

# Academy Notebook

NEWS • TIPS • RESOURCES

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### The Academy and ASCRS Held Inaugural Eyecelerator Conference

Eyecelerator, an historic joint venture between the Academy and the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery (ASCRS) to accelerate innovation in ophthalmology, successfully launched its inaugural conference on Nov. 6, 2020. The Eyecelerator conference will be held twice a year, immediately prior to each society's annual meeting.

**A powerful platform for innovators and entrepreneurs.** In addition to presentations by more than two dozen ophthalmic innovation companies, the virtual meeting included physicians and industry leaders who explored topics as diverse as brain-machine interfaces and start-up financing strategies. Keynote speakers included Karin Schetelig of the Boston Consulting Group and Frederick H. Moll, MD, often lauded as the "father of robotic surgery."

**Learn more** about Eyecelerator at [www.eyecelerator.com](http://www.eyecelerator.com).

### Star Award for Society's Effort to Put Safe Surgery on Ballot

In October 2020, the Academy's Secretariat for State Affairs recognized the Arkansas Ophthalmological Society



## Eyecelerator™

**INAUGURAL CONFERENCE.** The Academy and ASCRS held the first-ever Eyecelerator meeting Nov. 6, 2020.

(AOS) with its Star Award for its Safe Surgery Arkansas campaign.

**AOS strives to put safe surgery on the ballot.** Following enactment of optometric surgical legislation, AOS sponsored a state ballot issue that would let voters decide whether to allow optometrists to perform scalpel and laser surgery.

**Spirited effort derailed by a technicality.** While a September 2020 ruling by the Arkansas Supreme Court on a technical matter blocked the issue's inclusion on the November 2020 ballot, the Secretariat recognized AOS' efforts as a first of its kind: No state society had ever sought to protect quality eye care by appealing directly to voters in this way. "Despite the loss," said Academy Secretary for State Affairs John Peters, MD, "AOS proved that ophthalmologists can be energized to fight hard. The breadth of their sustained effort was commendable."

### Academy Honors N.J. and Vermont Society Directors

In October 2020, the Academy Secretariat for State Affairs recognized executives of two state ophthalmology societies for their exemplary work.

**2020 Outstanding Executive Director:** Organizational Development—

**Matthew S. Halpin**, Executive Director, New Jersey Academy of Ophthalmology (NJAIO), for shepherding a variety of NJAIO efforts, including maintaining strong state society membership; supporting volunteer leaders; providing a quality virtual annual meeting; and supporting member communication via the society's newsletter and website.

**2020 Outstanding Executive Director:** Political Action—**Stephanie Winters**, Executive Director, Vermont Ophthalmological Society (VOS), for marshalling the resources of VOS to persuade an independent government body in Vermont to issue a report recommending against the expansion of the optometric scope of practice to include surgical procedures, and ensuring that Vermont regulators and legislators understood the significance of the report.



**DIRECTORS.** Mr. Halpin and Ms. Winters.



AMERICAN ACADEMY  
OF OPHTHALMOLOGY®

## FOR THE RECORD

### Honor Your Colleagues

To recognize the achievements of ophthalmologists who have made incredible contributions to ophthalmology, the Academy would like your help in nominating recipients for the Laureate Recognition Award.

This award honors an outstanding ophthalmologist whose significant contributions to the field have shaped modern ophthalmology. The Academy is accepting nominations through Feb. 1 for the 2021 award.

**Nomination forms** are available at [aao.org/about/awards/laureate#nominations](http://aao.org/about/awards/laureate#nominations).

### Election Results

On Nov. 16, 2020, voting opened for four positions on the 2021 Board of Trustees. On Dec. 17, the results were posted on [aao.org/about/governance/elections](http://aao.org/about/governance/elections).

**For more information** about the elections, visit [aao.org/about/governance/elections](http://aao.org/about/governance/elections).

### Nominations for the Academy Board

By Anne L. Coleman, MD, PhD  
As Past President of the Academy, it is my privilege to serve as Chair of the Academy's Nominating Committee in 2021. This committee represents a variety of interests within the Academy and

is charged with identifying appropriate candidates for the open positions on the 2022 Board of Trustees.

