



OREGON OPTOMETRIC PHYSICIANS ASSOCIATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Oregon Optometric Physicians Association presented its most prestigious awards to members showing outstanding leadership throughout 2017-2018 to help protect patients, promote and advance quality of eye health, primary eye care and vision in Oregon.

The following awards are conferred and presented annually at OOPA's statewide membership meeting, which was held in Bend in June:

Para-Optometric Award was presented to Dr. Erin Pedersen, OD: An optometric assistant or technician who has made the most outstanding contribution to the profession of optometry, para-optometry and the general public.

President's Award was presented to Dr. Amanda Balsabore, OD: That individual who has continually contributed though the years to the profession of optometry and his/her community; one who is active in both community and optometric affairs, and one who has distinguished himself/herself by service above and beyond the call of duty.

Apollo Award was presented to Dr. JP Lowery, OD: A person(s) not necessarily directly related to the Optometric industry or possessing a doctor of Optometry degree, who has performed distinguished service to the welfare of the public. Eligible nominees may include, but are not limited to; educational institutions or organizations; research programs, and civic and community groups.

Student of the Year Award was to Shaina Sullivan: That member of the graduating class of Pacific University College of Optometry in Forest Grove who has demonstrated to his peers those qualities of dedicated voluntary service by participating in extra-curricular optometric and/or community activities which, as a result, have led to the betterment of the profession of optometry. By the willingness to donate their time and effort to those projects, the Oregon Optometric Physicians Association makes this award in the interest of every State Optometric Association, all of whom look forward to having the recipient as a valuable member upon graduation.

The recipient of this award is selected from and by the members of the graduating class based solely on the extra-curricular participation of the student in optometric, community and University activities.

Young OD Award was presented to Amber Dunn: An optometrist who has been in practice for more than two years but not more than six years who has significantly participated in organized optometry through OOPA.

Advocacy Award was presented to Darrin Fleming: An OD who has performed outstanding service on behalf of OOPA, working on issues related to third party and advocacy concerns.

OD of the Year presented to Dr. Doug Walker, OD: An optometrist who, during the past year, has made the most outstanding contributions to the OOPA. He or she must maintain a professional practice in the finest tradition of optometry and one who has contributed to the betterment of optometry in Oregon. Dr. Walker also currently serves as President of the Oregon Board of Optometry.

At the annual membership meeting, the organization also elected its 2018-2019 board of directors to lead the organization's efforts to protect, promote and advance the professional practice of optometry. These elected board members represent more than 700 Optometric Physicians, faculty, industry partners and students who devote their lives to caring for Oregonians' vision and eye health:

Dr. Gabby Marshall, OD, President (Elemental Eyecare, Bend Oregon)

Dr. Nicole Rush, OD, President Elect (Bandon Vision Center, Bandon Oregon)

Dr. Ashley McFerron, OD, Immediate Past President (Canby Eyecare, Canby Oregon)

Dr. Scott Walters, OD, Senior Past President (Eye Care Group of Southern Oregon, Grants Pass Oregon)

Dr. Darrin Fleming, OD, Secretary / Treasurer (Eugene Eye Care Associates, Eugene Oregon)

Dr. Amber Gatti Dunn, OD, Board Member (Gatti Vision, King City Oregon)

Dr. Nathan Roland, OD, Board Member (Roland OptEX, Beaverton Oregon)

Dr. Derri Sandberg, OD, Board Member (Lifetime Vision Care, Bend Oregon)

Optometric Physicians provide nearly 90% of primary eye care across Oregon. Critical medical issues like diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, cancer and other sight and life threatening diseases are often diagnosed first by eye doctors because the eye is the only exposed organ in the human body. With routine annual comprehensive eye exams, Optometrists can diagnose and treat medical eye diseases, injuries and conditions in addition to prescribing and corrective lenses to address vision issues.

Optometrists spend four years in post graduate study learning about the intricacies of the human eye, and are licensed to diagnose and treat most eye health conditions. Optometric Doctors (ODs) work closely with Ophthalmologists (MDs) to refer surgical treatments outside their scope of practice, and together, they provide comprehensive eye care services to Oregonians. Optometric Physicians place patient safety above all other considerations, and recommend all individuals receive in person annual comprehensive eye exams to protect against the onset of disease or eye health problems not discernable with online or other self-administered tests.

One in four school aged children have undiagnosed vision problems, and are often misdiagnosed with attention or behavior issues, medicated, tracked and never reach their educational or lifelong potential. OOPA recommends all children receive their first comprehensive eye exams before age 1, then again at age 3 and 5 to ensure their academic success and to prevent unnecessary blindness or medical eye conditions.