

VisionMonday2007

20

MOST INFLUENTIAL

Women

IN OPTICAL

# Power Women

NEW YORK—Women’s capabilities and points of view are more visible throughout more segments of the vision care field and the optical industry than ever before.

In work reflected at individual companies, regional and local groups as well as on the national stage via organizations, educational institutions, research and development, design, marketing, sales and senior management positions, women are bringing a new dynamic to the business and the professional arena.

**Vision Monday’s** fifth annual, groundbreaking report takes a slightly different approach in **VM’s** 20th anniversary year: this year we asked readers to nominate women who have not yet been recognized but also to consider the ongoing achievements and influence of some of those who’ve been cited in past years.

The result and, importantly, the collective impact of these women and their accomplishments, are what lend power to **Vision Monday’s** report. Some of their comments also support the roles that mentoring and education and experience play in helping them get the job done.

Notes one of these women, “Through economic changes and the financial need for two-income households, women have educated themselves and have earned a position to be not only licensed professionals but also leaders in their respective fields. I believe that becoming a learned individual, male or female, is the way to advance oneself and I feel that the higher education of women has played a significant role in the shift of women from the office pool to the boardroom/exam room.”

Says another, “As more and more women enter medical schools and trade programs the amount of women in our industry will naturally grow. Each individual will leave their own mark on society. No one can predict how gender will change the direction of our field but I would like to think that those individuals entrusted to care for another will do so with intellect and integrity. The present and future should be about exceeding your client/patients expectations and being the best you can be in what you do, regardless of gender.”

And finally, how will women continue to impact the blend of fashion, technology and healthcare that is today’s vision care universe and optical industry? States one of our honorees, “With flair!”

—The Editors

## 5 Years of Honors

**Vision Monday’s** “Most Influential Women in Optical” started as a Special Report in 2003 and we’ve recognized, with the help of our readers, the achievements and contributions of more than 200 leaders in that period.

On occasion, we’ve recognized the pioneering efforts of some, posthumously, who helped grow the optical business and we have also reached out internationally to women who exert influence around the world.

In addition to the 2007 honorees, we also present the names of the 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006 rosters on the following pages.

### First Honor for Women Industry “Pioneers” in 2004

Ruth White, Avante Garde Optics  
Norma Golden, D.O.C. Optics

### International Women in 2005

Melanie Devlyn-Perez, Devlyn Optical Group  
Astrid Galimberti, Anfao  
Laurence Lafont, Lafont  
Melanie Sherk, OD, Doctors Eyecare Network

For a look at past year’s reports, please visit [www.visionmonday.com](http://www.visionmonday.com)

## Methodology

Nomination forms requesting submissions for **Vision Monday’s** 5th Annual “Most Influential Women in Optical” report were issued via Jobson’s **Vision Monday, 20/20** and **Review of Optometry** publications and their Web sites during the months of May and June 2007.

This year’s report was structured differently than those in the past.

This year, **VM** considered nominations from among the 200+ women previously honored, requesting that readers consider who among them was, in their opinion, among the most influential in the field and industry this year. In addition, we encouraged readers to submit nominations for newcomers.

On the occasion of **Vision Monday’s** 20th anniversary, the goal was to create a report citing the contributions of 2007’s 20 Most Influential Women.

Nominees are required to have a minimum of two years of experience in the optical industry in any segment of the market or vision care field and nominators were asked to submit the nominee’s title and current role, along with a brief description of the way she influences the business. There was no limit to the number of nominations submitted.

The “Influential Women” process is not designed to be a vote or a ranking and the number of nominations received did not affect the people considered for final selection. More than 500 responses were reviewed and categorized. Vision Monday’s editors reviewed each entry, consolidated the candidates and made the final selection.

The “Chosen Because...” selections are drawn from the nominations submitted for each candidate. Honorees are organized alphabetically by sector. ■

## VM Survey of Past Honorees Reveals They've Come a Long Way

NEW YORK— Over the past 20 years, women have made huge inroads climbing the corporate ladder in the optical industry and according to **Vision Monday's** recent survey of "Influential Women" past honorees, prospects for future advancements are looking even brighter.

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**20**  
MOST INFLUENTIAL  
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When asked about career opportunities for women over 40, as compared to other industries or professions, nearly two-thirds, 39 percent, said the outlook was "very promising" while 57 percent rated the opportunities as "promising."

Several past honorees offered golden nuggets of advice for their colleagues looking to further develop their professional/working careers in the optical field. "Be professional, learn your trade well and work hard," said Deb Malakoff, Vision Council of America's VP of trade shows. "Don't ever assume that you will move ahead for any reason other than performance. Take full

advantage of industry support groups, training and education [in and outside the industry] and networking opportunities. The optical industry is a wonderful blend of fashion, technology and healthcare where opportunities abound," she said.

Andrea Thau, OD, owner of Thau and Associates advised, "Be the best that you can be. Give back to your profession by volunteering—it is rewarding and enjoyable. You can make a difference."

Several past honorees reminisced about how things have changed over the years for women. "Having worked with optical retail, optical wholesale, optical lab, frame manufacturing, optical buying groups, optical third party networks and doctors of optometry over the last 30 years, I have seen tremendous change in the role of women," according to Emily Mikel Folline, Folline Vision Centers, Columbia, S.C.

"We were once support staff, who learned the optical business from our more-often-than-not male employers. But perhaps the real change is that most people in the optical business look to

one another as opticians, technicians, executives, optometrists, etc., who happen to be male or female. We are no longer the woman optician."

Change, especially for women, has more often than not been a good thing. "When I entered the industry some 20 years ago, one of the gentlemen I worked for loved to refer to me as a "broad"—now that I am one...no one uses the terminology," according to VCA's Malakoff. "Back then, women in leadership positions were far and few between. Yes, there were a few women in powerful roles scattered in the manufacturing, retail and professional side, but not to the extent that you see today. I would estimate that 20 years ago, even as recent as 7 to 10 years ago, the majority of individuals graduating with an optometric degree going into practice were men...now there are more women than men entering the field," she said.

Thau agreed with the sentiment that more women were entering the field than ever before. "When I began optometry school women represented 9 percent of practitioners. Now the

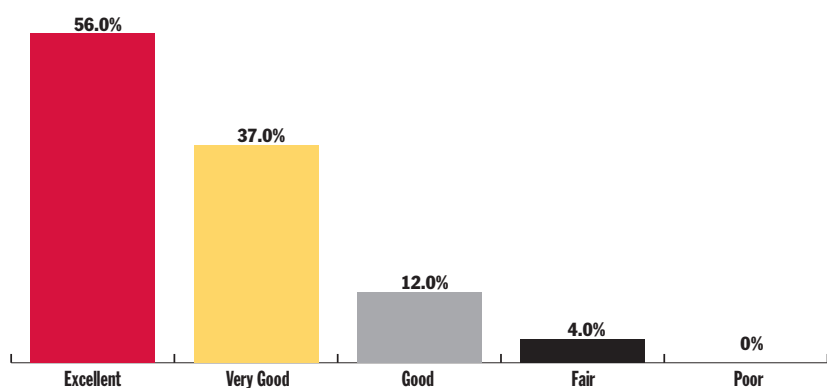
schools are well over 50 percent women. I always heard that there were not enough women in leadership. I got involved to change that," she said.

When asked to characterize prospects for young women entering the eyecare/eyewear industry, more than half of the survey's respondents, 56 percent, rated the outlook as "excellent" while another 37 percent said prospects for new entrants was "very good." New honoree Cheryl Archer, OD agreed that times were indeed changing for women in the industry. "With some of the failures in managed care, I believe healthcare is making a shift towards consumer-driven decisions. Patients are becoming more educated and there is wealth of information available to them on the Internet. Women still tend to be the primary healthcare decision makers for their family. Being on both sides of that exchange provides women with an opportunity to influence and bring a fresh perspective on the delivery of eyecare in every step of the process," she said.

