

Ketchum

MARSHALL B. KETCHUM UNIVERSITY *Fall/Winter 2021*



The Class that Served *17*

A Ketchum Family 25

The Person Behind the Eyes 31

Ketchum

Ketchum Magazine is sent to University alumni, faculty, staff and friends of Marshall B. Ketchum University and is published by the Office of Marketing & Communications.

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Our Vision

We seek to reimagine the future of health care education.

Our Mission

The mission of Marshall B. Ketchum University is to educate caring, inspired health care professionals who are prepared to deliver collaborative, patient-centric health care in an interprofessional environment.

Our Core Values

Marshall B. Ketchum University is guided by the values of:

Accountability: We are committed to honesty, fairness and responsibility for our words and actions.

Caring: We strive to address the needs of our University community and others by nurturing a spirit of compassion.

Excellence: Consistent with our legacy, we are committed to achieving outcomes of the highest quality.

Innovation: We have the courage to dream and experiment with creative and unique ideas.

Respect: We value the unique talents and diversity of people, strive to work collaboratively and honor the open exchange of ideas.



**Marshall B.
KETCHUM UNIVERSITY**

Marshall B. Ketchum University and Ketchum Health is a 501 (C)(3) nonprofit institution.



Table of Contents

FEATURES

The Class that Served | 17

A Ketchum Family | 25

The Person Behind the Eyes | 31

MBKU Peer Advisors | 34

Diversity and Inclusion | 35

IN THIS ISSUE

President's Perspective | 1

Throwback | 2

Sharing the Love | 3

Campus News | 4

Ketchum Conversations | 7

Multifaceted Care | 9

Faculty Focus | 12

A Part of the Recovery | 13

Donor and Alumni | 23

Faces of MBKU | 27

First Friends | 34

The Spanish Class | 35

Leadership Corner | 37

Class Notes | 39

Faculty Publications | 40

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Dr. Kevin L. Alexander was named the founding President of Marshall B. Ketchum University in 2013. Under his vision and leadership, the institution has transformed from a single-discipline college to a multidisciplinary interprofessional University with the addition of the School of PA Studies and the College of Pharmacy.

Dear Alumni and Friends,

To even the casual observer, it is clear that Marshall B. Ketchum University is about service. You see the skilled educators in optometry, PA studies, and pharmacy, you see students who are striving to learn and succeed in these fields, and you see the labs, exam rooms, and lecture halls where it's all taking place — and you have an understanding that this is truly a great health care university serving the Orange County community and beyond.

However, beneath the surface, there is a whole other dimension to what all these people bring to the community. There is a richness at MBKU, a depth to our population that makes us exceptional. Our school is a great gathering of individuals who are dedicated to serving others beyond their stated job descriptions. As I near my retirement, I can say with great sincerity that this is one of the things that brings me the most pride as President of MBKU. I have tried to do the same throughout my career.

In this issue of *Ketchum* magazine, we shine a light on just a few of the stories of service in our community. Lt. Col. Bob Gmelin, OD, '66, is a part of a remarkable class of SCCO graduates who almost entirely served in the military. We tell his story and highlight some of the members of the 1966 class, knowing that it represents just a fraction of the many SCCO alumni who served their country.

MBKU has much to be proud of with respect to our clinical facilities, and in this issue we focus on the Garden Grove clinic, which is a pediatric clinic run in partnership with the Boys & Girls Club of Garden Grove, and which represents a challenging and rewarding rotation site for SCCO students.

The COVID-19 pandemic is still having profound effects on how we deliver health care and how we educate our students, but this issue also tells the story of how faculty and students from all three disciplines came together to volunteer for vaccination clinics to serve our community.

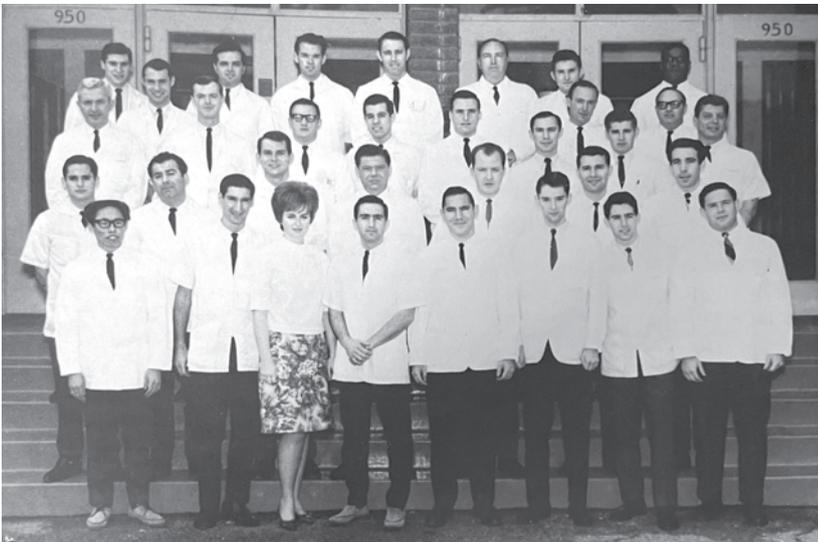
I hope you enjoy reading about these stories and more, and, to our MBKU family — I hope you know that the depth you and your work bring to our community is appreciated, valued and remembered!

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin L. Alexander". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kevin L. Alexander, OD, PhD
President

Throwback



Did You Know?

Dr. Marilyn Carter was the only woman who graduated in the LACO/SCCO class of 1966. She also served as a Class Officer as the Senior Class Secretary. The Class of 1966 has some wonderful accomplishments. See page 17 to read more about how that class has served.

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Sharing the Love



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Thank you to the 2021 sponsors of the SCCO First-Year Orientation on Aug. 12, 2021: Alcon, Allergan, CooperVision, Essilor, Johnson & Johnson Vision, National Vision, and VSP. We appreciate your partnership and support of our SCCO students! #MBKUstrong #MBKUProud

@ketchumuniversity

Our students proudly represented MBKU's SCCO at the House of Delegates at Optometry's June Meeting in Denver, Colo. In attendance was Annabel Storch '19, former AOSA President; Dhara Patel '24, AOSA Trustee-elect; Nina Stroud '23, AOSA Trustee; and Ryan Funai '22, current AOSA President.

@ketchumuniversity

The inaugural SCCO InSight programs for the classes of 2023 and 2024 were a success! Special thank you to our corporate partners who sponsored the programs and shared with the students how their company will support them throughout their education. Thank you again to Alcon, CooperVision, National Vision, and VSP. We are grateful for your support! #MBKUProud #MBKUstrong



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By the Numbers

101

SCCO students achieved Student Fellowship this year with the American Academy of Optometry.



AMERICAN ACADEMY
of OPTOMETRY

Campus News

Pharm Student of the Year



Congratulations to Class of 2021 College of Pharmacy graduate Dr. Dorith Anda. Dr Anda was awarded student of the year for the South Bay/Long Beach Society of Health-System Pharmacists.



Peer Advice

Our students provide helpful tips and resources in MBKU's Peer Advice Advisor Blog each week. Explore topics like transition from undergrad to grad school, eating well and healthy snacking, and how work-study works. Learn ways to destress before a big test from Jacky Ho (SCCO Class of 2024) in her latest article entitled How I Destress Before Tests on ketchum.edu/news.

Welcome Back BBQ

Students safely gathered to celebrate the start of the school year with a Welcome BBQ hosted by the Student Association's Extracurricular Committee and University Student Affairs. Students enjoyed games on the lawn, TK Burgers, and support from their Peer Advisors. To read more about the amazing impact of MBKU's Peer Advisors, read the feature on page 32.



COP Student Appointed to National Advisory Group

Congratulations to Taylor Renee Austin | MBKU Student Pharmacist, Class of 2022. Taylor has been appointed to the American Society of Health-System (ASHP) Residency Preparation Advisory Group. Her role will include advising ASHP members on student residency preparation resources, including the process for obtaining a residency and how it differs from other career options. She will be working with other pharmacy students across the nation during her term. She is hoping to represent MBKU College of Pharmacy well so the MBKU program can continue to be representatives for ASHP. Taylor, you make us proud!



2021 Commencement Exercises

SCCO and COP were able to graduate in person in May 2021 and our newest PAs as will graduate on Nov. 12, 2021, marking the sixth graduating class for SPAS.



Western Pharmacy Exchange

Dr. Monica Trivedi, Taylor Austin, Timmy Chung, and Van Cathy Pham attended the Western Pharmacy Exchange (WPE) for CPhA on June 19-20. Over the conference weekend, Van Cathy Pham received the Student Pharmacist of the Year Award, Dr. Trivedi and students presented posters, and our COP team placed second in Quiz Bowl – even with the smallest team in the competition!



Congratulations Martina!

Congratulations to Martina Mikail, College of Pharmacy Class of 2022, who has been selected as the Marshall B. Ketchum University, College of Pharmacy, recipient for California Society of Health-System Pharmacists (CSHP) 2021 Student Leadership Award.



White Coat Ceremony 2021

Congratulations to the College of Pharmacy Class of 2025 and the SPAS Class of 2022 for receiving their White Coats this October.



No Higher Calling

Dr. Mark Nakano and Dr. Brandon Grove

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, universities and health care institutions were thrown into a new reality – one that combined taking extreme protective measures out of an abundance of caution with shifting many practices online. This was particularly true for the places that were both educational *and* a health care institution, such as MBKU’s clinical facilities. *Ketchum* magazine sat down with Dr. Mark Nakano, SCCO’s Associate Dean of Clinics for Ketchum Health, and Dr. Brandon Grove, Director of Medical Clinics to talk about the challenges and the accomplishments of the past year and a half.

***Ketchum* magazine: Can you talk a little about how your clinic has been able to continue its service to the community over the past year and a half?**

Dr. Mark Nakano: The clinic was closed a very limited amount of time — about one week — as we delivered urgent and emergent care to the community. Once we became comfortable delivering care with PPE, new safety protocols and new processes, we were able to bring the faculty and students back to deliver care in a safe environment. We modified the elements of exams to decrease exposure for patients, staff, faculty and students.

