

University of Missouri-St. Louis
College of Optometry
Academic Unit Annual Report – January 1, 2003 – December 31, 2003

Academic Unit: College of Optometry

5/27/2004

Key Administrators:

Deans: Larry J. Davis, Dean; Gerald A. Franzel, Associate Dean for Continuing Education and e-Learning; Ralph P. Garzia, Assistant Dean for Clinical Programs

Directors: Edward S. Bennett, Director, Student Services; Alexander D. Harris, Director, Externships; Vinita Henry, Director, Residencies; Carol K. Peck, Director, Graduate Studies

Faculty Chair: Aaron S. Franzel, Chair, Faculty Leadership Committee 2003

College of Optometry Mission:

The primary mission of the University of Missouri-St. Louis College of Optometry is to graduate a select and diverse population of optometrists and vision scientists who will contribute to eye care and to the profession of optometry. Through its academic program, the College instills in the graduate a professional and scientific attitude, ability and skills for life-long learning, and the basis for contributions to the social welfare of the community. Through its research programs, the College fosters the creation and advancement of new knowledge in the ophthalmic and vision sciences to further optometrists' understanding and ability to care for patients. Through post-graduate residency and continuing education programs, the College elevates the educational level of eye care professionals. Through College eye care centers and other outreach programs, the College provides exemplary service to the population of the state's largest metropolitan community.

--Adopted by unanimous faculty approval, Autumn 2000

Executive Summary of Key Accomplishments:

The faculty, staff and administration continue to be committed to the **strategic plan** of the College which sets forth specific action steps to fulfill the diverse mission of teaching, research, patient care and service. The document underwent a full review in August 2003. Faculty and administration embrace the plan as a guide not only for the future but also for the day-to-day operations within the College. Other documents developed or refined by the faculty and administration during 2003 include a **Faculty Statement of Ideals**, designed as an initial set of standards to promote excellence for the College academic culture, and a revised **instrument for student assessment of teaching** which is administered **on-line**.

Advanced technology continues to play an increasingly major role as **internal processes** were improved during 2003 with the planning and development for **Electronic Medical Records (EMR)** for four clinical sites. EMR was initiated at the University Eye Center beginning in late 2003 and fully operationalized in early 2004. Implementation of EMR for the three other sites will begin in 2004. The College of Optometry is **among the first optometry programs** in the nation to make the change to electronic medical records.

Substantial progress was made in the areas of **student learning and achievement and student recruitment**. The numbers of applicants increased for the second year in a row (up approximately 10% over the previous year). Academic credentials of those projected to enter the professional degree program in the fall of 2004 were also higher than the previous year's class. The first time pass rate on the National

Board Examination Part I Basic Sciences increased another 5.2%, bringing the College to 73.2 % versus a national pass rate of 68% for first-time takers. Faculty and staff continued to work tirelessly in efforts to prepare the students for the NBEO examinations and in student recruitment. Also, students prepared comprehensive updates to the Part I NBEO Study Guide developed in 2002. Work to create an uncompromising teaching and learning ethos within the college through open dialogue among and between the faculty, students and administration will continue in 2004.

Considerable additional progress was made toward the 2002-3 goal of **filling open faculty positions** in several critical areas of instruction. Despite substantial competition for highly qualified faculty among the 17 schools and colleges of optometry, we successfully recruited five new full-time faculty members during 2003. In keeping with our priority goals for the year, these new faculty allow us to build on existing strengths including applied and theoretical optics, contact lenses and clinical studies, visual processing, primary eye and vision care, eye health management, pediatrics ocular motility and binocular vision and disorders of reading and learning. Also, the addition of a new faculty member with expertise in biomedical science fulfills a long-standing priority for the College.

Tracy Santhuff filled the newly developed administrative staff position of **Manager of Marketing and Communications** in the spring of 2003. In collaboration with the existing Interactive Graphic Designer position, the positive impact of this team was evidenced throughout the year with an enhanced public image through press releases, newly developed recruitment brochures and strategically placed advertisements directed toward potential students and patients.

As in previous years, the administration is committed to **collaboration, cooperation and commitment to excellence** in all areas of the college. Each and every activity within the College is initiated and executed with a view toward improving the visual welfare and quality of life of our patients. The College continues to develop and nurture opportunities for **partnerships** that address the visual needs of citizens living in the St Louis metropolitan community.

