



Optical's Most Influential Women VisionMonday 2008

Success Stories

NEW YORK—Women's professional involvement in virtually every segment of the vision care field and optical industry continues to escalate.

And, as several of this year's **Vision Monday** honorees observed, the female's role in the industry can be attributed to forces as varied as eyewear's ascension to the fashion and brand arenas as well as women's expansion throughout the health-care professions, financial services and technology industries. A powerful force, women are increasingly taking on leadership roles throughout local, regional and national companies via research and development, design, marketing, sales, educational institutions and senior management.

In this 6th year of **Vision Monday's** highly-anticipated Annual "Most Influ-

ential Women" report, we take a new approach. We wanted to widen the scope of women we continue to recognize, who make leadership contributions throughout the ECP, retail, supplier, lab, managed care and association landscape.

So we solicited nominations and organized our honorees in four arenas:

- **Executive Suite:** Candidates are women who hold the positions of president, CEO, CFO, CMO, CIO or COO who guide their companies forward, inspire leadership among their teams and peers and achieve high performance. They are industry influencers who set the tone for their companies and the industry.

- **Mentors:** Candidates are women who

are team builders, developers of talent, who via example or education and training successfully influence others to learn and to grow in their business or professional acumen, within their organizations or among others in the industry.

- **Rising Stars:** Candidates are women who are "up-and-comers" in their careers and within their companies or arenas within the industry; sharp talents who are on their way toward higher levels of responsibility and influence.

- **Innovators:** Candidates are women who have initiated new product developments or special programs in the arena of marketing, technology or retail, who have spearheaded innovative business ideas or

enterprises that are achieving marked success and reinventing old ideas.

Via networking, coaching as well as education, training and plain old hard work, women are building careers and making contributions throughout every phase of the market and interaction with patients and customers. We hope you enjoy reading their "stories" of success in this challenging and ever-changing world of optical.

We join our readers in saluting them and also want to re-congratulate the several hundred women who have been recognized in our five prior years of reports. Visit www.visionmonday.com to review those rosters of Wonder Women.

—*The Editors*

METHODOLOGY

Nomination forms requesting submissions for **Vision Monday's** 6th Annual "Most Influential Women in Optical" report were issued via Jobson's **Vision Monday, 20/20** and **Review of Optometry** publications and Web sites during the months of May and June 2008.

This year's request for nominations was structured differently than in prior years. The purpose of this was to widen the scope of women we continue to recognize in the report, who make leadership contributions throughout the ECP,

retail, supplier, lab, managed care and association landscape.

Readers were asked to make up to three nominations per the following categories: **Executive Suite, Mentors, Rising Stars and Innovators.** The nomination form defined these as: **Executive Suite**—Candidates are women who hold the positions of president, CEO, CFO, CMO, CIO or COO that guide their companies forward, inspire leadership among their teams and peers and achieve high performance. They are industry influencers who set the tone for their companies and the industry. **Men-**

tors—Candidates are women who are team builders, developers of talent, who via example or education and training successfully influence others to learn and to grow in their business or professional acumen, within their organizations or among others in the industry. **Rising Stars**—Candidates are women who are "up-and-comers" within their companies or arenas within the industry; sharp talents who are on their way toward higher levels of responsibility and influence. **Innovators**—Candidates are women who have initiated new product developments or special programs in marketing,

technology or retail, who have spearheaded innovative business ideas or enterprises that are achieving marked success and reinventing old ideas.

The "Influential Women" process is not a vote or a ranking. The number of nominations received did not determine final selection. More than 230 nominations were reviewed and categorized. **Vision Monday's** editors reviewed each entry and made the final selection.

The "Chosen Because..." selections are drawn from the nominations submitted for each candidate. Honorees are organized alphabetically by category. ■

Executive Suite

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Women who hold the positions of president, CEO, CFO, CMO, CIO or COO or who are industry influencers who set the tone. They guide their companies forward, inspire leadership among their teams and peers and achieve high performance.

Giancarla Agnoli

Senior Vice President,
Design and Managing Director,
Marchon Italy
Marchon Eyewear, Inc.
Puos d'Alpago, Italy

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."She oversees a great operation in design and research, managing some 220 people plus 50 sales reps...her dedication and commitment are critical to the company."



Agnoli was working in the export group at Marcolin, working closely with the "new" Marchon Eyewear company from the outset 25 years ago as the frame company developed products from the Italian factory. She became so involved with Marchon that she came on board after proposing the company needed a full-time design and production facility in Italy.

Today, she oversees several major functions—distribution, via Marchon's distribution center and its growing sales force in Italy, the company's production facility and its research and design group, working with licensors like Fendi, Pucci and others to bring to market the company's brands and developing new materials, applications and coloring technologies, interacting, too, with the company's U.S. based design team.

Agnoli noted, "Because our industry has become so much a fashion-influenced business, it is attracting more women today, women feel at ease in this business."

SHE SAYS..."My motto has always been 'where there's a will, there's a way.' Determination and passion are important, get involved and bring your ideas across. Have no fear in expressing your viewpoint but have the intelligence and humility to accept a 'no,' evaluate, and always learn from whatever comes your way."

Cary Carlson

Senior Buyer, U.S. Optical
Costco Optical
Issaquah, Wash.

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."Cary implemented an extremely successful private-label eyewear program, and her 'turns' in eyewear are by far the best in the industry...ask any supplier who's the best buyer in optical, and her name will be one of the first you hear."



Cary Carlson is coming up on her third anniversary (Aug. 1) as Costco Optical's senior buyer. In that role, she oversees purchasing for all product categories carried in the wholesale club's more than 360 U.S. vision centers, with primary responsibility for ophthalmic frame and sunwear buying. Before this position, Carlson had been Costco's frame and sunwear buyer since 1997, having moved over then from the lens category.

Carlson got her start in the optical business in 1985 as a dispenser with Lee Optical in Arizona. After working for independent optometrists for a few years, she moved to a Costco Optical location in Tucson in 1989, training under Art Salas, Costco's current vice president of optical. Carlson transferred to San Diego as an optical-department manager a year later, then became operations coordinator and continued to climb the ladder at Costco Optical from there.

Said Carlson, "It's exciting to me how the frame and sunwear industry has evolved from function to totally fashion, including the designer representation. I'm very enthusiastic and passionate about eyewear, and I love my job."

SHE SAYS..."I've seen no sign that women are held back in the optical industry, as long as they prove themselves. In fact, it's even easier for women to succeed today, because we see more focus on recognizing women and their abilities in this business."

Michelle Clark

Chief Financial Officer
The Kenmark Group
Louisville, Ky.

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."Michelle made a large impact on Kenmark's financial planning and systems in her very first year at Kenmark. She was very important in implementing our ESOP plan. She continues to have a huge impact on Kenmark and we are very lucky to have her."



With 15 years of accounting experience, including a stint as the manager of financial reporting for a publicly traded company and five years as a CPA,

Michelle Clark has brought a wealth of financial experience to the Kenmark Group in her six years with the company.

Clark's most notable accomplishment as CFO was her role helping to implement Kenmark's Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP), of which she is the administrator. As a 100 percent employee-owned company, Kenmark is the only employee-owned eyewear company in the optical industry.

She credits much of her success to a managing partner of the CPA firm she worked for right after college who mentored her and showed her how important it is to lead by example. With his guidance, Clark not only sharpened her accounting skills, but developed a high level of professionalism and effective leadership skills—all tools she was able to use when Kenmark became a client of the firm.

After spending several weeks at Kenmark performing fieldwork and several years auditing the company, she developed a real interest for the optical industry and the rest, as they say, is history.

SHE SAYS..."Working for someone who is truly passionate about what they are doing made me realize at an early age that in order to excel I needed to be passionate about life,

work, values and others. My advice to anyone beginning their career is to choose a career they are passionate about."

Dawn Friedkin

Chief Operating Officer
Classic Optical Laboratories, Inc.
Youngstown, Ohio

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."Dawn Friedkin is not afraid to venture into uncharted waters and will take whatever direction is needed to accomplish the Classic Optical dream, with her employees at the core of her inspiration and her dreams at the core of ours. All recognize her sincerity, dedication, integrity and ambition. She is a role model, mentor and inspiration for the Classic Optical family."



Dawn Friedkin has come a long way from her summer job as a teenager "traying up frames" for the first state of Ohio Medicaid eye-glass contract. Now

with more than 15 years experience in law, business, government, public policy, strategic planning, and organizational management, Friedkin is the chief operating officer of her family's wholesale ophthalmic laboratory business, Classic Optical where she oversees all operations and provides the strategic vision for the company's future.

"I believe that it is important to give your team enough room to work and think on their own while keeping yourself informed enough to set realistic goals that challenge your team to be the best," said Friedkin.

Friedkin wears several hats and ultimately does whatever is needed to get the job done including taking the lead on major sales presentations, participating in the assessment of new products, equipment, and the related developing technologies. She is also active in mentoring and training new and experienced associates.



**WE KNEW WE COULDN'T BE
THE ONLY ONES WHO RECOGNIZED
YOUR POTENTIAL.**



**Congratulations to
Darcy Kemp**

**Named A "Rising Star" Among *Vision Monday's*
2008 Most Influential Women In Optical**

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SHE SAYS...The optical industry provides a wonderful place for women to excel in the workplace at all levels. I am thrilled to join this year's group of Influential Women honorees because I believe they represent the best and brightest our industry has to offer."

Lisa Gear

**Director of Optical Frame Sourcing
Luxottica Retail
Mason, Ohio**

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."She has an extremely consultative approach and an outstanding taste level that she is able to translate to multiple business models."



Gear had been working as director of a local modeling agency in Cincinnati when she was drawn by the opportunity to grow and learn with a relatively new

company at the time, LensCrafters, that was clearly on a major growth track. For the past 22 years, Gear has worked in a range of roles for the retail organization, from customer service to the company's high-end boutique projects to buyer of men's and contemporary eyewear and sunwear.

Earlier this year, Gear was promoted to the newly-created position of director, optical product for Luxottica Retail, where she will directly influence the frame assortments for all Luxottica Retail optical brands, including LensCrafters, Pearle, Sears Optical and Target Optical. Said Gear, "I think I am someone who has strong relationships with a broad range of vendors and I'd been doing a lot of trend forecasting and have had much interaction with our factories. The new organization allows our buying teams to be more plugged into their brands and focus on their business. I focus outward to the vendor community and if the teams need to know things, my team goes out and researches for them, presenting new lines in clear, concise manner and developing the tools they need to be successful with their brands."

Gear said she's had many mentors, and credits Luxottica Retail's Joel Sodano, who just recently retired, to helping her with straightforward feedback and constantly challenging growth.

