



AMERICAN ACADEMY
OF OPHTHALMOLOGY®

2017 YEAR IN REVIEW

Celebrating Our Passion for Patient Care

Protecting Sight. Empowering Lives.®



The American Academy of Ophthalmology is the world's largest association of eye physicians and surgeons — a global community of 32,000 ophthalmologists. Each year, our leadership and more than 1,000 physician volunteers work diligently to produce the best member experience, the most innovative educational resources and the most powerful advocacy tools so that you can provide the highest-quality patient care.

In the pages that follow, find out what together we all achieved in 2017. From further enhancing the Ophthalmic News and Education (ONE®) Network's leading clinical education content to fighting for ophthalmology's best interests in state and federal affairs, the Academy continues to support you and your patients on all fronts.

A contact lens infection almost blinded Te' LaVette on her wedding day. Ohio ophthalmologist Thomas L. Steinemann, MD, diagnosed her with a corneal infection and managed to save her vision. This experience has turned her into an advocate for proper contact lens wear and care. Read more about our patient stories campaign on page 18.

PHOTOS, THIS PAGE AND COVER: Brian Kaufmann, MetroHealth System



A Letter From the Academy CEO

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

This 2017 Year in Review highlights some of the many established programs and new initiatives of the American Academy of Ophthalmology. It is, however, by no means a comprehensive summary, given the total scope of our activities. The Academy is the largest professional membership association in global ophthalmology with over 32,000 members. Its educational programs and clinical guidelines are accessed by over 80,000 ophthalmologists worldwide. Its public-facing programs touch over three million people a month.

The Academy’s duty and obligation is therefore to serve communities, individuals and our profession in many different arenas. We are first and foremost an educational

organization — dedicated to helping ophthalmologists acquire and sustain a very high level of professional quality. We achieve this through a number of programs — peer-reviewed scientific journals, the world’s largest annual meeting of ophthalmologists, a massive online learning resource, evidence-based clinical guidelines and much more. We recognize that different people learn differently — and we try to meet these varying learning styles. The Academy is also putting an increasingly large percentage of its learning tools outside of password-protected barriers — so they are accessible to everyone, including the public. Optimal health care involves active patient engagement. We wish to provide patients with informational resources from the most basic to the most complex and comprehensive.

The Academy also bears an advocacy responsibility. Most societies are grappling with health care system redesign to reconcile the compelling objectives of access for all to necessary care of the highest quality at the lowest cost. We believe that ophthalmologists and ophthalmologic organizations (particularly the Academy) have a responsibility to contribute to policy-making affecting eye health, disease and treatment. If we abrogate this responsibility, others without our perspective, knowledge and experience will design the eye care system of tomorrow without us.

Our Academy must not only encourage and facilitate innovation by others, but should itself be an engine of innovation. Ten years ago, we launched the largest online compendium of scientific knowledge in any specialty — the Ophthalmic News and Education (ONE) Network. It continues to evolve using new technologies



of simulation and personalized learning plans. Four years ago, we launched what is now the world’s largest single-specialty clinical data registry — the IRIS® Registry (Intelligent Research in Sight). Its goal is to provide real-world, real-time feedback to ophthalmologists on their clinical activity and improve quality of care. And we work with others — individuals and organizations — to bring new drugs, technologies and techniques to the clinic and operating room.

Finally, the Academy sets standards for its members and for itself not only for clinical care, but also for

professionalism. This includes “walking the walk” with regard to ethics, identifying and managing conflicts of interest, promulgating policies based on scientific evidence, sustaining programs of mentoring and leadership development, encouraging a culture of welcoming and responsible individual behavior and above all, placing the patient first.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David W. Parke II, MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David W. Parke II, MD
Chief Executive Officer

A Letter From the 2017 Academy President

Dear Colleagues,

It has been an honor to serve as the 2017 Academy president in the 121st year of our professional organization, the American Academy of Ophthalmology. Each year, our Academy achieves remarkable advancements for our profession due to dedicated physician volunteers on more than a hundred committees and the support of the excellent Academy staff. The membership is well represented by the Board of Trustees' wisdom of experience and new insights from younger ophthalmologists.

Education continues to be the foundation of the Academy under the leadership of Senior Secretary for Clinical Education Louis B. Cantor, MD. Close to half of the

Academy's physician volunteers work on education committees. The Ophthalmic News and Education (ONE) Network continues to be the educational nexus for ophthalmologists around the world. The latest addition is the David E. I. Pyott Glaucoma Education Center, which is dedicated to advancing education of eye care providers globally for the most effective care of patients with this complex disease process. In the rapidly changing subspecialty of retina, a new Academy publication, *Ophthalmology® Retina*, brings more information to ophthalmologists managing retinal disorders.

The IRIS Registry (Intelligent Research in Sight) continues to grow in importance to the practice of ophthalmology by facilitating physician participation in the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS), enabling our fellow Academy members to avoid tens of thousands of dollars in financial

penalties. And now, through the foresight of H. Dunbar Hoskins Jr., MD, and his wife Ann, with the generous support of \$500,000 from OMIC, the Academy launched the Hoskins Center IRIS Registry Research Fund. Research of large data sets from the IRIS Registry can allow us to identify the most effective and efficient care for patients more rapidly. This will be a truly transformative change in how research and subsequently patient care is practiced.

The Minority Ophthalmology Mentoring Program Student Engagement Day was held for the second time at the annual meeting. It was very successful in introducing these students to the possibility of becoming ophthalmologists. This is a long-term project that will be rewarding for patient care and for



ophthalmology in the future.

Developing ophthalmology leaders is also important for the future of our profession. The Academy's Leadership Development Program (LDP) celebrated 20 years of service as well as global expansion of the program. The impact of the LDP is manifested in many of our organization's best leaders such as: 2018 Academy President Keith D. Carter, MD; 2017 Jackson Memorial Lecturer Daniel F. Martin, MD; Council Chair Mathew W. MacCumber, MD, PhD; Council Vice Chair Lynn K. Gordon, MD, PhD; 2017 Straatsma Award recipient Shahzad I. Mian, MD; and 2017 Artemis Award recipient Jeff H. Pettey, MD. After 20 years, there are too many outstanding graduates to list them all.

It has been an honor to serve as the 2017 Academy president in the 121st year of our professional organization.



