

Editorial ▶ In Their Own Words ...

Marc B. Taub, OD, MS, Southern College of Optometry, Memphis, Tennessee

The Optometric Extension Program Foundation is 90 years young this year. I have called this organization home and been a part of this family for the past 15 years. I am honored to edit their journals and to publish numerous books under their roof. I am thrilled with the education I have taken that has fundamentally altered my thinking about vision. I am most proud of the friends and mentors that I have met along the way and with whom I have formed long-lasting bonds. I am honored to have been a part of the first 90 years and look forward to being a part of the next 90. In this editorial, I wanted to bring you the words of the Past Presidents on what OEP means to them.

This 90th anniversary issue contains four classic articles and one that you have probably never seen before from the archives. We asked many practicing clinicians to read over the classics and discuss the lasting impact on the profession.

We hope you enjoy this stroll down memory lane and plan on bringing you more classics from the archives in future issues of *OVP*.

Paul A. Harris

OEP to me means first-class education to stimulate new thinking, new approaches, and to help equip our profession with the tools and knowledge necessary to change our patients' lives. OEP provides this education in nearly every type of venue and size, catering to everyone's needs, in North America and abroad. OEP is both the heritage from which our great profession emerged and also represents the best in current thinking. It is the most forward-thinking, clinically oriented group of people from which we can all learn.

Joseph R. Miele

The Clinical Associates of OEFP were the life-blood of my Optometric life. For more than 40 years, my colleagues provided me the opportunity to learn, and the more I learned, the better I cared for my patients. It was the constant challenge to learn how to help my patients be more efficient and comfortable that made my career demanding, but immensely rewarding. I thank the Clinical Associates who were so instrumental in creating that challenge and OEFP for creating the gathering place for those CAs.

Gregory Kitchener

I was introduced to the Optometric Extension Program (OEP) in the office of Bruce Wolff, OD, in the early 1970s and through this association had the opportunity to meet Dr. Skeffington. These interactions drew me into experiences with an ever-widening family of clinical associates. If I attempted to specify my optometric genealogy, I would name Bruce as my father, with Skeff as grandfather, being sure to include some significant uncles like Bob Kraskin and Paul Lewis, add a few cousins like John Streff and Jerry Getman, then branch out with a myriad of brothers, sisters, and younger cousins.

Growing up with these influences, I was encouraged to see OEP not as a ritualistic testing protocol of numbered probes, or as a rigid algorithm of case analysis, or even as a Venn

graphic of an emergent vision. What OEP provides through valuable elements from each of these, as well as its many publications and educational forums, is rather a direction for viewing human development and behavior. Learning to see and trying to better describe what is visible from this direction has been a continuing and fulfilling challenge.

So, besides the far-flung optometric family that it has afforded me, OEP is the foundation and the wellspring for the developing clinical application of an evolving understanding of the pervasive role of the visual process in human behavior.

Robin Lewis

I was a bright, yet learning-disabled child. OEFP provided a great deal of the education my optometrist needed to help me. His help with my vision kindled a lifelong interest and passion for understanding the visual process, as well as a desire to share my vision with others. Thanks to my optometrist and OEFP, I have a place in the process of sharing and teaching that is fundamental to the reason the Foundation exists.

I so appreciate the opportunities OEFP has provided me, and is still providing me, to serve and to learn. Like Skeffington and Alexander before us, each of us is taking our place in service to an ideal—a vision of lives changed for the better through a better understanding of the visual process.

Glen T. Steele

OEFP provides the opportunity to explore vision beyond the limits of the eye through thoughtful education, clinical observation, and case study. OEFP looks beyond the eye to link vision to overall development and function. OEFP stimulates thinking with concepts to assist patients and parents as they move through the process of life with vision as their guide, whether through development or restoration of function. OEFP gives me a connection to share with some of the brightest individuals from all over the world.

Jim Cox

I learned in school (LACO) about OEP and the tenets of Behavioral Vision Care. Once out in practice, LuPrele Williams took me under her wing and sent me to 13 OEP-sponsored education events in the next 18 months. I was introduced to all the major proponents of BVC and became involved at local, State, National, and eventually International OEP activities. My comfort level of involvement is the behind-the-scenes work for the Foundation, and I will never regret my time or forget the huge number of wonderful clinical associates that I have met.

Eric Ikeda

Optometry is to healthcare as the Optometric Extension Program (OEP) is to behavioral vision care. Since graduating from optometry school, my post-graduate education (clinical curriculum, regional congresses, etc.) and the access to resources available from OEP have enabled me to grow as a practitioner. It has allowed me to provide optometric vision care at a much higher level than I ever imagined. What does OEP mean to me? It is a fulfilling, professional lifestyle of continued learning and impacting and being impacted by those who we serve, our patients.

Bev Roberts

My OEP experience began as finding education in an area my university training didn't provide. It grew to provide my international family. Members of the OEP family are special. They welcome you and include you whenever you arrive in their area. They provide a wonderful learning environment combined with great social experiences. May the great interactions continue.