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First of all, I want to thank you all for the opportunity and honor of serving as MOA president. From before my first day of optometry school, I was taught by my mentors how important it is to be involved in your state association. As a student I saw firsthand how important grass roots keypersons systems can be and will work on making our system better over the next year.

I may be approaching this position a bit differently than most of my predecessors. I am a female and an employed optometrist.

When I interviewed for board secretary, one of the questions they asked me was “what do you hope to accomplish as an executive officer.” My response was to do my part to make the profession of optometry better in the state of Missouri and to serve as an example to other females or employed doctors who might be afraid to take the leap and become involved in the MOA.

We have had other female presidents, but it has been a while, and I know many employed doctors who think they are not a good fit for the MOA because they are not practice owners. These are both reservations I had in my early days on the board, but I have learned that in both cases I was wrong. We all have different situations and those perspectives are important to best represent our members.
As MOA members, we have so many things to be thankful for this year. After many years of work on the part of some of our very dedicated members, our MOA Vision Plan is ready to roll out. I am proud to have been a part of this project. I sincerely thank all those who put in the long hours to make this insurance plan happen.

The Legislative Conference was January 13-14 in Jefferson City. Committee meetings as well as the Legislative Reception were at the Millbottom again this year. Thank you to everyone who made time to attend. Being a committee member is a great way to get involved in the MOA.

In addition to committee meetings and CE, we received information on implementing the MOA Vision Plan. MOA is also introducing our patient protection bill again this year. We have a lot of new faces in the legislature and we need keypersons. Please contact your trustee or the central office if you have a personal relationship with any of our Senators or Representatives.

This year we are changing up the Leadership Retreat. Optometry’s Meeting® is in St. Louis June 20-23. In order to increase efficiency for our volunteers, we will be having our board and committee meetings on Sunday June 23 in St. Louis. I urge you all to attend both events.

My personal motto for this year is “change is a good thing,” coincidentally there are some changes coming for the MOA as well as we implement the new society structure.

I know this is a big change for the MOA, but it is necessary for the continued health and growth of the association. This new structure will help us to ensure we have the most qualified and dedicated trustees serving you on the MOA board.

My presidential term is off to a great start, I have visited the St. Louis and Kansas City Optometric Societies. I enjoy getting to meet members and get a taste of how each society functions. I am so excited about the next year for the MOA, I hope it will be one of growth and success. I promise to do my best to serve the patients and optometrists in the state of Missouri. Again, I thank you for this opportunity. If you have any questions, please reach out to me.

Mindy Blackford, OD
MOA President 2018-2019
P: 660-665-6262 | mindymblackford@hotmail.com
The weather was again the topic of conversation at this year’s MOA Legislative Conference. Winter storms covered central Missouri before the conference. However, the weather didn’t stop members from attending important functions at this year’s event.

One of the important functions at the conference is the volunteer committees that work to lay out a course of action for the MOA Board for 2019. These meetings were held on Sunday afternoon, January 13th, with a good turnout. It was nice to see many new faces joining us despite the weather. The MOA Board held meetings on Sunday before the busy conference agenda continued Monday.

The Legislative Conference day began on Monday with a presentation by Daniel Carey from the AOA titled “Preparation for Future Legislation: Are We Ready?” This was followed by two hours of continuing education about integrating the MOA Insurance plan into your practice presented by Dr. Jason Lake, Dr. Kory Scullawl, Dr. Doug Herriott, and Dr. Lee Ann Barrett. This presentation was followed by lunch, and afterwards the MOA members listened to guest speaker, Senator Caleb Rowden, the Missouri Senate Majority Floor Leader.

We had several UMSL College of Optometry students attending the legislative conference, and it is important that students and MOA members learn about the legislative process and what it means to our profession.

Our profession was well represented by doctors as we then took the opportunity to visit our legislators at the Missouri Capital. These Doctors of Optometry distributed cinnamon rolls to legislative staff and members of the Missouri House and Senate. This was followed by a legislative reception Monday evening at the Millbottom Event Center.

If you have never attended a legislative conference, you are missing out on a unique opportunity. Make plans now to attend next year’s conference to become involved in the betterment of your profession.
MOA is on the lookout...

for a few great volunteers!
Are you ready to step up?

Contact the MOA Central Office for details.
Call Dr. LeeAnn Barrett @ 573-635-6151
or email moaed@moeyecare.org.
Welcome to Parrot Eyes!!
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Osage Beach, MO

Visit www.moeyecareconference.org for further details!