Advocacy on both the federal and state levels is critical for patient care and practice health. The Academy has expended significant effort, time and money to protect federal reimbursement for the clinical care ophthalmologists provide. Access to and reimbursement for compounded medications has been an issue for over a decade. In 2017, the Academy continued this seemingly never-ending work to ensure that we have access to these sight-saving medications for our patients. Another federal advocacy focus is to decrease the regulatory burdens that divert physician time away from patient care. At the state level, we remain active in working with legislatures to ensure the highest quality of care across the nation.

Effective advocacy requires financial investment and personal relationships. Academy members who know their state legislators and donate to their state PAC, as well as the Academy's Surgical Scope Fund, help to impact the

quality of care at the state level. At the national level, OPHTHPAC® donations allow the Academy to support members of Congress who are favorable to ophthalmic patient care. If *all* U.S.-based Academy members (rather than the currently fewer than 20 percent) split a \$900-a-year contribution among the three funds, the results could be remarkable for our patients.

And that is our *raison d'être* — taking care of patients. The Academy's 2017 Secretary for Communications Philip R. Rizzuto, MD, and his committee members share patient stories with our membership and the public to help make eye health a priority. These stories are inspiring because they remind us of why we wanted to be ophthalmologists and make us proud of our profession and our colleagues.

Just as eye health should be a priority for patients, to take good care of them, physicians also need to be healthy. Administrative burdens, electronic medical records implementation and many other changes are diverting physician

attention away from patients, increasing stress while eroding physician happiness. The Academy has created a series of online wellness resources and events to help restore well-being for ophthalmologists. Remember the joy of matching in ophthalmology? Perhaps following in a mother's or father's footsteps? Keep the joy of the wonderful profession of ophthalmology. Take time to live a healthy life. Eat healthy food, get sufficient sleep and take time to exercise.

Ophthalmology is a great profession. Thank you for the privilege of serving as the 2017 president of the Academy.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Ann Bradford, MD
2017 President

Keep the joy
of the wonderful
profession of
ophthalmology.
Take time to live
a healthy life.

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Using the Power of Data to Advance Patient Care and Ease Reporting



The Academy's [IRIS® Registry \(Intelligent Research in Sight\)](#) — the nation's first EHR-based comprehensive eye disease and condition registry — is also the world's largest clinical data registry. And its reach continues to grow, providing ophthalmologists with clinical benchmarks and practice patterns on more than 44 million U.S. patients and 182 million patient visits. By having the ability to immediately apply the knowledge of millions of data points, we are supporting ophthalmologists in their quest of improving patient outcomes at a quickening pace.

PROMOTING NEW SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES

Researchers are continuing to mine the IRIS Registry data and shed light on treatment patterns. Recent population-based studies include:

- How three brands of treatment appear equally effective in patients with a common form of age-related macular degeneration
- How a potentially blinding complication related to macular degeneration treatment is less common than previously reported

- How return trips to the OR after macular surgery are frequently linked to worse visual outcomes

And to support additional studies using IRIS Registry data, Research to Prevent Blindness joined the Academy during AAO 2017 to announce the creation of [a new category of grant](#). This collaboration will fund six studies over two years. Each grant of \$35,000 will allow recipients to learn how to use the IRIS Registry's analytic capabilities and help clinical researchers leverage this growing resource.

HELPING YOU SUCCEED DURING THE REIMBURSEMENT TRANSFORMATION

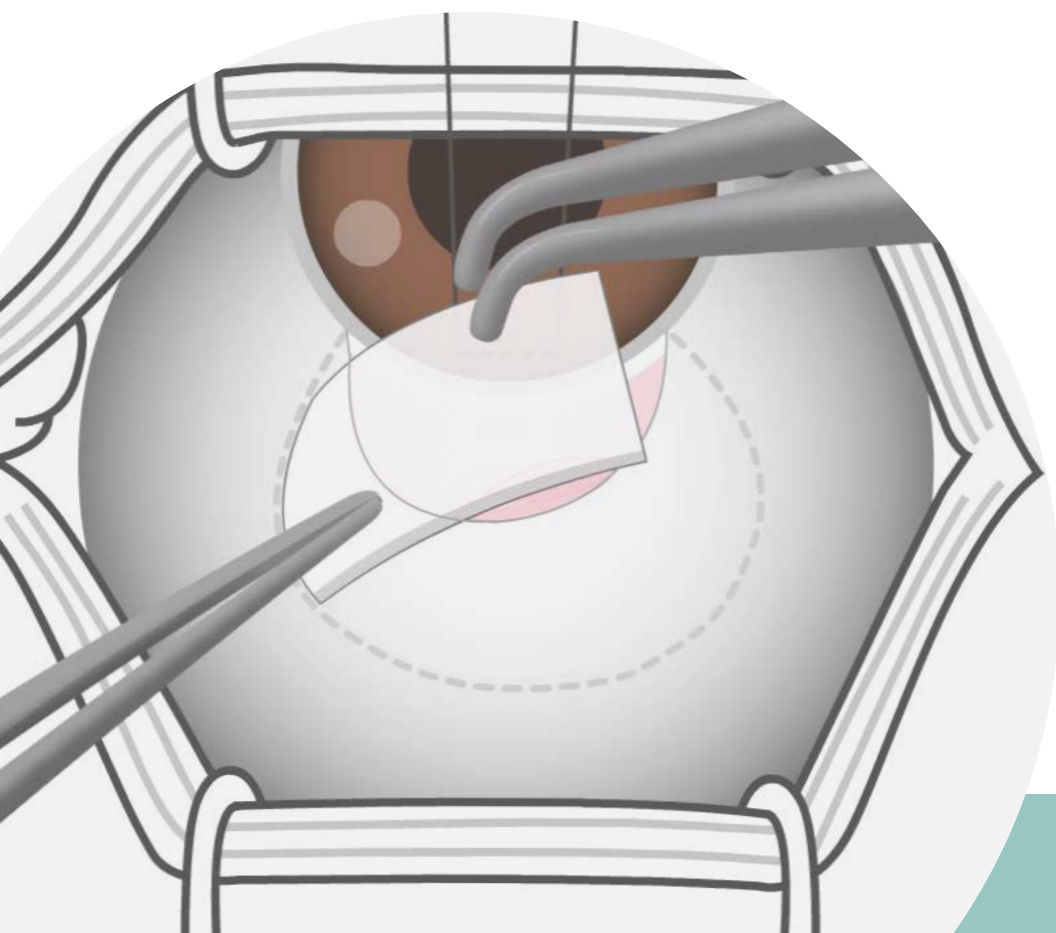
Nearly 18,000 physicians from over 5,200 practices are currently using IRIS Registry data to assess their quality of care and ease compliance with Medicare reporting requirements. They are rewarded with savings that increase every year by avoiding penalties.