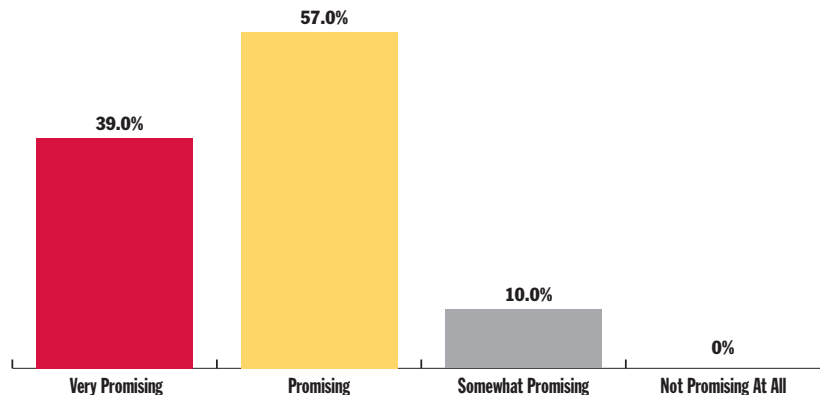
*Continued on page 46*

### Opinions of "Influential Women"

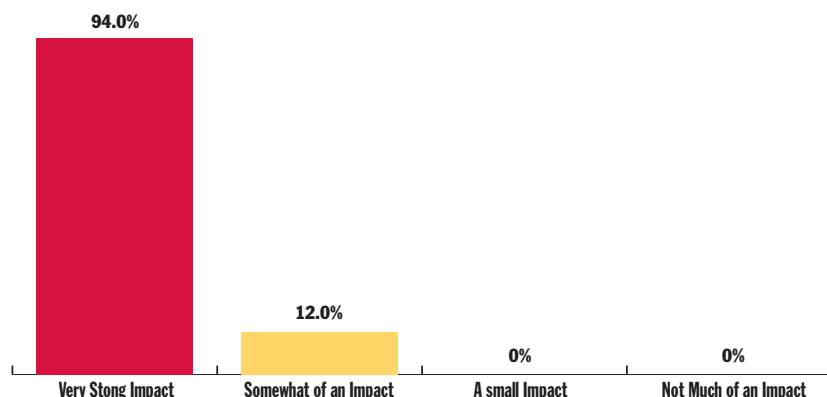
**How would you characterize the career prospects for young women entering the eyecare/eyewear industry?**



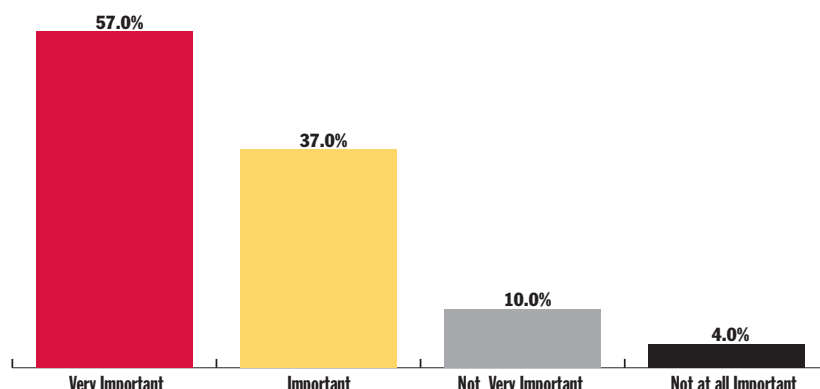
**Compared to other industries or professions, how are the career opportunities for women age 40 and over?**



**How would you characterize the impact you and your female colleagues have made on your company, organization or institution?**



**How important a role have mentors played in your career?**



## QUOTABLE QUOTES

### How the role of women in optical has changed over the past 10 to 20 years:

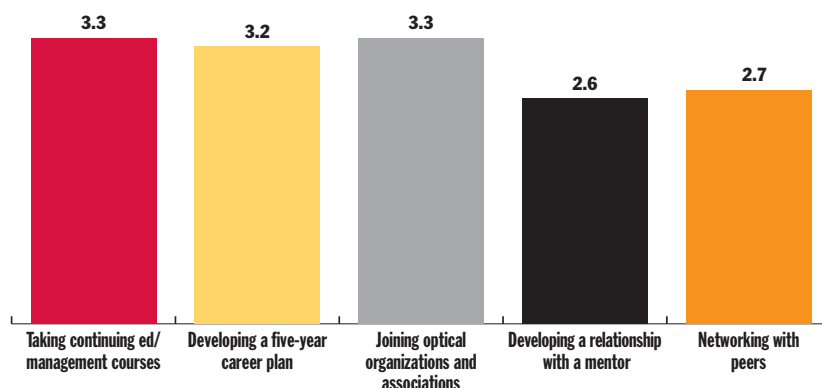
“Women have always had a presence in retail, but mostly at entry level positions. Over the course of the past 10 years, women have progressed considerably to upper level management within retail organizations.”

“Women are a rising force in our profession and are setting new standards of professionalism in dynamic new ways. I see young women as committed, challenged and very driven, perhaps even more than their male colleagues. Our local optometry school is more than 70 percent female. The new face of optometry is that of a woman.”

“Women today have earned the management and leadership roles they possess. Hardworking, dedicated and loyal, women in the optical professions have created opportunities by starting their own companies, engaging in many types of leadership roles, taking on more challenging management positions and leading the way in education.”

“Women have come along way in building confidence in patients. We have seen the compassion in women grow over the years. The patients tend to feel more comfortable with women. And when choosing eyewear they have risen in choosing the perfect eyewear for them, which in return brings pleasure and referrals to their friends and family.”

Which of the following would give women in the industry the best opportunity to advance their careers to include management responsibility? Rank in order of importance from 1 to 5, with 1 being the most important and 5 being least important.



SOURCE: 2007 OPINION SURVEY OF VISION MONDAY'S 2003-2006 "MOST INFLUENTIAL WOMEN"

*Continued from page 44*

Vision Monday's survey also indicated that women have a high opinion of their own accomplishments and those of other women in the industry. When asked to characterize the impact they and their female colleagues have made on their respective organizations, a staggering 94 percent cited a "very strong impact." According to one respondent, "Women are stronger and more confi-

dent than they were years ago. They are happy to speak up and stick by what they believe. Women in optical are such an important influence because of the way we think and simply due to the buying power we have—from making key decisions, researching buying patterns and working with different personality types, we have the opportunity to become experts in this and so much more."  
—Mary Kane

# Congratulations Andrea Gluck

for being recognized as one of Vision Monday's  
**20 Most Influential Women  
in the Optical Industry.**



from all of us at  
**EYEWEAR DESIGNS LTD.**

## VisionMonday2007

# 20

MOST INFLUENTIAL  
*Women*  
IN OPTICAL

## Past Honorees

### 2003 HONOREES

#### Retail Executives

Nancy DiCosmo,  
Au Courant  
Meera Dua,  
Cole Licensed Brands  
Debra Fink,  
D.O.C. Optics  
Diana Hall,  
Bard Optical  
Michele Jantzen,  
Shopko Eyecare  
Centers  
Carene Kunkler,  
Sight Resource  
Sherry Lay  
Pearle Vision  
Lynn Millay  
LensCrafters

Sherrie Rogerson  
Doctor's Vision  
Center

#### Opticians and Dispensing Managers/Executives

Diane Charles,  
Woodlawn Optical  
Denise Cook  
Harvard Vanguard  
Medical Associates  
Stacia Decker  
Alvernon Optical  
Diane Easterwood,  
Kaiser Permanente  
Peggy Hudicer-  
Zillmann,  
Berris Optical  
Emily Mikel  
Folline Vision Center  
Juanita Moman,  
Moman's Eyecare  
Pam Parizo  
Parizo's Champlain  
Valley Eyecare  
Selima Salaun  
Selima Optique  
Mello Thompson,  
Image Optical

#### Optometry

Catherine Amos OD,  
Eyecare Associates  
Vision Service Plan  
Susan Danberg OD,  
Special Olympics  
Opening Eyes Program  
Harlyne Hantman, OD  
Independent Practice

Jan Jurkus OD,  
Illinois College of  
Optometry

#### The Supplier Side

Grady Culbreth  
Carl Zeiss Optical  
Mimi Friedfeld,  
ClearVision Optical

Gai Gherardi,  
I.a. Eyeworks  
Barbara McReynolds  
I.a. Eyeworks

Andrea Gluck,  
Eyewear Designs  
Nikki Iravani OD,  
CooperVision

Teresa Mandarinini-  
Hanlon,  
Davis Vision  
Jean Scott  
Luxottica

Donna Van Green  
Seiko Optical Frame  
Division  
Sheila Vance  
Sama Eyewear

#### Field Sales/Training

Mindy Bernstein  
Kenmark Optical

Val Manso,  
Optical Dynamics

Danne Ventura  
Essilor Lenses

#### Laboratories

Donna Benedict  
Optical Laboratories  
Association

Lorinda Fraboni  
Walman Optical  
Corrine Hood,  
Katz & Klein Optical

Vicki Kathe,  
Lightbenders

Teri Lew  
Vision Service Plan  
Sue Murray  
Cumberland Optical

Naomi Svochak  
Tru Form Labs  
Dana Weeks,  
Optical Services  
International

#### Media/Associations/ Consultants

Jackie Angel  
Wind River County  
Optical  
Marge Axelrad  
Jobson Optical Group

Stephanie De Long,  
Eyecare Business  
Darlene Eakin  
Kentucky Optometric  
Association

Pam Fritz,  
American Association  
of Dispensing  
Ophthalmologists

Carole Norbeck  
Silhouette Optical



New  
Honoree

**OPTOMETRY**  
**Cheryl Archer, OD**  
Allen-Auglaize Eye Care Center  
Lima, Ohio

**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "Dr. Archer is the current president of the Ohio Optometric Association, the second largest state association in the country, certainly one of the most influential women leader in the American Optometric Association (AOA)."