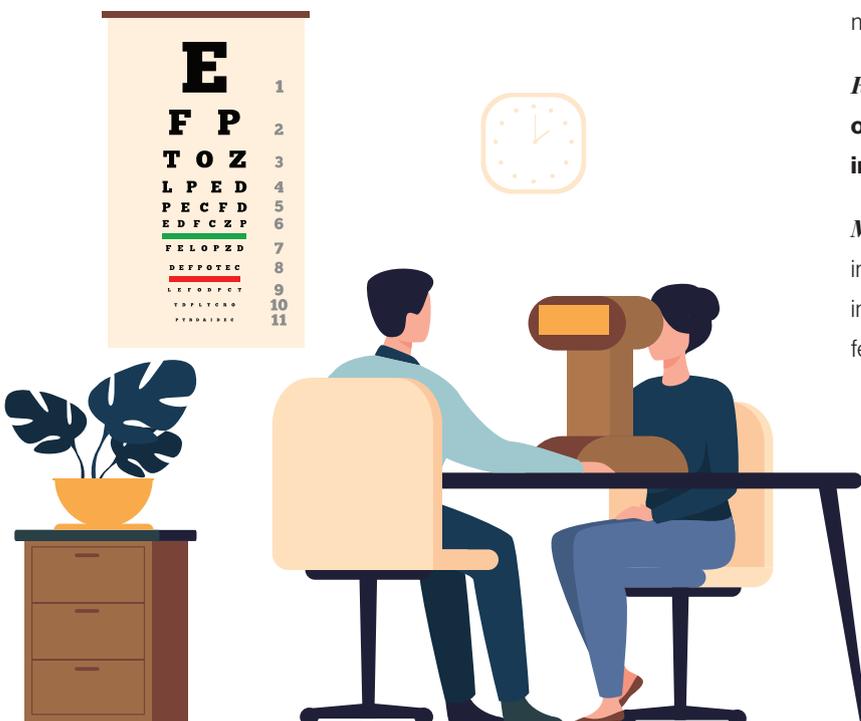
Dr. Brandon Grove: And I’ll add that technology has been central to our ability to serve. Telemedicine combined with parking lot assessment of sick individuals has helped to limit the scope of coronavirus infection in our university community.

EM: What would you say was the biggest challenge you faced in the clinics during this time?

BG: Educating our University members about the specifics of infection and reasoning behind policy updates has been a significant challenge. The Office of Student Affairs in coordination with University Administration has arranged “town hall” meetings over this time frame to communicate a consistent message about how our University will move through and beyond this pandemic.

EM: This issue of *Ketchum* magazine explores the theme of “service” at MBKU. In your view, why is service such an important part of MBKU’s clinical identity?

MN: Being available when the community needs you the most is important and demonstrating that to our student-interns is equally important. We all signed up to be doctors, so we have to get over any fear we might have to help our patients and our community.



BG: At its very core, health care is about service. Given the sacrifice of our time and energy in combination with the pressures inherent to health care, the reason we do what we do is service. There is no higher calling than to place others' needs above our own in the practice of serving them.

KM: Taking a moment to look back at the last year and a half, what are you most proud of with respect to the clinics you lead?

BG: Coming back to the challenge of educating our University community, we have served as a consistent source of scientifically based information at a time when misinformation is prevalent. We have helped guide policy and maintain our students' progress toward their degrees that will better the lives of those they care for.

MN: I am so proud of the resiliency of people and their desire to continue to help others that needed eye and vision care. No one has ever experienced a pandemic and this virus came with a lot of unknowns. We developed a plan and adjusted as we needed to based on the CDC Guidelines. I am proud of the staff, faculty and students for stepping up and meeting the challenge of the pandemic. 🛡️



Dr. Mark Nakano



Dr. Brandon Grove



Multifaceted Care

MBKU's Garden Grove Clinical Facility Works Wonders

It might be tempting for a person — when looking at the size and scope of Ketchum Health, or at the rich history of University Eye Center in Los Angeles — to believe that the good work happening in those clinics has mostly to do with their cutting-edge technology and well-equipped exam rooms.

When one considers MBKU's Garden Grove clinical facility, however, it reveals the truth of the matter, a truth that applies to all three clinics: Their success stems from the people within them, from their directors and the support staff to the faculty mentors and the students rotating through.

MUSICAL CHAIRS

The reason the Garden Grove clinic functions as such a great reminder of this truth is because co-directors Dr. Jillian Youngerman and Dr. Allegra Burgher are able to deliver care that meets the standard of excellence MBKU is known for in facilities that are a bit smaller than the other clinics. As a part of a program called Access to Resources for Children's Health, Education, and Support (ARCHES) at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Garden Grove, Dr. Youngerman and Dr. Burgher work out of a suite in a larger CHOC building, where they play musical chairs with eye equipment, mini fridges, and water coolers to provide enough exam areas to serve as many children as possible on the days they're open. And serving children is the mission at Garden Grove. There's no doubt all the individuals who work there are happy to forgo some creature comforts, empowered as they are by the perspective that comes from a front-row seat to the transformational effects of providing quality vision care to children who need it.

“It's very rewarding not just to help these children but to instill that love of helping others in our students.”

— DR. JILLIAN YOUNGERMAN

“Children don't understand that their visual experience is unusual until they're screened,” says Dr. Burgher. “We see a lot of amblyopia, for example, a condition which prevents the brain from developing a pathway to one of the eyes. Kids who have this often just try to adapt to it, but the thing is, it's treatable. A lot of kids do not come in with any complaints, because they've been making do on their own. Since a child is often not going to tell you that they're not seeing well, a lot of vision problems go untreated in children. This is why it's so essential to check children's vision if they're struggling school. These kids are relying on us, which is why we take a lot of pride in doing the best work we can.”

VITAL SERVICES

Educating communities and doing vision screenings for children are both vital, given that children often suffer an even worse fate than an untreated eye condition: an untreated eye condition that is misdiagnosed as a learning problem. This issue is close to Dr. Youngerman's heart because it's precisely what happened to her as a child. “When I was a kid, I was labeled 'slow' because my vision was so poor that I would go up to the front of the board and try to memorize everything so I could do my assignments,” she recalls. “So I am very aware of the impact we can have with just one eye exam. And it's very rewarding not just to help these children but to instill that love of helping others in our students.”

The opportunities that those who work in the Garden Grove clinic have to help children go far beyond vision care. Just by virtue of its proximity to a larger network of social services, ARCHES is able to meet needs in a number of different places where they arise. “We do a lot of homeless youth case management, we do a lot of health insurance, social services and enrollments,” says Dr. Burgher. “We have school supplies, and we have laundry detergent and hygiene supplies that we give to patients.” The idea is to remove barriers to continuing care that often take the form of basic but unmet needs.

“In some ways it's challenging working out of a space like this,” says Dr. Youngerman. “But in other ways it is so unique and rewarding. We might be working on a glasses order while someone from ARCHES is pulling open a drawer to give dinner to our patient for that night. Or they're grabbing backpacks filled with school supplies from the room where we're giving an eye exam. Being able to help them with what they need and provide all these resources in one place is so great.”





“With our University support, we can have these patients come through, we can dedicate a lot of time to them.”

— DR. ALLEGRA BURGHER

ESSENTIAL SUPPORT

The ability to be so generous with all the common and the unique resources of a vision care office comes from the support the clinic receives from the Boys & Girls Club and of course, from MBKU. Both Dr. Burgher and Dr. Youngerman have first-hand knowledge of what it's like to experience difficulties with access to health care, so they both fight and advocate for their patients as only individuals who know what it is to struggle can, with MBKU as an essential partner. “Because we see so many low-income patients, if this were a private practice setting, it would be untenable,” says Dr. Burgher. “With our University support, we can have these patients come through, we can dedicate a lot of time to them, provide them with glasses, and these other resources on a sliding scale so they can afford it. Whether it's the University itself, or the Office of Advancement securing grants for us, there are many different people working to help these children. And, I would like to add that we are always looking for more people who have the same goals to help these kids.”

Of course, MBKU gets something out of the partnership as well: The Garden Grove clinic is one of the University's most important rotation sites, reserved for fourth-year students, who will be challenged by a diversity of cases and situations they may not see elsewhere. “The children at our clinic often have more complex cases, due to no prior care or lack of access to resources,” says Dr. Burgher. “It helps students think more globally about their patients.”

“We are also unique in that we provide a multitude of eye services in one place,” adds Dr. Youngerman. “We're so small, we do the billing and the coding, the exam, of course, and also the optical portion. There are a lot of lessons to be learned from working with pediatric patients. You have to think on your feet, be creative, not be afraid to get to know your patient where they're at. You have to learn to educate your patient really well! I tell my students that if you can educate a seven-year-old on amblyopia, you should be able to educate a 75-year-old on glaucoma, because you've learned all these different ways to communicate.”

GLOBAL IMPACT

The Garden Grove clinic is a bit smaller than the others, and it's a bit farther away, but it fits beautifully into MBKU's philosophy of service to the community as an essential component of a quality health care education. And Dr. Burgher and Dr. Youngerman hope to partner with even more people to see the influence of their clinic extend beyond Orange County. “Dr. Burgher and I are both passionate about making a difference in our community,” says Dr. Youngerman. “One person can have a huge impact, but it becomes a lot more powerful and starts to become more a global impact when we have a team around us with similar goals and similar vision. One of our big visions is to be able to impact children's eye care not just for our community but for children throughout California and children throughout the nation. We are always looking for more resources to be able to do that.”



People Person

Among the many things that Dr. Joycelyn Yamzon most appreciates about teaching at MBKU are the ways that students have embraced the University's identity as an institution with service to the community as one of its pillars.

"I love what we've been seeing here at Ketchum from the College of Pharmacy standpoint," she says. "It's that the students have really been the ones to push community service opportunities forward. They come to faculty and say, 'We have these great opportunities and these great ideas for service,' and the faculty simply need to say, 'Let's make it happen!' The COVID-19 vaccination drives are a perfect example of that."

CONNECTING TO THE COMMUNITY

The pharmacist's ability to connect with, advise and serve patients in their community drew Dr. Yamzon to the profession in the first place. As an undergraduate chemistry major, Dr. Yamzon loved working in the laboratory, with one fairly large caveat: there weren't enough people. "Obviously I enjoyed my co-researchers and other employees, but I just found the type of interaction that came with working with patients so much more personally satisfying," she says. "In pharmacy school I worked as an intern at Kaiser, and I saw first hand patients' tendency to bring things up with their pharmacists that they did not mention to their doctor. That's when I first realized what it actually meant for the pharmacist to be one of the community's most accessible health care providers."

