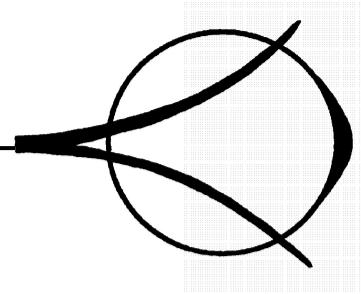


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October 2008

Project Vietnam To Begin In October

In partnership with Alcon Laboratories and the Vietnam National Institute of Ophthalmology (VNIO) in Hanoi, the IAO is preparing to teach a series of courses for Vietnamese ophthalmologists beginning this fall. The courses presented through *PROJECT VIETNAM* will be taught by IAO volunteers, and Alcon has generously covered the cost of travel expenses and accommodations for the Illinois doctors, as well as providing equipment, supplies and other materials for the course.



Project Vietnam (l-r) – James Katz, MD; Maria Rosselson, MD; Chitra Nadimpalli, MD; & project director Ronald C. May, MD.

On October 6th, the first group of IAO members will be departing for Vietnam. Three Chicago-area ophthalmologists will be teaching a two-week phacoemulsification course. They are: James Katz, MD, who practices at Midwest Center for Sight in Des Plaines; Maria Rosselson, MD, of Chicago Cornea Consultants in Highland Park; and Chitra Nadimpalli, MD, of Wicker Park Eye Center in Chicago. Ronald C. May, MD, of Ophthalmology Partners in Deerfield, is the IAO Project Vietnam director. Drs. Rosselson and Nadimpalli will share teaching duties the first week (October 6-10), and in the second week, Dr. Nadimpalli will be joined by Dr. Katz.

In about three months, the IAO will be sending another team to Vietnam. They will travel to the provincial hospitals where the students practice to observe surgery and work with the Vietnamese ophthalmologists to refine their techniques.

IAO Executive Director Rich Paul will also be attending the first week of the program in Vietnam and will be updating an online blog throughout the trip. Check out <http://illinoiseyemds.blogspot.com> regularly to learn about the difference IAO members are making in Vietnam.

Chicago Lighthouse Names Szlyk as New Executive Director

Janet Szlyk, PhD, professor and director of the Low Vision Laboratory at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), was named the new Executive Director of The Chicago Lighthouse. Dr. Szlyk, who succeeds the retiring Jim Kesteloot, assumed her new duties as head of the 102-year-old agency on August 4th.



At UIC, Dr. Szlyk won acclaim for building the Department of Ophthalmology & Visual Sciences' Low Vision Laboratory into an internationally recognized facility with a mission to develop and assess methods, devices, and treatments to optimize remaining vision in patients with eye disease. Widely respected for her passion as an advocate for people with visual impairments, Dr. Szlyk's scientific research, which consists of over 175 publications and presentations, has been intended to identify ways of improving the quality of lives of patients with low vision.

Founded in 1906, The Chicago Lighthouse is one of America's most comprehensive social service agencies. Housed under its roof are the country's oldest and most prominent low vision clinic; one of the few remaining clock manufacturing facilities in the U.S.; a nationally acclaimed school for children who are blind with multi-disabilities; a VA program serving blind veterans in all 50 states; and a radio station. The agency provided education, referral and direct services to more than 70,000 people in fiscal year 2007.

Physicians to Receive Incentives for Electronic Prescribing in 2009

By Joy Newby, LPN, CPC, PCS, Newby Consulting, Inc.

Over the next five years, ophthalmologists must transition to electronic prescribing for Medicare patients or else face penalties under a provision set forth by Medicare legislation passed in July. To help defray the cost of the new systems, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008 authorizes the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to make incentive payments from 2009 to 2013 to physicians who successfully implement e-prescribing measures, either under Physician Quality Reporting Initiative guidelines or under Medicare Part D at a level determined by CMS.

CMS representatives expressed their hope that widespread adoption of e-prescribing systems will streamline the prescribing process for doctors, patients and pharmacists, saving time and money. However, detractors argue that challenges still exist, such as a lack of standardization and a persistence of keystroke errors that still require pharmacist-physician verification.

OMIC Announces Dividend for 2008 and Rate Decrease for 2009

Favorable claims experience and solid financial results have allowed the Board of Directors for the Ophthalmic Mutual Insurance Company (OMIC) to declare a dividend for 2008 and a rate decrease for 2009. Annual base premiums will decrease by an average of 8.5 percent beginning Jan. 1, 2009. A 20 percent dividend credit will be applied to all 2008 policy holders at renewal. Call OMIC Sales at (800) 562-6642, Deena Mader at ext. 628, or Robert Widi at ext. 654 for a premium indication for your area, or visit www.omic.com to complete a quick quote form.