Upon graduation from Ohio State College of Optometry in 1984, Archer toyed with the idea of teaching or going into research, but she opted for private practice and has never looked back. Today, as senior partner and president of a four-office, six-doctor group in Ohio, Archer is still enamored of the idea of being in business for herself saying, "I just can't see myself running any other type of practice." Archer participates in several volunteer programs including Vision USA offering free eye exams, as an InfantSEE provider, and as a volunteer in VOSH missions to the Ukraine helping to fit more than 500 people with eyeglasses in the span of a week.

"This year, we are going back to the Ohio legislation to get the state to update the scope of optometric practices, which has a great effect on what we can prescribe and how we can treat patients," she said.

"We need to be a unified voice advocating that optometry is the source for a lifetime of quality comprehensive eyecare. We have a powerful message to deliver. Being dedicated to that task is my way of both recognizing the contribution made by leaders preceding me and paying ahead to generations yet to come."

**SHE SAYS...** "I've learned that you're capable of achieving so much more when you keep a positive attitude and have a passion for what you are doing. Never allow your attitude to become stagnant. Do not fear success or failure because you'll learn from both."



New  
Honoree

**MANAGED CARE**  
**Patricia Cochran**  
Chief Financial Officer  
Vision Service Plan  
Rancho Cordova, Calif.

**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "As a pioneering female leader in managed vision care and finance, Patricia acts as a role model and mentor to many women."

As VSP's chief financial officer, Cochran leads VSP's finance division and charitable giving programs. Since she joined VSP in 1978, she has been instrumental in VSP's numerous acquisitions of regional vision plans. From 1984 to 2000, these acquisitions helped transform the company from a one-state organization to the national leader in eyecare benefits. Cochran's strategic management skills were fundamental in navigating the compliance steps necessary for VSP to expand to all 50 states.

As a pioneering female leader in managed vision care and finance, Cochran serves as a role model and mentor to many women. She helped establish VSP's mentor program and made key contributions to VSP's corporate culture, which blends a focus on high performance with a healthy work/life balance.

Cochran is the founder and leader of VSP's Sight for Students charity program, which provides underprivileged children nationwide with free eyecare. She also volunteers on three non-profit boards of directors.

**SHE SAYS...** "I would encourage young women to find a mentor in their organization to get some honest feedback from outside the normal chain of command. Also, I advocate that they volunteer for causes they love and are passionate about. You can learn a lot of skills that you can bring back into your workplace and further your career."



'03  
Past  
Honoree

**ASSOCIATIONS**  
**Grady Culbreth**  
Liaison, Vision Council of America's  
AR Committee  
Midlothian, Va.

**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "She is dedicated to promoting AR lenses, premium lenses and educating ECPs."

Culbreth is well-known throughout the industry for her work as an educator and as an officer for various industry organizations. She is a member of the Opticians Association of Virginia and president of the National Academy of Opticianry. In 1999, she became the first female president of the AR Council.

Currently, Culbreth serves as liaison for the Vision Council of America's AR Committee. In September, she will become president of the Optical Women's Association.

Culbreth earned her opticianry degree from J. Sargeant Reynolds in the early 1980s. (She's now on the school's advisory board.) She used her skill and knowledge to earn the confidence of patients who were used to seeing a male optician in the dispensary.

In 1989, Culbreth began her corporate career with Carl Zeiss Optical, Inc. (now Carl Zeiss Vision), holding a variety of jobs including manager of sales administration, national professional development manager, director of business development and spokesperson. For the last two years, she has served as a consultant to Zeiss. She also operates her own consulting company.

**SHE SAYS...** "Women will find many opportunities for professional growth and development if they join an optical organization and chair a committee. That experience will help you learn how to manage, and you'll be able to meet influential people. You'll be helping the organization as well as helping yourself."



**that meet the evolving needs of her customers."**

Liz DiGiandomenico is currently responsible for all facets of EyeMed's sales, marketing and services, having led the company's growth to a position where EyeMed now serves more than 135 million covered lives through more than 3,500 client companies. Under DiGiandomenico's leadership, and with the rising demand for vision wellness and its growing role in overall health care and wellness programs, EyeMed has continued steady growth year after year. Over the past three years, the company has continued to see double-digit revenue growth, according to DiGiandomenico.

DiGiandomenico was also a founding member and is currently first vice president of the National Association of Vision Care Plans.

**SHE SAYS...** "This is an exciting time for women in optical, with more women making important inroads into many professional areas. More Asian women are entering and completing optometry school than any other female minority, which adds a key element of diversity as well."

'04  
*Past Honoree*

**MANAGED CARE**  
**Liz DiGiandomenico**  
Senior Vice President  
General Manager/EyeMed Vision Care  
Mason, Ohio

**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "She is passionate about providing value and service to clients, members and providers... adept at identifying trends and translating them into products



'03  
*Past Honoree*

**SUPPLIER**  
**Andrea Gluck**  
Co-President  
Eyewear Designs Ltd.  
Syosset, N.Y.

**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "She demonstrates longevity in an ever changing industry, influences trends and the way we look at the optical field today."

Thirty-two years ago Andrea Gluck was a neighbor of the man who would change the course of her life forever, her future

partner at Eyewear Designs Ltd., the late Barry Baum, and after three decades she still loves coming to work every morning. Gluck, who since became the founding president of the Children's Vision Coalition, a member and Pleiades honoree of the OWA, and the most recent past chairman of the VCA, is responsible for sales, product and marketing of Eyewear Designs Ltd., and credits a good portion of her success to her parents. "I come from a large Irish family and we learned early on to pull our own weight. It didn't matter if you were a girl or boy, old or young, if you were assigned a job you got it done. It built a great work ethic in all of us," said Gluck. Her personal philosophy is to run her business the same way she runs her personal life: by treating all people equally and by caring about everything with the same intensity.

**SHE SAYS...** "There are no problems, only solutions. Les Brown said, 'Shoot for the moon—even if you miss you will land among the stars.' To me it means never say 'never,' always give it a try."

# Luxottica Retail Congratulates

**Liz DiGiandomenico**

Senior Vice President and General Manager, EyeMed Vision Care



**Lynn Millay**

Senior Director  
Lens Buying



**Two of the most innovative women in optical!**





New  
Honoree

### LABORATORIES

**Mary Hagge**  
President, Co-owner  
MJ Optical  
Omaha, Neb.

**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "She has kept MJ Optical in Vision Monday's Top Labs since taking over the company in 2003, with growth happening each year."

Mary and Mike Hagge started MJ Optical 42 years ago as an uncut lab in their Omaha basement. In the beginning, Mary fined and polished lenses and handled the billing. After Mike moved the lab to a bigger building, she trained to be a nurse and then stayed home to raise their seven children. She also raised thoroughbred horses.

When Mike passed away in 2003, Mary took over the leadership of MJ. With the support of her employees, including her sons Marty, Morrie, Mike and daughter Michelle, Mary soon set to work modernizing the business. MJ is now a full-service laboratory that is completely computerized and offers a diverse product range.

She continues to indulge her equestrian passion and now raises quarter horses.

**SHE SAYS...** "I try to encourage everybody, no matter what their role is. I have an open door. Anybody can come and talk with me about anything."



'03  
Past  
Honoree

### RETAILER

**Diana Hall**  
Owner/President  
Bard Optical  
Peoria, Ill.

**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "A true pioneer among women in optical retailing...an active business leader."  
Diana Hall has owned Bard Optical since

1981, taking it from a 40-year-old, single-location dispensary to an 18-store operation that generated \$8.5 million in overall sales in 2006—an increase in volume of more than 20 percent over the last five years. Hall gives credit to Bard Optical's employees—many of them company veterans—for much of the chain's steady growth: "Organizational consistency is a major factor in our success," she said.

Hall also pays close attention to training in sales and customer service, urging store personnel to greet long-time customers by name and to maintain relationships with them. Helping other women find their niches in retailing, in general, and in optical in particular, is important to Hall. She regularly spends time speaking before business groups, and is serving this year as incoming president of the central Illinois chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners.

**SHE SAYS...** "It's so important for successful women to reach out to other women and help them move up the ladder. Part of that is through talking about all aspects of the business—the good as well as the bad."

# Congratulations

To This Year's  
20 Most Influential Woman  
& The Next Generation of Leaders

## VisionMonday



'06  
Past  
Honoree

RETAILER

### Julie King

**Vice President/Divisional Merchandise Manager, Optical Merchandising Wal-Mart/Sam's Club Bentonville, Ark.**

**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "She is responsible for sourcing and purchasing for one of the largest optical operations in the country. She is also out in front speaking of women's health and the

### importance of regular eye exams."

King oversees merchandising for the 3,000-plus company-owned Wal-Mart Vision Centers and Sam's Club Optical in the U.S. Before joining Wal-Mart's optical division in August 2003, she worked in merchandising in jewelry, sunglasses and watches for the retailing giant; King celebrates her 12th year with Wal-Mart this month.

