

Academy Notebook

NEWS • TIPS • RESOURCES

WHAT'S HAPPENING

EyeNet Milestone: Volume 20

EyeNet Magazine was launched in 1997 to give Academy members clinical insights they can trust—free from industry bias. This current issue initiates volume 20. Since its inception, the magazine has evolved in several ways:

- Delivering 12 issues per year instead of 10
- Creating ancillary publications (the EHR supplement, *EyeNet Selections*, *Guide to Academy Exhibitors*, *Academy Live*, and others)
- Generating supplemental content online (videos, slideshows, and Web extras)
- Adding a host of digital options (www.eyenet.org, email blasts, and the mobile-optimized digital edition)
- Updating the design to a fresh new look as of this month's issue

Over these many years, *EyeNet* has continued to bring you a vibrant letters page, a thought-provoking Opinion page, the physician-written sections of Ophthalmic Pearls, Morning Rounds, and Blink, and the unbiased journalism that helps put *EyeNet* at the top of industry rankings. *EyeNet* has been #1 in high readers since 2009.¹

EyeNet thanks you for your ongoing readership!

1 Kantar Media 2015 Eyecare Readership study.



THEN AND NOW. The first EyeNet cover from October 1997 next to the newly updated January 2016 cover.

State Leaders Broaden Horizons

Two graduates of the Academy's Leadership Development Program (LDP) had the opportunity to share the organizational skills and training they acquired through the LDP with their colleagues in Africa. Immediate Past President of the Texas Ophthalmological Association **Sidney K. Gicheru, MD**, and Councilor for the Colorado Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons **Alan E. Kimura, MD, MPH**, recently collaborated with the African Ophthalmology Council (AOC) President **Kunle O. Hassan, MBBS**, and the International Council of Ophthalmology to launch the AOC LDP on Aug. 21 and 22, 2015, in Naivasha, Kenya. During the LDP, class participants learn about leadership, advocacy, and association governance.

Dr. Gicheru said, "We had 16 total confirmed AOC LDP participants. They will be part of a 2-year program with 2 face-to-face encounters, 2 remote learning sessions, and a final graduation with project presentations in 2017. We need to give the AOC LDP all the support we can—I think we will make such a big difference. Kunle is a great and able leader and is very well respected. He is a giant in Africa."



AOC LDP PARTICIPANTS IN KENYA. Dr. Kimura (front row, far right), Dr. Gicheru (front row, 2nd from the right), and Dr. Hassan (2nd row, 4th from the right).



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TAKE NOTICE

Jan. 15 Deadline—Put PQRS at the Top of Your To-Do List

If you signed up to use the IRIS Registry Web portal to manually report 2015 data for the Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS), you must enter all your data into the portal by Jan. 15.

For practices without electronic health records (EHRs), or that have EHRs but have not integrated them with the IRIS Registry clinical database, this portal provides an opportunity to participate in PQRS. If you don't report PQRS successfully, you will be subject to financial penalties under both the PQRS and the Value-Based Modifier programs.

This Jan. 15 deadline does not apply to practices that integrated their EHR with the IRIS Registry clinical database—their data are automatically transmitted to the IRIS Registry throughout the year.

FOR MORE INFORMATION on the IRIS Registry and PQRS, visit www.aao.org/iris-registry and www.aao.org/pqrs.

Nominate a Colleague for the Laureate Award

The Academy is accepting nominations through Feb. 1 for the 2016 Laureate

Recognition Award. This award honors an outstanding ophthalmologist whose significant scientific contribution to the field has shaped modern ophthalmology.

TO SUBMIT A NOMINATION, visit www.aao.org/about/awards/laureate and select “Nominations.”

Seeking Outstanding Ophthalmologists

Would you like to nominate a colleague for this year's Outstanding Humanitarian Service Award? The Academy must receive your nomination by March 11. The award recognizes Academy fellows and members for outstanding contributions to humanitarian efforts, such as participation in charitable activities, care of the indigent, and community service. It acknowledges those who have performed above and beyond the normal duties of an ophthalmologist.