While a student, Dr. Yamzon also had the opportunity to do one of her rotations in a small, independent pharmacy, where the pharmacist she

worked for interacted with patients very much in the manner of a family. Now as an educator, Dr. Yamzon finds herself in another environment where so many of the exchanges reflect the best kind of family atmosphere: mutual respect, collegiality, an openness to new ideas, and a willingness to collaborate to make the finest of those ideas work. "The people here at MBKU make it what it is, and the main reason I love working here," she says. "We explain to students that it's our secret sauce, but as soon as they come here and see how faculty interact with each other and with students, it's even more apparent. We enjoy being here because everyone supports one another."

WORKING TOGETHER

The recently opened Interprofessional Education Clinic is one example that Dr. Yamzon cites of MBKU's willingness to work together to holistically serve the community. "I'm always reminding students that ultimately what we're trying to do is to improve patient outcomes and improve patient health. The best way to do that is to figure out how to serve them. Sometimes it's in the pharmacy, sometimes it's not. And I think the IPE Clinic is a great way for us to show that in working together, all the professions can give better care to our patients." ♥

A Part of the Recovery:

MBKU Students and Faculty Volunteer at COVID-19 Vaccination Sites

When Dr. Monica Trivedi, Professor in the College of Pharmacy at MBKU, received the great news that she was eligible for the COVID-19 vaccination, she booked her appointment right away at a site situated in a local fire station. On the day of her first shot, she arrived to discover a line of cars stretching for miles, wait times many hours long, and a beleaguered vaccination site that had overbooked that day's appointments a few times over. In that moment, she immediately recognized two very large needs: one was for trained vaccinators who could meet the demand of the millions of adults who were eligible and yearned for their vaccinations, and the other was for a community health organization that could help alleviate the logistical challenge of administering so many doses.



Dr. Mark Nakano

MBKU COMES THROUGH

Naturally, Dr. Trivedi realized that MBKU was primed to meet both needs, and she became one of many faculty and students who volunteered at vaccination sites throughout Orange County. These volunteer opportunities have ranged from supporting massive drive-through events at Soka University to smaller events partnered with local public health organizations like Family Health Matters and Latino Health Access. After completing all of the CDC training modules, student volunteers were able to serve in multiple roles, screening and checking in individuals, mixing and supervising doses, and of course, administering the vaccines themselves.

Dr. Trivedi volunteered a few times on her own early on so that she could learn what to expect, and right away she saw how fulfilling the experience would be for all involved. "It was so rewarding to see the number of people who came through who were so thankful," she says. "Early in February the people eligible were over 65, so we had caregivers and people bringing their parents – all so grateful and relieved for the opportunity to get vaccinated."

IN-PERSON CARE

The recipients weren't the only grateful ones. When MBKU students began working events, many of them felt uniquely empowered after a year of remote learning to be with each other and with people they could deliver care to. "Our students were super eager to be a part of these events," says PA Andrea Galdamez, Professor in the School of PA Studies (SPAS). "They got to talk to patients and feel really connected to being a part of the recovery of this pandemic."

Erika McCracken, a first-year PA student who helped build interest among students for the volunteer opportunities and who volunteered herself, echoes how important this connection was: "The most rewarding aspect was getting to step away from the computer screen and use my hands to help someone," she says. "Volunteering to give vaccines was the first time my classmates and I were able to apply some of the skills and knowledge we've been receiving during our grueling — but exciting — education."

OPTOMETRISTS JOIN THE EFFORT

Health care workers from multiple disciplines coming together to serve their local population is the very picture of what MBKU strives for as an institution of interprofessional education. And Southern California

College of Optometry was very much in that picture. At the onset of the vaccine rollout, optometrists were among those health care providers who received a special authorization to administer doses, and a number of faculty from SCCO joined the effort, including Dr. Mark Nakano and Dr. John Nishimoto. Estimating that by now he has probably given out around 5,000 injections, Dr. Nakano has been volunteering from the very beginning, eager to demonstrate how optometrists could be a part of the solution. "I have always been a firm believer in servant-leadership, so I was ready to lead this charge, especially as an administrator and faculty member of this profession," he says. For Dr. Nishimoto, the experience of providing vaccinations was almost surreal, but he would not pass up the opportunity to participate. "It was an amazing experience," he says. "Not only am I expanding my skills as a health care provider, but I'm contributing to a hugely worthwhile cause."

HARD WORK, BIG IMPACT

"Knowing our community is taking steps toward defeating this pandemic, and that MBKU was involved in creating those steps was so gratifying," says Van Cathy Pham, a third-year pharmacy student who served as Lead Student Coordinator. "It was a wonderful experience working side by side with faculty, local leaders and students from the PA program. I saw firsthand how much of a positive impact a health care worker can make on a stranger's life." Student and faculty volunteers did not take this impact for granted; it of course represents their goal to be health care leaders as well as their choice of MBKU to accomplish that. "One of the main reasons why I wanted to attend MBKU was their dedication to service in the community," says Lauren

"Knowing our community is taking steps toward defeating this pandemic, and that MBKU was involved in creating those steps was so gratifying."

Magdeleno, a first-year PA student. "I saw the complicated logistics that went on behind the scenes to help enable our students to volunteer and take action, which showed just how hard our students and faculty were willing to work to have greater impact on our community and help keep it safe by administering COVID vaccines."

It fits the character of the University that, as the world continues toward the goal of recovering from the pandemic, MBKU would find ways to be on the frontlines, helping those who are traditionally underrepresented in health care – divisions made starker by COVID-19. "Our overall mission is to be of service, right here in our community, to those who need it most," says Professor Galdamez. "We haven't had a pandemic like this for 100 years, so it's a once-in-a-lifetime event. It's affected us all in so many ways. And for me, my colleagues and MBKU students, being able to channel that to good, to healing, is an experience we'll never forget." ♥



Allie Mollet, MMSC, PA-C



Dr. John Nishimoto



Dr. Mark Nakano



Dr. Cathie Heyman

The Human Side



While serving as a military medic in the U.S. Air Force, Martin Holt had a revelatory encounter with another military health care provider that altered the course of his life.

Observing this man as he worked on the same surgery floor, Martin could tell that he was important – he had a group of people around him seemingly at all times, writing down everything he had to say. The young Martin naturally assumed the man was a doctor and called him that, but he was quickly corrected. “He told me, ‘I’m not a doctor; I’m a physician’s assistant,’” recalls Martin. “That’s when the lightbulb went off for me. I could see the response he got from patients because of the way he was able to care for them, and the passion he had, as well as his caring attitude. He really took the time to make sure patients understood the care they were receiving. I knew this was the job for me.”

AN IDEAL PROFESSION

After completing his time in the military, Martin found himself in the same position as the very first PAs in history: possessed of considerable medical training and excited to use it in civilian life. He went to PA school, confident that the profession would allow him to

serve others in the way that has been modeled for him by his mentor in the military. Martin began working for a doctor who ran a Women’s Health and Pediatric clinic in his hometown of Fullerton, Calif., which catered to the underserved communities in Orange County.

It’s a community that he is particularly close to. As the son of an immigrant mother from Mexico, Martin is familiar with the large population of individuals who are often overlooked by the interests that dominate the affluent area. “I began working at this clinic, and I just loved it,” he says. “I loved the people, who are so grateful to receive quality health care and who often go unnoticed.” The clinic eventually became a federally qualified health clinic, which allowed the scope and number of patients it served to be greatly broadened over the 22 years Martin has worked there.

MBKU COMES CALLING

Eventually Martin noticed that, of all the PA students who rotated through his clinic, the ones from a new school in Fullerton called MBKU were always exceptional. He checked it out, which led to occasionally guest lecturing, and then eventually to becoming a full-time educator, a role in which Martin thrives. He particularly loves teaching PA students about the power of building relationships with patients, part of those essential skills that cannot always be communicated in textbooks. Building relationships leads to trust and understanding, essential components of care when it’s possible that a patient is not able to read, or to get a ride to an appointment, or to otherwise navigate the health care system successfully. It’s the human side of medicine he first observed all those years ago in the work of the military PA.

For Martin, the human side of medicine means seeing patients as people, not a collection of symptoms or a disease, and serving them. “In the end, we’re all human beings,” he says. “Everyone has value, and everyone should be respected. Often patients simply want to be heard, and if there’s something I can do, or my clinic can do to help, then we will. Because it’s so important to give back in this way.”

“In the end, we’re all human beings. Everyone has value, and everyone should be respected.” —MARTIN HOLT

Instant Transformation

For Dr. Erin Rueff, there is almost something miraculous in being an optometrist who specializes in the area of cornea and contact lenses. Accounting, of course, for the years of study and the steady progress of treatments that enable it, the experience of providing care that is almost instantaneously transformative has always been deeply moving to Dr. Rueff.

"I've always wanted to be in the health profession and I truly love how optometry allows you to quickly impact someone's everyday health and needs," she says. "My specialty in contact lenses seems to be one of the few areas of medicine where a patient walks into your room essentially disabled, you design a lens for them, and they walk out able-bodied, ready to do whatever they need to do in their lives – with no surgery and no healing time."

LIFELONG LEARNER, EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATOR

It's not a bad metaphor for Dr. Rueff's work as an educator. She prides herself on designing ways for her students to see and comprehend very complex concepts more clearly, breaking them down into simpler parts to make them more accessible. Her career as a professor grew out of her identity as a lifelong learner and a persistent researcher. When Dr. Rueff reached the point in her education where she was seeing patients all day, every day, she found it just slightly lacking – she still had a lot of curiosity left, and a desire to hone her clinical and research skills further. Teaching at MBKU has given her the opportunity to embrace and fulfill many roles in optometry.

"I found that the extra onus you have to not only be accountable to your patients, but also to be accountable to your students, really makes you the best doctor you can be," she says. "At MBKU, where there is such an excellent faculty who puts so much thought and effort into quality teaching, I'm able to see patients, to teach students, and to do research,



and that's really the full circle of contributing to the profession. Being a part of each of those aspects makes me better at the other one. Seeing patients makes me ask better research questions, and working with students makes me think harder about the rationale for my clinical care."

A FOCUS ON STUDENTS

At MBKU, where a philosophy of student-centered teaching is combined with a small family-type atmosphere, professors like Dr. Rueff are able to see their work as very directly serving the next generation of optometrists. "I try to spend a lot of time with students outside of class as a resource for them, talking to them about what they've experienced, giving them advice about things like residency, jobs and how to survive boards season."