SHE SAYS..."It's all about passion. Stay connected to it. But keep a balance in your life, that's important. In terms of business, females are the gatekeepers to where families spend their money—the female perspective is becoming more important and more considered."

Lisa Howard, OD

**President
Kentucky Optometric Association
Middlesboro, Ky.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."Dr. Howard is the current president of the Kentucky Optometric Association and is only the third woman to hold that position. She has also served on the Board of Health and many other civic organizations. Lisa is recognized by her peers as an outstanding leader in the ophthalmic field and serves as a great role model to all women in optometry."



Lisa Howard, OD, has been in private practice for more than 22 years and during that time, she has always managed to give back to her community on

both the local and state levels. As president of the Kentucky Optometric Association, she oversees the entire organization consisting of 350 members and travels extensively throughout the state and across the country representing optometry in Kentucky. For the past eight years, she has served on the Kentucky Board of Examiners, the only woman appointed by the Governor to help represent and regulate the practice of optometry. "By stepping 'outside the usual box' for jobs usually held by men, I believe I have made these things seem possible for other women. Women are choosing optometry as their career in record numbers and as their numbers grow, certainly their influence will grow as well."

Howard describes her business as a family practice, treating everyone from infants to seniors and featuring an in-house lab for finishing lenses as well as a dispensary with a dedicated optician. "My personal business philosophy is to provide the utmost in customer service—and remember, the patient is always right."

SHE SAYS..."Sometimes, the harder things are, the more rewarding they are. It definitely takes a certain amount of sacrifice, discipline, and a lot of hard work, but balancing your own practice, a happy family, good income, and control of your time is something very attainable."

Cindy Keil

**Senior Buyer
Eye Care Associates
Raleigh, N.C.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."Cindy began her career in eyecare as an optical consultant selling eyewear in the Eye Care Associates small flagship office. As the company grew, she transitioned into a greater management role, where she is now an integral part of strategic planning initiatives overseeing inventory, sales promotions and budgets."



Over 20 years ago Cindy Keil interviewed for an accounting position at the small Raleigh, N.C.-based optometric practice, Eye Care Associates.

Though that position had already been filled, she was asked to join the optical sales department.

Through the years, she's received support from Eye Care Associates founder and CEO, Dr. Stephen Bolick, who she credits with teaching her just about everything she knows about the optical industry, and Bob Brodney, president of the company, who she said has shown her many different ways to look at the business. Today, her position allows her to explore her interest in unique eyewear and drives her to be the exclusive or first provider of high-end eyewear in the area.

In addition to her optical responsibilities, Keil manages and oversees new office design and construction for the high volume practice, something that allows her to marry her personal interest in interior design with her love of eyecare. She has personally overseen four cold start openings and five significant remodel efforts in a four-year time span.

SHE SAYS..."I help people get what they need to do their jobs better, supporting people to help them do their jobs more effectively. You shouldn't be afraid to ask questions, to get involved. Sometimes we can

feel intimidated but showing you're smart and motivated is the best thing you can do for your career."

Benitha Mintz

**Chief Financial Officer
Zyloware, Inc.
Long Island City, N.Y.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."She brought new ideas and innovation to the entire company, singlehandedly streamlining systems to improve the bottom line of this 85-year-old family business. She has global business views, keeps her staff focused and is customer-oriented."



Mintz, with a B.S. degree in accounting from New York's Hunter College, worked in public accounting and moved to a women's apparel and sleep-

wear apparel company as controller for 14 years. She was looking to make a change and joined the Shyers nearly three years ago at Zyloware in a transition from their long-time controller who was retiring.

"This was a good size company, but a family business and needed someone to bring them to the next level. I saw a real opportunity to make a difference, that's a goal for me. I work in tandem with our operations manager and saw many parallels with the apparel business, and have helped switch to new systems and processes." Mintz was promoted two months ago to the CFO position.

Mintz, 43, oversees a team of five. She noted, "Work is about learning and trying to create the opportunities you have. One of my former bosses in public accounting always told me, 'Be passionate about what you do, never stop learning.'"

SHE SAYS..."Don't be afraid. With mistakes, you learn. Women can be assertive, but not aggressive. Never forget where you came from and don't be intimidated. Mistakes can be good, you have to show your capabilities."

Dame Mary Perkins, DBE FBOA

**Co-Founder, Board Member
Specsavers Optical Group
Guernsey, U.K.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."She is passionate about eyecare but also about people; she is down to earth,

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humble and remains at the heart of the business, with a strong focus on public relations and corporate social responsibility."



Perkins recalls that when she qualified in 1965/1966, "there were very few women doing optics in college and therefore, once working, very few women optometrists, or ophthalmic opticians, as we were then called, in practice. I started my own business as soon as I was fully qualified and this led to many surprised comments."

She and her husband, Douglas Perkins, founded Bebbington and Perkins Opticians in Bristol in 1967, selling the 23 stores in 1980. They opened the first Specsavers store in 1980. Rapid expansion via their unique "joint venture" business model in the U.K. was followed by openings in Holland, Scandinavia, Spain and other European markets; last year the company established operations in Australia. Specsavers opened its 1,000th store this year, celebrating record turnover of £1,050 billion.

The recipient of numerous honors, including the first Spirit of Everywoman Award, Outstanding Businesswoman Award, Rotary International Community and Vocational Service Award and honorary fellow at Cardiff University, Perkins was made a Dame Commander of the British Empire in 2007.

She is a member of the Group's board of directors, responsible for relationships with the optical partners and the company's charity strategy, still working on the "shop floor" several days each month. Perkins noted, "I believe passionately in providing affordable eyecare for everyone."

She says..."You never stop learning. I have encouraged women in our group to have a career path and personal development plan. It's a matter of using good appraisal systems and making sure they have a good career progression plan mapped out."

Andrea Saia

Chief Executive Officer
CIBA Vision
Duluth, Ga.

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."With her results-oriented and spirited leader-

ship style, she challenges and motivates her colleagues to strive for excellence. While her drive and energy level are unmatched, she is always 'cool' under pressure and is always open to new ideas."



With a solid track record in brand marketing in a range of fields, Saia, the first female CEO of the company, joined CIBA Vision in April 2002 as global head of marketing. She has held numerous positions in the U.S. and Switzerland including the role of COO for CIBA Vision, overseeing all operating activities. She was also global lens franchise head and head of the Europe, Middle East and Africa region.

A Chicago native, Saia has built businesses, people and organizations across multiple companies, industries, geographies, channels, and cultures. Prior to joining CIBA, Saia worked in a variety of senior level positions at Revlon and Unilever/Helene Curtis and started her career in brand management with Procter & Gamble. She holds a bachelor's degree from Miami University and MBA from the J.L. Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University.

"It's a great time to be in business for all women. Most consumer-oriented categories are driven by women's purchase decisions. It's great to have a female perspective in the boardroom."

And in our industry, the primary decisionmaker is the practitioner, who is predominantly female. Affinity and the ability to connect individually with patients and associates are important. It's all about benefits and bringing better product to market that is exciting for both the practitioner and the patient."

SHE SAYS..."Do your best to accept career opportunities and challenges presented to you. These may be different from the track you thought you were on but this is what gives you great perspective and moves you beyond your level of comfort."

Linda Sauer

Chief Operating Officer
Advantica EyeCare
Ellicott City, Md.

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."Under Linda Sauer's leadership, our service center has more than doubled in size in both space and employees. Sauer is a great leader and mentor, respected by her employees and peers. In addition, Sauer has donated time to various charities in her community, as well as nationally, such as Prevent Blindness Mid Atlantic."



is also responsible for the development, design, operation and improvement of systems that deliver the company's products. "My role is to provide strategic direction to the oper-

ations center that will allow the company to support current business and future growth."

Sauer finds her biggest challenge is constantly reinventing her team as the business grows and the needs of the company change. But as a leader, she is able to empower her employees and make them accountable for the company's well being as well as their own.

SHE SAYS..."I believe in investing in my team. I try to lead by example and encourage my team to come up with solutions. I am a firm believer in giving people the opportunity to problem solve and try new things. This is the key to building a strong team."



Congratulations Debbie,

on your recognition as one of the optical industry's most influential women.

Aearo is truly proud and appreciative of your leadership and contribution to our success.



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Aspasia Shappet

**Chief Executive Officer and President
MESVision
Costa Mesa, Calif.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“She led MESVision forward through the use and development of technology and cultivating staff from within...while always keeping in mind the importance of regular routine vision care and how it corresponds to the individual's overall health.”



Aspasia Shappet says she wound up in the eyecare business, running a managed vision company with two million covered lives, “by pure accident.”

An accounting major in college, she worked for an accounting firm after graduation; one of that firm's clients was managed-vision player Superior Optical (now Superior Vision). After working with Superior's

executives via the accounting firm, Shappet joined Superior in 1991 as its chief financial officer; she aided in Superior's turnaround, leading to a sale of the company a year later.

Again through her connection with Superior, one of whose key executives served on the board of MESVision, she joined MES (which stands for Medical Eye Services) as its CFO late in 1993, soon adding responsibilities as chief operating officer and later becoming president/CEO.

Under Shappet's leadership, MESVision has grown from a West Coast-only operation at the time she joined the company to a national managed-vision firm operating in all but three U.S. states, with a provider panel covering every state.

SHE SAYS...“The challenge for women in any industry is to learn to communicate directly and succinctly, and to be perceived as non-emotional. Learning how to communicate is really important for women.”

Mary P. Walker

**President
Superior Optical Labs, Inc.
Ocean Springs, Miss.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“Mary Walker has been instrumental in increasing sales for each of the last 18 years, bidding on and winning several Veterans Administration contracts along with several industrial safety contracts. She possesses tremendous skills at marketing, employee control and plays an integral part in growing the business. Walker is an overachiever and it's time that she is recognized for her achievements.”



Mary Walker started out as the bookkeeper for Superior Optical Labs and quickly found out that you can't do bookkeeping without learning more of the lab's day-to-day operations. With the encouragement of her husband Hal, who has been in the optical industry for over 30 years, Walker spent as much time as possible in the

lab, where she discovered the finishing department tasks matched her skills. Walker found herself enjoying edging, tinting and mounting explaining, “I work well with my hands.” She tells others who are interested in the lab business, “Don't hesitate to get in the lab and get your hands dirty. Try to work at every position.”

Walker earned her ABO certification and now promotes certification of all Superior Optical employees. Once certified, Walker could now dispense eyewear to their safety accounts and provide relief work at the Veterans' Administration where Superior Optical has contracts. On the register of the “Woman Owned Business Council,” Walker now oversees order entry, and the frame and lens departments, spearheading new sales and opportunities.

SHE SAYS...“There are more women in the optical industry than ever before. Women have positions in sales, marketing, and the actual running of the labs. My advice is to learn all you can. Try to lead by example and never ask your employees to do anything you wouldn't do.”



