

AOA FACULTY AND STUDENT MEMBERSHIP LIAISONS – 2021



AMERICAN OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION

Mission Statement

The mission of the Faculty and Student Membership Liaisons is to strengthen the connection between schools and colleges of optometry and the AOA by acting as ambassadors for the next generation of optometrists, increase awareness of the AOA as the advocate for organized optometry and to promote membership and participation of faculty, residents, and students within the organization and its affiliates.

Objectives: Mentorship – Connection – Advocacy

- Increase number of faculty and residents as members of AOA by demonstrating the value of AOA membership
- Strengthen the connection between faculty, residents and students with the AOA by increasing awareness of AOA 's activity at each school and college of optometry
- Provide information and resource materials instrumental for faculty development such as certification programs, leadership training, and/or educational opportunities through AOA EyeLearn or at Optometry's Meeting
- Encourage faculty and residents to demonstrate to students the value of AOA membership and the importance of active participation in AOA and its affiliates
- Support AOSA student and state affiliate events
- Create a forum for discussion and idea-sharing

Padhmalatha (Pat) Segu, O.D. Chair
University of Houston College of Optometry
psegu@central.uh.edu

Jacquie Bowen, O.D.
AOA Board of Trustees Liaison
jbowen@aoa.org



AOA Faculty Liaisons by School/College

ICO

*Illinois College of Optometry
Chicago*



JANICE MCMAHON, OD
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF OPTOMETRY
jmcmahon@ico.edu

Dr. Janice McMahon graduated from Southern College of Optometry in Memphis, TN, in 1998. After completing a Primary Care residency at the Illinois College of Optometry in 1999, she remained in Chicago as a full-time faculty member. She is a staff doctor at the Illinois Eye Institute, didactic lecturer, laboratory instructor, and holds positions within the AOA and on the Illinois State Board.

IU

*Indiana University School of Optometry
Bloomington*



KATIE CONNOLLY, OD
ASSISTANT CLINICAL PROFESSOR
katiesconnolly@gmail.com

Dr. Connolly graduated from the Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University in 2014 and completed a residency in pediatric optometry at IUSO in 2015. She serves as the Chief of the Pediatric and Binocular Vision Service, Director of the Myopia Control Clinic, Coordinator of the Pediatric Optometry Residency at IUSO, and is the Director of the school vision screening program in Bloomington. She has been focusing on improving access to eye care for low income children in Indiana through IUSO's Vision for the Future Program and in Jamaica, through See Better. Learn Better, a national charity where she serves as clinical director. Special interests include amblyopia, strabismus, and optometric coding and billing. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Optometry and serves on AAO's Faculty Liaison Committee. Dr. Connolly is the state clinical director for Special Olympics Opening Eyes and is an active member of the American Optometric Association where she serves on the AOA's Faculty Liaison Committee. Dr. Connolly is an InfantSEE provider and is the President of the Stonebelt Optometric Society.

IAUPR

*Inter American University of Puerto Rico
School of Optometry*

UNASSIGNED

MCPHS

*MCPHS University School of Optometry
Worcester, MA*

UNASSIGNED

MCO

*Michigan College of Optometry at
Ferris State University, Big Rapids*



BRIAN MCDOWELL, OD
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

brianmcdowell@ferris.edu

Dr. Brian McDowell is an Associate Professor at the Michigan College of Optometry. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Biomedical Sciences from Western Michigan University with a minor in Applied Ethics. After completing his Optometry degree at the Michigan College of Optometry in 2011, he went on to be the founding resident of Henry Ford OptimEyes' Primary Care residency.

His current teaching responsibilities include supervising 2nd and 3rd year interns at the University Eye Center's Primary Care clinic as well as laboratory supervisor for the Optometric Procedures I and II courses. Dr. McDowell also lectures in a variety of other courses with a strong emphasis on the use of clinical technology to enhance education.

**MATTHEW ROE, OD**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PEDIATRICS AND VISION THERAPY

mroe@midwestern.edu

Matthew Roe, OD, FAAO is an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics and Vision Therapy at Midwestern University Arizona College of Optometry. He is the Course Developer of the college's Sports Vision elective and serves as Course Director for courses in the methods curriculum and pediatrics curriculum. He precepts third- and fourth-year students in primary care and pediatric/vision therapy specialty clinics.