She sees the key opportunity for the Wal-Mart and Sam's optical departments as "education for our consumers." What I enjoy most in my job is the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of our patients—like being a part of national outreach programs that provide needy children with vision care, educating adult patients what to expect as their eyes age and as their children's eyes develop, and leading them to the high-value solutions we have at Wal-Mart and Sam's Clubs."

**SHE SAYS...** "As women develop their careers in optical, my advice is to keep one thing in mind and that one thing is the patient. If you are a good student of the patient you will have the answers needed for success."



New  
Honoree

SUPPLIER

### Heike Kremser

**Managing Director  
Base Curve  
Sun Valley, Calif.**

**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "Heike was a pioneer in the high-end segment of the industry in the 90's and has brought her wealth of experience to a new leadership role for Base Curve."

As a child in Germany, Heike Kremser dreamed about living in the U.S... In the

early 90's that dream was realized when she arrived on a special project for Swatch Eyes and stayed to work for EYEota. After spearheading the launches of high-end brands like Kata and Isaac Mizrahi, she left the optical industry in 2002 and returned in 2005 when Steve Horowitz, executive vice president of REM, asked her to head up a new, as yet named, division. Kremser, armed with a fresh perspective, became the managing director of Base Curve, where she is involved in every aspect of the business, from building the brands to customer service and finance. "The additional perspective of having lived and worked in other countries has helped me to think globally and to reach across other cultures and industries," said Kremser. "The greatest challenge is to get your brands on the map. It is an oversaturated market and you have to find a way to make your brands indispensable to the consumers and opticians. But I love what I do because I have a great team of people to rely on."

**SHE SAYS...** "Given the scope of the industry, there is no area a woman can't be successful in if you follow

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BUSINESS  
24/7



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20

MOST INFLUENTIAL  
*Women*  
IN OPTICAL'04  
Past  
Honoree**ASSOCIATIONS**  
**Deborah Malakoff**  
VP Trade Shows  
Vision Council of America  
Alexandria, Va.

**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "She is a leader in coordinating all of VCA's programs. In her role with the Vision Expos for VCA, she's extremely adept at marketing, relationships and building on prior levels of success." Malakoff started her career with a B.S. in ad design and marketing, joining RCA Records. She freelanced for optical retail pioneer, Bob Hillman, when he had one store. When Quaker Oats bought Hillman's business, he hired her as visual merchandising manager for what grew into 38 EyeLab locations. Deb joined him again in a new Hillman-Kohan venture as director of creative services until that business was sold in 1999. She later was tapped by the Vision Council of America (VCA).

"Apart from my day-to-day interactions with VCA member companies my focus is on the show partnership with Reed, the VCA Show Committee, and relations with industry organizations affiliated with our events," she noted. Last year, VCA welcomed a new CEO, industry veteran Ed Greene, who has reenergized the staff, the membership and the partnership."

Malakoff recently completed serving a three-year term on the board of MATSO (Major American Trade Show Organizers trade association). Last March, Malakoff received the Optical Women's Association's 2007 Pleiades honor.

**SHE SAYS...** "Of all the advice I've received through the years, one piece of advice is paramount: be passionate about what you do—otherwise it's time to do something else. Of late, I rely the most on my husband, Tony Castor, who continues to be a great sounding board and confidant."

'03  
Past  
Honoree**RETAILER**  
**Lynn Millay**  
Senior Director, Lens Management  
Luxottica Retail  
Mason, Ohio

**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "Her influence over the years has manifested itself in production innovation and in driving the growth of important trends in optical. She is widely respected for her vision and partnership."

Since being honored as one of **Vision Monday's** first Most Influential Women in Optical in 2003, Lynn Millay has seen her responsibilities at Luxottica Retail increase exponentially. (After beginning her career in the optical business at American Optical, Millay became LensCrafters' third employee when the chain was founded in 1983.)

Following parent Luxottica Group's acquisition of Cole Vision in October 2004, Millay began to oversee lens purchasing not only for Luxottica Retail's 800-plus LensCrafters stores, but also for the company's newly acquired Pearle Vision, Sears Optical, Target Optical and BJ's Optical locations. She was also now dealing for the first time with stores that did not have on-site optical labs. "It's been a major responsibility to look at the areas in which the various retail brands are similar, and take advantage of those synergies, and at where they're different, and figure out how to deal with that as well," Millay said. "It's also been a new experience dealing with centralized labs as well as LensCrafters' traditional in-store labs."

**SHE SAYS...** "I think optical may be a little more welcoming to women than retailing—and business—in general because of the connection with people, which women are innately good at. Our industry helps people see—that's pretty amazing, and a very personal thing...and women get that."

New  
Honoree**OPTICIAN**  
**Jean Miller**  
Director of  
Ophthalmology Retail Service  
Mayo Clinic  
Rochester, Minn.

**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "She does her job with an even disposition, a very open mind, a sense of humor, trust in her management team and unbelievable optical instincts."

While training to be a medical secretary, Miller worked in an optometric practice, a job which became the springboard for her 30-year career as an optician and manager. Following a two-year apprenticeship, she was recruited by Pearle Vision Center, eventually becoming supervisor of the Rochester, Minn. location. After earning ABO certification, she spent five years at a private practice before joining the Mayo Clinic's new optical division in 1996.

In 2004, Miller was promoted to her current position as director of ophthalmology retail service at Mayo Clinic. She oversees two high-volume opticals in Rochester, a surfacing lab and nine off-campus sites in Minnesota and Wisconsin. The optical business has consistently grown under her direction, with more than 30 employees in the main Rochester location and a second location that will soon double in size.

**SHE SAYS...** "Rely on your own confidence and instincts. I also recommend that women starting out in optical become ABO-certified, because that offers more credibility. Don't be afraid to gather new ideas and learn from your peers and grow."

*Past*  
**Honorees**

## 2004 HONOREES

**Retail Executives**Sharon Blankenship  
Pearle Vision  
Janet Callif  
Luxottica RetailDebbie Thomas,  
Eye Care Centers  
of AmericaKathy Veltri,  
Cole Vision/Target  
OpticalLisa Wolman,  
For Eyes Optical  
Debra Woyce,  
National Vision**Opticians and  
Dispensing****Managers/Executives**Janie Blackstock,  
Horizon Eye CareDiane Drake  
All About Eyes  
Vision CenterAmy Endo,  
A. EndoDianna Finisey  
Wagner Opticians and  
National Academy of  
OpticianryPatti Galko,  
Northeastern Eye  
InstituteHelene Goldschmidt,  
Frame Up Eyewear Inc.Kelly Huntsinger-  
Chasnov,  
Eyetopian OpticalCathy Trejo  
Monument Vision Clinic**Optometry**Sandra Bury, OD,  
Complete Vision CareJanet Carter, OD,  
Association of  
Regulatory Bodies of  
Optometry (ARBO)Paula Newsome, OD,  
Advantage Vision CenterKelly Nichols, OD,  
The Ohio State University  
College of OptometryBina Patel, OD,  
New England College  
of Optometry

Susan Resnick, OD

Kathryn Reynolds, OD,  
Clarkson Eyecare

Glenda Secor, OD

**Suppliers, Field Sales  
and Training**Mary Angrisani,  
CooperVisionPat Aptaker,  
Nouveau EyewearLiz Davila,  
VISX, Inc.Debra DeLong,  
Sãfilo USAKyle Duffens,  
Duffens Optical/  
South-Central region,  
Essilor Laboratories of  
America (ELOA)Connie Falvo  
Transitions OpticalDonna Gindy  
Rem EyewearGail Israel,  
LuxotticaJan Kubiak,  
Signet Armolite, Inc.Regina Lage  
Viva International GroupCorrine McCormack,  
Corrine McCormack Inc.Susan Polson  
National Optronics, Inc.Nancy Roelke  
SOLA OpticalChristina Schnider,  
VISTAKON, Vision  
Care, Inc.Jennifer Walker  
Essilor Laboratories  
of AmericaBecky Wilkinson  
OakleyDebi 'Zuke' Zuccheri,  
CIBA Vision**Managed Care**Laura Costa  
Vision Service PlanDonna Denby,  
Davis VisionLiz DiGiandomenico,  
EyeMed Vision CareSusan Hauser  
Comprehensive  
Professional SystemsMary Lou Stephan,  
Kaiser Permanente**Laboratories**Sue Crawley  
Volunteer Optical  
LaboratoryKathy Gross-Edelman,  
Pech Optical Corp.Julie Larson,  
Walman Optical**Associations/Consultants**Susan Knobler  
Gift of Sight DevelopmentDebbie Malakoff  
Vision Council of AmericaRene Soltis  
Vision Council of America





New  
Honoree

**OPTOMETRY**  
**Colleen H. Riley, OD, FAAO**  
Director, Research and Development  
Vistakon  
Jacksonville, Fla.

**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** Her ability to bring clinical, materials and design science to product development has been instrumental in the creation of contact lenses that addresses the underserved needs of millions."