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**MESVision CONGRATULATES A
TRUE LEADER
WITH A CLEAR VISION:
ASPASIA SHAPPET, CEO**

Congratulations Congratulations Congratulations

Vision Monday's - 2008 Most Influential Women in Optical



Mentor Award
Judi Blondell
Regional Sales Manager
Marchon USA



Executive Suite Award
Giancarla Agnoli
Managing Director -
Marchon Italy
SVP - Marchon

from all your friends and colleagues at

MARCHON®

Calvin Klein
collection

ck
Calvin Klein

COACH
EST. 1941

Disney
eyewear

EMILIO PUCCI

FENDI

FLEXON

KARL LAGERFELD

MICHAEL KORS

NAUTICA

Nike

Sean John
collection

GAMES

Rising Stars

Women who are “up-and-comers” in their careers and within their companies. Sharp talents on their way toward higher levels of responsibility and influence.

Optical's Most Influential Women VisionMonday 2008

Maristella Brentani

**Vice President,
Product Development
Luxottica Group
Port Washington, N.Y.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“Stella has an incredible product sense and admirable work ethic. She is very in tune to what styles are trendy now and in the future. Hard working, devoted, and steadfast, Stella knows exactly what is needed to not only better our company but the eyewear industry as a whole.”



Brentani began her career in the world of finance but soon realized she'd prefer a field where she could combine her financial background with her marketing education and love of fashion. That meant having to start over from scratch in the optical industry while pursuing her masters degree.

She has now been in the business since 1999 when she started at Safilo USA in product development and marketing. Then she became director of accessories for Skagen, supervising the design of their sunwear and travel collection.

In 2006, Brentani joined Luxottica's U.S. wholesale division as vice president of product development, overseeing all collections for the North American market. She wanted to embody a new way of interpreting product in the industry, so her first order of business was building a stronger and refocused product team to revamp the company's designs across their entire portfolio to better meet the North American market's needs.

She considers herself lucky to be a part of Luxottica's team because she

feels the company has always recognized women's potential. She cites several women colleagues in leadership positions that proves women no longer represent the minority but a strong and growing reality.

SHE SAYS...“I think I would give the same advice anyone would give to any woman trying to gain ground within her career: be motivated, driven, persistent, and always realize your potential. You can do anything that you set your mind to; it is all about hard work and dedication.”

Laura Dyer

**Assistant Vice President, Strategic Events/Community Relations
Davis Vision
Plainview, NY**

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“Her dedicated community outreach efforts to make vision care more available to the uninsured, underinsured and less fortunate make a difference in the many lives she touches.”



Dyer started working at Davis Vision in 1992 as a college intern. Since then, she has progressed through various marketing and community relations positions at Davis. In her current role as assistant vice president, strategic events/community relations, Dyer spearheads key programs that promote the importance of regular routine vision care in one's overall health.

“The best part of my job is seeing firsthand that my work and the support from my company have resulted in positive outcomes in the lives of those who need us,” said Dyer. She coordinates vision

screening clinics for hundreds of children whose families have little or no health insurance. “Ninety nine percent of what I do here is with children,” she noted.

Dyer has organized fundraising activities to support such organizations as Mercy First, a non-profit, non-sectarian agency that cares for abused, neglected or troubled children and families in crisis. She also develops corporate sponsorships of children's literacy programs through relationships with local and national professional sports organizations, and arranges for professional athletes to serve as inspirational speakers for a variety of organizations.

SHE SAYS...“As a working mom in this industry, I have learned that women can do anything they set their minds to.”

Lisa Fawcett

**VP of Marketing, Contact Lenses
Bausch & Lomb
Rochester, N.Y.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“She's calm under pressure, understands how sales and marketing complement each other, and is highly innovative in developing new training methods. That skill can be seen in the explosive growth she was able to gain for MultiFocal lenses, and her ability to bring PureVision lenses back into the U.S. market.”



You could say that Lisa Fawcett's ‘star’ has been rising ever since she joined Bausch & Lomb in 1996 as she seamlessly made the transition from pharmaceutical sales rep to

product management at B&L. Today, she manages a team of 14 people responsible for growing revenues for B&L's multibillion dollar soft CL business throughout the U.S. Since being named VP of marketing in 2005, Fawcett has helped strengthen B&L's strong share in the specialty business and

spearheaded the efforts to make the company a market leader in the multifocal business. In short, she's launched and reinvigorated all PureVision brands and the majority of the SoftLens Speciality brands for B&L since being named to the VP position.

Fawcett's accomplishments have not gone unnoticed by B&L executives. She was selected and completed the company's management training courses known as the B&L University “in-residence” programs, a five-year course that took her from Rochester, N.Y. to Normandie, France. She described the experience as a way to learn about herself as a leader and figure out how to move an organization and get things done. “If you are going to be a leader, you need to remember to look behind to see if anyone is following you.”

Fawcett is a firm believer in assembling a team that's cross-disciplined in an effort to get the message out about B&L's brands to consumers and ECPS alike. “I try to lead by example and be truly collaborative. Everyone brings strengths to the ‘party’ and being able to tap into those strengths and bring strategic ideas to the forefront is the most powerful process to be in.”

SHE SAYS...“Although it's a challenge, it is also stimulating to work in such a dynamic marketplace. This industry has seen the evolution of truly innovative products but has also suffered from intense scrutiny over the past few years. The latest challenge is also the latest opportunity to truly have an impact on the market.”

Darcy Kemp

**Director Trade Marketing
CooperVision
Fairport, N.Y.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“Darcy has taken CooperVision's trade marketing to a world class level. Her contribution to CooperVision accounts has been invaluable to them as they establish brands, develop promotions, create consumer demand and

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Rising Stars

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provide education to their OD's. She is viewed within the organization as a professional who will make tremendous contributions and leadership in years to come."



Darcy Kemp's career has indeed been on the fast track ever since she joined CooperVision nearly three years ago. Having worked in the healthcare industry for 13 years, Kemp has spent the last four years in the optical world, starting out in an advertising agency with clients in the medical device and optical business. She then moved on to the field of biotechnology and pharmaceuticals before joining CooperVision in 2005.

Today, she is currently responsible for overseeing the commercialization of CooperVision's contact lens products for all U.S. optical retail customers, buying groups and multiple door locations. She is responsible for pricing, distribution,

branding and promotions. This year, Kemp's trade marketing efforts helped launch CooperVision's silicone hydrogels and new modalities. "The product mix is always changing because of new materials and designs. My greatest challenge is having the time to do everything that I think about."

Not only does she work with product managers when it comes to pricing and distribution, she has also been known to accompany area sales managers as they visit ECPs to educate and inform them about the company's products. CooperVision is known for their toric and multi-focal lenses and fitting the patient is the greatest challenge for most ECPs, Kemp said. That and convincing patients that the cost and convenience factor of CLs is worth it.

"I bring fresh ideas to the table. I motivate people to think differently and always keep a positive attitude. Within the optical business we sometimes need to defy convention and go where our own vision takes us. Who said you can't color outside the lines?"

SHE SAYS..."Throughout my careers, I have been blessed to work with people who are great teachers, motivators and have acknowledged my accomplishments. This combination has allowed me to learn, grow and blossom. Now it's time I do the same for others."

Jennifer Ma

**Channel Marketing Manager
Hoya Vision Care, North America
Carrollton, Texas**

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."She has created and implemented a variety of programs and materials that have helped grow Hoya's new distributor network."

Arriving at Hoya two years ago, Jennifer Ma quickly put her sales and marketing experience to good use. Having previously worked at Essilor and at a Dallas ad agency, Ma brought new ideas and fresh energy to Hoya's distributor sales team. She was the driving force behind two of Hoya's most successful National Promotions "My Big Fat Greek Hoya Getaway" and "Go for the Green."



"My Big Fat Greek Hoya Getaway" was Hoya's biggest national promotion to date and garnered Hoya both increased name recognition and additional sales. More than 120 travelers, including

eyecare practitioners, distributors, Hoya representatives and guests, enjoyed a nine-day getaway to Greece.

"Marketing is a lot of fun, because you can put your creative touch on things," she said. "Developing promotional materials, sales aids and travel incentives is a reflection of yourself."

Ma spends about 30 percent of her time on the road, working with Hoya's corporate labs, Hoya distributors and eyecare professionals. She is also responsible for Hoyanet, a Web portal giving users access to a range of personalized information and tools.

"I love my job because I can put my hands in all different buckets and learn different things," Ma remarked.

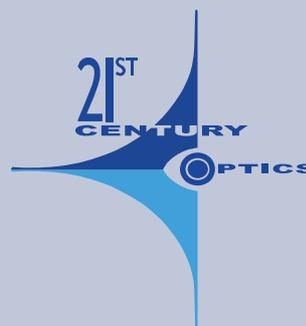
SHE SAYS..."I think I can make a difference in this industry, especially

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when it comes to developing new ways to market products. I want to change our way of thinking about educating patients and doctors."

Laurinda Mackenzie

Executive Vice President/General Manager, Vision UnitedHealthcare Specialty Benefits Portland, Ore.

CHOSEN BECAUSE... "While managing and directing an organization of 900 people, she has created an exciting work environment that is making a difference in the future of healthy vision."

Laurinda Mackenzie is relatively new to the vision care field, but she brings extensive experience in general healthcare.

In May 2007, Mackenzie became executive vice president of UnitedHealthcare Specialty Benefits' vision operation, with responsibility for strategic sales, product development, network,



and retail stores for the vision segment, which includes the company's managed vision operation (formerly Spectera) as well as UnitedHealthcare's 37-store United Optical chain.

Prior to this assignment, Mackenzie was senior vice president of vendor relations with UnitedHealth's Specialized Care Services operation. She has also served as chief executive officer of LifeEra, a UnitedHealth Group company, and held senior executive positions at Working Solutions and ACCESS Clinical Consulting.

Mackenzie also has a retailing background—she went through Dayton Hudson's executive training program early in her career—in addition to her past experience in the medical-related field.

One element of her new responsibility is spearheading the company's move toward positioning eyecare as a key component of maintaining consumers' over-

all health and well-being. Mackenzie sees her role as "an opportunity to make a big difference in people's lives, and to let them know about the value of primary eyecare in catching health challenges at an early stage."

SHE SAYS... "The eyecare field offers a great range of opportunity for women in terms of range of career options and the wide range of skill sets that can be utilized to drive success. I would encourage the building of a professional network to offer visibility to all of the options for women beginning their eyecare career."

Beverly Marquez

Essilor Laboratories of America Region Vice President Southwest Region San Diego, Calif.

CHOSEN BECAUSE... "Her drive to develop a strong relationship between sales and lab operations teams has helped ensure Essilor's success and ability to meet its customers' needs."



