Positive change in optometry, is how we, as a profession, value ourselves. If each of us were to be honest, how many of us value what our true worth is, to the profession and to our patients. How many of us truly value the excellence in care that we provide our patients daily? How many of us truly value the importance that we contribute to our patients, each time we enter an exam room? Change is happening all around each of us. The leaves have changed colors and are falling to the ground. Fall is upon us and a change to a long, cold winter, is not that far away.

Change in optometry is happening as well. Healthcare reform is moving forward daily. The Board Certification process is a reality and is moving forward as well. But I would like to briefly talk about one single word and how I think it can change optometry for each of us individually and collectively as a profession. That word is value. The word value can be used as a noun or a verb, but I would like to focus on the word value as it is used in the context as a verb. The definition of the word value as a verb, is as follows: to consider with respect to worth, excellence, usefulness or importance. I am of the opinion, that one of the main issues that stagnates and hinders positive change in optometry, is how we, as a profession, value ourselves. If each of us were to be honest, how many of us value what our true worth is, to the profession and to our patients. How many of us truly value the excellence in care that we provide our patients daily? How many of us truly value the importance that we contribute to our patients, each time we enter an exam room? Over the
QUIZ

Which of these is your greatest asset? __
Which of these is currently uninsured? __

Your ability to earn an income is your greatest asset, by far.

If that income stream is interrupted—even for a brief period—what would happen to the rest of your lifestyle? Research shows that men have a 43% chance of becoming seriously disabled during their working years, while women have a 54% chance.¹

To learn how flexible, high-quality disability income insurance can protect your greatest asset, please contact:

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& COMPANY, LLC
A Representative of Guardian
James R. Bodensteiner, CLTC
Financial Representative
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Fargo, ND 58102
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Facsimile: 701-239-0276
Email: jim_bodensteiner@glic.com

¹ “Why Disability” booklet, published by National Underwriter.
Disability income products underwritten and issued by Berkshire Life Insurance Company of America, Pittsfield, MA, a wholly owned stock subsidiary of The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America (Guardian), New York, NY, or provided by Guardian.

Be sure to ask about a 10% premium discount program available to NDOA Members!
Incoming President’s Message (Cont.)

years I have gotten to know many of you in this association professionally, but yet as a collective group I feel we, as optometrists, tend to undervalue the services and the care we provide and the knowledge and skill each one of us has.

Each of you is in a very small percentage of people that can only do what you do based on your education, experience and skills. You need to recognize that and you need to value that daily! Each of you, including myself, need to value who we are as optometrists first and foremost, before we can expect our ophthalmology colleagues to, before we can expect our other MD colleagues to, and more importantly before we can expect our patients and the general public to.

I’m sure many of you have heard Dr. John McGreal speak before. I have sat through hundreds of hours of CE like all of you and I have probably forgotten 99% of what I have heard, but there has never been a comment by a lecturer that stuck with me like what I heard Dr. McGreal say a few years back in a practice management and coding class he presented. His comment was, and I’m paraphrasing slightly, that we, as the profession of optometry, undervalue our services and the expertise that we provide our patients, so much that we, as optometrists, “don’t even pick the low lying fruit hanging from the tree”. All of the services that each of us provide our patients is some type of fruit hanging on a tree. You need to value yourself enough to make a change in your practices to pick that fruit.

My challenge to each of you is to value and to consider with respect to worth, excellence, usefulness and importance, your education, your expertise, your experience and your skill as an optometrist as you move forward in your day to day practice.

In closing, I’m honored to serve as president of the NDOA this coming year and I look forward to being a small part in hopefully changing our profession and association for the better.

MARK YOUR CALANDERS
February 17-18, 2012
Continuing Education Meeting &
UND FIGHTING SIOUX
VS
MICHIGAN TECH HOCKEY
Only 60 hockey tickets available!
REGISTRATION INFORMATION COMING SOON!

Outgoing President’s Message
Respectfully Submitted: Dr. Robert Nyre

Just a note to all my colleagues in the NDOA. It has been a real pleasure to serve as your president this last year. If I can leave you with one last message, it is BECOME INVOLVED!

