



VISIONS

ALUMNI MAGAZINE

SOUTHERN
COLLEGE OF
OPTOMETRY



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PRESIDENT'S CORNER »

Richard W. Phillips, OD '78, FAAO



ForwardThinking | FutureFocused

Eight second-year students have spent part of their summer participating in SCO's second annual Summer Research Program. When the program started in 2009, five students participated; this year, the number grew by three.

"SCO's Summer Research Program gives second-year students the opportunity to perform research under the direct supervision of a faculty mentor or mentors," said Charles G. Connor, PhD, OD, SCO's Director of Research.

The program is promoted to students in advance of the summer semester. Those students who get accepted into the program are paired with faculty to work on a variety of specific research topics.

Lauren Krawczyk's project is studying disparity in data from results obtained on a phoropter and those obtained from free space cards as she studies differences in the eye's convergence and divergence.

"I had done research, working with a development biologist at LSU," she said. After hearing Dr. Connor talk to her class about the program, she filled out an application, along with a description of why she wanted to participate. All the necessary documentation and applications for each project were then approved by SCO's Institutional Review Board (IRB) Committee, chaired by Patricia Cisarik, OD, PhD.

Krawczyk's work has included developing data sheets, guideline forms for study subjects, contacting prospective patients to participate, and then compiling information after her clinical observations.



1st row (L-R): Erin Kindy, Janine Henry, Jennifer Henry
2nd row (L-R): David Hite, Nora Cothran, Kristin Spears, Lauren Krawczyk;
Not pictured: Brittany Radke

"We will be combining our findings with NSUOCO's," Spears said. "I'm excited to see the results of the study and see how our data compares to the data collected at NSUOCO."

Through her participation, Spears also hopes to learn more about the logistics of getting a research experiment approved by the IRB and how the final data will be compiled and organized.

The research program has even allowed Jennifer and Janine Henry, twin sisters, the opportunity to collaborate together on their project. The

Students Active Participants in Summer Research Program

A number of fellow students have participated in her study, first-years in particular, along with spouses and friends. "It's kind of neat because our friends who participate get to come and see SCO," Krawczyk said.

She's found the work very interesting. Because fixation disparity tests theoretically should yield similar results by testing the same underlying mechanism, finding and explaining mismatched data is part of the research challenge that she and Dr. Maples are exploring.

Krawczyk tests each subject twice and hopes to wrap up her interviews and testing by the early fall, with a goal of finishing the work by the end of the year.

Classmate Erin Kindy is working on two studies with Dr. Cisarik. The first is a comparison to see if referral rates for school vision screenings are increased with the addition of vergence and accommodative facility tests.

"Basically, we're looking to see if we can catch students who have binocularity problems that would interfere with their schoolwork," Kindy explained.

Her second project is to see if a correlation exists between esophoria at near and self-perceived ability at resolving Magic Eye® pictures.

Meanwhile, in her work with Dr. Edmondson, Kristen Spears is exploring a comfort comparison among several different over-the-counter drops containing ketotifen fumarate. These newer formulations of anti-allergy medications are commonly used for relief of seasonal allergic conjunctivitis. The study is assessing the relationship between the comfort of the drop and patient compliance.

Several of Dr. Edmondson's colleagues at Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of Optometry (NSUOCO) are doing a similar study, Spears noted.

Henrys are performing phone surveys to investigate compliance rates among contact lens wearers in daily, bi-weekly, and monthly wearing modalities.

"Opposing views exist in the recent literature," said Dr. Dan Fuller, their research mentor. "The study seeks to explore these views within the context of a single large clinic population."

Regardless of their various research topics, each student is expected to submit his or her findings to a national meeting, such as the American Academy of Optometry or the American Optometric Association, and to assist faculty in presenting their research in published papers, CE lectures, or academic posters.

For Lauren Krawczyk, the experience has already proven interesting enough to make her think about how she could participate in research in her post-graduation practice.

Until then, she can also foresee an additional benefit to her participation. "Working in the summer research program has made me more interested in the research side of optometry and could be useful if I choose to pursue residency opportunities," she noted.

Enhanced clinical research strengthens SCO's clinical excellence by increasing faculty – and student – expertise, noted Dr. Connor, head of SCO's research program.

"Pursuing clinical research excellence contributes to the college's overall mission to provide the highest quality and most current instruction of basic and clinical science," he said. "This in turn contributes to our mission of educating the best possible healthcare providers while promoting lifelong learning, so it's really a win-win for all involved."

Dumas to Lead Minority Recruitment Effort



Continuing the goal of enacting the college's new Strategic Plan, SCO has begun a new recruitment initiative with Dr. Janette Dumas at the helm as Coordinator of Minority Student Recruitment.