Dr. Rueff is also able to directly model one of the chief ways optometrists serve their profession, working as the faculty-student liaison for the American Academy of Optometry student club. It's another way in which her fulfilling career has come full circle, as she can mentor, teach and support young optometry students in much the same way she herself was. ♥



The Class That Served

In 1966, the U.S. Department of Defense ordered the Doctor's Draft and granted optometrists the same status as physicians and other vital medical personnel to enter the U.S. military as officers. With the escalating war in Vietnam, this order gave the 1966 graduating class of Southern California College of Optometry (then called Los Angeles College of Optometry) a choice of either volunteering to enter military service or of being drafted into the service. Of the original 30 graduating class members, eight were already veterans and 22 chose to volunteer for service. They became "the class that served."



The Class That Served



THE CLASS OF 1966

CDR Al Mayer (USN pilot), Maj. Norm Wiley (USMC pilot), Lt. Gerry Cooper (USA), Lt. Col. Bob Gmelin (USA), Lt. Pat O'Brien (USAF), Sgt. Jack Patwell (USA), Sgt. Dick Marrs (USAF), Pfc. Calvin Moore (USA), Chris Bartelson (USN), Tony Bentley (USA), Geof Cecchi (USA), Dave Eldridge (USAF), Harry Enenstein (USA), Irv Feiles (USAF), Perrin Guyton (USAF), Bert Harvey (USN), Joel Hirsh (USA), Steve Karan

(USA), Don Krahling (USN pilot), Ron Leavitt (USA), George Lew (USA), Art Pazornik (USA), Mace Perlman (USA), Lee Reber (USA), Dave Sackin (USA), Jim Socks (USN), Ralph Starr (USAF) and Marvin Weitzman (USA). Classmate Marilyn Carter was excluded from the draft, and classmate Steve Bensussen attempted twice to enlist but was not acknowledged.



IN MEMORIAM

Harold Drapkin

Perrin Guyton

Bertram Harvey, III

Stephen Karan

Richard Marrs

Calvin Moore

Patrick O'Brien

Jack Patwell

Norman Wiley

The general consensus of the new graduates in uniform was that they were welcomed into the service. They now had an income, a place to live, a job in which they were needed and the camaraderie of fellow medical professionals. It was like being in a residency program and a fantastic learning experience. Upon their honorable discharge from the military, they were fully qualified and ready for private practice. They now held a considerable advantage over optometrists who did not serve in the military. They had medically treated eye anomalies, infections and injuries.

ONE AMONG MANY

Each member of the Class of 1966 has a distinct story of service and sacrifice, and their accounts could fill this magazine many times over. Some of their experiences were shared, others were unique, but there is no doubt that they were shaped by their time in the military in lasting ways. One member of the Class of 1966 whose story represents the dual distinction of a LACO alumnus and military veteran is Lt. Col. Bob Gmelin. He received an ROTC Commission and served several years of

Of the 22 members in the Class of 1966 who served in the military, three were deployed to Vietnam: George Lew, Jim Socks and Don Krahlung. Dr. Krahlung was a U.S. Navy Aviator who flew over 80 combat missions to and from aircraft carriers and earned four Air Medals.

active and reserve duty in the military police and Army aviation before moving to Los Angeles in order to attend a small but highly regarded optometry school.

Early in the school year Bob ran into some academic trouble, and Dr. Charles Abel cautioned him to buckle down. Dr. Abel so inspired him that Bob made the Dean's list twice; first with an under 2.0 grade point average followed with an above 3.0. The memory stands out for him as an example of how even then the school went out of its way to support students and keep them on track for success. "That's how LACO worked," he says. "They bent over backwards to help students, to encourage them, and to make sure they became successful optometrists."

IN THE ARMY NOW

After graduation Dr. Gmelin re-applied to the Army with one request: that he be stationed in Germany. He was welcomed back - though not overseas - to the Military Academy at West Point, New York, where he served eight years as Chief Optometrist. Midway through that tour he was stationed for three years as Optometry Chief at the U.S. Army hospital in Nürnberg, Germany, then he returned to West Point where he was promoted to Major.

When viewing hundreds of marching cadets at West Point, it appears that few are wearing glasses. That should have made for light duty for Dr. Gmelin at the eye clinic, but it wasn't so. The three other service academies limit admission to their candidates who wear corrective lenses, but West Point has no such limitation, and upward of 70% of each new class of cadets enters wearing glasses. Over a thousand newly arrived "plebes" are fitted with two pairs of Rx military glasses during their first week at the academy. "You may not need glasses to march, but you needed them for everything else!" says Dr. Gmelin. While at West Point, the Army determined that the OD degree was a professional degree, whereas their policy was that career officers should have an advanced academic degree. To accommodate their requirement Dr. Gmelin went on to earn a MA in sociology in 1970. A year earlier he had been accepted as a Fellow in the American Academy of Optometry.

During his long tour at West Point, Dr. Gmelin met his wife, Sally, a K-4 art teacher at its dependent school. They were married at the academy chapel and for their honeymoon assignment they were stationed at the Army hospital in Tehran, Iran. Upon arrival at the very first checkpoint, a security guard pointed an AK-47 at Sally's head. Dr. Gmelin took her hand, squeezed it, and whispered to her, "You're in the Army now."

Things were fairly routine as he served as Chief of Optometry at a hospital that mostly cared for U.S. military retirees who worked in Iran. But then the shah left, and Ayatollah Khomeini came to power. Sally was evacuated along with all the remaining wives in country, and those who remained were advised to keep a low profile and to avoid any conflicts. They were taught one phrase in Farsi, "ان امانت است" - "mantaslim," which means "I surrender." It proved to be helpful when the hospital and later the U.S. Embassy were captured by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard. Held hostage at the hospital, Dr. Gmelin was eventually released when one of the guards complained of an eye problem. After treating the guard's conjunctivitis, Dr. Gmelin was allowed to leave the hospital, and then safely evacuated and reunited with his wife at West Point.



DAVE ELDRIDGE

(USAF) was stationed at Barksdale AFB in Bossier City, La., home of a B52

SAC Base. “I was a very young, newly married, inexperienced 23-year-old who had never lived away from home. I had to quickly adapt to military discipline, a marriage, life in the South, and coming into contact with a wide variety of people from all over the country. It was a wonderful way to start my optometric career, gaining confidence and great experience.”



LEE REBER

(USA) served in Hanau, West Germany; San Antonio, Texas; El Paso, Texas; and

Hawaii. He also served as lieutenant commander in the United States Public Health Service, working for the Indian Health Service in Gallup, N.M.



CHRIS BARTELSON

(USN) spent two years at the National Naval Medical Center in

Bethesda, Md., where he was part of an ophthalmology residence program, and at Lemoore Naval Hospital in California’s San Joaquin valley. “I taught instrumentation, optics, and contact lenses, and treated routine vision problems as well as returning wounded Marines. At Lemoore I was expected to take care of most anything that came in, so it was a great experience. My time in the Navy really prepared me well for private practice and was especially helpful with knowing how to interact with other medical disciplines. I was very pleased to have served.”



RALPH STARR

(USAF) served as the base optometrist at Altus AFB in Oklahoma. “Being in the Air Force and

providing eye care for our pilots and supporting personnel gave me a feeling of pride in having a profession that my country needed. I will always relish the experiences I had in the service that I never would have had as a civilian.”



JIM SOCKS

(USN) retired from the U.S. Navy with the rank of commander. For one year he was

stationed at the Naval Support Activity Hospital in Da Nang, Vietnam, and then served at the Naval Submarine Medical Research Laboratory in Groton, Conn., where he was both a research optometrist and the command executive officer. While on active duty, Dr. Socks obtained a masters of bioengineering from UC San Diego, and a MBA from the University of New Haven.



HARRY ENENSTEIN

(USA) served at Kimbrough Army Hospital at Fort Meade, Md.

A LONG CAREER OF SERVICE

Again given an assignment in Heidelberg, Germany, Dr. Gmelin was the Chief of Optometry and selected to serve as the Army Consultant to the Surgeon General, Europe. His two sons were born there and this is when he was promoted to lieutenant colonel. Dr. Gmelin’s final assignment was as Chief of Optometry at Letterman Army hospital in the Presidio of San Francisco. This is where Dr. Gmelin officially added “educator” to his resume, working as an assistant professor and presiding over UC Berkeley students rotating through his large optometry clinic.

In 1986, when Dr. Gmelin retired from the Army, he was awarded the “Legion of Merit” for his 20 years of service. But he wasn’t done working; he joined civil service. First he served eight years as a U.S. Navy industrial optometrist at Mare Island Naval Shipyard in

Vallejo, Calif., and then he served six years as a USAF occupational optometrist stationed at McClellan Air Force Base in Sacramento County. In addition to vision exams, Dr. Gmelin worked tirelessly to serve the unique vision requirements of the personnel. “In the Navy I got to crawl into submarines to help workers see in dark, cramped spaces,” he recalls. “And in the Air Force I moved about in the planes to evaluate workers’ vision needs.”

Lt. Col. Bob Gmelin’s story is just one example of the multiple members of Los Angeles College of Optometry’s Class of 1966 who served their country and their medical profession with dedication and dignity. In a profession distinguished by its care for others, the sacrifices made by the members of the Class of 1966 as they followed their calling and their duty is particularly worthy of honor, recognition and gratitude. ♥



MBKU Dedicates the Michael Sellers, OD, '78, and Family Administration Tower

On a warm fall afternoon in September, Marshall B. Ketchum University celebrated the naming of the Michael R. Sellers, OD, '78, and Family Administration Tower, dedicated to commemorate the transformational \$1 million gift made by Dr. Sellers and his wife Elizabeth Sellers to the University.

In attendance were the guests of honor, University administration, members of the Board of Trustees, student leaders, and a number of other guests representing beloved friends and family of the Sellers.

"This is an exciting day for Marshall B. Ketchum University as we celebrate and thank Dr. Michael and Elizabeth Sellers," said Richard Price, Chair of the Board of Trustees. "Their gift will provide resources in perpetuity for SCCO student scholarships and a significant investment in our next capital project to renovate the Basic and Clinical Sciences building. Thank you for creating a legacy to support SCCO and generations of students!"

