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Contact Us

Iowa Academy of Ophthalmology

President: Christopher L. Hauptert, MD

Executive Director: Tess Young, JD

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New Leaders for the IAO

As of July 1, the following leadership positions are in effect:

- President: Christopher L. Hauptert, MD
Past President: Mariannette Miller-Meeks, MD
Secretary/Treasurer: Steven J. Jacobs, MD
PAC Chair: Jeffrey L. Maassen, MD
Legislative Chair: Andrew C. G. Steffensmeier, MD
IMS Legislative Committee: Andrew C. G. Steffensmeier, MD
IMS Committee on Medical Services: Michael D. Abramoff, MD
AAO Federal Advocacy Coordinator: Michael H. Scott, MD

A special thanks to all our previous officers and representatives!

A Message from Your President:

Hello, IAO members! I hope this newsletter finds you enjoying your summer. The IAO is working hard to serve you, and you will learn the specifics about our current efforts below. I wanted to briefly highlight some items of special interest:

We salute Iowa's refractive surgeons, all of whom agreed to participate in Sight for Soldiers, an IAO-sponsored program that provided discounted refractive surgery for Iowa National Guard troops deploying to Afghanistan and Iraq. The program was a terrific send-off for our troops and great chance to project a positive, proactive image for ophthalmology in Iowa.

I strongly encourage you to donate to the IAO PAC, OPHTHPAC and the Surgical Scope Fund. All three entities are crucial to preserving our profession as we know it, and as health care reform begins to take shape, it is more important than ever to donate. If you have been a regular contributor, thank you! If not, please join in the effort! We are striving for 100% participation in both OPHTHPAC and the Surgical Scope Fund among IAO members. Any amount would be greatly appreciated.

We are excited about improving vision screening for Iowa's children. Iowa Kidsight and Prevent Blindness have provided much-needed service, but too many children in Iowa still go without adequate screening. We continue to pursue legislation favorable to vision screening, but we are dedicated to assembling a statewide network that will screen all of Iowa's kids, regardless of legislation.

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I want to acknowledge our outstanding executive director, Tess Young. She brings boundless energy and dedication to her position and has been doing a tremendous job serving the IAO. We are extremely fortunate to have her working for us. Thanks, Tess, for your fantastic service!

We are working to increase participation among IAO members. There are plenty of opportunities to serve, and we need your help to reach our potential as a state society. If you are interested in becoming more involved, please contact Tess and she will gladly find a way for you to pitch in.

Please read on, as Tess has assembled an informative newsletter that will bring you up to date on the IAO's activities on your behalf. I look forward to serving you. If you have any suggestions as to how we could serve you more effectively, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Christopher L. Haupert, MD
chaupertirc@aol.com
515-222-6400

IAO Annual Meeting

The 2010 Iowa Academy of Ophthalmology Annual Meeting, "A Focus on the Business of Ophthalmology," was held at the Sheraton West Des Moines on April 16. The EHR panel discussion and the other business related speakers were well received. EHR vendor demonstrations were well attended. Both physicians and practice administrators benefited from this terrific opportunity to explore the acquisition and implementation of EHR.

We need IAO members' input on whether an annual meeting is a wise use of our limited resources. Please complete the survey included in this newsletter and return it in the enclosed envelope. If we have your current email address, you will receive this survey via email as well, so reply however you would like. If you do not receive it and want it by email, please provide your address to IowaAcademyOp@aol.com. Thank you very much in advance for your help.

Please help us by completing a survey here or by email!

Coding Information

Current coding and compliance information is sent to coding professionals for our member practices and is available on our website, www.IowaEyeDocs.org. Coding, reimbursement, and other updates, as provided by Newby Consultants, Inc., are posted. These include New Diagnosis Codes effective Oct. 1, 2010. Members can obtain a username and password for accessing this information by contacting Tess at IowaAcademyOp@aol.com.

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Sight for Soldiers: A Success that will be shared!



We are proud to report that 116 Iowa National Guard soldiers received discounted refractive surgery under the Sight for Soldiers program. The American Academy of Ophthalmology has embraced the program and it will be shared with all State Executive Directors at the AAO Annual Meeting in Chicago this fall. We are grateful that every refractive surgeon in the state agreed to participate, and Iowa's National Guard troops thank you!

Have you made your IAO PAC contribution?

State legislative and gubernatorial elections will take place in just a few months. These elected officials can have a tremendous impact on your practice and on your patients' access to healthcare. Ophthalmology must have a voice in these elections.

In recent sessions, we have been working to support legislation mandating vision screening for Iowa's children, as opposed to mandatory comprehensive eye exams. We know that many legislators are concerned about this important issue. In addition, we remain vigilant regarding scope of practice issues.

Our PAC dollars are spent wisely, toward races that will have the greatest impact on issues of interest to ophthalmology. Please donate today to our PAC and help us elect lawmakers who understand the value of your medical degree and will listen to your concerns. Contact us for more information.

Iowa Ophthalmologist on Journey to DC

Please join the IAO in congratulating Mariannette Miller-Meeks, MD, on her victory in the Primary Election for the 2nd District US Congressional Race. Dr. Miller-Meeks has a long history of service including her role as the first woman President of the Iowa Medical Society and last year's President of the IAO. Dr. Miller-Meeks has a unique understanding of the issues related to your ability to practice medicine and your patients' access to quality care. For more information and to help Dr. Miller-Meeks on her journey, go to www.millermEEKS.com

Pictured below: Dr. Miller-Meeks receiving an OPHTHPAC check from IAO President Dr. Christopher Haupert to help with her campaign.



