

Ketchum

MARSHALL B. KETCHUM UNIVERSITY 2023 Issue

Focused on the Future *13*

To Tell the
Ketchum Story 7

The Fundamental
Happiness of Giving 19

MBKU | 
CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

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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Julie A. Schornack, OD, MEd, *President*

EDITOR

Erin Hales, MBA, EdD, *Associate Vice President for Marketing & Communications*

COPYWRITER

Rene Scheys

DESIGN

Tawny Marcus, *Graphic Designer*

PHOTOGRAPHY

Matt Breneman, *Senior Director of Multimedia Services*
Raphael Perdomo, *Multimedia Production Assistant*

PRINTING

The Printery

CONTACT

Send comments, questions and address changes to:

Marshall B. Ketchum University
Marketing & Communications
Attn: Erin Hales
2575 Yorba Linda Blvd., Fullerton, CA 92831-1615
marketing@ketchum.edu

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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

To Tell the Ketchum Story | 7

Focused on the Future | 13

The Fundamental Happiness of Giving | 19

*Following in the Footsteps:
The Mallinger Family Legacy* | 21

*Alumni Practice Feature:
The Courage of Conviction* | 29

IN THIS ISSUE

Campus News | 4

Faculty Focus | 9

Staff Spotlight | 12

The Art of a Miracle | 23

Faces of MBKU | 25

Homecoming 2023 | 31

Sparking New Ideas | 33

Leadership Corner | 35

Class Notes | 37

SCCO Alumni Maui Fire Relief Efforts | 38

Faculty Publications | 39

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President's Perspective



Dr. Julie A. Schornack is the second President of Marshall B. Ketchum University in Fullerton, California and has been at the college since 1986. Over the course of her time at the University she has served in a variety of positions including Associate Dean of Clinical Education, Vice President of Clinical Affairs for the Southern California College of Optometry and most recently, Senior Vice President and Chief of Staff for the University. President Schornack was appointed the second president of MBKU on July 1, 2022.

In so many ways, it has been business as usual for me when I was appointed last year as the second President of Marshall B. Ketchum University. I have spent my entire professional career at this institution – more than 30 years – so I am very familiar with the people, the places and the programs of this wonderful university, and serving in leadership positions here has been one of the highlights of my life.

I believe that when new leaders find themselves at the helm of a university that's on course, built well for the journey and populated by individuals of passion and purpose, they should do all they can to preserve the strengths of the institution while seeking ways to grow and evolve that remain respectful of the best parts of the institution's character. And when I reflect on what makes the character of MBKU special, it is first and foremost that our community produces the kinds of stories such as the ones represented in this issue of *Ketchum Magazine*.

As our oldest program, Southern California College of Optometry has many "legacy families." These are families that count multiple members and generations among our alumni, and in this issue we shine a light on the Mallinger family. After graduating from SCCO in the 1960s, Dr. Joseph Mallinger went on to an illustrious career in optometry that included an essential role on our Board of Trustees while we transitioned to a university. His daughter Dr. Jennifer Mallinger and his niece Dr. Leah Mallinger followed in his footsteps, and this fall his grandson and Jennifer's son Brandon Young entered SCCO as a first-year.

Our youngest program is also producing exceptional alumni. In this issue, we feature Dr. Grace Hong, a graduate of the College of Pharmacy who was a member of its very first class. She co-owns an independent, family-run pharmacy in Southern California, and represents the type of compassionate, driven health care provider that we pride ourselves on producing.

Our recurring features *Faces of MBKU* and *Faculty Focus* highlight a number of the wonderful students who will soon become exceptional alumni, and the dedicated and generous professors who educate them.

I am so grateful that these are just a few of the amazing people I am honored to interact with every day. I hope you see your own pride in Marshall B. Ketchum University exemplified by these stories of our remarkable community.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie A. Schornack". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Julie A. Schornack, OD, MEd
President

Throwback



Did You Know?

Our Board Chair and SCCO alumna Dr. Lynn Gabriel, '78, has always been active in optometric associations on the local, state and national levels, and served as the first female president of the California Optometric Association in 1990. Dr. Gabriel is part of the SCCO alumni association and served as its president from 1987 – 1989 and was awarded its distinguished alumnus award in 1993.

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Sharing the Love



NSO Week Recap Reel – Shared Aug. 16, 2023

"Our Peer Advisors had a great time at New Student Orientation! We're so glad to have you all back on campus! Welcome to each of our new cohorts!"



Welcome Back Barbeque Throwback Thursday – Shared Aug. 3, 2023

Throwback Thursday to the Welcome Back BBQ last year! We can't wait to welcome our students back to campus next week! We have some great events planned to kick off the Fall Quarter. What are you most looking forward to during NSO?



President Schornack Inauguration – Shared June 1, 2023

Happy Throwback Thursday MBKU! In honor of President Schornack's new feature in *Authority Magazine*, we're throwing it back to her inauguration and the MBKU10 Anniversary celebration last April. Thank you for the feature @authoritymagazine and thank you to our staff for putting together such an amazing event. Check out President Schornack's feature at medium.com/authority-magazine.



Peer Advisors Group Shot (NSO Week) – Shared Aug. 9

Appreciation post for our 2023 Peer Advisors! They have done a great job welcoming SCCO and COP CO2027 and SPAS CO2025 to MBKU! We've had a great first week of Fall Quarter, and we're just getting started! #mbku #mbkuproud



SCCO Class of 2023 Commencement – Posted May 19, 2023

From COVID to Commencement, our SCCO Class of 2023 has endured through it all. Congrats to our brand new OD's on completing this chapter of your healthcare education. Our faculty and staff here at MBKU, as well as President Schornack and President Emeritus Dr. Alexander wish you luck on your future endeavors. #mbkuproud



SPAS Suture Lab – Posted Sept. 13, 2023

Can you believe we're already halfway through Fall Quarter? Time flies when you have labs, classes, and midterms to study for! For our PA students, ultrasound and suture labs are on the agenda. We hope you had fun and learned something new! Keep up the hard work! Don't worry, Thanksgiving Recess will be here before you know it.



SCCO Class of 2024 and COP Class of 2023 Pinning Ceremony – Shared May 12

Three programs, two pinning ceremonies, and one very proud campus here at MBKU. Congrats to COP Class of 2024 for leading your program in the first ever College of Pharmacy Pinning Ceremony! Finally, congrats to SCCO Class of 2024 for continuing the legacy at your Pinning Ceremony. We wish you the best as you move on to the next chapter #mbkuproud #mbku



SCCO Basketball Game vs. WCO – Shared Aug. 30, 2023

SCCO kept their eyes on the prize. Last week, SCCO's basketball team faced off against Western College of Optometry and wrapped up with a 67-61 victory! Congrats SCCO, you make us #mbkuproud! Thank you to @western_optometry for joining us!



SCCO Commencement Legacy Hooders – Shared June 8, 2023

Last month, MBKU welcomed back a special group of alumni to celebrate the commencement of SCCO Class of 2023. These alumni presented the doctoral hood to their legacy graduates during the ceremony. It was a privilege to share this moment with you and your families. Thanks you to everyone who participated in the ceremony, and congrats again to our graduates and legacy hooders!

Stay connected, follow us on social media. [@ketchmuniversity](#) and [@ketchumhealth](#) on Facebook and Instagram. [@mbku](#) on Vimeo. [Marshall B. Ketchum University](#) on LinkedIn. [@ketchmuniversity](#) on TikTok.

Campus News



SCCO Faculty, Residents and COA Leadership Participate in Ophthalmic Procedures Course at Ketchum Health

In preparation for Optometric scope of practice expansion, this past Jan. 12-15, the Ophthalmic Procedures Course taught by the faculty from Northeastern State University/Oklahoma College of Optometry, was offered at Ketchum Health to SCCO/MBKU Faculty and the California Optometric Association (COA) Leadership. The 32-hour certification program included in-depth lectures, concepts, and hands-on workshops in the use of medical lasers, injections, suturing and minor surgical procedures.

National Academies of Practice Inducts Dr. Julie A. Tyler

Dr. Julie Tyler, SCCO Faculty, has been inducted into the National Academies of Practice (NAP) as a Distinguished Fellow. The awards and induction ceremony was held in Washington, D.C., on April 1, 2023, and celebrated the Class of 2023 Fellows.



Student Bowl 2023

This spring, the AOSA chapter at SCCO hosted their annual Student Bowl. Five students from each class competed to select one winner that competed in the nationwide student bowl in Washington, D.C., during Optometry's Meeting.



College of Pharmacy's Dr. Stec Elected the 2023 President of the AAAS Pacific Division

The MBKU's Core Values in Service transpire in the Western Region of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) with the election of Dr. Jozef Stec as the 2023 President of the AAAS Pacific Division.

Honoring President Emeritus Dr. Kevin L. Alexander

MBKU's President Emeritus Dr. Kevin L. Alexander was awarded the Honorary Doctor of Science degree during the SCCO Class of 2023 Commencement in May. Dr. Alexander received the honorary degree for his 14 years of service to the university, his contributions to MBKU, as well as the optometric and health professions.



Commencement 2023

This year marked the 119th Commencement Ceremony for the Southern California College of Optometry, the fourth Commencement Ceremony for the College of Pharmacy, and the eighth Commencement for School of PA Studies. Congratulations to all the 2023 Graduates!



UECLA Gives Back

At the end of the school year, the UECLA team participated in the "Move. Be. Thrive" Health and Wellness Fair at USC Hybrid High School. The event was hosted by the Thrive in Joy Foundation with a focus on bringing awareness of physical health, emotional health and overall well-being to underserved areas. The inaugural event attracted over 200 students and family members.





Dr. Robert McKenna Presents at the American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA) Meeting

Dr. Robert McKenna, faculty with the School of Physician Assistant Studies, presented results of original research, "A Comparison of Procedures Performed by PAs and NPs for Older Adults," during the annual meeting of the American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA) in Nashville. Funded by a grant from the AAPA, his group used the core primary care procedures the Council of Academic Family Medicine recommends that all family medicine residency graduates demonstrate competence in to probe Medicare encounter databases.

SPAS Fall Service Event

As part of New Student Orientation week, the SPAS Class of 2025, along with faculty and staff, participated in a service event for the Orange County Food Bank. The team put together more than 1,000 boxes of food that will be given to seniors in Orange and Riverside counties.



Welcome New Students!

MBKU kicked off the new school year with New Student Orientation week in August. A big welcome to our new SCCO, SPAS and COP students!



Discover MBKU

On Saturday, Sept. 23, MBKU held their interprofessional admissions event, "Discover MBKU." Over 150 prospective optometry, PA and pharmacy students joined to learn more about what we do at MBKU.



To Tell the Ketchum Story

Dr. Carmen Barnhardt

Dr. Carmen Barnhardt is the Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services at Marshall B. Ketchum University. Previously, she served as the Vice President for Student Affairs where she established the Student Achievement Center, Student Leadership Certificate program, and other student services. Dr. Barnhardt has been a faculty member at the Southern California College of Optometry since 1996, and prior to that, received her Doctor of Optometry and residency certificate in Pediatric Optometry and Vision Therapy from SCCO. Recently, *Ketchum Magazine* sat down with her to discuss some of the innovations MBKU is undergoing in its admissions process.