Selected accomplishments of the College are highlighted below under the headings of Accreditations, Physical Facilities Improvements, and Advanced Technology.

Accreditations

- **College of Optometry unconditional accreditation:** The College continues to enjoy unconditional accreditation status granted by the American Council on Optometric Education (ACOE) in February 2002 as a result of the Fall 2001 site visit. The next site visit is scheduled for November 2008 (the maximum period granted by the ACOE). The college leadership continues to ensure that strategic planning remains a priority, including scheduled review of goals, objectives and measurable outcomes.
- **On-site Residencies unconditional accreditation:** The on-site residencies in **Pediatrics/Binocular Vision** and **Contact Lenses** are also both unconditionally accredited, with the next site visits scheduled in 2009.
- **VA Medical Center Affiliated Residencies site visits scheduled:** The Cochran VA Medical Center in St. Louis and the Truman VA Medical Center in Columbia were both unconditionally accredited in 2003 with the next site visits scheduled in 2010. The Kansas City VA Medical Center is accredited with conditions and the next site visit will be in April 2005.

Physical facilities improvements

- The **Pre-Clinic areas** of the College where students receive their first hand-on training was further upgraded this year, including new carpeting for both the lecture area and each of the fully-equipped individual exam areas. Also, lighting was updated and new work areas were made possible through updates to tables and chairs.
- New flooring was installed in the common area entries to the **University Eye Center (including the Pediatrics/BV areas)** on the first and second floors.
- The SIU-E Center in East St. Louis relocated its services, including the **East St. Louis Eye Center**, to a brand new facility in East St. Louis.
- The **Mobile Eye Center** represents an altogether new physical facility of the College, albeit a “roving” unit. Details may be found under “Community Engagement” and “Clinical Operations” below.

Advanced Technology –

- In 2003 The College of Optometry planned for the necessary hardware and software purchases for the implementation of **electronic medical records (EMR)** beginning in January 2004. This required the installation of desktop computers in all examination and testing rooms in the four sites of the Center for Eye Care. The software permits doctors to enter clinical findings electronically, including drawings, photographs, and visual field records. The College is among the first optometry programs in the nation to make this move to EMR.
- Evaluations of student interns and **externship site data** continues to be collected via a Web-based interface (form servlet) from on campus and off-site externship locations (accessible by both externs & preceptors/attending doctors for reporting purposes—patient logs, case reports, grades). Querying these patient log and clinic grade databases allows for "real time" analysis of the data, to determine timely information about student experiences at each externship site, number of patients, types of interventions and evaluation of student performances. In 2003 more advanced queries were written to further enhance this functionality.
- **On-line course evaluations** for the didactic curriculum continue to gain acceptance with a newly revised question format. Student participation in the evaluation process increased over the previous year.
- An **online form for the evaluation of student performance during patient encounters** written by our faculty was operationalized in 2003. It allows clinic preceptors to provide immediate feedback to students regarding each patient encounter. The student receives a copy of each evaluation by e-mail. The records are also compiled into a database, which the clinic management team can use for ongoing evaluation of students' progress and awarding of student clinical grades.
- Use of the College of Optometry's **on-line student application process** continues to gain acceptance: Of the 255 total applications from prospective students for the entering class of Fall 2004, 128 (50%) were received on-line, representing an increase of 12% over last year. Applications received in a PDF file format account for 49 (19%) of applications received.

Traditional paper applications were received from 78 (31%) applicants. There were 10 applicants reapplying for the Fall 2004 representing 4% of the applicant pool.

- A new **Student Record Tracking Database** was implemented in the Office of Student Services for Fall 2003. The new system allowed for improved communications with prospective students and has increased the efficiency of the application process as a whole. Information about prospective students, applicants, current students and alumni is readily accessible via an Access database.
- The College of Optometry’s Continuing Education programming was the first CE program selected to **pilot on-line CE registration** on campus. 25% of all registrants did enroll on-line, and participation in courses rose 20%.
- In cooperation with the Missouri Optometric Association, College faculty wrote and offered the first five didactic hours of a course in advanced clinical procedures in a web-based format on line. This represents an increasing acceptance of **web-based continuing education** in Missouri.
- Beginning in Winter 2003 **Environmental Vision** was adapted to a hybrid format of traditional lecture supplemented with distance-learning components, independent study and classroom presentations.
- **Classroom Technology** is increasingly incorporated into many areas of instruction. All optometry courses continue to be held in advanced technology classrooms. Two classrooms were further upgraded during 2003 with advanced speaker system modules to enhance lecture audibility.