The IRIS Registry is now ophthalmology's tool of choice for the [Merit-Based Incentive Payment System \(MIPS\)](#). As with PQRS, the IRIS Registry provides two platforms to help you tackle MIPS—one requires EHRs (integrating your EHR system with the registry) and the other doesn't (manual data entry via a web portal). For the 2017 reporting year, the IRIS Registry expects to save participants an estimated \$100 million — and those practices using an IRIS Registry-integrated EHR realized an almost 100 percent success rate for quality reporting. This is a large increase from the \$24 million savings in 2014, when reporting through the IRIS Registry began.

READ MORE:
[IRIS Registry Mined for Insights](#)
(EyeNet® Magazine)

PHOTO: Mathew W. MacCumber, MD, PhD, presented during the AAO 2017 symposium, "[The Value of the IRIS Registry: What Can We Learn From 100 Million Patient Records?](#)" He and a distinguished panel of Academy leaders discussed how the Academy's IRIS Registry is enabling studies on practice patterns, factors affecting clinical outcomes and possible risk factors for disease development.

Advancing Clinical Education With State-of-the-Art Learning Tools



2017 was a year of educational evolution at the Academy, marked by the development of a new glaucoma education center and the launch of a new clinical journal dedicated to retinal disease.

SPEEDING ONLINE MEDICAL TRAINING IN GLAUCOMA TREATMENT

When David E. I. Pyott, CBE, MD(Hon), past chairman and CEO of Allergan, pledged \$2 million to the Academy Foundation for glaucoma education, he wanted to provide instruction to eye care providers globally and allow for easy sharing of information among them. The new online [David E. I. Pyott Glaucoma Education Center](#) makes publicly available most of the Ophthalmic News and Education (ONE®) Network glaucoma content. The center also introduces many new features to complement the ONE Network's existing educational materials that include:

- **Surgical video and animation.** The center offers fresh perspectives on surgeries by showing videos of procedures accompanied by animation clearly illustrating each step.

- **Interactive maps and data.**

Epidemiologic and incidence data come alive through an interactive map that quickly conveys basic information for each U.S. state.

- **Diagnosis and treatment algorithms.**

The center lets the clinician specify a disease (POAG, PACG, etc.) and navigate stepwise through each decision needed to arrive at a management algorithm — all designed for use on your smartphone.

- **Gonioscopy videos.** The *Color Atlas of Gonioscopy*, now available through the center, gives users access to clinical videos of procedures for the angle.

SHOWCASING TOP-TIER RESEARCH FOR RETINA SUBSPECIALISTS GLOBALLY

In response to the growing volume and quality of retina research, the Academy launched a new clinical journal: [Ophthalmology® Retina](#). It focuses exclusively on retina-related eye diseases and conditions and publishes original research of interest to retina specialists worldwide.

With this increased exposure to retina-specific manuscripts, ophthalmologists will be better able to stay on top of the latest advances in medical drug treatment, surgery, technology and science.

“A devoted retina journal provides subspecialists with cutting-edge research and just-in-time insights to better serve patients,” said Andrew P. Schachat, MD, editor-in-chief of *Ophthalmology Retina*. “In an environment that is constantly changing, it’s important that we equip our colleagues with everything they need to choose appropriate emerging treatments. *Ophthalmology Retina* will be a valuable resource for retina specialists around the world.”

PHOTO: Thanks to a generous donation from David E. I. Pyott, CBE, MD(Hon), new instructional videos on the ONE Network combine surgical footage with detailed step-by-step animation.

Providing AAO 2017 Attendees With Unparalleled Learning Opportunities



[AAO 2017](#), the 121st annual meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, was the year's most important showcase for research and innovations in eye care, with 537 exhibitors, 239 instruction courses, 53 symposia and hundreds of scientific papers and posters. It was also the single largest global ophthalmic education opportunity. Nearly 23,000 ophthalmologists, health professionals and industry personnel from around the world convened in New Orleans to hear from thought leaders, gain insights into practice management trends and get hands-on experience with cutting-edge treatment techniques.

HIGHLIGHTS OF AAO 2017:

The Academy pioneered a Scientific Poster Lounge, housing touchscreen poster kiosks and the new Scientific Poster Theater. These kiosks provided attendees with a communal environment to view the electronic posters. All six theater sessions proved highly popular, with excellent attendance.

The Academy continues to develop novel educational formats. The annual meeting secretariat introduced a newly designed

instruction room at AAO 2017 to improve engagement with both the material and class participants. We also piloted a phone-based audience response system so that attendees could further interact with lecturers. Ten sessions were held in this new environment, including Diagnose This Live, during which attendees competed in teams to solve some of the most difficult "Diagnose This" quizzes.

AAO 2017 attendees also spent time recharging in the beer garden, challenging colleagues to a game of chess and discovering other ways to relax in the brand-new [EyePlay Experience](#). This area was designed by the Academy with a focus on increasing physician well-being.

The Academy again offered the free [AAO 2017 Virtual Meeting](#) to bring the conference to those who were not able to attend in person. This year, we streamed more than 20 hours of educational content for live remote access. More than 2,300 people from 117 countries accessed AAO 2017 and Subspecialty Day presentations.

Top 5 Highly-Rated Symposia at AAO 2017, Based on Attendee Evaluations:

- 1. Medicolegal Implications in Ophthalmic Practice**
- 2. Genetic Disorders in Pediatric Ophthalmology**
- 3. Practical Use of Electronic Health Records to Improve Safety and Quality**
- 4. Management of Common Ischemic Neuro-Ophthalmic Conditions of the Elderly**
- 5. From Ground Zero to the Moon: How Intracranial and Intraocular Pressure Disparities Relate to Vision**

PHOTO: Daniel F. Martin, MD, delivered the Jackson Memorial Lecture, "Intravitreal Therapy for Retinal Diseases: From CMV to CNV." Dr. Martin discussed the reshaping retina practice and the paradigm shift away from intravenous and oral therapy to multiple repeat intravitreal injections. The professor and chair of the Cleveland Clinic Cole Eye Institute also covered the rationale and results from many of the most important clinical trials, in particular, the political challenges and important clinical findings from the Comparison of Treatment Trials.