Hotel information is already available online for anyone who wants to make reservations.
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The AOA will be returning to St. Louis for their 122th Annual Optometry’s Meeting later this year in June of 2019. It is not too early to make plans to attend five days of the best continuing education in the industry.

Stay up to date on the latest technologies and industry advances in the Exhibit Hall. Get engaged and network with your peers at more than 100 different events.

Other special events include the AOA Golf Tournament being hosted by the Missouri Optometric Association at Forest Park Golf Club. We will also be holding our summer MOA Leadership Retreat in conjunction during the last weekend of the AOA Optometry’s Meeting.

Other important events at the AOA and AOSA homecoming include optometry’s voice which is the meeting of the House of Delegates, the Essilor XXVIII Optometry Student Bowl, and a celebration of optometry at Cardinals Nation. There will be two floors of private stadium seating with prime views to watch the home team Cardinals play the Los Angeles Angels and former Cardinal player, Albert Pujols.

The AOA Optometry’s Meeting will be held from June 19-23 and is the 122nd AOA Congress and the 49th AOSA Conference. Registration and housing are open for the meeting and you may register now at the AOA website.
Member Benefit: “Prioritizing Cyber-Security and HIPAA Compliance” Bootcamp

In today’s digital age, addressing key cyber-security and compliance requirements is now more important than ever as compliance and security go hand-in-hand in protecting your practice.

Creating an effective cyber-security and compliance program gives you the tools that you need to document your processes and assess any areas of vulnerability that could lead to potential security incidents and violations.

Take advantage of this MOA member benefit where AOAExcel’s HIPAA compliance partner, Compliancy Group, outlines actionable tips you can use to make your practice more secure, all while addressing your federally mandated HIPAA requirements:

“One Hour Security and Compliance Bootcamp” webinar
Tuesday, February 26 at 2pm EST
Register here: ExcelOD.com/HIPAA-compliance

Compliancy Group gives eye care professionals confidence in their compliance with a total HIPAA solution to address the full extent of the regulatory requirements. With guided support, clients are given the tools they need to maintain the privacy and security of health care information, all while growing their business. As a MOA benefit, members receive three additional months free, included with a one-year subscription. Compliancy Group is dedicated to helping eye care succeed.

For more information about Compliancy Group, and the HIPAA resources available to MOA members through AOAExcel, please visit ExcelOD.com/HIPAA-compliance.
New Year, New Opportunities

Opportunities for ODs and Practices Looking for Top Talent

With a new year brings new opportunities and one of the best times of the year to hire a doctor of optometry. AOAExcel’s Optometry’s Career Center saves you time and gives your career posting maximum visibility with ODs. Don’t sift through piles and piles of unqualified candidates, Optometry’s Career Center targets qualified candidates from across the country.

Benefits of posting your position with Optometry’s Career Center (OCC) include:

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- Access to OCC’s resume database with candidates from all 50 states and all professional experience levels
- Expand your reach utilizing the OCC’s Career Spotlight Newsletter. Deliver your postings directly to the inbox of thousands of passive seeking ODs who aren’t actively searching job sites for positions but may be interested in yours.
- Connect with young ODs from the upcoming graduating class of 2019
- AOA Members receive a discount of up to 50% on their postings
- Postings start as low as $180 for a 45-Day Ad

To find your next qualified candidate, visit OptometrysCareerCenter.com
The MOA Remembers
Dr. Frank Fontana

Achievement, Commitment, and Advocacy

Few people have had as much positive impact on so many as did St. Louis optometrist Dr. Frank Fontana. Affectionately called “Uncle Frank” by hundreds of peers and friends throughout optometry, Dr. Fontana earned his nickname by serving as a mentor and advocate for countless optometric educators and future leaders of the profession. He was an internationally recognized speaker and a true pioneer during the early years of contact lenses, helping train many of his colleagues throughout the US in this then new technology. He died in Las Vegas on October 3 at age 96, after suffering a stroke a few days earlier while attending Vision Expo West, a major eyecare conference.

A St. Louis, Missouri, native, Dr. Fontana was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1943 and became a supply sergeant in a medical battalion during World War II. Decorated for his actions in Europe, Dr. Fontana would use his GI Bill to graduate from Illinois College of Optometry in 1949. Only a year later, Dr. Fontana would open his practice in St. Louis and specialize in contact lenses.

A pioneer in the field, Dr. Fontana published countless articles and clinical investigations related to contact lenses, in addition to consulting and lecturing on the topic throughout his career. He was named chair of AOA’s then-Contact Lens Committee in 1979 and was co-founder of AOA’s Contact Lens Section before chairing the section in 1983.

