

EyeLights eNews



March 2025

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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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President's Message

IJCAHPO Certificants, Greetings!

I am pleased to announce that over 170 certified IJCAHPO members were recognized for their long-standing commitment to certification. IJCAHPO recently sent congratulatory letters and certificates to the certified COAs, COTs, and COMTs, for their continuing certification, with no lapses in their over 40 years of being certified. You can read and see the list of certificants **at IJCAHPO's website in our [50th Anniversary publication](#).**



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.

IJCAHPO has an exciting **New Year** planned to assist you with your certification and recertification needs! Watch IJCAHPO's eBlasts, EyeXchange Connect, and social media posts to catch our latest updates on the following:

Continuous learning that is quick, fantastic, and low cost or free!

- We will be offering a low cost \$5 webinar in April (1.0 IJCAHPO CE credit) and the Virtual Spring AOP Symposium for only \$95.
- IJCAHPO provides the most comprehensive and affordable education and vetted training courses by global leaders who are reputable and renowned with CE credit available for our certificant members as compared to other CE providers.

New Certifications coming to you soon—a Retina Certification and new updates to the COA, COT, and COMT examinations!

Ophthalmologist survey data show that they value IJCAHPO Certified Members more than non-certified AOP for their knowledge, skill, and services to our patients.

- Certified AOP are paid more than non-certified AOP.
- The 2024 Salary Study report will be published in March—if you participated in the survey, you will receive a complimentary copy.

International recognition of your professional development through achieving certification.

- IJCAHPO certificants have joined a proud group of distinguished AOP around the globe who have demonstrated competencies and proficiency to their hospitals and ophthalmologists who support and understand the value of learning and achieving a credential!

As you maintain your learning and your professional development, you are contributing to quality patient care, ophthalmology, and your practice's medical services. We support and challenge you to be the **Best You Can Be** for you, your ophthalmologist, and your patients!

I look forward to hearing from you who undertake this challenge so we can share your stories and achievements worldwide!

Sincerely,



Michael Stewart, MD, IJCAHPO President



Find out how your patients can save

LEARN MORE

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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!**
- **CE credits through IMiles courses, webinars, and training.**
- **Professional Development Opportunities**
- **Exclusive Member Offers**
- **Latest News & Industry Trends**

Re-Subscribe and Stay Informed:

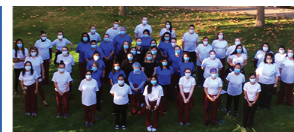
To start receiving emails again, [click here](#) and re-subscribe to the updates and events that matter most to you. It's quick and easy, and you'll regain access to all the news and resources that support your professional growth and certification.

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.

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

Tech Corner



- **Ontario Laws About ROUB and CDOS Certification**
- **University of Mississippi Medical Center**

Ontario Laws About ROUB and CDOS Certification

IJCAHPO Board Member, Carla Blackburn, BSc, COMT, CDOS, ROUB highlighted an announcement pertaining to ophthalmic ultrasound. Accreditation Canada, diagnostic standard for ophthalmic ultrasound, states that ultrasonographers must hold appropriate qualifications and IJCAHPO's two credentials are listed as acceptable. This recognition highlights the importance of the Registered Ophthalmic Ultrasound Biometrist (ROUB), the Certified Diagnostic Ophthalmic Sonographer (CDOS), and the ophthalmic technician's role in eye care.

University of Mississippi Medical Center

By **Bobbie Beard, MHA, BBA, CCM**, Director, Ambulatory Operations, Department of Ophthalmology, University of Mississippi Medical Center

The University of Mississippi Medical Center Clinic, Department of Ophthalmology, is a multispecialty academic clinic with all sub-specialties of ophthalmology, including Comprehensive, Glaucoma, Cornea, Retina, Pediatrics, Ocular-Plastics, Neuro-Ophthalmology, and an Optical Shop. Dr. Kimberly Crowder is the chairperson of our department. We began the year with six COAs and now have a total of 31 Certified Ophthalmic Assistants. Two of which also obtained their Ophthalmic Surgical Assistant through IJCAHPO.