Making an Impact on Our Profession at Home, Abroad, and in Times of Need



As part of the global ophthalmology community, the Academy is ramping up the fight against eye disease and helping ophthalmologists make long-lasting, sustainable contributions to eye care in communities at home and overseas. We are investing in our patients and our profession by fostering tomorrow's physicians, connecting trainees to global training opportunities and giving back to those in need.

DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF OPHTHALMOLOGISTS

During Student Engagement Day at AAO 2017, the Academy welcomed the second class of 25 students from 22 schools to the Minority Ophthalmology Mentoring Program. This collaboration with the Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology (AUPO) is designed to attract underrepresented medical students to ophthalmology to more accurately reflect the patient population. As part of the program, the Academy matched students

with ophthalmologists who will mentor them for the coming years, helping them prepare to be competitive when applying for the residency match. In addition, the Academy and the AUPO approved five years of additional funding for the program through 2022.

HELPING DELIVER CARE IN UNDERSERVED AREAS OF THE WORLD

Since its launch one year ago, the [Global Directory of Training Opportunities](#) has grown to more than 3,300 listings. This free resource helps ophthalmologists track down supplemental training opportunities outside their countries and provides basic information and links to fellowships, observerships and research opportunities from around the world.

TEAMING UP TO SUPPORT HURRICANE AND EARTHQUAKE SURVIVORS

In response to the devastation caused by natural disasters in August and September 2017, we teamed up with the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology to establish a Hurricane Relief Fund helping those in affected areas get

the vital services and assistance they need. One hundred percent of the donations went to [Americares](#), a non-profit disaster relief and global health organization providing immediate response to emergency medical needs and supporting long-term health care initiatives for people in the United States and around the world.

To get the message out, we highlighted [personal stories](#) of those Academy members who went above and beyond in their own communities to support disaster victims. We also offered a portal for [industry leaders](#) to provide information about the supplies they were offering to affected communities.

PHOTO: Derick Ansah received a certificate from program chairs Mildred M.G. Olivier, MD, and Susan H. Forster, MD, on completion of the 2017 Minority Ophthalmology Mentoring Program Student Engagement Day. Medical students learned about the many subspecialty areas from which to choose in ophthalmology and about the diseases that most affect minority populations.

Federal Advocacy: Building New Relationships to Advance Patient Care



The past year's evolving health care landscape provided significant challenges — but also opportunities — as the Academy advocated on behalf of ophthalmology and our patients. Our successes resulted from carefully cultivated relationships with regulators and lawmakers, coupled with exemplary ophthalmologist-led advocacy.

PRESERVING THE PHYSICIAN-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP THROUGH REGULATORY RELIEF

In January, the Academy launched an aggressive effort to secure regulatory relief for all physicians. Our focus remains on reducing administrative burdens and penalties that prevent physicians from spending more time with patients.

So far, Academy-led coalition efforts have gained some much-needed relief from penalties that will affect physicians in 2018. We also made gains to unburden federal quality reporting.

ENSURING PHYSICIANS' SUCCESS IN MEDICARE'S NEW PHYSICIAN PAYMENT SYSTEM

In 2017, our profession was among the most prepared in medicine for

the first year of the Quality Payment Program, Medicare's value-based payment system for physicians. This includes the [Merit-Based Incentive Payment System](#), the fee-for-service pathway through which most ophthalmologists participate.

The Academy took steps to help all ophthalmologists avoid all 2019 penalties for this year's performance. We also helped win significant relief for small practices participating in the program in 2018, while keeping passing thresholds low for other practitioners.

PROTECTING PATIENTS' TIMELY ACCESS TO CRITICAL COMPOUNDED TREATMENTS

Thanks in part to our ongoing advocacy efforts, the Food and Drug Administration released a new draft guidance that provides ophthalmology with a pathway to continued access to repackaged Avastin. Also, legislation has been introduced by the Academy's congressional allies to allow traditional compounding pharmacies to retain the ability to compound for office use in states that allow for office use.

ADVOCATING TO DELAY PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONTACT LENS RULE

Following more than two years of Academy advocacy, the Federal Trade Commission announced in December that it will delay issuing final guidance on its update to the Contact Lens Rule. Our efforts were rooted in preventing the agency from forcing prescribers to obtain signed patient acknowledgement forms that confirm receipt of their contact lens prescription.

POSITIONING SUBSPECIALISTS FOR SUCCESS VIA NEW TAXONOMY CODES

The Academy capped a successful three-year effort to enable subspecialists' success in federal programs and possibly other insurance company data using taxonomy codes. The National Uniform Claim Committee accepted seven Academy-developed designations that we hope will also be adopted beyond Medicare by private insurers.

PHOTO: Seema Verma, MPH delivered the keynote address at AAO 2017, presenting a frontline account of federal efforts to improve the U.S. health care system. Ms. Verma is the current CMS administrator.

OPHTHPAC: Strengthening Ophthalmology's Federal Advocacy



Ophthalmology's federal advocacy in 2017 was strengthened by the access provided by the Academy's [OPHTHPAC® fund](#). OPHTHPAC uses the investments of U.S. ophthalmologists to ensure our profession has the necessary relationships to enact change in Washington, D.C.

OPHTHPAC is a non-partisan political action committee that contributes to both Democrats and Republicans, because legislation is more easily passed when supported by both political parties. When legislative fights emerged in 2017, OPHTHPAC helped ensure we had allies from both sides of the aisle on our side in Washington, D.C.

In 2017, the OPHTHPAC fund raised \$702,910 from 1,625 Academy members. This means that:

- We've reached 35 percent of the Academy's \$2 million fundraising goal for 2017-2018.

- Through 9 percent participation by the Academy's U.S. members, fewer ophthalmologists are taking on more of the burden of strengthening our profession's PAC and, thus, our ability to effectively advocate on the federal level.

Our profession must be ready for the coming federal battles against well-fortified opponents. For example, optometrists signaled federal aspirations by opening a 3-to-1 cash-on-hand margin for their PAC, compared to ours. And primary care is using its PAC to generate strong support for rebalancing Medicare in favor of gatekeeper physicians.

Every ophthalmologist has an obligation to take the necessary steps to protect our profession. [Make your investment today](#) to keep OPHTHPAC strong and amplify our voice on Capitol Hill.

PHOTO: Brian Joondeph, MD, MPS, FACS, left, and Rep. Mike Coffman, R-Colo., met recently for lunch. This conversation, made possible in part by OPHTHPAC, enabled Dr. Joondeph to expound on the Academy's regulatory relief and compounding efforts, for which Rep. Coffman offered his support.

