

THE  
AMERICAN OPTOMETRIC SOCIETY

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*Giving Optometrists A Voice*

*In Their Profession*



*American  
Optometric  
Society™*

# August 2009

- The American Optometric Society was formed to represent the interests and concerns of optometrists throughout the United States.
- The AOS is an inclusive, transparent organization working with and improving representation of optometrists within local, regional & national optometric organizations.
- The AOS is committed to open communication with fair and equal representation for members of all optometric organizations.

# THE AOS

## 2000+

Optometrist Members  
Throughout the United  
States & Canada

Only Doctors of Optometry

We Represent Optometrists

**70%**  
**OF OUR MEMBERS  
ARE NOT AFFILIATED  
WITH ANY OTHER PROFESSIONAL  
ORGANIZATION**

**WE ARE THEIR ONLY VOICE**

# Why The AOS?

- Grassroots movement in direct response to formation of the ABO and the lack of individual representation in optometry.
- Our membership is concerned about the future of optometry.
- The basic issues of optometric parity & access in the health care arena and how to best achieve them is paramount.

# AOS SUPPORTS

- Maintenance of competency.
- Credible and accountable certification.
- Responsibility for optometric regulation and licensing by individual state licensing boards.
- Membership in other state & professional associations.
- The concept of stand-alone vision care plans and provider non-discrimination.

# THE AOS DIFFERENCE

- Every member has a direct vote in electing the AOS leadership.
- The AOS Board of Directors is directly accountable to its members.
- Members are routinely surveyed for their opinions and votes are public.
- The AOS responds to every query by a member or potential member.

# NATIONAL LICENSURE

- National licensure is a complex matter because (a) it will require legislative action in most if not all states, and (b) scope of practice and CE requirements vary considerably from one state to the next.
- The AOS believes that working with ARBO and development of a national standard for maintenance of competency are essential first steps toward the goal of national licensure.

# OPTOMETRIC COMPETENCY AND BOARD CERTIFICATION

- Optometry is a specialty profession, unlike medicine, which is fundamentally general.
- Entry level optometric competence is ensured through a rigorous and comprehensive four-year post-graduate optometric education and training, passing credible independently administered national board exams, and obtaining state licensure.
- This process assures the public of entry level optometric competence equivalent to and in the same manner as does board certification of a medical specialty.

# THE AOS BELIEVES

- Licensed Doctors of Optometry have met functionally equivalent requirements for board certification as specialty trained medical doctors.
- Optometry is rapidly evolving and we must remain fully integrated within the health care system, receiving equal access and equal reimbursement for our services.
- The AOS supports the concept of a reasonable, attainable, cost effective and credible means of demonstrating optometric competence.

# The AOS Position on Certification and Maintenance of Certification

- Recognize the quality and rigors of optometric education, NBEO testing, and individual state requirements for licensure.
- Respect the authority of state licensing and regulatory boards to determine optometric competency standards.
- Support for a credible, defensible, and attainable process for demonstrating maintenance of the knowledge and skills required to provide quality eye care to the public.
- Support a process that tracks the standards for maintenance of certification equivalent to those established by the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS).
- Support a dynamic and continuous maintenance of certification process, moving away from the concept of periodic "re-certification".
- Support a means of providing an honest, transparent, unobtrusive and cost-effective means for optometrists to complete certification and maintenance of certification processes.
- Respect traditional optometric values.

# American Board of Clinical Optometry

- Recognizes that optometric licensure provides the same assurance of competency as does medical board certification.
- Supports and enhances ongoing education and competency in optometry.
- Recognizes doctors of optometry who have proven their competence and their ability to provide the highest quality optometric care to the public, recognizes doctors of optometry who have sought to facilitate and improve prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of disorders affecting the eye and related structures, and recognizes doctors of optometry who have sought and obtained training and knowledge in a sub-specialty within the profession of optometry.
- Grants optometrists, duly licensed by law, certificates or other recognition in the practice of optometry or its sub-specialties.
- Provides a credible ongoing mechanism to demonstrate maintenance of competency through maintenance of certification.

We Represent Optometrists

# MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION

## The American Board of Clinical Optometry

- **Art Epstein, O.D., F.A.A.O., D.P.N.A.P.**  
Chairman and President
  - **Janet Carter, O.D., F.A.A.O.**  
Treasurer, Director at Large
  - **David Davidson, O.D., M.S.**  
Secretary, Director at Large
  - **Dickson Chen, O.D., F.A.A.O.**  
Director at Large
  - **Don Fong, O.D., F.A.A.O.**  
President, Neuro-Optometric  
Rehabilitation Association
  - **Jeff Martin, O.D., F.A.A.O.**  
Director at Large
  - **Pamela Miller, O.D., F.A.A.O., J.D.,  
D.P.N.A.P.**  
President, American Optometric Society
  - **Shannon Steinhauser, O.D., F.A.A.O.**  
Director at Large
- Advisor(s) to the Board of Directors:**
- **Michael Ohlson, O.D., F.A.A.O.**  
**Association of Regulatory  
Boards of Optometry**

We Represent Optometrists

# THE AOS MISSION

TO ENSURE OPTOMETRIC

Education

Competency

Excellence

&

Access & Parity in the Health Care Delivery Systems

We Represent Optometrists

We don't just represent Optometry  
as a Profession

We Represent Optometrists  
As Individuals



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[www.optometricstudiesociety.org](http://www.optometricstudiesociety.org)



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