Beverly Marquez joined Essilor Laboratories of America in 2006 as Southwest region vice president after a 20-year sales career in the clinical laboratory field. Under her leadership, the Southwest region earned Essilor's District of the Year in 2007.

Marquez has earned the respect of Essilor's customers by understanding their needs and aligning resources to meet those needs. "I'm very hands-on," she said. "I cold call at least once a month, working closely with the sales and operations teams."

Marquez stays in close contact with team members, spending about half of her day speaking with them by phone. She has initiated a mentoring program in which each person on her staff coaches someone within the ELOA labs they service.

The program includes monthly lunch meetings and sharing educational materials. A key goal of the program is to spread knowledge within the lab and develop continuity as the lab personnel

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changes over time. "It's like building the bench on a football team," Marquez said.

SHE SAYS..."Anybody can become a leader as long as they have the initiative and willingness to develop their skills."

Eve Zartman-Ball

**Senior Director, Public Affairs & Advocacy
The Vision Council
Alexandria, Va.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."Eve oversees all aspects of the Vision Council's advocacy and professional relations efforts as well as its governance. Her passion for advocacy has been lifelong on the campaign and social advocacy fronts. She is also involved in various organizations in the community including many years on the Board of My Sister's Place (MSP), a

domestic violence shelter and currently as president of the board of the St. Alban's Early Childhood Center (SAECC)."



Eve Zartman-Ball has always considered herself an advocate which is why she left the for-profit world of the stock market and came to the Vision

Council (then known as VICA) in 1999. Zartman-Ball became interested in the optical field because of its mission of helping people see.

"I know that if we do it right [at the Vision Council] we can help people get the vision care products and services they need. Working in a field where outcome is tangible and achievable is a great field for anyone."

Before coming to Vision Council, Zartman-Ball laid her 'social advocacy' foun-

dation working on health care and social welfare issues for N.Y. Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan and then on to public relations firm Hill & Knowlton where she handled a variety of healthcare and social marketing, media and government relations.

Today, she is tasked with overseeing all of the government and professional relations for the Vision Council and her accomplishments there over the past nine years include promoting the children's vision care legislation, building 50 state vision resources and analysis, and helping to reshape the Better Vision Institute and make the Vision Summit a reality.

Her greatest challenge? "Not allowing the organization to go backward but live up to its mission and purpose. I am excited about the new focus afoot not only

within the Vision Council but within the industry to focus on common objectives, aligning resources and ensuring that we all work toward the bigger picture. It just seems like a light bulb is finally coming on and people are really "getting it" and it is an exciting challenge and time to see in our industry."

SHE SAYS..."All of my mentors have redefined/pushed some boundaries, but they were found in time to have been leaders in crises by having pushed those envelopes...What inspires me every day is to try and live beyond myself and use all of my talents every day for the betterment of the world in some way. Every day is a gift and I am constantly driven and inspired to do better tomorrow."

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Mentors

Women who are team builders, developers of talent. Via example, education or training they successfully influence others to grow in their business or professional acumen.

Optical's Most Influential Women

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Lori Archer

Senior Vice President, Account Management and Product Development
UnitedHealthcare Specialty Benefits
Indianapolis, Ind.

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“Lori always looks for ways to grow and enrich her company, as well as her staff... her passion for our industry inspires others to be interested and learn on a daily basis; she also considers the advancement of her staff as a positive reflection on her and the company.”



Lori Archer has extensive experience in managed vision care, beginning with two years working for Vision Service Plan in the mid-1990s. After

leaving VSP, she joined managed-vision player Spectera in 1997; Spectera was acquired by UnitedHealthcare in 2001.

By her own description, Archer has “worn a lot of hats” at the company during her tenure there, including responsibilities as senior vice president of sales operations and her current role as senior VP of account management and product development for UnitedHealthcare Specialty Benefits, a position she took on in January 2007.

Along the way, Archer has always felt it important to act as a mentor for up-and-coming employees, both formally and informally, encouraging them to develop new ideas and look for ways to improve company processes, themselves and the company. She has also participated in executive mentoring programs within UnitedHealthcare as well as in outside programs, both to improve her own management skills and to help others.

SHE SAYS...“I tend to instinctively be a mentor; I’m always appreciative of the career goals of my team and work with them to achieve those goals—it’s part of my management philosophy.”

Pam Benson-Gibson

Education Director, Western Region
Pech Optical
Sioux City, Iowa

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“She has been an inspiration to thousands of people in the retail and professional optical industry.”



While still in high school, Pam Benson-Gibson began working part-time for optometrist Dr. James Boucher in Laramie, Wyoming in 1970. After moving to California, she worked for Benson Optical for two years before joining Varilux as a customer service manager in 1984. She remained with Varilux for eight years, eventually working with many of the company’s lab customers.

“I was 1-800-BEST-PAL,” she joked, referring to the company’s toll-free customer service line.

Benson-Gibson joined wholesale lab Pech Optical in 1995. She took a two-year hiatus to dispense in Cody, Wyo., then returned to Pech. She got involved with optical education about seven years ago at the urging of lab owner Bob Pech, and she now spends much of her time giving seminars at various state optometric, ophthalmological and optician conventions.

For Benson-Gibson, learning is always a two-way process. “It thrills me to get information that I can use to help others,” she said, adding that she is always on the lookout for new avenues to share ideas.

“For example, more of our accounts are using webinars, which allows us to get information to them more quickly as well as have interaction with them. I find that exhilarating.”

SHE SAYS...“This is a wonderful industry. We actually make people’s daily lives better. I encourage people to not just treat it like job. It’s a gift.”

Judi Blondell

Regional Sales Manager—Central Region
Marchon Eyewear, Inc.
Nashville, Tenn.

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“She is the epitome of a mentor. For over 20 years, she has been proactive in developing the reps in her region. Her nurturing qualities and high expectations are some of the reasons that her reps and managers have been top performers for years.”



Longevity at a company is a rarity these days in corporate America but not for Judi Blondell. She’s spent the last 20 years at the same company—Marchon

Eyewear, wearing many hats starting with director of market development when she joined Marchon in 1988. She became regional sales manager for the Mountain Region in ’93 and has since assumed responsibility for two additional regions—the Midwest and Southwest. Today, she manages and directs over \$55 million in sales across all divisions of the company and counts some 90 reps and 3 district sales managers as direct reports.

“There is an entrepreneurial culture at the family-owned company that was there from the beginning and still exists today. There’s an energy here and a strong desire to succeed.”

Blondell takes her role as a mentor seriously using her influence at Marchon to help achieve company goals and develop win-win strategies. “I think I have a reputation for being fair, but also for raising the bar when it’s needed. I am not afraid to speak up or fight for what I believe in.”

SHE SAYS...“Ultimately, your personal circle of influence will be determined by your clarity and level of commitment to your goals: Know your purpose. Develop your strengths. Have clarity in your goals. Believe in yourself. Work hard. Play hard. Laugh a lot.”

Natasha D’Sa

Associate Vice President,
Sales-Government and
Mid-Market Groups
EyeMed Vision Care
Mason, Ohio

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“Natasha has helped shape the organization into a leader in the industry while personally influencing countless current and former EyeMed associates...She is now devoted to passing her knowledge on to other associates so the company’s success continues for many years to come.”



After working with EyeMed Vision Care and its predecessor company, LensCrafters Managed Vision Care, since the late 1980s, today Natasha D’Sa

takes pleasure in sharing her experience in the managed vision field with others.

D’Sa first joined the LensCrafters retail chain 22 years ago, starting as a temp in the company’s accounting department. After two years in finance and accounting, she switched to the chain’s business development segment, then helped launch LensCrafters Managed Vision Care, which became EyeMed in 1998 following Luxottica Group’s acquisition of LensCrafters in 1995. D’Sa rose through the organization in positions such as senior director of account management; she was also involved in the integration of managed vision firms acquired by Luxottica during that period.

In her current role, D’Sa works with state and other government groups as well as companies to craft a managed vision plan that will best suit their employees’ needs.

SHE SAYS...“Acting as a mentor is one of the best parts of coming to work every day. I think other people can benefit from my knowledge to enhance their own creative thinking. I love to work with fresh talent—they’ve got places to go.”



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Jerry Ann Himes

**Key Account Manager
Carl Zeiss Vision
Helena, Ark.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“She has a tremendous amount of knowledge and is willing to take any opportunity to help and educate opticians.”



An optical industry veteran with five decades of experience, Jerry Ann began her optical career as a teenager working in her parents' surface lab.

After becoming an optician, she turned her attention to opticianry education. Certified by the American Board of Opticianry Masters program and the National Contact Lens Examiners, she is a member of the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation and serves as

chairman of the National Commission on State Optician Regulatory Boards.

Himes has served on the Arkansas State Board of Dispensing Opticians for over 25 years, and is active in the Opticians Association of Arkansas. “My forte is education. I like helping people,” she said.

Himes joined SOLA 18 years ago as a lens consultant, working her way up to become key account manager in the company, which merged with Carl Zeiss several years ago and is now known as Carl Zeiss Vision. One of her primary responsibilities is conducting seminars.

“I want to elevate opticians,” she said. “They take care of one of the most precious gifts people have. The optician is the most important person in the eyecare delivery chain. If they don't properly fill an Rx, the whole chain falls back. That's very often overlooked.”

SHE SAYS...“Opticianry is a very rewarding profession. You help give people a better quality of life.”

Debra Lang

**District Sales Manager
21st Century Optics
Long Island City, N.Y.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“Debra Lang is the definition of class and professionalism. Her inexhaustible efforts include leading strategic teams to conduct large scale corporate events for hundreds of ECPs in the New York area. Her in-office staff trainings help ECPs deal with the realities of the optical business.”



Debra Lang has called the optical industry home for more than 20 years starting out in the mid '80s as a local sales rep with Optyl, a frame com-

pany. In 1990, she landed a sales consultant position with Varilux, where for 11 years she managed and grew a Manhattan territory responsible for more than 5,000 pairs of Varilux lenses. While at Varilux, she laid the foundation for her

future at 21st Century Optics by getting involved with the company's training programs. “I was quite good at standing up in front of a group and in a casual, conversational way, explored ways to help ECPs move beyond where they are to position premium products in their practice, teaching them the verbiage to use with patients, and to understand the dollars and cents that go along with it.”

In 2001, she decided to step out of her comfort zone and challenge herself by learning the lab side of the business when she joined 21st Century Optics.

Today, in addition to her responsibilities as sales manager for the Tri-State area, she has written and presented dozens of training programs for ECPs, guiding them through business building seminars that go beyond technical expertise with an emphasis on growing their business through product technology and sound business practices.