SUPPORT OPHTHPAC

Nearly 90 percent of Congress is up for reelection in 2018. Because of this, OPHTHPAC's election-year participation is vital to our profession to ensure that our congressional champions remain in office, while building and sustaining relationships with Congress' new faces.

OPHTHPAC took the following steps in 2017 to prepare for this coming election year:

- **Tracking congressional races nationwide;**
- **Hosting fundraisers for key members of Congress to help educate them on specialty medicine's issues;**
- **Holding meet-and-greets with new federal candidates; and**
- **Requesting information from a dozen declared and potential candidates.**

[Help strengthen the OPHTHPAC fund](#) to ensure we have a strong presence in 2018's many congressional races.

State Government Affairs: Advancing Patient-Centered Policies, One State at a Time



State legislatures are increasingly asked to consider proposals that have a significant effect on ophthalmology's patients and how we provide care. The Academy partners with state societies nationwide to ensure that only the most appropriate legislation becomes law.

In 2017, the Academy found state-based success in the following areas:

LEGISLATION THAT PROMOTES PATIENT-CENTERED CARE

State legislatures determine how patient care is delivered across the country and by whom. In 2017, the Academy partnered effectively with state ophthalmology and medical societies in several key states to help shape such legislative proposals. In each effort, we advocate for the highest quality of ophthalmic care for our patients.

The Academy is determined to ensure that patients have access to the proper treatment from qualified health care practitioners. This means preserving ophthalmologists' role as the primary provider of eye care and the leader of the eye-care team.

ACCESS TO SIGHT-SAVING PRESCRIPTION EYEDROPS

More than 50 percent of the U.S. now offers early prescription-eyedrop refills, due to an on-going Academy initiative to provide patients with access to self-administered prescription eyedrops, which often involve a reasonable amount of waste.

Minnesota is the latest state to allow early refills of sight-saving prescription eyedrops. With 26 states on board, the Academy continues to support ophthalmologists who use this issue as an opportunity to build a meaningful relationship with their state lawmakers, while advocating for our patients.

SPURRING TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION

The Academy believes physicians should have the right to evaluate new technologies to determine what is appropriate for our patients. This stance was bolstered by an Academy-endorsed effort in

Virginia to authorize telemedicine for seeing patients and issuing prescriptions for eyeglasses and contact lenses. It also paves the way for online refraction.

The Virginia Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons supported the measure, which aligns with the [Academy's policy statement](#) on use of innovative technologies in diagnosing eye diseases and conditions.

PHOTO: 2017 Academy President Cynthia Ann Bradford, MD, visited North Carolina lawmakers to share ophthalmologists' perspectives on a patient-care legislative proposal.

Ensuring the Success of Our Profession Through Informed Legislators and Future Leaders



Each April, the Academy's [Mid-Year Forum](#) in Washington, D.C., brings together our members and other ophthalmic leaders to learn about legislative and regulatory issues facing the profession. We also meet with federal lawmakers to help shape public policy.

ENGAGING ONE-ON-ONE WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS

At Mid-Year Forum 2017 [Congressional Advocacy Day](#), a record 431 ophthalmologists met on Capitol Hill with legislators and their staff to present the concerns and positions of our profession. This included a record 170 residents and fellows participating in the Mid-Year Forum via the [Advocacy Ambassador Program](#).

Congressional Advocacy Day participants urged members of Congress to press the Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in support of the Academy's campaign to provide relief from regulatory burdens and Medicare payment

penalties. As a result, CMS offered a reprieve from the requirements and penalties associated with these legacy quality-reporting programs for 2018.

Academy members also pushed Congress for robust funding for vision research. Although it must act to finalize the spending levels for fiscal year 2018, Congress is poised to increase funding for the National Institutes of Health and National Eye Institute. In addition, funding for the Defense Vision Research Program is likely to be maintained at \$15 million.

PREPARING LEADERS FOR ROLES IN ORGANIZED MEDICINE AND BEYOND

Academy advocacy ambassadors also attended the third annual [L.E.A.P. Forward](#) session during Mid-Year Forum 2017. This program featured leaders in our profession providing members-in-training with key messages on leadership, engagement, advocacy and practice management. Jordan Stanley, MD, a 2017 advocacy ambassador sponsored to attend Mid-Year Forum 2017 by the Alabama Academy of Ophthalmology, said, "I cannot say enough positive things

about the quality of this session. I was inspired by each speaker and left with an overwhelming sense of optimism about the future of our profession."

In addition, participants in the [20th Academy Leadership Development Program \(LDP\) class](#) were announced in June. At the Global LDP Alumni Reception during AAO 2017, we celebrated this milestone along with the global expansion of the program. Attendees included global LDP alumni from national and supranational societies as well as participants of all 20 Academy LDP classes who were nominated by state, subspecialty and specialized interest societies.

PHOTO: During AAO 2017, Adrienne W. Scott, MD, presents her project to her graduating LDP class and the incoming 20th LDP class.

Funding Innovations in Medicine and Creating Lasting Legacies



Academy members, corporations and friends were instrumental in driving a successful year of fundraising to support the Academy [Foundation's](#) educational, quality-of-care and service programs. In 2017, we raised more than \$4.5 million in support of key programs including the Ophthalmic News and Education (ONE) Network, global outreach programs, the EyeCare America® program and the Museum of Vision®.

ORBITAL GALA 2017

The [Orbital Gala](#) has brought in more than \$2 million over the past 14 years in support of the Academy's programs. And the 2017 event was one of the most successful to date. Nearly 400 guests enjoyed a silent auction, dinner and dancing at Mardi Gras World during AAO 2017 and helped raise more than \$190,000 for Academy programs.

HOSKINS CENTER IRIS REGISTRY RESEARCH FUND

This year's Orbital Gala also honored former Academy CEO H. Dunbar Hoskins Jr., MD, a

champion for ophthalmic education, physician and patient advocacy, and technological innovation. Dr. Hoskins and his wife, Ann, recently established the new Hoskins Center IRIS Registry Research Fund. This fund, which is being supported through a \$500,000 donation from OMIC, will enable researchers to harness the power of the IRIS Registry database to produce groundbreaking studies. It's a remarkable opportunity for researchers to:

- Consider new and more effective approaches to prevent and treat eye disease;
- Learn more about treatment impacts, drug interactions and complications; and
- Provide evidence-based clinical answers in shorter periods of time, leading to rapid improvement in patient outcomes.