**JOHN GIALOUSAKIS, OD, FAAO, FSLs, DIPL ABO**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

jgialousakis@midwestern.edu

Dr. John Gialousakis joined the Chicago College of Optometry (CCO) in 2018 from the State University of New York (SUNY) where he obtained his Doctor of Optometry degree, completed a residency in cornea and contact lenses, and served as an Assistant Clinical Professor from 2014 to 2018. His areas of expertise include contact lens applications for keratoconus, myopia control (including orthokeratology), presbyopia, pediatric aphakia, and post-trauma/post-surgical, as well as prosthetics.

Dr. Gialousakis has published journal articles, and delivered poster presentations and continuing education lectures. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Optometry (AAO), a diplomate of the Cornea, Contact Lenses, and Refraction Technologies through the AAO, a member of the American and Illinois Optometric Associations, a Diplomate of the American Board of Optometry, and a Fellow of the Scleral Lens Education Society. Dr. Gialousakis is currently the Director of Curriculum Development, Chair of Admissions, and an Assistant Professor at CCO.



DIANE RUSSO, O.D.
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

dianerusso@gmail.com

Dr. Russo is an Associate Professor of Optometry in the Department of Primary Care at New England College of Optometry (NECO) where she is Instructor of Record for the following courses: Introduction to Public Health, Public Health and Clinical Practice, Patient Care II a & b, and Patient Care III a, b, & c. Dr. Russo is also an Attending Optometrist at Codman Square Health Center where she precepts second, third, and fourth year students.

Dr. Russo received her BS from Quinnipiac University in 2006 and matriculated from SUNY State College of Optometry in 2010. After graduation, she completed a residency in Primary Care and Low Vision at the West Haven VA Medical Center. She most recently completed her MPH degree from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in 2017. In 2019 she received the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) Rising Star Award and in 2010 she was named one of Vision Monday's Most Influential Women in Optical.

Dr. Russo has been a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry since 2012 and is currently a Candidate for the Public Health and Environmental Vision Diplomate. She is also an active member of the American Optometric Association, Massachusetts Society of Optometrists, and American Public Health Association, serving on the Health Promotions Committee, the Legislative Action Committee, and Section Councilor of the Vision Care Section, respectively. Her research interests include access to eye care for vulnerable populations, vision insurance utilization, and optometric education.



NICOLE STOUT, O.D.
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

stoutn@nsuok.edu

Dr. Stout completed her Doctor of Optometry at the University of Waterloo School of Optometry and Vision Science in 2015 in Ontario, Canada. She then moved to Oklahoma to complete an Ocular Disease & Family Practice Residency at Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of Optometry. Following completion of her residency, Dr. Stout returned to Canada to work as a Clinical Instructor at the University of Waterloo School of Optometry and Vision Science.

In 2017, Dr. Stout returned to Oklahoma to join the NSUOCO faculty and currently holds a full-time position as an Assistant Professor. Dr. Stout is also a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry.

**CRISTINA LAW, O.D.**

ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

lcristin@nova.edu

Dr. Cristina Llerena Law is the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Associate Professor at the NSU College of Optometry. Dr. Law is an NSU College of Optometry graduate. After obtaining her O.D. degree in 2006 at NSU, she completed a residency in Pediatric Optometry at SUNY State College of Optometry. She served as didactic and clinical faculty at SUNY from 2007-2015. She completed a Ph.D. in Vision Science from the Graduate Center for Vision Research at State University of New York in June of 2017.

Aside from her administrative responsibilities, she devotes most of her time to her primary area of research, neuro-plasticity in adult amblyopia. Her other responsibilities at NSU include acting as instructor of record for Ophthalmic Optics I and II and clinical supervision of interns and resident optometric physicians at the NSU Optometry clinics. She is the instructor of record of a graduate scientific writing course for the NSU Graduate Program in Clinical Vision Research.

**MICHAEL EARLEY, O.D.**

PROFESSOR

earley.3@osu.edu

Dr. Earley is a Professor of Clinical Optometry and holds the VSP Chair for Advancement of Professional Practice at the OSU College of Optometry. He serves as the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs with responsibility for the professional program, student affairs and chairs the admissions committee. He completed both his OD (summa cum laude) and PhD training at OSU and has been on faculty since 1990. In clinic, he primarily works with children with special needs and children and adults following acquired or traumatic brain injury. He teaches coursework in neuroanatomy, general anatomy, histology, and clinical diagnostic reasoning. He has received numerous awards for teaching including the Educator of the Year Award from the American Optometric Association, the Michael G. Harris Award for Excellence in Optometric Education from the American Optometric Foundation and Ohio State's highest teaching award, the Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching. He is a member of the Academy of Teaching.

