



## In This Issue:

***“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

Greetings – Last year we celebrated ***IJCAHPO’s 50th Anniversary***—a year that we all will remember! 2020 will be another time that we will long remember.

Continuous learning is one of IJCAHPO’s main missions; and during this challenging time in our lives, education and training take on a new meaning and importance for each of us. IJCAHPO provided training and resources on COVID-19 through webinars, online courses, and a web site resource: <https://www.jcahpo.org/covid19resources/>. Some CE Credit courses have been offered free or at a very low cost and we hope that you joined us. As our practices begin to reopen, we encourage you to stay vigilant and continue with your training and heightened safe patient and employee practices.



IJCAHPO invites you to volunteer on our new Education, Certification, or Career Development Task Forces, to help shape the future of the Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP) profession. There are many ways to be involved, from volunteering on a committee, presenting a course, to instructing a workshop (Learning Lab). Your commitment will be short-term, typically conducted during an after-work hours conference call or at a face-to-face meeting (when travel and in-person meetings resume). You will be asked to serve at your certification level and area of interest. If you are interested, please send an email to [volunteer@jcahpo.org](mailto:volunteer@jcahpo.org) with your name, address, certification and contact information—preferred phone number and email address.

I challenge you to be the ***Best Technician You Can Be*** for you, your employer, and your patients!

Neil Choplin, MD, President

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## IJCAHPO Updates



### IJCAHPO Career Center

IJCAHPO is excited to announce the launch of our Career Center; your partner in finding the **Right Employee** and the **Right Employer**.

**Employers**—It will assist you to:

- Seek the right employees
- Post available jobs
- Explore candidate resumes
- Manage applications received
- Access resources

**Employees**—You will be able to:

- Connect with the right employers
- Post your resume
- Get interviewing advice
- And so much more!

We are here to support your practice and your career. Visit the IJCAHPO Career Center at <https://careers.jcahpo.org>

### Discover Eye Careers

For Employers

Job Opportunities

[Home](#) | [Get Started](#) | [Wages & Benefits](#) | [Profiles](#) | [Financial Assistance](#) | [GED](#)

There's a  
Career in *Sight*  
for you!

Watch our Career Video

*"We're in demand.  
I was hired  
immediately!"*

Valentina W.



#### Who are Ophthalmic Medical Technicians?

Ophthalmic medical technicians work for eye doctors. They perform patient exams, administer eye medications and may assist in surgery.

#### Learn More

About a career as an ophthalmic medical technician



Discover Eye Careers New Website

Do you know someone who is interested in a career in ophthalmology? Share the new Discover Eye Careers website with them at [www.discovereyecareers.org](http://www.discovereyecareers.org). This website features great information about the roles and responsibilities of Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP), how to enter the field, wages and benefits, financial assistance, and personal career stories from current AOP. Make sure to link the page to your clinic's website for recruiting assistance.

## Education



IJCAHPO  
**Technicians  
& Nurses Program**  
June 6, 13 & 27, 2020  
Virtual Broadcast CE Program  
Held in conjunction with ASCRS

**NOW A 3-DAY VIRTUAL BROADCAST CE PROGRAM!**

### ASCRS and IJCAHPO's Technicians & Nurses Program Moves to a Virtual Broadcast in June

Gain the latest information on cataract and refractive surgery safely, from the comfort of your own home by registering for the ASCRS and IJCAHPO Technician and Nurses Program - Clinical, Surgical/Ambulatory Surgical Center (ASC) tracks. These innovative sessions will be transferred from the classroom into a Virtual Broadcast program held on three Saturdays:

**Part 1: June 6, 2020, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Central Time.**

**Part 2: June 13, 2020, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Central Time.**

[To Register for Parts 1 & 2 Click Here](#)

**Part 3: June 27, 2020, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Central Time.**

[To Register for Part 3 Click Here](#)

The program features 21 innovative courses during this three-day event. The June 6th and 13th two-day program is \$200, and the June 27th program is \$100. A total of 21 CE credits are offered for the three days.