After 12 years with the Indiana University School of Optometry, Colleen Riley

found herself at a career crossroads. She served as co-director of the school's Contact Lens Clinic, was an assistant clinical professor and supervisor of the Contact Lens residency program. Throughout her tenure, Riley was instrumental in securing more than 14 grants and served as Principal Investigator for the Collaborative Longitudinal Evaluation of Keratoconus Study (CLEK) funded by the National Eye Institute. Three years later she joined the R&D team at Vistakon and helped the company launch several products including the silicone hydrogel Acuvue Oasys and Acuvue Advance for Astigmatism.

She participates in Johnson & Johnson's Women in Leadership Initiative (WLI), a company-wide networking and mentoring program promoting career development as well as real life advice.

**SHE SAYS...** "You have to opt for what will offer you the best life experience. In my case, being able to combine teaching with private practice allowed me to grow and learn early in my career which gave me the ability to make good choices later on."



'05  
Past  
Honoree

**RETAILER**  
**Jackee Smith**  
President and CEO  
Co-op Optical  
Detroit, Mich.

**CHOSEN BECAUSE.....** "She is a capable, compassionate leader who focuses on people, charitable service and sound business practices."

In the course of her 30-year optical career, Smith has risen from being a receptionist to being president and chief executive officer of Co-op Optical, a Detroit-based company with 135 employees and 11 retail stores, an optical manufacturing division and a vision insurance company. She is one of the few African American women to lead a regional optical company. Under her leadership, Co-op Optical's sales have grown from \$13.6 million in 2004, the year she became CEO, to \$17.7 million in 2006. The company's customers include the Detroit Board of Education, Wayne County Community College District and Oakland University. Nationally, it serves DaimlerChrysler and American Axle. She sees Co-op Optical as an "eyecare conservation organization."

She serves as chairperson of the children's division for New Center Community Mental Health, and coordinates a Toys for Tots program for low income children. She has also participated in the Child Care Coordinating Council.

**SHE SAYS...** "This is a great industry. If you leave your heart and mind open to grow, you're bound to succeed."

## 2007 MANAGED VISION CARE INSIGHT SURVEY NOW AVAILABLE!

\$99<sup>00</sup>



Updated with September 2006 data. Three year comparisons shown where possible.

### How do consumers really feel about Managed Vision Care?

From this study you will learn the importance of healthcare benefits, vision plan care and what features mean the most to consumers in a vision care plan. We look at how many people have a vision care plan and reasons for not having a vision care plan. Data is broken down by gender, income and whether or not the consumers have children living at home. Market overview charts are included.

For more information contact Beth Briggs ♦ 212-219-7825 ♦ bbriggs@jobson.com

VisionMonday2007

# 20

MOST INFLUENTIAL  
*Women*  
IN OPTICAL

*Past*  
**Honorees**

### 2005 HONOREES

#### Retail Executives

Debbie Cohen,  
D.O.C Optics  
Lora Loveland,  
Wal-Mart Optical  
Jacqueline Marvucic,  
Emerging Vision, Inc./  
Sterling Optical  
Gretchen Oldt,  
Empire Vision  
Centers/Davis Vision  
Laura O'Neill,  
Nationwide Vision  
Nancy Noll,  
Opticare Eye Health  
and Vision Centers  
Jo Patt,  
Accurate Optical  
Katheryn Schramm,  
A Child's View  
Regina Sharp,  
Shared Services  
Luxottica Retail  
Jackee Smith,  
Co/op Optical  
Vision Designs  
Sandy Smith,  
Doctors Vision Center

#### Dispensing Opticians

Sandra Brown,  
Dr. Bizer's Vision World

Jerry Himes,  
AoSola/Carl Zeiss  
Vision

Carol Russell,  
Bay State Eye Care

#### Optometrists/ Ophthalmologists

Tuyet Kathleen Doan, OD,  
Clarkson Eyecare  
Susan Meek, MD, JD,  
Ophthalmologist  
Beverly Miller, OD,  
Eye Associates  
Karen Rosen, OD,  
Rosen Optometry  
Associates

Janice Scharre, OD,  
Illinois College of  
Optometry

Susan M. Stenson, MD,  
New York University  
School of Medicine

Regina McCollum  
Sullivan, OD,  
Focal Point Optical  
Andrea P. Thau, OD,  
Thau and Associates

Penny Walter, OD, MPA,  
FAAO,  
Naval Ophthalmic  
Support and Training  
Activity

#### Suppliers

Laurie Badone,  
Seiko Optical Products  
of America

Lynda Baker,  
Con-Cise Contact  
Lense Co.

Kathy Bernard,  
Signet Armolite

Yvette Carranza,  
Digital Vision, Inc. (DVI)

Yvonne Grieco,  
Zyloware

Debbie Kelly,  
Safilo, USA

Lisa Lingard,  
Vision West, Inc.

Debbie Lochli,  
Viva International  
Group

Marj McGraw,  
Nouveau Eyewear

Kara Casey Meyer,  
REM Eyewear

Audrey Reed,  
Essilor of America

Donna Rollins,  
Marchon Eyewear

Bette Zaret,  
Transitions Optical

#### Managed Care

Cathy Holley,  
EyeMed Vision Care  
Vision

Kate Renwick-Espinosa,  
Vision Service Plan

Linda Sauer,  
Allied EyeCare

#### Laboratories

Kelly Bowling,  
Robertson Optical  
Laboratories, Inc.

Lynn Cherry,  
Cherry Optical, Inc.

Candice Levr,  
Homer Optical Co.

Susan Nutgrass,  
Midwest Labs

Gale Meyer,  
Diversified Ophthalmics

Lu-Lu White,  
Jorgenson Optical Supply

#### Associations/Consultants/ Media

Eileen Baird,  
Int'l Vision Expo and  
Midwest Vision Congress

Jenean Carlton, ABOC,  
NCLC,  
Carlton & Associates, LLC

Gloria Nicola,  
*20/20 Magazine*

Mary E. Schmidt,  
EyeSystems

Shirley Platzer-Stocks,  
SPS Associates



'05  
*Past*  
Honoree

#### OPTOMETRY

**Dr. Andrea P. Thau, OD,  
FAAO, FCOVD**

Owner  
Thau and Associates  
New York, N.Y.

**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "She has been very successful at combining her dual roles as an academican and a private practice optometrist."

Andrea Thau, OD has been in practice for the last 23 years and since 1987 she's owned and run a four-woman group private practice located on Park Avenue in New York City, specializing in full scope optometry with an emphasis on children and vision therapy. As an associate clinical professor at SUNY State College of Optometry, Thau's background and experience in the industry is extensive, including stints as past president of NYSOA, N.Y. Academy of Optometry, Optometric Society of N.Y., and current president of the N.Y. Children's Vision Coalition. Recently, she added another star to her orbit when she was elected to the AOA's board of trustees at the organization's Optometry's Meeting held in June. Thau considers her election to the board a special honor since there are only a handful of women selected for the AOA board. "You need to be at a certain stage in your career to be considered."

"I also feel a profound duty to 'pay it forward' and contribute to my profession by volunteering to help future generations of ODs." She is a founding committee member of the InfantSEE public health program, a partnership between the AOA and Johnson & Johnson Vision Care.

**SHE SAYS...** "It is a privilege to enable patients of all ages to have the vision they need to enjoy life. My mentor was my late father, Dr. Edwin C. Thau, an optometrist who loved practicing optometry and was dedicated to advancing our profession."



'06  
*Past*  
Honoree

#### MANAGED CARE

**Kathy Torrence**  
Product Line Manager  
Kaiser Permanente Optical Services  
Richmond, Calif.

**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "She has spent many hours educating and implementing updated testing for contact lens fitters across the country. She is a dedicated professional and a wonderful person."

Twenty-eight years ago, Kathy Torrence was a dispenser in an optical shop in Phoenix, Ariz. Today, she is responsible for marketing, product selection and management of two product lines—contact lenses and frames—for Kaiser Permanente Northern California. She is ABO certified, NCLE advanced and a CLSA Fellow. She has been president of the Pacific Coast Contact Lens Society, a CLSA board member and is currently serving on the Fellow Committee that administers the Fellow exam for CLSA.

Torrence oversees the design of new Kaiser Permanente optical stores and the remodel of existing locations. She's also on two national teams for Kaiser Permanente, the Contact Lens Sourcing and Standards team and the National Marketing team. With three boys, balancing family and her job can be a challenge but her passion for both keeps her positive and effective. "I try and make sure I do what I say I'm going to do, offering support for both my co-workers and my family. The people I work with and the members I help at the clinic inspire me daily. They are my motivation to do my best."