The educational journey began several years ago when we offered IJCAHPO CE credits at our annual conference that is attended by our techs as well as other ophthalmic techs throughout the region. We applied and achieved accredited recognition by IJCAHPO for the conference. We then required our techs' attendance in preparation for their certification. Each year, they could earn as many as 7.5 CE credits at this all-day seminar totaling the required hours to maintain their certification every three years. In addition to the conference, we offered courses with accomplished speakers to educate and engage employees provoking their knowledge and skill set. Simultaneously, I worked with each of them ensuring they had the educational literature and the experience they needed to sit for the proctored exam. This led to the success of our team.

"I am so proud of our team and impressed with this tremendous accomplishment. The result of this new level of education and certification among our techs, now 'COAs', is evident daily in their patient interactions. Excellent ophthalmic patient care can only happen when every member of the team is educated, certified, and engaged. Our COAs rose to this challenge, and we are now a stronger team because of their hard work. I appreciate Bobbie's leadership and encouragement in making this goal for our department a reality."

Dr. Kimberly Crowder

Professor and Chair of the Department of Ophthalmology.



Certification



- **New Exam Delivery**
- **Certified Retina Technician (CRT)**
- **Core Certification (COA, COT, COMT) Updates**

New Exam Delivery

Starting August 1, 2025, select examinations will be offered as proctored online examinations. Online proctoring allows you to take examinations in your workplace, a place of your choosing, or the comfort of your home. Examinations will still be offered in Pearson VUE Centers.

Certified Retina Technician (CRT)

A new credential designed specifically for AOP working in a retina practice will be available. This entry-level credential covers content areas in History and Documentation, Visual Assessment, Diagnostic Ultrasound, Ophthalmic Imaging, and others. Watch our website in the next few weeks to apply.

Core Certification (COA, COT, COMT) Updates

All three core certifications recently underwent an extensive study, a Job Task Analysis (JTA), to determine the current content areas and tasks that technicians must perform. Each examination has updated domain percentages. Only minor changes in the content areas resulted. While one major change is being implemented, the change does not impact

revising the content: Diagnostic Ultrasound was separated from Biometry; and Ophthalmic Imaging and Photography and Videography have been combined into a single content area. These new changes will take effect August 1, 2025.

Education



- **Special CE Opportunities**
- **Bookstore Promotions**
- **EYEXchange Updates and Schedule—CE Regional Meetings and CE Course Offerings**
- **ACE 2025 Orlando**

Special CE Opportunities

Are you looking to add a few additional CE courses to meet your recertification goals? Do you want to find some reasonably priced CE courses to complete your renewal? We have many ways to help you!

If you need just a few affordable CE courses, try an [IMILES subscription](#): Six courses for \$49 (which is about \$8.00 each). Plus, you will receive a special report that is designed to bring you trends on AOP and our profession.

The [Clinic CE Subscription](#) is another opportunity for you and your entire clinical staff to get CE courses and credits at a very low price per person. You and your colleagues would have access to more than 220 online courses for your lifelong learning and certification! Leading ophthalmologists and certified technicians who are the best in the field will train you in 22 content categories for a well-rounded foundation in ophthalmology. You can access videos, text-based learning materials, interactive courses, and CE Credits. Talk to your Practice Manager or Ophthalmologist about a 1-year subscription at a **Special Price of \$515 during the month of April**—price is for a clinic's entire staff per clinic location.

Bookstore Promotions

Save Green with the March COT and COMT Bundles. Are you striving to become a Certified Ophthalmic Technician (COT®) or a Certified Ophthalmic Medical Technologist (COMT®)? This bundle is of great value for any ophthalmic technician taking the next step in their career.

COT March Bundle, for ONLY \$130.00, includes:

1. Vaughan & Asbury's General Ophthalmology, 19th Ed. (\$110 Value)
2. COT Study Guide (\$15 Value)
3. COT Quick Study Cards-Online and Paper Versions (\$15 Value)
4. \$50 Exam Voucher (Coupon Expires 9/30/25)

COMT March Bundle, for ONLY \$90.00, includes:

1. COMT Exam Review Manual (\$89 Value)

2. COMT Study Guide (\$18 Value)
3. COMT Quick Study Cards-Online Version (\$15 Value)
4. \$50 Exam Voucher (Coupon Expires 9/30/25)

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/>.