"As part of the new Strategic Plan and the college's desired emphasis on a greater outreach to prospective underrepresented minority students, Sunnie Ewing, Director of Student Recruitment, and I determined that creating the position of Coordinator of Minority Student Recruitment would benefit us in many ways," said Joe Hauser, Vice President of Student Services.

"We feel having Dr. Dumas' talents and admissions experience in this new role will provide the college a much greater exposure to qualified underrepresented minority students."

Dr. Dumas, who says she is excited about the new position, feels patients will inevitably benefit from this new recruiting initiative and has already begun planning her approach.

"The need for more minority eye care professionals is evident because there is a disparity between the number of minority patients and the number of minority optometrists," she said.

"Activities such as participating in recruitment trips, establishing contacts and, most importantly, building relationships will be instrumental in reaching our goal."

Rotary Honors Dr. Phillips

SCO President Richard W. Phillips, OD '78, FAAO, recently was honored by the Memphis Rotary Club as a Paul Harris Fellow and as the Memphis chapter's Rotarian of the Year.

The Paul Harris Fellowship is the highest honor a Rotary Club can bestow on one of its members. The Memphis chapter awards the recognition for service to the club and the community.

"We felt Dr. Phillips deserved the recognition, as well as being named our Rotarian of the Year, because of his dedication to, and enthusiasm for, our international projects – a clean water project in Haiti and Stop Hunger Now Partnership," said Taylor Hughes, Executive Director of the Memphis Rotary Club.

Over the past year, SCO has hosted a

number of Stop Hunger Now food preparation projects for Haiti in conjunction with the Memphis Rotary Club.



Meet SCO's New Residents

Five new on-campus residents were recently welcomed to SCO to spend the next year working and learning in The

In Memory of Emma Ivie

For the past two years, the SCO community rallied around the family of Jared Ivie, OD '09. The summer before he began his senior year at SCO, he and his wife, Kerie, learned that their three-year-old daughter, Emma, had been diagnosed with neuroblastoma, a childhood cancer.

Emma bravely battled the disease over the past two years. In March, she was named St. Jude Children's Research Hospital's Patient of the Month as her dad neared the completion of his SCO residency.

When Emma asked if she could have her fifth birthday party at the SCO Activity Center, a site she connected with fun and games at her father's alma mater, SCO responded in a major way to make Emma's birthday a very happy one.

Emma requested a Disney Cinderella princess party, so a group of SCO volunteers went to work transforming the Activity Center gym into a castle backdrop, complete with a throne for Princess Emma. Local businesses donated their service, including a horse-drawn Cinderella coach that took Emma and her family to her birthday party on Wednesday, April 7. Students, faculty and staff lined a parade route as Emma waved on her way to her birthday ball.

Waiting were dozens of invited children, friends and family of the Ivies. Royal trumpeters heralded Emma's arrival on the red carpet leading to her throne. Guests enjoyed face and finger-painting, jewelry making, Princess cupcakes, a popcorn machine and fun and games.

Cinderella herself made an appearance and led the children in reading stories and dancing to music. The college was privileged to facilitate and host this special event for a member of the SCO family. After a brave, two-year fight, Emma Ivie passed away on June 27, 2010.





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Honorary Degree Nominations Encouraged

Southern College of Optometry is seeking submissions of names of distinguished optometrists and other individuals for consideration of honorary degrees to be awarded at Commencement 2011.

The college invites you to submit the name and accomplishments of individuals to be considered. There should be no anonymous submissions, even though your name will not be publicly disclosed.

Recipients must be of sufficient stature and character so as to honor the college. Specific criteria for an honorary degree at SCO include at least two of the following: distinguished record of scholarship, outstanding contribution to society through humanitarian efforts, public service or education; and outstanding contributions to the profession of optometry and/or optometric education.

Please send a letter of nomination, along with supporting details, i.e., publications, CVs, and biographies, to Academic Affairs (Honorary Degrees), c/o SCO, 1245 Madison Avenue, Memphis, TN, 38104. Nominations may also be emailed to Dr. Lewis Reich, Vice President for Academic Affairs, at degrees@sco.edu.

Nominations for honorary degrees must be submitted by **Friday, October 29, 2010**.

Out and About

SCO is committed to interacting with its alumni. We hope to see many of you at:

September 10-12

Vermont Optometric Association
Stowe, VT

September 16-19

Tennessee Optometric Association
Gatlinburg, TN

September 30-October 3

SCO Homecoming/Fall CE
Memphis, TN

September 30

SCO All School Convocation
Memphis, TN

October 23-24

Virginia Optometric Association
McLean, VA

November 12-14

North Carolina Optometric Society
Asheville, NC

November 17-20

American Academy of Optometry
San Francisco, CA