An active volunteer in his local optometric society, the Missouri Optometric Association and AOA, Dr. Fontana served on AOA’s Communications Committee and joined the Optometry’s Meeting® Exhibit Committee in 1999, serving there for over a decade.

His extensive expertise earned him editorial positions with many trade publications, as well as adjunct teaching and researcher positions at both the University of Missouri-St. Louis College of Optometry and Washington University School of Medicine.

Inducted into the National Optometry Hall of Fame in 2012, Dr. Fontana was awarded the AOA Contact Lens and Cornea Section (CLCS) Legend Award, the AOA Contact Lens Section Man of the Year Achievement, and countless other industry recognitions throughout his career. Additionally, Dr. Fontana was awarded the AOA President’s Award for a lifetime of distinguished service to the profession in October 2017.
In Memoriam –
Scott Marrs Remembered

According to his obituary, Scott Marrs passed away late Friday night, October 26, 2018, after a brief illness. He was the principal lobbyist and representative in the state capitol for various organizations throughout southwest Missouri and the Ozarks, including the City of Springfield, Missouri State University, Boys and Girls Club, Mercy, Bass Pro, City of Branson, the Missouri Optometric Association and many others.

His obituary says that he leaves behind his beloved family, his loving wife of 37 years, an educator, his daughter Katharine, a national political advisor, and his son William, a law school graduate of the university of Missouri and political consultant. His mother Barbara Bullington, his brother David Marrs, his sister Julie Hendrickson; all from Springfield. As well as Stan Bullington of Poplar Bluff, and Michelle Marrs Cannon of Springfield.

His family writes that Scott was a hard worker and diligent citizen promoting causes related to the place and people he grew up with in the Ozarks. He was a graduate and true son of the University of Missouri: with a Master’s in Public Administration from the Truman School of Public Affairs, a political science graduate of Drury University, and an avid Mizzou Football fan.

He was a friend to all, and loving father. Scott loved the outdoors, respected the natural beauty of the Missouri Ozarks, and taught his family to do the same. Scott was a believer in Christ and followed New Testament teachings, promoting kindness, grace, and service to others wherever he could. His quiet contributions to the city and region he loved made it a better place to live.

According to the Missouri Times, lobbyist Jay Hahn said, “Scotty was one of my longest and most trusted friends in the capital. We are all going to miss him.”

Marrs, who was known as “Scotty” by his friends and he is going to be missed by so many of his friends in the MOA. Everyone who encountered Scotty had tremendous respect and admiration for him. He was a hardworking, loyal, man with a wonderful sense of humor.

He will be remembered as a true friend to the members of the MOA.
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Central Missouri Optometric Society (COS)
The Central Society has a hiatus from meetings in the fall of each year. Society members were encouraged to attend MOA Fall Conference. We typically try to get our presidential visit in before the end of the year, but schedules didn’t mesh this year, so we look forward to that in 2019.

Greater Ozark Optometric Society (GOOS)
Our August meeting was at Springfield Brewing Company and was hosted by CARR Healthcare Realty.
In September our meeting was hosted by Arvest Bank and took place at Metropolitan Grill.
In October we hosted our annual Legislative Reception at Touche, where we took time to thank our local Representatives.
We then took a break for the holidays in November and December.

Kansas City Optometric Society (KCOS)
No Report Available

For more information or questions regarding our society, email osgkck@yahoo.com.

Northeast Optometric Society (NEOS)
The Northeast Optometric Society (NEOS) has not met since the MOA convention, in October.
We have our Presidential society visit scheduled for Thursday, March 7, 2019. Our society looks forward to welcoming Dr. Mindy Blackford, our MOA president and Dr. LeeAnn Barrett, our Executive Director for the visit. All NEOS members are encouraged to attend.

Northwest Optometric Society (NWOS)
It’s been a quiet winter up here in Northwest Missouri. We have been reaching out to new members, and we promoted the January Legislative Conference in Jefferson City, MO.
The new key person lists have been drawn up for the upcoming legislative session. We look forward in working with the new members of the Missouri House and Senate and educating them about the profession of optometry.
Our new MOA Vision Plan was explained and shared with the members attending the legislative conference this January, and I encouraged all Northwest society members to attend.
**Society Reports, continued**

**St. Louis Optometric Society (SLOS)**

The St. Louis Optometric Society continues to meet on the second Tuesday of each month at the Marriott West in Chesterfield, MO.

The October meeting was sponsored by Alcon and Shire and the CE was “The Zen of Dry Eye Mastery: A Simple System for Clinical and Practice Success” presented by Art Epstein, O.D. of Phoenix Eye Care. This was a highly informative CE lecture that involved the latest and best dry eye practices.