Orbital Gala attendees raised nearly \$1 million to support this worthy initiative.

THE FOUNDATION SALUTES EVERY DONOR

who supports the Academy and our mission to protect sight and empower lives. With your donations, last year we provided 225 full sets of the *Basic and Clinical Science Course™* to residency training programs in developing countries and referred more than 8,000 medically underserved seniors for sight-saving care through EyeCare America®.

Learn more about the many convenient [ways to give](#) and [make a gift today](#).

PHOTO: Former Academy CEO H. Dunbar Hoskins Jr., MD, was honored at the Orbital Gala for his years of dedicated service to the Academy. Dr. Hoskins and his wife, Ann, invested \$100,000 to launch the new Hoskins Center IRIS Registry Research Fund.

Making a Difference in the Lives of Underserved Patients Nationwide



EyeCare America® volunteer Michael R. Feilmeier, MD, likely saved an elderly man's life when the patient complained of partial vision loss. During a comprehensive medical eye examination, Dr. Feilmeier detected troubling signs of a blood clot in one of the patient's eyes. He immediately sent the man to his primary care physician for an ultrasound, which revealed a large clot obstructing 95 percent of his left carotid artery. "Had this condition not been quickly diagnosed and treated, this patient would have had a major stroke," said Dr. Feilmeier.

[EyeCare America](#) is a public service program of the Academy with a mission to reduce avoidable blindness and severe visual impairment, raise awareness about the importance of eye exams, and facilitate access to medical eye care for eligible older Americans. In just over 30 years, EyeCare America has grown to be one of the largest public service programs in American medicine, having helped nearly 2 million people nationwide

attain sight-saving care and access educational eye health resources. In 2017 alone, EyeCare America referred more than 8,000 medically underserved seniors and others at increased risk for eye disease to a pool of more than 5,500 volunteer ophthalmologists.

The impact is clear — the program receives countless notes from grateful patients throughout the year. Joyce from Fayetteville, N.C. said, "For a person on a limited income, this service was very much needed. The doctor and his office staff were very caring and professional. Having diabetes and being uninsured, I really needed an eye exam. Thank you!"

EyeCare America's successes are built on the backs of the Academy's community of member ophthalmologists who dedicate time from their busy schedules to come to the aid of those in need. These volunteers have the option to offer their services for multiple programs that provide either a glaucoma exam and/or a comprehensive eye exam, often at no out-of-pocket cost.

DEAR ABBY ADVISES SENIORS TO GET EXAMS

Abigail Van Buren spotlighted EyeCare America in her Oct. 2 Dear Abby column. In "[Group Offers Eye Exams for Seniors in Need](#)," she emphasized that many diseases can be diagnosed early through a medical eye exam.

Make your own impact and [become an EyeCare America volunteer](#) today.

PHOTO: Christine Chapman knew something was seriously wrong when her vision suddenly started to fail. She found help with EyeCare America volunteer Julia Song, MD. Dr. Song diagnosed Christine with narrow-angle glaucoma and helped her get the urgent surgery she needed, ultimately saving her sight.

Enhancing Your Ability to Manage a Thriving Practice and Reach Your Full Potential



To meet the new financial and operational challenges faced by every modern practice, the American Academy of Ophthalmic Executives® (the Academy's practice management affiliate) has taken the lead in helping ophthalmologists to develop actionable strategies for increasing value and improving patient satisfaction.

UNLOCKING YOUR CLINIC'S FULL POTENTIAL WITH THE LEAN PRACTICE

In 2017, AAOE bolstered its line of practice management resources to help you improve practice efficiency, profitability and improve quality of patient care. Our lean management program is designed specifically for ophthalmology and has something to offer every practice, regardless of size or subspecialty:

- [**The Lean Practice: A Step-by-Step Guide to Running an Efficient and Profitable Ophthalmic Practice:**](#) This eBook includes case studies and downloadable tools to help you increase your bottom line and reassess your practice from the patient's perspective.

- [**Mastering the Art of Lean:**](#) This online master class provides a set of lean principles and practical implementation steps for making simple and immediate changes.
- [**Think Lean: Reduce Costs, Increase Profitability and Improve Patient Satisfaction:**](#) This free, introductory webinar (available online at aao.org/lean) supports increasing your revenue by developing strategies around new payment initiatives, such as Medicare's MIPS.

HELPING YOU CODE CONFIDENTLY

As the premier ophthalmic reimbursement resource, the AAOE has expanded its offerings to 21 coding products, reaching every learning curve and covering every important topic.

New resources include:

- [**Reporting MIPS in 2018:**](#) In this 37-minute webinar, Academy experts show you how to avoid penalties and increase bonus potential.

- [**1-Hour Online Coding Courses:**](#) Boost your coding knowledge and coding expertise in 60 minutes. Each interactive course includes clear instructions, real-world examples and Q&A sections that help you assess your progress. New topics include E/M documentation, lesion removal, modifiers and coding for surgical complications.

AAOE welcomes all of your questions related to [coding](#), the [Merit-Based Incentive Payment System](#) and [ICD-10](#). In 2017 alone, we responded to more than 4,000 emails, sharing our tips for how you can best manage the business side of your practice.

PHOTO: Amanda Mestler, clinic operations manager at Duke Eye Center of Cary, N.C., appeared in an [Academy video about our lean programs](#). She said using lean practice management had a tremendous impact on the clinic. The center increased volume by 300 to 400 patients a month with no staff turnover or additional technicians.

Telling the Story of Our Impact Through the Voices of Our Patients



The Academy continues to showcase ophthalmic [patient stories](#) to elevate the profession of ophthalmology to the public and encourage people to make their eye health a priority. This monthly series highlights a single patient and the life-changing care they received from Academy-member ophthalmologists.

One of our patient stories features Jackson Allen, a 5-year-old whose vision was threatened after a coat hook punctured his eye. If not for pediatric ophthalmologist Jane C. Edmond, MD, the chance accident might have cost the boy his sight. “Dr. Edmond is wonderful,” said his mother. “I cannot thank her enough for what she did for my son. I was so worried about him not being able to see and being made fun of by other kids at school. She saved his vision and fixed his eye so he looks like other kids at school. It makes me so happy!”

[SUBMIT YOUR OWN STORY FOR CONSIDERATION.](#)

ENGAGING THE PUBLIC THROUGH DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The Academy reaches millions of people around the world through its proactive media outreach efforts. This exposure, combined with promotion of the Academy’s [EyeSmart®](#) website, increases ophthalmology’s presence in the public eye. Each story increases awareness and understanding about the value eye physicians and surgeons bring to society.