FACULTY:

Key Faculty Accomplishments: Faculty members played key roles in each of the accomplishments noted in the “Key Accomplishments” section above, as well as in the accomplishments detailed in Appendices I-IV attached to this report, which includes details of Faculty Grant Activities, Faculty Publications, Faculty Presentations, and Faculty Service Activities respectively. *These sections should be considered in their entirety for a more comprehensive summary of faculty accomplishments.*

Faculty Additions :

Kate Boland, OD	1.0 FTE	Geriatrics & Low Vision
Christine Garhart, DVM, PhD	1.0 FTE	Biomedical Sciences
Edward S. Jarka, OD	1.0 FTE	Coordinator of External Clinics
Linda Marks, OD	1.0 FTE	Pediatrics/Binocular Vision
Eric Ritchey, OD	1.0 FTE	Clinical Preceptor, Ophthalmic Optics
Ivetta Siedlecki, OD	1.0 FTE	Contact Lens Clinic
Lisa Dibler	0.7 FTE	Clinical Preceptor
Thomas Girard, PhD	0.1 FTE	Biochemistry
Eric Polk, OD	0.1 FTE	Clinical Preceptor
Gary Vogel, OD	0.1 FTE	Clinical Preceptor
Matthew Wickham, OD	0.1 FTE	Ophthalmic Lasers

Faculty Departures:

Larry Brown, OD	1.0 FTE	Geriatrics & Low Vision
Melissa Helfrich, OD	0.3 FTE	Clinical Preceptor
Bruce Morgan, OD	1.0 FTE	Contact Lens Clinic
Janene Sims, OD	1.0 FTE	Clinical Studies/Vision Screening
Lori Paul, PhD	0.2 FTE	Anatomy & physiology

Open Faculty Positions

Tenure Track Faculty	2.0-3.0 FTE
Eye Health Management Service	1.0 FTE

During a series of seminars throughout the year, the faculty developed a Faculty **Statement of Ideals**, designed as an initial set of standards to promote excellence for the College academic culture.

Individual faculty accomplishments/recognitions:

(See also Appendices I – IV)

- Timothy A. Wingert, O.D. began his term as President of the Missouri Optometric Association in the fall of 2003.
- Edward S. Bennett, O.D. was awarded “Educator of the Year” by students in the 3rd year class.
- Aaron S. Franzel, O.D. was selected as one of 38 “exemplary MyGateway users” and recognized in the campus wide event entitled Conversation about Teaching and Technology in December.
- W. Howard McAlister, O.D. was selected for promotion to Colonel in the Army in the U.S. Air Force Reserve, as well as receiving Meritorious Service Medals for service as Chief of the Optometry Clinic at the 181st Fighter Wing, two Armed Services Reserve Medals, a National Defense Service Medal, a Dept. of Veterans Affairs Service Award, USAF Expert Rifle and Pistol Ribbons, and a USAF War on Terrorism Service Medal.
- Timothy A. Wingert, O.D. received a USAF War on Terrorism Service Medal.
- Vengu Lakshminarayanan, Ph.D., was invited to lecture at the International Center for Theoretical Physics at the Winter College on Biophotonics in Italy.
- Raymond I. Myers, O.D., delivered a paper and was recognized as a 1978 Co-founder of the International Society for Contact Lens Research at their 12th Annual Society meeting in 2003.
- Edward S. Bennett, O.D., was awarded the Kevin Tuohy Memorial Lecture by the Contact Lens Society of America, presented at the Contact Lens and Eyecare Symposium, Orlando, FL in January 2003.

Alumni Recognitions :

- Joni LaFerla, O.D., ('93) became the first woman elected to the Heart of America Contact Lens Society (HOACLS) Board of Directors in its 41-year history.
- Barbara W. Brown, O.D., ('88) was elected to the Board of Directors of the Missouri Optometric Foundation.
- Dr Richard Wilson ('97) was selected as the 2003 Optometrist of the Year by the Missouri Optometric Association.

Grants and contracts secured: Grant Activities are attached as Appendix I.

