soper formally entered the ophthalmic industry in 1977 as an apprentice contact lens technology/Ocularist. He is Owner and Director of Prosthetics and Clinical Services, actively engaged in fitting contact lenses and ocular prosthetics at Soper Brothers and Associates in Houston, Texas. He has special interests in the cosmetic restoration of unsightly eyes, the adverse effects to the surface quality of contact lenses and ocular prosthetics, and the topographical changes of the cornea induced by contact lenses, surgical procedures and systemic disease. Mr. Soper is a Board Certified Ocularist, Fellow Member of the American Society of Ocularist, and a Fellow Member of the Contact Lens Society of America. He has served on the Board of Directors of the American Society of Ocularist, the Contact Lens Society of Texas, the Opticians Association of Texas and the Contact Lens Society of America. Mr. Soper is a past president of the American Society of Ocularist and the Contact Lens Society of America. Mr. Soper has served as Education Chairman of the American Society of Ocularist and in the same capacity for the Contact Lens Society of Texas. During his presidency he founded and has served as Chairman of the Contact Lens Society of America University an online educational site used worldwide for contact lens education. He has authored, co-authored and edited numerous publications and presentations. He was a staff instructor at the annual Baylor College of Medicine Contact Lens Technology Course from 1978-1990 and has lectured extensively throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico in the fields of contact lens technology and ocular prosthetics. Mark, his wife Marsha, sons Marcus and Marshall reside in Houston and are very active in numerous civic and charitable organizations.

Bernie Stewart
Bernie Stewart is an Honored Fellow of the Contact Lens Society of America, NCLE Master, and ABOC with 41 years clinical and 37 years teaching experience. He has taught refraction, retinoscopy, contact lens, optical and exam review courses in 43 states and 2 foreign countries in private clinics, medical schools, Opticianry, Ophthalmology and Optometry meetings. He has a private practice at Swedish Hospital Medical Center in Seattle, Washington where he specializes in difficult eye glass, refractive and contact cases as a consultant to ophthalmology.

Michael Stewart, MD
Michael Stewart, MD is chairman of the Department of Ophthalmology at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Florida. Dr. Stewart graduated with honors in chemistry from Harvard College in Cambridge, Massachusetts and from the McGill University Faculty of Medicine in Montreal, Quebec. He completed an internship in internal medicine at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami, Florida, and an ophthalmology residency at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. Dr. Stewart completed vitreoretinal
fellowships at Touro Infirmary in New Orleans, Louisiana and at the University of California, Davis, after which he became a partner at Retina Associates in Jacksonville. He joined the Mayo Clinic in 1999 and was awarded the title Professor of Ophthalmology in 2014. His research interests include diabetic retinopathy, macular degeneration, retinal vein occlusions, and infectious retinitis, with particular emphasis on retinal pharmacology, pharmacokinetics, and the mathematical modeling of ocular diseases and treatments.

Kimberly Strickler
Professor Strickler is the clinical dispensing director as well as the ophthalmic dispensing and fabrication coordinator of the Department of Vision Care Technology at New York City College of Technology in Brooklyn, New York. She is certified by the American Board of Opticianry and National Contact Lens Examiners and is licensed in both New York State and Florida. Professor Strickler is the current Vice President of the National Federation of Optical Schools, a Commissioner on the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation, and a member of the New York State Society of Opticians Education Committee for approving continuing education. Professor Strickler has lectured for both state and national organizations including New York State Society of Opticians, Opticians Alliance of New York and OptiCon. She is the current and past Chairperson of the annual Essilor/NFOS College Bowl. Prior to relocating to New York, Professor Strickler was Director of Retail Operations for two top-hundred triophthalmic practices as well as a private consultant/practitioner in the state of Florida. Professor Strickler received an Associate of Arts Degree in Counseling from Jordan College in Michigan, a Bachelor of Science degree in Ophthalmic Optics from The City University of New York and a Master of Arts degree in Multicultural Studies from City University of New York, College of Staten Island.

Brian A. Thomas, Ph.D., ABOM, NCLEC, FNAO
Brian A. Thomas, Ph.D., ABOM, NCLEC, FNAO is the Ophthalmic Science program coordinator at Raritan Valley Community College, North Branch, New Jersey. Doctor Thomas has been a state licensed, practicing optician and involved in Opticianry education for almost thirty years, including service as an ABO and NAO approved lecturer. He has completed his Ph.D. degree in Educational Leadership, Management and Policy at Seton Hall University. He graduated Summa Cum Laude with his M.A. degree in Health Professions Education from a joint program at Seton Hall University/University of Medicine and Dentistry of NJ. He also graduated with high honors from Essex County College with an A.A.S. degree in Ophthalmic Science, and from Union College with an A.A. degree in Business Administration, and received a B.S. degree in Allied Health Services/Health Management from Montclair State University, all in New Jersey. Professor Thomas has been engaged in all aspects of Opticianry education since 1981. He has developed many courses, both credit and non-credit, at the college level. He has also been a frequent lecturer for state Opticianry organizations, a member of the Opticians Association of NJ (OANJ) board of directors, state Education Chair for the OANJ and he has been published many times by the National Academy of Opticianry as well as several other publications including past technical editor for ECP magazine.

Samantha Toth
Samantha is a professional speaker and marketing consultant for Inneractive Media, located in Grand Rapids, Michigan. With multiple family members in the industry, Samantha was born into "optical diapers." Her past experience as a dispensing optician, coupled with ABO certification and a BA degree
from Michigan State University have given her a unique perspective on marketing optical companies. Samantha's niche marketing expertise led her to be named one of Vision Monday's "Most Influential Women in Optical," and enabled her to work with Transitions Optical and a number of optical laboratories and optical practices across the country.

**William Underwood**

William Underwood is the Program Director for the Opticianry program at Hillsborough Community College, Tampa, Florida. He received his Associate degree in Opticianry from Erie Community College, Buffalo, New York. Bill earned his Ph.D. in Education from the University of South Florida. Dr. Underwood is an ABO Master Optician, NCLE certified, and licensed in the states of New York and Florida. He is the Vice President of the National Academy of Opticianry, an Honored Fellow of the Contact Lens Society of America, and a past President of the National Federation of Opticianry Schools. Dr. Underwood lectures frequently at state and national meetings.

**Blair Wong**

Blair, a Massachusetts licensed optician since 1980, has dedicated his career to the betterment and advancement of our profession. Blair is a Past President to both the New England Contact Lens Society and the Opticians Association of Massachusetts (OAM). He is the Executive Director to the OAM, having served in that role since 1998. Blair serves on many national committees and organizations as an active committee member to the Opticians Association of America, the National Federation of Opticianry Schools and the American Board of Opticianry. Blair is the Department Chair of the Opticianry program at the Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology in Boston and is an Associate Professor at the New England College of Optometry. Blair is very appreciative and grateful for the many opportunities to have been able to contribute to the growth and advancement of Opticianry.