The ceremony also included remarks from MBKU founding President Dr. Kevin Alexander, Dean of SCCO Dr. Jennifer Coyle, and Vice President for University Advancement Joan Rubio. In his own speech, Dr. Sellers credited his late first wife Stephanie and his wife Elizabeth for supporting his career and efforts in philanthropy with unwavering commitment, and ended his remarks with a statement no doubt true of countless other alumni: "SCCO helped me realize dreams I didn't even know I had." ♥

MBKU Honors Alumni From All Three Colleges at Distinguished Alumni Awards Ceremony

On Sept. 18, 2021, Marshall B. Ketchum University for the first time recognized exceptional alumni from all three of its colleges, granting its Distinguished Alumni Award to recipients from SCCO, SPAS and COP. At a ceremony hosted by Alumni Association President Dr. Wynette Augustine, each of this year's honorees made gracious acceptance speeches that highlighted their gratitude for the education they received from MBKU, as well as the support from families, classmates, professors and colleagues.

"The outstanding reputation for excellence that our institution enjoys is the sum of individual advancement by our alumni," said Vice President for University Advancement Joan Rubio in her opening remarks. "Patient care, leadership in their community and profession, civic engagement and philanthropy all contribute to the collective reputation of SCCO, SPAS, COP and, ultimately, MBKU."

This year MBKU presented the Distinguished Alumni Award to SCCO graduates Michael Sellers, OD, '78, and Gary Asano, OD, '78. Receiving the Distinguished Young Alumni Award were Hannah Cho, OD, '12, from SCCO, Timothy Harkins, PA-C, '18, from SPAS, and Miriam Morkos, PharmD, '20, from COP. ♥



Michael Sellers, OD, '78, Hannah Cho, OD, '12, Miriam Morkos, PharmD, '20, and Gary Asano, OD, '78.

MBKU'S University Eye Center Los Angeles Receives \$75,000 Grant From Good Hope Medical Foundation

Marshall B. Ketchum University is pleased to announce that University Eye Center Los Angeles has received a grant of \$75,000 from the Good Hope Medical Foundation, a nonprofit organization founded in 1925 whose primary goal is to provide medical services to individuals with limited financial resources and to train physicians and medical students. These goals align with UECLA's mission as a clinical training facility that delivers much-needed vision care to communities in South Los Angeles through its Underserved Vision Program.

"We are so proud to have Good Hope Medical Foundation as a partner in our work in Los Angeles," says Joan Rubio, Vice President for University Advancement. "This grant will allow UECLA to continue serving underserved patients in our community, providing critical and often transformative vision care."

"I am so appreciative of Good Hope Medical Foundation's investment in the University Eye Center," says Dr. Dashaini Retnasothie, UECLA co-director. "With our recent expansion of additional specialty services and extended care, this grant plays a vital role in changing the lives of many people in Los Angeles County." Dr. Lisa Wahl leads UECLA with Dr. Retnasothie, and she is also thankful for the opportunities this grant affords. "The Good Hope Medical Foundation recognizes that there is a need for this type of care in the community," she says. "And this grant increases the great motivation that we already have to provide really excellent quality care to these patients who may not be able to afford it, or

have access to it – or even know that it exists."

The team of UECLA faculty optometrists, residents and student optometrists delivers complete diagnostic, therapeutic and preventative care, including: primary



eye care, cornea and contact lens, pediatric vision care, vision therapy, ocular disease, treatment for diabetic retinopathy (and other chronic health conditions), ophthalmology consultation and low vision rehabilitation. The recipients of these services are Los Angeles County's underserved children and adults who cannot afford them otherwise.

The COVID-19 pandemic has put enormous strain on low-income and underserved communities, revealing a number of problems specific to vision health. The patient demand has increased at UECLA because of this and many patients have lost their jobs or insurance coverage. Additionally, we are one of the few resources for underserved patients to provide care for complex vision problems or eye diseases.

Under President Kevin L. Alexander, MBKU has expanded its long legacy of serving the community while educating compassionate health care providers. The service at the core of this mission unites it in philosophy with organizations like Good Hope Medical Foundation.

"At MBKU, our relationships with partners to provide health care to our shared communities are a point of pride," says Dr. Alexander. "We are deeply grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with Good Hope Medical Foundation. We count it as an honor to use this grant to deliver our very high standard of health care, while also educating the next generation of optometrists." ♦

A Ketchum Family



Shortly after the start of his first year of optometry school at Southern California College of Optometry, Dr. Kevin Germundsen, OD, '88, attended a welcome party for new students at the Orange Hill Restaurant, where he spotted a second-year named Linda Arboleda on the dance floor and was instantly smitten. Kevin and Linda, OD, '87, began dating soon after, finished their optometry degrees, and then eventually married, becoming another successful SCCO love story.

Approximately 27 years later, both of Kevin and Linda's daughters would also have the experience of hanging out at the SCCO welcome party as first-year optometry students, in the very same Orange, Calif., restaurant where their parents met.

A PLACE TO THRIVE

Talk about MBKU's family atmosphere! Kevin, Linda, and their daughters Kristi, OD, '19, and Melissa, OD, '21, have all graduated from SCCO, finding that, for all the changes, innovations and advancements in optometry that SCCO has experienced, what remains consistent

has been a tradition of seeing students as individuals, who with great support, can thrive as optometrists. "Coming to SCCO from a large undergraduate university, I really felt like a family unit here," says Linda. "They gave us every tool to succeed, and I was prepared for many of the challenges I would face."

Kevin, who admits that a fair amount of the support he received as a student was lecture notes he borrowed from Linda, agrees that the small, close-knit community of SCCO was refreshingly different. "As students we understood that we were on a shared pathway to becoming doctors,"



he says. "At that point, the competition stopped. We all wanted to help each other, and we weren't competing with one another. There was great camaraderie, and the professors and the staff — their whole goal was to make us the best optometrists that they possibly could."

JOINING THE FAMILY BUSINESS

Obviously, Kristi and Melissa were quite familiar with the profession from an early age, but each had to make her own decision about a career, which their parents always gave them space for. At first, Kristi resisted. "Since my parents have the practice, I saw a lot of the business side of optometry, which wasn't very appealing to me," she says. However, when Kevin and Linda acquired a retinal imaging machine, he began demonstrating its uses to Kristi, and, more importantly, its effects. "He was showing me how much it helped patients, and how they were leaving happy. And that was the turning point, because I've always wanted to work in a field that really helped people like that."

Melissa decided right away. "My family pokes fun at me because I've always known that I wanted to be an optometrist," she says. "I was able to see how my parents were able to improve a patient's life, how happy patients were to see them, and how much they benefitted from vision services."

A CLINIC FOR THE COMMUNITY

Kristi and Melissa did not just follow in their parents' footsteps to SCCO, they are also following them into private practice. More specifically, into *their* private practice. The whole family works together now at Beachside Optometry in Huntington Beach, along with two other "family" members: SCCO alums Dr. Janay Sekhon and Dr. Michelle Kirk. "It was so important to live in the community we work in," says Linda. "Our patients greeted us at stores and restaurants, so our daughters really saw how optometrists can serve the community. It wasn't a job where we left in the morning and drove an hour away. Our work was always around us. I don't think we'd be as successful if we didn't have those relationships with the people around us."

"SCCO fosters that philosophy," adds Kevin. "This is your chosen profession, and as such, you owe it to your community to be involved, to provide quality care, and to have an active interest in the community around you. It's been a proud, proud time for me, to have my wife and both daughters working with me. I'm humbled by what's transpired, and it's so wonderful to see them thrive and grow and join us in working for our community." 🍷

Give Your IRA a Vacation

Last year Congress gave your IRA a much-needed vacation. No one had to make a required minimum distribution from their IRAs. Why not give your RMD another year off?

Make a Required Minimum Distribution Work for You

Last year as part of special legislation, Congress said there would be no RMDs in 2020. This year, the RMD is back for everyone 72 years and older. Most people do not like taking money from their IRA. They have saved for years, and they would prefer to let it grow. Worse yet, when you take the RMD, you pay income tax on that distribution.

The IRA Charitable Rollover Is an Annual Vacation for Your IRA

While you still must distribute money from your IRA if you are 72 or older, you can do it in a tax-advantaged way. If you are age 70 1/2 or older, you can contact your IRA administrator and ask them to make the distribution directly to Southern California College of Optometry, College of Pharmacy, or School of Physician Assistant Studies. When you do:

- You do not pay income tax on the distribution (but you also receive no income tax deduction)
- You receive gift acknowledgment for the full amount of the distribution
- You satisfy your RMD up to \$100,000
- If you and your spouse have your own IRA, both of you can use the IRA charitable rollover.

For more information about an IRA Charitable Rollover or other gifts, contact us at plannedgiving@ketchum.edu