NDOA is our association and it is our responsibility to make it work.

We have a fine staff, but that should not substitute for a committed membership. To paraphrase the oath, a leader with no followers is helpless and ineffective.

I will see you all at our next meeting, February 17-18, 2012 in Grand Forks—Go Sioux!

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Recommend digital lens technology to your patients so they can experience the digital difference everywhere they look - not just in front of their television.

Our MYTEE-Lite Pure DLT package allows you to offer digital lens technology to every patient at a competitive price.

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Northern Sights November/December 2011 Page 3
Thank You!

Dear Nancy & NDOA,

You put on a very enjoyable conference. I thought the education was great and the business meeting was interesting as well—always fun to see and hear members presenting their opposing views and doing it with class and civility, as was the case at our membership meeting on Monday.

The committee reports testified to the multitude of activities with which the association is involved. In the USAF/Air National Guard, that level of activity would be referred to as a “high ops temp”, ops standing for Operations—the actual flying of missions. It’s obvious that you all manage and achieve a high ops temp and your results are success.

Thank you for the Life Membership designation and the associated benefits. Thank you too for the Dakota Pride gift box. Mary and I are enjoying the treats.

Sincerely,
Dr. James McAndrew

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Thank You NDOA Annual Congress Sponsors & Exhibitors!

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TLC Laser Eye Center
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As we wind down another year, I do have to say it was a good year for the NDOA!

The 2011 Legislative Session was favorable and we are now planning for the 2013 session. The NDOA Board has discussed what issues might be on the forefront for the NDOA to pursue. Along with the State Board of Optometry, expansion of the Optometric Practice Act, to further define the privileges, is being massaged very delicately. Where do you think the profession should be? What issues would you like to see considered? There are a couple of Third Party issues to be researched, as to any willing provider statutes and/or provider contract language that dictates what you may charge for non-covered services to your patients.

The most monumental accomplishment was that Dr. Dori Carlson of Park River was installed as AOA’s first female and North Dakota’s first President. Dr. Carlson will go down in history as one of the finest and most influential for the profession!

Today, optometry faces big challenges to be included in national healthcare reform. As in our effort to be included in Medicare 25 years ago, much of the reform is accomplished in Washington DC, but the nuts and bolts of implementation occurs at the state level. Our state health exchange is being developed and is encouraging competition in the state, by designing an exchange that utilizes a “free market, consumer-driven approach”, along with, I’m assuming, an expansion of the Medicaid and CHIP Programs.

The NDOA 2011 Annual Congress in Fargo was a smashing success. Over 95 doctors and nearly 40 paraoptometric staff attended. I know not all liked the Sunday-Tuesday format, but evidencedally the majority did. We will follow the same dates in Bismarck at the Ramkota next year, September 30-October 2.

In closing, the NDOA is healthy in advocacy of the profession and membership support. However, in light of increased costs, the membership did approve a 2.7% increase in NDOA dues for 2012. The increase will be $24.00 for a total of $900. NDOA has not had an increase for 11 years. The AOA has increased their dues by 4.36% or $35.00. Statements will be mailed soon.

Thank you in advance for your continued support of your NDOA & AOA. Together we can accomplish much more than any individual optometrist can do on his/her own; to help patients get the care they need!

~ Eating For Your Eyes II~

Eating for your Eyes II: Diabetic Retinopathy is a program designed by ND State University nutrition experts. Nancy Kopp, Executive Director of NDOA and Sherri Nordstrom Stastny, PhD, RD, CSSD, LD, Asst. Professor, NDSU Health, Nutrition and Exercise Sciences were awarded a Healthy Vision Community Award, from the National Eye Institute to help fund the program.

Goals of Eating for your Eyes II include increasing knowledge and awareness about diabetic eye disease, particularly in older adults and American Indians of all ages.

The program focuses on diagnosis, risk factors, symptoms, prevention and treatment of diabetic retinopathy. The team has helped design a fun game to get participants excited about learning “eye nutrition” hints and pointers. The program is designed to adapt to the targeted audience in either a classroom environment or as part of a health or wellness fair.

