

GUEST EDITORIAL: THE OHS BLAST FROM THE PAST STUDENT CHALLENGE

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I have always believed that history is a living subject—one that gives us the very best teacher, experience. I traveled extensively throughout the United States with my family as a child, and my mom—a consummate teacher—adored history. She taught me that every readerbook deserved my time—“someone took the time to write it, and someone took the time and money to put it up, you should take the time to read it.” I’ve read thousands of books, pamphlets, informational signs, and attended hundreds of living history programs and tours. Some would rebel against this upbringing. I instead embraced it and have passed this love on to my husband and children. It baffles me when I hear the comment “history is boring.” That’s why I was thrilled to join the Optometric Historical Society Committee, combining both history and optometry!

This edition of *Hindsight* includes papers from three optometry students who share my point of view. They are three of the outstanding submissions from the Optometric Historical Society’s “Blast from the Past Student Challenge.” As a member of the OHS Committee and a coordinator of this annual project, it has been my pleasure to read and review student submissions each year. Requirements are intentionally broad: research and prepare information on a topic relevant to optometric history.

Students have proven themselves to be incredibly creative, with submissions ranging from infographics to research papers to videos. There is certainly much more information readily available than when I was a student! It is, of course, also a bit humbling when some of the “historic” topics are ones that I clearly remember as part of my optometric career; my 1999 graduation from Pacific

University couldn’t possibly mean something that happened during my career qualifies as “historic!”

Submissions are initially scored by members of the OHS Committee based on how well the applicant explained the influential person, event or development in optometric history; if the entry was informative and engaging; presentation, grammar and spelling; creativity; and the WOW Factor. The top qualifiers are then invited to present to a broader group for prize money. This year, this final presentation was virtual at a special Blast from the Past Zoom Session attended by over 500 students and doctors. Attendees were invited to vote to help make the final determination of first, second, third and honorable mention. This year’s first place winner was Faye Nie from Southern California College of Optometry for her excellent video on Otto Wichterle and Soft Contact Lenses. I would encourage everyone to view at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KxG8_1qXnC0 and see how much you learn! Second place was Trevor Phillips from Indiana University School of Optometry with his paper “All Eyes on Her: Celebrating Women in Low Vision History” (found in this issue of *Hindsight*). Third place was awarded to Karli Clark of Illinois College of Optometry for her paper “Dr. Bess Coleman, Optometrist: Kentuckian, Chicagoan, and Pioneer” (included in this issue of *Hindsight*). Honorable mention went to Jared Denton (Arizona College of Optometry) with his informative video on Johannes Kepler, found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPkxvRigZGI>. This issue of *Hindsight* also includes the paper “The Development of the InfantSEE Program” by Jessica Palmer (Indiana University School of Optometry). Congratulations to all and thank you for your submissions! I very much look



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forward to reading 2024 submissions. If you know of students or residents who would be interested in submitting, watch for the announcement coming in the winter and encourage them to take some time to apply. Another pearl of wisdom came from my mom, incorporating a quote from historian David McCullough: “History is who we are and why we are the way we are. Study it and you might learn something.”