Scholarly publications: A list of scholarly publications is attached as Appendix II.

Service Accomplishments: Service is a major component of the College of Optometry's mission. See **Outreach** and **Community Engagement** below for an overview listing of clinical and professional outreach services rendered by the College. For a list of individual service activities by faculty member, please see Appendix III.

Regular, Non-regular, adjunct, and FTE:

Regular:	Headcount =	10	FTE =	10.0
Non-regular:	Headcount =	10	FTE =	9.55
Adjunct:	Headcount =	17	FTE =	4.5
TOTALS	Headcount =	37	FTE =	24.05

Number and FTE research assistants & teaching assistants:

Teaching Assistants (Graduate): Headcount = 6 FTE = 3.0

Number and FTE staff:

Staff: Headcount = 32 FTE = 30.0

Students:

Student Recruitment/Student Affairs

- **Recruitment Plan:** The ambitious and now fully operational Recruitment Plan originally established in 2002 included twenty-one (21) recruitment trips and workshop presentations during 2003. UMSL Academic Advisors are updated annually re: prerequisites for recruiting from within our own institution, with particular emphasis placed on Honors College recruitment.
- **Applications** to the professional program were **up 10%**, with increases in scores on both the OATs and GPAs as well.
- The Interactive Graphic Designer and the Manager of Communications and Marketing collaborated to create the **first four-color brochures for the College**, including marketing pieces and recruitment brochures for both the O.D. program and the residency programs.
- The **3+4 program with Physics**, initiated in 2002, was approved in the Winter Semester 2003 by the Faculty Senate. Additionally, four other institutions have been approached to begin a 3+4 program with projected approvals scheduled for 2004: Lindenwood, Availa University (Kansas City), William Jewell (Kansas City) and UM-KC.
- A program was established where optometry students who had not yet completed a bachelor's degree could do so through the Evening College and receive a **Bachelor's in General Studies with an emphasis on Optical Science**.
- **2003-4 Scholarships** : See Appendix V for a complete list of Student Awards for 2003-2004.

- The newly established **Tran Family Scholarship**, 2003, was awarded for the first time Fall 2003.

Key student accomplishments:

- The **National Optometric Student Association (NOSA)**, an organization comprised predominantly of minority optometrists-in-training, received the **School of the Year Award** for excellence in community services at the 2003 Convention.
- Dr. Erin Cleary Sullivan ('03) was recognized as the College of Optometry's **first national winner of the 2003 Essilor Award for Presbyopic Management** in this national competition.
- **Beta Sigma Kappa** (optometry honor society) raised over \$4,000 for optometric scholarships during 2003.
- Bethany (Curtis) Whitesell and Kim Kohne were selected for **Who's Who among American Colleges and Universities**.
- Members of the Student section of the Volunteer Optometrists Serving Humanity (**S-VOSH**) made **service trips to Morocco, Costa Rico, Peru, Mexico, Bolivia, and Panama** during 2003, providing screenings and vision aids to populations who otherwise would be unable to acquire assistance.

Student awards/scholarships: Lists attached for UM awards and national awards (**Appendix V**).

Indicators of student success (e.g., licensure examinations, etc.): See **Appendix VI**. Indicators of Optometry student success include National Board Examination in Optometry (**NBEO**) **results** and respective **state licensing, placement information**, and acceptance into post-doctoral residencies (see Appendix VI). The first time pass rate on the National Board Examination Part I Basic Sciences increased another 5.2% in 2003, bringing the College to 73.2 % versus a national pass rate of 68% for first-time takers. The Class of 2003 performed well on the patient care component of the NBEO exam with a pass rate of 95% exceeding the national average of 92%.

Although there is no standard reporting mechanism for tracking licensing data for our graduates we have consulted with various State Boards to obtain the figures listed in Appendix VI. We also track our alumni to assess the usefulness of our in-house placement services and the American Optometric Association's placement services. (Appendix VI includes the results of the Class of 2003 Placement Service Survey.)

Six of our thirty-seven 2003 graduates were accepted into Residency programs for the current year in California, Florida, New Mexico, New York and Oklahoma. As an additional indicator of student success, we are in the process of gathering **alumni responses to the effectiveness of the curriculum's entry-level training**.

