



AMERICAN ACADEMY
of **OPTOMETRY**

For Immediate Release
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Academy 2026 Anaheim Highlights Research, Innovation, and Leaders Shaping the Future of Eye Care

Winter Park, FL – October 8, 2026 – Academy 2026 Anaheim, held September 30 – October 3, 2026, was the 104th annual meeting of the American Academy of Optometry. The annual meeting served as a gathering place for leaders across optometry and vision science to share emerging research, examine advances in clinical care and education, and explore developments shaping the future of the profession. The meeting brought together 7,648 registrants, including 4,452 optometrists and vision scientists and 1,161 students, for four days of education, research, innovation and connection.

The Plenary Session was titled “Insights to Action: Research Redefining Clinical Practice Today,” and highlighted seven landmark studies reshaping clinical care across the profession, spotlighted by leaders from the Academy’s Sections and Special Interest Groups (SIGs). Presentations included:

Semaglutide and Vision Risk: Translating Emerging Evidence on NAION into Clinical Care
Leonard Messner, OD, FAAO
Neuro-Ophthalmic Disorders Section

Interventions of Neurotrophic Keratopathy: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis
Zanna Kruoch, OD, FAAO, Dipl AAO
Anterior Segment Section

TFOS DEWS III in the Real World: One Year Later from Framework to Chairside Care
James Wolffsohn, PhD, DSc, FAAO, Dipl AAO
Section on Cornea, Contact Lenses, and Refractive Technologies

Wavefront-guided Scleral Lenses: A Technology at the Tipping Point
Jason Marsack, PhD, FAAO
Vision Science Section

CONCUSS Randomized Clinical Trial of Vergence/Accommodative Therapy for Concussion-related Symptomatic Convergence Insufficiency
Tara Alvarez, PhD, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Binocular Vision, Perception, and Pediatric Optometry Section
How ZEDS Is Reshaping Clinical Practice
Christen Kenrick, OD, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Anterior Segment Section

Optimizing Atropine Therapy for Myopia Control: Lessons from the LAMP Phase 4 Study

Shelby Johnson, OD, MPH, FAAO
Myopia Management SIG

The Monroe J. Hirsch Symposium, “Oculomics: Leveraging Ocular Biomarkers to Assess Systemic Health,” explored the emerging field of oculomics and its potential to use ocular biomarkers to provide insights into systemic health, bringing together experts from across vision science and related disciplines. Presenters included Drs. Vivek Srinivasan, Nawajes Mandal, and Doug Borchman with moderators Drs. Andrew Pucker and Erin Tomiyama.

Building on the Academy’s role as a Cochrane Eyes and Vision (CEV) Center for Evidence-Based Vision Care, Academy 2026 Anaheim also featured Eyes on Evidence | AAO + CEV Program Reviews. The session highlighted five recent systematic reviews addressing important clinical questions in areas including presbyopia, pediatric vision and telemedicine for diabetic retinopathy screening. By bringing rigorous evidence into the clinical conversation, the program demonstrated the Academy’s ongoing commitment to advancing evidence-based vision care and translating research into meaningful insights for patient care.

A highlight of the meeting was the confirmation of 319 new Fellows. Fellows of the Academy must complete a candidacy process that includes submitting written work demonstrating their skills as an optometrist or vision scientist, and sitting for an oral exam at the annual meeting of the Academy. It is estimated that 10% of practicing optometrists in the United States are Fellows of the American Academy of Optometry (FAAO). Optometrists, scientists, educators, librarians, administrators and editors are eligible to become Fellows of the Academy and earn the right to use “FAAO” after their name.

In addition, an impressive record 19 individuals were awarded Diplomate status by Sections of the American Academy of Optometry. Diplomates are Fellows of the Academy who wish to demonstrate their skill in a specific area. Currently ten Sections offer Diplomate programs: Anterior Segment; Binocular Vision, Perception and Pediatric Optometry; Comprehensive Eye Care; Cornea, Contact Lenses & Refractive Technologies; Glaucoma; Low Vision; Neuro-Ophthalmic Disorders; Optometric Education; Public Health & Environmental Vision; and Vision Science.

The meeting also marked a leadership transition, as Dr. Carl Spear of Pensacola, FL, was inducted as President of the American Academy of Optometry on Thursday, October 1. He will serve his 2027-28 term alongside the following board members: Dr. Andrew Mick (President-Elect), Dr. Chris Wilmer (Secretary-Treasurer), Dr. Jeffrey Walline (Immediate Past President), Dr. Nicholas Colatrella, Dr. Nancy Wong, Dr. Susy Yu, and newly elected board member, Dr. David Berntsen.