**SHE SAYS...** "Women in the optical industry today are more empowered and show great passion for what they do. Passion for your work is a good thing. I know sometimes it comes across as pushy, but don't let negative people stand in the way of your passion."



'03  
*Past*  
Honoree

#### SUPPLIER

**Danne Ventura**  
Director, Professional Relations  
Essilor of America  
Dallas, Texas

**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "She works tirelessly to serve and inform eyecare professionals about new technology and helps education in numerous ways. She represents Essilor of America and the optical profession with grace and dignity."

As a college-educated dispensing optician, Ventura joined Essilor in 1989 as education coordinator, initiating her own programs, including the co-founding of the Varilux Optometry Super Bowl competition. Today, Ventura is lecturing, teaching and publishing to fulfill Essilor's professional relations mission.

Ventura is a fellow in the National Academy of Opticianry (NAO) and the Opticians Association of America.

On the board of directors of the NAO, JCAHPO education and research foundation, New York City Technical College and Essex County College, Ventura's received many honors including the National Federation of Opticianry School's "Person of the Year" in 1995, the ATPO (Association of Technical Personnel in Ophthalmology) President's Award in 2004, the NAO Recognition Award in 2006 and she is currently on the Commission on Opticianry Education.

In November, she will receive a very special, high-level award from JCAHPO, the group's 2007 Statesmanship Award, granted "to a person who has manifested leadership through the support and training of allied health personnel in ophthalmology, and whose career has demonstrated dedication in the finest ethics and ideals of our ophthalmology profession."  
**SHE SAYS...** "I'd advise anyone to do what you love, and to always take the high road."

VisionMonday2007

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MOST INFLUENTIAL  
*Women*  
IN OPTICALNew  
Honoree

SUPPLIER

**Rose Wallace**  
Senior Marketing Manager,  
Lens Manufacturers  
Transitions Optical, Inc.  
Pinellas Park, Fla.**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "Rose Wallace has been lending her creative mind and keen understanding of the optical industry to Transitions Optical in a range of roles."

As a senior marketing manager for Transitions Optical, Rose Wallace is responsible for the development and management of marketing strategies for marketing Transitions Lenses for the lens manufacturers. She works closely with several of Transitions Optical's lens partners to promote emerging lines of sunglass lenses, Activated by Transitions. She led the way in the creation of a new eyeglass guide, which educates consumers on their eyewear options through a print magazine insert and interactive Web site, then drives them to their eye-care practitioner for more information. With Transitions Optical since 1991, Wallace has seen women rise to higher-level positions in all areas at Transitions. "We now have many women in key positions on our commercial team and several women on our global leadership team."

**SHE SAYS...** "Early in my career, I was fortunate to have a woman as a manager who encouraged me and showed me the ropes, highlighting my accomplishments within the organization. I encourage people to find someone highly respected in your company. Then learn everything you can from them. Also, never be afraid to take on a new opportunity or challenge. Even if you fail, you will learn so much."New  
Honoree

RETAILER

**Shirley Wanamaker**  
Optical Buyer  
Empire Vision/Davis Vision  
Syracuse, N.Y.**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "... "Perhaps one of the most powerful and influential people in the optical industry...a must on the list."

Shirley Wanamaker began in optical in 1975, as a receptionist at an ophthalmology practice. Since then, her career has taken her to many of the industry's best-known and historic retail chains, and to increasing levels of responsibility.

Wanamaker's career roster includes a stint with Benson Optical; a position as co-manager for EyeLab, the industry's first eyewear superstore, in the mid-1980s; and working as an optical buyer for Price Club as that warehouse club operation moved into optical retailing. Settling in Arizona in the early 1990s, she was a merchandise manager for Western States Optical there, then spent three years with Nationwide Vision before shifting to Sam's Club as that warehouse chain entered, then expanded in, the optical business. In the mid-1990s Wanamaker struck out on her own as co-founder of the Reading Glass Co., a 16-store chain selling non-prescription readers; when that concept failed to attract needed funding, she left to become general manager of Bard Optical, where she spent eight years until joining Davis Vision two years ago this month. Wanamaker now buys ophthalmic and contact lenses for Davis and its Empire Vision Centers optical chain.

**SHE SAYS...** "I've gotten where I have because of my own tenacity; I don't think it's made much difference being a woman. Even going back to when I was a dispenser, if someone had a problem dealing with a woman, it was their problem, not mine."'03  
Past  
Honoree

LABORATORIES

**Dana Weeks**  
Optical Services International  
President  
Norcross, Ga.**CHOSEN BECAUSE...** "Dana is president of the most influential, respected and prestigious optical laboratory association in the country. With all the acquisitions taking place within the industry, she has been able to maintain her desired level of membership. Dana is an enthusiastic, very hard working individual."

As president of Optical Services International (OSI) since 1988, Dana Weeks provides services that help the independent laboratory compete in today's world of large corporate-owned laboratories. OSI provides a variety of services including education, dispenser training, marketing and promotions. "Being a small business, I wear all the hats. Anything that needs to be done to assist our members, I try and do it," said Weeks. Since joining OSI, she has increased membership 85 percent, a major accomplishment considering OSI has lost 22 members due to lab acquisitions. On the board of directors for the Optical Women's Association and winner of the group's 2004 Pleiades award, she has seen women become more visible in management and sales positions over the past 20 years. "Today, there are women heading independent labs, women who are a vital part of management teams and two women who were past presidents of the Optical Laboratories Association." Her advice for women interested in a career in the optical industry: "Work hard, be prepared, keep your sense of humor and don't take yourself too seriously."

**SHE SAYS...** "The only thing that is constant is change. The old adage that it takes quality, service and price to be successful is no longer the case. These three ingredients are a must to exist, but fresh ideas and growth opportunities are the real factors that can set you apart today."*Past  
Honorees*

## 2006 HONOREES

**Retail Executives**Diane Beauflis,  
Eye Care Centers  
of AmericaRebecca C. Jackson,  
Omega OpticalJulie King,  
Wal-Mart/DMMPaulette Krstevski  
Vision PointVanessa Wise,  
LuxotticaRetail**Dispensing Opticians**Polly Fisher,  
A&A Optical RetailBarbara Folgo  
Strand Eye CareLaura Frezza-Chiarelo,  
West & Stannish  
OpticiansMadeleine Kruhsberg,  
Apex OpticalSylvie Putman,  
Pro-Style Optical**Optometrists/  
Ophthalmologists**Sarah Appel, OD,  
Pennsylvania College  
of OptometryRoxana F. Barad, MD,  
Pittsburgh Eye AssociatesIda Chung, OD,  
SUNY College of  
OptometryKristine Eng, OD,  
Orinda AssociatesJoan Exford Korb, OD,  
Korb AssociatesMichelle Harrison, OD,  
Camden EyeCare  
AssociatesElizabeth Hoppe, OD,  
New England College  
of OptometryLorie Lippiatt, OD,  
Salem EyeCare CenterKatherine Mastrota,  
OD, Omni Eye Clinic

Pamela Miller, OD

Jennifer Planitz, OD,  
Rio EyeCare PCMaria Richman, OD,  
The Doctor's Choice for  
Low VisionRhonda Robinson, OD,  
Ossip/Robinson  
OptometryJenny Smythe, OD,  
Pacific University  
College of OptometrySarita Soni, OD  
Indiana University**Suppliers**Kim Bratcher,  
The AllianceCarole Bratteig,  
Transitions OpticalJudy Canty,  
Polycore Optical USALouise Courville-Gill,  
Hoya Vision CareLori Feldman,  
IdealopticsBarbara Flickinger,  
Marchon EyewearDiane Gillis,  
Essilor of AmericaKaren Gough,  
CIBA VisionAnn Harrison,  
1-800 ContactsCathy Kaye,  
ClearVision OpticalDonna Nagawaki,  
Rem EyewearCindy Pelletier,  
ABB OpticalJanet Phillips,  
New York EyeCarmen Renscher,  
Shamir Insight**Managed Care**Kim Caruso,  
Davis VisionCheryl Johnson Vision  
Service Plan (VSP)Marylin Seastrom,  
EyeMed Vision CareKathy Torrence,  
Kaiser Permanente  
Optical Services**Laboratories**Karen Keeney,  
Chadwick Optical, Inc.Carol Lamy,  
Diversified  
Ophthalmics, Inc.LuAnn Mosier,  
Pech Optical Corp.Jennifer Steffey,  
SunStar Optical**Laboratories**Sue Crawley  
Volunteer Optical  
LaboratoryKathy Gross-Edelman,  
Pech Optical Corp.Julie Larson,  
Walman Optical**Associates/Consultants/  
Media**Cathy Ciccolella,  
Vision MondayValerie Scott,  
Association Exposition  
ServicesElizabeth Taylor-Creed,  
Southern Council of  
Optometrists/SECO

# The Next Generation Of Female Leaders

*Today's Students Embrace Professional Options*

NEW YORK—The nation's professional colleges of optometry and a diverse range of opticianry and technical schools are grooming today's vision care professionals and tomorrow's eyecare leaders.