***Ketchum Magazine:* In your newest role as the Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services (ESS), you and your team are in the course of implementing some changes to the way admissions is operating at MBKU. Why are these changes necessary?**

Carmen Barnhardt: The admissions landscape has changed drastically over the last 10 years since MBKU became a University. We now recruit in-person as well as virtually, which means our admissions

officers have exponentially more opportunities to promote our program. While this is a great thing, it more than doubles the workload, as materials, presentations and various modes of communication all need to be adjusted to serve the needs of prospective students across multiple platforms. Add in the component of keeping up with recruiting and promoting on social media, and it became evident that we needed to rethink our approach to huge tasks with a small team. Unifying our admissions processes and recruitment efforts allows us to best serve prospective students and allow our admissions officers to have a healthy work-life balance.

Of course, I always like to emphasize that we're centralizing the operations of admissions; we're not centralizing the academic part of it. So, for example, we're not changing any prerequisites. Centralizing admissions will build our capacity so we can continue to do meaningful recruitment and make connections with prospective students. This means we can continue to get the very best quality students here at MBKU, who go on to be the very best quality health care providers.



KM: What kinds of things has the new ESS been working on since you have centralized?

CB: Our team has built an Annual Recruitment and Marketing Plan. This helped us identify materials to tell the Ketchum story. We have created pieces that highlight the services and support we offer. For example, support services, career services and financial aid. We want prospective students to learn what it is like on our campus. So, we created print pieces that showcase living and studying in the Southern California area but also the student activities including the co-curricular programs and learning opportunities they have on our campus. High school and college counselors are another target audience, and to better service this group we have created an informative piece to support their advising work with pre-health profession students. Another exciting project is the MBKU Campus Video so people gaining interest in MBKU can see our beautiful campus and facilities. The team wanted to create a program for high school and undecided college students to explore our health profession programs. Now we have an annual event called "Discover MBKU" that happens in the spring. Finally, we are exploring ways to leverage technology to support our work. Having the ability to streamline processes, improve communications with prospective students and track meaningful information will further enhance the work we are doing.

KM: Of course, one of the important aspects of admissions is how it preserves the quality and character of the University. In your view, what are some of the things that make MBKU so special?

CB: I think it's all about the relationships. Early in my career, when I was a new faculty member here, I had a wonderful mentor and that relationship really set me on this path. As I moved into all these different roles, I have always felt that there's someone here who has my back. That's what I love about working at this University, and it's what I love in particular about working in Enrollment and Student Services. We have a great support system with students, faculty and staff where no one has to be out on their own. I see people across the University benefitting from these relationships.

KM: You've had an opportunity to shape MBKU's Student Affairs and Admissions offices over your long career here. What has been the key to your success at MBKU?



Dr. Carmen Barnhardt

CB: I think being able to marry all my different experiences together has suited me so well in this role. I have been a student, a faculty member, and now an administrator at this institution. I can't take credit for building it on my own, of course! I have had and continue to have such an amazing team to work with over the years. Every single person on this team has a huge heart and a big brain, and they work so hard. They are all amazing individuals. That's been a big reason why I think this department has been able to really transform what Enrollment and Student Services looks like at this institution. ♥

Dreams Revived

Even though Robyn Dettmar, MPAS, PA-C, claims with self-deprecating flourish that she was an unusual child, it might be just as accurate to say that she simply had a very strong and irrepressible scientific curiosity.

Upon having her tonsils removed, she requested she be able to hang on to them for further study, and in eighth grade, after having dissected a frog in her biology class, she asked her parents for another frog to dissect for Christmas that year.

AN UNUSUAL PATH

Her parents split the difference between encouraging her scientific pursuits and giving her a deceased animal, and she received a microscope instead. But Robyn's desire for a scientific pursuit, specifically medicine, was born and stayed with her, until she became an undergrad. That's when the cutthroat nature of her school's premed program did not resonate with her, putting her dream on pause. This pause lasted for a while, but in the meantime, she received a degree in community nutrition, married her husband and accompanied him to Ireland while he completed a master's degree. Robyn started her family there, then returned to the States and supported her husband while he pursued his PhD. She had three more children, raised them, became a childbirth educator, got certified as a lactation consultant for the health department, almost went to nursing school, and then, at the age of 40, entered her first year of PA school.

She practiced health care as a PA for over 15 years, in family practice, internal medicine, pediatrics and urgent care. That's when Robyn decided to throw another iron in the fire, get a second master's degree, and pursue another love: teaching. MBKU was her first interview a week after graduation. "I had no intention of taking the job because of the commute," she recalls. "But then I just fell in love with this program and the people in it. This is a really unique, amazing program, and I am so in awe of the people who put it together! We train our students to a very high standard and hold them to that standard, yet we are so kind to them and support them so much, and I love that!"



PASSION AND BELIEF

It is clear after just a few minutes of speaking with Robyn Dettmar that she has found a home for her enthusiastic compassion at MBKU. Her long and varied path to becoming an educator at the School of PA Studies has given her a perspective deeply informed by the philosophy that first and foremost, a health care provider should genuinely care for their patients.

"If you really believe in something, the students love it when you're passionate," she says. "An example that I use all the time is: Suppose a patient comes to you with psoriasis. You won't see it most of the time. It may not be in an obvious place. But think about how that's affecting them. You have to talk to that patient and consider how this condition is impacting their life. As their PA you must care about them enough to go a little deeper. One of the things I like to tell students is that if a patient has a smart PA or doctor, they're lucky because they'll figure out what's wrong. If they have a kind provider, then they're also lucky, because if they can't figure out what's wrong, they'll go the extra mile to refer them to someone else. But if they have a PA who is smart and kind, then they have hit the jackpot! I had a student come up to tell me, 'I'm going to be smart and kind,' and I was so happy, because I knew she would be, and I knew that meant we were doing our work well." ♦

Opportunities Large and Small

Dr. Erin Tomiyama, Assistant Professor in the Southern California College of Optometry, is uniquely suited to appreciate the advantages of MBKU's small size, both as a current faculty member and as an alumna. When she was an undergraduate at UCLA, she recognized that she was one out of a great many, and she enjoyed it, embracing the experience fully. When it came time to study at the graduate level, however, she knew she wanted something different: more hands-on, with more opportunities for personalized attention from faculty.

"I really treasure all the relationships I built with faculty members here at SCCO," she says. "When I was a student, I got to know them really well. I had a formal level of respect for them as my teachers and mentors, but I also developed a personal level of respect for them as well – which has only multiplied as I came to work here myself and we became colleagues."

A UNIQUE STAMP

Now as a faculty member, Dr. Tomiyama has another appreciation for MBKU's smaller size. After completing her optometry degree at SCCO, she went on to do a residency in cornea and contact lenses at the University of Houston. There, she got a healthy dose of a large institution from the perspective of a graduate student, as she went on to complete a master's and then a PhD in physiological optics. Though the large size of the University of Houston had its advantages – there aren't many places where one can transition so seamlessly from optometric residency to PhD – it is also true that, as Dr. Tomiyama has discovered, a place like MBKU gives her the opportunity to put a more unique stamp on the institution itself.

This starts with the fact that she feels no obligation to favor her academic focus with respect to clinic, classroom or lab. "In clinic, I'm seeing patients with students and interacting with them, I'm involved, of course, in didactic education, teaching labs and giving lectures to students, and I am also able to do research, currently spearheading two industry trials. SCCO has allowed me to deep dive into what I'm really passionate about, approaching it from all fronts, in clinic, in research and in educating students," says Dr. Tomiyama.

A MEASURABLE IMPACT

And because of MBKU's small size, Dr. Tomiyama's talent in these areas can have an outsized impact. When she returned to SCCO as a faculty member, one of her goals was to channel her passion for myopia management into a more structured service offering at

Ketchum Health. Now the new Myopia Management Clinic not only provides a more cohesive intake process for patients, it also gives the students who rotate through the clinic essential exposure to one of the leading issues facing optometrists today.

Another of Dr. Tomiyama's passions is mentoring students and crafting career and academic opportunities like the ones that proved so helpful to her own path. "When I was a PhD student, I was brought on to work on a large NIH grant at the University of Houston. The fact that I was given that opportunity makes me feel that I need to get to a level in my own career where I can help students be involved in similar opportunities to help launch their careers as well." ♦



The Family Business



When Dr. Josh Garcia decided to pursue a career in health care, he was in many ways going into the family business.

His grandfather was a physician, and his mother was among a number of family members on both sides who had followed a calling into nursing. Growing up in rural Pennsylvania, Dr. Garcia often heard about the nobility of the health care professions. He also witnessed it firsthand, as the very reason his family was situated in rural Pennsylvania. This area was underrepresented and his grandfather, after having completed his medical residency in the Philippines, chose to serve as it was desperately in need of doctors.

AN IMPORTANT MENTOR AND A NEW DIRECTION

As Dr. Garcia deliberated in high school between pursuing medical school or nursing school, he met a local pharmacist who opened a window to a world that perfectly married together his family legacy with his own particular gifts. "This pharmacist explained how in her field she had the science-based expertise in medications, but also a ton of interactions with the patients," says Dr. Garcia. "They trusted her and she developed great relationships with them over time. And I loved that. Building connection and being able to do it in a health care setting fit everything for me."

Before beginning pharmacy school, Dr. Garcia's notion of the profession was, like so many others', limited to a person behind the counter at the major retail chains. As that notion expanded, so did his interests, and he pursued a postdoc residency in clinical hospital pharmacy, and then a specialty residency in infectious diseases. By this time he felt quite reasonably that he had achieved all of his professional goals, but then his career plans expanded once more. He realized how much he loved teaching and mentoring students.

"I love all aspects of being an academician, from teaching to research to service," he says. "But ultimately it all boils down to the impact you can have in one professional's life. Just like that first pharmacist was a role model for me, and inspired me with her passion for people. And the thing that I find most enjoyable is being able to guide a student who's just like me, who initially had no idea what area of pharmacy they wanted to do. If I can help them discover a passion or understand the impact we have on patients, or help them get that job, it's my favorite part of this work."

STUDENTS FRONT AND CENTER

Before his current role as Student Outreach & Pathways - College of Pharmacy Specialist, Dr. Garcia was serving as the Director of Admissions for the College of Pharmacy. One of Dr. Garcia's greatest innovations there was to package everything that makes MBKU special – such as its student-centered, generous, and family-like community – and present it dynamically to prospective applicants. He did this with a very simple approach: put current students front and center. With the Admissions Ambassador program, prospective students get an intimate and authentic look at what it's like to attend MBKU, guided by experts who are friendly, enthusiastic and honest.

In this way the program makes the strongest case for itself, and Dr. Garcia has no reservations about granting this inside look, because the "insides" are in such good shape. "The overall tone I observed in some students in pharmacy school back when I attended was that they couldn't wait to get out," he says. "Here, it's different. Students wish we had a residency because they want to stay! Of course our students are challenged, but we also go to great lengths to make sure that they are supported just as much. Our students know we have an environment where they can feel comfortable and learn." ♦

"If I can help them discover a passion or understand the impact we have on patients, or help them get that job, it's my favorite part of this work."