Dr. Earley is involved in clinical research and continues to participate in many multicentered clinical research projects including the Convergence Insufficiency Treatment Trial (CITT), Amblyopia Treatment Studies (ATS), Vision in Preschoolers (VIP) and a study on head traumatic brain injury funded by the Department of Defense. He is a recipient of the Advancement of Science award from the Neuro-Optometric Rehabilitation Association (NORA). He has authored or coauthored more than 80 abstracts, book reviews, and publications and has lectured nationally at more than 50 venues. He is a past president of the Ohio Optometric Association. On behalf of the AOA, Dr. Earley did numerous "Back to School" TV spots with Bill Nye "the Science Guy" and was a speaker at the 2011 AOA School Readiness Summit: Focus on Vision which included a national group of educators, health care professionals, and policy makers. He also serves on the InfantSEE and Children's Vision committee.

**WILLIAM HEFNER, O.D.**

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

whefner@pacificu.edu

A native Kansan, Dr. Hefner spent 20 years in private practice in Topeka, KS specializing in pediatrics and family practice optometry before re-joining the faculty at Pacific University College of Optometry in 2017. Additionally, he continues to serve in the United States Air Force as the Medical Group Commander for the 190th Air Refueling Wing in Topeka, KS. In his nearly 23 years of service, Dr. Hefner has provided humanitarian health care in El Salvador, Armenia and Trinidad and Tobago. Dr. Hefner is a past president of the Kansas Optometric Association, Heart of America Contact Lens Society, and a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry. He is also the recipient of numerous awards including the 2016 Armed Forces Optometrist of the Year for the Reserve Forces, the 2006 Air National Guard Optometrist of the Year, the 2002 Kansas Optometric Association's Young Optometrist of the Year and the 2001 Kansas Optometric Association's Vision Service Award.

He is currently an Associate Professor at Pacific University College of Optometry where he has been the Lead Course instructor for multiple courses and Labs, co-chair of the curriculum and faculty search committees, and finally has served as the clinic director for three of the University's five clinics. In 2020, Dr. Hefner was named the University's Outstanding Junior Faculty of the Year for Service.

**LAINÉ HIGA, O.D.**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

lhiga@salus.edu

Laine S. Higa, OD is an Assistant Professor at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry (PCO) at Salus University. He obtained his undergraduate degree in Cellular/Molecular Biology from Pacific University and went on to complete his optometric education at the Illinois College of Optometry. He completed a post-graduate residency program in Primary Care at the PCO. Dr. Higa works with second, third, and fourth year optometry students and residents in both the didactic and clinical program at PCO. He has a special interest in dry eye disease, anterior segment disease and is currently working on a research project looking at the effects of computer-screen blue light filtration and the effects on the signs and symptoms of dry eye. During his free time, Dr. Higa enjoys cooking, baking and wine tasting.



RACHELLE LIN, O.D.
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

rlin@ketchum.edu

Dr. Rachelle Lin is a full-time Assistant Professor at the Southern California College of Optometry (SCCO) at Marshall B. Ketchum University (MBKU). She treats patients in the clinical departments of Low Vision Rehabilitation and Acquired Brain Injury at the University Eye Center at Ketchum Health in Anaheim, CA. She also conducts genetic testing for inherited eye conditions. At MBKU, she teaches low vision rehabilitation, genetics, clinical methods, and nutrition. She has lectured internationally, with special interest in traumatic brain injury, vision rehabilitation, genetic testing, and gene therapy. Dr. Lin is an active member of the American Optometric Association and the California Optometric Association (COA), where she currently serves as COA Trustee. She has served as Chair of the COA Low Vision Rehabilitation Section and as President of the Orange County Optometric Society. She is also a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry. Dr. Lin received her Doctor of Optometry and Master of Science in Vision Science degrees from SCCO. She completed her post-graduate residency at the VA Long Beach Healthcare System in low vision, traumatic brain injury, and primary care. She was named 2019 COA Young Optometrist of the Year.