**Save the dates! Register now!**



**ACE  
2020**

**Save the Date!**

**48<sup>th</sup> Annual Continuing Education Program**  
November 13-15, 2020 | Las Vegas, NV

**ACE 2020—Save the Date!**

Many of you may be asking, "Will ACE and AAO take place this year with the recent COVID-19 pandemic and shelter-in-place regulations?" **Yes!** Keep the dates of November 13-15, 2020 on your calendar as we are planning an exciting program that you will not want to miss—even if you cannot travel!

The 48th Annual Continuing Education (ACE) Program will have a new look and structure. At this time, plans are focused on a combined program with in-person programs at the Westgate Las Vegas Resort & Casino, as well as virtual broadcast educational opportunities.

The Premier Event in Eye Care Education will offer many new courses and more. This year's three-day event will launch on Friday, November 13, with our second-year special feature, the **Capstone Lectures: Innovations in Ophthalmology**. This fast-track one-day program features new and exciting developments in ophthalmology by experts in the field. **The Friday summit will be streamed live worldwide!**

**New This Year** – We will not send out our traditional ACE Bulletin, but instead we will have an extensive online program brochure that will highlight the November educational program. Registration will open after July 4, 2020. The full ACE program, and updates, will be listed on IJCAHPO's web site starting in July at [www.jcahpo.org/ace](http://www.jcahpo.org/ace).

We are realistic and know that much may change in the next several months. We will keep you updated regularly on the status. **In June, watch your email in-box and IJCAHPO's website for extensive details on the program.**

### **New CE Opportunities for 2020 - New Virtual Broadcast Events (VB) or Virtual On-Demand Events (VOD) in Fall 2020**

The world of education has evolved dramatically due to COVID-19. Virtual and distance education are the **new educational modalities** and we are excited to expand the ways we deliver quality programs to you—in the safety of your home or clinic! IJCAHPO is offering Virtual On-Demand (VOD) CE Programs that attendees can complete at their own pace and earn CE credits by completing a quiz and evaluation. Also offered are Virtual Broadcast (VB) CE Programs where attendees can take advantage of our new attendance monitoring system eliminating the need for taking quizzes.

### **Virtual and E-Learning Programs (Throughout the Summer)**

**June 6, 13, 27 – VB:** [ASCERS and IJCAHPO Technicians and Nurses Program](#)

**July 11 – VB:** [Phoenix, AZ - In cooperation with the Arizona Retinal Specialists and The Mayo Clinic](#)

**July 17 – VOD:** [CSOMP and IJCAHPO Virtual Annual CE Program](#)

**September 12:** [Cleveland, OH](#)

**September 12:** [Kiawah Island, SC - In conjunction with MUSC](#)

**October 24:** [New York, NY](#)

### **CE Regional Programs (Lectures Returning in the Fall, Watch for Updates)**

**September 18-19:** Greensboro, NC—In cooperation with NCSEPS

COT Certification Exam Prep Course

**October 9-11:** [Orlando, FL - In cooperation with FSO](#)

**October 11:** [COT Certification Exam Prep Course](#)

**November 13-15:** [48th ACE Program, Las Vegas, NV](#)

### **New Criteria and Application for Continuing Education Providers Handbook**

IJCAHPO has a new Criteria and Application for Continuing Education Providers handbook, effective May 1, 2020. This criteria and application handbook contains updated policies, fees, addition of Live Stream in acceptable formats, more user-friendly forms, and frequently asked questions. Applications postmarked on or after May 15, 2020, must comply with the updated policies, fees, and forms to be considered complete. [View the updated handbook HERE.](#)

**Implementing Telemedicine into the Ophthalmic Office - Sue Vicchilli, COT,**

## OCS, OCSR, Director, Coding & Reimbursement, AAO

Telemedicine is an alternative way to communicate medical care with patients who can't or won't come to the practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. While telemedicine coverage is physician work: **How can Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP) help?**

AOP can triage patients by phone. A new or established patient calls the practice. What is the complaint? If not emergency care, but requires communication with the ophthalmologist, follow these steps:

1. Notify parent/patient that there will be a charge to insurance for the telemedicine visit.
2. Confirm insurance.
3. Obtain:
  - a. The best phone number;
  - b. Email communication; or
  - c. Virtual two-way communication for telemedicine face-to-face encounters.
4. Notify the parent/patient when the physician will be in contact based on the communication options.