The Gift of the Journey

Marissa Miara, who is the Experiential Coordinator in the Office of Experiential Education at MBKU's College of Pharmacy, had a somewhat unusual path to employment at the University, in the sense that it went through Southern California College of Optometry – not as a staff member, but as a patient.

For more than a few years, she had been struggling with inexplicable vision loss, bewildered by both the physical ailment itself and the inability to understand the source of it. The impact it was having on her life was made worse by the emotional toll of searching for a diagnosis but always coming up short.

A LIFE-ALTERING DIAGNOSIS

This changed soon after she was referred to the Low Vision clinic at Ketchum Health for the first time. During one of Marissa's visits, her optometrist mentioned that there was an organization providing free genetic testing for low vision patients, and within months she received a phone call from a genetic counselor who was able to confirm for her the exact, extremely rare genetic mutation which was causing her vision loss. While the condition is not curable, having the information changed her life. "When you finally have a name for it, it brings so much relief," says Marissa. "I had a starting point to move forward. It was a huge gift to have an understanding of what was going on, and an opportunity to start my journey from there."

The journey was daunting. Putting herself back into the workplace after having suffered from significant vision loss required Marissa to figure out how to reinvent the skills she knew she had in a different and challenging context. That's when she came across a job posting for a position at MBKU's College of Pharmacy. "I thought, 'I have to have this job,'" says Marissa. "I had been given such a gift going through Ketchum Health in the form of that starting point for my diagnosis that I really felt like it would be a full-circle moment for me to work at MBKU and give back." Marissa went through the hiring process with no small amount of trepidation, but it shouldn't be a surprise that MBKU had everything she needed to accommodate her low vision while interviewing her.

A GIFT THAT KEEPS GIVING

And when she got the job, they had everything she needed to help her do it well. "The process was so easy," says Marissa. "I was in a place where they had a program that understood the kind of needs that a person with visual impairments has, and because of the Low Vision clinic, I always had people to talk to and ask questions. And then getting set up in the workplace and in my life with assistive and adaptive technology was very smooth, again, because of the people there to help me determine what was necessary given my limitations and different needs."

What is perhaps most important to Marissa, in addition to the fact that she's been able to thrive in her role as the Experiential Coordinator in



the College of Pharmacy, is that she has also been given a very sincere opportunity to give back to the University, just as she had originally hoped. She's been invited to classes in SCCO to speak from the heart about the patient experience, to give future optometrists a living example of how low vision affects people.

"They may never experience a patient with a rare genetic disease," says Marissa. "But the process of finding mine was through a routine optometric examination at LensCrafters. So they may very well be instrumental in helping someone come to a diagnosis who doesn't even at that present time know they have a problem. But after that little starting point, I eventually got a diagnosis because that first person began investigating. Sharing my patient perspective has been a very therapeutic part of my personal journey, because I'm able to illustrate the impact that optometry and ophthalmology had in helping me, after getting news that was very devastating, regain my voice and my life." ♦

FOCUSED ON THE



**DR. JULIE A. SCHORNACK
LEADS MARSHALL B. KETCHUM
UNIVERSITY TO A BRIGHT FUTURE**

In July 2022, Dr. Julie A. Schornack was appointed as the second President of Marshall B. Ketchum University, establishing a new era in the history of the health care educational institution which commenced over 100 years ago. The official appointment of Dr. Schornack as MBKU's first woman President on April 27, 2023, is truly significant, but that significance goes beyond gender: On one hand, it ensures stable and exceptional leadership for MBKU, for which there is already great precedent, and on the other hand, it signifies a milestone on the path to a future where leadership positions at every level faithfully represent the multiplicity of demographics, perspectives and experiences that make institutions of higher education robust and vibrant.

Early on in her teaching career, Dr. Schornack received an evaluation from a student on which the observation was made that she was "not much of a lady." For those who have the pleasure of knowing Dr. Schornack, it is not too difficult to guess what this misguided student was hinting at. Dr. Schornack's enthusiasm and passion for her work are not subtle, nor are they disguised under any sexist notions about what is a "proper" way for a woman to behave. What you see with Dr. Schornack is what you get, and what you get is an infectious laugh, a deep conviction for her work and purpose, an expansive sense of humor, a fierce joy for the people who are her friends and colleagues, and of course, a long record of dedicated and deeply considered leadership at Southern California College of Optometry and MBKU.

Dr. Schornack is also an individual with a strong sense of pragmatism, rooted partly in her Midwestern upbringing near Chicago, where hard work and resourcefulness were prized above all else. For this reason, she might have been happy enough without the fanfare of a large inaugural ceremony and with no more than a passing mention of her becoming MBKU's first woman President. She preferred to focus on continuing to build the University and navigate the challenges facing it. And while she herself has not changed with respect to this focus, her perspective has. One of the primary elements that changed it was hearing from other women – colleagues, faculty, students and her own daughters – about how much it meant to them.

"As much as things have improved in this country," says Dr. Schornack, "When you look at the demographics of women in the position of president of a university, it's still pretty low; under 20%. It is not 50/50! And so it is significant to faculty and especially students, and to subsequent



generations from a role model standpoint, from a leadership standpoint, from the standpoint of them knowing they can do whatever they want. When I was growing up, it felt like there were two choices available to women: teacher or nurse. So to understand that there are many more choices is powerful and freeing. You know, it's not like my family sits around every day telling me how great I am, but at one point my daughters both said, 'We're really proud of you.' It hadn't dawned on me that that would be a part of the conversation. But now I'm glad it is."

A LIFE IN EDUCATION

Dr. Schornack has essentially spent her entire career in higher education, coming by the calling honestly — it was there almost from the beginning. As she advanced through the levels of her own schooling, she uncovered an ambition to teach at that very level; however, the ambition lasted for as long as it took her to move to the next one. A desire to be an elementary school teacher became a desire to be a high school teacher, before becoming a desire to be a college professor. Finally, she went to optometry school, and her true calling was realized.

She found optometry like so many others have. Volunteer work as an undergrad at Loyola University in Chicago — where she double-majored in biology and English — had convinced her that she wanted to pursue opportunities in health care, but when she asked a group of medical school residents whether they would choose the same path if given the

Focused on the Future



INAUGURATION CELEBRATION

The event included a traditional ceremony welcoming the University's president into her new position. Members of the Board of Trustees, faculty, student body and close colleagues stood by Dr. Schornack's side in unity to highlight her remarkable journey, service and leadership in a manner that touched each and every guest in the room.



chance to do it all over again, not one of them said “yes.” Dr. Schornack took this as a sign that medical school would not be a good fit for her!

Providentially, her mother worked in an optometry office at the time, and when Dr. Schornack spent time there, eventually getting hired on a part-time basis, all the ways that optometry stands out as a field of practice came into focus. It was a means to have more control over one’s life and time, while remaining connected to a vital health care profession. After completing optometry school at Illinois College of Optometry, Dr. Schornack went to Pacific University to get a master’s in Education, in order to bolster her resume for the teaching job that remained at the heart of her ambition.

Upon completing her education, the first place that hired her was a small but storied optometry school in Fullerton, Calif., called Southern California College of Optometry (SCCO), and it is here that she has spent her entire career. “They took a chance on me,” Dr. Schornack says, when recalling her early time at SCCO. “I was committed to optometric education, but didn’t necessarily have a depth of knowledge in cornea and contact lens. Longtime and recently retired professor Tim Edrington mentored me that first year or two, and brought me along so that I had expertise in that area of optometry. That’s an opportunity that I got that probably wouldn’t happen today. They hired me for enthusiasm more than knowledge! You can catch up on the knowledge part, but you can’t teach genuine enthusiasm.”

THE PRESIDENT’S SIDE OF THE DESK

From humble beginnings as an enthusiastic and passionate faculty member in the lecture halls, clinics and laboratories, to her oversight of clinical education and then to Senior Vice President and Chief of Staff for her predecessor Dr. Kevin L. Alexander, Dr. Schornack has spent 35 years being shaped by and helping to shape the character of SCCO and MBKU. Needless to say, this experience gives her a unique and well-informed vantage point from her new spot behind the President’s desk.

“Having sat on the other side of this desk through three presidents,” she says, “I observed firsthand how the choices that are made set the direction of the University. Those are the things in my head as I approach important decisions that affect us moving forward. It deepens the perspective that you have, the perspective on who you are and on what’s best for this University.”

There are challenges in that regard confronting Dr. Schornack immediately, and two stand out. The first is centered around admissions and enrollment and what many admissions experts believe will be a steep drop-off in prospective students at the graduate level. Fewer people have children in the years around a recession, and the effects of the 2008 financial crisis in this context will soon be felt. Another factor contributing to this problem is the global questioning about the value of an undergraduate education. When fewer people choose to attend college, it quite naturally leads to fewer people choosing to attend



As a leader, she is bright and clear-thinking, very compassionate, and absolutely loves our students. She always gives 110%, and that's the kind of leader that makes you want to give more than 100%!

DR. LYNN GABRIEL, CHAIR OF THE MBKU BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND SCCO ALUMNA, ON PRESIDENT SCHORNACK

graduate schools. "MBKU is really good at capturing applicants once they've already decided what their profession is going to be," says Dr. Schornack. "What we need to do is talk to people before they've made up their mind about what they want to do when they grow up, and offer our professions as opportunities. We want to continue to attract capable and diverse students who are going to be fulfilled serving others in the health care arena, in the midst of a lot of competition from other schools."

The other significant challenge is the continuous need to maintain, expand and renovate where necessary the physical campus and facilities of Marshall B. Ketchum University, beginning with a building that has patiently waited its turn the last decade while vital accommodations were made for MBKU's two new programs. The Clinical and Basic Science Building, which is at the heart of every SCCO student's didactic education, is next in line for an overhaul. The difficulty, of course, is cost. "It is an expensive and challenging endeavor," explains Dr. Schornack. "We are a nonprofit university. So when we talk about special projects, and expensive upkeep and new instrumentation, we often have to rely

on the benevolence of others to help us do that, because our yearly operating budget can't possibly fulfill all those needs. My challenge is to tell that story well, so everyone understands how difficult it is to be a nonprofit, and how, without external help, there are a lot of things that can't be addressed."

PEOPLE, PLACES, PROGRAMS

In her inauguration speech, Dr. Schornack articulated her philosophy of presidential leadership as a matrix of three focal points: People, Places and Programs. All of her motivations for guiding MBKU to its next chapter are rooted in these three aspects of the University, and her aim is for them to thrive. "I would like to make sure that our people here feel supported: in the workplace, educationally and supported to be productive," she explains. "And then I want us to do our very best job to constantly reflect on our programs and say, how could we do better? How could we serve the students better? How could we enhance their education, enhance the experience, enhance the feeling that they walk away with so that they want to give back to the profession?"

In many ways this is a preservation of the culture that is already embodied at MBKU, as the generosity of its alumni is well-documented and extremely varied. "Giving back to the profession can be them giving back academically, giving back financially or giving back by contributing to the body of knowledge by doing research in their profession," says Dr. Schornack.