The committee is interested in identifying leaders in our profession with experience in confronting the critical issues facing organized medicine and who reflect the strength and diversity of our members. The Academy's leaders should be knowledgeable, experienced, and prepared to devote the time and energy required by a large organization in these challenging times. This work is both demanding and rewarding for those interested in helping to assure the Academy's success and responsiveness to members.

With these characteristics in mind, please assist the committee by suggesting appropriate candidates for the following positions in 2022:

**President-elect (to serve as President in 2023).** Nominees should have leadership experience within the Academy as well as demonstrated leadership qualities in clinical practice, in their own ophthalmic communities, and in other medical or ophthalmological organizations.

**Senior Secretary for Clinical Education (three-year term).** This Senior Secretary coordinates the programs and activities of the Academy's education division, including curriculum development, online education, lifelong learning and assessment, and educational publications. **Christopher J.**

**Rapuano, MD,** is currently serving the third year of his term and is eligible for a second term.

**Trustee-at-Large (four-year term).** This individual should be an Academy Fellow who demonstrates strong leadership potential and would be able to represent and articulate the needs and concerns of the membership to the Academy board.

**International Trustee-at-Large (three-year appointment).** This individual should be an Academy International Fellow or Member who practices exclusively outside the United States and has a strong affinity for the Academy and broad experience and understanding of his or her region. This individual should be able to represent and articulate the perspective of international members to the Academy board.

**Thank you for your interest and participation in this process.** Membership participation is vital, not only for the Academy but also for our collective goals of being able to provide appropriate, accessible, and affordable eye care to the public. On behalf of the Nominating Committee, I look forward to receiving your suggestions as we seek to identify our profession's future leaders.

**Send your confidential suggestions by Feb. 1** to Anne L. Coleman, MD, PhD; Nominating Committee Chair, American Academy of Ophthalmology, P.O. Box 7424, San Francisco, CA 94120-7424. Suggestions can also be e-mailed to [nominate@aao.org](mailto:nominate@aao.org) or faxed to 415-561-8526.

**For more information on the board nominations,** visit [aao.org/about/governance/board-nominations](http://aao.org/about/governance/board-nominations).

### Congratulations to Life Fellows/Members

The Academy is pleased to congratulate members who have achieved the status of Life Fellow/Member in 2021. The Academy commends them for their dedication to lifelong learning and advancing standards of care over their 35 years of membership and deeply appreciates their loyalty and long-standing support.

**For the full list,** view this article at [aao.org/eyenet](http://aao.org/eyenet).

#### ABOUT THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Academy nominating process has been carefully crafted to be inclusive, fair, and efficient. This process encourages a broad base of nominations from the entire Academy membership. The Nominating Committee composition is delineated by the Bylaws, and it considers a number of factors when screening potential candidates including: integrity, ophthalmology leadership ability, special expertise, past committee and leadership experience and performance, and knowledge and interest in the multitude of issues currently faced by ophthalmologists. In addition to nominations from the current year, the committee reviews prior year nominations to ensure a wide range of potential candidates for each position. Following months of confidential deliberations, the committee presents final recommendations to the Board of Trustees for approval. This single candidate method avoids the loss of valuable future leaders, as there are no public "losers" in the election. Often those considered but not selected for an open position one year become the nominee of choice in a future year.

## TAKE NOTICE

### A Request From *EyeNet*

Next month, some of you may be invited to participate in a magazine readership survey conducted by Kantar Media. If you are a fan of *EyeNet*, please participate. Being ranked among the most widely and thoroughly read ophthalmic publications enables the magazine to secure funding for projects that help you in the clinical realm and in your practice.

### Don't Miss the Jan. 31 Deadline for 2020 MIPS

If you are using the IRIS Registry to report the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) for 2020, Jan. 31 is a key date on three counts.

**1. Finish manually entering your MIPS information.** This deadline applies if you are using the IRIS Registry web portal to manually report quality measures, promoting interoperability (PI) measures, or improvement activities. If you successfully integrated your electronic health record (EHR) system with the IRIS Registry and if your EHR has 2015-edition certification, your MIPS quality data are automatically extracted from your EHRs, but you must report PI measures and improvement activities manually.

**Manually report quality data.** You can either enter patients one at a time or batch patients via a properly formatted CSV file.

**Include the data-completeness totals.** If you are manually reporting patients for a quality measure, you must submit to the IRIS Registry the total number of patients eligible and excepted from that measure.