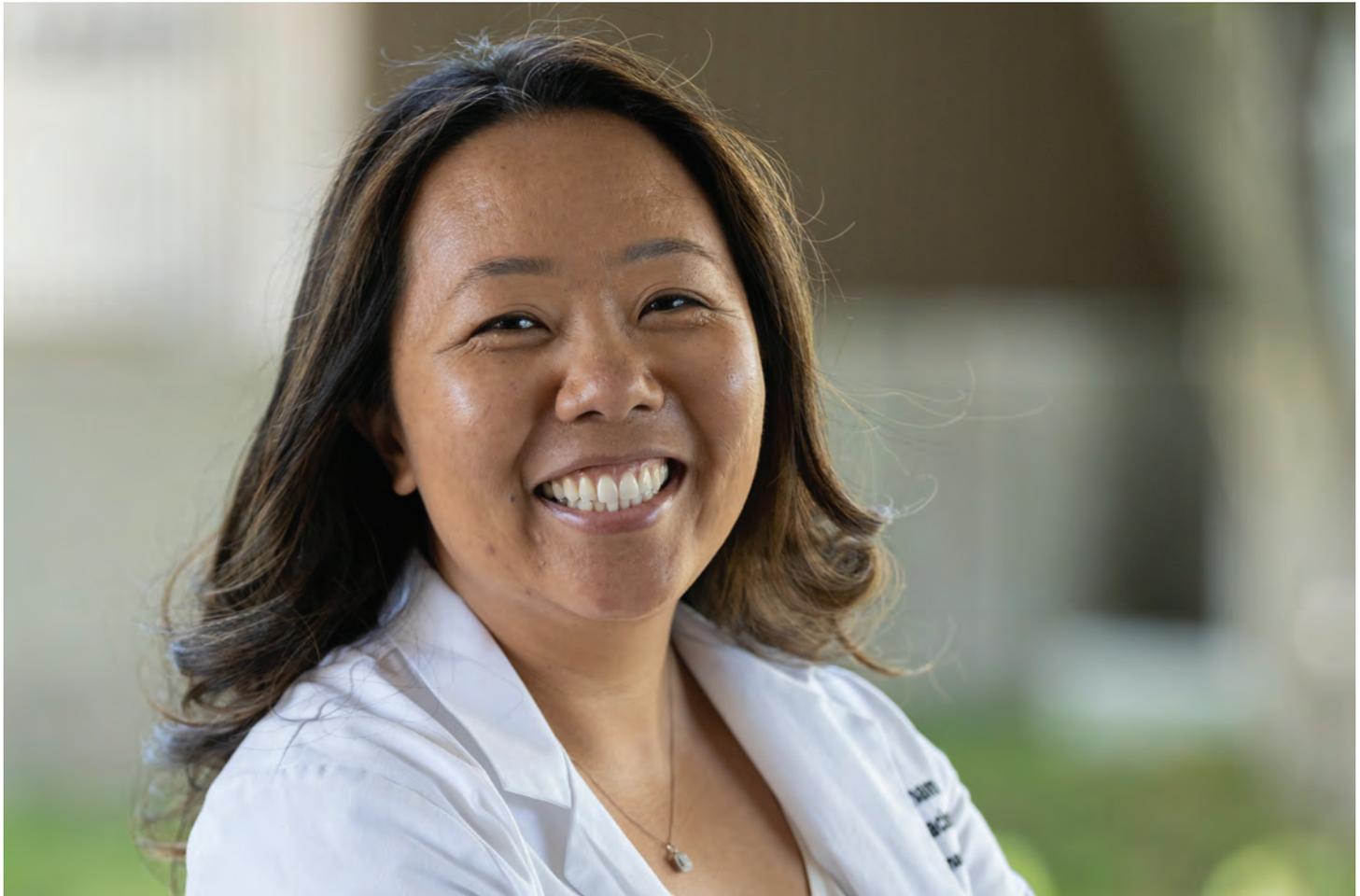
FACES OF MBKU

Among the many friendly faces you'll encounter at MBKU are these three future health care leaders. Each of these students embodies the passion and compassion at the heart of MBKU's mission.

NOMINATE A STUDENT

Do you know an exceptional MBKU student? Reach out to marketing@ketchum.edu to nominate a student for a future issue.





Van Cathy Pham, COP 2022

Helping People Comes First

Van Cathy Pham grew up with certain parental expectations that were very clear to her: If she went into a career in the health sciences, her parents would surely be thrilled. However, among barriers to this was a large one: Cathy didn't really care much for school. "I always said to people, 'It would take the jaws of life to get me back to school!'" says Cathy. "The path my parents wanted for me didn't necessarily appeal to me. What appealed to me was helping people."

BACK TO SCHOOL

After some time in the corporate world, Cathy found herself a bit burned out, so the "jaws of life" got a hold of her and dropped her back in school – for a philosophy degree. Cathy learned a lot, but found job prospects scarce, so she pivoted to environmental science, where her desire to help people and make the world a better place found expression in work she did abroad for water resourcing. She also found time to teach herself to code software. Something was still missing, however, and Cathy was finding it harder to ignore the simple fact that her devotion to helping people really would be powerfully achieved in a career in health sciences.

When Cathy's sister graduated from pharmacy school, Cathy was exposed to a profession that seemed perfectly designed to combine all the highlights of her atypical career path, where a strong business

background could be merged with face-to-face interactions with patients every day, and where she could use her knowledge of coding to write software to improve practices and methods.

FINDING WAYS TO SERVE AT MBKU

So now Cathy is studying at MBKU's College of Pharmacy, and she couldn't be happier. Not only has her desire to serve others found a home at MBKU, so has her relationship with going to school. "MBKU offered a high-touch, personalized experience in learning, which is really important for someone like me to succeed. From the beginning, I've felt comfortable knowing professors on a personal basis, which has been vital in my success in their classes," she says.

Cathy has already taken advantage of MBKU's culture of service in a major way, helping to organize the participation of the University's faculty and student body in multiple COVID-19 vaccine events. After years in the corporate world, and then experiencing the bureaucracy surrounding her work in water resourcing, it was thrilling for Cathy to see how quickly a good idea to serve the community was encouraged and then mobilized. "At MBKU, they said, 'If you jump, we'll jump with you,'" she says. "So it was amazing to go to Dr. Monica Trivedi with this idea and to have her support it right away, and then for her and I to make it happen."



Charles Asamaphand and Susan Lee, SPAS

Love for the Profession

For the past 16 years, Charles Asamaphand and Susan Lee have shared two deeply felt interests, which has enabled these School of Physician Assistant Studies students to form a partnership of common goals that has sustained them for all this time: the first is each other, and the second is a dream of becoming PAs.

They both knew fairly early on that they wanted a career in medicine, and they have both pursued this calling with determination and devotion. They began by volunteering in hospitals, Charles worked as a caregiver, they both became EMTs, and they both worked for multiple years as medical scribes in a family practice – all in the service of gaining experience and prerequisites for their applications to MBKU's SPAS program.

A STRONG PARTNERSHIP

Crucial to their success has been their partnership with each other. "When you basically grow up together, you learn how to communicate better," says Susan. "When you have someone who wants to pursue the same dreams and aspirations, you can build each other up and support each other."

The fact that they are both becoming PAs also allows Charles and Susan to mitigate one of the issues common to individuals pursuing careers in medicine while in a relationship. "We're lucky, because when we talk with other people, we really hear how some couples will struggle because of how demanding PA school can be," says Charles. "Because we're both in medicine, it's a little easier to understand where each other's frustrations or adversities are coming from, and to give each other good advice and support. We are lucky to have each other."

Charles and Susan are entirely on the same page with respect to another aspect of the profession, which is the way that service to others is at the heart of their ambitions. Having embarked on medical missions and witnessed firsthand the way relatively basic health care can have profound effects on the developing world, Susan and Charles were looking for a PA school where service was paramount and the campus community was close-knit, attributes they assuredly found at MBKU. "When looking at PA schools, MBKU was always at the top of our preferences," says Charles. "It has an atmosphere of a family, where the faculty support the students because they know each other, and it's a place where community service is deeply ingrained."

PAYING IT FORWARD

"Based on our upbringing and the adversities our families encountered, it was always a given that we would devote our lives to helping others," adds Susan. "This is because our parents always instilled in us the belief that we need to give back to the community, just as we were helped during difficult times."

Charles and Susan plan to go into primary care and family medicine, where they will be empowered to build relationships with patients and care for them long term, while taking every opportunity to continue medical missions. "Wherever we end up, in whatever specialty, as long as it's a place we can apply our skills and knowledge to serve patients in our community, we'll be happy," says Charles.

"And hopefully it will be in the same office!" adds Susan.



Thuymi Dinh, SCCO

A Legacy of Service

Some people have a clear path in their lives to becoming an optometrist. It's pretty much a straight shot, from their transformational first lenses dispensed by a caring OD to four years at SCCO. Others are like student Thuymi Dinh, who did in fact have formative early experiences in vision care, but then went on to take somewhat curvy path to optometry.

IN HER FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS

When Thuymi finished high school, her strong desire to serve her country, inspired in large part by her father – who served as an officer in the Vietnamese Navy and helped others escape the country as Saigon fell – won out over her childhood dreams of becoming a doctor, and she applied to the extremely selective U.S. Naval Academy. There she majored in information technology and competed as a Division I swimmer, before graduating and being commissioned into the U.S. Marine Corps as an officer.

After five years of service to her country, Thuymi received an honorable discharge, at which point she put her IT degree to use as a consultant and project manager at a Fortune 500 company. Then, with great accomplishment under her belt, and all the trappings of

a successful career laid out before her, Thuymi's childhood dreams came calling. The desire to help people as a health care provider never really left her, so she quit her job, sold her house, and began obtaining her prerequisites so she could apply to SCCO.

MORE ROLE MODELS

Now in her second year, Thuymi sees the concept of service as a through-line that followed her along the different turns in her life. "I'm very passionate about helping others," she says. "That's been the pattern in my career and even before my career, whether it's serving in the Marines, my work as a swim coach and personal trainer, and of course, my goal of becoming an optometrist. I always want some kind of opportunity to serve."

At SCCO, Thuymi has ample opportunities to employ the leadership skills she developed as a military officer, as well as a great role model to add to her father's example for the type of service-centered career an optometrist with a military background can have. "Dr. Corina Van de Pol is someone I greatly respect and admire," says Thuymi. "When I compare my military service to hers, I am so humbled, because of all she has done for the military and optometry communities." ♥

The Person Behind the Eyes

There likely is not a multitude of places where the worlds of veterinary medicine and optometry overlap, so it is safe



to say that Finn the Hedgehog was unique. One of the top employees at Redmond Eye Clinic in Redmond, Wash., Finn was a mascot, a model and a creative way for Dr. Jeff Binstock and Dr. Kim Skyles to connect with their community, humanize the profession of optometry, and make children more comfortable before their eye exams. And even though

Finn passed away last year, he is remembered fondly, as an exemplary hedgehog, and somewhat ironically, as an example of how Dr. Binstock and Dr. Skyles see their clinic as prioritizing people above all else.

Dr. Binstock is another rare case of overlap. He went to veterinary school and practiced veterinary medicine for a brief time, before his strong interest in ocular health combined with a lifelong goal to own a business inspired a major career change to optometry. He decided to enroll at Southern California College of Optometry.

It was at SCCO where he met Dr. Skyles, who found in optometry a captivating profession where one was rewarded for an equal interest in science and in people. They married shortly after graduation, and a couple of years later found a great opportunity to take over the Redmond Eye Clinic.

EXCEPTIONAL CLINICAL EDUCATION

Dr. Binstock and Dr. Skyles were both drawn to SCCO for much the same reason: They wanted an optometric education focused on developing students as excellent clinicians. "One of the things I learned from the profession of veterinary medicine is that it's not necessarily all about your book knowledge," says Dr. Binstock. "It's often more about your clinical skills, your bedside manner, your ability to communicate effectively, and your ability to get a patient to believe in your recommendations and to trust you have their best interests at heart. SCCO had a lot of that training instilled really quickly, because you're learning clinical skills so soon. They prepare students to hit the ground running."