2026 New Diplomates

Anterior Segment Clinical Diplomates

Erich Hinel, OD, MS, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Benjamin Graham, OD, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Binocular Vision, Perception and Pediatric Optometry Clinical Diplomates

Aaron Salzano, OD, FAAO, FOVDR, Dipl AAO

Chak Yin Li, MCLinOptom, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Binocular Vision, Perception and Pediatric Optometry Research Diplomate

Arijit Chakraborty, PhD, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Cornea, Contact Lenses & Refractive Technologies Clinical Diplomates

Lily Arendt, OD, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Dawn Lam, MSc, OD, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Brooke Messer, OD, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Caitlin Morrison, OD, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Cheryl Zabrowski, OD, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Cornea, Contact Lenses & Refractive Technologies Research Diplomates

Caroline Blackie, MS, PhD, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Maria Walker, OD, PhD, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Glaucoma Clinical Diplomate

Scott Anthony, OD, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Low Vision Clinical Diplomate

Xiao (Shawn) Yu, OD, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Optometric Education Clinical Diplomate

John P. Gialousakis, OD, EdM, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Public Health and Environmental Vision Clinical Diplomates

Jeanie Lucy, OD, MPH, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Nadine Furtado, OD, MSc, FAAO, Dipl AAO

Vision Science Research Diplomates

Andrew Carkeet, PhD, FAAO, Dipl AAO
Safal Khanal, OD, PhD, FAAO, Dipl AAO

2026 New Fellows

Rayan Abilmouna	Hailey Champion Caudill	Mikaila Gallagher
Kaelyn Adams	Kasey Chan	Eva Gao
Nabila Al-Tamimi	Samantha Chan	Jessica Garcia
Daniela Alcantar	Shannon Chan	Shannon Gavin
Kandace Alfred	Allissa Chang	Mia Gheduzzi
Cristina Alvarez-Peregrina	Jaclyn Charbonneau	Darren Giglioizzi
Lynette Amematekpor	Xiao Tong Chen	Heather Gitchell
Pious Amoako	Elizabeth Chetty	Traci-Lin Goddin
Emmanuel Ekow Ampiah	Santosh Chhetri	Courtney Goode
Angela Anderson	Claire Chu	Lauren Gormley
Gabrielle Anderson	Sarah Chung	Tracy Gose
Emmanuel Anning	Wincy Chung	Sabyasachi Goswami
Ernest Anosike	Yau Han Eva Chung	Kevin Gress
Affan Ansari	Candis Clark	Isabel Groth
Antoinette Antwi	Christopher Clark	Amy Gu
Kwame Antwi-Boasiako	Emily Coan	Satish Gupta
Obiageri Anyadigibe	Allison Couture	Bradley Habermehl
Diana Arredondo	Mackenzie Coyne	Jennifer Xiu-Fang Haensel
Anitha Arvind	Dayne Crouch	Nicole Haessly
Shabistan Asrar	Angela Cunanan	Anna Beth Harris
Purva Atreay	Anastasia D'Amico	Abigail Hartle
Elizabeth Avery	Sergio Diaz Gomez	Yakout Jade Hatoum
Nataliya Babiychuk	Lauren Disterhaft	Andrea Hawryluk
Madison Bailey	Hong An Do	Lea Heuer
Laura Baldino	Annie Dong	Kylvin Ho
Nikhil Bansal	Kylie Donohue	Daniel Hoffman
Elizabeth Bedell	Brianna Doyle	Jennifer Holmes
Esther Ben-Chika	Charles Druckman	Paa Kwesi Fynn Hope
Kayla Beraldo-Turner	Natalie Duider	Collette Houssan
Ian Binns	Taisiya Dulin	Emily Huang
Kelsey Blalock	Molly Duong	Adam Hulisz
Noelle Bock	Jane Eluwa	Tracey Huynh
Christian Boggess	Shaila Emani	Vithusha Illanganathan
Clarice Bouvier	Edafe Emurotu	Uchechukwu Iwuanyanwu
Emily Brill	Kayla Eshbaugh	Jacinth Priscilla
Terry Bush	John Esser	Sara Javidinejad
Rachel Bushey	Mary Fazelian	Lakshpreet Jeor
MJ Bustamante	Arthur Fernandes	Yaadam Jobe
Holly Carlson	Meron Fitta	Jini John
Courtney Carmain	Amber Flynn	Marlin John
Keith Castleton	Maddison Fortman	Kristin Joseph
Sayantika Chakrabarti	Shail Gajjar	Reetu Julakanti

Kimberly Juntarashine
Anthony Kamalu
Rachel Kane
Byung Soo Kang
Isabel Kazour
Christie Ugochi Kenneth-
Ohaeri
Matthew Keyzer
Alice Kim
Allen Kim
Kendra Kim
Lauren King
Samantha Klemann
Ciara Knapp
Meghan Knizak
Rohan Kolte
Anna Konstantinidis
Ayakoro Koroye-Egbe
Daniel Kowalsky Moskaliuk
Abigail Kuborn
Meenakshi Kumar
Jon Kuznia
Philip Kwok
Raphael Kyei
Emily Kyle
Amy Lanzendorf
Jenny Lau
Jennifer G. Le
Jennifer T. Le
Betty Li
Yuan Li
Debbie Lieu
Catherine Liu
Fay Liu
Payton Lock
Katharine Lockwood
Walter Long
Kristine Ly
Sydney Lyncook
Gopinath Madeswaran
Emily Magas
Brooke Major
Rakesh Maldoddi
Jacqueline Malish
Karena Malluege
Izma Mamoon
Manoj Manoharan
Aleksandra Marijan
Sherin Mathew
Kaylin Maxwell
Juliana Mazzotta