On the Political Front

2008 Illinois Medical Eye PAC Contributions

The outcomes of state legislative concerns that directly affect ophthalmologists, including Medicaid reimbursement rates and scope of practice legislation, can be influenced by the Illinois Association of Ophthalmology's collective voice. This year, with your help, we have been able to make great strides in our governmental affairs efforts to protect the quality of medical eye care in Illinois.

During 2008, your generous contributions to the Illinois Medical Eye PAC have allowed us to support the following individuals and caucuses during this election season:

Rep. Edward Acevedo (D-Chicago)	Sen. Randy Hultgren (R-Wheaton)
Sen. Pamela J. Althoff (R-Crystal Lake)	Rep. Renee Kosel (R-Mokena)
Rep. Suzanne Bassi (R-Palatine)	Sen. Terry Link (D-Waukegan)
Rep. Mark Beaubien (R-Wauconda)	Rep. Joseph Lyons (D-Chicago)
Rep. Patricia Bellock (R-Westmont)	Speaker Michael J. Madigan (D-Chicago)
Rep. Bill Black (R-Danville)	Sen. Ed Maloney (D-Chicago)
Rep. Dan Brady (R-Bloomington)	Rep. Sidney Mathias (R-Arlington Heights)
Rep. Jim Brosnahan (D-Oak Lawn)	Rep. Michael P. McAuliffe (R-Chicago)
Rep. Daniel Burke (D-Chicago)	Rep. David E. Miller (D-Dolton)
Rep. Linda Chapa LaVia (D-Aurora)	Rep. Rosemary Mulligan (R-Des Plaines)
Sen. James Clayborne (D-East St. Louis)	Rep. Ruth Munson (R-Elgin)
Rep. Franco Coladipietro (R-Bloomington)	Rep. JoAnn Osmond (R-Antioch)
Rep. Sandy Cole (R-Grayslake)	Rep. Robert Pritchard (R-Sycamore)
Rep. Marlo Colvin (D-Chicago)	Rep. Randy Ramey (R-West Chicago)
Rep. Beth Coulson (R-Glenview)	Rep. David Reis (R-Olney)
Sen. Dan Cronin (R-Lombard)	House Republicans
Rep. Tom Cross (R-Plainfield)	Senate Republicans
Sen. Maggie Crotty (D-Oak Forest)	Rep. Kathy Ryg (D-Vernon Hills)
Sen. John Cullerton (D-Chicago)	Rep. Jim Sacia (R-Freeport)
Rep. Shane Cultra (R-Onarga)	Rep. Skip Saviano (R-River Grove)
Senate Democrats	Rep. Tim Schmitz (R-Geneva)
Sen. Kirk Dillard (R-Westmont)	Sen. Jeff Schoenberg (D-Evanston)
Rep. John Fritchey (D-Chicago)	Rep. Ed Sullivan (R-Mundelein)
Sen. Don Harmon (D-Oak Park)	Sen. Frank Watson (R-Greenville)
Rep. Brent Hassert (R-Romeoville)	Rep. Dave Winters (R-Rockford)
Rep. Tom Holbrook (D-Belleville)	Rep. Karen Yarbrough (D-Broadview)

To make a contribution to the Illinois Medical Eye PAC, please contact our administrative office at 847/680-1666.

Looking Ahead

Mark Your Calendars for the 2nd Annual IAO Capitol Eye Screening

We are happy to announce that planning for the second annual IAO State Capitol Eye Screening is underway! Last year, four IAO board members and their staff volunteered to provide free eye screenings to nearly fifty legislators, staff, and visitors to the Capitol in Springfield. The screening served as an opportunity for IAO members to discuss legislative issues with lawmakers and to maintain the IAO's positive visibility in the legislature.

Next year's screening will take place on Wednesday, February 25, 2009, from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. We are looking for volunteers to assist with the screening and interact with state legislators throughout the day. Your time and effort will go a long way toward increasing the visibility of ophthalmology among members of the state legislature, as well as helping to educate lawmakers about what we do.

Dates to Remember

February 20-21, 2009
IAO/COS Joint Conference,
Rosemont, IL

February 25, 2009
IAO Capitol Screening Day,
Springfield, IL