**Don't "cherry-pick."** If you report a quality measure on less than 100% of eligible patients, CMS expects you to select patients who are representative of your performance for that measure. If CMS suspects that you have cherry-picked patients to boost your performance rate, it may audit your reporting.

**2. Sign the data-release consent form.** Providers who are reporting as individuals should sign their own consent forms; providers who are reporting as a group can be included on a single

## D.C. REPORT

### What Does a Biden Administration Mean for Health Care?

Health care was one of the top issues in the 2020 election, and when President-elect Biden takes the oath of office in January, his administration will want to quickly deliver on some of his key campaign promises. However, the success of his health agenda could largely depend on which political party controls the Senate in the new Congress—a decision that, at time of press, hinged on the outcome of two runoff races in Georgia on Jan. 5.

So what will a Biden administration mean for health care policy?

**COVID-19.** Addressing the coronavirus pandemic will be an immediate focus of the next administration. As a candidate, Mr. Biden promised to implement a national system for testing and contact tracing, targeted business closures, and the promotion of mask-wearing as a patriotic act. His approach will be a sharp contrast to the Trump administration's policy of leaving most decisions up to individual states.

**ACA.** During the campaign, Mr. Biden proposed a health care agenda that focuses on fixing and expanding the Affordable Care Act (ACA). This includes offering a new public option for those in the individual market or with employer coverage and increasing premium subsidies. While a Republican Senate may make it harder to achieve that public option, Mr. Biden can act to shore up the ACA through the use of executive orders.

**Medicare.** The Academy is closely watching for potential changes to Medicare policies as a Biden administration has many reasons to stabilize the program. During the campaign, Mr. Biden did not support Medicare-for-All, instead opting to support reducing the Medicare age from 65 to 60 and establishing a new long-term care tax credit.

**Prescription drugs.** The Academy will also be watching to see how the new administration seeks to tackle high prescription drug prices. Mr. Biden supports legislation allowing Medicare to negotiate prices for government programs. He also supports prohibiting drug companies from raising prices faster than inflation for people covered by Medicare and other federal programs. He has proposed creating an independent review board to determine a drug's price for those cases in which new specialty drugs are launched without competition, using what other countries pay to determine a "reasonable price." A Republican Senate, however, would limit achievement of many of these policies.

**Implementing these plans.** To finance the cost of his health care plans, Mr. Biden supports using savings from reducing prescription drug prices, lowering other health care costs, and raising taxes on capital gains and ordinary income for high earners and heirs.

A Biden administration could move quickly to implement regulatory changes to support his policy priorities. But if control of the Congress remains divided, backing those changes up with legislation where necessary could be challenging. He may also face challenges overcoming some of the divisions within the Democratic Caucus in the House of Representatives.

consent form, which can be signed by the administrator. All your practice's ophthalmologists must be up to date with their 2020 Academy membership dues. You must sign a new consent

form each year and can do so via the IRIS Registry dashboard. For instructions, see [aao.org/consent-form](https://aao.org/consent-form).

**3. Submit your data to CMS.** The final step is to confirm that your data





**VIRTUAL ORBITAL GALA.** Guests at the 2020 Orbital Gala took advantage of the virtual setting's more laissez-faire dress code. Ron W. Pelton, MD, PhD, showed up as the "Notorious R-O-N."

are ready to send to CMS and click "submit." You'll know you are done when CMS sends a MIPS score estimate, which will display in your dashboard. (There is a limited exception to this Jan. 31 deadline: If you integrated your EHR system with the IRIS Registry, do not send your quality data to CMS until your dashboard indicates that you have a full year of data.)

**Learn more about the IRIS Registry and MIPS at [aao.org/iris-registry](http://aao.org/iris-registry) and [aao.org/medicare](http://aao.org/medicare).**

## See Where You Stand on the Physician Well-Being Index

Start the year by giving yourself a checkup. The Academy's wellness resources ([aao.org/wellness](http://aao.org/wellness)) include free access to the Physician Well-Being Index, a brief online assessment developed by Mayo Clinic in partnership with MedEd Solutions.

**Goal.** This tool is intended to help you better understand your overall well-being and areas of risk compared with other physicians across the nation.

**Free member benefit.** To take the assessment, Academy members will need to create an account at <https://app.mywellbeingindex.org/landing-page/aao> (use invitation code AAO 2020).