Karen McCloud
Julliette Mensah
Caleb Mergener
Brandon Merrill
Kelsey Miller
Megan Mirsberger
Alisa Molina
Parker Monsen
Sarah Muha
Gilbert Nacouzi
Amber Naqvi
Modesta Ndulaka
Halle Neyens
Christopher Nguyen
Karen Nguyen
Kathy Nguyen
Lucas Nguyen
Michael Nguyen
Rita Nguyen
Tanya-Thaovy Nguyen
Tuong-Vy Nguyen
Vanna Nguyen
Amber Nichols
Yufei Nie
Carol Adanma Nneji
Allison Noe
Joshua Normandeau
Marija Novakovich
Emmanuel Obeng
Osamudiamen Ogiemudia
Ugochi Ohabuike
Ejiro Peggy Ohwin
Akpobome Okpare
Onome Nancy Okuh
Bright Vandyke Okyere
Lauren Olmstead
Igwebuike Onwumelu
Onyekachi Oparah
Isela Orozco
Kioba Oruambo
Jennifer Padolina
Suharsha Paidimarri
Diana Pajongvirotjanasakul
Navjot Pannu
Riya Paranthan
Dhara Patel
Dhruvi Patel
Nathan Patterson
Elaine Petry
Janna Pham
Vivian Pham

Jackeline Pivaral
Kevin Pizarro Miller
Paige Pline
Benjamin Ofoe Portuphy
Julie Poteet
Weronika Przepiora
Daniel Rafla
Luis Ramirez
Subhiksha Rangavittal
Vasudha Rao
Joshua Reese
Kaitlyn Rexroad
Alexander Rief
Azalia Roach
Collin Robillard
Kayleigh Rohr
Citlalli Rosas Medina
Andrew Rothstein
Jack Rouleau
Samantha Round
Joshua Russell
Jannah Said
Timothy Said
Megan Sajer
Miguel Ángel Sanchez Tena
Padmaja Sankaridurg
Sidra Sarwat
Jeanne Saw
Lotus Schifsky
Nicole Schmiedt Neumann
Madison Schnell
Nathan Schramm
Patrick Schultz
Allison Shelton-
Tahdooahnippah
Justin Simbulan
Reneta Simeon
Amrit Singh
Farrah Sitto
Agatha Sleboda
Samantha Southard
Barbara Stivala
Lindsay Stronz
Madhumathi Subramanian
Valliammai Subramanian
William Sullins
Mitchell Sullivan
Rheza Marisse Tabasuares
Hena Tahir
Jia Tan
Christina Tanios

Claire Tashner
Christina Thompson
Jean Thomson
Cindy Tieu
Amanda Tran
Kelly Tran
Sophia Tran
Tammi Tse
Kaitlyn Tsou
Benjamin Turner
François Régis
Twiringirimana
Gillian Uldrich
Keith Uyemura
Steve Van Grouw

Lee Vartigian
Sakshi Vasiu
Heather Vigo-Sanchez
Brian Vo
Harrison Vo
Jimmy Vo
Julie Vu
Shara Vu
Lauren Vuong
Siulley Vuong
Sonal Aswin Vyas
Hannah Walleck
Jessica Wang
Shaye Wang
Si Wang

Raymond Warner
Amber Watkins
Gabriella Watson
Jessi Wieck
Don Williams
Autumnn Wooten
Mallory Wright
Chieh-Lin Stanley Wu
Mary Beth Yackey
Shawn Yamane
Joseph Nifandam Yennu
Jillian Youngerman
Amy Zheng

About the American Academy of Optometry

The American Academy of Optometry inspires excellence in eye care by fostering research and disseminating knowledge in vision science through its journals, Optometry and Vision Science and Clinical Insights in Eyecare, and the continuing education presented at its annual meeting. Fellows of the Academy are committed to the premise that learning is a lifelong obligation of a professional, as is the commitment to expand the profession's knowledge base through ongoing fellowship and exchange.

In 2027, the Academy will bring its continuing education to three regional meetings focused on myopia, glaucoma and ocular emergencies, in addition to its annual meeting, Academy 2027 San Antonio, November 10 - 13, 2027, in San Antonio, TX. For more information, visit www.aaopt.org.

About the American Academy of Optometry Foundation

The American Academy of Optometry Foundation is the 501(c)(3) philanthropic arm of the American Academy of Optometry. It was founded in 1947 for "upholding, broadening, fostering, promoting, and aiding optometric education, the profession of optometry, and its practitioners." The Foundation provides financial support for optometric research and vision and eye health education to improve patient clinical care. Learn more at www.aaopt.org/aaof.

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