

EyeLights eNews



December 2025



Wishing you a

JOYFUL
SEASON

The IJCAHPO office will be closed December 24, 25, and 26, 2025, and January 1, 2026. Product orders placed after December 19 will be processed after January 2.

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

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EYEXchange Connect

This past year, IJCAHPO launched an ophthalmic community discussion board, EYEXchange Connect, as an online space for AOP to engage with one another, ask questions, and share solutions. The discussion board is open to all ophthalmic technicians, certified and non-certified. We have some great connections for you from many of IJCAHPO's volunteer technicians and leadership who are involved. A key weekly feature is the new Grand Round Case Study provided complimentary by Dr. Ray Stein, Bochner Eye Institute, and a JCAHPO Foundation Board member who donates his weekly case studies for us to post. Please encourage your eye care team to register for this free service of key information. [Join us and your fellow AOP online today!](#)

Career Center

• Apprenticeship Program

Apprenticeship Program

In 2023 and 2024, IJCAHPO was awarded US Department of Labor (DOL) and MN Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) recognition as a Registered Apprenticeship Program Provider. In our first year, we had 11 Apprentices in Minnesota, and we were awarded a DOLI Labor Education Advancement Program (LEAP) grant. Seven of the Apprentices have completed the training and have achieved their COA certification designation.

In 2026, we will be offering the program in Minnesota for our second year and will accept and train 20 Apprentices who are each within their first 3-6 months of hire at a Minnesota clinic.

The Apprenticeship Program provides skill-based education and on-the-job training for technicians at partnering clinics. LEAP grant funds provide support services to Apprentices and their employers, including educational materials and certifications at **no cost to the Apprentice or employer**. The registered Apprentice Program focuses on mentorship, on-the-job training, safety, and leadership development.

In the upcoming program, the Minnesota Association of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (MAEPS) will be partnering with IJCAHPO to encourage their membership to participate

and enroll new hires into the Apprenticeship Program. Jane Bailey, MD, will be chairing the MAEPS Program. IJCAHPO is required to meet state standards, and requires these to be met by both the employer and the Apprentice.

Education



- **Prepare for the COT® Examination in St. Paul**
- **Give Your Team the Gift of Growth**
- **EYEXchange Updates and Schedule**
- **ACE 2026 Save the Date**

Prepare for the COT® Examination in St. Paul

Join us in person at the IJCAHPO Training Center in St. Paul, MN, on Tuesday, January 6, 2026, from 4:00-7:30 pm for a Certified Ophthalmic Technician (COT®) Exam Prep Session. Craig Simms, MEd, COMT, CDOS, ROUB, CRT will lead this interactive session through review of the content areas for the IJCAHPO COT multiple-choice certification exam and the following clinical skills: retinoscopy, refinement, ocular motility, cover and alternate cover testing, keratometry, lensometry, tonometry, and visual fields. Registration requires COA certification or proof of enrollment in an accredited COT Program and verification from the program director. **Attendees who complete the training will earn 3.0 IJCAHPO CE credits.** Register today!

Give Your Team the Gift of Growth!

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Clinical Reference Manual
An Essential Guide for Allied Ophthalmic Personnel
Craig N. Simms, MEd, COMT Lynn D. Anderson, PhD

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EYEXchange Updates and Schedule—CE Regional Meetings and CE Course Offerings

Add these to your Calendar TODAY so you won't miss these learning opportunities. To access the online links and information, go to <https://www.jcahpo.org/education/>.

2026 Regional Event Schedule

January 30, 2026—[Salt Lake City, UT](#) (in cooperation with UOS)
 January 30, 2026—[Kansas City, MO](#)
 January 31, 2026—[Banff, Alberta, CA](#) (in cooperation with EPSAA)
 February 28, 2026—[Houston, TX](#)
 March 28, 2026—[Austin, TX](#) (in cooperation with TSEPS)
 April 10-12, 2026—[Washington, DC](#) (in cooperation with ASCRS/ASOA)
 April 18, 2026—[Rochester, MN](#) (in cooperation with the Mayo Clinic)
 June 5-6, 2026—[Orlando, FL](#)
 June 6, 2026—[Flagstaff, AZ](#) (in cooperation with ASEPS)
 July 25, 2026—[Phoenix, AZ](#)
 September 12, 2026—[Greensboro, NC](#) (in cooperation with NCSEPS)
 September 19, 2026—[Albuquerque, NM](#) (in cooperation with NMAO & NMAOT)

Can't make it to a national or regional meeting? IJCAHPO hosts online continuing education.