TO OBTAIN A NOMINATION FORM, contact Member Services by phone, 866-561-8558 (toll free) or 415-561-8581; by fax, 415-561-8575; or by email at member_services@aa.org. Nomination forms are available at www.aao.org/about/awards/humanitarian.

thalmology-specific coding exam. The open-book test contains 100 questions covering every aspect of ophthalmic coding.

TO SIGN UP for the exam, visit www.aao.org/ocs.

MEETING MATTERS

AAO 2016: Innovate

Join us at McCormick Place in Chicago for AAO 2016, held in conjunction with the Asia-Pacific Academy of Ophthalmology. The theme of the meeting is Innovate, and it takes place Oct. 15-18, following Subspecialty Day, Oct. 14-15.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, visit www.aao.org/2016.

2016 Abstract Deadlines

To present at AAO 2016, you must submit abstracts online. The abstract submitter for instruction courses and new Skills Transfer labs closes Jan. 12. The abstract submitter for papers/posters and videos is open March 10 to April 12.

TO SUBMIT, visit www.aao.org/presentercentral.

Claim Las Vegas CME Credits by Jan. 13

CME credits earned at AAO 2015 and/or Subspecialty Day must be reported by Jan. 13. As a service to members only, the Academy maintains a transcript of Academy-sponsored CME credits earned, provided that the member reports those credits to the Academy. Members may also report credits earned through other CME providers so that their record is available on a single transcript.

CLAIM YOUR CME CREDITS online at www.aao.org/cme.

AAO Meetings on Demand

Be sure to check out AAO Meetings on Demand for cutting-edge information presented during Subspecialty Day sessions and AAO 2015 symposia. Save when you buy the complete package: full-motion videos of all 6 Subspecialty Day meetings plus highlights from AAO 2015. Or purchase only the Subspecialty Day meetings you are most interested in. Some courses may not be

International Blindness Prevention Award

Established in 1992, the International Blindness Prevention Award is presented at the Academy annual meeting to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to the prevention of blindness or restoration of sight. The deadline for 2016 nominations is Jan. 30.

TO SUBMIT A NOMINATION, visit www.aao.org/about/awards/blindness-prevention.

Become an Ophthalmic Coding Specialist

Demonstrate your coding prowess by passing the Ophthalmic Coding Specialist (OCS) Exam, the only oph-

ACADEMY STORE

Educate Patients for Glaucoma Awareness Month

January is Glaucoma Awareness Month. Achieve lasting patient understanding with the Academy's completely revamped video collection, brochures, and handouts on glaucoma. These up-to-date materials also help set realistic patient expectations, strengthen informed consent, and reduce malpractice risk.



TO ORDER AND VIEW SAMPLES, visit www.aao.org/store and enter the keyword “glaucoma.” Narrow results by choosing “Patient Education.”

available or may be available only in audio form, contingent upon the extent of recording permission granted by the presenter. AAO Meetings on Demand does not provide CME credit.

TO ORDER, visit www.aa.org/on-demand.

FOR THE RECORD Election Results

On Nov. 16, voting opened for 6 positions on the 2016 Board of Trustees.

The results are as follows:

- President-Elect: **Cynthia A. Bradford, MD**
- Senior Secretary for Clinical Education: **Louis B. Cantor, MD**
- Trustee-at-Large: **Michael F. Chiang, MD**
- Trustee-at-Large: **Cynthia Mattox, MD, FACS**
- Chair, the Council: **Mathew W. MacCumber, MD, PhD**
- Vice Chair, the Council: **Lynn K. Gordon, MD, PhD**

FOR MORE INFORMATION about the elections, visit www.aa.org/about/governance/elections.

Nominations for the Academy Board

By Russell N. Van Gelder, MD, PhD

As past president of the Academy, it is my privilege to serve as chairman of the Academy's Nominating Committee in 2016. This committee represents a variety of interests within the Academy and is charged with identifying appropriate candidates for the open positions on the 2017 Board of Trustees.

We are 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, I ask you to assist the committee by suggesting candidates for the

D.C. REPORT

The Academy Looks Ahead to 2016

Few years have been as important to health care policy as 2016 will be. The Academy will remain highly engaged on a number of fronts, while taking action in several new areas. Read on for some of the key issues and milestones that the Academy's advocacy staff will be focusing on over the next 12 months in Washington, D.C.