And at the heart of Dr. Schornack's long-time service to SCCO and MBKU is the students, and the transformation they experience between their first class and their graduation. "Transformation" is a word that showed up quite a bit in Dr. Schornack's inauguration speech, and it shows up a lot in conversation when she speaks about her aspirations for the University. She sees it as perhaps the fundamental byproduct of the education students receive at MKBU.

"When students come to us, they have been focused on themselves their whole lives, and rightly so," she says. "They go through school and undergrad, and they're trying to build their life, and to build their brain, and their sense of who they are. And then as they approach health care education, we ask them to transform into someone who is going to spend their life caring for others. And their focus moves outward, to other people. Now, it's not about their own well-being and progress, but about the well-being and progress of others. And that's the transformation.

"Some of our students may have already started that journey, but once they get here, they don't have a choice! And it's not just the knowledge that we pour in their heads to care for people. Hopefully it's the attitude and the philosophy of care that they receive as well."

A POWERFUL SUPPORT GROUP

Establishing that larger sense of purpose — and staying true to it — in a career in higher education and health care is not always easy, so it is best to have help along the way. A number of years ago, Dr. Schornack began meeting with a group of women, all fellow optometrists and health care professionals, who were at similar ages and on similar career paths with each other. They got together once or twice a year to share stories and lift each other up as they navigated through both the successful and unsuccessful parts of their careers, and that support has been a powerful component of Dr. Schornack's achievement. Many of those women became deans, presidents, in charge of their own firms and consulting groups, or moved outside the profession of optometry into research. No matter what, they have all stayed connected and proud of each other.

Dr. Lynn Gabriel, current chair of the Board of Trustees of MBKU, is an alumna of SCCO, the first woman president of the California Optometric Association, and a friend of Dr. Schornack. Needless to say, she could not be happier to see Dr. Schornack's accomplishment. "There is nobody who better understands than Julie Schornack what the University has gone through to get where we are, here in our 10th year," says Dr. Gabriel. "She totally understands the principles that SCCO has always used to educate its students, so she is well-equipped to help the School of PA Studies and the College of Pharmacy build upon that history of turning out really wonderful, caring health care professionals. As a leader, she is bright and clear-thinking, very compassionate, and absolutely loves our students. She always gives 110%, and that's the kind of leader that makes you want to give more than 100%!"

MAINTAIN THE CULTURE, STRENGTHEN THE CULTURE

Toward the end of her inauguration speech, Dr. Schornack hit a snag. Some part of her written remarks had absconded somehow, and after making this discovery, and then a brief moment of deliberation, Dr. Schornack announced, "There's something missing here, but I'm just going to make it up." She then went into storytelling mode, her personality and good humor shining through, and came out on the other side of the moment — having capably brought everyone along with her — with aplomb.

One imagines that what happened during this small glitch in her speech will be a foretaste of Dr. Julie A. Schornack's leadership as President of Marshall B. Ketchum University. An unexpected challenge represents not an insurmountable roadblock but an opportunity to pivot toward a strength, to remain confident in the moment, and confident as well in the generosity of the gathered community and its ethos of abundant support.



And ultimately the greatest strength of MBKU is its people, and the community-oriented culture that welcomes, cares for and challenges those people, before sending them out or bringing them back in to impact the world through leadership in the health care professions. Maintaining and strengthening this culture is what Dr. Schornack ultimately hopes her legacy as President of MBKU will be.

"President Alexander spent 15 years building a university," she says. "From a single discipline he built a university both figuratively and literally. We added programs, we added buildings, we added infrastructure. I feel like what I have to do is continue the project, put time and effort into weaving together the programs and developing a university culture, to create a continuous, integrated university feel, so that each of the programs is appreciative of the other and recognizes that they're not alone on this campus. We want to be respectful of individual programs, but also focus on the good of the many! It's an ongoing conversation with the programs and with my executive group, to say how do we bring people together? How do we increase knowledge and awareness of others, what their work is, what is important to them and who they are as people? It is incumbent on us to create those experiences. And I would hope that at the end of my time here, people respect the decisions that I've made, that they realize I was trying to do everything in the best interests of the University, and that I worked to build people up and to integrate the programs and to make them stronger. That would be a good legacy!" 🖤

Marshall B. Ketchum University Announces a Major Gift to Establish the Forester-Chia Radiology Room at the Ketchum Health Medical Clinic

The Fundamental Happiness of Giving

There are some relationships between people that grow so naturally that they seem designed for each other from the start. When circumstances align to bring together hearts full of generosity on one side with the needs of an institution on the other, it is a privilege to witness how both thrive in purpose and delight. This benevolent manner of relationship has formed between Marshall B. Ketchum University and Denny Chia and Lynn Forester-Chia, a husband and wife who partner together in business and philanthropy.

The passion Denny and Lynn have for giving back has in a very short time resulted in the funding of a number of student scholarships for the School of PA Studies, special enrichment for MBKU faculty, staff and students, and, perhaps most excitingly, a major donation that will provide a brand-new radiology room for the Ketchum Health Medical Clinic.

“The Forester-Chia Radiology Room will really change the face of the clinic for us at Ketchum Health,” says Joan Rubio, Vice President for University Advancement. “It will allow us to expand our outreach to the community, as there is a lot of demand for this service. It will reposition the clinic and put us in place we haven’t been, in addition to expanding the scope of rotations for our students in that clinic. This is a truly transformational gift.”

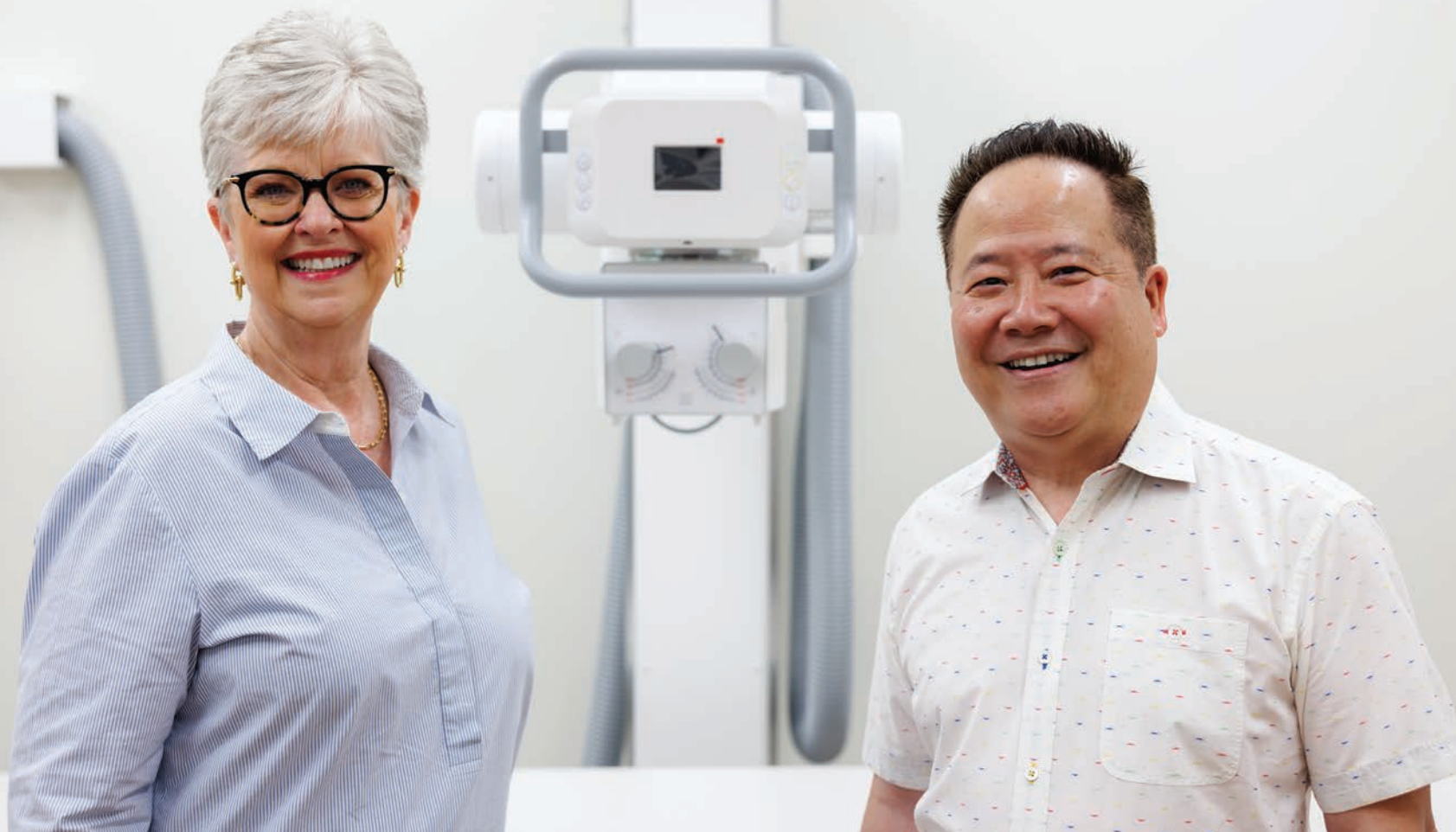
A FORTUITOUS MOMENT

A large part of Denny and Lynn’s enthusiasm for giving to MBKU is due to the way that the University’s mission of educating compassionate health care professionals aligns with Denny

and Lynn’s long history of experiencing the vagaries of receiving medical care in America. MBKU first came to their attention almost providentially. Denny and Lynn were speaking to Denny’s doctor, during his routine physical, when Denny noticed the doctor’s lab coat had a logo for MBKU on the chest. He asked about it and discovered his practitioner, Dr. Daniel L. May, in addition to being a caring and exceptional provider of health care, was also a Board Trustee, longtime faculty member, and the Medical Director for the School of PA Studies at MBKU.

As a longstanding part of the MBKU family, Dr. May spoke to Denny and Lynn with enthusiasm about the University, its mission, its successes, and its continual need for financial support. It is not an overstatement to say that, as a result of that conversation, Denny and Lynn found a new calling.





"There's a Chinese saying that is difficult to translate into English exactly," says Denny. "But it roughly means something like, 'To give to others is the fundamental happiness.' This is how Lynn and I feel now. Giving to others makes us very, very happy. It's an amazing feeling. I have a small company, and when people get to my age, they often think about retiring. Well, I wake up in the morning now and I feel like I will do my best for my company so I can do more for MBKU!"

SPREADING GRATITUDE

Like so many others who live generously, Denny and Lynn also feel compelled by gratitude, particularly as it relates to funding student scholarships and improving access to family health care. The deep familiarity of all the complexities involved with receiving medical care has given Lynn and Denny a burning desire to ease those complexities for others.

When Dr. May and Joan Rubio first invited Denny and Lynn to get more familiar with MBKU, they attended a commencement ceremony and were deeply moved by the family atmosphere MBKU is famous for, as well as the deep sense that they were witnessing a group of leaders on the cusp of great things. "Commencement brought tears to our eyes," says Denny. "To see all these students who are going to graduate, and then right away they'll take their board exams, and right away start contributing to society. It was very, very touching."