Completed programs include participation at the Turtle Mountain and Fort Totten communities and the United Tribes Summit. Train-the-trainer was held last year, so many county extension agents in North Dakota are equipped and ready to present the program. If you are interested in collaborating in a workshop, please contact Sherri.Stastny@Ndsu.edu.

Upcoming activities include a workshop in Bismarck, West Fargo, Fargo, Minot and Devils Lake. Additionally, a Dining with Diabetes IVN workshop is scheduled in 13 ND counties for November.

Collaborators on the project include Julie Garden-Robinson, Food and Nutrition Extension Specialist and Nikki Seaberg, NDSU dietetics student (pictured with display).
HIPAA 5010—HAVE YOU TESTED OR ARE YOU READY TO TEST?

January 1, 2012 Deadline is LOOMING!

Noridian EDISS requests the following of Trading Partners for the HIPAA 5010 transition:

- To compile a representative set of business-relevant test cases to use for 5010 testing.
- Submit these test cases in Total OnBoarding (TOB) for 5010 re-certification
- Ensure the ability to receive the 999 and 277CA transactions from TOB prior to testing.
- If submitting through a vendor, ensure 5010 testing requirements are met through them before any testing is pursued with payer/contractor.
- If a vendor is testing on your behalf, it is essential that they achieve 5010 compliance and test your claims prior to December 2011.

To achieve Total On Boarding for 5010 certification, go to www.edissweb.com.

2011 Version of Advance Beneficiary Notice of Non-Coverage Must Be Used Beginning Sunday, January 1, 2012

In May 2011, CMS released an updated version of the Advance Beneficiary Notice of Non-coverage (ABN) (form CMS-R-131), which will replace the 2008 version of this form. The 2011 version contains no substantive changes from the 2008 version of the notice and was approved by the Office of Management and Budget. The 2008 and 2011 ABN notices are identical except that the release date of "3/11" is printed in the lower left hand corner of the new version. The ABN is used by all providers, practitioners, and suppliers paid under Medicare Part B, as well as hospice providers and religious non-medical healthcare institutions (RNHCIs) paid exclusively under Part A.

When the 2011 ABN was posted to the CMS website on May 16, CMS announced a mandatory use date of September 1 and permitted providers and suppliers to begin using the new form immediately. Subsequently, they have received requests from the industry to extend this deadline in order to permit providers and suppliers with pre-printed stockpiles of ABNs, time to exhaust their supplies.

Providers and suppliers are allowed to use either the 2008 or 2011 version of the ABN through the end of this year; beginning January 1, 2012, they must begin using the 2011 version. ABNs issued after January 1, that are prepared using the 2008 version of the notice will be considered invalid by Medicare contractors. 2008 versions of the ABN that were issued prior to January 1, as long-term notification for repetitive services delivered for up to one year, will remain effective for the length of time specified on the notice.

Information and a copy of the 2011 version of the ABN (form CMS-R-131) can be found online at http://www.CMS.gov/BNI, under the "FFS Revised ABN" link.

Matte Sanders
804 35th Ave SW
Minot, ND 58701
Phone: 612-590-5693
E-mail: matsanders@pacificu.edu
School: Pacific University, 2011
Seeking a Full-time or Part-time position in North Dakota. CV available upon request.

IRIS Reminds Small Businesses About Health Care Tax Credit

As tax filing deadlines approach, the Internal Revenue Service and Department of Health and Human Services are reminding small business employers to review the eligibility requirements for the new Small Business Health Care Tax Credit.

The health care tax credit was included in the Affordable Care Act to help small businesses and tax-exempt organizations that pay at least half of the premiums for their employees’ health insurance coverage. The credit is available to businesses and tax-exempt groups with 25 or fewer employees and average incomes of $50,000 or less. During the health care reform debate, many organizations fought hard to ensure tax-exempt employers were eligible to receive the credit along with small businesses.

According to the IRS, tax-exempt organizations that file on a calendar year basis and requested an extension to file to November 15 can use Form 8941 and claim the credit on their Form 990-T.

“As the filing deadlines approach, we want to make sure that small business owners don’t leave any money on the table,” said IRS Commissioner Doug Shulman. “Small businesses that offer health insurance should learn about this credit and claim it if they are eligible.”

