

EyeLights eNews



December 2024

In This Issue

"To promote global eye health and prevent blindness through training program accreditation, education, and the certification of Allied Ophthalmic Personnel."

- [President's Message](#)
- [IJCAHPO Updates](#) OMIC Updates
- [Certification](#) Certified Retina Technicians (CRT); Your Certification Can Get You College Credits
- [Education](#) Easy Access and Affordable CECs; December 2024 Webinar Series; 2025 Regional Events; ACE 2024 Highlights
- [Foundation](#) New ACE Scholarships
- [Career Center](#) Careers In Sight for You
- [Tech Corner](#) AOP Week 2024; Join EYEXchange Connect

President's Message

Greetings,

This holiday season, I'd like to thank all IJCAHPO Certificants and our volunteers for your dedication to providing excellent eye care to our patients. Your work makes a difference in the lives of your patients, your ophthalmologist, and your eye care team. Your commitment is demonstrated daily by keeping a positive attitude, willingness to step in and assist, and updating your training and skills to ensure that ophthalmology patients receive the best care possible.



Michael Stewart, MD

IJCAHPO President;

Professor and Chairman Emeritus
of Ophthalmology,
Mayo Clinic College of Medicine,
Jacksonville, Florida;

Professor of Ophthalmology Research
Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

I am very excited to announce that IJCAHPO was recognized by the **State of Minnesota and U.S. Departments of Labor as a Registered Apprenticeship Sponsor!** IJCAHPO is working with ophthalmology practices to train and educate new hires in their on-the-job training programs. In Minnesota, four practices have 11 participants in the apprenticeship program. IJCAHPO has also applied to the State of California for apprenticeship recognition and has been approved for the first steps in the process. Information about the program and how your practice can work with IJCAHPO to train your new hires is coming soon on IJCAHPO's website.

"I would love to say that being a part of the apprenticeship program has been extraordinary. The support with study materials and guidance on the program provides clear expectations for the apprentice and the mentors. Our staff truly appreciate the extra help."

—**Bonnie F.**

Supervisor at a retina practice with
three apprentices

2025 will be a year with many new IJCAHPO initiatives. Certification will offer a new online application. There will be new educational courses and publications. We will also release new studies on data from IJCAHPO's 2024 Salary Survey and the 2024 Technician Sexual Harassment Survey. Keep your certification and membership active and join as we create a new outlook in the ophthalmic profession!

Mark your calendar to attend ACE in Orlando from October 17–19, 2025. IJCAHPO will add many new faculty, courses, and events to update attendees on technologies and treatments and create a lively atmosphere! If you need financial assistance to attend ACE, check out [IJCAHPO's Foundation website](#) for the many scholarships available to our members.

Happy Holidays and New Year! As 2024 closes, we have time to reflect and give thanks for our family, friends, and colleagues, and for all the joys and sorrows that we have shared. We **Thank You**, our dedicated volunteers who donate time and talent to support IJCAHPO's mission.

Sincerely,

Michael Stewart, MD, President

Have you been missing important IJCAHPO updates?

You may have accidentally unsubscribed from our mailing list, and we don't want you to miss out on valuable information.

Here's Why This Matters:

When you opt out of one of our emails by clicking the unsubscribe link in the footer, you are removed from receiving **all future communications** from IJCAHPO—not just the specific email you intended to stop. This means you could miss out on critical updates, including:

- **Certification Reminders & More!**
- **Free Continuing Education Credits**
- **Professional Development Opportunities**
- **Upcoming Webinars & Training**
- **Exclusive Member Offers**
- **Latest News & Industry Trends**

Re-Subscribe and Stay Informed:

To start receiving emails again, simply visit your IJCAHPO account and re-subscribe to the updates and events that matter most to you. It's quick and easy, and you'll regain access to all the news and resources that support your professional growth and certification.

Know Someone Who's Missing Our Emails?

If you know anyone who is not receiving our updates, let them know they can subscribe by visiting their IJCAHPO account as well. We want to ensure all members stay connected!

Need Help?

If you need assistance with the re-subscription process or have any questions, our Help Desk is here for you. Just give us a call at **800-284-3937**, and we'll be happy to assist you.