SHE SAYS...“The most important thing I can say about this side of the business is that the relationships are as important. To help an ECP grow their practice requires

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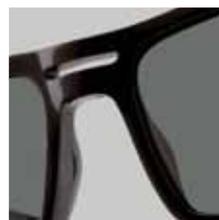
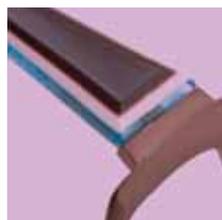
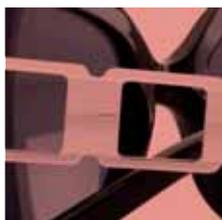
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Chief Financial Officer

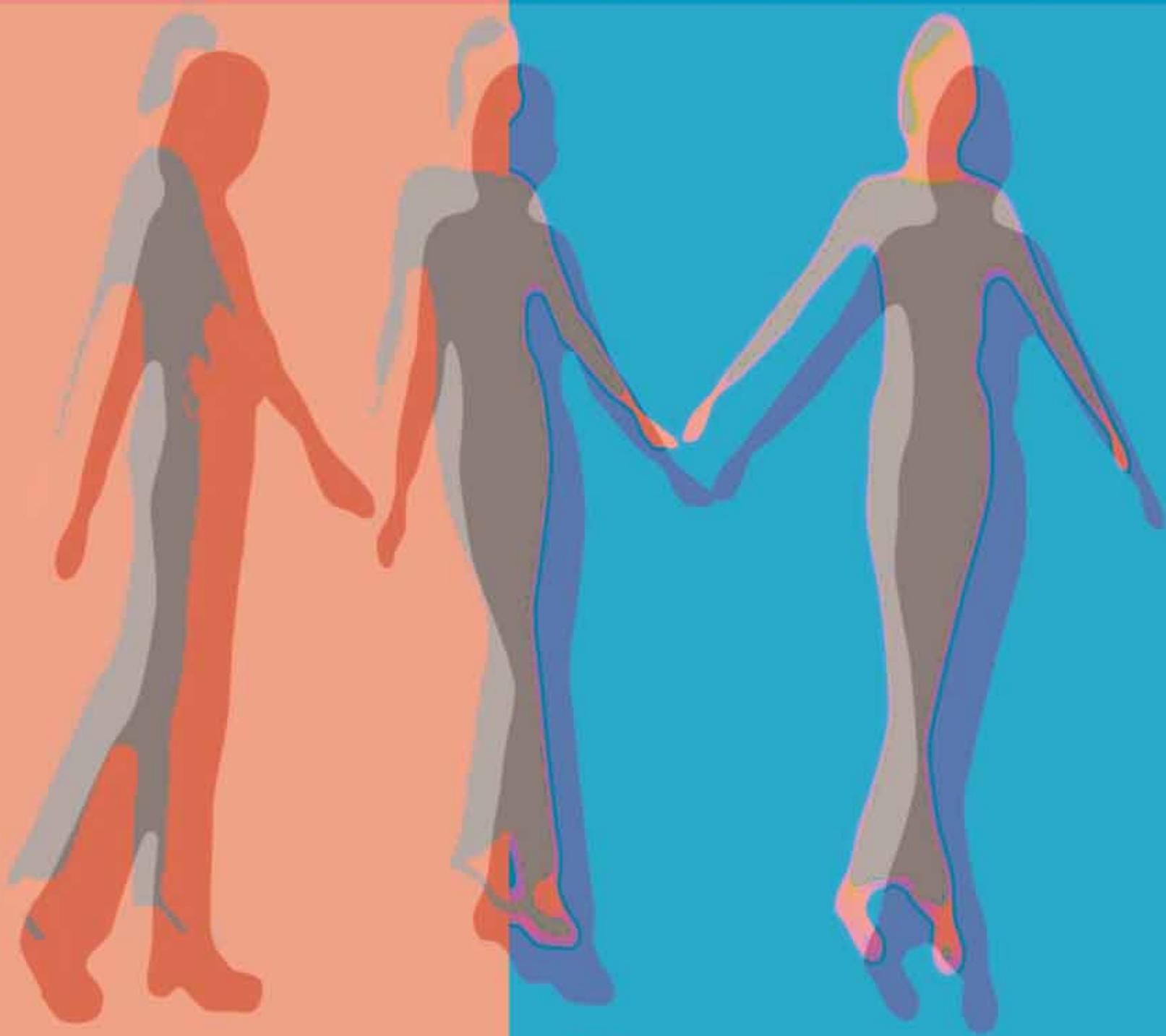


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strong listening skills and it is my responsibility to become their business advisor and help them get beyond simply asking about the cost of a pair of lenses."

Sue Larson

**General Manager
National City Lab
Costco Optical
San Diego, Calif.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."In the male-dominated field of optical lens manufacturing laboratories, Larson has worked her way up the ladder to where she is held in very high regard in the lens manufacturing world."



Sue Larson is that industry rarity, a female top executive of a major optical-laboratory.

Shortly after graduating from high school, Larson went

to work at the Opticraft lab in Portland, Ore., spending 18 years there before joining Costco Optical in 1992, at the warehouse giant's lab in Tukwila, Wash. "I've been a lab rat my entire career," she said proudly.

For the past three years, Larson has been general manager of Costco Optical's second U.S. lab, in the San Diego suburb of National City, Calif., with full responsibility for that lab's product and profitability.

The lab, one of the country's largest lens manufacturing facilities, currently does 18,000 to 20,000 jobs per week for Costco's more than 360 U.S. in-store vision centers. "There are very few labs of our size in the country, doing what we do," she said.

SHE SAYS..."I love what I do and the role I play with my crew, and I really enjoy seeing them succeed. As a mentor, I let less-experienced team members think through a challenge on their own, then I share my knowledge—and I keep learning, too, from listening to them."

Debbie Roney

**Director of Logistics/Customer Support
Aearo Technologies
Chickasha, Okla.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."Debbie Roney provides excellent leadership and mentoring within our company and is a strong role model for many of our female employees and managers. Roney is widely recognized by lens manufacturers as a strong, yet fair, buyer of lens blanks and often provides feedback that improves the lens manufacturer's procedures and processes."

Coming up on her 10-year anniversary with Aearo Technologies, Debbie Roney has been in the optical industry for over 26 years with 14 years at Triconic Laboratories and three years with the Nassau Lens Company. She started her career working part time for an optical lab with plans to obtain her real estate license and move into sales. She found the optical industry fascinating and soon recognized that optical was a good career choice.

Today, Roney is responsible for lead-



ing the customer support team at Aearo. She is heavily engaged in their systems architecture and works tirelessly on process controls and improvements.

While considered a mentor by her employees, Roney points to two mentors in her own life that have guided and influenced the way she works with her staff—Jeff Zeidner, one of the "smartest optical professionals that I have ever had the pleasure to work with" and Larry Headlund, an optical/mathematician/systems guru who was (and still is) an inspiration to her. Her personal philosophy of leadership is to help her team achieve success. "When folks can see and feel your passion, feel your appreciation for their efforts, the results you are looking for from them follows," said Roney.

SHE SAYS..."Success is gained if you can positively influence others to achieve their best. This is something that I work hard on each and every day and it never disappoints

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Lori Archer
Senior VP
Account Management &
Product Development

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Laurinda Mackenzie
Executive VP/General Manager
Vision

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Danne Ventura

Professional Relations Essilor Lenses



Pat Stiles

National Account Manager



Beverly Marquez

Regional VP, South West Region,
Essilor Laboratories of America



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Vision Monday's 2008 Most Influential Women In Optical**



Essilor would also like to take this opportunity to
congratulate all the winners of this award.



Mentors

Optical's Most Influential Women VisionMonday 2008

me. I tell other women to work hard, albeit smart. Don't be afraid to be a turtle....in order to get somewhere you need to stick your neck out."

Josephine Shallo-Hoffmann, PhD, FFAO

College of Optometry
Nova Southeastern University
Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."She is respected as an educator by her peers and students and deserves to be recognized for her contributions to the profession."



Bringing new understanding to the field of vision science is Dr. Josephine Shallo-Hoffmann's profession and her passion. An experienced educator, Dr. Shallo-

Hoffmann, who holds a PhD in psychology, has for the past decade served on the faculty of the College of Optometry at Nova Southeastern University (NSU) in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. She currently chairs NSU's Research and Graduate Studies and Institutional Review Board.

Dr. Shallo-Hoffmann developed and instructs in the Masters in Clinical Vision Research course at NSU and works closely with the students to maximize their learning potential. She has been selected as professor of the year three times and has received the NSU professor of the year, Student Life Achievement Award. She continues to contribute to the profession with her

mentoring, publications and research.

"My inspiration is to build a program of excellence," she said. "The goal of our program is for our students to make a meaningful contribution to vision science and to the literature. We're teaching them to provide better patient care, diagnosis and treatment of eye conditions and diseases."

SHE SAYS..."Advancing the academic knowledge in our field and helping our students become better physicians is what's most important to me as a teacher."

Vicky Sheppard

Contact Lens Program Manager
Vision Essentials by
Kaiser Permanente Southern Calif.
Los Angeles, Calif.

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."In her current role at Kaiser Permanente, Vicky Sheppard trains and provides technical support to 26 clinics in Southern California that fit contact lenses. Sheppard has helped expand and advance the contact lens program while training and supporting ODs, fitters, technicians, and clerks across the region."



Vicky Sheppard's career in the optical industry started when she answered an ad for a receptionist position at Benson Optical in Minnesota in 1979. After training as an

optician and then as a contact lens fitter, Sheppard discovered she liked the medical aspect of the job and the relationships she developed with her patients. Moving to California for the warmer weather, Sheppard spent 10 years working at private practices as a pediatric CL fitter before moving over to Kaiser five years ago.

A Fellow in the Contact Lens Society of America and on their board of directors, Sheppard was recently appointed to the board of the National Contact Lens Examiners. Her mission at Kaiser Permanente is to increase knowledge, awareness and promote usage of contact lenses at the 26 clinics she manages.

As a mentor to others, Sheppard acknowledges the mentors and organizations in her life that have had a positive impact on her career. "Oakley Waite taught me the basics of contact lens fitting and gave me a great foundation. I am also extremely grateful for educational societies like Minnesota Contact Lens Society and Contact Lens Society of America."

SHE SAYS..."I love helping people see better, especially kids. I am able to work with a lot of different people and whether it is a patient who hasn't been able to wear contacts successfully in the past or helping a practitioner be successful, I find it's fun to get others excited about contact lenses."

Jean Simone

Director of Special Sales
Charmant USA
Morris Plains, N.J.

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."Jean is a strong, results-oriented woman who is kind and influential. She moti-

vates everyone around her, leading by example. Jean is truly deserving of recognition for the fantastic career she has had and the way she has met and surpassed everyone's expectations."



Jean Simone started in the optical industry 31 years ago and has held a number of significant positions, including national sales manager for Tura and B.