PATIENT-CENTERED CARE

In Redmond, Dr. Binstock and Dr. Skyles have found a growing city that has retained its close-knit community feel, which is an ideal place for them to practice their patient-centered approach to optometry. "Taking care of the patient is the core of our business," says Dr. Skyles. "We kind of want to make a little microcosm of a community within our clinic, where when you come in, we'll serve you and your family and all the people you bring to us, because you're a part of our community."

"We've learned that when making business decisions, you can't go wrong just always trying to do what's best for the patient," adds Dr. Binstock. "As a business owner, you can get caught up in the business side: finances, profit and loss statements, and things like that. And your better judgment can be tested, but we have always just tried to do what's best for the patient."

They have also learned that when running a practice, the best interests of another group of people must be given the highest priority: their employees. A somewhat surprising and very much rewarding aspect of owning Redmond Eye Clinic has been the way that Dr. Binstock and Dr. Skyles are able to create an environment that edifies the lives of the people who work for them. "Of course we focus on the patients, who are number one," says Dr. Skyles, "But you also have to think about the people's lives that you're affecting because they're your employees. They're the people who are there with you eight hours or more a day, working closely with you to reach the same goals. And it's very rewarding knowing that something that you have created is helping so many other people. It's helping the patients that you're working with and it's helping the staff you're working with."

A FLOURISHING PRACTICE

This approach has been all the marketing innovation Dr. Binstock and Dr. Skyles have needed for their practice to thrive. They view each patient as an individual with unique needs and then apply their exceptional clinical skills to serving that patient. It has given Dr. Binstock and Dr. Skyles rewarding careers and Redmond an optometric clinic that has the interests of the community at heart. "The unofficial motto of our clinic is to treat the person behind the eyes," says Dr. Binstock. "We tell patients what to expect. We listen to what they want, we try to deliver that care as clearly and as friendly as possible, so they leave feeling cared for, trusting in us and happy that they got what they wanted. And we just do that every day. It's that simple." ♥





Maeve McDonnell



Avissa Zomorrodian



Jacinda Chan



Sierra Sanchez

First Friends

MBKU's Peer Advisor Program Welcomes and Supports New Students

A philosophy of service is so deeply woven into MBKU's culture that it is frankly not difficult to find example after example of how the University strives to serve its community. However, one of the main reasons that so many students thrive at MBKU is because that philosophy extends to serving its students.

This is the purview of people like Ashley White, MBKU's Assistant Director for University Student Affairs, a role in which she is responsible for a host of programs designed to enrich, support, and invest in students' experience at the University. Among a myriad of duties, Ashley is an advisor for the Student Association, which registers all the student organizations, clubs, and groups on campus, she is in charge of new student orientation, and she manages and oversees one of MBKU's most successful student service initiatives, the Peer Advisor program.

ESSENTIAL SUPPORT

The Peer Advisors are second-year MBKU students — i.e., students for whom the rigorous demands of beginning their education as health care providers are still fresh in memory — who get connected to incoming classes for the purposes of becoming an essential support system. As the very first non-administration contact made with incoming students, the Peer Advisors by design also extend their mentorship to areas beyond academics. "They're meant to be a support system, of course, answering any questions new students might have about their respective programs," says Ashley. "But they're also meant to be a way for the new students to help build social connections. Every peer advisor is assigned around five students, and they're charged with having multiple meetings with the group as a whole. Then we'll have social events — virtual for now — which is meant to be a way for the new students to be able to find a friend. That's my favorite way to describe it: They're the new students' first friend."

The Peer Advisors accompany their advisees through orientation and meet with them multiple times throughout the semester, giving them a point of connection and rapport that can help carry them through the difficult first year. "From the moment you step on campus, you know there is a second-year who has your back," says SCCO student Maeve McDonnell, who enjoyed her time as a Peer Advisor so much that she returned this year to serve as lead Peer Advisor Coordinator. "MBKU

promotes a collaborative culture, where we are encouraged to help one another learn and succeed in graduate school."

A FAMILY ATMOSPHERE

SPAS student Sierra Sanchez sees the Peer Advisors as another example of the family atmosphere MBKU creates through its environment of supportive and inclusive learning, particularly important for the fast-paced PA program. "I've had multiple occasions where students were completely overwhelmed and just needed help navigating that. I'm so grateful that I could be there for them during those moments."

"MBKU has always placed an emphasis on the importance of community and student feedback, which are principles that trickle down to us as Peer Advisors who hope to make each student feel valued and supported," says Jacinda Chan, also from the SPAS. Another student who felt valued by MBKU as a new student because of the Peer Advisors decided to become one herself. "When I was new to the program, my Peer Advisor made my transition so much easier," says COP student Avissa Zomorrodian. "It was so rewarding to be a part of the same chapter of my advisees' lives."

THE PEER ADVISOR BLOG

The influence of the advisors now goes even beyond the edges of campus to help future and potential MBKU students through the new Peer Advisor blog on the main website. Students used to be able to access informative blog posts written by Peer Advisors through the educational web portal, but when Ashley White first arrived at MBKU, she realized the content would serve the community even better by being more accessible, having updated photos and video, and making the whole experience more visually appealing for all the students.

The Peer Advisors program also serves the mentors themselves, as they learn even more about MBKU and have a profound experience of helping others. "When we advertise the position to students, we essentially tell them, 'This is a way to give back,'" says Ashley. "We put a lot of effort into deciding who gets to be Peer Advisors, which shows how important the program is and how much MBKU cares about its students. We want students who are motivated and dedicated, not just to the program, but to the school as a whole — and to helping people." ♥

To read all the Peer Advisor blog posts, visit ketchum.edu/news



Ashley White

"When I was new to the program, my Peer Advisor made my transition so much easier. It was so rewarding to be a part of the same chapter of my advisees' lives."

— AVISSA ZOMORRODIAN, PHARMACY 2023



The Spanish Class

MBKU's Popular Courses in Medical Spanish Equip Students With Diverse Clinical Skills

When Melissa Contreras, OD, MPH, FAAO, was appointed MBKU's Assistant Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion last year, she was tasked in part with taking a 1,000-foot view of how the concepts relate to the University's goals of producing exceptional health care providers, and to explore and enact initiatives designed to keep MBKU ever an innovator when educating students with sensitivity and purpose. In this way, MBKU's development of its diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs has mirrored Dr. Contreras' own understanding of it.

As a student at SCCO, Dr. Contreras found herself encouraged to take the role of unofficial interpreter during her first clinical rotations by virtue of her knowledge of Spanish, an experience that was challenging but deeply rewarding. At the time, she says, she understood only part of the larger picture, mainly focused on embracing the beliefs SCCO had about serving the needs of its patients well. When Dr. Contreras began working on her residency and then a masters in public health, she was able to develop the language to connect the dots between helping patients in an exam room by speaking their native language, and the greater significance of what it means for a doctor who as a part of their professional identity has a strong understanding of DEI. In the same way, MBKU is evolving the philosophy of excellent, patient-driven health

care it has long practiced into intentional programs and opportunities that allow students to understand and capitalize on this crucial aspect of delivering care to patients.

A THREAD OF BELONGING

"When we say that we are patient- and student-centered, we want to make sure that there is this thread of belonging and inclusion throughout that is always held as a pillar," says Dr. Contreras. "I loved SCCO when I was here, in part because I learned that my Spanish was a useful thing to me as a doctor. I could make a deep impact on my patients' lives by responding to their health needs in a way that acknowledges and honors their cultural backgrounds. And so now I'm hoping to have a bigger

impact across the professions to make sure our graduates, whether SCCO, SPAS or College of Pharmacy, have a deep understanding of the principles of DEI and the improvement in health outcomes we are aiming for through the pursuit of a diverse workforce to serve diverse patient populations.”

WELCOME TO SPANISH CLASS

For truly exceptional learning institutions, DEI programs often represent a refinement and refocusing of the good work they already do. At MBKU, one such example is two medical Spanish courses: one is a required course in the College of Pharmacy, and the other is an interdisciplinary elective that is optional for all MBKU students. The courses have been thriving for a number of years, exemplifying an essential component of students' preparation to confidently provide care to different communities. Dr. Contreras co-teaches the course with PA Sandra Fineman, Director of Clinical Education for SPAS, and Dr. Michal Mingura, Assistant Professor from the College of Pharmacy.

For Dr. Contreras, the medical Spanish course is not just about vocabulary; it's about instilling a love of lifelong learning in students, specifically as it pertains to the backgrounds and cultures of the people who are their patients. “We can give them the framework of what it means to provide culturally responsive care – most importantly to always be open to learning and to be curious about the culture and experiences of the person coming to their chair,” she says. “We want them to have an understanding of the different beliefs and practices around health and illness and to be able to partner effectively with patients to provide care that harnesses the knowledge they gain here, while respecting and incorporating the patients' beliefs and understanding of their own experiences.”

A POPULAR COURSE

Dr. Mingura sees the medical Spanish course as an absolutely essential component of her students' education, as it fills a demonstrable gap in the quality of care many patients receive. “Patients who have challenges understanding the English language (known as LEP, or limited English proficiency), are at higher risk of experiencing adverse medical outcomes,” says Dr. Mingura, citing a research article titled *Language-Based Inequity in Health Care*. The article asserts that, “Patients with limited English proficiency (LEP) are among the most vulnerable populations. They experience high rates of medical errors with worse clinical outcomes than English-proficient patients and receive lower quality of care by other metrics.” Co-teaching the class is also a way for her and her colleagues to model the interprofessional approach to education that is the foundation of MBKU's mission. “Working with

faculty from the other departments has been extremely rewarding,” says Dr. Mingura. “We have developed an excellent working relationship that allows us to learn from each other, thereby expanding our own abilities, but we can also rely on each other for backup when we need help. I think this is another benefit of interprofessional education that is frequently overlooked – the faculty benefit as much as the students as they establish and grow working relationships with other professions.”

SERVING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

PA Fineman cites another reason the course is succeeding: it's popular with students who understand that the curriculum offers valuable content that helps their clinical skills and distinguishes their educational experiences. “I often hear that this course is one of the reasons students have chosen to attend MBKU,” says Fineman. “It is an honor, and so rewarding to provide a service that benefits my Spanish-speaking community and our University. A unique strength of the course is the diversity of the co-instructors. Dr. Contreras acquired her knowledge of the language from her Colombian family, Dr. Mingura, from classes she took in Spain, and I learned the language from my Mexican parents. However, all of us continue to learn from our patients.”