## Virtual Orbital Gala Raises \$400,000 for Museum

Thanks to the generosity of the ophthalmic community, the 17th annual Orbital Gala during AAO 2020 Virtual was a huge success. The first-ever virtual Orbital Gala attracted more than 800 supporters from all over the world and

raised more than \$400,000 in support of the Academy's Truhlsen-Marmor Museum of the Eye. David W. Parke II, MD, Academy CEO, encouraged guests to bid on unique items including vacations, jewelry, art, conversations with legends like Jane Goodall, and more. George A. Williams, MD, presented a matching gift of \$50,000. The museum is set to open in 2021 at Academy headquarters, located in the

heart of the tourist-rich Fisherman's Wharf neighborhood in San Francisco.

**Visit the museum at [aao.org/museum-of-the-eye](http://aao.org/museum-of-the-eye) or donate at [aao.org/donate](http://aao.org/donate).**

## Support the Academy Foundation

Now is a great time to recommend a grant that will make an immediate impact on the success of Academy programs such as the ONE Network or IRIS Registry. If you don't have a donor advised fund, discover the ease of opening one and learn about its advantages, such as a federal income tax charitable deduction.

**Take action at [aao.org/daf](http://aao.org/daf).**

## Volunteer: Write an Article for YO Info

Passionate about the future of ophthalmology? Invest in the education of young physicians by writing for *YO Info*, the Academy's monthly online newsletter distributed to young ophthalmologists (Academy members in training and those in the first five years of practice).

All articles are published on [aao.org](http://aao.org), and the newsletter is distributed electronically to about 7,000 young ophthalmologists in the United States and around the world.

To get started, suggest a topic in practice management, clinical pearls, advocacy, or other issues relevant to young ophthalmologists. Your submission will be reviewed, and if your article topic is selected, you can expect a time commitment of three to six hours, including edits and reviews.

**Learn more at [aao.org/volunteering](http://aao.org/volunteering),**

then choose "Write an Article for *YO Info*." (This is just one of many Academy volunteer opportunities.)

## MEMBERS AT LARGE

### Troutman Prizes

**Troutman Cornea Prize for Young Clinician Investigators—Drew Salisbury, MD,** of Premier Medical Group in Mobile, Alabama, for his paper, "Increasing Povidone-Iodine Exposure in Endothelial Keratoplasty Tissue Processing and Fungal Infection Impact." Dr. Salisbury was awarded a \$5,000 honorarium from the Troutman Endowment and presented his work at the Cornea and Eye Banking Forum, which took place virtually prior to AAO 2020 Virtual.

Dr. Salisbury commented, "It is a tremendous honor to be the 2020 recipient of the Troutman Cornea Prize. The results from this study have changed the way that eye banks process corneal tissue across the United States. The new processing method is proving to be a safe and cost-effective measure to significantly decrease the number of postoperative fungal infections that occur after all types of cornea transplantation. Postkeratoplasty fungal infection is one of the biggest fears of a cornea specialist, and our study protocol significantly decreases the probability of this dreaded complication. I want to thank my mentors at Eye Consultants of Atlanta and the staff at the Georgia Eye Bank for allowing me to be a part of this remarkable project."

This award, established by a Castroviejo Cornea Society Founder, Richard C. Troutman, MD, DSc (Hon), is awarded annually to the investigator under 41 years of age who authored the best paper published in *Cornea* the year before.



**AWARDEES.** Dr. Salisbury and Dr. Haller.

**Suzanne Véronneau-Troutman Award**—**Julia A. Haller, MD**, was presented this award at the Women in Ophthalmology (WIO) Reception and Awards Ceremony held virtually during AAO 2020 Virtual. The award recognizes an ophthalmologist who has done the most in the preceding year to advance and enhance the position of women in ophthalmology.

Dr. Haller, who is ophthalmologist-in-chief at Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia, has strongly advocated for women ophthalmologists throughout her career. In the past year alone, she has written two articles emphasizing the inequities in treatment of women ophthalmologists at the podium and in the operating room. Locally, she is involved in Women of Wills and in mentoring college students, medical students, residents, fellows, and faculty.

The Suzanne Véronneau-Troutman Award, established by Suzanne Véronneau-Troutman, MD, FRCS(C), FACS, is awarded annually by WIO.