Perhaps one of the most dramatic elements of change in the arena has been the notable and significant increase in the number of women drawn to the optometric profession and the dispensing community.

As has been well documented of late, women are comprising the majority of today's optometric school graduates. Drawn to the core values of the profession, the various practice opportunities that exist in private practice, group practice, public health and corporate and hospital settings, women coming out of the schools, as exemplified by the students we spotlight here, are already very active, curious and eager to extend the scope of their contributions.

As well, the need for educated dispensing opticians remains paramount.



Increasingly complex and varied product technologies – combined with a more informed and inquisitive patient base—reinforce the need for professionally-trained individuals to serve their needs as well as the demands of competitive business dispensaries and retail operations.

This is the second year that **Vision Monday** will be bringing a new dimension to its annual report honoring the “Most Influential Women in Optical.”

We asked the heads of the nation's professional optometry schools as well as those heading the ophthalmic dispensing and opticianry tech programs around the U.S. to recommend

a female candidate to represent their school and the Class of 2007 graduates.

Their choices reflect superb standards of commitment, passion and accomplishment. The spirit of these young women are already influencing patient care and will undoubtedly impact the professional eyecare field's future. —*The Editors*

The Next Generation of Leadership is presented by

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## The Next Generation of Opticianry Leadership

### Women Swell Ranks Of Opticianry Field

Today's dispensing and opticianry schools are a diverse range of community and state schools which offer students many ways to take part in eyecare's growth and to learn about modern patient care.

Sometimes women entering the field are coming out of high school or college. In other cases opticianry is attracting women exploring new career opportunities.

The profession is also attractive to young moms and offers flexibility in terms of time and practice structure. It's a career choice that enables contribution in the health-care arena.

Women are increasingly entering the field.



**Tzippy Abramowitz**  
Raritan Valley Community College  
Somerville, N.J.

Abramowitz was a mother of four when she started the program at Raritan Valley—she currently has 6 kids, ages 1 to 11 years old, but nevertheless found time for her studies and the development of an optical business, too, balancing it all.

She started one business, Eyewear Unlimited, while she was in college and about six months ago launched a new higher-end location, called Imperial Designer Eyewear in her town of Lakewood, N.J.

"I saw a need in our area for an optical store—we used to have to drive a half-hour to get to the nearest store."

Abramowitz loved her experience at Raritan Valley, she said, "I enjoyed learning and understanding the concepts of good vision and there's a personal satisfaction helping people see."

**HER SCHOOL SAYS: "Tzippy is a born leader and will do well with her career and her life. She was a phenomenal student, managing to start her own optical business, with several young children at home. We never were able to figure out how she managed to do all that and still be the brightest and most eager student in the classroom!"**



**Sali Alshafai**  
Erie Community College  
Williamsville, N.Y.

Alshafai, originally from Nablus, Palestine, has lived in the U.S. since 2003. With the challenge of learning a new language, Alshafai maintained a 3.54 GPA and tutored her classmates in computer application of optics throughout her studies at Erie.

She's currently working for LensCrafters in the McKinley Mall in Hamburg, N.Y. and eventually would like to focus her practice in the contact lens area.

Alshafai, a volunteer for the United Nations in the Palestine refugee camps, in the U.S. is a member of the Muslim Public Affairs committee.

She is continuing her education to pursue a Bachelor's degree at the University of Buffalo this fall.

**HER SCHOOL SAYS: "Sali's positive attitude is a delight to those around her."**



**Judy Havermann**  
Community College of Vermont  
Rutland, VT.

Havermann's opticianry degree is the start of a second career for this 59-year-old, who worked full-time while attending CCV.

Havermann spent 22 years as director of rental and property management at Killington Ski Resort in Vermont, but had been long fascinated with the eyecare field.

"Way back when I was in my 20's, I'd wanted to be an optometrist, but as they say, 'life got in the way,' and I raised a family and things took another direction so I got involved in business.

"But about three years ago, I learned that the community college in my town offered a good program in opticianry and I thought it would be great to get involved in eyecare in that capacity. I've been wearing glasses since I was 8 years old and my kids have had eyecare/vision issues as well. It's just been something I've always wanted to be involved in."

During the program, she spent 5 semesters doing dispensing and laboratory clinical work at Rutland Optical.

Now in North Carolina, Havermann works for Eastern Carolina Eye Center.

**HER SCHOOL SAYS: "Judy consistently submitted high-quality work, demonstrating her growing understanding, appreciation and enthusiasm for the field."**



**Sarah Hutchinson, ABOC, NCLC**  
Middlesex Community College  
Middletown, Ct.

Hutchinson is a graduate of the ophthalmic design and dispensing program and a recipient of an associate science (A.S.) degree.

Nationally certified by the American Board of Opticianry (ABOC) and the National Contact Lens Examiners (NCLC), she completed a fellowship in specialized contact lens fitting with Rene R. Rivard at Consulting Ophthalmologists in Farmington, Ct. as well as the course in contact lenses at the Vision Care Institute, sponsored by Johnson & Johnson Vision Care.

Hutchinson also represented Middlesex Community College at this year's National Federation of Opticianry Schools/Essilor College Bowl at Vision Expo East in New York.

Just finishing her Connecticut state practical exam, Hutchinson is currently working with Glasses Galore of Middlebury, Ct.

**HER SCHOOL SAYS: "Sarah is an outstanding student and has tremendous potential in her future career."**



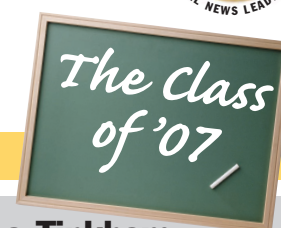
**Judy Logue**  
Cuyahoga Community College  
Cleveland, OH.

Balancing family, work and school, Logue, a single mother with three children, was a chiropractic assistant and wanted a new career and new opportunities.

After talking to the program manager at Tri-C, which was in her town, she entered the optical technology program and learned the opticianry field, maintaining an 'A' average and appearing on the Dean's List.

Today she works at Madison Eye Care, in Westlake, Ohio, a two-office, private practice, a Vision Source practice.

**HER SCHOOL SAYS: "Logue's positive attitude and sunny disposition has brightened the lives of all around her, encouraged and inspired her classmates. What's she's accomplished here at Cuyahoga lead us to believe that Ms. Logue is a future leader in the field of opticianry in Northeast Ohio and we're proud she graduated from our program."**



## The Next Generation of Opticianry Leadership



**Crystal Shutt**  
J. Sargeant Reynolds  
Community College  
Richmond, Va.

A Magna Cum Laude graduate and a member of the National Honor Society Phi Theta Kappa, Shutt represented her school at the recent National Federation of Opticianry Schools College Bowl in New York.

"I always liked health care and I started working in the field and loved helping people and the technical aspect of eyewear!"

Shutt works at the Eyewear Plus Optometric Center in Williamsburg, Va. She notes that the upcoming Vision Expo West conflicts with her pending wedding, but "I look forward to getting back to Expo in New York, I hope, next year."

**HER SCHOOL SAYS: "She is a shining example for the rest of her classmates, always coordinating test review sessions and helping tutor others."**



**Stefanie Smith**  
Camden County College  
Blackwood, N.J.

Smith acknowledges she "fell into" the optical business, when a local optical store was looking for help, after considering new job options, she started working there and learned she really liked it and all it entailed.

A New Jersey Stars scholarship recipient, she graduated with honors and plans to attend Rutgers University in the fall.

**HER SCHOOL SAYS: "Stefanie is one of the brightest stars and we're proud to have her represent our school and class of 2007."**



**Chelsa Tinkham Skinner**  
Indiana University School  
of Optometry Optician/Technician  
Program  
Bloomington, Ind.

Recipient of the Optician of the Year Award, Skinner received her A.S. degree this year and her Bachelor of General Studies from the IU School of Continuing Studies in May.

She graduated with honors for both degrees, on Dean's List.

She is currently employed by the IU School of Optometry Borish Center for Ophthalmic Research assisting in research projects.

She performs preliminary exam testing, data entry and analysis, and full scope opticianry duties for projects involving spectacles.

Due to her husband's educational plans, she will be moving to Phoenix, Arizona in August 2007.

**HER SCHOOL SAYS: "Chelsa has been an excellent leader and role model to her classmates. She is hard-working, dedicated, and well respected by the faculty, staff, and students."**

## The Next Generation of Optometry Leadership

### Women Are Changing Dynamics of Profession

Now composing the majority of students enrolled at virtually every optometric school in America, the emergence of women is already changing the dynamics of the profession.

