



WPA 2025 FALL CONVENTION



Madison, Marriott West
1313 John Q Hammons Dr, Middleton, WI 53562
September 26 & 26 2025



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WELCOME!

Welcome to the Wisconsin Paraoptometric Association Fall Convention!

We're so glad you're here! The Wisconsin Paraoptometric Association (WPA) is a dedicated community of para-professionals who are passionate about advancing optometry through education, training, and connection.

As a paraoptometric, you're more than just a team member; you play a crucial role in providing quality vision care to patients of all ages. You support both your doctor and your patients, making a real difference in their eye health and overall well-being. The more you grow your skills, the greater your impact—not just in your office, but in the entire profession.

With new advancements in technology and expanding responsibilities in eye care, staying up to date is more important than ever. That's why WPA is here to support you with regular educational events throughout the year, held across our two state districts. We're committed to helping you develop your skills, pursue certification, and take your career to the next level.

The WPA is proudly endorsed by the Wisconsin Optometric Association (WOA), and we work closely with them to ensure you have the best resources and support available.

Becoming a WPA member means more than just professional development—it's a chance to connect, build friendships, and be part of a community that truly understands your passion for eye care.

Paraoptometric of the year!



2024- Eileen Leow Eye Care
Center of Wausau

Nominate a Star Paraoptometric!

Know someone in your office who goes above and beyond?
Nominate them for the WPA Paraoptometric of the Year Award an
annual honor recognizing outstanding contributions to
optometry and the community.

Nominee Requirements:

WPA member in good standing

Service to optometry and paraoptometric associations

Public service and personal achievements

Professional Endorsements

The recipient will be celebrated at the WOA President's
Luncheon at our fall convention and receive a custom award
plaque.

Submit nominations by September 1st.

Nomination form below.

Help us celebrate the passion, professionalism, and heart behind
patient care.

Thank you to all past, present, and future honorees—you make a
lasting difference every day!



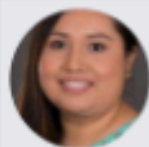
Meet the Board !



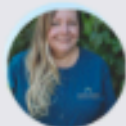
Julie Steebs, ABO, CPOA
President



Lori Kindschy, CPOT Past
President Pro Tem



Modesta Montes, CPO
Treasurer



Lori Post, CPO Secretary



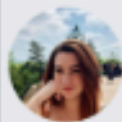
Jeanette Howard, ABO
District Liason



Beth Brester, ABO, NCLE,
CPOA District Liason



Nicola McKenna-Smith,
District Liason



Brittany Perkins, District
Liason

MEET OUR SPEAKERS!



Kelly Poyner – Speaker

A self-described inspirationalist, Kelly Poyner is a coach and speaker with The Transformational Team. Kelly is committed to adding value to others and sharing insights and tools to help launch their personal and professional growth. She has spent the last 35 plus years developing her “toolbox” and is currently most passionate about the work she is doing to help others show up, step up and speak up.

Kelly’s passion for connection can be traced back to the fact that she had the privilege of running many of the family businesses. Some from the ground up. “Of all the projects I have worked on, my favorite has truly been as a trainer, coach and facilitator. For me it is all about people. Connection is a gift and helps us strengthen our families, our friendships and our networks. This has allowed me to move beyond my own expectations and creates a depth in my day-to-day experiences as I stand in service to others.”

Kelly Poyner has been featured in healthcare publications, Comforts at Home® Magazine and as a newspaper columnist.

When Kelly is not in the “office”, you will find her spending time with family, looking to create new experiences, reading and working out.

MEET OUR SPEAKERS!



Joy Gibb, ABOC, FNAO –
Speaker

Joy L. Gibb, ABOC, FNAO began her optical career in 1986. She managed an independent retail opticianry in Bountiful, Utah for over ten years before opening her own business, Eyes of Joy Mobile Optical Service and is currently the practice manager for Daynes Eye and Lasik in Bountiful, Utah. In addition, she often consults practices about their dispensaries and improving customer service and sales. Patients often seek her help with the difficult to fit prescription, progressive lenses, and children's eyewear. Joy has participated in the writing of several industry guides and publications and has also served as a member of the Better Vision Institute.

MEET OUR SPEAKERS!



Phernell Walker, MBA, ABOM,
NCELC, LDO – Speaker

Phernell Walker, MBA, ABOM, NCELC, LDO

Renowned International Speaker

Master in Ophthalmic Optics

Mr. Walker is an esteemed and highly sought-after speaker and educator who possesses a great passion for optics and business. He is widely recognized for his influential textbook, "Pure Optics," which has now reached its Third Edition and is utilized in optometry and opticianry colleges. In addition to his impressive academic achievements, Mr. Walker previously served as an Adjunct Professor of Ophthalmic Optics at Pacific

University College of Optometry. He has earned a master's degree in business management (MBA), Master in Ophthalmic Optics, and an Associate of Science Degree in Opticianry. Mr. Walker holds prominent positions in various organizations, including the

American Board of Opticianry, Vision Expo, and the Opticians Association of America Board of Directors. Currently, he serves as the VP of Optometric Relations at VSP Eyefinity.

