

# Academy Notebook

NEWS • TIPS • RESOURCES

## What's Happening

### **Glaucoma Research Foundation's 2009 Awards Ceremony**

The Academy's outgoing executive vice president, H. Dunbar Hoskins Jr., MD, was awarded the 2009 Catalyst Award by the Glaucoma Research Foundation (GRF) this past January.

The GRF funds collaborative research with the explicit mission of finding a cure for glaucoma. Also honored at the GRF ceremony was Rohit Varma, MD, MPH, for his landmark Los Angeles Latino Eye Study, which confirmed that Latinos are at disproportionately high risk for glaucoma; Donald J. Brown, PhD, for his work testing the effect of IOP on the movement of optic nerve head collagen beams; and John Hetherington Jr., MD, who cofounded the GRF with Dr. Hoskins in 1978.

The foundation's foremost project is "Catalyst for a Cure" (CFC), which was launched in 2002 and integrates the glaucoma work of labs at Johns Hopkins University, Vanderbilt University, the University of



**HONORING INNOVATION.** "Research is critical to finding a cure for glaucoma, and funding this work is what the Glaucoma Research Foundation [GRF] does," said Dr. Hoskins, 2009 Catalyst Awardee. "We are all proud of its accomplishments." Pictured above: Dr. Hoskins (center) with researchers supported by the GRF—(from left to right) Nicholas Marsh-Armstrong, PhD, Philip Horner, PhD, David Calkins, PhD, and Monica Vetter, PhD.

Utah and the University of Washington. Their research has led to a paradigm shift in understanding glaucoma progression. The standard model, which had proposed that optic nerve injury is induced solely by elevated IOP, has given way to a deeper model of neurodegeneration. In this new model, IOP is but one of several factors along a continuum of disease that theoretically increases the number of targets for therapy.

The CFC researchers expressed hope at the awards ceremony that curing glaucoma will advance the fight against other neurodegen-

erative processes.

*For more information on the Glaucoma Research Foundation, visit [www.glaucoma.org](http://www.glaucoma.org).*

## FYI

### **Update Your Membership Listing for the New Directory**

Please take time to visit "Update Member Profile," located at [www.aao.org/member](http://www.aao.org/member), to ensure that your information is complete and accurate for both the Acad-

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### **Vision Center of Excellence:**

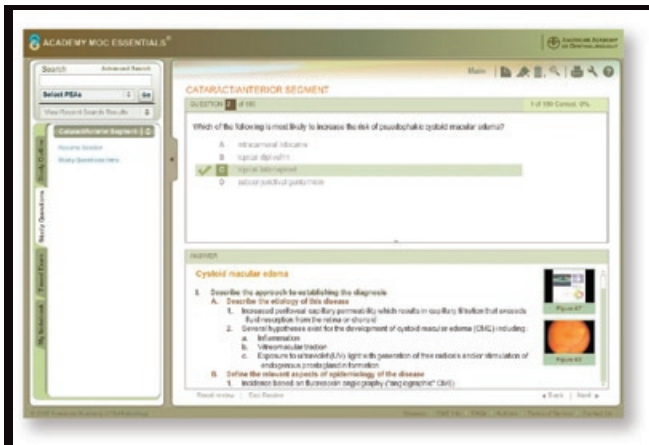
Its funding is one of the Academy's top legislative priorities.

emy's 2010–2011 Member Directory and *Find an Eye M.D.*, the online directory of practicing ophthalmologists. Changes to your information for the 2010–2011 Member Directory will be accepted through July 1.

*For more information, contact Member Services by phone, 866-561-8558 (toll-free in the United States) or 415-561-8581, or e-mail, [member\\_services@aao.org](mailto:member_services@aao.org).*

### **Take Part in the 2009 Eye Injury Snapshot**

The Academy and the American Society of Ocular Trauma are once again urging all ophthalmologists, ophthalmology residents and emergency room physicians to report every eye



**EXAM STUDY KIT.** Log in to the Ophthalmic News & Education (O.N.E.) Network to access the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Exam Study Kit. This online study program is based on the Practicing Ophthalmologists Curriculum—the same content used by the American Board of Ophthalmology to develop exam questions for the Demonstration of Ophthalmic Cognitive Knowledge (DOCK).