Robinson. She came to Charmant USA three years ago as director of special sales where she oversees retail department sales, sales to corporate and regional chains, export into Latin America and all of Charmant USA's customer service and sales support efforts, as well as continuing to travel globally. A laundry list of responsibilities she meets with a level of professionalism, energy and good humor that raises the bar for everyone.

Believing the optical industry is more of a family than any other industry she has known, the close knit nature of the industry and the relationships she has formed over the years have helped cement her reputation for honesty and fairness. Her personal philosophy includes a desire to contribute to a greater good and to help her company, or an individual, grow and succeed. As someone who admits to having had many mentors in her own life and who believes everyone you come into contact with has the ability to give some sort of direction, she strives to be a positive influence on all those around her.

SHE SAYS..."I have always felt that doing my job is about helping oth-



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Pam Gibson

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Andrea Saia, Chief Executive Officer
Honored in Executives Category



Barbara Rhodes, Manager, Global Integrated Marketing
Honored in Innovators Category

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Congratulations to Andrea Saia and Barbara Rhodes on being named two of the **Most Influential Women in the Optical Industry** by *Vision Monday*. Thanks to their leadership, dedication and innovative thinking, the CIBA VISION® philosophy of *Shared Passion for Healthy Vision and Better Life* is clearer than ever.

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Mentors

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ers do the job they need to do. If I can help them do it better or get the things they need faster then I am here to help them. I know that to be successful we all have to get behind the ship to push it."

Pat Stiles

**National Accounts Manager
Essilor
Union, Ky.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."She brings a comprehensive understanding of products and processes to her customers."



Having been in the optical industry for over 30 years, Patty Stiles is widely respected for her knowledge and professionalism. She began her career in

1967, working in the accounting department at Onondaga Optical, a Syracuse,

N.Y. wholesale lab run by brothers Victor and Lionel Gilels. She rose through the organization to become general manager, remaining with the lab for 20 years.

"There were very few women managing labs at that time," she recalled. "I owe a lot to the Gilels brothers. They didn't care if you were a male or female, as long as you were good at what you did."

Next, Stiles was recruited by Essilor's Silor division to be a detail sales rep in upstate New York. She soon took on greater responsibilities, eventually managing detail sales east of the Mississippi and then became wholesale manager in upstate New York and New England.

As Essilor's national accounts manager, she has called on Empire Vision, Davis Vision, National Vision and Luxottica, which is currently her sole focus. "It's great because I get involved with a little bit of everything, from new products and technologies to IT issues."

SHE SAYS..."Learn everything you can, have a can-do attitude, and find good mentors."

Danne Ventura

**Director of Professional Relations
Essilor of America
Dallas, Texas**

CHOSEN BECAUSE..."Danne has received the highest award from the Joint Commission of Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology (JCAHPO), is well known and respected for her education and leadership in opticianry, optometry, and ophthalmology and annually directs the Varilux Optometry Super Bowl."



After 25 years in the optical industry, Danne Ventura could wallpaper a room with all the awards and honors she has received. In fact, in 2007 she was even named a Fellow in the American Academy of Optometry, an uncommon distinction for someone who isn't an optometrist.

In addition to her honors, she also sits on a number of boards including the National Academy of Opticianry, the

JCAHPO Education and Research Foundation, the Vision Council Education Task Force and the Commission on Opticianry Education.

If these qualifications alone didn't make her exactly the kind of person students entering the optical industry turn to for guidance and advice, her role as director of professional relations at Essilor of America certainly would. As part of her job, she works with schools, associations and students, administers and runs Essilor's student grant program.

Ventura also believes that the newer generations of women in optical are definitely making a place for themselves. Since the sheer number of women in optometry schools has already out-paced men, as they graduate and start to practice, women will become even more influential in associations and shaping the industry, she said. Ventura was honored by **VM** in the First "Influential Women" issue in 2003.

SHE SAYS..."Balance is the key. Women just starting out today really need to keep a balance and not sacrifice their real lives for their work."

Your significant contributions to the industry are clear.



Congratulations on being named two of the 50 Most Influential Women in Optical.

Natasha D'sa

Sr. Director Mvc Sales & Operations



Lisa Gear

Director Optical Frame Buying

LUXOTTICA
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"Influential Women in Optical"
2008 Honoree

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thanks our colleague
Jerry Ann Himes
for her tireless support
of the profession of Opticianry



CARL ZEISS VISION

Innovators

Women who have initiated new product developments or special programs in the arena of marketing, technology or retail. They have spearheaded innovative business enterprises that are achieving marked success.

Optical's Most Influential Women

VisionMonday 2008

Ann Harrison

**Director of Broadscale Marketing and CRM
1-800-CONTACTS, Inc.
Draper, Utah**

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“Ann Harrison is leading the television, direct-to-consumer and in-store marketing behind the 1-800-CONTACTS' alliance with Wal-Mart. This alliance will create the largest optical network in the industry to span across optical stores, call centers and the Internet. I hope you can comprehend the scale and complexity of what she is accomplishing on an alliance that will have a profound impact on the industry.”



Ann Harrison has been with 1-800-CONTACTS for the past eight years. Harrison worked as a marketing manager for four years before becoming the director of

broadscale marketing including television, radio and print, and customer relationship management (CRM). Prior to joining 1-800-CONTACTS, she worked in the health benefits management industry as a health benefits consultant.

Her newest project, the integration of marketing for the new alliance between Wal-Mart and 1-800-CONTACTS, will bring contact lenses to more Americans at lower prices and more convenience. The combined marketing efforts being created by Harrison will drive awareness of the alliance and enable consumers to take advantage of these benefits.

Harrison's favorite part of her job is listening to contact lens wearers—gaining

understanding of their needs and wants in the contact lens purchasing process and in their lenses. She enjoys finding ways to simplify the process of getting contact lenses, which is why she's so excited about the alliance between 1-800-CONTACTS and Wal-Mart.

Harrison was honored by VM in the “Influential Women” issue of 2006.

SHE SAYS...“I'm inspired by the many women in the optical industry and in other industries who are creating change. I tell other women, ‘Go for it.’ The optical industry is a great place to be.”

Patty Perreira

**Co-Founder and Designer
Barton Perreira
Venice, Calif.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“In today's market that is dominated by big corporations, Patty has designed an eyewear collection that was bought by all the major U.S. department stores and is also sold in only the top independent stores. It was an amazing feat to start her own company and design a line that has very quickly made such a big impact.”



Patty Perreira got her start in the optical industry in 1986 answering phones at a newly founded eyewear company called Oliver Peoples. Over subsequent years, she did a number of jobs in the growing company, eventually settling into a creative role where she did everything from marketing to design, all without formal training.

Along with Larry Leight, she's worked on collections for Prada, Miu Miu and Vera Wang along with Oliver Peoples, as well as bringing Paul Smith Spectacles to market. She cites as some of her biggest mentors: Leight, who gave her the opportunity to design; Smith, who she calls a creative genius; and Kenny Swartz, another founder of Oliver Peoples and the person who taught her the more technical aspects of making frames.

In 2006, Perreira left Oliver Peoples. Later, along with Bill Barton, the former OP president, the two started luxury eyewear line, Barton Perreira. She said the greatest challenge to starting her own line was finding the confidence within herself.

She admits it was a huge step to believe she could do it without corporate backing but her perseverance, knowledge and keen sensibilities have garnered her line acclaim and respect, both within the industry and out.

SHE SAYS...“I think it is important to continue to look outside the industry and not have tunnel vision when it comes to looking at what you do. You need to keep an open mind, be patient and stick with it. People want things to happen so fast nowadays but it is better if they take their time to make sure things are done right.”

Gai Gherardi & Barbara McReynolds

**Co-Owners/Co-Designers
I.a.Eyeworks
Los Angeles, Calif.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“I.a.Eyeworks has been creating original, invigorating eyeglasses since 1979, designed by the company's co-owners, Gai Gherardi and Barbara McReynolds. They have also redefined perceptions with explosive marketing concepts that meld trademark humor, ‘low-brow’ materials, politically-charged messages, and spiritual encouragements.”



Since 1979, I.a.Eyeworks' iconoclastic glasses have changed the way people think about eyewear. Its designs are immediately recognizable for their modern strokes and bold color innovations, infiltrating the popular culture landscape in everything from art to movies, and all of the brand's success can be traced back to founders and partners, Gai Gherardi (above, right) and Barbara McReynolds (above, left), who own and design the line.

Gherardi and McReynolds, who started their business because of their love of eyewear, are still to this day inspired by the idea of being able to put one of their designs on someone's face and seeing it make a difference. They claim it is that spark that has continued to sustain and inspire them, while driving on their success. A level of success the duo has reached by not backing down and being open to what is going on around them. They believe that though success gives you power and it is what you do with that power and staying true to yourself that is the real challenge.

With three namesake retail stores in Southern California, I.a.Eyeworks frames are distributed to exclusive retailers and opticians worldwide. Despite the company's success it is still privately owned and operated and fiercely proud of its independence.

THEY SAY...“Women need to recognize and connect with our intuition and act on it. We have to trust our intuition and not be afraid to follow it. Some of our best decisions have come from not going with the norm but believing in our intuition and the choices it has led us to. Those choices give us fear-

See the Video of the Week

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Innovators

Optical's Most Influential Women

VisionMonday 2008

lessness. Women need to fear nothing and no one.”

Barbara Rhodes

**Manager, Global Integrated Marketing
CIBA Vision Corporation
Duluth, Ga.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“She developed and launched the FreshLook Color Studio, a revolutionary Internet-based technology that allows visitors to try on FreshLook Color contact lenses... Web site visitors have increased 125 percent over the launch period.”

Barbara Rhodes refers to the development and wildly successful launch of the FreshLook Color Studio as her second “baby” (she had a baby boy last year). The interactive, online tool, launched earlier this year, allows consumers to upload



their photo to freshlookstudio.com and “try on” contact lenses in a range of colors. Rhodes refers to the studio as “a virtual solution offering consumers a way to experiment with color contact lenses.

And once they have their photos they can get opinions from family and friends by posting it online or emailing it around.”

Another advantage of the studio: less chair time once consumers go to their eyecare practitioner and the simpler sell is something that CIBA is marketing to ECPs as part of their brand communication message.

Rhodes, who has been with CIBA Vision for two and a half years has more than 15 years of experience in the marketing and advertising world. Currently

responsible for Web-based marketing for all of CIBA's CL brands, Rhodes has spent most of her career in the industry handling healthcare clients at media companies. The best part of her job? “It's nice to work on projects that do good things for people.”

As for the future, Rhodes is working on taking the FreshLook Color Studio experience to the next level and is in the process of rolling out the technology on a global level to more than 20 countries worldwide.