Throughout his career, Mr. Walker has received numerous prestigious awards that recognize his exceptional contributions to the field of optics. Some of these notable accolades include: the Joseph Bruneri Award in Optics from the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO), the Beverly Myers Achievement Award in Ophthalmic Optics, the Helen Keller Benefactor Award, International Opticians Association (IOA) Silmo

Paris' Lifetime Achievement Award and IOA of the Year 2023 Nominee and the National Academy of Opticianry (NAO) Educator of the Year award.

MEET OUR SPEAKERS!



Kellye Knueppel, OD, FOVDR –
Speaker

Dr. Knueppel has dedicated her career to the practice of optometric vision therapy, establishing The Vision Therapy Center in Wisconsin in 1995. She is a graduate of Southern California College of Optometry and completed the SUNY Vision Therapy Residency. She is a Fellow of the Optometric Vision Development & Rehabilitation Association (OVDRA). She lectures internationally on vision development, strabismus and amblyopia, vision and learning, neuro-optometric rehabilitation and prescribing therapeutic performance lenses.

Dr. Knueppel is Wisconsin Clinical Director, North America Regional Clinical Advisor and Global Faculty Advisor for the Special Olympics Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes Program; a Past President of the Wisconsin Optometric Association; and was Adjunct Clinical Faculty for Illinois College of Optometry for over 20 years. Dr. Knueppel has been an invited international clinician for ten Special Olympics World Games due to her expertise in functional lens prescribing.

Dr. Knueppel received the prestigious G.N. Getman Award from OVDRA (2021), the Golisano Health Leadership Award for North America (2023), the Award of Excellence from Wisconsin Special Olympics (2010), Wisconsin Optometric Association Optometrist of the Year (2006) and Young Optometrist of the Year (2002).

MEET OUR SPEAKERS!



Tessa Sokel, OD – Speaker

Dr. Tessa Sokol is a Wisconsin native who began her optical career in 1998 as an optician before becoming an optometrist. After earning her Doctorate in Optometry cum laude from the Illinois College of Optometry in 2007, she brought her extensive training and community-minded focus back to Wisconsin to establish Sokol Advanced Eyecare.

Dr. Sokol completed four optometric internships across the country, gaining experience in ocular disease, surgical co-management, low vision rehab, pediatric optometry, and contact lens care at renowned facilities including the West Palm Beach VA, the Child and Family Optometry Clinic in Kansas, the Naval Hospital at Parris Island, and the Illinois Eye Institute.

She has received numerous honors, including membership in Beta Sigma Kappa and Tomb & Key honor societies, the Wisconsin Young Optometrist of the Year award (2014), and a spot on Madison's 40 Under 40 list (2015).

Dedicated to service, Dr. Sokol is an active member of both the Wisconsin and American Optometric Associations, serving in leadership roles and on legislative committees. She is also an InfantSEE provider, a member of VOSH International, and has delivered eye care in nine countries. Locally, she partners with OneSight and performs school screenings.

Beyond optometry, Dr. Sokol helps plan Madison's St. Patrick's Day parade and enjoys cycling, running, cooking, flying, and spending time with her dogs.

MEET OUR SPEAKERS!



Tristan Wiebel, ABOC –
Speaker

Business Development Representative @ ZEISS Vision Care | American Board of
Opticianry Certified

Tristan is a Business Development Representative at ZEISS Vision Care and an American Board of Opticianry Certified professional. Known for his natural leadership and strategic mindset, Tristan excels at bringing out the best in those around him by recognizing individual strengths and using positive reinforcement to solve problems. He is deeply committed to his clients, consistently going above and beyond to provide exceptional service. With a genuine gift for customer care and a strong investment in building lasting relationships, Tristan is a trusted partner in delivering tailored, effective solutions.

MEET OUR SPEAKERS!



John Zimmerman – Speaker

Technical Sales & Training Specialists at Carl Zeiss Vision

John is a seasoned optical industry professional with over 27 years of experience in sales, training, and business development. Since 2020, he has served as a Sales & Technical Training Specialist at ZEISS Vision USA, where he delivers expert training and support on ZEISS products to clients and teams nationwide.

John has been with ZEISS since 2008, previously holding roles as Business Development Representative and Senior Retail Business Development Representative for the Southeastern U.S. and Puerto Rico. His work has consistently focused on driving growth, building strong client relationships, and enhancing the customer's experience through technical knowledge and practical solutions.

Before joining ZEISS, he spent nearly a decade at Tri-City Optical as Sales and Marketing Manager, where he developed a strong foundation in marketing strategy and team leadership. Based in Clearwater, Florida, John holds an associate's degree from Spencerian College and is known for his dedication to education and excellence in the vision care field.

Whether he's in the field working with clients or developing technical training programs, John brings energy, expertise, and a people-first mindset to everything he does.