The MOC Exam Study Kit provides study outlines; hundreds of multiple choice questions with correct answers that link back to the study outline; and timed exams for each practice emphasis area (PEA) that simulate the DOCK online test-taking experience.

The MOC Exam Study Kit is a benefit of Academy membership. To access it and other MOC resources, visit [www.aao.org/MOC](http://www.aao.org/MOC).

injury treated during the week of May 17 to 24 to the Eye Injury Snapshot project. The form takes only a few minutes to fill out, and data can be submitted online or by fax.

Eye injury prevention got a big boost in 2008 through both the fifth annual Eye Injury Snapshot project and the eye injury awareness effort of the Academy's EyeSmart campaign. The response to the Eye Injury Snapshot was strong, with about 775 data reports submitted. This helped secure increased media exposure and resulted in greater public awareness of the importance of wearing protective eyewear.

**For more information about the Eye Injury Snapshot,** visit [www.aao.org/](http://www.aao.org/)

**snapshot.** To order a free EyeSmart Eye Injury Kit, visit [www.aao.org/eyesmart](http://www.aao.org/eyesmart) campaign.

### Discount for Office Staff Job Postings

Advertise open positions for non-MD office staff positions on the Professional Choices Web site and receive a \$100 discount through May 1 on a 90-day online listing.

List jobs by categories (e.g., Billing/Coding, Technician or Administrator/Office Manager) to target qualified candidates.

**For more information,** visit [www.aao.org/professionalchoices](http://www.aao.org/professionalchoices). Each 90-day listing costs \$245 for members and \$445 for nonmembers (discount included). Please use promotion code "staff09."

### Ask the Ethicist: Revised PhRMA Code

**Q:** I have been asked by an ophthalmic pharmaceutical company to become a speaker for one of the company's products. After attending a speaker training meeting, I will be paid an honorarium for speaking at local and regional dinner meetings. A colleague has advised me that the updated Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) Code on Interactions with Healthcare Professionals, which took effect Jan. 1, places limitations on speaker training meetings, as well as speaker programs. What do I need to know about the PhRMA code in this regard?

**A:** The updated PhRMA code provides guidelines regarding appropriate interactions between health care providers and pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, including participation in speaker programs and speaker training meetings. If you are considering becoming a speaker for industry, attending a speaker training session held by the company is strongly advised, as it is important that you are fully aware of the FDA guidelines that govern the content of industry-sponsored presentations. The PhRMA guidelines state that these training meetings

be held in venues that "are conducive to informational communication and training" and thus resorts are considered inappropriate venues.

Similarly, with regard to the speaker program itself, the PhRMA code states that speaker programs, which have traditionally been held in private dining rooms of expensive restaurants, should offer only "modest meals" to attendees and also be held in "a venue and manner conducive to informational communication." You, as the speaker, have the responsibility to clearly identify the company sponsoring the presentation and to state that you are presenting on behalf of the company.

In addition, the speaker arrangement with the company must not be an inducement or a reward for specific prescribing patterns and should avoid any possible appearance of such a reward or inducement. Accordingly, the arrangement should be set forth in a written and signed contract with reasonable compensation based on fair market value.

A relatively common and particularly problematic issue that speakers for industry may encounter is the expectation that they will discuss unapproved or off-

### Did You Know?

Academy members can report and review their continuing medical education (CME) credits online at no charge. Through the "My CME Transcript" feature on the Ophthalmic News & Education (O.N.E.) Network, you can keep track of credits earned for both Academy and non-Academy CME activities and print your transcript. Credits are reflected immediately after they are entered.

To access this service, visit [www.aao.org/cme](http://www.aao.org/cme).

label uses of a medication. Per the federal government, a physician who accepts compensation for agreeing to promote an off-label use of a medication risks indictment, as does the manufacturer of the medication.