In 2017, Academy spokespeople granted more than 200 media interviews and were quoted in more than 2,000 news stories — all engaging the public in a variety of messages, from cautioning against non-prescription Halloween contact lenses and avoiding certain holiday toys to debunking common myths about fireworks and urging proper eye protection for sports.

To promote healthy contact lens wear and care, the Academy created “[Eight Steps to Protect Your Sight From Contact Lens Infections](#),” a video highlighting the poor habits that put the public at risk of vision loss.

Our media reach peaked with the news coverage of August’s total solar eclipse and the best ways to enjoy the phenomenon. This included press releases and videos about [viewing](#) and [photographing](#) the eclipse without damaging your eyes (or your camera) in addition to an [infographic](#) to help ensure people get the facts about safely experiencing the event.

More than 1,000 news stories across the country featured this eye safety message. Academy clinical spokesperson Russell N. Van Gelder, MD, PhD [got the message out](#) via a nationally-syndicated feature story by CBS News, letting readers know that the only way to safely view a partial or total eclipse is with certified solar glasses.

PHOTO: A hanger hook punctured the corner of Jackson Allen’s eye, severing a muscle and narrowly missing his brain. Two years after the accident, his resulting amblyopia has been corrected and his vision has improved from 20/200 to normal.

Recognizing Exceptional Colleagues for Their Service to Ophthalmology



During AAO 2017, [the Academy recognized its members](#) for several types of achievements. These awards honor ophthalmologists in multiple stages of practice and for a range of activities, from humanitarian service to mentorship and faithful volunteer service.

Howard C. Cohn, MD, and **Stephen T. Petty, MD**, received the **2017 Outstanding Humanitarian Service Award** for their charitable contributions to ophthalmology. Both performed community service above and beyond the typical duties of an ophthalmologist.

David A. Karcher received the **2017 Distinguished Service Award** for his many years of service as the executive director of the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery and for the impact he has had on the profession of ophthalmology.

The Academy presented leadership from the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** with the **2017 Special Recognition Award** for leading a partnership to address

the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine report and for working to create a national vision and eye health surveillance system.

Gregory P. Kwasny, MD, received the **2017 Outstanding Advocate Award** for his tireless advocacy-related efforts at both the state and federal levels to build relationships with legislators in support of ophthalmology.

Sheila West, PhD, PharmD, received the **2017 International Blindness Prevention Award** for her efforts to restore sight worldwide. **Shahzad Mian, MD**, received the **2017 Straatsma Award** for excellence in resident education.

Jeff H. Pettey, MD, nominated by both the Utah Ophthalmology Society and the John A. Moran Eye Center, received the **2017 Artemis Award** for his dedication to the underserved in his local community and abroad.

Mark J. Mannis, MD, received the **2017 EnergEYES Award** for his outstanding mentorship, guidance and inspiration to young ophthalmologists.

ACADEMY LAUREATES

The Laureate Award honors ophthalmologists who have made exceptional scientific contributions toward preventing blindness and restoring sight worldwide.

2017 – Irene H. Maumenee, MD

2016 – Matthew D. Davis, MD

2015 – Bruce E. Spivey, MD

2014 – Jerry A. Shields, MD

2013 – Daniel M. Albert, MD, MHS

2012 – Stephen J. Ryan, MD

2011 – Alfred Sommer, MD, MHS

PHOTO: The Laureate Recognition Award is the Academy's highest honor, recognizing individuals among our membership who have made seminal contributions to ophthalmology. During AAO 2017, Academy CEO David W. Parke II, MD, presented this year's award to Irene H. Maumenee, MD. She is one of the world's leading experts in genetic eye diseases and is unanimously regarded as the founder of genetics as an ophthalmic subspecialty in the United States.

Exploring Our Ophthalmic Heritage, Historical Controversies and Surgical Advances



The Museum of Vision's newest exhibit, "[Cataract](#)," explores the history of cataract surgery in honor of [phacoemulsification's 50th anniversary](#). The exhibit focuses on the changes, challenges and controversies in surgical technique from ancient times to the present. At AAO 2017, the exhibit featured seven display cases containing cataract-related artifacts from all over the world — including Roman couching needles and one of the first phaco machines, the Kelman phacoemulsifier-aspirator model #7001, manufactured by Cavitron in the early 1970s and donated by the late Barrett G. Haik, MD.

The [Museum of Vision](#) is the history and archives department of the Academy. The museum utilizes the 38,000-piece collection to celebrate the unique contributions of ophthalmology to science and health. The museum proudly serves as an educational resource for Academy members, medical historians, researchers and the public. In 2017 alone, more than 120,000 people visited the museum's website.

To complement its latest exhibit, the Museum of Vision presented a new history symposium during AAO 2017 titled, "Historical Controversies in Cataract Surgery: From Couching to Phaco." This symposium traced the history of various cataract procedures and took a closer look at these great discoveries and even greater debates. Topics included:

- The 100 Years' War: From Couching to Extraction
- ECCE vs. ICCE: Are the Parts Greater Than the Whole?
- Incisions and Sutures: To Close or Not to Close?
- Phacoemulsification: The Evolution of Surgical Technique
- IOLs: Location, Location, Location
- Phaco at 50: The Man and His Legacy

The Museum of Vision also received two major book donations in 2017: an extremely rare volume of Georg Bartish's *Ophthalmodouleia: das ist Augendienst*, published in 1583, and a second edition published in the 1600s. Donated by Christopher F. Blodi, MD, and Norman B. Medow, MD, respectively, this is the first

ophthalmic text published in vernacular German. It is also the first extensively illustrated book for any surgical specialty, containing 91 full-page, woodblock prints. Together, the text and images are an astonishing record of the practice of ophthalmology during the Renaissance period.

PHOTO: Academy members such as Ronald L. Anderson, MD, of Washington, D.C., enjoyed being photographed with the museum's Kelman Cavitron phaco machine at AAO 2017.

Supporting You on Your Path to Success With Expanded Member Benefits



The American Academy of Ophthalmology provides the highest-quality ophthalmic education, offering resources to stay current on the latest research and techniques; manage an efficient, profitable practice; and provide the best care for patients. Our 32,000 members contribute to our mission: to protect sight and empower lives by serving as an advocate for patients and the public, leading ophthalmic education and advancing the profession of ophthalmology. [Watch our inspiring video](#) to see how we are protecting sight and empowering lives.