2025 Regional Event Schedule

April 12, 2025—**Rochester, MN**

April 25–28, 2025—**Technician & Nurses, ASCRS, Los Angeles, CA**

June 7, 2025—**Orlando, FL**

September 13, 2025—**Myrtle Beach, SC**

Exam Prep Courses

April 25, 2025—**COA, Los Angeles, CA**

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

Virtual Symposiums

April 11–21, 2025—**Spring AOP Symposium**

June 6–16, 2025—**Summer AOP Symposium**

September 5–15, 2025—**Fall AOP Symposium**

December 5, 2025—**Practice Management AOP Symposium**

Webinars

March 4–25, 2025—**March Webinar Series**

April 1, 2025—**Oculoplastics Red Flags on the Phone and in the Clinic—Richard C. Allen, MD, PhD, FACS**

April 8, 2025—**Ocular Ultrasound in Marine Mammals Webinar Special—In honor of Cynthia Kendall, BMET, CDOS, ROUB (Ret.)**

May 6, 2025—**Setting up a Sterile Environment for Minor Surgery in an Office Setting—Elethia Dean, PhD, MBA, RN, BSN**

June 3, 2025—**Beyond Basics: Assessment and Analysis of B-Scan—Carmelina Trimboli, COA, CDOS**

Visit store.jcahpo.org for details.



**ACE 2025
ORLANDO**

SAVE THE DATE! OCTOBER 17-19

THE PREMIER EVENT IN EYE CARE EDUCATION

The graphic features a vibrant orange and yellow background. On the right side, there are two circular inset images: the top one shows a city skyline at night with lights reflecting on water, and the bottom one shows a city skyline during the day with a body of water in the foreground. The text is prominently displayed in white and yellow, with a pink banner for the dates.

ACE 2025 Orlando

At this special time of year, winter, it is time to start thinking about attending IJCAHPO's Annual Continuing Education Program in Orlando on October 17–19, 2025! The land of Florida Sunshine and IJCAHPO's 53rd ACE program with over 100 on-site and over 50 virtual online courses. If you are interested in teaching, or recommending faculty or topics, please send them to education@jcahpo.org.

JCAHPO Foundation



- **Awards Presentation**
- **2025 Virginia S. Boyce Humanitarian Award Nominations Open**
- **Scholarships Available**
- **Two Important Ophthalmic Experts Recently Passed Away**

With President Stewart, MD, presenting



Pamela D. Lichtenstein
COMT, OSA



Michelle D. Willis
COMT, OSC



Carla Blackburn
COMT, ROUB, CDOS

Awards Presentation

In our Annual Continuing Education meeting, IJCAHPO President Michael Stewart, MD, presented awards to outstanding IJCAHPO volunteers, Pamela D. Lichtenstein, COMT, and Michelle D. Willis, COMT, who received Statesmanship awards.

Pamela D. Lichtenstein, COMT, OSA, has dedicated her career to advancing ophthalmic education and clinical excellence. She has worked in various capacities, including as an instructor for IJCAHPO's ACE Program and an important leader in the certification simulation examinations. Her ongoing commitment to teaching, mentoring, and advocacy has helped shape the future of ophthalmic care.

Michelle D. Willis, COMT, OSC with over 45 years of experience in ophthalmic practices, is a passionate educator and mentor. Her career highlights include leading staff development initiatives, introducing innovative technologies, and contributing to multiple boards including IJCAHPO and ATPO. Michelle continues to play a key role in training the next generation of ophthalmic professionals, both in clinical and academic settings, including her involvement in teaching "Red Flags in History Taking" at the ACE Program.

Carla Blackburn, COMT, ROUB, CDOS, was presented with the Virginia S. Boyce Humanitarian Award in recognition of her global humanitarian work and exceptional leadership in ophthalmic education. As the Program Director of the Bachelor of Science Honors Ophthalmic Medical Technology program at the University of Ottawa, Carla has influenced countless students. Her work extends beyond the classroom, with humanitarian missions to remote communities in Canada and abroad, including Orbis volunteer work in Cameroon and Bangladesh, and efforts to improve clinical care at the Srikiran Eye Institute in India. Carla's dedication to improving access to eye care worldwide and her service to the profession make her a true humanitarian.