Although off-label prescribing is not specifically addressed by the updated PhRMA code, a physician speaking on behalf of industry should avoid discussing off-label uses of a medication unless a member of the audience asks a question about such a use. In such a case, the physician should feel free to discuss such off-label uses but should clearly state that such uses are off-label.

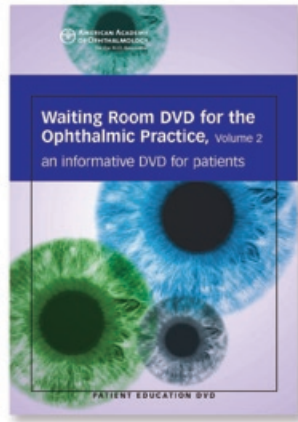
For the entire PhRMA Code on Interactions with Healthcare Professionals, visit [www.phrma.org](http://www.phrma.org) and select the "PhRMA Code" box. To submit a question for this column, contact the Ethics Committee staff at [ethics@aao.org](mailto:ethics@aao.org).

## Academy Store

### New Patient Brochure on PRK

The Academy's *Photorefractive Keratectomy (PRK)* (#051129) brochure is now available for purchase. It discusses refractive errors and how PRK may be used to correct these vision problems. Topics include what patients can expect before, during and after PRK surgery, as well as the procedure's risks and benefits.

The Academy has 38 peer-reviewed brochure titles in English and seven



in Spanish. Each title comes in a package of 100 and is \$32 for members and \$40 for nonmembers.

### Educate Your Patients While They Wait

The Academy's *Waiting Room DVD for the Ophthalmic Practice, Vol. 2* (#050120) covers age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, cataracts, diabetic retinopathy and more. The DVD can be viewed in English, Spanish or closed-captioning.

It is \$225 for members and \$295 for nonmembers. You will receive a 10 percent discount when you purchase volumes 1 and 2 together.

### Maximize Your Practice's Profit Potential

Be sure to check out the American Academy of Ophthalmic Executives' host of practice management resources:

- *A+ Marketing: Proven*

## Academy Store

To order products from the Academy Store, visit [www.aao.org/store](http://www.aao.org/store) or phone the Academy Service Center at 866-561-8558 (toll-free in the United States) or 415-561-8540.

## WASHINGTON REPORT

### Academy Priorities Include Vision Center

The Vision Center of Excellence (VCE), created by the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act, is a joint Department of Defense/Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) program devoted to the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment and rehabilitation of military eye injuries. Congress established the VCE in response to problems veterans were experiencing and the need to create a more seamless transition in care between the departments. The VCE will also facilitate vision research efforts, including research on visual dysfunction related to traumatic brain injury. The Academy advocated for the creation of the VCE and continues to work with veterans' organizations and the vision community to support the center. Securing adequate funding for the VCE is one of the Academy's top legislative priorities for the 111th Congress.

The Academy advocated for the creation of the VCE and continues to work with veterans' organizations and the vision community to support the center and its activities.

One of the center's responsibilities is the development of a military eye injury registry containing up-to-date information about the diagnosis, treatment and follow-up for each serious eye injury sustained by military personnel. An important feature of the registry is the requirement for the exchange of information between the Department of Defense and the VA.

Col. Donald A. Gagliano, MD, has been appointed the VCE's first director. Col. Gagliano has held broad medical responsibilities in the military, both in Europe and Iraq. He has led soldiers at every level of command, having served as platoon leader and company commander, laboratory commander and hospital commander. He was awarded the Army Surgeon General's "A" Designator in recognition of his leadership and extensive international contributions as an ophthalmologist and retina surgeon. Claude L. Cowan Jr., MD, is the VCE's deputy director. He is an ophthalmologist at the Washington, D.C., VA Medical Center and serves as a clinical professor of ophthalmology at both George Washington Medical Center and Georgetown University Medical Center.

As heads of the VCE, Col. Gagliano and Dr. Cowan will ultimately be in charge of a combined clinical, administrative and information technology staff involving four military clinical VCE locations. The VCE also will coordinate with other clinical centers of excellence and VA medical facilities that provide specialized services to American troops wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In addition to addressing military eye injuries, Col. Gagliano wants the VCE to focus on eye diseases that impact veterans and would like it to be involved in international eye humanitarian efforts to help build relationships around the world.

