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## President's Message

Summer has arrived! Also soon to arrive in your mail or inbox is IJCAHPO's 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Continuing Education Program! This year marks a very special year in IJCAHPO's history—it is ***IJCAHPO's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*** of incorporation. Come celebrate our anniversary with us Friday through Sunday, October 11-13. I invite you to join us in San Francisco for one of the best educational events of the year: ACE 2019!

We are excited to announce that the Harold A. Stein Lecture will be presented by Smithsonian Ingenuity award winners, ***Jean Bennett, MD, PhD, and Albert Maguire, MD***, and will describe using gene therapy to cure a form of inheritable blindness: "Seeing the Light with Retinal Gene Therapy: From Fantasy to Reality." Come network with your fellow ophthalmic technicians and learn from world class speakers. This three-day program is one of the best professional development investments you can make for



yourself and your eye care team. Registration opens July 8, watch for more information!

At the end of July, I will complete my two-year term as IJCAHPO's President of the IJCAHPO Board of Directors and I am greatly honored to have served. I am one of two IJCAHPO Presidents to have served twice in this leadership role with the goal to promote and support Allied Ophthalmic Personnel, who are so important to our eye care team and to me personally in my practice. With a name change from "JCAHPO" to "IJCAHPO", currently over 27,000 certified allied health professionals, a wide variety of accredited training programs, and a profession that's spreading internationally, we have much to celebrate in our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary—1969 to 2019! We are dedicated to bringing high quality Standards to enhance the profession and to advance our mission, ***"To promote global eye health and prevent blindness through training program accreditation, education and the certification of Allied Ophthalmic Personnel."***



Thank you, and I hope to see you at ACE in San Francisco this year!

—William F. Astle, MD, FRCSC, Dipl. ABO, IJCAHPO President

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## **IJCAHPO Updates**

We want to make EyeLights a valuable resource to you. We are taking a slightly different approach in this issue, including more updates on the profession, information on new materials that may be of interest to you, testimonials from your colleagues, and even a special promotion. We would appreciate your feedback on this issue and how to make the next one even better. Please email us: [icahpo@icahpo.org](mailto:icahpo@icahpo.org)

## **ACE 2019—Watch for Registration Opening This Week!**

The 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Continuing Education (ACE) Program will be held in San Francisco, October 11-13, 2019. This Premier Event in Eye Care Education will offer new courses and a new and expanded line of Learning Labs. This year's three-day event will launch on Friday with a new special feature, the Capstone Lectures: Innovations in Ophthalmology, featuring ophthalmology leaders covering new and exciting developments. ***The Friday summit will be streamed live worldwide!***

The Harold A. Stein Lecture will be presented by Smithsonian Ingenuity award winners, **Jean Bennett, MD, PhD, and Albert Maguire, MD**, and will describe using gene therapy to cure a form of inheritable blindness: “Seeing the Light with Retinal Gene Therapy: From Fantasy to Reality.” Preview them on [HERE](#).



This year’s program features 214 courses, including:

- **54 NEW LECTURE** courses for the more experienced eye care team members
- **14 MASTER** level courses
- **27 ADVANCED** level courses
- **75 INTERMEDIATE** level courses
- **25 BASIC** for skill-based, hands-on training
- **74 LEARNING LABS**
- **12 NEW HIRE COURSES** in one convenient track

The ACE Bulletin is in the mail—watch your mailbox and IJCAHPO’s website for the program. Registration opens July 8, 2019. Updates will be posted at [www.ijcahpo.org/ace](http://www.ijcahpo.org/ace).

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**ACE 2019**

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**October 11-13, 2019**  
Hilton San Francisco Union Square  
and Parc 55 San Francisco

**47th Annual Continuing Education Program**

### **An Update from IJCAHPO Public Affairs—Surgical Assisting Alert**

IJCAHPO Public Affairs continues to see, with increased frequency, states introducing legislation requiring Surgical Assistants to be graduates of a specific Surgical Assisting Program and be certified by the same program. To-date, 25 states have passed or introduced legislation to define eligibility requirements for a surgical assistant/technologist, sometimes specifying a particular credential that has the result of excluding ophthalmic designations. As this legislation is introduced we are alerting state societies, and are providing proposed language to present to state legislatures, along with sharing relevant data supporting the position of the importance of Ophthalmic Surgical Assistant/Technologists (OSA/ST).

