

President's Statement

KEITH D. CARTER, MD

The Value of Education, and the Satisfaction of Giving Back

When I got the phone call from Dr. Parke inviting me to serve as Academy President-Elect in 2017 and Academy President in 2018, I was thrilled and humbled. I am very honored to serve as your president. A member for 30 years, I value the Academy, and I have worked on a great many projects and assumed many roles, from writing for *Focal Points* to serving on the Ethics Committee.

For my presidential term, I have several goals. One is technical: to influence improvement of the ability of ophthalmic equipment to communicate with the electronic medical record. We see equipment with great promise at our meetings, but, often, it can't "talk" to the other systems that we use to care for patients. If we can promote a common language, as radiology has done, it would be a great accomplishment.

The second goal stems from a core value of mine. One of the mainstays of my career has been educating physicians in training, both at the University of Iowa and through the Academy. This is because I would not be where I am without very good teachers and mentors in my life. My first mentor was the physician who delivered me! He wrote letters of recommendation in my support for my applications to pharmacy school and medical school, and he influenced me to choose academics. I would never have seen numerous trainees mature into successful physicians or had my gratifying experiences at the Academy if it weren't for the guidance, support, and encouragement of my mentors.

For this reason, I am excited about participating in a new collaborative program with the Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology (AUPO) to attract underrepresented minorities to the profession. We haven't made significant gains in 30 years in recruiting professionals who reflect the populations that we serve. Part of the challenge is gaining the attention of these young students and securing mentors to guide them through the process. Then, the student needs to be prepared to be a competitive applicant. When competitive students with diverse experiences are in the classroom, this enhances everybody's education.

Enhancing diversity within ophthalmology is part of giving back to the generations that follow us. Many of the younger generation are less color- or gender-based in their

thinking, but efforts still must be made to change the professional landscape.

Giving back is vital—and a pleasure. As I progressed in my own positions, I discovered the joy that comes from seeing a student develop into a well-trained doctor, especially in terms of surgery. Another great pleasure about working with young people is that they constantly challenge you and keep you thinking. They bring excellent ideas—and we need to listen to them. Some of the biggest achievements we've seen come from physicians in training. For example, EyeRounds, our department's online education forum, was originally presented by a resident who saw the vision of the Internet while we were all worrying about the book chapters we'd write. Now, EyeRounds is one of the most-visited ophthalmology websites around the world.

While much practical training and education is now online or increasingly done in simulation labs, the art of medicine can never be fully taught that way. Taking care of patients is passed on from doctor to doctor in real-life settings. Explaining how to alleviate a patient's fears or how to deliver bad news cannot easily be taught from a book. It's our role to be there for young ophthalmologists and share our experiences. Many practices recognize this and are asking to have trainees come to their offices for real-world exposure. That may be a bigger part of future training.

I am excited to step into this new role and hope to be seen as a president who values education and diversity and continually promotes the profession, but I can't be successful without you. The Academy is great because of its many volunteers. If you have interests in education, diversity, technology, or other areas, let us know. Your involvement is welcome and necessary. Let's get started!



Keith D. Carter, MD
Academy
2018 President