We value your membership and want to keep you connected to everything IJCAHPO has to offer. Please take a moment today to re-subscribe so you don't miss out on important updates.

Thank you for being a valued member of the IJCAHPO community!

IJCAHPO Updates



- **OMIC Updates**

OMIC Updates

In partnership with OMIC, IJCAHPO brings your attention to updates made to the Ophthalmic Practice Rules (Eyeglass Rule) on June 27, 2024, by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). The FTC proposed updating the rule in December 2022 after receiving over 800 public comments regarding ophthalmologists' and optometrists' noncompliance with the rule's longstanding requirement to provide patients with a free copy of their prescription immediately after a refractive eye exam. The updates are intended to increase compliance foremost by requiring certain prescribers to obtain a patient's signed confirmation of receipt of their prescription.

OMIC encourages you to read the FTC announcement here to ensure your practice complies. The announcement lists the following changes, which go into effect September 24, 2024: "The changes announced today require that prescribers, after providing the prescription, request that their patients sign a statement confirming they received their prescription and keep a record of such confirmation for at least three years. These new confirmation requirements—which mostly mirror those already in place for contact lens prescriptions—only apply to optometrists and ophthalmologists with a financial interest in selling prescription eyewear. Other changes to the rule: allows prescribers, with a patient's verifiable affirmative consent, to provide the patient with a digital copy of a prescription instead of a paper copy; if the patient refuses the digital copy, the prescriber must provide a paper copy; explicitly specifies that, whether the patient consents to digital delivery or opts for a paper copy of their prescription, the prescription must be provided immediately after the examination is completed (not after the patient has been sold glasses, for instance). A patient must have their prescription before any offer to sell them glasses; clarifies that presentation of proof of insurance coverage shall be deemed to be a payment for the purpose of determining when a prescription must be provided; changes the term "eye examination" to "refractive eye examination" throughout the text and emphasizes the need for prescribers to educate consumers that there can be a difference between an eye health examination and a refractive eye examination. This is because the automatic release of prescriptions is only required following a refractive eye examination."

OMIC Emergency Room Update

Suppose your ophthalmologist provides on-call duty to an emergency room (ER). In that case, it is essential to be aware of your responsibilities under the Emergency Medical Treatment & Labor Act (EMTALA), which was enacted by Congress in 1986 to ensure public access to emergency services regardless of ability to pay, insurance status, national origin, race, creed, or color. The Act imposes specific obligations on Medicare-participating hospitals that offer emergency services.

Certification



- **Certified Retina Technician (CRT)**
- **Your Certification Can Get You College Credits**

Certified Retina Technician (CRT)

In mid-January 2025, IJCAHPO will launch a new certification specifically for retina technicians. The Certified Retina Technician (CRT) credential was developed in response to a need for retina technicians to have a credential specific to the subspecialty. This credential will cover 17 content domains, including History and Documentation, Visual Assessment, Surgical Assisting, and Ophthalmic Imaging. The examination will be

available online and in Pearson VUE testing centers.

Your Certification Can Get You College Credits

Did you know your IJCAHPO Certification is worth the equivalent of college credit? You can apply for college credit equivalency from the American Council on Education—more information is available [here](#).

Education



- **Easy Access and Affordable CECs**
- **December 2024 Webinar Series**
- **2025 Regional Events**
- **ACE 2024 Highlights**

Easy Access and Affordable CECs

If your technicians wonder how they can renew their certification at a low cost or if they feel like they can't afford recertification, here's how IJCAHPO can help them grow their knowledge and skills with affordable CECs. Please share the following with your eye care team:

