

## Message from the Dean

### New Beginnings and Opportunities

*"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."*

Henry Ford

Greetings Friends and Colleagues--

As we enter 2008, it is a time for new beginnings and renewed opportunities. Many exciting activities continue to define our great program.

Like my daughter Sydni, who once looked forward to her first recital, I gaze toward our work for the coming year with excitement and anxious optimism. As she did, we will spend the next several months in preparation for an important public event. Sydni's focused effort culminated in a three to four minute performance; ours will conclude with a successful site visit from representatives of the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE). Like her, in order to realize a successful outcome, we must dedicate many hours over the course of several months...and we will. Also, as she did, I look forward with positive anticipation to the exhilaration associated with sharing what we have prepared.

Central to that preparation will be an assessment of our impact upon the community. This issue of the EyeWire provides a small glimpse into the numerous ways in which we enrich the lives of fellow Missourians and others throughout the region.

It is also a pleasure to introduce our new editor, Dr. Edward Bennett. With a list of publications numbering in the triple digits, service as contributor and editor of several professional publications and twenty-five years service for the college Ed is uniquely qualified to serve our college in such a capacity. As you read on, I hope that you enjoy learning about the many positive personal and collective accomplishments of our talented faculty, staff, students and alumni.

Happy New Year!

Sincerely,



Larry J. Davis, Dean

## UMSL Optometry Scores Big! McFarland is NBEQ National #1; Entire Class of '09 Soars!



Michael McFarland (left) receives the Norman E. Wallis award from Dean Larry Davis.

Photo courtesy of August Jennewein

Michael McFarland, '09 had the highest individual award over 1300 students who were administered the NBEQ Part One examination this past August. McFarland, from Frontenac, Kansas was presented with the 2007 Dr. Norman E. Wallis Award for Excellence by Dr. Larry Davis, Dean of the College of Optometry and member of the NBEQ Board of Directors, in a ceremony on November 15th. The award honors the longtime executive director of the national board of examiners in optometry and is presented each year to the individual who achieves the highest score. It was only appropriate that this presentation was in front of the entire class as the Class of 2009 achieved a pass rate of 90.7% with an average score of 500.0, the highest in recent UMSL College of Optometry history.

The exceptional performance in recent years by UMSL students on the extremely challenging Part One examination is the result of several factors. First, they are presented with strategies and resources that can benefit them in their preparation, much of which is obtained via surveying previous classes to determine what was most and least beneficial in their preparation. Second, they were presented with two review courses, one given by UMSL College of Optometry faculty who teach in the areas tested on Part One, and a second one presented by the KMK organization under the direction of Dr. Kyle Cheatham of Omaha, Nebraska. Finally, the most important factor behind their success was the amount of hard work they exhibited in preparing for this examination. In that regard there are few individuals who work harder than Mike McFarland. According to friend and study partner Neil Sample, '09, "Mike is a person who has much intelligence and a goal-oriented drive that allows him to excel at any area he chooses, specifically optometry. He has gone beyond what has been asked of him inside and outside the classroom to put himself in a position to develop into an excellent doctor. His most recent accomplishment is one that came to a very deserving individual with much hard work and long hours of study; but this award will not be the last accomplishment as he will strive toward other ambitions throughout life."

## NEWS & NOTES



Dr. Timothy A. Wingert, Associate Professor of Optometry was recently honored as the 2007 recipient of

the Missouri Optometric Association's Optometrist of the Year Award at their annual convention held at the Ritz-Carlton in Clayton. Dr. Wingert has been a member of the faculty since 1988. Congratulations!



**Pictured l to r: Drs. Linda Marks, John Crane, Provost Glen Cope, Dean Larry Davis, Raymond Myers and Kathleen Boland.**

It is a distinct pleasure to learn that the College of Optometry has been selected to receive the 2007 Community Champion Award for the Health Care Organizations category presented by the Institute for Family Medicine, St Louis Missouri. The award which recognizes "Individuals and organizations not in the limelight, but making significant and unselfish contributions to community health, especially for those who are less fortunate" was presented during the Second Annual Salute to Community Champions Dinner, Saturday, September 15, 2007.

Dr. Ed Bennett was named Clinical Features Editor for Contact Lens Spectrum and was on the Editorial Panel for the 19th Edition of "Ophthalmic Drug Facts."