BRIAN KNIGHT, O.D.
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

bknight@od.sco.edu

Dr. Brian Knight is a native Memphian who graduated from the University of Memphis in 2008 with a bachelor's degree in biology. Dr. Knight received his Doctor of Optometry degree from Southern College of Optometry in 2014. He completed his residency in Hospital Based Primary Care Optometry at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Memphis, TN.

Dr. Knight currently serves as an Assistant Professor, supervising student clinicians in Adult Primary Care, the Anterior Segment lab, and Anterior Segment and Ophthalmic lasers lab. Dr. Knight is also a member of the American Optometric Association, West Tennessee Optometric Physicians Society, and Tennessee Optometric Physicians Society. His clinical interests include Primary Care and Ocular Disease.

**MARILYN VRICELLA, O.D.**
ASSOCIATE CLINICAL PROFESSOR*mvricella@sunyopt.edu*

Dr. Marilyn Vricella is an Associate Clinical Professor in the Pediatrics Vision department of the University Eye Center and a Fellow of College of Optometrists in Vision Development (COVD). She received her Doctor of Optometry from SUNY College of Optometry and upon graduation received the Dr. F.W. Brock Memorial Award, Dr. S. Eisenberg Memorial Award and the Dr. M. Cohen Memorial Award. Dr. Vricella completed her residency in Pediatrics and Infant Vision at SUNY Optometry before joining the College as a faculty member. Dr. Vricella serves the Pediatric Optometry Residency supervisor. Additionally, she is a clinical instructor to interns and externs. She is also the Principal Investigator for the Pediatric Eye Disease Investigator Group and serves as the American Optometric Association Faculty and Student Membership Liaison. Previously she was an investigator for CITT. She has lectured both nationally and internationally in the areas of pediatrics and binocular vision and has numerous professional publications.

**CAROLINE PATE, O.D.**
PROFESSOR, DIRECTOR OF RESIDENCY PROGRAMS*cbeesley@uab.edu*

Dr. Caroline Pate earned her OD degree from the Pennsylvania College of Optometry in 2004. Dr. Pate completed her residency training in family practice optometry at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry, and then joined the UAB School of Optometry faculty in July 2005, where she currently is a Professor in the Department of Optometry and Vision Science. Dr. Pate serves as the Director of Residency Programs at UABSO. Her teaching roles at UAB include course director for Diseases of the Anterior Segment and course instructor for Clinical Evaluation of the Visual System. She sees patients as a clinical attending in the school's Ocular Disease and Primary Eye Care clinical services, as well as provides direct patient care one day per week as a part of the Faculty Private Practice, the University Optometric Group.

Dr. Pate is a past-chair of the Education Committee for the Alabama Optometric Association (AOA), and is a past-president of the Birmingham Area Optometric Society. Dr. Pate is currently serving as chair of the Allied Health Professionals Education Committee for SECO International. Dr. Pate was named the Alabama Optometric Association's Young OD of the Year in 2014 and the Alabama Optometric Association Educator of the Year in 2019. Dr. Pate was honored as the recipient of the 2020 AOA Educator of the Year. She is currently serving on the AOA's Membership Development Committee and the Faculty and Student Membership Liaison Committee.



ANNE TASAKI, O.D.
ASSISTANT CLINICAL PROFESSOR
anneytasaki@berkeley.edu

Dr. Anne Tasaki, O.D., received her optometry degree and completed her residency in pediatrics and primary care at the University of California Berkeley School of Optometry (UCBSO). Currently Dr. Tasaki is a full-time Assistant Clinical Professor in the pediatrics and primary care clinics at UCBSO where she teaches third year optometry students as well as mentors the current pediatrics, primary care and community health residents. She is also a staff optometrist at Kaiser Permanente San Rafael and provides comprehensive vision care to their pediatric patients.

Dr. Tasaki is a member of the AOA Faculty and Student Membership Liaison Committee and a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry. She is also the Immediate Past-President for the Alameda and Contra Costa Counties Optometric Society and received their Young OD of the Year Award in 2018. She currently serves as Chair of the Admissions Committee and Co-Chair of the Continuing Education Committee for UCBSO. Dr. Tasaki enjoys hiking and trying new restaurants around the Bay Area.