Virtual Symposiums

January 17–27, 2026—[Winter AOP Symposium](#)

Webinars

January 6, 2026—[Optic Neuritis and Space Flight Associated Neuro-ocular Syndrome \(SANS\)](#)—Andrew Lee, MD

Visit store.jcahpo.org for details.

Distance Learning Opportunities

Earn CE credits online! IJCAHPO hosts monthly live webinars on a variety of eye care topics.

January Webinar - Optic Neuritis and Space Flight Associated Neuro-ocular Syndrome

To launch our January 2026 webinar, neuro-ophthalmologist and NASA consultant Andrew Lee, MD, will discuss his research and what it reveals about neuro-ophthalmology on Earth. Dr. Lee's "Optic Neuritis and Space Flight Associated Neuro-ocular Syndrome (SANS)" will first cover the good, the bad, and the ugly of optic neuritis, addressing signs and symptoms, diagnostic testing, and treatment. The second part of the course will pivot to address the structural changes to the brain and eyes, referred to as Spaceflight-Associated Neuro-ocular Syndrome (SANS), experienced by astronauts who have

undergone long-duration spaceflight in microgravity environments. Astronauts who return after spaceflight may have disc edema, choroidal folds, cotton-wool spots, nerve fiber layer thickening on OCT, globe flattening, or a hyperopic shift. [Registration Open Now!](#)

Visit <http://store.jcahpo.org/calendarschedule.aspx> for additional information.

Save the Date for ACE 2026

Mark your calendar for the premier event in eye care education! IJCAHPO's 54th Annual Continuing Education (ACE) Program will take place October 9-11, 2026, in New Orleans, LA. There's a course for every member of the eye care team. New hires benefit from introductory courses, and experienced AOP gain insights and advance their competencies and knowledge with courses at the advanced and master's levels.

Certification



- **Become a Certified Retina Technician (CRT®)**
- **ACE renews College Credits for Core Certifications**

Become a Certified Retina Technician (CRT®)

This past year, IJCAHPO launched its newest certification: The Certified Retina Technician (CRT®). This retina-specific credential is the best way to signify your knowledge and experience in the retina field. Those meeting the eligibility requirements are encouraged to apply by mail to take the exam. Online exam registration is coming soon. Learn more and begin your application here:

<https://www.jcahpo.org/certification/certifications/certified-retina-technician/>

ACE Renews College Credits for Core Certifications

The American Council on Education (ACE) accredits the COA, COT, and COMT examinations and provides those who hold these credentials with credits towards college completion in the U.S. The Council approved all three of IJCAHPO's Core Certifications for credit: The COA for 12 Lower-Division Baccalaureate credits; COT for 18 Lower-Division Baccalaureate credits; and the COMT for 18 Upper-Division Baccalaureate credits. If you are considering returning to college or pursuing an additional degree, your certification gives you a head start.

Certified Ophthalmic Assistant (COA) Examination

Lower-Division Baccalaureate	3	Introduction to ophthalmic assistant
Lower-Division Baccalaureate	3	Introduction to ophthalmic assessment
Lower-Division Baccalaureate	3	Ophthalmic optics and refractometry
Lower-Division Baccalaureate	3	Ophthalmic Practicum I (introductory)

Certified Ophthalmic Technician (COT) Examination

Lower-Division Baccalaureate	3	Intermediate ophthalmics
Lower-Division Baccalaureate	5	Intermediate ophthalmic assessment
Lower-Division Baccalaureate	3	Optics
Lower-Division Baccalaureate	3	Refractometry and Opticianry

Lower-Division Baccalaureate 4 Ophthalmic Practicum II (intermediate)

Certified Ophthalmic Medical Technologist (COMT) Examination

Upper-Division Baccalaureate 3 Advanced ophthalmics
Upper-Division Baccalaureate 5 Advanced ophthalmic assessment
Upper-Division Baccalaureate 3 Optics
Upper-Division Baccalaureate 3 Refractometry and Opticianry
Upper-Division Baccalaureate 4 Ophthalmic Practicum III (advanced)



Ring in the New Year with New Ink!

Looking for a fun clinic essential? Our eyeball pens are now on sale for **\$4.00 each** (shipping not included). They're perfect for everyday use, staff appreciation, and something practical at every workstation. [Purchase here!](#)

Offer ends on January 15, 2026

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.

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:

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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.

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



International Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology
YOU'RE SEEING THE BEST. IJCAHPO CERTIFIED.

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