SHE SAYS... “I'm inspired by the possibilities life brings to us—what is new, what is on the horizon and how I can make it work for us in helping others. Personally, I believe in doing the best I can and being the best I can be in a continual search for a happy, fulfilled and balanced life.”

Terri Wilson

**Vice President, Strategic Alliances and Sales Operations
VSP Vision Care
Rancho Cordova, Calif.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“Terri leads numerous cutting-edge programs and Best in Class initiatives... through her efforts, she has masterfully enhanced VSP's approach to exceptional client satisfaction.”



The hot new trend in managed vision care these days is maximizing the connection between eyecare and overall wellness—and VSP Vision Care's Terri Wilson is definitely

in the midst of this innovative movement.

After beginning her career at a Wisconsin HMO, Wilson has spent 11 years with VSP, initially working with the managed-vision giant's provider network to implement programs related to the company's panel of eyecare professionals; she also spent some time on the sales side.

About a year ago, Wilson added account management functions to her

2008 Most Influential Women in Optical

DAVIS VISION
THE EYECARE ADVANTAGE

Laura Dyer

*Assistant Vice President
Strategic Events/Community Relations*

Laura Dyer is a passionate advocate for healthy vision and an inspiration to those around her. Dyer's efforts in organizing vision screening clinics throughout the country have enabled many children with little or no vision benefits to receive the eye care they need.

A tireless champion of the less fortunate, Laura has organized myriad fundraising drives for agencies that care for troubled or abused children and families in crisis. Her development of corporate sponsorships for literacy programs will continue to enhance the community by increasing the reading skills of those citizens who participated.

This 16-year veteran of Davis Vision has taken the company's long-time dedication to outreach initiatives to new levels, reinforcing Davis Vision's reputation for truly making a difference in the communities it serves. The broad impact of these initiatives affirms the importance of Laura Dyer's contributions to Davis Vision and the vision industry, with a special focus on those in need.

Congratulations, Laura!



Innovators

Optical's
Most
Influential
Women
VisionMonday 2008

role; in January, she took on additional responsibilities working with third-party vendors and payers to develop patient data.

Today, her primary responsibility is in VSP's expanding health care initiatives, helping the company demonstrate how private-practice independent ECPs help manage patients' overall health. Wilson works to develop strategic partnerships with disease managers, data aggregators and health plans in an effort to identify and manage patients with chronic conditions—all part of an initiative that has helped bring optometrists further into the healthcare arena.

SHE SAYS...“In many cases, the connection between eye health and a person's overall health is new to the people I talk with, so it's exciting to share our story, and let them know the eyes are the window on wellness.”

Bette Zaret

**Senior Vice President,
Global Marketing
Transitions Optical
Pinellas Park, Fla.**

CHOSEN BECAUSE...“Bette Zaret is a true visionary, dedicated to elevating the importance of Healthy Sight through education, eyewear and eyecare for people around the world. Her passion has also sparked a revolution within the company that is spreading throughout the industry.”

Zaret has 30 years of international marketing experience with such companies as Johnson & Johnson, Bristol Myers Squibb and Disney. Since joining Transitions Optical in 2001, Zaret has established the Transitions Partners in Education Program, including the creation of the Transitions Healthy Sight Counsel-



ing program, a global initiative that aims to educate practitioners and patients on potential threats to good sight and healthy eyes; funding of clinical research in the area of quality of vision at major academic ophthalmology and optometric institutions; developing a wide range of continuing education vehicles for eyecare practitioners; supporting educational and scientific meetings in the U.S. and abroad; and spearheading relations with the World Council of Optometry (WCO) and American Optometric Association (AOA).

Zaret has also been very instrumental in the launch of the Transitions Healthy Sight for Life Fund, Transitions Optical's global corporate giving initiative.

She's played a major role in Transitions' new PGA sponsorship, the 2009 Transitions Championship for Healthy Sight. Zaret is responsible for all strate-

gic marketing functions and for establishing and expanding the Transitions brand equity worldwide. Zaret also chairs the company's Global Marketing Council.

She is an admitted idealist and optimist. “It's like a mosaic, where far away is the big picture and closer up, all the tiny points fit together. You need a great team to contribute, expand that vision and get you there.”

Zaret has a B.A. cum laude from Syracuse University and an advanced executive degree from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management. Zaret was previously honored as one of VM's Most Influential Women in Optical in 2005.

SHE SAYS...“Work hard, find balance, be honest and have integrity. I had to fight gender wars when I was moving up; but today, I am seeing a different world, there's a real transformation and this industry is poised to really change people's lives by helping them understand healthy sight.”

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Turn-key Promotions - Designed For You. Whether you're an independent provider, a retail chain representative or a wholesale lab partner, Vision-Ease Lens offers unique turn-key promotional opportunities for all channels designed to help your business succeed.

Product Specifications - For access to the most pertinent information you need for ordering and processing, check back here frequently for the most up-to-date product specifications available.

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THE NEXT GENERATION OF FEMALE LEADERS

Students Enthusiastically Take On Professional Roles



NEW YORK—Females continue to raise their profile within the eyecare professions.

Women remain the majority of students now enrolled in U.S. schools and colleges of optometry. In addition, women are dominant among those students gaining technological and ophthalmics know-how at the leading optical dispensing and technical programs across the country.

Further, diversity of today's female students—spanning many cultural backgrounds and age groups—young singles,

mature “second career” women and working mothers—promises to further change the professional eyecare and dispensing landscape.

In optometry, women say they are drawn to the core values of the profession, and the various business opportunities that exist in private practice, group practice, public health and corporate and hospital settings.

The young women coming out of the schools and colleges, as exemplified by the students we spotlight here, are

already very active, curious and eager to extend the scope of their contributions.

The need for educated dispensing opticians remains paramount. A range of product technologies, more complex optical choices and an increasingly informed and demanding patient base continue to reinforce this need.

The 3rd edition of this special section, of **Vision Monday's** “Most Influential Women in Optical” issue, is underwritten by a grant from the Luxottica Group. We asked the heads of the country's pro-

fessional optometry schools and those overseeing the ophthalmic dispensing and opticianry tech programs around the U.S. to recommend a female candidate to represent their school and the Class of 2008 graduates.

Their choices reflect high standards of commitment, achievement and accomplishment.

—Marge Axelrad

Class of 2008 Student Profiles compiled and written by Samuel Colon.

The Next Generation of Leadership is presented by



OPTICIANRY STUDENTS

The Next Generation Of Female Leaders



Victoria Arellano Essex County College Newark, N.J.



Since her 18th birthday, Arellano has been supporting herself through school. Receiving her licensure as an optician will enable her to work fulltime while pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Biology and Portuguese at Rutgers University in Newark, N.J.

While working as an apprentice for the past two years, Arellano has volunteered for the Gift of Sight Program and the Lions Eye Banks of New Jersey.

Arellano said, "My profession in Ophthalmic Dispensing began unintended, but led to a true passion for the technology of lens manufacturing. For the past two years, I have been employed at a major competitor in the eyewear market and hold a supervising title at my office. Working at this retailer/pharmacy has nurtured my communication skills as well as the technical skills I have studied throughout my degree."

HER SCHOOL SAYS: "There is no other way to describe her. She is the kind of student that every dedicated teacher would want."

Siobhan Gross Middlesex Community College Middletown, Conn.



Working as a sales associate in a retail optical shop, Gross realized how much she loved the optical field.

"It still is so amazing to me all of the things that I have encountered in this field, and how much I have learned, especially through my courses the past few years."

At school, Gross served as a Laboratory Clinic Manager at the College Optical Clinic. Currently, she is serving as a Clinical Fellow in Contact Lenses at Consulting Ophthalmologists in Farmington, Conn. Here, she is getting hands-on experience in contact lens fitting.

She will be taking the Connecticut State practical exams this month, and will be moving to Newport News, Va. by the end of the year, where she plans to get a Master's Degree in Health Care Management.

HER SCHOOL SAYS: "She has been an advocate and unofficial tutor for several of her classmates."

Laura Huffman Hillsborough Community College, Tampa, Fla.



Huffman served as President of Hillsborough Community College's Opticianry Organization and also served as the college's representative to the National Federation of Opticianry Schools' College Bowl.

A glasses-wearer herself since the age of seven, she has always been interested in eyewear. Now that she is an optician, she finds great joy in helping the customers with such a necessary aspect of their life—vision.

"I have always liked helping people and I believe providing them with quality products to help them see is quite rewarding. My favorite is always helping the kids that come in and have to get glasses."

In the next year, Huffman plans on sitting for the Florida State Boards and possibly helping out at the opticianry program at Hillsborough Community College.

HER SCHOOL SAYS: "Laura is the outstanding female graduate from the Hillsborough Community College Opticianry Program."

Nancy Jarin Roane State Community College, Harriman, Tenn.



Jarin was elected Opticianry Student of the Year, by her classmates, representing her school at the 2008 National Federation of Opticianry Schools (NFOS) College Bowl competition in New York City at Vision Expo East, and winner of this year's Essilor CRP Award.

While in school, Jarin performed community serviced related to the eyecare field and she noted that her favorite aspect of being an optician is helping others.

"Whether it's an eyeglass adjustment, helping patients to better understand their prescription, choosing which eyewear is best for them, or helping them to insert and remove their contact lenses, it is very satisfying just knowing that I have helped someone."

She is currently working for Sears Optical and Target Optical, and she plans to continue working as an optician in the future.

HER SCHOOL SAYS: "She is definitely a next-generation leader!"

Kathie Kazdin Cuyahoga Community College Cleveland, Ohio



A recent graduate of Cuyahoga Community College's Optical Technology Program, Kazdin managed to complete school while working full-time and raising a family.

After completing her clinical experience at Park Opticians, a highly-reputable, family-owned optical shop with two locations in the Greater Cleveland area, she was hired by the business. She has now been there for over a year and is very happy with her work.

"I'm learning more each day and hope to continue to help produce quality items for our customers to use and enjoy."

HER SCHOOL SAYS: "While in the program, Ms. Kazdin showed wonderful time management skills, and she was an inspiration to those around her."

Amy Malone Seattle Central Community College School of Opticianry Seattle, Wash.



Malone, a 37-year-old mother of two, managed to balance work and family life with her school schedule, becoming a top student. As the president of SCCC's Scholastic Opticians Society, where she helped raise money to send students to the Opticians Association of Washington conventions.

She finds that the industry has suited her extremely well. "I enjoy the interaction with people, the fashion component, and the science...it plays perfectly into my personality and interests."

Malone plans to become optical manager at the private OD practice where she is currently employed. She is starting an Alumni Association for Seattle Central's School of Opticianry, which "will provide networking for graduates as well as fundraising to support the program and students."

She plans to pursue a Bachelor's degree in Optical Business Management and eventually open up her own dispensary.