IJCAHPO would like to thank all our volunteers who have provided outstanding services to make this profession successful.

2025 Virginia Boyce Humanitarian Award Nominations Open

The Virginia S. Boyce Humanitarian Award was established to honor those AOP who exemplify leadership and an unwavering commitment to volunteerism and public service. This award recognizes individuals who are some of AOP's finest educators, mentors, dependable and steadfast volunteers, and friends, be they ophthalmic assistants, ophthalmic technicians, or ophthalmic medical technologists. If you know someone who exemplifies the criteria, please encourage them to be nominated. More information is on IJCAHPO's website under the Foundation Awards: ***Nominations accepted January 1–April 30.***

Scholarships Available

The JCAHPO Education and Research Foundation supports technicians in their career path with Scholarships and Grants for education and certification. There are Grants available for continuing education programs and their registration fees. In addition, there are multiple scholarships available to assist technicians with their certification application fees. Please go to the Foundation website on IJCAHPO's site and then locate scholarships and grants to review the multiple opportunities there are!

Two Important Ophthalmic Experts Recently Passed Away

Cynthia Jean Kendall, CDOS, ROUB, of California, a leading teacher, eye care provider, and author recently passed away in January 2025. Many of you knew Cynthia's effervescent attitude and thoroughly captivating presentations with sonography and animal eyes! She authored more than 200 publications during her career, with her research in radiology, optometry and ophthalmology. She held many prestigious positions during her career including CEO and Vice President of Ellex.

Joanne Harris, COT, passed away some time ago, and the world lost a dedicated person to the eye care profession. Unfortunately, this announcement is coming to you late. Earning a BA Degree in Health Care Administration, Joanne's early career included working as an Ophthalmic Tech at the Spokane Eye Clinic. She then worked at Portland Community College (Portland, OR) where she established and chaired the Ophthalmic Medical Technology department. She assisted many ophthalmic technicians in their Ophthalmology careers.

IJCAHPO Updates



- **Physician–Patient Relationship: Brought to you by OMIC**

Physician–Patient Relationship: Brought to You by OMIC

Physicians may decide to terminate the physician-patient relationship (“the relationship”) due to inappropriate behavior, noncompliance, or nonpayment. Termination should be a last resort, and attempts should be made to rehabilitate the relationship if possible. Relationships can be terminated for any reason as long as it is not discriminatory, there are no contractual obligations with payers, or patients are not in the acute phase of care (e.g., during the post-operative period). There are potential liability exposures and risks of medical board complaints related to patient abandonment if the relationship is not properly terminated. It is recommended that physicians develop a policy and procedure to have a standardized process to navigate these challenges.

If you have questions regarding this information, please contact Risk Management for confidential assistance at riskmanagement@omic.com or call us at 1-800-562-6642 and choose option 4.

RISK RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish a policy and procedure to address how you will handle inappropriate behavior, noncompliance, or nonpayment, including the process of terminating care.
- Attempt to rehabilitate the relationship before termination.
- Document the issues and rationale for the termination in the medical record.
- Do not terminate for any discriminatory reasons (disability, race, religion, etc.).
- Do not terminate during the acute phase of care (e.g., 90-day post-op period).
- Review health insurance contracts for guidance and exclusions.
- Communicate with the patient the plan to terminate and address any prescription refills.
- Send the termination letter by certified and regular mail, and include in the letter:
 - The reason for the termination (not required).
 - 30 days of emergency care from date of letter.
 - The urgency of continued treatment and the risks of not obtaining care.
 - How they can obtain medical records.
- Flag the termination in the medical record to prohibit the scheduling of future appointments.
- Contact their health insurance or state medical society for referral options.

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.





International Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology

2025 Woodlane Drive · St. Paul, Minnesota 55125-2998

Phone: 651-731-2944 · Toll Free: 800-284-3937 · Fax: 651-731-0410 · www.jcahpo.org

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