*Tactics for Success* (#012182) shows you how to market your practice and helps you identify cost-effective marketing opportunities. It is \$99 for members and \$113 for nonmembers.

- *The Dispensing Ophthalmologist* (#012179) is a step-by-step guide to creating a business plan, building a dispensary, hiring an optician, measuring performance and more. It is \$99 for members and \$135 for nonmembers.

- *The Practice Success Kit: A Collection of Ophthalmic Executive's Resource Guides* (#012165) contains nine modules that cover a range of topics from business operations to marketing. It is \$240 for members and \$325 for nonmembers.

## Meeting Matters



### Save These Dates

Mark your calendar for the Academy's Joint Meeting with the Pan-American Academy of Ophthalmology (PAAO).

- **June 3:** Advance Program available on the Academy's Web site.
- **June 24:** Registration and housing open to Academy, PAAO and AAOE members.
- **July 8:** Registration and housing open to nonmembers.
- **Aug. 5:** Early registration deadline.
- **Aug. 26:** Last day to register and have your badge and meeting materials

mailed to you before the meeting.

- **Sept. 30:** Preregistration deadline.
- **Oct. 23–24:** Subspecialty Day meetings.
- **Oct. 24–27:** Joint Meeting.

For the most up-to-date meeting information, visit [www.aao.org/2009](http://www.aao.org/2009).

### Submit Abstracts for Papers, Posters and Videos

If you are interested in being a presenter at next year's Joint Meeting, abstracts must be submitted online:

- For papers, posters and videos, the online submitter closes on April 14.
- If you are making plans to submit a video abstract, the deadline to submit the actual video is April 24.

Abstracts may be submitted for review to the Academy or the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology. Please review the abstract guidelines before making your submission.

For information on submitting an abstract, visit [www.aao.org/2009](http://www.aao.org/2009), select "Scientific Program" and "Presenter Central." For further information, e-mail [meetings@ao.org](mailto:meetings@ao.org).

### Upcoming Academy Exhibits

The Academy will exhibit at two ophthalmology meetings this spring. Stop by the booth and browse the latest Academy products, learn about membership and get information on the Joint Meeting in San Francisco this October.

- **April 4–8:** American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery, San Francisco, Booth #2108. Visit



**CALIFORNIA ADVOCACY.** As part of the Residents' Advocacy Program, Dr. Melendez (far right) and Dr. Hovanesian (far left) challenged residents at the Jules Stein Eye Institute to advocate for their patients and become champions for a cause, issue or position.

[www.ascrs.org/09am](http://www.ascrs.org/09am) for more information.

- **May 16–19:** Asia-Pacific Association of Ophthalmology, Bali, Indonesia. Visit [www.apao2009bali.org](http://www.apao2009bali.org) for more information.

Leadership Development Program. "Advocacy is more than scope of practice issues. It has to do with advocating on behalf of our patients for better health care," said Dr. Melendez.

JSEI program director Anthony C. Arnold, MD, and JSEI faculty John A. Hovanesian, MD, were instrumental in organizing RAP. "Our residents learn important clinical skills during their residency, but advocacy lessons are just as important," Dr. Hovanesian said. C. Nathaniel Roybal, MD, PhD, was one of the JSEI residents in attendance. "The inspiring advocacy seminar by Dr. Melendez demonstrated the need for young ophthalmologists to develop leadership skills and influence policy," said Dr. Roybal. "Our local and federal involvement is key to the future of ophthalmology and to our ability to continue providing exceptional patient care."

## Members At Large

### Advocacy Program Enlightens California Residents

During the Residents' Advocacy Program (RAP) this January at the Jules Stein Eye Institute (JSEI), residents from Los Angeles-area programs participated in a series of discussions about the importance of patient advocacy.

The program was presented by Robert F. Melendez, MD, a member of the Academy's Young Ophthalmologist committee and graduate of the Academy's