In April, IJCAHPO worked with the Texas Ophthalmological Society to oppose legislation that was introduced in Texas that could affect the safety of patients in need of ocular surgery. This legislation included language that would exclude practicing ophthalmologists, physicians, and surgeons the ability to properly delegate tasks to qualified, trained and certified ophthalmic medical personnel which could limit the access of well-trained, Certified Ophthalmic Surgical Assistants (OSA/ST) in performing the appropriate tasks not only in the clinic, but also in the surgical suite. IJCAHPO Public Affairs argued that the success in ophthalmic surgery depends on the appropriate utilization of technology and staff who are well-trained in ophthalmology and the technologies that enhance it. We also stated that it would unreasonably require surgical assistants to complete an Associates Degree, and then achieve licensure, which has not been identified as a need. This legislation failed to advance prior to the Texas Legislature adjourning, meaning that it is did not pass. However, we believe that there is a chance it will be re-introduced when the Texas Legislature convenes in 2021, as well as similar legislation in other states. If this happens, we will work to achieve the same successful result that was achieved in this effort.

In May, IJCAHPO joined the New York State Ophthalmological Society to support bills introduced in the New York State Legislature to amend the education law in relation to the delegation of certain professional responsibilities for instilling eye drops to patients. The bills allowed for the training and authorization of Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP) to instill eye drops under on-site supervision and delegation of licensed professionals without the risk of such delegation being considered professional misconduct or improper delegation. Additionally, they promoted efficiency while still delivering high quality eye care, and public protection. The bills have now been passed in both legislative Houses without opposition, and it is expected that this will be signed into law by the Governor. Once signed, the regulations will be published for public comment prior to the law taking effect. This is a great outcome that affirms the scope of AOP.

### **E/M Documentation Guidelines, from the American Academy of Ophthalmology**

CMS' changes impact two situations for documentation using E/M codes. These changes do not impact the eye visit codes.

- **Redocumenting patient history.** Physicians are no longer required to redocument the chief complaint or history that their staff or technicians have already documented if the physician determines that this information is sufficient. Instead, physicians can indicate that they have reviewed and verified the information already documented. This impacts both new and established patient exams.

Although it's not a requirement, the change was designed to ease the documentation burden for physicians.

- **Medical student and resident exam.** When providing services at a teaching hospital, physicians are no longer required to redocument medical students' or residents' exams or medical decision-making. Physicians are still required to perform key elements of the exam and review the students' medical decision-making and correct any errors. The physician must make sure to sign and date any documentation the medical student provides and attest the note as the attending physician.

### **College Credit for IJCAHPO Certification!**

The American Council on Education's College Credit Recommendation Service (ACE CREDIT®) has evaluated and recommended college credit for the following IJCAHPO certification examinations:

Certified Ophthalmic Assistant (COA®)	12 credits
Certified Ophthalmic Technician (COT®)	18 credits
Certified Ophthalmic Medical Technologist (COMT®)	15 credits

The effective dates for this program are March 1, 2019-February 28, 2022.

Founded in 1918, ACE CREDIT is the major coordinating body for all the nation's higher education institutions, representing more than 1,600 college and university presidents and more than 200 related associations nationwide. It provides leadership on key higher education issues and influences public policy through advocacy.

ACE CREDIT connects workplace learning with college and universities helping adults gain access to academic credit at colleges and universities for formal courses and examinations taken in the workplace or other settings outside traditional higher education.

For more than 30 years, colleges and universities have trusted ACE CREDIT to provide reliable course equivalency information to facilitate their decisions to award academic credit. For more information, visit the ACE CREDIT website at [www.acenet.edu/credit](http://www.acenet.edu/credit).

Please visit the IJCAHPO website for more information regarding ACE CREDITS at [www.jcahpo.org](http://www.jcahpo.org), News and Resources.

