Vision Rehabilitation Section Highlights at Optometry’s Meeting®

The 2015 Optometry’s Meeting® in Seattle was packed with section activities and education courses. The Vision Rehabilitation Section highlights included the following:

VRS Council Meeting

Multiple issues were discussed, including education programs for 2016, articles for the newsletter and member benefits. The second installment of the Brain Injury Resource Manual project and continuing education were discussed.

VRS Annual Business Meeting


2015-2016 VRS Council

From left: David Lewerenz, O.D., chair; Jason Clopton, O.D., chair-elect; Brenda Montecalvo, O.D., immediate past chair; Bhavani Iyer, O.D., vice chair; John Rundquist, O.D., secretary; Carl Thomas Garbus, O.D., council member; Gary Asano, O.D., council member.
**Chair**
David Lewerenz, O.D.
Tahlequah, Okla.

**Chair-Elect**
Jason Clopton, O.D.
Cookeville, Tenn.

**Vice-Chair**
Bhavani Iyer, O.D.
Pearland, Texas

**Secretary**
John Rundquist, O.D.
Buffalo, N.Y.

**Member-At Large**
Gary Asano, O.D., FAAO
Tahlequah, Okla.

**Member-At-Large**
Carl Thomas Garbus, O.D.
Valencia, Calif.

**Immediate Past Chair**
Brenda Montecalvo, O.D.
Beavercreek, Ohio
This year’s VRS Member Forum featured ‘Pearls from Pennsylvania’ with Paul Freeman of the Pennsylvania Optometric Association. Dr. Freeman presented the vision rehabilitation pearls and was followed by Dr. Dennis Siesman, who presented on Low Vision Building Designs. Attendees enjoyed hors d’oeuvres.
VRS Awards

The VRS awards presentation took place at the Seattle Downtown Marriott where the council members mingled and visited with section members, industry educators and leaders, past and present, in the vision rehabilitation field. Sections recognized award recipients at this social event.

Dr. Jerry P. Davidoff Vision Care Award

The AOA VRS Dr. Jerry P. Davidoff Vision Care Award is given to an optometrist who is a member in good standing with the AOA VRS and who has demonstrated exceptional services to the community, the field of vision rehabilitation services and/or the VRS.

The recipient of the 2015 AOA VRS Dr. Jerry P. Davidoff Vision Care Award was Mitchell Scheiman, O.D. (left).

Dr. Scheiman is currently dean of research and a professor of optometry at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry at Salus University. In the past 20 years, he has spent the majority of his professional time as a researcher involved in randomized clinical trials. He has been a principal investigator for the Correction of Myopia Evaluation Trial. He was the study chair of the Convergence Insufficiency Treatment Trial that was completed in 2008 and two other randomized clinical trials investigating the effectiveness of treatment for convergence insufficiency. He is currently study chair of the new CITT-ART study investigating the effect of vision therapy for convergence insufficiency on reading and attention. His specialty areas are pediatric optometry, binocular vision and vision therapy. He has published over 165 journal articles and has written four textbooks. He is a diplomate in Binocular Vision, Perception and Pediatric Optometry in the American Academy of Optometry, and a Fellow of the College of Optometrists in Vision Development (COVD). Dr. Scheiman also maintains a private practice in which he specializes in vision therapy.
Distinguished Service Award

The AOA VRS Distinguished Service Award is given to a non-optometric colleague or organization for major contributions to the advancement of vision rehabilitation and exceptional service to the community, the field of vision rehabilitation, and the AOA VRS.

The 2015 awardee of the VRS Distinguished Service Award was the Neuro Optometric Rehabilitation Association International.

The Neuro Optometric Rehabilitation Association International (NORA) was founded 23 years ago by William Padula, O.D. At that time, there was a group of 7 optometrists who met in Chicago because they all felt there was a lot to learn regarding traumatic brain injury and serving this population of patients. The initial founding fathers included William Padula, John Streff, John Thomas, Daniel Gottlieb, Todd Davis, Vincent Vicci, and Constantine Forkiotus.

This core group of optometrists realized that optometry alone was not the answer to help brain injury and neurologically impaired patients, but that it would require a team approach. They decided to continue to meet on an annual basis and to invite rehab professionals outside the field of optometry.

NORA became a very unique organization because of the following: It is the first optometric organization that encourages brain injury patients and their families to become members. NORA promotes membership to doctors and therapists in the rehabilitation field and offers hospital memberships. The majority of the optometrists in NORA have hospital staff privileges and strong affiliations with rehabilitation hospitals and outpatient facilities. Neuro optometric rehabilitation is becoming recognized in the field of rehabilitation due to NORA’s efforts. As a result there are members in NORA from all over the world.

The goal of NORA INTL is to emphasize the crucial role of vision in human performance and to help improve the quality of life for those individuals who are neurologically impaired. Education is an important role that NORA provides. At the annual conference attendees learn how important it is to optimize the visual motor, visual perceptual and visual information processing systems.

This year’s annual conference will be May 13-16 in Denver. It will kick-off with the popular two-day clinical skills programs that are taught by optometrists, chiropractic, occupational and physical therapists.
Thank you to our 2015 VRS Sponsors