2017 MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS

The Academy conducts a [membership survey](#) every two years to capture practice environment statistics and gain a better understanding of member needs. These findings enable the Academy to develop programs and services that are truly responsive and relevant to the ophthalmology community. This year's takeaways include the following:

- **U.S. members'** satisfaction with ophthalmology as a career is at an all-time high. Despite evolving changes with the regulatory environment and physician payment, nearly 90 percent of members are "extremely satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their career choice.
- **U.S. members-in-training** reported an all-time high in satisfaction with their residency programs. Among these ophthalmologists, 80 percent rate their residency training as "excellent" or "very good," compared with 71 percent in 2015. The top challenges and concerns of residents are surgical complications, understanding business activities, being prepared enough to practice independently and finding the right job.

NEW MEMBER BENEFITS

The Academy expands [member benefit offerings](#) each year, and in 2017, we developed something particularly valuable. A 2017 Medscape survey found a 43 percent rate of burnout among ophthalmologists. We want

to significantly reduce that number, so we created a series of [online wellness resources and events](#) to help you cope with stress, restore your own well-being and preserve the joy of protecting sight.

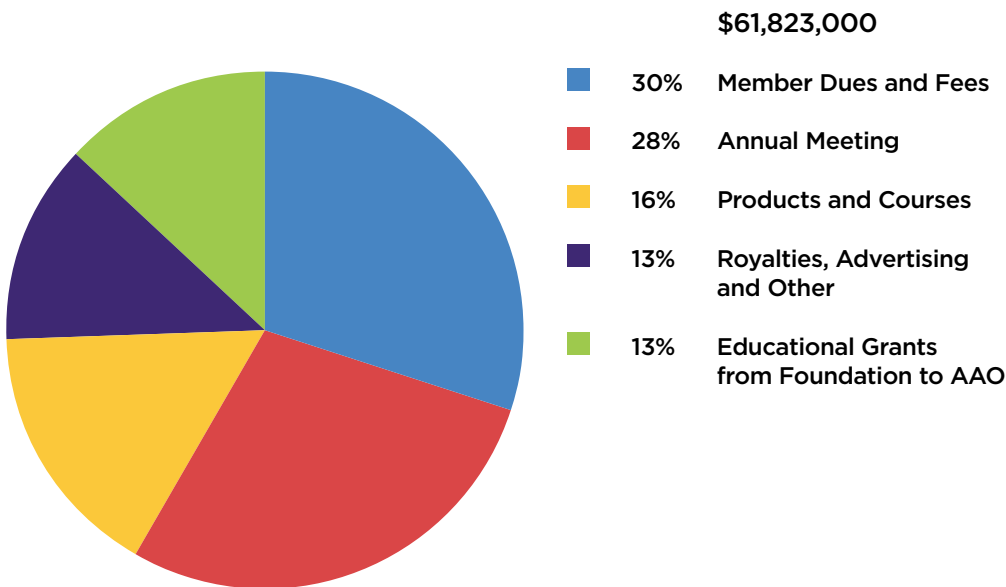
And to help you transition to the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS), the award-winning *EyeNet® Magazine* published the [MIPS Manual 2017](#). It features a range of ophthalmic-specific tools and materials to help you successfully submit quality measures and avoid penalties. This five-part series makes for a valuable reference resource all year long.

PHOTO: Diana R. Shiba, MD, Academy fellow since 2010, shares an uplifting moment with her patient. Dr. Shiba is one of the Academy's 32,000 members who are protecting sight and empowering lives.

Academy Actuals for Fiscal Year Ending 2017

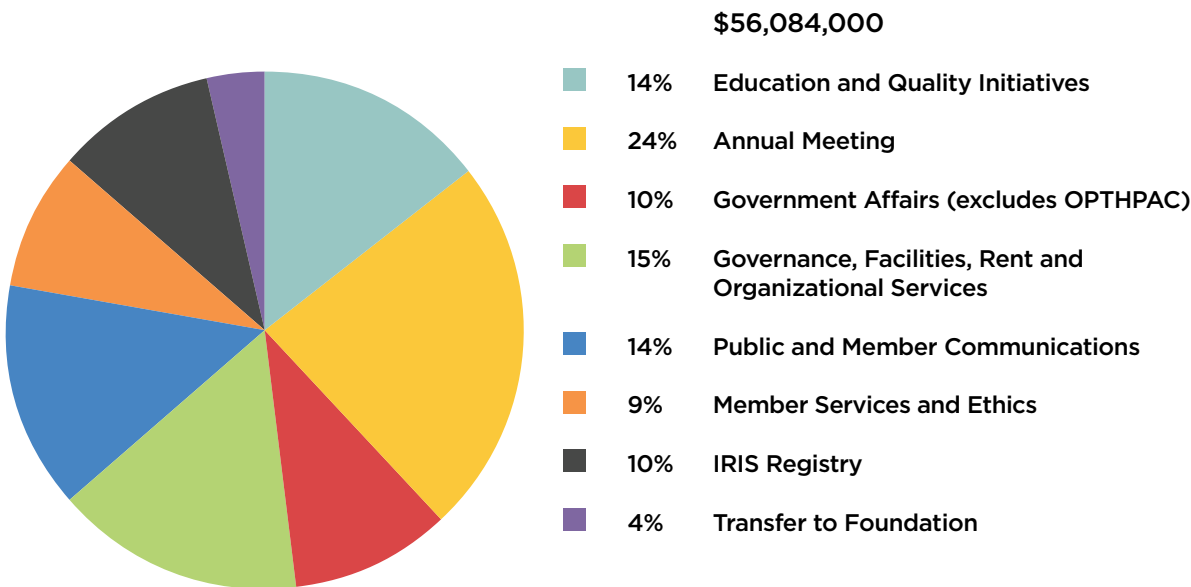
FYE 2017 Revenue — Academy Only*

Major categories of revenue have remained relatively stable.



FYE 2017 Expenses — Academy Only*

Top expense categories are education-related.



**Revenue and expenses presented exclude OPTHAPAC and Academy Services, Inc. activity.*

When Nick Myers was 15 years old, he visited Gene Gaddy, MD, for a routine eye exam. Twelve hours later, he was receiving a blood transfusion after being diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Thanks to Dr. Gaddy's life-saving action, and after three years of chemotherapy, Nick is now in remission. Read more about our patient stories campaign on page 18 or [online](#).



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