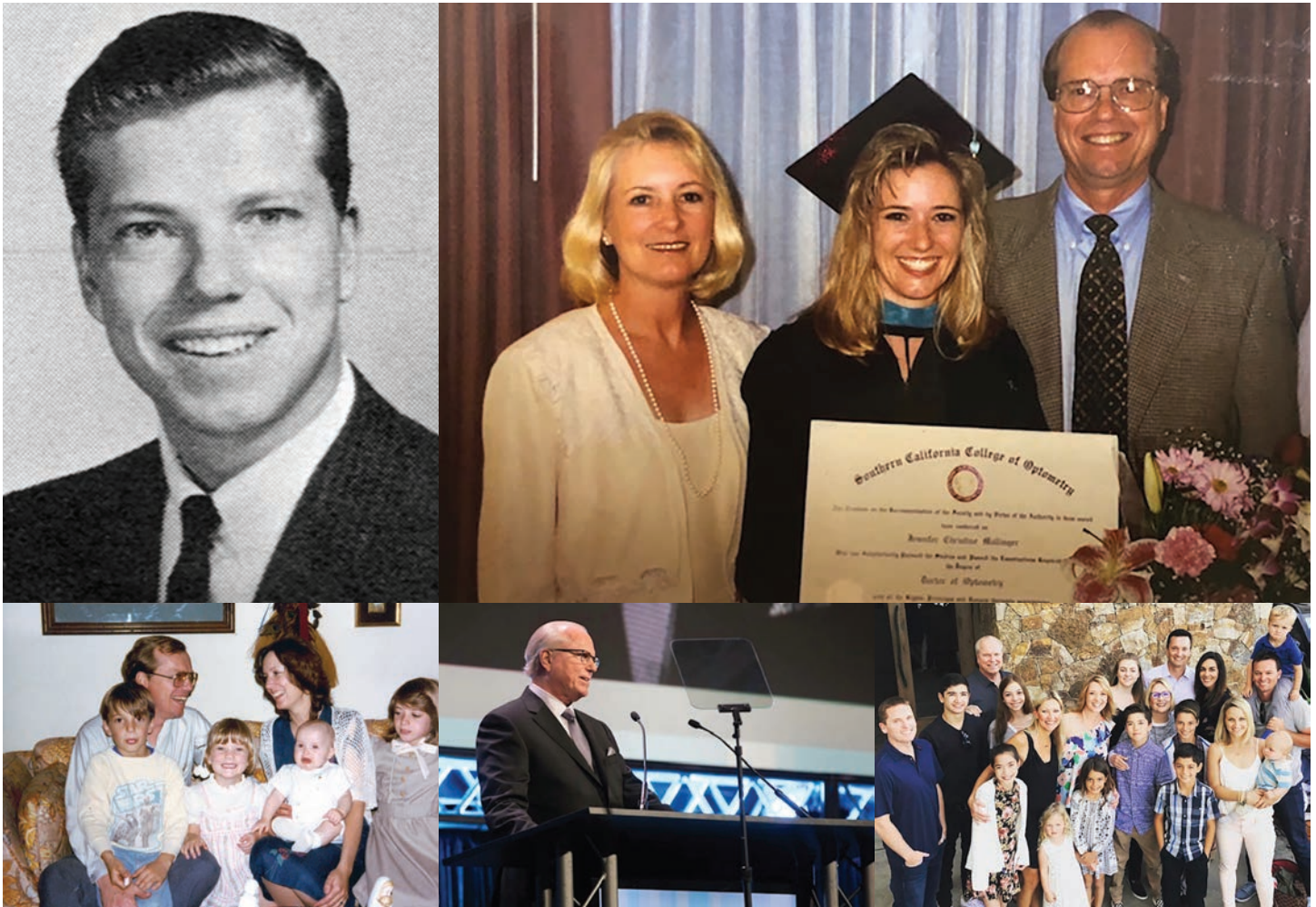
AN EAGER GIFT

Motivated by a calling to do whatever they could to support the education of caring health care providers, Lynn and Denny were

made aware of the need for a radiology room at the Family Health Clinic at Ketchum Health, and how that capability would expand the services the clinic could provide to the community. Knowing that these services are needed sooner rather than later, they decided to donate the entire cost of a new radiology room at Ketchum Health. With this gift, not only will Orange County have another point of access for this vital medical service, but MBKU students will benefit as their learning expands to encompass the new treatments the clinic will be able to provide.

"The MBKU community and I are so grateful for the generosity of Lynn and Denny," says MBKU President Julie A. Schornack, OD, MEd. "Working with such enthusiastic and kind-hearted individuals to determine a place where their gift could have a truly lasting impact was such a pleasure, and I am so excited to see the effects this new facility will have on the Ketchum Health Family Medicine Clinic and the surrounding community."

As honored as Denny and Lynn are by the opportunity to provide such a substantial enhancement of MBKU's medical facilities at Ketchum Health, they are also very clear that they're not done giving. With an appreciation for all that they have received and a strong aspiration to support MBKU's mission of supplying the world with more compassionate health care leaders, Denny and Lynn are passionate about continuing to support MBKU however they can. "I've always said to Denny that I want to do everything we can to put Ketchum on the map," says Lynn. "I want Ketchum to continue on their path to becoming the go-to school for learning about medicine, and being known for the quality of their education." ♥



Following in the Footsteps: The Mallinger Family Legacy

On the first day of Dr. Jennifer Mallinger's career as a student at Southern California College of Optometry, her goal was to lay low. She had no intention of using to her advantage the fact that her father was Dr. Joseph Mallinger, one of SCCO's most accomplished alumni.

Jennifer was, after all, reluctant to follow in her father's footsteps at first, applying to only one optometry college — not SCCO — with only one back-up plan, which was to continue her career as a manager at Chili's Grill & Bar if she didn't get in. When the first application did not work out, her father convinced her to give SCCO a try, irrespective of how promising her career at Chili's might have been. He had a hunch based on his own experiences that his daughter would thrive in SCCO's small, student and service-centered atmosphere.

Eventually, Jennifer very genuinely came to agree with this line of thinking, but she was also determined to be her own person and to succeed at SCCO on her own merits. She had support in this aspiration from her best friend, Julie Anthony-Arcemont, who was remarkably in the same

position: Julie's father was also an extremely accomplished optometrist, Dr. Jack Anthony, President of the California Board of Optometry at that time. So, there they sat in the back row, as anonymous as any of their other classmates, when, as Jennifer puts it: "The very first day, a professor said, 'We'd like Jennifer Mallinger and Julie Anthony to stand up!' And they explained in detail to all of our classmates exactly who our fathers were! I suppose it was good to rip off the Band-Aid all at once!"

THE GIFT OF A LEGACY

Very quickly, Jennifer began to truly appreciate the fact that, since she was a future optometrist, her father's profound influence on the profession was one more gift he was giving to her. In this way, it is technically true that she did use her father to her advantage.

It is also true of many members of the Mallinger family. Their legacy at SCCO extends from Joseph to his daughter Jennifer, Joseph's niece, Dr. Leah Mallinger; and his grandson and Jennifer's son, Brandon Young. Each of them has forged a career in optometry — or in Brandon's case, begun one — that is grounded in values such as hard work, compassion and service to the profession, and they all exemplify the exceptional alumni for which SCCO is so well-known.

When called upon, Joseph has always been a calming and encouraging presence for his daughter Jennifer, his niece Leah, and now his grandson Brandon, who is a first-year. Jennifer and Leah recall his mantra from the particularly difficult early years of optometry school, "You're smart enough to get yourself in, so you're smart enough to get yourself out." He knew what they were capable of and, of course, given his long and successful career, no one knew better what the profession would demand of them. From the moment he graduated as a part of the last class before SCCO moved to its Fullerton campus, Joseph Mallinger has had one mission: to promote the profession of optometry through his extensive advocacy, nonprofit and MBKU board member work.

ANOTHER CHAPTER

Joseph's grandson Brandon Young was the rare kid who felt no embarrassment whatsoever when his mom called out "I love you!" in front of his friends while dropping him off at school. He'd respond just as loudly that he loved her more. So, it seems that it would make sense that he would choose an optometry school known for its family culture, where his own family had a prominent legacy. It wasn't so simple, however. Brandon took great care in choosing where to study optometry, applying to and interviewing at multiple schools.

Growing up, he had spent a lot of time in his parents' first practice, so he was immersed in optometry from a young age and developed a genuine interest in the profession, which evolved as he became old enough to actually work for his parents. It did not truly blossom until he spent time as a technician in a small practice co-owned by a father and daughter in Colorado while he was in college at CU Boulder. There, his passion



for vision care and the impact that he could have on patients decisively confirmed the notion that he was driven by a calling outside of his parents' influence — as positive as that influence was.

As soon as Brandon interviewed at SCCO, it all came together, and during the opening week BBQ, he had a moment when he realized that he was following in the literal footsteps of his grandfather, mother and aunt. "Interviewing at the other schools and then at SCCO, I got to talk to the professors, see the equipment, and get a real vibe of what the campuses were like, and what the next four years would look like," says Brandon. "And it came down to two things: family and culture. The campus culture is like a family. SCCO is a school run on connection, and on trying to get you to become the best OD that you can be, and then to practice to the highest of your capability and knowledge. And it's been surreal so far, being in the footsteps of where my parents were, and where my grandfather was, and where Leah was, at a program that is never trying to push us away, but always trying to pull us in and set us up for success."

GENUINE AND GOOD

Jennifer now owns Mallinger Family Eyecare, a fitting name for her practice, as she has never departed from that guiding principle. She and the optometrists who work with her — which includes her longtime friend Dr. Julie Anthony-Arcemont — are very intentional about how they care for their patients. "I just had a new patient this week who told me, 'I picked you because you have the word 'family' in your practice's name,'" says Jennifer. "One of the things my dad told me was 'You'll never need to advertise if you're really good and genuine and kind.' That's what happened. Patients feel like they're a part of my family practice, and I love that. I've had patients for 25 years, and I get to watch their children grow up. I truly feel like they're a part of my family." One such patient is a former, regular from the aforementioned job at Chili's. She promised him she'd be an eye doctor, and to look her up. He did, and he's been Jennifer's patient ever since.

LOVE AND SUPPORT

Joseph, Jennifer and Brandon were all in attendance at the hooding ceremony of Leah Mallinger when she completed her optometry degree at SCCO in 2008, a moment she recalls with great pride. There was no question for Leah: SCCO was her dream school, and she fully capitalized on the support she was able to draw from her uncle and cousin. Leah runs the dry eye clinic at a private group practice in Arizona, and her success, just like the rest of the family's, serves as a testament to the tremendous education they have received at Southern California College of Optometry.