Coverage for telemedicine varies by payer. For best practices, check the websites for their top commercial payers and create a spreadsheet that specifies which codes and modifiers are recognized and which place of service is applicable. For more information, visit coding for telemedicine often at [aao.org](http://aao.org).

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## Certification

### **NEW! - Recertification applications are now online!**

IJCAHPO is pleased to announce online recertification application processing is now available to our certifiants. Online recertification application processing provides you with the ability to upload your documentation and pay online in one easy process. The addition of this new feature will save you time through the uploading of your documents and money by not having to mail your application. Once your application is submitted and your form of payment is accepted, you will receive a confirmation and receipt of your transaction.

Recertification criteria has remained the same and you will be required to submit the appropriate number of credits and required signatures.

[Start your recertification application HERE!](#)

Thank you for being an IJCAHPO Certificant! Keep checking our website, [www.jcahpo.org](http://www.jcahpo.org) for new educational offers, certifications, and services.

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## Educational Offers, Grants Available

### **Educational Offers**



# IJCAHPO Online Learning Systems®



*Sharpen your skills in six simulated areas:*

*Keratometry, Lensometry, Ocular Motility, Retinoscopy/Refinement, Tonometry & Visual Fields.*

**BONUS:** Access to online modules has been extended—now 6 months!

## **Get IJCAHPO’s Online Learning Systems simulations for 180 days for \$180!**

You will have access to comprehensive learning through online simulation, demonstrations of the skills using best practices, and learning how to measure and record results for the essential ophthalmic skills used in the clinical practice: keratometry, lensometry, visual fields, ocular motility, tonometry, and refraction (retinoscopy and refinement). This offer expires July 31, 2020. [To order, click HERE.](#)

## **June Preview – Summer Specials Coming Your Way!**

Plan to register for the rebroadcast of the 2019 Capstone Lectures and earn 5.5 CE credits for \$77! Originally live streamed during the Annual Continuing Education Program in San Francisco, you won’t want to miss these leading-edge topics and speakers. This course series is made possible with support by Allergan.

Next month, **3 NEW** online courses will be available for \$29! Watch for more information on these and other convenient, economical, and exciting educational opportunities to earn your CE credits.

## **A Tremendous Way to Save Money for All Clinical Practices: Share the Clinic Subscription With Your Manager!**

**IJCAHPO’s Clinic CE Subscription, an extensive collection of online courses for ophthalmic technicians, is available for ONLY \$349/year until June 1 for everyone at your location (regular price of \$549)!** 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 \$349 the Clinic CE Subscription offers all eye care team members in one location the use of the clinic’s coupon code to access 170+ IJCAHPO Group A credit online courses. Don’t miss this special spring limited time offer! Visit [www.jcahpo.org/ClinicCE](http://www.jcahpo.org/ClinicCE) to learn more, call us at 1-800-284-3937 and select prompt "6", or email us at [subscriptions@jcahpo.org](mailto:subscriptions@jcahpo.org).

## **Available Grants**

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

In 2000, Harold A. Stein, MD, established the Harold A. Stein MD, Award for the Best Scientific Paper by an Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP). This recognition is given to an AOP who demonstrates exemplary, original scientific research and authorship on any ophthalmic topic of their choice (i.e., glaucoma, contact lenses, dry eye, animal eyes, cataracts, macular degeneration, etc.). The award recipient will receive a prize of up to \$2,000!



*\*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 “The Ophthalmic Assistant: A Text for Allied and Associated Ophthalmic Personnel” now in its 10th edition. To perpetuate the prize, Dr. Stein is donating royalties from The Ophthalmic Assistant to the JCAHPO Education and Research Foundation*

To apply, complete and submit the application form on the Foundation's website [HERE](#).  
Application deadline: June 30

## New Resources: Education and Certification

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

### Updated COT Study Guide now available!

The COT Study Guide prepares you to take the Certified Ophthalmic Technician examination. 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? Refinement 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.**



*Refinements are single-topic articles and quiz packages authored by leading ophthalmologists and technicians. IJCAHPO awards 1 Group A Continuing Education Credit to those who successfully complete the module quiz.*