Learning opportunities are not limited to the classroom, and “teachers” are not limited to formal educators. Ultimately one of the primary goals of the medical Spanish class, and of the DEI programs at MBKU, is to help students become sincerely interested in the diversity of experiences represented by every patient they encounter, and to learn how to communicate and treat them successfully as they deliver the most personalized care. ◆



“I could make a deep impact on my patients' lives by responding to their health needs in a way that acknowledges and honors their cultural backgrounds.”

Leadership Corner

***Southern California
College of Optometry***



Jennifer Coyle, OD, MS, FAAO
*Professor & Dean, Southern California
College of Optometry*

Among the many things we have learned in the past 18 months, the pandemic has truly magnified the inequities in access to quality health care in our country. I am so proud of our SCCO faculty and students who are doing their part to bridge the gap daily in the community health clinics in our Ketchum Health Network. Through the leadership of Drs. Dashaini Retnasothie and Lisa Wahl at UECLA, Benedictine Gonzales at South Central Family Health Center, Allegra Burgher and Jillian Youngerman at the Boys & Girls Club of Garden Grove, and Shora Ansari at our Tustin Clinic, our students are gaining diverse clinical experience, providing eye and vision care to underserved populations, and building their cross-cultural communication skills in impactful ways. Each of these community health clinic rotations provide opportunities to make a difference in the lives of patients of all ages, backgrounds and unique needs. As we get back to in-person meetings and receptions, I look forward to meeting more alumni and hearing your stories of your time in our clinics at SCCO, and all the ways you serve in your communities.

School of PA Studies



Allison Mollet, MMS, PA-C
Program Director & Associate Professor

Despite limitations related to the pandemic, students and faculty have continued to find ways to serve others. For the first time, students' Masters Capstone Projects addressed real-time, pandemic-related, health care needs. Students developed a training program for flight attendants to help mitigate the spread of infectious disease on commercial aircrafts, something not currently included in airline training protocols. Another group created a website very early in the pandemic to educate at-risk communities about COVID-19 prevention. Other students took advantage of Zoom to provide an original workshop on breastfeeding to over 160 Hispanic teen mothers in need.

Professor Galdamez led a volunteer team of students and faculty at a local COVID-19 vaccination clinic, administering more than 300 vaccines to the community! Professors Salcido and Holt also led a vaccination clinic providing over 100 vaccinations. In many ways, serving others through the pandemic has helped us cope. I am so proud of how our students and faculty have found meaningful ways to serve others despite the pandemic. As we prepare to say goodbye to our Class of 2021 in November, we are excited to see how they will continue to serve others as certified, practicing PAs.

College of Pharmacy



Edward Fisher, PhD, RPh
Professor & Dean, College of Pharmacy

The COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging in so many ways, but one positive aspect related to it is how the faculty, preceptors and students of MBKU College of Pharmacy have volunteered their time and expertise to provide COVID-19 vaccinations to the public. The two major sites where they contributed their service was at the North Orange County Regional Health Facility, where the clinic was fully run by MBKU College of Pharmacy students and the faculty provided about 350-400 vaccines to patients daily, as well as at the Orange County Public Health Department at the Soka University site, where a total of 3,000 people were vaccinated daily. These service contributions from student pharmacists and pharmacists demonstrated their dedication to helping out in these trying times.



SAVE THE DATE

FOR MARSHALL B. KETCHUM UNIVERSITY'S

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*Celebrating and honoring
MBKU President
Kevin L. Alexander, OD, PhD*

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SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 2022

LYON AIR MUSEUM



**Marshall B.
KETCHUM UNIVERSITY**

Continuing Education

Southern California College of Optometry

Upcoming Course Schedule

SUNDAY, DEC. 12

SCCO | MBKU Live Webinar

Contemporary Topics in Optometry

8 CE Units

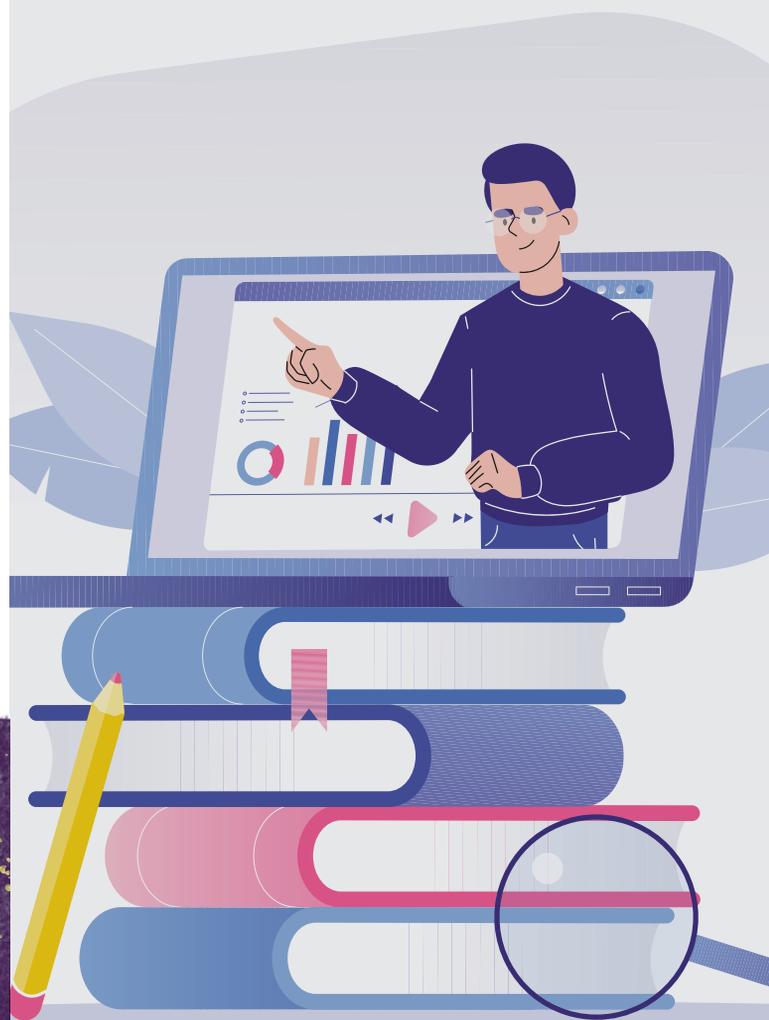
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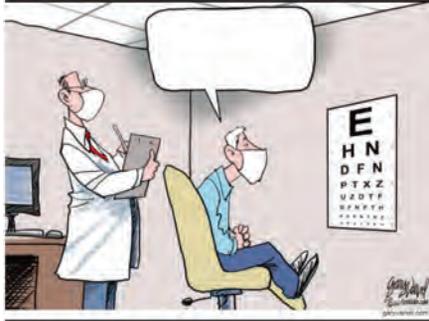
Class Notes

1957

Richard Vendeland, OD, '57, volunteers in the ER at Torrance Memorial Hospital.

1966

The Last Word: This week's top picks



Robert Gmelin, OD, '66, was the winner of The Last Word contest in the *Press Democrat*: "I always leave the fine print for my lawyers to read."

1970

Kenneth Lawenda, OD, '70, was elected to the Board of Directors of the Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry (ARBO). ARBO represents state boards in the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. He is the Past President of the California Optometric Association 2006-2007, and was the California Optometrist of the Year, 2007.

1976



Terrace Waggoner, OD, '76, is a Flight Surgeon and Aerospace Medical Resident Clinical Instructor at the Naval Aerospace Medical Institute, Pensacola, Fla. For nearly a decade, all new USA military personnel have been screened for normal color vision using the PIP 24 Plate Color Vision Test designed and developed by Dr. Terrace Waggoner. He and his son T.J. also created the Waggoner Computerized Color Vision Test (WCCVT), which was validated by SCCO Associate Professor, Dr. Jason Ng and the Department of the Navy and other prestigious institutes. The WCCVT is used by NASA to screen astronauts and accepted by the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard to screen all aviation applicants for normal color vision - including jet fighter pilot applicants whose life dream is to fly the F-35 fighter aircraft.

1985

Leonidas Johnson, OD, '85, Rev. Dr. Leonidas Johnson, authored *Phenomenal Vision: Eyesight to Life Sight*, which explores the connection between eyesight and one's view of life.

2015

Nicole Kohan, OD, '15, was named California Optometric Association Young OD of the Year.



IN MEMORIAM

It is with great sadness that Marshall B. Ketchum University announces the recent passing of Dr. Lou Hoffman, a longtime faculty member and clinical director of Southern California College of Optometry. As an early pioneer in the fields of vision therapy and vision development, Dr. Hoffman's influence on the profession of optometry was immeasurable, ranging from significant academic research to the long list of students and optometrists who considered him a friend and a mentor.

"Dr. Lou Hoffman led by example, guiding students with warmth and humility as an educator and modeling compassionate clinical care of patients," said Dr. Jennifer Coyle, Dean of SCCO. "His legacy is one we continue to strive to uphold."

Dr. Hoffman graduated from Pennsylvania College of Optometry, now Salus University, in 1956, and it was at PCO that he began his groundbreaking career in pediatric optometry. When he later joined the faculty of SCCO, he was already shaping the nascent field of vision therapy through his trailblazing scholarship. At SCCO, he served as a role model to countless optometrists, who built upon his work and whose clinical education was deeply formed by his example of caring leadership.

To share your Class Notes, please visit:
ketchum.edu/alumni/alumni-class-notes

Faculty

FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

January–September 2021

JANUARY

Phan T, **Kawasaki B**, **Mietzner D**. Case report: retained lens fragment in the anterior chamber 32 years after cataract surgery. *Clinical & Refractive Optometry*. January-February 2021;35(1):321-327.

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Borsting E, Arnold EL, Mitchell LG, et al. Effect of vergence/accommodative therapy on attention in children with convergence insufficiency: A randomized clinical trial. *Optometry and Vision Science*. March 2021;98(3):222-233. doi:10.1097/oxp.0000000000001659

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*“One of the deep
secrets of life is that
all that is really worth
doing is what we
do for others.”*

-LEWIS CARROLL