## NOA: Past, Present, Future

By Kimberly Marks '09



**From left to right: Kimberly Marks '09, Dr. Alexander Harris, '86, Dr. Carol Merritt, '89 NOA National President, Dr. Melantha Nephew, '04 and Fannie Coleman, '09.**

Dedicated to the interests of minority eye care practitioners, the National Optometric Association has been going strong since 1969. Founded at a time when there were unequal opportunities for African Americans in the profession of optometry, the main goals of the association were to increase the minority presence in the profession. Today, the NOA continues to reach new heights.

Student recruitment, job placement, and patient and community education are only a few of the things the NOA strives to do nationwide. The NOA also targets at-risk and underserved communities to promote eye care awareness. The National Optometric Student Association is a branch of the NOA created to support and encourage students, with NOA members serving as role models and mentors during their academic careers and beyond.

The University of Missouri- St. Louis College of Optometry is proud to announce its continued support and alumni presence in the NOA. The well respected alumna and former faculty member, Dr. Carol Merritt, is the newly elected 2007- 2009 NOA national president. Dr. Melantha Nephew, '04, another alumna, serves as the 2007-2009 national secretary and program director of special assignments. Dr. Alex Harris, '86, an alumnus and the faculty advisor of UMSL's NOSA chapter, has been a dedicated member of the NOA for many years. We also have great representation at the student level, recognizing current third year students Kimberly Mark as the 2008-2009 NOSA national president, and Fannie Coleman as the 2008- 2009 NOSA national treasurer. Through the support of the NOA and UMSL, minorities will not go unrecognized in the profession of optometry.

## UMSL Optometry Scores Big!

(Cont. from page one)

When asked what he credited his success and that of his class to, McFarland's response was, "I think that the KMK review course got everyone jump started, and ready to prepare for the examination. The study schedule (prepared by Neil Sample), combined with great study material is definitely what helped out on the examination." The class was understandably proud of both his performance as well as that of the entire group. "As our class representative, I speak for the entire class when I say that we are extremely proud of Mike," commented Amanda Lashley "He is an outstanding student and person, and I believe no one deserves this honor more than he does. Mike is a truly gifted individual who excels both academically and in clinic, and he is going to make an exceptional optometrist. I also commend the class of 2009 for all of their hard work in accomplishing a 91% pass rate. This is an outstanding achievement, and I am honored to be a part of such a brilliant group of people." McFarland agrees. "I am very proud to be a member of the Class of 2009. Everyone works very hard in this class. I've made a lot of lifelong friends in my time at UMSL."

## Continuing Education in the News

### Brain, Vision & Learning Conference a Success



**Dr. Carl Bassi, Director of Research, during his presentation at the Brain, Vision & Learning Conference**

On November 7th and December 5th, 2007 the College of Optometry, School of Education and Department of Psychology combined to present an innovative and timely program entitled "Brain, Vision & Learning Conference: Integrating the Senses to Optimize Learning." There was participation by a large, interdisciplinary faculty with an accelerated coverage of the positive and negative, evaluation, diagnosis and remediation of processes in learning. According to Dr. Jerry Franzel, Associate Dean of Continuing Education and e-learning, "This conference brought educators, optometrists and other health-care professionals together to empower them with information on the latest findings on brain

processes and multimodal learning with concrete applications; vital information that will make a difference to the learning journey of each child." The program was well received and planning toward a conference for next year has already been initiated.

### International Contact Lens Designer and Innovator, Dr. Paul Rose, is Coming to UMSL

The second annual GP Specialty Lens Practice Today and Tomorrow symposium will be held Sunday, May 4th at the JC Penney Conference Center. It will feature Dr. Paul Rose, developer of the Rose K series of contact lenses for the correction of keratoconus and post-surgical patients. An entertaining and informative speaker, Dr. Rose will present on the clinical management of the irregular cornea in the morning program and will assist in the moderation of a series of specialty GP patients (keratoconus, post-surgical, multifocal and toric) who will be presented in the afternoon via the assistance of a projection slit lamp. Other faculty participating in this program will be Drs. Tom Quinn, Bob Grohe and Ed Bennett.

### Age-Related Macular Degeneration

A symposium on age-related macular degeneration will be presented Sunday, March 9th at the JC Penney Conference Center. Drs. Tom Landgraf, Ed Jarka, John Crane and Carl Bassi from the UMSL College of Optometry are among the faculty participating in this symposium.