As for the man who started it all, and did so much for the school, the profession, and his own family, Joseph Mallinger couldn't be prouder. He and Jennifer always encouraged Leah, and Leah looks forward to joining them in providing all the support Brandon will ever need. "My family is so awesome and encouraging," says Leah. "My uncle or cousin never suggested I should do things a certain way because of my last name. At no point during my time at SCCO or since has my family ever been anything less than loving and supportive, always encouraging each of us to continue to give the best care for our patients and to never be afraid to practice to the full scope each state allows. My hope is we will continue to show Brandon that optometry is an incredibly rewarding profession we all love and enjoy, and watch him continue the legacy." 🍀



The Art of a Miracle

A Local Artist's Vision is Restored at Ketchum Health

A little over a year ago, Pat Edep found herself completely unable to paint anything. The once-prolific, award-winning artist had battled a case of shingles, and the disease went into her eye, ruining the vision in that eye and damaging her ability to focus. While she was able to slowly work with an ophthalmologist to get some function back, her peripheral vision was gone, making it virtually impossible for Pat to see canvas and brush.

Suffering from not just the loss of vision, but also her life's passion, Pat did not at first know where to turn, and it seemed like she might never regain her vision without facing the need for surgical intervention. That's when her eye doctor referred her to The University Eye Center at Ketchum Health. Through the invested and knowledgeable care of SCCO doctors and residents, Pat was able to regain sufficient use of her vision without having to undergo surgery on her eye.

AVOIDING SURGERY

"Whether stemming from a severe eye infection, traumatic injury or a hereditary corneal disorder, many patients like Pat may have no choice but to pursue surgical intervention in order to improve their vision," says Dr. Jessica Liaw, who treated Pat and was formerly the Cornea & Contact Lens resident at MBKU. "Optometrists hold a distinctive role in their expertise to excel in specialty contact lens fitting and rehabilitate a patient's vision as an option before surgical intervention. At Ketchum Health, our optometrists are not only equipped to expertly manage and treat individuals dealing with intricate refractive and corneal conditions, but are also devoted to imparting their knowledge and expertise to train the next generation of optometrists to excel in this vital field."

Through patience, expertise and some trial-and-error, Ketchum Health doctors were able to fit Pat with a custom contact lens that restored the vision in her damaged eye. "It was like a light being turned on for me," Pat recalls. "For the first time in nearly two years, I was able to see the work again! I was able to paint again. When they put that lens in my eye, to get that vision back – it was like a miracle."

A JOY RESTORED

Since then, Pat has been painting regularly, preparing for a show in the fall of 2023. Her work covers a wide a range of subjects, including landscapes, still lifes and an extensive series of large cats, in which their strength and majesty is juxtaposed keenly with the means by which their species is most endangered. Pat couldn't be happier. "It's my joy," she says. "I can see the brush hit the canvas again, and I am so thankful

for the quality of health care I received at Ketchum Health, as well as the empathy they demonstrated for me throughout the process."

It was Pat's joy and gratitude that stood out to SCCO Associate Professor Dawn Lam when they were introduced after Pat's successful treatment, and Dr. Lam saw the story as one more genuine indicator that MBKU is affecting lives in truly positive ways. "Our faculty are knowledgeable and well-trained in a wide range of lens designs, and thus, this treatment was very well-suited for Pat Edep," she says. "As a health care provider, it's always rewarding to have someone tell us we have made an impact in their lives. Pat was very enthusiastic about how she can now return to her art and her activities of daily living, and we couldn't be happier for her." ♥



"For the first time in nearly two years, I was able to see the work again! I was able to paint again. When they put that lens in my eye, to get that vision back – it was like a miracle."

— PAT EDEP, KETCHUM HEALTH PATIENT

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.





Rachel Jones and Hannah Hahn

Twin Ambitions

You could be forgiven for believing that Hannah Hahn and Rachel Jones, twin sisters who are both in their second year of MBKU's School of PA Studies program, had planned it this way from the beginning. After all, having one's beloved twin sister by one's side while navigating the rigors of a PA education no doubt has to be one of the more effective student success strategies.

But the fact that Rachel and Hannah did not entirely plan it that way makes the time they are sharing at MBKU all the more special. While they both had a strong fascination with the human body and caring for it from a very young age — Hannah recalls finding a drawing she did as a child of herself, holding a baby, on which she had attempted her best childhood guess at spelling 'obstetrician' — this fascination initially took them in very different directions. Rachel originally went into physical therapy, working in an orthopedic private practice, then as a medical assistant, bothered somewhat by the sense that something was yet missing. Hannah was working as an ER scribe, attempting to discern where she might ultimately fit, whether that meant medical school or nursing school.

DISCOVERING A NEW PASSION

These jobs brought both sisters into the presence of PAs, and brought them both, separately, to the same conclusion. "As I watched PAs work and how they interacted with patients, I realized this is the thing I'm supposed to do," says Hannah. "It was the perfect mix of medical decision-making and autonomy but also teamwork. And I was drawn to the deep human connection I saw they had with their patients."

Rachel made the same discovery: "PAs would come to the orthopedic practice and I saw they were able to diagnose, they were able to treat,

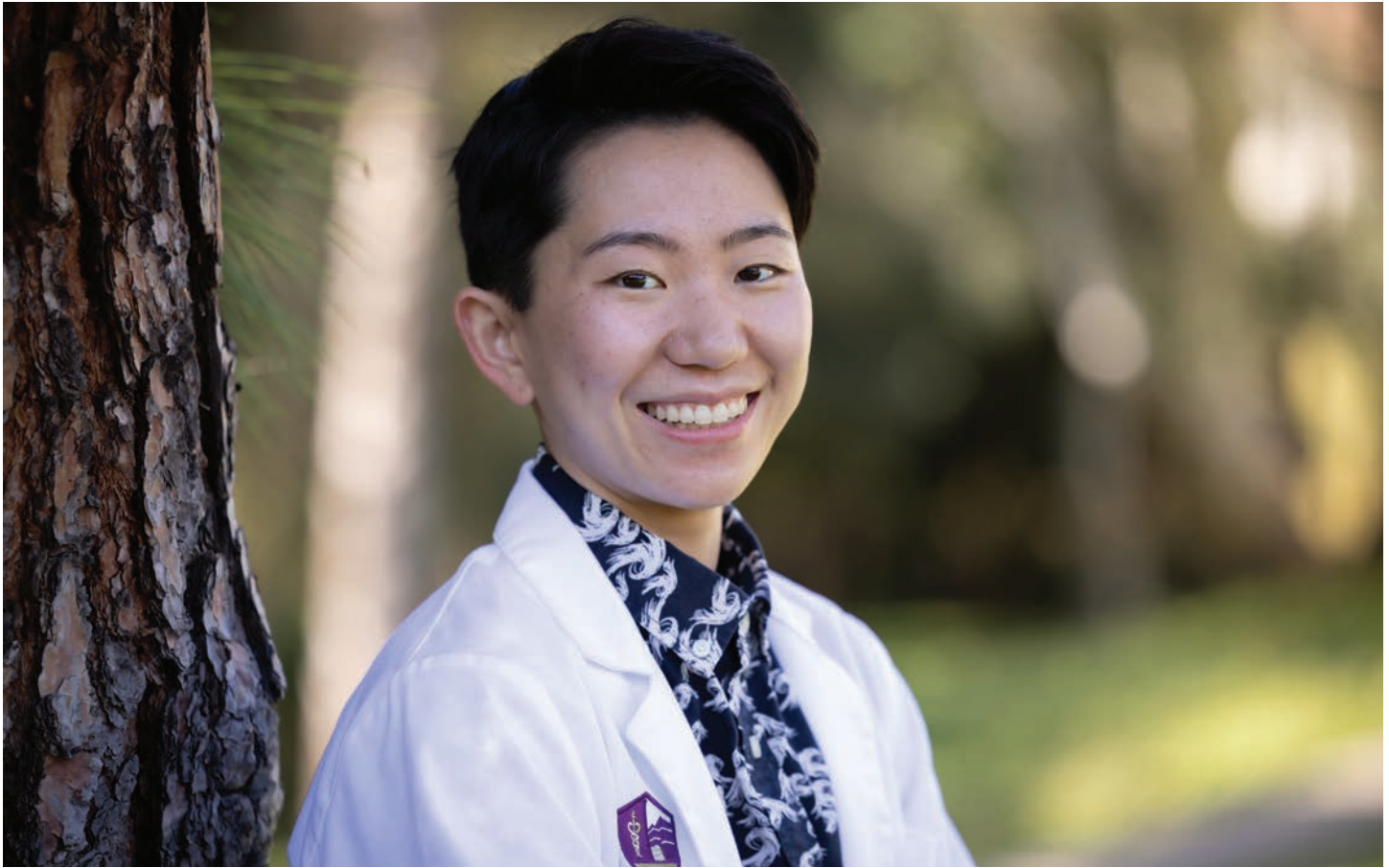
to prescribe, and be a part of the decisions that were made with the patients. It's definitely the best balance and mix of medicine you can get."

It wasn't a straight shot from that discovery to MBKU, however. Hannah had begun applying to PA schools while Rachel was still working in physical therapy, and they eventually came to be aware of how difficult and complex the application process is. They both went through that process many times, gaining a deep appreciation for all the help they were able to receive. This made their acceptance in the same class at MBKU feel all the more meant-to-be, and now the sisters are thriving at a program that prides itself on its family atmosphere. "MBKU is remarkable in the sense that faculty and staff truly do care and are invested in our success as PAs and health care providers," says Rachel.

"I will echo that," adds Hannah. "Last year we had a family member in the hospital, and our professor was so understanding, allowing us flexibility with exams and then asking after that family member's health. They care about you. You become their family and they become yours, and it's a very safe, very special place to be."

A MENTORSHIP IN MENTORING

Before her acceptance at MBKU, Rachel had found an invaluable resource: a student mentor from MBKU. This mentor also unofficially "adopted" Hannah, and both sisters attribute their current progress to this vital assistance. Their mentor challenged them to pour their gratitude into serving others, and now, both sisters have themselves become mentors for others going through the PA admissions process as a way of giving back the help that proved so crucial for their own success.



Yuuji Hiraki

Be the Person You Needed

For many students at MBKU, a kindhearted, formative experience with a health care provider is one of the first places they find inspiration to become one themselves. This was not the case, however, for SCCO student Yuuji Hiraki. Their experience with medical care throughout their life was often onerous and lacking in consideration and respect. Still, a love of hard sciences and a desire to give back to the community that had helped them through difficult times drew Yuuji toward a vocation in the medical field.

They took multiple opportunities to explore options, such as volunteering at an organization that performed free dental screenings. This organization also did free vision screenings, which intrigued Yuuji, and they came away from the experience leaning toward optometry as a real option. After two years of working as a medical scribe, Yuuji decided to explore optometry even further, shadowing different optometrists, and learning about the profession's high job satisfaction, ample community service opportunities and work-life balance.

A WELCOMING CULTURE

As a native of Colorado, Yuuji would have to pursue an OD out-of-state, as Colorado does not have a college of optometry. It does have a program that partially funds students' optometric education with the proviso that they return to Colorado and practice optometry there. Yuuji applied to a number of the schools that participated in this program, and MBKU immediately stood out. "I wanted to see what the campus culture

was like," says Yuuji. "I met a couple of students through a Facebook group as I was considering my options, and they were so genuine, very kind, and so willing to help me. And I thought that painted a great picture of what the campus culture would be like."