1. One of the best and most cost-effective CEC offerings is IJCAHPO's [Clinic CE Subscription](#). With a Clinic CE Subscription, the entire eye care team of technicians can access these courses at no additional cost—your practice only pays one low price. The subscription offers over 200 courses. Let your sponsoring ophthalmologist or practice manager know about IJCAHPO's Clinic CE Subscription, which is available for \$549 annually.
2. IJCAHPO offers several **FREE CECs** annually. We announce them when the offer is open, but we don't always know a year in advance when we will have them available.
3. Every year, we promote our **Webinar Series**, which has four webinars over one month for \$35 or less. We offer these opportunities several times each year. For less than \$180 over 3 years, one could earn the 18 credits necessary to maintain a COA certification. See details about our [December Webinar Series](#) in the next section.
4. Are you familiar with [iMiles](#)? IJCAHPO's online subscription for certified individuals includes 6 CECs for \$49 annually. In 3 years, this is \$147 for 18 credits, which meets the COA credits required for renewal.
5. We offer one-day **Virtual AOP Symposiums** for 6–8 credits for about \$95. These are seasonal, and combined with other resources mentioned, you can achieve significant cost savings. To stay informed, bookmark the [schedule of events page](#) on our EyeCareCE Marketplace website.
6. IJCAHPO's Foundation offers many **Grants and Scholarships** that often pay complete meeting registration or certification fees. However, you must apply for the scholarship and earn it by writing an essay or meeting other criteria. View the [Foundation website](#) for more details.
7. **Exam Study Materials**—IJCAHPO print and online prices range from \$15–\$25; courses start at \$55. IJCAHPO's competitors' charges range from \$90–\$195—far

more expensive than IJCAHPO's courses. View all available materials and courses on our [EyeCare Marketplace](#) website.

8. Your practice may apply to offer its staff relevant course content for IJCAHPO CE Credit, which is \$45 for 1 CEC hour. All techs in the clinic will be able to obtain credit if they attend the course. For example, if you have five techs attend the course—the cost is \$8.00 per tech. View more details and encourage your practice to apply with the [CEC Handbook](#).

December 2024 Webinar Series



The December Webinar Series includes four webinars in one package for a fraction of the cost! This December, earn **4 IJCAHPO CE Credits**, usually a \$80 value, for ***just \$30***.

Presenters:

- **December 3:** "Ophthalmology Grand Rounds: A Potpourri of Cases" by Eydie Miller-Ellis, MD; Angela Gupta, MD, PhD; Taylor Linaburg, MD; Tejus Pradeep, MD; and Sabhyta Sabharwal, MD
- **December 10:** "You Saw What? A Curious Compendium of Ocular Oddities" by William Ehlers, MD
- **December 17:** "Adenovirus, Herpes Simplex and Herpes Zoster Anterior Segment Disease" by Francis Mah, MD
- **December 17:** "Diving and the Eye" by Michael Stewart, MD

Level of Courses: Basic–Masters

[Register Today!](#)

2025 Regional Events

2025 Regional Event Schedule

January 17–27, 2025—**Winter AOP Symposium (Virtual)**

January 31, 2025—**Salt Lake City, UT**

February 7, 2025—**Kansas City, MO**

February 21–March 3, 2025—**Imaging AOP Symposium (Virtual)**

Visit store.jcahpo.org for details.

ACE 2024 Highlights

IJCAHPO's Annual Continuing Education (ACE) 2024 occurred October 18–20, 2024, at the Hyatt Regency Chicago. Here are some highlights of the meeting.

Harold A. Stein, MD Lecture

Carol L. Shields, MD, had everyone buzzing after her Harold A. Stein, MD Lecture. Dr. Shields's keynote address started with a tribute to Dr. Stein. She then presented her program, *Intraocular Tumors: The Cutting Edge*, where she spoke about uveal melanoma and nevus, which was a fascinating insight into diagnosing and treating eye cancers and new systemic therapies that may assist in preventing metastatic disease.

Awards Presentation

Prior to the keynote address, IJCAHPO President Michael Stewart, MD, presented awards to outstanding IJCAHPO volunteers, Pamela D. Lichtenstein, COMT, and Michelle D. Willis, COMT, who received Statesmanship awards. Carla Blackburn, COMT, was presented with the Virginia S. Boyce Humanitarian Award. IJCAHPO would like to thank all our volunteers who have provided outstanding services to make this profession successful.

Tech Trivia Reception

A fun time was had by all at the first Tech Trivia Reception, a free event hosted by IJCAHPO. Attendees were provided snacks, beverages, souvenirs to take home, and one free CE credit for playing. Everyone participated as teams worked together, challenging other teams during five rounds of ophthalmic trivia. The winning team included Sherry Malone, COT, OSC; Carla Blackburn, BSc, COMT, CDOS, ROUB; Harlie Hazel, COA, OSC; Karrie Whitman, COA; Amber French, COA, OSC; and Christine Dopp, COA. They each won a free CE credit or webinar and a wireless charger for their efforts. Congratulations to the winners and to all who participated!