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### **Frequently Asked Questions about IJCAHPO's Core Certification Examination**

**We are glad you asked! We get lots of questions about our exams and exam**

**processes, particularly when there are updates. Here are the answers to our most Frequently Asked Questions about IJCAHPO's Core Certification Examinations.**

**How are IJCAHPO's certification examinations created?**

IJCAHPO follows standardized and legal processes in updating its certification examination content for Certified Ophthalmic Assistant (COA), Certified Ophthalmic Technician (COT), and Certified Ophthalmic Medical Technologist (COMT). The examinations are updated every 3-5 years following a rigorous research process, called a Job Task Analysis (JTA). The study provides the research and validation of the tasks that a job incumbent (our certificants) perform on a daily basis.

**Who is responsible for the creation of the examination content areas and questions?**

The Certification Committee is responsible for the development of the examinations by writing test questions, updating content areas, and setting the pass/fail scores to ensure the test reliably assesses the knowledge and skills of each level of certification examination. This Committee is comprised of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) who are certificants from each certification level and ophthalmologists (employers).

**What is the difference between the new examinations and previous versions?**

While the new Certification Core Criteria Handbook outlines the examination content areas and may look different from previous years, there is very little difference in the test content. Primarily, we have categorized and specifically listed the task areas differently to give you the best information on what content is on the examination in some areas.

For example, in previous examinations, General Medical Knowledge was incorporated within Ophthalmic Patient Services and Education. However, the Certification Committee agreed it was important to re-introduce the General Medical Knowledge as a stand-alone content area. An area that may seem different is two previous content areas: Supplemental Skills and Ophthalmic Imaging. These content areas included A-scan, B-scan, photography and videography, and other areas. Now, the new exam splits these content areas into separate categories of Biometry or sub-categories of Imaging: Ophthalmic Imaging and Photography/Videography. The following table reflects these changes in red.

## Certification Examination Content Changes 2016-2019

2016 Content Area	2016 Certification Level and Sub-Content Areas	2019 Content Area	2019 Certification Level and Sub-Content Areas
<b>Ophthalmic Imaging</b>	<b>COA</b>	<b>Ophthalmic Imaging/ Photography/ Videography</b>	<b>COA</b>
	External photography/Diagnostic/ Standardized A-scan		Define external photography
	<b>COT</b>		<b>COT</b>
	External photography/Diagnostic/ Standardized A-scan		Perform external photography
	<b>COMT</b>		<b>COMT</b>
	External photography/Diagnostic/ Standardized A-scan		Perform external photography
<b>Supplemental Skills</b>	<b>COA</b>	<b>Supplemental Testing</b>	<b>COA</b>
	Contact A-scan		N/A
	<b>COT</b>		<b>COT</b>
	Contact A-scan		N/A
	<b>COMT</b>		<b>COMT</b>
	Contact A-scan Immersion A-scan		N/A
		<b>Biometry</b>	<b>COA</b>
			Define and identify (A-scan biometry)
			<b>COT</b>
			Measure and record axial length (A-scan biometry)
			<b>COMT</b>
			Measure and record axial length (A-Scan biometry)

## Personal Stories and Testimonials

### Kristin L. Sylvester, COT

"I finished high school with a GED in 1994 due to a rough childhood. I took a medical assisting course while a senior in high school and worked as a medical assistant for 6 months. In 1995, I started working as an ophthalmic assistant and trained on the job with my medical assisting background. In 2000, I became a COA and a COT in 2008. In 2009, I started college and graduated with honors with my Associate of Science degree in general studies then continued on to graduate cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Health Education and Promotion and an emphasis in Health Science. I received several merit-based scholarships and was accepted into the honors society at both colleges. Getting a

GED did not set me up for a life of short cuts or failure, and quite frankly, it has been the opposite."

**Do you have a story you'd like to share? We'd love to hear it!**

Please let us know by sending a note to [cert@icahpo.org](mailto:cert@icahpo.org). We will follow up and use your story to inspire others.