### Coding Update 2008

The foremost authority on the ever-increasingly important topic of coding and billing, Dr. John McGreal will be providing a four hour program on this subject on Monday evening, May 5th at the JC Penney Conference Center.

## NEWS & NOTES

Three members of the class of 2009 were recognized at the Annual Missouri Optometric Association Convention. Laura Bequette and Deanne Wehner each received scholarship awards presented by the Missouri Optometric Association Auxiliary (MOAA) and Ryan Read received the Missouri Optometric Student Assoc. (MOSA) Student Leadership Award.

Amanda Bahr '08 became an American Optometric Foundation Carl Zeiss Vision Fellow. She was selected by a national panel of optometric leaders who carefully reviewed the qualifications of individuals nominated by all of the colleges of optometry.

Dr. Julie Dekinder and Dr. Linda Marks became fellows of the American Academy of Optometry at the AAO annual in meeting in Tampa in October 2007.

Stephen Purdy '11 and wife Karina Purdy welcomed Nathan Michael



Purdy to their family on November 10, 2007. Seen in photo with big sis Sophia Isabel.

Tim

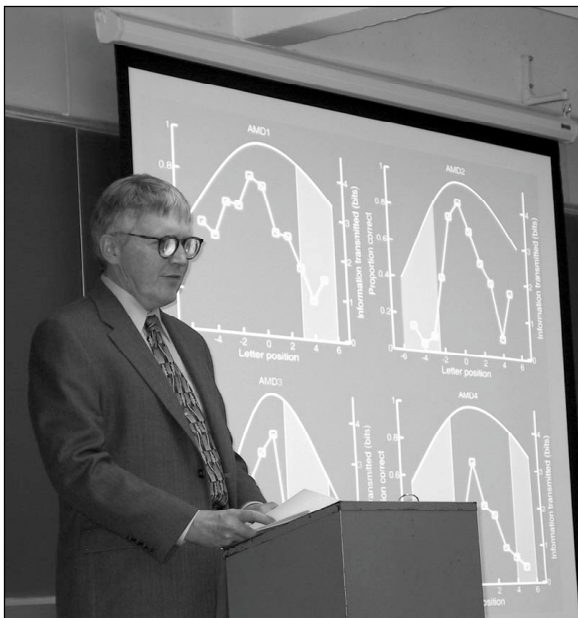
Blankenship '07 announced, "Our beautiful baby is here!" She was born Friday, 9/7/07 at 9:45pm. Her name is Karis Ann Blankenship. She weighed 7lbs 12.5oz and was 19.5in long. Mom (Jennifer) and baby are doing great!"

Tara (Eckland) Lukkarinen, O.D. '98, her husband, Ray, and their first son, Ryan, welcomed Nathaniel James Lukkarinen to their family on July 18, 2007. "Nate" weighed in at 8 lbs 12 oz. and was 21 1/2" long.



## 6th Annual Fechner Day Brings Honored Speaker to UMSL

Dr. Gordon Legge was the featured speaker for the 6th Annual UM-St. Louis College of Optometry Fechner Day, held October 19th. Dr. Legge is the Distinguished McKnight University Professor and chair of the Department of Psychology at the University of Minnesota, and head of the Minnesota Laboratory for Low-Vision Research. Dr. Legge spoke about his research on low vision and reading to an overflowing crowd of students, faculty and guests from the campus and community.



Dr. Gordon Legge

The **EYEwire** is published by the Office of the Dean at the University of Missouri-St. Louis College of Optometry.



Dr. Edward Bennett, Editor  
[EBennett@umsl.edu](mailto:EBennett@umsl.edu)



Janice White, Designer  
[janice.white@umsl.edu](mailto:janice.white@umsl.edu)



Dr. Larry J. Davis, Dean  
[ljdavis@umsl.edu](mailto:ljdavis@umsl.edu)

If you prefer to receive your newsletter electronically, please email Janice White and provide your email address. Thanks! (If we already have your email address there is no need to re-submit it.)



### Office of the Dean

One University Boulevard  
St. Louis, Missouri 63121-4400  
Telephone: 314-516-5606  
Fax: 314-516-6708  
<http://optometry.umsl.edu>

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
St. Louis, MO  
Permit No. 3