After the first two years of optometry school, in which rigorous didactic curriculum dominates, it's easy for a student in optometry school to feel their energies waning. When Yuuji experienced this, they were able to return to the original well of their inspiration: volunteer vision screenings. Participating in as many as they could through their role as vice president of the Lions Club gave Yuuji a renewed sense of how much of an impact a compassionate and generous health care provider can have on the world.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF DOCTOR

Now Yuuji draws inspiration from the knowledge that they can be a different kind of doctor than the kind they so often encountered. "As someone who's working in a field that may not always be as welcoming to people with my identities, I want to be that person for those who need it," says Yuuji. "There's a quote that says, 'Be the person you wish you had when you were younger.' That's driving a lot of what I want to do and how I want to practice. I want to be a provider that those in the LBGTQ+ community, as well as people with identities traditionally marginalized by the health care system, can go to, feel comfortable, and get the care they need."



Carmen Yu

Family Practice

By the time College of Pharmacy student Carmen Yu was nine years old, she already had a fair bit of experience guiding pharmacy patients on the exact dosages of their medications and their proper uses. The patients were, of course, her own family members. As the daughter of a generation of immigrants, her English-speaking skills, as well as the familiarity and trust engendered in family, made her a de facto medical assistant for many years, a role she welcomed. As she got older, her growing interest in science and biochemistry merged with these formative memories as her family's advocate and began to nudge her toward pharmacy as a career.

This nudge became an embrace when she got a job at a small, independently owned pharmacy, which served a mostly minority population, and she realized her experience powerfully situated her to perform that caring role for others as a vocation. "I found myself gravitating toward that independent pharmacy setting," says Carmen. "Much like my childhood, I could really teach these elderly patients how to take care of their health, how to take their medications and exactly what they were for. It's where I had the most impact, and what I felt was most rewarding."

A WARMTH THAT WAS GENUINE

As Carmen began interviewing with different pharmacy schools as an applicant, MBKU's distinctiveness stood out almost incidentally; during

the Zoom interviews, she could see the camaraderie and friendship between faculty members and administrators before the interviews even started when they logged on to the call. So, when Carmen's interviewers then conveyed that same warmth to her as a potential student, she knew it was a genuine byproduct of a great University culture.

"I can't imagine that I could become the person I am today in any other program," says Carmen. "The environment is so unique, not only because of its size but because it's a newer program, so it pushes students to be innovative, and it has faculty and administrators who passionately support all these new and innovative ideas, and truly care about my growth and success."

TOOLS FOR SUCCESS

As president of the MBKU student chapters of the American Pharmacists Association and the California Pharmacists Association, Carmen has had ample opportunities to pursue ideas that exemplify this support. She challenged the notion that there should be any limit on the number of community outreach events she and her classmates could pull off, yet was always met with approval and resources. "MBKU has given me all the tools to be a successful provider and confident leader. When I go on clinical rotations I see firsthand how well I've been prepared in terms of my clinical knowledge. I can see how all the hard work of our professors has paid off." ♥

The Courage of Conviction

In the changing landscape of community pharmacy, it is no secret that small, independent, family-owned establishments are increasingly rare. Sun Sun Pharmacy, in Monterey Park, Calif., is one such pharmacy, servicing a devoted and loyal clientele who benefit from highly personal, expert care.



For many years, Dr. Grace Hong has been helping to provide that care, albeit in a number of varied ways. Sun Sun Pharmacy is co-owned by her father, Mike Min-kan Hong, and like so many family stores, Grace began working for him while young, helping out where she could with tasks like serving as unofficial interpreter, proofreading audits, and reviewing legal work. After receiving her PharmD as a member of MBKU College of Pharmacy's first graduating class, Grace's duties have expanded, and she now helps to run the pharmacy as

a partner to her parents. Though the work may be challenging and the hours long, Dr. Grace Hong is a persistent and dedicated care provider, and she stands with conviction in a gap that her many underserved, immigrant patients might otherwise slip through, a bulwark against the impersonal or overly corporatized health care that often dominates today.

All the same, the demands of the job ask that Grace greet each moment with a down-to-earth, humble sense of humor and a reluctance to swell her pride. This isn't always such a challenge in a family-owned establishment, where more traditional markers of success, such as promotions or positive employee reviews, are not always readily given. Grace must therefore chart her accomplishments more modestly: a plate of cookies and cakes from a grateful patient, or a special lunch made and brought to her during her frantic or nonexistent lunch hours, or her father calling late to ask, "Did you eat?"

TAKING THE LEAP

Though Grace has long been answering the call to assist in her family's businesses, it was not a foregone conclusion that she would enter the profession of pharmacy. She went through undergrad as a humanities major, with the goal of becoming an artist, a development that she admits did not thrill her parents. Even after becoming a licensed technician, and taking appropriate prerequisites to somewhat placate her parents' dreams, Grace resisted pharmacy as a career.

It wasn't until she entered a Health Executive MBA program almost on a whim that the notion of pharmacy as a true option rose in her thinking, nurtured by the recognition she received from the many other health professionals in her program. "I did not fully know my own worth at the time," says Grace. "As a tech, I sometimes felt like I was just performing errands. But in the MBA program, I was working with these amazing physicians and nurses who were older than me, and they figured me out, legitimized my work and helped build my confidence." Around this time, Grace's father became ill, and her stronger sense of assurance combined with the knowledge that she was the most feasible choice to preserve the family business led her to take the leap, and she applied to a brand-new College of Pharmacy at Marshall B. Ketchum University.

A NEW COLLEGE; A NEW BEGINNING

That first COP class at MBKU is a special one, since they took the biggest step of faith in a program not yet fully accredited and still developing its identity. While acknowledging there were not unreasonable hiccups and some growing pains, Grace is grateful for all the hard work of her classmates, faculty, administrators and staff to build a strong foundation for the COP's subsequent achievement. "At the beginning there was certainly a lot of adjusting," says Grace. "But we always had great professors who really cared about us and were very supportive, and the school worked very hard to include us. I truly believe that Dr. Rajesh Vadlapatla saw something in me that I didn't yet see in myself. And Dr. Josh Garcia was instrumental in establishing that culture of camaraderie. He was always bringing students together."



Grace excelled at MBKU, involving herself in multiple professional organizations and shining in a student internship at St. Joseph's Hospital. She was not, at that time, necessarily planning to continue to work for her parents, but then, during her last rotations, the COVID-19 pandemic changed everything. Sun Sun Pharmacy is located across the street from a hospital, with a flow of patients coming from the ER, and her parents and other employees at the pharmacy at high risk by virtue of their age. It made sense for her to take on the responsibility of maintaining the COVID protocols, and so, fresh out of MBKU, Dr. Grace Hong returned to work for her parents – now with a PharmD degree.

THE EXTRA MILE

Her current approach is to do almost whatever it takes to make sure her patients are cared for well. She remembers all the relevant details of their medical histories and will go the extra mile to negotiate on their behalf with insurance companies so that their essential medications are covered. Part of this is rooted in her own empathetic character, and part is rooted in her experience as the daughter of Taiwanese immigrants. Her mother,

Sophie Hong, has always been a source of inspiration and strength for Grace, at home and at Sun Sun Pharmacy. "My mom's bravery and support of her husband is instrumental to our family's little success as an immigrant family," says Grace. "She is always the one to encourage my dad or me to take the leap when we are at our most insecure, and she believes in a woman's strength in business and in the home."

Grace's generosity as a health care provider is made possible by the level of attention she can choose to devote as an independent practitioner. "I try my best, and I think, if this were my family member, I'd hope somebody would try just as hard. I can help people with pricing, I can help them come up with solutions without corporate metrics telling me I'm out of line. Our population is mostly immigrants, who sometimes need a little extra patience and a little extra attention, because many of them don't know all the ways that health care works here. I have some new patients, a couple, who recently told me, 'You do not treat us like we are just a number.' My patients ask for me, because I know exactly who they are!" 🖤

Homecoming 2023

MBKU Establishes a New Alumni Tradition

On Saturday, Sept. 30, Marshall B. Ketchum University inaugurated a new tradition in honoring its wonderful alumni, celebrating the first-ever University Alumni Homecoming. The event brought graduates of the Southern California College of Optometry, the School of PA Studies, and the College of Pharmacy together at the same time for a day of reunion and recognition. Over 130 alumni were in attendance, including representatives from the Classes of 1973 and 1998, celebrating their 50th and 25th-year reunions, respectively.



The event honored the recipients of MBKU's Distinguished Alumni Awards: Wynette Augustine, OD, '84; Beverly Pack Bianes, OD, '91; John Nishimoto, OD, '87; Brianna Riddlebarger, PA-C, '19; and Melanie Vela, PharmD, '22.



After gathering at different areas of the Kevin L. Alexander, OD, PhD Campus in Fullerton, Calif., alumni from all three colleges enjoyed food, drinks and live musical entertainment on the lawn.



Sparking New Ideas

MBKU's IDEA Center Awards its First-Ever Mini-Grants

In February 2022, Marshall B. Ketchum University founded the Inclusion, Equity, Diversity, and Accessibility (IDEA) Center, a campus hub whose mission is to instill and preserve core values that promote a vision for the University as a place that truly welcomes, accommodates and empowers individuals from every demographic. The IDEA Center grew out of the decision by MBKU to put a more deliberate focus on efforts to ensure MBKU graduates are skillfully prepared to provide health care in a diverse society. Part of this mission is to offer education that promotes understanding of differences, affirmation of identities and an understanding of the community's role in reducing health disparities.



CENTER FOR
IDEA

MARSHALL B. KETCHUM UNIVERSITY

AN EXCITING RESPONSE

Melissa Contreras, OD, MPH, FAAO, was appointed as MBKU's Assistant Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), and one of the concepts at the core of Dr. Contreras' leadership of the IDEA Center is that its work would be produced

and embodied by the community itself, an organic outgrowth of MBKU's mission and values. To this end, one of the IDEA Center's first campus-wide initiatives was the introduction of five \$1,000 mini-grants, a venture meant to solicit and fund projects that promote inclusive practices, increase diversity, structural equity and accessibility. Announced at last year's University Retreat, Dr. Contreras was hoping to solicit funding proposals from all corners of the campus, from students and faculty to staff and administrators, and to her great gratification, this is precisely what happened. The IDEA Center received many submissions, and through a careful process, selected the five projects that would be awarded the grants, with the goal of implementing them within the following year.

"I'm very excited about the response of the MBKU community," says Dr. Contreras. "I believe it shows that people have the opportunity to take ownership of ideas that promote DEI, ideas that are sparked from needs within their own departments or clinics or classroom settings. And they can dream up the idea, they can propose it, and they can get it funded and they can implement it. And it can all happen with the support of the IDEA Center."

CONNECTING THROUGH LANGUAGE

Dr. Elaine Chen, Associate Professor at SCCO, is the author of one of the approved grant proposals. As a faculty member, she was able to address observations she had made in her educator role: seeing

that there was often friction stemming from spoken English, on the side of both non-native speakers and native speakers, she crafted a proposal meant to create an opportunity to bring people together in an environment where the stakes and the tension were low.