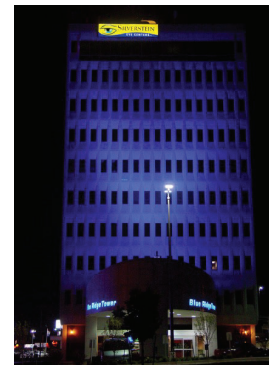
**An interview with Dr. Steven Silverstein**

Dr. Silverstein is an ophthalmologist with a thriving practice in Kansas City. He invests in his team through certification and continuing education as a key part of his success in providing excellent patient care. We asked him to describe his practice and why certification is a core part of his approach to building a great team.



**Please describe your practice.** Silverstein Eye Centers is a multi-specialty, comprehensive ophthalmology practice in Kansas City, Missouri. We have 38 employees, 1 main office, and a state of the art ASC. I have been in practice for 28 years as a board certified, fellowship trained corneal specialist.

**Please describe how you invest in your team through certification.** I send my staff to the local and sometimes regional meetings in order to stay ahead of the ever-increasing fund of knowledge in ophthalmology. I pay for any technician who wishes to be certified to sit for the exam as well as their study materials once they have passed the exam.



**Why do you believe certification is worthwhile for your team and your practice?** Certification is essential to ensure that technicians maintain a proper level of expertise in the care of ophthalmology patients, are able to recognize most pathologic states, and then remain up to date with the many advances in our field.

Dr. Silverstein also takes time out to speak to ophthalmic technicians at continuing education events.

***Thank you, Dr. Silverstein, for investing in your team and in our community!***

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**Tech Corner**



**The team from VitreoRetinal Eye Center from Biloxi, MS, and Covington, LA.**

"Our TEAM assists patients to help them see the world by providing compassion, expertise, and exceptional retinal eye care."

Submitted by Natalie Loyacano, COMT, ROUB, OCS, OSA. Natalie has been an active volunteer for IJCAHPO and ATPO. We are truly grateful for Natalie's many years of service and for the wonderful work performed by the VitreoRetinal team!



**Back Row:** (left to right): Rena Espat, Insurance Verification; Angel Childress, Patient Receptionist; Dr. Avit "Frere" Gremillion

**Middle Row:** Morgan McIntosh, Ophthalmic Assistant; Natalie Loyacano, COMT, ROUB, OSA, OCSR, CR Practice Administrator; Lessie Williams, Ophthalmic Assistant; Amy Gunter, Ophthalmic Technician, Surgical Assistant

**Front Row:** Kayla Brueckner, Ophthalmic Assistant; Margaret Wheeler, Ophthalmic Technician, Lead

Technician

**Inset:** Pattie Nussbaum, Billing & Insurance; Lynne Lahare, Patient Receptionist, Charge Entry

## **Educational Offers and Grants Available**

### **Educational Offers**



**JULY** EyeCareMarketplace  
Tuesday Webinar Series  
**SPECIAL**  
Take Advantage of This Month's Special!

Save on July Webinars  
Series of 4  
for only \$25!  
*Normally a \$72 value when purchased separately*

### **Lazy Days of Summer Sale—4 July Webinars for Only \$25!**

IJCAHPO's Tuesday Webinars are a great way to expand your knowledge and earn CE credit. Do you need 4 CE credits quickly and at a low, low cost? This \$25 promotional package includes 4 exceptional July courses by these leading experts:

- **July 2: The Why, What, and How of the Most Commonly Used Billing Modifiers in Ophthalmology**, by Matthew Baugh, MHA, COT, OCS, OCSR
- **July 9: B-Scan Fundamentals: A Beginner's Guide**, by Carmelina Trimboli, COA, CDOS
- **July 16: Great Expectations: Liability Risks of Unrealistic Surgical Goals**, by Hans Bruhn, MHS
- **July 23: Slit Lamp Examination**, by Janet Hunter, COMT

**Normally \$72 when purchased separately, we are offering this bundle for only \$25.**  
To purchase, click [HERE](#) and order the July 2019 Webinar Series Special.

**Clinic CE Subscription: An extensive collection of online courses for ophthalmic technicians—ONLY \$549/year for everyone at your location!**

Train and  
Keep Your  
Eye Care Team  
Educated with  
a Clinic CE  
Subscription



160+  
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Courses!