Technician Learning Lounge

Also new this year was the Technician Learning Lounge, where ACE Attendees could take a break, network, meet sponsors, and see equipment up close with hands-on demonstrations.

Thank You to Our Sponsors

Presenting the ACE program is a significant endeavor that we could not do without our sponsors. We want to thank the following companies for their support in helping make this year's ACE program successful: Hadley, Dompé, Heidelberg Engineering, Zeiss, Notal Vision, ICARE, The Eye Group, Reichert Technologies, Keeler, AbbVie, Vital Vision Health, and College of DuPage.

Calling All Speakers!

Do you know any great speakers or topics that would be a good addition to the program? We are looking for potential speakers for ACE 2025. If you know someone or can suggest new topics, please get in touch with Craig or Chelsie at IJCAHPO, (800) 284-3937, and let them know!

JCAHPO Foundation



- **New ACE Scholarships**

New ACE Scholarships

Coming in 2025 are three new ACE Scholarships. Two of these will be in the names of IJCAHPO's recent ACE Keynote Speakers, Carol L. Shields, MD, Chief of the Ocular Oncology Service, Wills Eye Hospital; and Philip Rosenfeld, MD, PhD, Professor of Ophthalmology, from the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute of the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. These generous ophthalmologists returned their honorarium as the Harold A. Stein, MD, Speaker to the JCAHPO Education and Research Foundation to support ophthalmic technicians in their careers by coming to ACE. Each scholarship will be given in the amount of the on-site base registration to attend the program.

The third scholarship is a special ACE scholarship that will be available in honor of Eydie Miller-Ellis, MD, and her late husband, Robert Ellis. We thank them for their generosity in supporting you and your career!

View more information about all of the grants and scholarships the JCAHPO Education and Research Foundation has to offer at the [Foundation website](#).

Career Center

- **Careers In Sight for You**

Careers In Sight for You

If you are looking for a new employee or opportunity, IJCAHPO's Career Center is the place to start. You can post an ad, post your resume, search for a job, and find resources to help you in your career as an ophthalmic assistant, technician, or medical technologist. Learn about certification, wages, and benefits. There is even a free resume review! Take a look at the [Career Center website](#) and see what's *In Sight* for you.

Tech Corner



- **AOP Week 2024** (Check out a couple of fun photo submissions!)
- **Join EYEXchange Connect**

AOP Week 2024



AOP Week 2024 was November 3–9. It is a week to acknowledge the hard work, dedication, and outstanding patient care that AOP provides their physicians and practices. IJCAHPO hosted several contests and activities on our Facebook and Instagram pages to help celebrate the exceptional work performed by AOP. Our contest winners are:

- Giselle Sanchez Colon, COA
- Elina Caballero, COT
- Leslie Ann Farrow, COA
- Cecelia Revay, COT
- Christina Cupo, COA
- Fishman & Sheridan Eyecare Specialists

Photo submissions by Drs. Fine, Hoffman, & Sims LLC (*left*) and Fishman & Sheridan Eyecare Specialists (*right*).

Join EYEXchange Connect

Have you heard?
Join your eye care peers
online at our brand new...

EYEXchange Connect

IJCAHPO has created a discussion forum for the ophthalmic technician community to communicate with each other, learn about what's happening in the field, and learn about regional CE courses, webinars, symposiums, and interesting items we hope will appeal to AOP.

Free to all certified ophthalmic technicians, EYEXchange Connect is a platform where our members can ask questions, engage in conversation, get information, submit opinion polls,



and have fun through posts and threads. It is as quick and easy as sending an email, and you can post images and videos. Through EYEXchange Connect, you will receive information specifically for allied ophthalmic personnel, news, and announcements on continuing education, certification, special events, and more.

If you are IJCAHPO certified, you automatically become a member. GET CERTIFIED TODAY—your membership benefits start immediately! Join us on [EYEXchange](#)

[Connect.](#)

We want to make EyeLights a valuable resource for you. We appreciate your feedback on what you want to know more about and how to make the next one more beneficial to you and the profession. Please email us at jcahpo@jcahpo.org.



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