Academic Programs:

Graduate Programs:

- Three degrees were conferred in Physiological Optics in 2003: one PhD (Laura Barnes), and two MS degrees (Sandya Subramanian and Aruna Rajagopalan). This was also the first year that the College graduated a PhD student whose graduate work was entirely supported by external

funding (including all stipends and tuition), in this case from the Air Force Institute of Technology.

- One new graduate student was admitted to the Physiological Optics program in 2003 (Yafei Niu).

New Programs: None

Changes in Programs:

- Several **“housekeeping” shifts in course sequencing** and consolidation were operationalized in 2003-2004:
 - Physiological Optics laboratory courses were integrated with their corresponding didactic course to promote better use of time and to enhance proper timing of labs. These changes will take effect, on Dean’s approval, for Fall 2004.
 - Likewise, the Physical Optics lab course was integrated with its corresponding didactic course to promote better use of time and to enhance proper timing of labs. These changes will take effect, on Dean’s approval, for Fall 2004.
 - Curricular review and discussions during 2003 resulted in plans to implement an integrated approach to present biochemistry and ocular physiology/anatomy. The course will be entitled Ocular Biochemistry and will be a four (4) credit hour course, with plans to offer the course for the first time in Fall 2004.
- A practical laboratory experience with injectable agents was added as part of the 3rd year **Ocular Disease Laboratory requirements** effective Fall 2003.
- **Environmental Vision** was adapted to a hybrid format of traditional lecture supplemented with distance-learning components, independent study and classroom presentations.
- Thorough **reviews of each curricular track** continue to progress. Shifts to organized curricular tracks were partially operationalized in the areas of Pediatrics and Binocular Vision, and Contact Lenses, each having undergone a comprehensive review and reorganization during the 2003-2004 academic year. Other tracks will follow.
- A comprehensive checklist of the outline of materials covered in the National Board Examinations in Optometry (**NBEO outline**) and a **checklist of established minimal entry level standards** were circulated among all faculty members to identify the courses which address each item or area. The goal is multifold: to insure that all topics are adequately covered, to assess the sequencing of topics covered, and to reduce duplicative efforts where appropriate. This initiative will continue in 2004.
- Alumni and optometrist members of the College Advisory Board participated in a ½ day focus group to discuss perceived adequacy of preparation in the area of **practice management** and recommendations for strategies to enhance the curriculum in this area.

Outreach/continuing education:

(see **Community Engagement** below for outreach activities)

Continuing Education (CE): Continuing Education outreach to the optometric community provided 4,202 classroom hours of training to a total of 312 enrolled participants during 2003. Although one 120-hour course offering was dropped from the CE offerings this year (accounting for the decrease in total number of participants), enrollment in each of the other CE courses offered in 2003 in fact increased significantly, up to 20%. Attendees to the CE programs were predominantly from the regional area, with an increase in the number of health care providers from all sections of the country

The College of Optometry was selected as the campus pilot program for on-line CE registration. During this first run, approximately 25% of CE registrants registered online, and overall participation in CE courses increased by 20% when enrollment was offered on-line.

2003 Continuing Education programs sponsored by the College include:

- **Annual Therapeutic Pharmaceutical Agents** - one hundred and twenty hours of intensive study to meet the education requirements of all of the fifty state boards of optometry for certification proficiency in the management of ocular diseases.
- **Annual Continuing Education Program in Las Vegas** – A cooperative effort with the not-for-profit **Ophthalmic Education Institute**. This program has been met with great enthusiasm nationally for both the depth of the courses and the quality of speakers. Attendance increased by 25% and sponsorship by 100%.
- **Annual Mid-America Vision Conference - in cooperation with the UMSL College of Education**, an issue oriented discussion of current studies, texts, and programs in Learning Related Vision Problems.
- **The Annual Senior Seminar** - a two day program of distinguished speakers in honor of the graduating class.
- **Annual August Academe** - a very popular eight-hour continuing education program directed toward meeting optometric relicensing requirements.
- UMSL annually co-sponsors the **education program of the Heart of America Contact Lens & Primary Care Congress** administering the testing and providing transcript quality certification.
- The UM-St. Louis College of Optometry continues to serve as the optometric continuing education accrediting body for **emedicine.com**, the largest on-line medical journal offering over 550 courses.
- An innovative two-year old and still-evolving continuing education course developed in cooperation with the **Missouri Optometric Association**, includes two components: a 6-hour basic sciences section to be delivered on-line, and a 16-18 hour face-to-face section at a site to be determined.