Job Seeker

Matthew Sanders
804 35th Ave SW
Minot, ND 58701
Phone: 612-590-5693
E-mail: matsanders@pacificu.edu
School: Pacific University, 2011
Seeking a Full-time or Part-time position in North Dakota. CV available upon request.
The American Board of Optometry (ABO) elected new officers during its 2011 Annual Meeting held on October 12th in Boston. The slate of new officers is as follows:

Chairman: Paul C. Ajamian, O.D.
Vice-Chairman: James M. Vaught, O.D.
Secretary: Barbara L. Reiss, O.D.
Treasurer: Robert P. Nyre, O.D.

In addition, Megan N. Moll, O.D. of Denver, CO was elected the new director representing the American Optometric Student Association.

David Cockrell, O.D., who served as the founding chairman of the ABO, stepped down as he assumes his role as secretary-treasurer of the American Optometric Association.

AOA EyeLearn Education Web Portal Debuts
With Board Certification Resources

Optometrists planning to seek American Board of Optometry (ABO) Certification will be the first to benefit from EyeLearn, the AOA’s new comprehensive optometric education Web portal.

The new “one-stop online learning resource” was officially launched during the first week of June with a range of services and materials designed to help AOA member optometrists successfully complete the recently introduced ABO certification examination.

As previously announced, the EyeLearn portal features a first-of-its-kind CE Finder function that lists continuing education courses offered by state optometric councils, regional optometric organizations and the AOA. It also offers access to a variety of print, audio, video, and interactive learning programs.

The objective in developing EyeLearn is to provide a very practical, usable resource that really meets the needs of optometrists in terms of both educational content that is relevant to the practitioner's needs and providing access to learning resources that optometrists can use where and when they need them.

With many optometrists planning to pursue ABO board certification over the coming months, the AOA has made it a point to launch EyeLearn with a range of features designed to help practitioners achieve that objective.

The Web portal’s CE Finder function initially offers a listing of more than 50 courses being offered at state and regional optometric meetings, as well as at Optometry’s Meeting.

The Web portal’s initial online content focuses on four topics covered in the ABO exam

- Vision Rehabilitation
- Glaucoma
- Systemic Health
- Pediatrics

For each topic, the EyeLearn Web portal offers

- A new custom-developed online learning module
- Videos of continuing education lectures presented
- Optometry: Journal of the American Optometric Association articles published over the past two years.

Optometrists seeking board certification should be able to very adequately prepare by taking a classroom course at an optometric meeting and then supplementing that course with EyeLearn online learning resources, on subjects of particular interest.

Vision rehabilitation, glaucoma, systemic health and pediatrics represent 4 of 10 topics the ABO suggests optometrists may wish to review before taking a certification examination.

Online learning resources for the other six topics will be introduced over the course of this year. However, certification-related content is just the beginning.

EyeLearn’s CE Finder course listing and online educational resources will quickly be expanded to include a full range of optics relevant to optometry, including clinical studies, practice management, industry advancements, regulatory compliance and advocacy-related issues.

EyeLearn will be a centralized learning resource that will be valuable to optometrists seeking continuing education on virtually any subject. Today, optometrists are demanding high-quality continuing education on an unprecedented array of subjects, from the broad range of clinical topics encompassed in full-scope eye and vision care, to practice management and regulatory compliance.

EyeLearn is designed to provide access to a complete range of optometric education from traditional classroom courses to online print, audio, video, and interactive learning programs—all at one convenient, one-stop, online source.

AOA members can access EyeLearn on the AOA website at www.aoa.org/eyelearn.

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New Officers at Annual Meeting

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Crizal Avancé with Scotchgard Protector is the Anti-Reflective lens that’s made to stay clean. This exciting new generation of Crizal® lenses offers customers an unprecedented level of lens performance, cleanliness and clarity.

New Transitions® VI Lenses:

- As clear as clear lenses, now even better
- Darker for improved glare reduction
- Darker in hotter temperatures
- Faster to dark, faster to clear
- 100% UVA and UVB blockage
- UV400 protection