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

### 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.

#### **2020 Webinar Schedule**

**June 2:** [Albinism: New Thoughts on an Old Topic by William Astle, MD, FRCSC, Dipl. ABO](#)

**June 9:** [Idiopathic Intracranial Hypertension by William Ehlers, MD](#)

**June 16:** [IOL Calculations by Jack Holladay, MD, MSEE, FACS](#)

**June 23:** [Cataract Measurements from a Technician's Perspective by Warren Whitford, COMT \(Repeat\)](#)

**July 7:** [Graves' Ophthalmopathy by David A. Kostick, MD](#)

**July 14:** [Ophthalmic Imaging in 2020 by Dirk-Uwe Bartsch, PhD](#)

**July 21:** [Refraction Road Blocks and How to Move Past Them by Leslie Olander, COA](#)

**July 28:** [TASS \(Toxic Anterior Segment Syndrome\) by Rebecca Metzinger, MD \(Repeat\)](#)

Visit [store.jcahpo.org](http://store.jcahpo.org) for details.

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**Tech Corner – IJCAHPO's Leadership for Education and Certification are Two Experienced Leaders in the Ophthalmic Technician World**

## **An Interview with IJCAHPO's Secretary of Certification, Natalie Loyacano, COMT, ROUB, OSA**

When I was hired in the ophthalmology department at Ochsner, I learned about the opportunity of becoming certified. I no longer saw my position as a "job", instead a career. I wanted to make this my profession and be successful. To be successful, I knew there would be special training and knowledge needed to progress.



### **1. How did you get into this career field?**

I had applied for a medical assistant position at Ochsner and was hired by the Ophthalmology department.

### **2. What was your pathway to certification?**

When I was hired in the ophthalmology department at Ochsner, I learned about the opportunity of becoming certified. I no longer saw my position as a "job", instead a career. I wanted to make this my profession and be successful. To be successful, I knew there would be special training and knowledge needed to progress.

As an employee at the Tulane Ophthalmology Clinic, I was introduced to the COA program and to the skills test for the COMT exam. Let me explain...when the AAO Annual Meeting would be hosted in New Orleans, IJCAHPO would give the practical examination for the COMT exam at the ophthalmology clinic where I worked. I volunteered to be a "patient" for the testing participants to test their skills. Seeing the examination tasks and the knowledge required to complete the tasks energized me even more. I knew then that I wanted to complete every certification test and skill test to be just like the other COMT's.

At the Tulane Clinic, I was able to participate in the COA training program. Following completion of the COA program, I became eligible to take the COA test and passed the exam in 1989. I then became "hooked" and made it my goal to obtain my COT within the allotted 2-year timeframe. I read every book that was recommended to assist with studying and preparing for the COT test. During that time, I was also trained to assist in surgery and began preparing to take the Ophthalmic Surgical Assisting (OSA) exam. Once I became eligible to take the test, I took the COT and the OSA test and passed both. As soon as I was able to take my COT skill test, I did and passed; I was so excited! I changed jobs to work in clinics that gave me the experience necessary to take and pass the COMT skill test. Even though it took me 13 years to finally become a COMT, I never gave up hope! My journey to obtain the COMT certification was long, but I was able to gain valuable knowledge and the skills needed to accomplish my goals.

### **3. Why is certification important to you?**

Certification has always been important to me. I have tried to inspire many others to pursue certification. I was inspired by many colleagues and friends I met by being involved with ATPO. I was able to increase my skills, knowledge, pay, and opportunities by being certified.

### **4. Tell us about your role as Secretary of Certification for IJCAHPO.**

As Secretary of Certification, my goal along with IJCAHPO's goal, is to increase the number of ophthalmic assistants to become certified. Keeping the test up to date with current information is crucial in making the test valuable.



## **5. What advice or tips do you have for Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP)?**

Never give up on your goals. There are so many more resources available to assist with preparing for every level of certification. Being certified has given me the confidence to become an educator for the patient and a competent assistant for the physician. Never turn away opportunity by saying "it's not my job"! If it's not your job, then take the opportunity to learn it!