Number of graduates by degree/certificate :

39 Doctor of Optometry (O.D.) degrees were awarded in May, 2003.

2 Master of Science degrees in Physiological Optics were awarded in May, 2003.

1 Doctor of Philosophy degree was awarded in May, 2003.

Number of course sections taught at first professional and graduate levels :

Calendar year 2003 = 199

Student credit hours generated at undergraduate/graduate levels: (professional level)

Professional level student credit hours generated:

Winter 2003: 3046 student credit hours

Summer 2003: 533 student credit hours
Fall 2003: 3375 student credit hours

Unduplicated headcount of majors by degree/certificate :

Winter 2003: 157 Doctor of Optometry students enrolled
Fall 2003: 159 Doctor of Optometry students enrolled
AY 2003: 10 enrolled in graduate programs in Physiological Optics
(one student is simultaneously enrolled in the first professional level program)

Community Engagement and Community Service: Community engagement remains an inherent element of the College of Optometry’s mission and ongoing goals. The College Strategic Plan includes the statement that we will “contribute to the social welfare of the community through clinical and related service programs.” *Please also see the section in this report entitled **Clinical Operations** for more detailed information on the services offered to the greater St. Louis Community.*

Community Outreach and Service: Eye care for the medically needy is delivered to the both St. Louis, MO and East St. Louis, IL metropolitan areas through the Optometric Center, East St. Louis Eye Center, and three community health centers. Services are also provided to local school districts and nursing homes, as well as through participation in numerous health fairs and vision screenings. The ongoing goal of initiating and nurturing University and community partnerships enhances the College’s ability to provide a broad and expanding spectrum of community outreach services.

- The Centers for Eye Care provide approximately \$125,000 of uncompensated eye and vision care each year.
- The **Vision Screening Program** screens several thousand children and adults at various locations throughout the St. Louis metropolitan area each year.
- Clinical optometric services are offered at **four established UM-St. Louis School of Optometry clinic sites** (on campus, in the Central West End, in St. Charles County, and East St. Louis, IL).
- Clinical services are offered through three fee-for service **community health clinics**.
- Services are offered through two **no-fee public health clinic for recent immigrants**.
- Pediatric clinical outreach is offered in **six high-need school districts**, including schools throughout St. Louis city, St. Louis and St. Charles counties, and in East St. Louis, Illinois.
- Special School District services are provided via a Pearle Vision Foundation grant.
- **Geriatric clinical outreach** is provided in three institutional settings.
- The **Indigent Eyecare Program** serves at least 100 patients per year who would otherwise be unable to afford services. Partnered with **YouthBuild** (opp for hi-risk youth and young adults to obtain GED while experiencing on the job training in construction skills), **Special School District**, and **other school districts** whose social worker or nurse refers patients.
- College faculty, staff and students participated in **community screenings and health fairs**.

- The Center for Eye Care developed timelines for the introduction of a Mobile Eye Center, a 34' vehicle to be outfitted with two complete ophthalmic lanes, a dispensary and handheld diagnostic equipment. Funds secured in 2002 expressly for a **mobile eye care services van** were utilized in 2003 to design, purchase and equip the customized vehicle in preparation for maiden voyage in early 2004.
- **Eyemail** – A web-based information service with articles by guest authors designed to educate and to create greater awareness of vision health topics and resources for the general public. Target audience includes the university community, friends and alum of the College, other health professionals.
- Initial investigations and planning phases for a **Neighborhood Vision Plan** are in development. The plan would assist local businesses in offering screening and vision exam benefits to their employees.
- The Interactive Graphics Designer and the Manager of Marketing and Communications collaborated to provide a three-day **on-site mentoring** experience for a marketing student from the high school in Breese, IL.