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Come to the 2010 AAO Annual Meeting Oct. 16-19 in Chicago!

Take this opportunity to attend this national meeting while it is almost in your backyard. Send your office staff to learn about all the latest in technology and Electronic Health Records. See you in the Windy City!

~ WHERE ALL OF OPHTHALMOLOGY MEETS ~



The banner features a stylized illustration of the Chicago skyline with a prominent skyscraper and a Ferris wheel. The text 'CHICAGO!' is written vertically on the right side. The main text reads: 'AAO x MEACO CHICAGO 2010', 'Register Now www.aao.org', 'Come to the first Joint Meeting of the Academy and the Middle East Africa Council of Ophthalmology (MEACO).', '2010 JOINT MEETING: OCTOBER 16 - 19', 'SUBSPECIALTY DAY: OCTOBER 15 - 16', and 'AAOE PROGRAM: OCTOBER 16 - 19'.

The American Academy of Ophthalmology is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education to provide continuing medical education for physicians.



Residents sponsored for the AAO 2010 Mid Year Forum

This year the University of Iowa and the IAO co-sponsored two residents to attend the AAO Mid Year Forum as our Advocacy Ambassadors. Accompanied by Keith Carter, MD, Esther Hong, MD, and Gina Rogers, MD, visited Capitol Hill to advocate for issues important to ophthalmology. Both residents later shared their experiences at Grand Rounds at the University.

Pictured below are Tess Young, Executive Director, Christopher L. Haupert, MD, Esther Hong, MD, and Gina Rogers, MD, at the recognition banquet for the Advocacy Ambassadors.



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OPHTHPAC Makes a Difference! Join Today!

**American Academy of Ophthalmology CEO David W. Park II, MD,
Discusses the Importance of OPHTHPAC**

Ophthalmology will realize a 10 percent increase (5 percent practice expense update, Jan. 1, 2010; 1.1 percent sustainable growth rate update; tentative 4 percent practice expense update, Jan. 1, 2011) in Medicare reimbursement this year, despite all of the confusion and instability over the last six months associated with health care reform and physician pay. The increase is a critical victory and has become a baseline for future Medicare reimbursement negotiations. As an ophthalmologist, you benefit substantially from the successes that we have been able to achieve in Washington, D.C. These improved Medicare payments would not have happened without OPHTHPAC. As the health care debate moves to rule-making and regulation, many issues are still on the table. **Put part of your increased payment toward an investment in our future by supporting OPHTHPAC.** Go to www.aaof.org, [Advocacy](#), [OPHTHPAC](#) and become a player in these critical issues TODAY.

Help us Win the Scope of Practice Battle

Iowa has been lucky the last few years, but border states Nebraska and Missouri have been hit with legislation from optometry that threatens ophthalmology's scope of practice.

The Academy's Surgical Scope Fund is one of ophthalmology's most powerful weapons against optometry's bid for surgical privileges. The fund provides grants to state ophthalmological societies to support their legislative and public education efforts on safe eye surgery.

The Surgical Scope fund needs YOUR support to continue fighting for your patients' safety. Please join your colleagues in making your maximum contribution TODAY. You may contribute online or download a printable form to fill out and send via fax or mail. Go to www.aaof.org, [Advocacy](#), [Surgical Scope Fund](#).

Contributions to the Surgical Scope Fund are confidential and are not subject to FEC reporting requirements. Funds are not used for contributions to political candidates or their PACs. The Surgical Scope Fund can accept gifts from corporate entities as well as individual givers, but contributions are not tax-deductible as a charitable or business expense.

Please contact the Academy's State Governmental Affairs office at 202.737.6662 for more information about the Surgical Scope Fund.

Check out the IAO website:

www.IowaEyeDocs.org

Contact Tess for your User ID and Password
for member only pages.

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Collaborative Efforts by the IAO:

Prevent Blindness Iowa: The IAO is working with Prevent Blindness Iowa to better educate the public about eye safety. We are working together on a number of press releases and public service announcements to increase awareness of vision safety and the need for vision care in our state. In addition, we are partnering with Prevent Blindness to build a state-wide network for children's vision screening.

Iowa Kidsight: While Iowa Kidsight continues to increase the number of preschool screenings performed across the state, the legislature continues to reduce their funding. The IAO has offered to reach out to legislators, raise awareness of and encourage funding to this vital program. We are also working to forge a partnership between Iowa Kidsight and Prevent Blindness in assembling a state-wide children's vision screening program.

Optometry: The IAO continues to maintain a relationship and dialogue with optometry in an effort to reach consensus on child vision assessment legislation. You may be aware that optometry has arranged for a "green card" to be distributed to the parents of elementary school children. This green card implies that comprehensive eye exams are mandatory, but they are not. We are working with optometry to modify the language on the card, which is misleading in its current form. We hope to agree on more accurate language that conveys the importance of vision assessment for children – screening or a comprehensive exam -- without implying that either method of assessment is mandatory.