## **An Interview with IJCAHPO's Secretary of Education, Christine McDonald, COA, ROUB, OSC, COE, CTC, OCS**

The owner physician at my past practice was very pro-education of all staff, especially the technicians, as he saw the technical staff as extenders of the doctors and felt the more educated the technicians were, the better the patient care. In this practice we had 100% technician certification rate. Our technicians were better equipped to handle patients, understood what to ask during the history taking portion of the exam, knew if something wasn't 'right' the patient would need more testing, would consult with the doctors on how they wanted to proceed with extra testing, and had outstanding results on workups and refraction.



### **1. How did you get into this career field?**

I shared a babysitter with the office manager of a small ophthalmology practice. They were looking for a front desk person and she asked me if I would be interested. I called her several times asking questions about the job; I really wasn't sure if I was interested. I finally agreed to an interview. The owner physician was very pleasant, and I was offered the front desk position and took it. I started at the front desk and like all smaller offices, took on many rolls including surgery coordinator, billing, and eventually running the front office. This physician was a great teacher. He would show us interesting things with the patient in the exam room and I learned quite a bit from him over the 10 years I worked for him.

### **2. What was your pathway to certification and why is certification important to you?**

It was a hard decision to leave my first practice, but having no room for growth, I felt it was time. I accepted a position at another ophthalmology practice. I was managing this practice, both front office and clinic. I wanted to learn more of the technical side of the business, to have a better understanding of what our technicians did and to help me better lead them and troubleshoot any problems in the clinic. I started working with patients and studying for the COA exam while running the practice. Being a technician is a labor of love. I found I truly enjoyed working with patients one-on-one. I was very fortunate to work for this practice; the owner physician was very pro-education of all staff, especially the technicians, as he saw the technical staff as extenders of the doctors and felt the more educated the technicians were, the better the patient care. In this practice we had 100% technician certification rate. Our technicians were better equipped to handle patients, understood what to ask during the history taking portion of the exam, knew if something wasn't 'right' the patient would need more testing, would consult with the doctors on how they wanted to proceed with extra testing, and had outstanding results on workups and refraction. After almost 20 years working in this practice, I went on to achieve my ROUB and COE certifications, however it was with sadness that the owner physician was ready to retire and sold the practice. I then found my current position with The Retina Institute as Director of Billing and Operations. Moving into retina was a big change after spending 30 years in comprehensive ophthalmology.

### **3. Tell us about your role as Secretary of Education for IJCAHPO.**

My role as Secretary of Education is very exciting. The role of an ophthalmic technician

continues to change and advance, and IJCAHPO is working on more educational programs, with higher levels of learning content, to keep up with this demand. We are also integrating different delivery methods and modalities for education, and I am very excited about the upcoming Annual CE meeting in Las Vegas. We are adding many new topics and lectures to the program.

#### **4. What advice or tips do you have for Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP)?**

This is a fantastic field where you are able to work closely with physicians and patients, providing care and helping to restore and improve patients' vision. Technical advances in the field happen rapidly, providing the opportunity to continuously learn and grow. Being in this field has allowed me to grow in many directions, including the opportunity to travel to Haiti multiple times. There I worked in an eye clinic and OR with physicians and technicians from across the country, helping to perform exams and surgeries, changing the lives of the patients we serve.

#### **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@jcahpo.org](mailto:cert@jcahpo.org). We will follow up and use your story to inspire others.



The image is a promotional graphic for TechAlliance by Allergan. It features a woman's face on the right side. On the left, there is a logo with the letters 'TA' in a blue circle, followed by the text 'TechALLIANCE by Allergan'. Below the logo is a blue banner with the text 'Join the Alliance'. Underneath the banner, it says 'Access patient savings, pharmacy callback guides, and patient counseling resources.' and 'Join the Alliance ▶'. At the bottom, there is a small copyright notice: '© 2019 Allergan. All rights reserved. All trademarks are the property of their respective owners. CDT119323 01/19 183575'.

**Thank you Allergan for your continued support of AOP and IJCAHPO's Annual CE meeting! Watch for more information about this year's event and visit: [www.allergantechalliance.com](http://www.allergantechalliance.com)**

***We want to make EyeLights a valuable resource to you. We appreciate your feedback on what you want to know more about and to make the next one more valuable to you and the profession. Please email us: [jcahpo@jcahpo.org](mailto:jcahpo@jcahpo.org).***

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