Community Partnerships:

- Partnership with **Pepose Vision Institute** provides **refractive surgery** in the East St. Louis metro area.
- Continuing partnership with **Metro and Metro East Lions Clubs and Gateway Lions Club Project** to provide vision screening and primary and secondary **eye-care for low-income patients** in the metropolitan area.
- Through the **Gateway Lions & Partners**, UMSL is partnered with **St. Louis City Agency on Aging** where we are jointly tied together with a **National Eye Institute Healthy Vision 2010** Grant provided to Gateway.
- Also, the **Solutia Foundation of Illinois** provided Gateway Lions \$10,000 most all of which will accrue to UMSL in the form of **eye care for East St. Louis area children.**
- **The Pupil Project**, an ongoing joint project between the Pediatric Optometry faculty of the Center for Eye Care and faculty of the UM-St. Louis College Education since 2002, assesses visual and psycho educational processing in children with learning problems, consults with parents and proposes management strategies.
- The Center for Eye Care continued its **partnership with Washington University Department of Ophthalmology**. Residents from Washington University co-manage ocular disease patients with Center for Eye Care faculty at three sites on a monthly basis.
- **The Gateway Lions and Partners in cooperation with the Southwest Illinois Optometric Society and the St Louis Optometric Society** sponsored a golf benefit to provide resources for the “safety net” the Lions have traditionally maintained to ensure that people in the St. Louis metropolitan region do not go without essential vision services.

Collaborative Partnerships within the UM -System:

- **The Pupil Project**, an ongoing joint project between the Pediatric Optometry faculty of the Center for Eye Care and faculty of the **UM-St. Louis College of Education** since 2002, assesses visual and psycho educational processing in children with learning problems, consults with parents and proposes management strategies.
- Ongoing partnership with the **UMSL College of Arts and Science (Department of Psychology)** to provide consultative support in a student engagement program initiated by the College of Optometry.

Clinical Operations – Center for Eye Care

- **Staffing**: Two Center Support staff members were added in the areas of billing and credentialing. The later position is a new position that has become necessary to maintain faculty files for managed care credentialing, to process applications for individual and Center provider status with insurance companies and to serve as a liaison between the College of Optometry and the health care industry.
- **Practice Management Systems**: Compulink was awarded the contract for a new practice management software vendor, as a result of an RFP prepared in conjunction with Business Services and Instructional Technology. This project involved acquisition and installation of the Compulink 8.0 software, hardware upgrades, data conversion from the terminated Alcon IVY system and complete implementation in 2003 providing control of clinical, fiscal, and inventory information, and linking the campus Center and four external clinics into a common database system. Staff training continued throughout the year.
- Timelines were developed for implementation of **electronic medical records**, including the purchase of desktop computers, networking requirements, printers, scanners, server and preparations for Center faculty training. The College of Optometry added a 0.50 FTE networking and hardware specialist from the UM-St. Louis Instructional Technology staff. The Center Supervisor was provided extensive training in the electronic medical record software application.
- **HIPAA Compliance**: April 2003 saw compliance with the 19 HIPAA regulations required for full regulatory compliance. Training sessions for faculty, staff and students with Center for Eye Care were conducted by the College of Optometry Privacy Officer. The Center for Eye Care Privacy Policies were approved by UM system Office of General Counsel. A Center HIPAA and Compliance website was established.
- Approximately .4 FTE faculty were assigned to perform a review of medical records and patient outcomes for the primary care clinic. With the introduction of electronic medical records, queries have been developed to monitor the level of medical record integrity.
- The University Eye Center added **corneal refractive therapy** to its services in Summer 2003.
- The Center provided **weekly vision screenings** throughout 2003, primarily screening school aged children. Faculty and students visited schools throughout St. Louis city and St. Louis and St. Charles counties. The Center also continued its partnership with the East St. Louis Lions Clubs by providing school vision screenings in East St. Louis, Illinois.

- The Center for Eye Care developed timelines for the introduction of a **Mobile Eye Center**, a 34' vehicle to be outfitted with two complete ophthalmic lanes, a dispensary and handheld diagnostic equipment.
- **The Pupil Project**, an ongoing joint project between the Pediatric Optometry faculty of the Center for Eye Care and faculty of the UM-St. Louis College Education since 2002, assesses visual and psycho educational processing in children with learning problems, consults with parents and proposes management strategies.
- The Center for Eye Care continued its **capital improvement program**, updating three ophthalmic refracting lanes and expanding the availability of handheld diagnostic technology.
- The Center for Eye Care continued its **partnership with Washington University Department of Ophthalmology**. Residents from Washington University co-manage ocular disease patients with Center for Eye Care faculty at three sites on a monthly basis.
- **Marketing & Education:** A Back-to-School campaign was initiated to educate the public and market the availability of eye and vision health at our Eye Centers. Ads appeared in the St. Louis American and County Journals, with demonstrably heightened telephone activity in the clinics during the time frames of the print ads.