**\$549/Year for All Staff at One Location**

**A Tremendous Value for All Clinical Practices,** IJCAHPO's Clinic CE Subscription for online education courses is the most cost-effective way to train and educate your eye care team! For only \$549, the Clinic CE Subscription offers all eye care team members in one location the use of the clinic's coupon code to access 160+ IJCAHPO Group A credit online courses. If you do not have a Clinic CE Subscription, we encourage you to subscribe so that all the staff at your practice location may take courses! Visit [www.jcahpo.org/ClinicCE](http://www.jcahpo.org/ClinicCE) to learn more, call us at 1-800-284-3937 then prompt "5," or email us at [subscriptions@jcahpo.org](mailto:subscriptions@jcahpo.org).

***If your clinic signs up by July 31 we will send you a voucher to attend a webinar for FREE!***

## Available Grants

### Harold A. Stein, MD, FRCSC\* Prize for Best Scientific Paper

All Allied Ophthalmic Personnel are invited to submit an original scientific paper on any ophthalmic topic of their choice (i.e., glaucoma, contact lenses, dry eye, animal eyes, cataracts, macular degeneration, etc.)



*\*Harold A. Stein, MD, FRCSC, was the president of JCAHPO in 1986 and 1987, and is the author of numerous publications, including the ever popular "Ophthalmic Assistant/A Text for Allied & Associated Ophthalmic Personnel" now in its 9th edition. To perpetuate the prize, Dr. Stein is donating to the JCAHPO Education and Research Foundation all royalties from specific books which he has authored.*

*Papers accepted January 1 to July 31.*

### **Continuing Education Grant**

Grants are awarded as vouchers to be used towards IJCAHPO and/or ATPO Continuing Education Program registration fees. Amounts range from \$50 to Full Registration and are valid for one year from the date the voucher is issued.

*Applications accepted January 1 to July 31.*

You can stay up-to-date on all grant nomination and award activity at:

<http://www.ijahpo.org/foundation/scholarships-grants-and-awards-available/>

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## **New Resources: Education and Certification**

Available at the IJCAHPO Resource Center: [store.ijahpo.org](http://store.ijahpo.org)

### **Doctor, I Have an Ant in My Eye**

*(Downloadable PDF)*

***Now available as a Downloadable PDF  
in the IJCAHPO Resource Center  
for only \$2.99 >>>[HERE](#)***

Proceeds go to the JCAHPO Education and Research Foundation



### **Overview from the author, Dr. Roger P. Harrie, MD**

Ants and tarantula barbs in the eye, lids stuck shut with super glue, and patients who pull out their own eye are just a few of the things I have seen over my 42 years of practice in ophthalmology. My journey began as a bushy brown haired medical student who struggled to decide what specialty to enter and continues as a thinning gray hair who sub-specializes in ophthalmic ultrasound with a daily medley of eye tumors, trauma, and diagnostic quandaries. This book highlights singular events along that odyssey with the patients who relied on me to figure out what was wrong with their eyes and do the right thing to make things better. I learned an awful lot about this amazing one inch part of the body, and I guarantee that you will make your own discoveries as you read. I have taught hundreds of medical students, interns, residents and fellow ophthalmologists mostly by patient centered learning. Someday there will be a way to download into young minds all of the binary code embedded in senior neural networks such as mine, but for now the best I

can do is share some of the most memorable stories with you in this book.

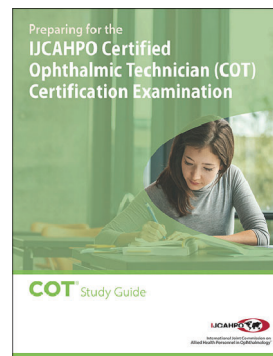
### **Praise for “Doctor, I Have an Ant in My Eye”**

*In Dr. Roger P. Harrie’s book, “Doctor, I have an Ant in my Eye,” he describes his journey through his first day of medical school, to his residency, then into his practice. His entertaining writing style and sense of humor makes the book an easy read while, at the same time, teaches lessons in Ophthalmology. I would highly recommend this book for anyone in eye care who wants to learn about ophthalmology while being thoroughly entertained.*