HER SCHOOL SAYS: "...she has always been a positive influence."

**WORKING
TOGETHER**

Dear Reader:

It is with great pleasure that we celebrate the future leaders of the optical industry, inspired by their desire and commitment to providing the highest standards of care in helping patients see better.

Today, we salute the leading female graduates from each of the major U.S. schools and programs of optometry and opticianry. We believe that these women will help change the face of today's eyecare profession by taking on important roles in areas of private practice, group practices and optical retail operations as well as in education and technology settings.

To this end, Luxottica Group remains deeply committed to Working Together with the new generation of optical leaders, and with our valued customers, in providing the programs, products and services most closely connected to the needs of the eyecare professional.

We are honored to sponsor Vision Monday's 2008 "Next Generation of Leadership," which we are confident will help move forward women's roles in the delivery of quality eyecare services.

Our warmest congratulations to all those who have earned an esteemed place in this issue.

Sincerely,



*Pierre Fay
Executive Vice President
Wholesale North America
Luxottica Group*



LUXOTTICA[®]
G R O U P

OPTICIANRY STUDENTS



Cassia Niemotko

Raritan Valley Community College, Somerville, N.J.



Entering the optician program at 17 years of age, Niemotko completed the difficult curriculum in two years of full-time study while maintaining a steady job, making a lasting, positive impression on her professors along the way.

She credits her professors, who, she said, “took the time to assist me in areas where I needed extra help,” for giving her the opportunity to begin enjoying opticianry work.

“It is a very fulfilling job to be able to assist people in improving their vision. There is a multitude of different opportunities that allow you to both deal with the public and/or deal with the mechanics and technicalities of fabricating a pair of glasses.”

In the future, Niemotko plans on becoming a licensed optician. She is now working at Optical Options in East Randolph N.J., and hopes to be ready to take the State Board Exam this fall.

HER SCHOOL SAYS: “We are sure that she will have a most successful career in her new profession. It is a forgone conclusion that she will be a leader of opticianry soon.”

Elyse Turner

Indiana University School of Optometry Optician/Technician Program, Bloomington, Ind.



Recipient of the “Technician of the Year Award,” Turner was an active and excellent student at IU, working for an optometrist in the summer of 2007 and then as a lab teaching-assistant in the ophthalmic dispensing class in the spring of 2008.

“I have been wearing glasses since the third grade so becoming an optician/technician just seemed to fit. I can relate to the patients on a more personal level.”

Currently, Turner works in a private practice, she is still enrolled as a full-time student and she hopes to become an ophthalmic assistant. Although she noted that it has been difficult balancing the schedules of school and work, she remains positive. “Being an Optician/Technician has been a very rewarding experience.”

HER SCHOOL SAYS: “She possesses an exemplary professional attitude and ethical foundation. Elyse will be an asset to the profession and we are proud to have her as a graduate.”

Vanessa Rivera

Broward Community College Fort Lauderdale, Fla.



As a single mother, Vanessa Rivera was wary of going to school to enter the optical program at Broward Community College. Once she started, however, she found immense support from her community and remained driven to complete the challenge.

“I tried hard and grew personally in the optical program at Broward Community College. I overcame obstacles and stayed with it no matter how many times I wanted to quit. Our professors were awesome and the support I received from my co-workers and the doctors is what kept me going, along with the drive to better myself for my daughter and me.”

Rivera plans to use the knowledge she has gained and continue her education. She plans to get a bachelors degree and eventually go to optometry school.

HER SCHOOL SAYS: “Vanessa is a wonderful student.”

Yuliya Zhukova

New York City College of Technology, Brooklyn, N.Y.



Holding a Bachelor’s degree in creative writing from CUNY Brooklyn College, Zhukova began her optical career as an eyewear consultant for Lens Crafters. She soon became interested in opticianry and enrolled at the New York City College of Technology, Vision Care Technology Department, where she graduated with an Associate’s Degree in Ophthalmic Dispensing.

“When I got to school, I saw that there was so much more to the world of ophthalmic dispensing than I had imagined,” she said.

Zhukova made the Dean’s Honor List every semester maintaining a GPA of 3.79. She is the recipient of two distinguished awards, the Philip L. Salvatori Contact Lens Theory Award and the New York State Society of Opticians Future of Opticianry Scholarship.

Zhukova hopes to become involved in management as well as frame design.

HER SCHOOL SAYS: “Since enrolling in the program, Ms. Zhukova excelled to the top of her class.”

Megan Smith

Erie Community College Williamsville, NY.



At the time of her entrance into Erie Community College, Smith was a 27-year-old single mother of two twin girls. She managed to graduate with honors and became a member of the international honor society, Phi Theta Kappa. She was also a tutor for the physics department and she helped a professor run a class for high school students.

Previously working for JCPenney Optical, Smith has recently started working as an optician and contact lens fitter at Eye Care and Vision Associates, a private ophthalmology practice with four different locations in Western New York.

“Right now, the most rewarding part of my job is when a patient picks up their glasses and they say, ‘Wow, I can see now!’” she said.

Smith plans to get married this July. “It has been a wonderful and very busy two and half years, but I wouldn’t trade them for the world.”

HER SCHOOL SAYS: “Megan demonstrates dedication, commitment, and strong leadership qualities.”

TODAY'S STUDENTS SAY...

“I overcame obstacles and stayed with it no matter how many times I wanted to quit.”

“...it is very satisfying just knowing that I have helped someone.”

“It is still so amazing to me all of the things that I have encountered in this field, and how much I have learned...”

“I’m learning more each day...”

“It is a very fulfilling job to be able to assist people on improving their vision.”

“...the most rewarding part of my job is when a patient picks up their glasses and they say, ‘Wow, I can see now!’”

“Being an Optician/Technician has been a very rewarding experience.”

“Yoga and meditation allow me to center and regroup myself from the hecticness of modern life. As I believe in trying to live and perform at my own highest level, Luxottica’s devotion to excellence resonates well with me.”

DR. JIYEN SHIN, O.D.
Golden Vision
Optometric Centers
Los Angeles, CA

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To learn more about Dr. Jiye Shin and the advantages of partnering with Luxottica go to www.luxandme.com

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OPTOMETRY STUDENTS

The Next Generation Of Female Leaders



Sharanjit Burmy, OD SUNY College of Optometry New York, N.Y.



Born in London, England, Burmy immigrated to Canada when she was nine years old. After receiving her BSC from the University of British Columbia, she moved to New York City to pursue her OD.

At school, Burmy was president of her class for the past three years. She has also been an active volunteer since she was a young teenager.

"Optometry has been more than I anticipated it to be, allowing students and optometrists to be more involved with their communities, while more importantly allowing the clinician to participate in the overall general healthcare of their patients."

Next year, Burmy will begin a residency in Ocular Disease at SUNY College of Optometry. After that, she hopes to teach part-time at an optometry school while working in a private practice.

HER SCHOOL SAYS: "Sharanjit represents the best and brightest among our students. Not only did she achieve excellence in the clinical and didactic portions of our program, but she was a dynamic student leader."

Marlena Chu, OD UC Berkeley School of Optometry Berkeley, Calif.



As an undergraduate at UC Berkeley, Chu was an outstanding student, whose grades and enthusiasm made a lasting impact on her professors. She was elected co-president of her class and appointed as a member of the School Admissions Committee.

"Optometry allows me to not only care for my patient's vision needs, but to be part of their lives."

Soon she will enter a Low Vision Residency program at UC Berkeley, where she plans to further her clinical experience while helping a neighborhood to which she feels a strong connection.

"I am very excited to serve the low vision needs in the Bay Area, a population dear to me, and also to work with the always amazing duo of Dr. Robert Greer and Dr. Ian Bailey."

HER SCHOOL SAYS: "At Berkeley, Ms. Chu has excelled both in the classroom and in clinical patient care."

Jessica Mai, OD University of Missouri St. Louis School of Optometry St. Louis, Mo.



Graduating on the Dean's List with honors, Mai is the recipient of the 2008 Contact Lens Faculty Clinical Excellence Award, the 2008 Student Ambassador Award, and the 2008 Missouri Optometric Foundation Clinical Experience Award.

"I believe that optometry is an outstanding profession and I am proud to be a part of it. I am forever grateful to those who paved the way and made optometry what it is today. During my career, I hope to continue to be involved in promoting the profession and moving it forward for future generations."

Mai plans to work in a multidisciplinary clinic in Kansas.

HER SCHOOL SAYS: "She was one of two graduates who distinguished himself/herself with the honor of Dean's List with Honors."

Ashley K. McFerron, OD Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of Optometry Talequah, Okla.



McFerron is a recipient of many awards, including the NSUOCO Clinical Excellence Award, the NSU Honor Society Award, the Vistakon Award of Excellence in Contact Lens Patient Care, and the Transitions Healthy Sight for Life Scholarship.

In 2006, McFerron founded the Bedlam Optometry Clinic, which provides healthcare for the uninsured in the city of Tulsa.

McFerron recently moved to Portland, Ore. and will be practicing primary care optometry with a special interest in contact lenses in Woodburn, Ore.

She has high hopes for the future of optometry. "I think the profession is moving in a positive direction. There are so many things changing and so much research going on. I think things will only get more interesting."

HER SCHOOL SAYS: "Ashley McFerron is an outstanding female graduate."

Melissa Schroeder, OD Indiana University School of Optometry Bloomington, Ind.



Schroeder served as the Indiana University Optometric Student Association Trustee, increasing membership and attendance of the organization. While at school, she was a strong advocate for IU, leading tours, and hosting prospective lunches.

Schroeder has a positive outlook for her optometric future and the future of the profession in general. "I am excited to be entering the great profession of optometry. Optometry has made impressive advancements in the past few decades, and it is important for members of the profession to take interest in our future."

Schroeder will be joining Urbandale Optical, a group private practice in Urbandale, Iowa.

HER SCHOOL SAYS: "Melissa Schroeder is successful both in the classroom and out. There is no doubt in my mind that she will continue her advocacy for the profession and make an impact wherever she goes."

Anita Ticak, OD Ohio State University College of Optometry Columbus, Ohio



After struggling with visual problems at a young age, Ticak "developed a passion for eyecare early on," she related, and since then, she hasn't looked back.

Ticak recently completed a Master's Degree in Vision Science concurrently with her Doctor of Optometry degree.

A recipient of the AOA Student Leadership Award and the OOA Senior Student Award, Ticak served as President of the OSU Optometry chapter of the AOA and the AOA-PAC.

"Never have I seen such a group of committed, giving and passionate people as is seen in optometry."

Ticak is currently doing a Cornea and Contact Lens Residency at the University of Houston College of Optometry.

HER SCHOOL SAYS: "Anita has been an active student organization participant and leader throughout optometry school."