Critical Issues for the Unit:

- Major fiscal challenge continues to be high cost of education, which impacts our efforts to recruit and retain a highly qualified student body. Educational fees have therefore been frozen by request for the past two years, even as we affirm the commitment to provide scholarships from the general operating budget. (Departmental awards provided to over 98% of students now exceed 30% of total student fees collected.) We are seeking alternate sources of revenue beyond educational fees and State funds in order to operate the program.

Continued growth and quality improvements of the professional degree program will be influenced by our success in addressing several challenges. They include:

- growth of non-tuition income--the faculty and administration will continue to seek new sources of income in the following areas: grants and contracts, clinic fees, individual gifts and foundations through the addition of research active faculty, marketing of the available services, improved processes and procedures throughout the College and continuation of the efforts to seek support for scholarships and indigent eye care;
- maintaining a highly qualified student body-- we will continue the student recruitment plan;
- maintaining a highly qualified faculty-- interviews are scheduled for the open faculty positions and current faculty are eligible for development opportunities that will enhance and/or expand their teaching and research opportunities;
- increased participation in managed care plans and other initiatives that attract patients to the clinic sites operated by the College of Optometry. The result will be an increase in the number of

patient encounters at these locations and an increase of collections derived from clinical operations -- the administration will continue to work with campus and university officials in order to maintain and increase eligibility for participation in managed care plans and seek to improve the timeliness of negotiations associated with the contract implementation and credentialing process;

- increased productivity and performance level of center staff in the areas of financial management, billing, compliance and credentialing -- the administration will continue several ongoing staff, student and faculty training initiatives intended to leverage more efficient utilization of computer software technology and enhance productivity at all levels. Plans are underway to add additional experienced support staff in strategic areas;
- increased faculty development time or assignment in clinical administrative duties -- discussions are underway to adjust teaching assignments of some faculty. The addition of clinical faculty will also improve performance in critical areas;
- increasing the number of patient encounters for students--we will continue initiatives including marketing and the pursuit of collaborative agreements with community-based groups / agencies / companies in order to provide eye and vision care to their constituents;
- a reduction in the number of assigned classroom hours. Students enrolled in the first three years of the curriculum have limited time to integrate and process the materials that are presented in a traditional lecture format. One of the objectives of the ongoing curriculum review is to increase the use of case based / group learning and self- discovery exercises-- the faculty and administration will continue to pursue workshops and other resources in order to continue to develop and enhance the curricular track structure.
- continue to enhance the public image of the program through accomplishments, newsletters, brochures, communications with the campus, professional colleagues and alumni
- continue to nurture a positive work and learning environment while promoting excellence in teaching, research, patient care and service
- continuous evaluation of the implementation of the strategic plan through a comprehensive outcomes assessment process
- plans for ergonomic improvements to the physical facility and equipment, to enhance learning, patient care research and service
- maintain and enhance the eye and vision research program
- provide professional growth opportunities to faculty
- continue to develop a cultural ethos for excellence in research, teaching, learning, and patient care
- uniquely, recruit and retain a diverse student population with the appropriate academic capabilities to successfully complete the program of study
- balance the cost of education with the various factors which interfere with recruitment while ensuring that graduates have diverse and excellent placement opportunities

- increase research and research funding activities
- increase the number of requests for funding of research and programs

Future directions of the Unit:

- In order to maintain a viable program we need to improve the design and presentation of the clinic facilities to increase efficiency and public perception. Such a shift will also improve the perception of prospective students thereby helping to meet our goals for recruiting the highest qualified applicants.
- Continue to pursue initiatives that will allow the college to be recognized as among the best schools and colleges of optometry among the ASCO affiliates.

APPENDICES 2003:

(Located in separate electronic file: Annual Report 2003 Appendices)

Appendix I:	Grant Activity 2003
Appendix II:	Faculty and Student Scholarly Publications 2003
Appendix III:	Faculty and Student Professional Presentations 2003
Appendix IV:	Faculty Professional Service Activities 2003
Appendix V:	Student Scholarships and Awards 2003-4
Appendix VI:	Licensing and Placement Information 2003
Appendix VII:	Scholarly Activity Data Collection Table 1999-2003
Appendix VIII:	2003 Annual Report to the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education