Women are embracing the core values of the vision care field and are participating in primary eye care as well as bringing a new perspective to such specialties as contact lenses, sports vision, pediatric optometry, public health care and hospital service.

Students, too, are taking time to give back and are learning the value of volunteerism throughout the country.



**Rebecca A. Enloe, OD**  
Northeastern State University  
Oklahoma College of Optometry  
Tahlequah, Okla.

Enloe received NUSOCO's 2007 Golden Retinoscope Award for demonstrating the most outstanding clinical skills in her class.

This year she was also the recipient of several prestigious awards including the Heart of America Contact Lens Society Award, the Vistakon Award of Excellence in Contact Lens Patient Care, the Eschenbach Low Vision Award and the Oklahoma Academy of Optometry First Place Award.

A member of Beta Sigma Kappa, Becky was the director for Students Incorporated for Textbooks and Equipment in 2005-2006.

Her professional memberships include the AOA, AOSA, COVD, Women in Optometry and the Oklahoma Association of Optometry Physicians.

**HER SCHOOL SAYS: "She consistently demonstrated the highest level of professionalism in the clinic, classroom and social setting. Becky is an excellent healthcare provider who is caring and compassionate toward each and every patient she encounters."**

**Erica Johnson, OD**  
Ohio State University  
College of Optometry

Johnson is concurrently completing a doctor of optometry degree and a master's degree in vision science. Her master's thesis is titled "Individual Education Programs for Students in Ohio" and she's collecting vision information from children who have difficulty in school, comparing those to kids who have no difficulty to determine better screening options and improve the understanding of vision and education.

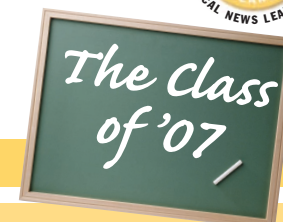
She was president of OSU's class of 2007 and has held a number of other student leadership roles, including serving as president of the Optometry Student council and the OSU chapter of the American Optometric Student Association (AOSA).

A recipient of many awards including the AOSA's Student of the Year and the OSU board of trustees Student Recognition Award, she's a member of the Gold Key International Optometric Honor Society and Beta Sigma Kappa.

She's also received scholarships from the OSU College of Optometry, the Wildermuth Foundation, the Ohio Optometric Foundation, the AOA and Vision Service Plan.

Following her graduation, Johnson will complete a pediatrics residency at the Southern California College of Optometry.

**HER SCHOOL SAYS: "She's an exceptional scholar, clinician and exemplary leader. She is a consensus builder, regarding differing points of view with objectivity and respect."**



## The Next Generation of Optometry Leadership



**Tracy Jacobsen, OD**  
Pacific University College  
of Optometry  
Forest Grove, Ore.

Originally from Grand Island, Nebraska, Jacobsen was hit in the eye with a soccer ball at age 16 and almost lost her sight. "I'd been in and out of eye doctors' offices—since then, I've regained most of the vision in my eye, but eyecare was something I felt I always wanted to be connected with."

Jacobsen was also the first in her family to graduate from college. She attended liberal arts Hastings College, where she received her B.A. in psychobiochemistry.

She graduated from Pacific's College of Optometry with a 3.94 GPA and also achieved a masters in education in visual function in learning this year with a 4.0 GPA.

Just this month she started a residency at the American Lake Veteran's Administration facility in Tacoma, Wash. "I've been interested in low vision issues, but I've also found that optometry really supports the values of continued learning. I was the AOSA trustee from Pacific. It's also important to educate lawmakers about the role and potential of our profession."

**HER SCHOOL SAYS: "An outstanding student and #2 in her class, she was involved in college activities including serving on the Academic and Professional Standard's committee, she was the AOSA trustee which allowed her to travel to meet with leaders in optometry nationwide."**



**Jennifer Stewart OD**  
New England College of Optometry  
Boston, Mass.

An upstate-New York native, Stewart was pre-med and a biology major as well as captain of the track team at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, NY.

In her senior year, she worked for an OD who was a family friend and became intrigued with optometry.

With her enthusiasm for sports, the idea of sports vision opened up a world of opportunity that combined her interests. Stewart interned with well-known sports vision specialist Don Teague OD and worked with and learned a great deal from him.

"I was the national student liaison for the sports vision section of the AOA, helping them develop ways to get students involved in this area and was able to start the Performance Vision Club at our school—we got 80 students interested! Performance is not limited to sports, but computers, technology, pilots, police forces, etc."

Stewart has worked with Dr. Howard Purcell at Johnson & Johnson on the Worldwide Performance Vision Council. J&J is a sponsor of the upcoming Beijing Olympics.

A recipient of numerous scholarships, Stewart is now joining a single-location private practice in Hopewell Junction, N.Y. working in the sports vision arena.

**HER SCHOOL SAYS: "She is an excellent representative of optometry's future leadership and already has many accomplishments to her credit."**



**Natasha Jenkins, OD**  
University of Missouri-  
St. Louis College of Optometry  
St. Louis, Mo.

Jenkins completed her doctorate of optometry graduating Dean's List with honors and was chosen by the optometric faculty as Class Marshall for the graduating class of 2007.

She was selected as a Nebraska State Contract Scholar and honored as a four-year member of the Beta Sigma Kappa Optometric honor society and has been an active member of AOSA, the Neuro-Optometric Rehabilitation Association and the College of Optometrists in vision development. She's also received several awards for academic scholarship.

Prior to her studies, Jenkins earned her bachelor's degree in biopsychology at Hastings College in Hastings, Nebraska, graduating with high distinction, summa cum laude there. While at Hastings, she was a chemistry tutor and performed violin with the Hastings Symphony.

Growing up on a ranch in Western Nebraska, Jenkins is excited to return to her home community and she is joining a private practice there, with Drs. Terry Adams, Todd Mahoney and Paul Colburn at Scottsbluff Vision Clinic.

"I think private practice is the best way to promote optometry in general and how I can best use my talents."

**HER SCHOOL SAYS: "She is just an exceptional student and a great leader."**



**Keri Owyang, OD**  
UC Berkeley School of Optometry  
Berkeley, Calif.

After receiving her B.S. in biology in 2003 from UC San Diego, Owyang worked at the school's department of ophthalmology Glaucoma Center.

When she got to Berkeley's optometry school, she was active in the Beta Sigma Kappa honor society by helping to grow membership, tutoring and organizing lectures for all students. She also became USOSA's academic liaison and was academic vice president of her class.

Involved in clinical work at the UC Berkeley pediatric, primary care, low vision, and advanced contact lens clinics, she also was involved in doing work in the fast-paced setting of Kaiser Permanente, the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Mather and the San Diego State Optometric Clinic.

Volunteer work included participation in the Northern California Special Olympic games and a VOSH mission to Thailand.

Owyang plans to work as an optometrist in Palo Alto, Calif.

**HER SCHOOL SAYS: "She's demonstrated tremendous potential for future leadership and excellence in the field."**



**Kasey Suckow, OD**  
Nova Southeastern University  
College of Optometry  
Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

In addition to various leadership activities during her first two years as a student, Suckow served last year as the president of the school's Student Government Association representing the interests of over 400 optometry students.

Also an active member of Student VOSH and the optometric honor society, Beta Sigma Kappa, she graduated sixth in her class and was only one of three students in the third-year class who earned clinical honors for the entire year.

Growing up on a small farm in Iowa, Suckow was drawn to optometry.

"I did an externship at a VA and loved the system and it was the best learning experience I could have had." She's also doing a residency at a VA in Chicago and is interested in disease management and low vision.

**HER SCHOOL SAYS: "She maintained a high level of clinical care and earned rave reviews from her externship supervisors. She's demonstrated dedication and commitment to the optometric profession. We look forward to greeting Kasey as a colleague."**



**Emma Vicuna, OD**  
Southern California College  
of Optometry  
Fullerton, Calif.

Raised in Las Vegas, Nev., Vicuna graduated from the University of California, San Diego in 2003 with a B.S. in general biology and a B.A. in Spanish literature. She says, her father, a family practice doctor, was one of the inspirations for her to consider becoming an MD, but her awareness of optometry led her in a new direction when she considered its possibilities.

At Southern Cal, she served as president pro-tem of the student association as a second year student and was also class president as a third and fourth year. Vicuna was co-founder of the SKY Vision program, which provides polycarbonate lenses for under-insured children who are patients at the eye care center.

She said, "I had started at a clinic as part of my externship and just loved working with kids." For the next year, Vicuna will be completing a clinical residency in pediatric optometry at the University of Houston College of Optometry.

**HER SCHOOL SAYS: "In addition to leaving an important leadership imprint at the college, she always displayed a high level of professionalism and dedication to her studies and to her classmates."**