—Craig Simms, BSc, COMT, CDOS, ROUB

### **Updated COT Study Guide now available!**

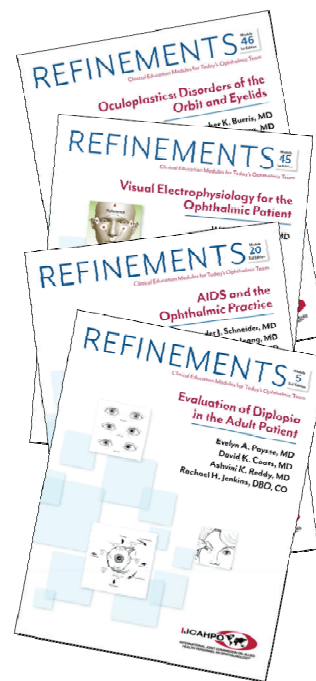
The COT Study Guide prepares you for taking the Certified Ophthalmic Technician exam. The Study Guide covers the ophthalmic knowledge and examination content domains, including: sample exam questions in multiple tests for testing yourself, COT examination description, screen captures, examination preparation and study tips from certified professionals, and more!



**Only \$15 >>>[HERE](#)**

### **Refinements Available in Print and Online**

Do you need a flexible distance learning option? Refinements modules help you expand your ophthalmic knowledge while earning CE credits at your own pace from any location. Refinements are single-topic articles and quiz packages authored by leading ophthalmologists and technicians. Our new and recently updated Modules include **Aids and the Ophthalmic Practice, Evaluation of Diplopia in the Adult Patient, Visual Electrophysiology for the Ophthalmic Patient, and Oculoplastics: Disorders of the Orbit and Eyelids.**



*ICAHPO awards 1 Group A Continuing Education Credit to those who successfully complete the module quiz.*

**Complete library of Refinement Modules available >>>[HERE](#)**

## **Calendar of Upcoming Professional Development Events**

## **Leading Ophthalmology Experts Presented at Technicians & Nurses Program on Clinical, Surgical, and ASC Current Topics**

At the last event, the Technicians & Nurses Program presented two innovative clinical and surgical/ambulatory surgical center (ASC) tracks at the ASCRS and the International Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology (IJCAHPO) program. With over 40 courses offered during the three-day event, eye care teams heard leading faculty speak on current trends, research, treatments, surgical procedures, technologies, and practice operations that the technical team addresses. **Save the date—May 15-19, 2020 in Boston, MA!**

## **Other Webinar and Regional Educational Events**

### **Regional Event Calendar**

**June 28-29, 2019:** Hollywood, FL—In cooperation with FSO

**July 20, 2019:** Phoenix, AZ

**September 7, 2019:** Cleveland, OH

**September 6-7, 2019:** Asheville, NC—In cooperation with NCSEPS

**September 12-15, 2019:** Albuquerque, NM—CLSA Annual Conference

**September 21, 2019:** Las Vegas, NV

**October 11-13, 2019:** San Francisco, CA—47<sup>th</sup> ACE Program

**October 25, 2019:** Buffalo, NY—ATPO CE Regional

**November 2, 2019:** New York, NY

### **Upcoming Webinars:**

IJCAHPO hosts weekly webinars presented by leading industry professionals. This webinar series is a convenient distance learning option that provides a great way to gain valuable knowledge and skills while earning CE credits.

### **Webinar Schedule**

**July 2, 2019:** The Why, What, and How of the Most Commonly Used Billing Modifiers in Ophthalmology, by Matthew Baugh, COT, OCS

**July 9, 2019:** B-scan Fundamentals: A Beginner's Guide, by Carmelina Trimboli, COA, CDOS

**July 16, 2019:** Great Expectations: Liability risks of unrealistic surgical goals, by Hans Bruhn, MHS

**July 23, 2019:** Slit Lamp Examination, by Janet Hunter, COMT

Visit [store.ijahpo.org](https://store.ijahpo.org) for details.