## ACADEMY RESOURCES

### Access Ophthalmology Retina, Focal Points, and Other Free Member Benefits

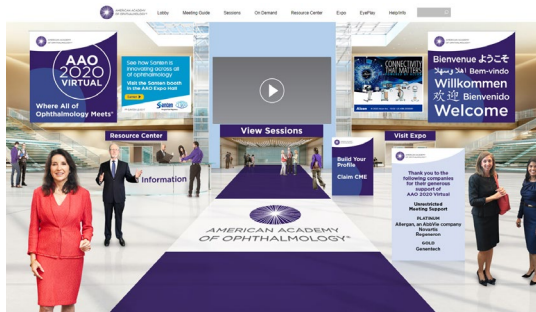
All Academy members now have online access to *Ophthalmology Retina*'s current, past, and in-press articles for free at [ophthalmologyretina.org](http://ophthalmologyretina.org). This journal was previously available only as a paid print subscription. In addition, another member benefit becomes available this month: the full *Focal Points* archive of 100+ digital issues ([aao.org/focalpoints](http://aao.org/focalpoints)).

As a reminder, the popular resource *Wills Eye Manual* is also available as a member benefit ([aao.org/wills-eye-manual/index](http://aao.org/wills-eye-manual/index)).

And in the next few months, the Academy's new, open access journal, *Ophthalmology Science*, will join the 16 publications on [aao.org/journals](http://aao.org/journals).

### Join Now and Retain Access to AAOE Resources

In 2020, the American Academy of Ophthalmic Executives (AAOE), the Academy's practice management affiliate, extended some of its valuable



**YOU CAN STILL EXPERIENCE AAO 2020 VIRTUAL.** The live broadcast of AAO 2020 Virtual took place Nov. 13-15, but you can still view on-demand annual meeting content, all eight Subspecialty Day meetings, the Expo, and more. Even if you did not register for the live meeting, you can do so now—registration is open until Jan. 29, 2021. The virtual meeting platform is open through Feb. 15, 2021. Learn more at [aao.org/2020](http://aao.org/2020).

membership benefits to every Academy member for free.

If you join AAOE now, you'll get uninterrupted access to these important resources as well as several other benefits, including:

- real-time support and advice through the E-Talk listserv;
- members-only coding and practice management resources; and
- strategic business intelligence from Academy experts.

Learn more at [aao.org/aaoe](http://aao.org/aaoe).

## MEETING MATTERS

### Plan to Attend AAO 2021 in New Orleans

Mark your calendar for AAO 2021. It takes place Nov. 13-15, 2021 (with Subspecialty Day meetings beginning on Friday, Nov. 12), at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans.

For details, visit [aao.org/2021](http://aao.org/2021).

### 2021 Abstract Deadline Is Jan. 12

Want to create content for AAO 2021? Submit an Academy or AAOE instruction course or new Skills Transfer lab abstract between Dec. 10, 2020, and Jan. 12, 2021.

Learn more at [aao.org/presentercentral](http://aao.org/presentercentral).

## PASSAGES

### Dr. Parke, Academy Life Fellow, Dies at 97

David W. Parke, MD, age 97, died peacefully, surrounded by his family in Connecticut, on Nov. 13, 2020. Dr. Parke left a lasting impact on the profession of ophthalmology and on the Academy.

Dr. Parke had been an Academy member since 1957. His lifelong community leadership and prolific service to people with low vision were celebrated with the Academy's Outstanding Humanitarian Service Award in 2002, the 2008

annual meeting Guest of Honor, and the Senior Achievement Award in 2013. He chaired the Academy's national committees on State Affairs and on Government Relations. He also served on the Senior Ophthalmologist Committee from 1998 to 2016. For 14 years, he was editor of the Academy's *Scope* newsletter for senior ophthalmologists.

"It's hard to overestimate his impact on the profession of ophthalmology and on the Academy, after 32 years of active practice and another 20 years spent directly helping those with low vision and blindness," said Academy Past President Anne L. Coleman, MD, PhD.

Dr. Parke retired from medical and surgical ophthalmology in 1988 and embarked on a second career serving patients with low vision and blindness.

He served as president of the Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians and was a clinical professor at Yale University.

Dr. Parke is survived by his three children, seven grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. His son and one of his grandsons are ophthalmologists.



**DAVID W. PARKE, MD.** On Nov. 13, 2020, Dr. Parke Sr. passed away in Connecticut at the age of 97.