The general election. Election years have a profound impact on the national health care discussion. Expect this year's conversation to be dominated by drug prices, the Affordable Care Act, and entitlement reform—which could include changes to Medicare and Medicaid.

Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS). In 2016, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) must propose and finalize its rule for MIPS, which is the agency's next-generation physician payment system. CMS must work quickly. In October, the agency began the critical rulemaking process for MIPS with a formal request for information. The rulemaking must be completed in 2016 because the base performance year is 2017. The Academy is working to ensure that Academy programs such as the IRIS Registry are able to qualify physicians for as much of the program as possible.

2017 Fee Schedule. Congress has instructed CMS to identify \$1 billion in misvalued codes annually for the next 3 years. The Academy always makes it a priority to defend ophthalmology reimbursements and will be paying close attention to any global surgical codes that are in CMS's crosshairs for revaluation.

Technology. Equipment and software intended for use in the diagnosis or treatment of a disease or other condition, including apps, online diagnosis tools, and wearable technology, are regulated by the FDA. Because technology start-ups emerge frequently, claiming to be "the one" that will change the landscape of eye care, the Academy will monitor and evaluate each of these entries to the market. The core goal in each case remains ensuring that the FDA clears only those that provide quality patient care.

To stay on top of the Academy's advocacy efforts, visit www.aa.org/advocacy/eye-on-advocacy.

following positions in 2017:

President-Elect (to serve as president in 2018). 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 Ophthalmic Practice (3-year term). This senior secretary coordinates the programs and activities relating to the management and practice of ophthalmology. This position is currently held by Robert Wiggins, MD, MHA, who is serving the final year of his first term and is eligible for a second term.

Secretary for Annual Meeting (3-year term). This secretary is responsible for all Academy programs at the annual meeting and Subspecialty Day.

Two Trustees-at-Large (4-year term). These individuals should be Academy Fellows who demonstrate strong leadership potential who would be able to represent and articulate the needs and concerns of the membership to the Academy Board.

One Public Trustee (a renewable 3-year appointment; an advisor to and member of the Board of Trustees). The bylaws allow the Board to appoint up to 3 public trustees. We currently are served by Humphrey J.F. Taylor and Paul B. Ginsburg, PhD. Mr. Taylor is

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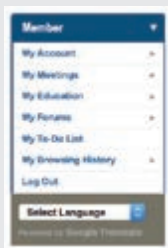
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chairman emeritus of the Harris Poll. Dr. Ginsburg, who is the Norman Topping Chair in Medicine and Public Policy at the University of Southern California, will complete his fourth term in 2016 and is eligible for nomination to a fifth term. Public trustees do not vote on Academy governance, the budget, or other programmatic issues. They do, however, provide insight on how ophthalmology can better work with the rest of medicine, the public, government, and industry. The nominating committee will be pleased to receive suggestions for individuals, who may include physicians from other medical specialties or leaders in industry, government, public policy, or advocacy.

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 Russell Van Gelder, MD, PhD, Nominating Committee Chair, American Academy of Ophthalmology, P.O. Box 7424, San Francisco, CA 94120-7424. Suggestions can also be emailed to nominate@aao.org or faxed to 415-561-8526.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, visit www.aao.org/about/governance/board-nominations.

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Maryland Society Volunteers for Vets

The Academy once again partnered with the American Legion National Convention, held last Aug. 28-Sept. 3 in Baltimore. The Maryland Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons collaborated with the Academy to recruit volunteer ophthalmologists to screen the veterans. "This public service screening is an opportunity to give back to our nation's veterans," said **David B. Glasser, MD**, immediate past president of the Maryland Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons. "It's a chance to educate veterans and their families on the importance of high-quality eye care."



SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED. Ruby A. Parikh, MD, and Sami Karim, MD, give eye exams to veterans.

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. These include integrity, ophthalmology leadership ability, special expertise, past committee and leadership experience and performance, and knowledge and interest in the multitude of issues currently facing ophthalmology. In addition to nominations from the current year, the committee also 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.