The November meeting was the Presidential Visit by our newly appointed MOA President, Dr. Mindy Blackford, and MOA Executive Director, Dr. LeeAnn Barrett. Dr. Blackford addressed her presidential agenda including the Board restructuring of the Societies and the SLOS trustees having two votes, which was accomplished at the annual MOA Convention by a marginal vote. Other MOA action items discussed were to refile the Patient Protection Bill again this year, involving online or kiosk eye examinations (ie. Opternative) and illegal contact lens sellers. Dr. Barrett reported the new Governor, Mark Parson, is very optometry friendly, which will help with our future legislative efforts. The November meeting CE was “Taking Dry Eye Disease to the Next Level” presented by Lawrence Gans, M.D. and Eric Ricker, O.D., a fellow SLOS member.

Finally, the December meeting was the SLOS Holiday Party hosted by Midland Optical and held at Napoli 2. The evening consisted of dinner, drinks, holiday trivia and prizes.

For more information about the SLOS, contact Executive Director Paula Huff
Email: paula@stlouisoptometricsociety.org
Phone: 314-725-2020
Web: www.stlouisoptometricsociety.org.

**Southeast Optometric Society (SEOS)**

The SEOS November meeting was canceled due to the weather. We plan to meet again in January after the MOA Legislative Conference. I encouraged all SEOS members to attend the Legislative meetings in Jefferson City.

**Southwest Optometric Society (SWOS)**

The Southwest Society has not met since the last newsletter. We organized our keyperson list as we prepared for the legislative conference in January.

**West Central Optometric Society (WCOS)**

The WCOS has not formally met this quarter. We continue to primarily communicate via email for updates on MOA activities and important announcements.

**MOAA: Official Notice**

It pains us to report that the MOA Auxiliary has been officially dissolved. After several years of discussion and a failed effort to increase membership, the MOA Auxiliary Board has unanimously voted to disband, effective January 14, 2019.

It is well documented that declining membership in all service organizations is being seen worldwide and, despite our best efforts, we were not able to overcome that trend.

The Auxiliary has been honored to be an integral part of the MOA for many years and we are proud of our efforts to assist the MOA in their many legislative and educational endeavors, as well as our efforts in assisting countless optometry students with educational scholarships.

The MOA Auxiliary would like to thank all optometrists and supporters who have contributed to our cause throughout the years.
Welcome Aboard!

Winter / Spring 2019

Please take every possible opportunity to encourage optometrists in your area who are not currently members of the MOA to join this important organization. To those of you who have reached out and brought a new member to the MOA membership roster—THANK YOU!

Please encourage the paraoptometrics in your practice to join the MOA Paraoptometric Section. The MOA para section is a great way to meet other paraoptometrics, grow professionally, and gain continuing education credits toward certification. Join the MOA's Paraoptometric Section today!

We welcome the following new MOA members.

Optometrists
• Raymond Brill
• John Burton
• Jordan Douglas
• Alyssa Harris
• Eric Jerde
• Julie Lafreniere
• Kelsey Manescalco
• Marie Oliver
• Brittany Rosenthal
• Robin Sechler
• Sheri Speak

Para Section
• Mikayla Bathon
• Teshae Davis
• David Perkins
• Sadie Pravecek

MOSA
• Kennon Cox
• Kelly Deering
• Ashley Dimercurio
• Scott Fritsche
• Valerie Leff
• Alexandra Mehas
• Laura Mosley
• Nicholas Portell
• Maggie Scott
• Maria Tantsits
• Adam Wira
UPCOMING EVENTS

2019

April 7-9
AOA Congressional Conference

June 18
MOA’s AOA Golf Tournament
Forest Park Golf Club
Forest Park, MO

June 19-23
Optometry’s Meeting
St. Louis, MO

June 23
MOA Leadership Retreat
St. Louis, MO

October 3-6
MOA Annual Conference
Welcome to Parrot Eyes!
Margaritaville
(formerly Tan-Tar-A)
Osage Beach, MO
CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF

Executive Director — LeeAnn Barrett, OD | moaed@moeyecare.org
Finance / Membership Manager — Sue Brown | sue@moeyecare.org
Legal Counsel — Marc Ellinger | P: 573/634-2500 | mellinger@blitzbardgett.com
Governmental Relations Consultant — Jay Hahn | Hahn O’Daniel | P: 573-573-635-6944 | Jay@HahnOdaniel.com
— Scott Marrs | P: 573-636-5873

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Immediate Past-President — Tom Cullinane, OD | P: 314-579-0909 | seeingme@sbcglobal.net

ABOUT VISION

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