PAT SEGU, O.D., CHAIR
CLINICAL PROFESSOR
psegu@central.uh.edu

Dr. Segu graduated from the University of Florida with a Bachelor of Science in Microbiology and Cell Science in 1988. Her education continued at the University of Houston College of Optometry receiving a doctorate degree in 1992. Dr. Segu completed a residency in hospital-based optometry at the Veteran's Administration Medical Center Tacoma, WA and holds a therapeutic license in the state of Texas with glaucoma privileges. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry (AAO), a diplomate of the American Board of Optometry, a member of the Texas Optometric Association and American Optometric Association. Dr. Segu holds several leadership positions and continues to be actively involved in several professional and non-profit organizations. Previous leadership positions include chair for the American Public Health Association's Vision Care Section, chair for the Texas Public Health Association's Vision Care Section, chair for the American Academy of Optometry Vision and Aging Sig, and board chair for Prevent Blindness of Texas. In 2021, Dr. Segu was appointed to chair the Faculty Liaison Committee for the American Optometric Association.

Dr. Segu is currently a clinical professor, director of the clinical teaching fellowship program, clinic director for the Houston vision collaboration project-See to Succeed for the University of Houston College of Optometry. Dr. Segu is the recipient of the 2020 Texas Optometric Association Mollie Armstrong Leadership Award, 2020 Texas Public Health Association Vision Care Section Distinguished Service Award, 2015 American Public Health Vision Care Section Distinguished Service Award, 2014 University of Houston Teaching Excellence Award under the Community Engagement category, 2013 Texas Optometric Association Educator of the Year Award. Dr. Segu's interests include community service outreach, primary care optometry and ocular disease.

**SRIHARI NARAYANAN, O.D.**

PROFESSOR, DIRECTOR OF CORNEA & DRY EYE SERVICE

narayana@uiwtx.edu

Srihari Narayanan is an experienced Optometric Practitioner, Educator and Researcher. He is currently a Professor and Director of Cornea and Dry Eye Service at the University of the Incarnate Word Rosenberg School of Optometry. He serves on various University / National / International committees with leadership roles. Dr. Narayanan teaches a variety of didactic courses and serves as a clinical preceptor for OD students. He provides COPE-approved CE lectures for licensed Optometrists. Dr. Narayanan has also been involved in educating Optometrists in several European and Asian countries. His research interests include tear film and dry eye disease as well as anterior uveitis. He has several scientific publications and presents research in national and international meetings. Prior to moving to the United States, Dr. Narayanan practiced optometry in India and Bahrain.

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BENJAMIN KONIG, O.D.
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

benkonig@upike.edu

Dr. Benjamin Konig is originally from Brentwood, Tennessee. He went to Lipscomb University in Nashville for his undergraduate degree. He completed his doctor of optometry degree at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry, and then completed a residency in Vision Rehabilitation at Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of Optometry. Dr. Konig regularly participates in volunteer service trips, and he has served in 18 Remote Area Medical clinics and 6 International eye clinics. He was one of the first placements for the Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity (VOSH) Corps program which was sponsored by VOSH International and the Brien Holden Vision Institute. At this placement, he taught optometry in Nicaragua at the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Nicaragua medical optometry program for 8 months. Following his placement there, he joined the faculty at the Kentucky College of Optometry, where he teaches Gerontology and Low Vision, Ophthalmic Optics, and Integrated Case Based Learning.

UNASSIGNED**NATALY FAHIM, O.D.****ASSISTANT PROFESSOR/DIRECTOR OF EXTERNSHIP CLINICAL
EDUCATION**nfahim@westernu.edu

Dr. Nataly Fahim graduated from Nova Southeastern University, College of Optometry and completed a Primary Care Optometry residency program at Southern College of Optometry. Following the completion of her residency, Dr. Fahim worked at a busy private practice which focused on primary care, ocular disease and contact lenses. She joined Western University, College of Optometry (WUCO) as a part-time faculty member in January 2011 and transitioned into a full-time Assistant Professor position in August 2012. She was appointed the Director of Externship Clinical Education in 2018. Dr. Fahim is a laboratory instructor and precepts third- and fourth-year students at WesternU Health Eye Care Institute. She also serves on the student performance and assessment committees. Dr. Fahim is a fellow of the American Academy of Optometry, and a member of the American Optometric Association, the California Optometric Association, and the Inland Empire Optometric Society.