"I saw groups of students who struggled with English as a second language and isolated themselves, as well as students who wished they could become more proficient at a second language other than English," says Dr. Chen. "I was able to try to give opportunities to both these groups to connect. Ultimately, if our students speak different languages more fluently, it will foster better patient care in our community. Also, connecting students and staff to share languages within our own school will foster community in our own University."

PROMOTING AWARENESS, IMPROVING OUTCOMES

As President of the Muslim Student Association, Sohaila Baheer spearheaded their program to promote awareness of the disparities

"I believe it shows that people have the opportunity to take ownership of ideas that promote DEI, ideas that are sparked from needs within their own departments or clinics or classroom settings. And they can dream up the idea, they can propose it, and they can get it funded and they can implement it. And it can all happen with the support of the IDEA Center."

MELISSA CONTRERAS, OD, MPH, FAAO,
ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT OF DIVERSITY,
EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

MBKU IDEA Center

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE RECIPIENTS OF THE INAUGURAL 2023 MINI-GRANTS.

experienced by Muslim patients due to cultural barriers and misunderstandings. Sohaila's proposal is a fitting representation of a member of MBKU's community who is attuned by virtue of experience and background to the unique obstacles a minority group may face, and how the mini-grants create an opportunity to address it more widely.

"I was motivated to write a proposal for the DEI mini-grant because I saw an urgent need to address health care inequalities encountered by Muslim patients as a result of cultural barriers and misunderstandings. Muslim patients frequently have specific health care needs and preferences due to religion and cultural beliefs, and future health care practitioners, including optometry, physician assistant and pharmacy students, must be culturally competent in order to provide optimal care. The DEI mini-grant provides the financial support needed to make this important project possible."

A COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY

Dr. Contreras sees the first round of funding as a success story in how it demonstrated that the work of promoting diversity, equity and inclusion is not just falling on the IDEA Center itself, but becoming a priority in all the corners of the campus. It's the tangible beginning of a larger mobilization to take on these ideas and to be inspired by them as they come to fruition. "It's a collaborative process," says Dr. Contreras. "We're engaging our communities to offer their expertise and their ideas, because we will forever be learning about each other as individuals from different backgrounds, different cultures, different religions and different identities. We have a lot of support from the University administration because MBKU understands that our people are our greatest resource. And if we can infuse cultural humility into the education of our future pharmacists, PAs and ODs, then from the perspective of the IDEA Center we are truly reimagining health care education." ♦



SHILITA K. MONTEZ, PROJECT:

EXERCISES FOR EXPLORING HUMAN INTERSECTIONALITY

Overview: A program to explore human intersectionality through exercises that provide empirical and visual analysis that measures and reveals in real time how humans operate within their intersecting identities.



DR. ELAINE CHEN, PROJECT:

SECOND LANGUAGE MIXER

Overview: A language exchange event to promote inclusive learning that fosters relationships between students and further collaboration with their peers.



DRS. JULIE TYLER AND HEIDI WAGNER, PROJECT:

PATIENT EDUCATION PROJECT – READ, RECOGNIZE, REFLECT BY STUDENTS (PEP-RRRS)

Overview: A project to increase recognition and reflection among students "regarding how race, gender, and other indicators ... are represented in health professions education" through analysis of patient education materials.



MUSLIM STUDENT ASSOCIATION (MSA), PROJECT:

PROMOTING CULTURAL/RELIGIOUS AWARENESS AMONG MBKU HEALTH PROFESSIONS PROGRAMS TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE OUTCOMES FOR MUSLIM PATIENTS

Overview: A program to increase cultural competency and awareness about the needs of Muslim patients to address the health care disparities experienced by Muslim patients due to cultural barriers and misunderstandings.



MBKU LIBRARY, DR. SCOTT JOHNSON, WHITNEY SPROUL, KATIE GSTALDER, DIANA JACOBSON, PROJECT:
DEI LIBRARY E-BOOK INITIATIVE

Overview: A program to educate and inform, facilitate dialog and spark engagement to create a diverse, equitable and inclusive medical community and educational experience with new digital materials focused on DEI-related topics.

Leadership Corner

Southern California College of Optometry



Eric Borsting, OD, MSED
*Professor & Dean, Southern California
College of Optometry*

As we welcome the class of 2027 to our campus, we have an eye on the future. In January 2023, over 20 faculty members and members of California Optometric Association completed the Ophthalmic Procedures Course taught by the faculty from Northeastern State University/ Oklahoma College of Optometry. The 32-hour certification program included in-depth lectures, concepts and hands on workshops in the use of medical lasers, injections, suturing and minor surgical procedures. This program will prepare the SCCO faculty for scope expansion that is occurring in many states and is being actively pursued in California.

Our outstanding faculty continue to be recognized at a national level with Dr. Jason Ng receiving the Michael G. Harris Family Award for Excellence in Optometric Education, Dr. Julie Tyler receiving a fellowship with the National Academy of Practice, and Dr. Erin Rueff becoming a diplomate in the Cornea and Contact Lens Section of the American Academy of Optometry. In addition, Dr. Susan Cotter served as the President of the American Academy of Optometry. Finally, our students continue to pursue postgraduate residency training to further their skills and prepare for the future of optometric practice. We had 39 students accepted into residency programs from the Class of 2023.

School of PA Studies



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

The School of PA Studies has integrated thoughtful curricular additions to ensure we are meeting the learning needs of our evolving student body and to ensure our graduates are prepared for the demands of clinical practice today and tomorrow.

A new formative course was implemented in which students take a board-like exam and complete OSCE stations. Students can identify their strengths and weaknesses, and faculty can provide additional and early support to students who may need it.

Our DEI course instructors added an impressive new program called Empathable, which helps students grow in empathy and inclusion through immersive experiences.

Professor Holt leads the way with classroom technology, creating podcasts and online interactive modules to appeal to students with a variety of learning styles and schedules. Yes, students can actually study while on a jog now!

We are now routinely using video recordings during patient assessment testing. Having students watch these videos has proven to be valuable for growth at all levels. Furthermore, clinical students will now complete two additional weeks of behavioral health during clinical rotations.

Our Class of 2023 graduates in November and we are excited to see how they will continue to impact their communities and thrive as practicing PAs today and in the years to come.

College of Pharmacy



Judy Ortiz, PhD, PA-C
*Vice President for Academic Affairs
Interim Dean, College of Pharmacy*

The College of Pharmacy embraces innovative methods to prepare future pharmacists for the dynamic health care landscape, including innovations in the classroom and through community engagement.

Active learning is a cornerstone of pharmacy education. Students practice patient care during simulated patient experiences. Cases are used to apply learning concepts and assess students' understanding of pharmacy concepts. Immersive training in our interprofessional DEI course helps build the students' empathy for their patients.

Participating in conferences offers pharmacy students a chance to stay updated on the latest research, innovations and trends in the field. It encourages networking, collaboration and exposure to diverse perspectives, ensuring they remain at the forefront of pharmacy practice. We had the largest MBKU attendance ever at the Western Pharmacy Exchange in Las Vegas, where students competed in the Quiz Bowl, cheered on by President Schornack, VP Joan Rubio, fellow students, faculty and alumni. Community engagement, such as the student, faculty, staff and alumni basketball game, promoted wellness and connected pharmacy students with their communities.

The future of pharmacy education lies in these dynamic approaches, empowering students to be well-rounded, patient-centric and community-oriented pharmacists.



Southern California College of Optometry

Continuing Education

2024 Course Schedule

FEB. 4

Live Webinar

Gathering on Glaucoma

Focused CE | 8 CE Units

MARCH 24

Live Webinar

Excellence in Eye Care: Part 1

SCCO's Annual Two-part Series | 16 CE Units

JUNE 3 - 6

In Person | Fullerton, Calif.

Biennial Indian Health Services Eye Care Program

SCCO Sponsored | 29 CE Units

JUNE 8 - 9

Live Webinar

SCCO's Residency Forum

Resident Presentations | 10 CE Units

JULY 13 - 14

Live Webinar

Excellence in Eye Care: Part II

SCCO's Annual Two-part Series | 8 CE Units

SEPT. 8

In Person | Fullerton, Calif.

Partners in Training: Part I

SCCO's Continuing Education Collective | 8 CE Units

DEC. 8

Live Webinar

Partners in Training: Part II

SCCO's Continuing Education Collective | 8 CE Units

WEEKLY

Veterans Administration Greater LA CE Seminars

SCCO Sponsored | 3 CE Units

ASYNCHRONOUS

ketchum.edu/continuing-education/online-ce

CE Online

SCCO Sponsored | 1-2 CE Units

LEARN MORE & REGISTER

ketchum.edu/ce

CONTACT US

email: ce@ketchum.edu | phone: 714.449.7495

HOME COMING 2024

SAVE THE DATE!

Bring the whole family and join us for a fun day of reunion and celebration with your friends and fellow alumni and a celebration of the Distinguished Alumni honorees.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2024

Kevin L. Alexander, OD, PhD Fullerton Campus

Formal Details Coming Soon!



Class Notes

1977

Dale Hardy, OD, '77, sold his practice in South Jordan, Utah, that he has owned since 1994. He is now serving as a missionary helping to manage missionary housing at Ohio Columbus Mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

1979

Carl Boeck, OD, '79, is celebrating the birth of his third grandchild, a granddaughter, Cora.

1982

Leon Miller, OD, '82, is currently practicing in Englewood, Colo.

1989

Michael Bywater, OD, '89, Congratulations and thanks to Dr. Michael Bywater who spent many years working to change the New York law prohibiting non-SUNY fourth-years from rotating in NY state. On Oct. 25, 2023, the NY governor signed his bill to allow all optometry students to do externships in NY effective immediately! Thank you, Dr. Bywater and all the SCCO alumni who worked tirelessly for this.

2005

Derek Louie, OD, '05, was promoted to full Professor of Ophthalmology at Oregon Health & Science University in July 2022. He is the first OD to be promoted to this position within the OHSU Casey Eye Institute, and only the 13th OD across the country at this academic rank within the department of ophthalmology. He is grateful for the educational base from SCCO/MBKU, mentorship and lasting friendships he made. He continues to mentor early career optometrists. Thank you SCCO/MBKU!

2023 AAO FELLOWS

Congratulations to the following SCCO alumni who were named the 2023 New Fellows at the American Academy of Optometry meeting in New Orleans in October:

Megan Sam, '21

Michael Habib, '21

Natalie Breau, '22

Rebecca Phung, '22

Salena Quach, '21

IN MEMORIAM



Robert Gmelin, OD, '66

Dr. Robert Gmelin passed peacefully at home on Sept. 20, 2023, after a long and valiant battle

with leukemia. A member of the SCCO "1966 Class that Served," Dr. Gmelin served his country and his profession with dedication and dignity. Dr. Gmelin was Chief of Optometry at a military hospital in Tehran, Iran, when the Ayatollah Khomeini came to power. His bravery and optometric skills earned him and his staff their freedom when taken hostage by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard. He was awarded "Legion of Merit" upon his 1986 retirement from the U.S. Army as a Lieutenant Colonel. He is survived by his wife, Sally, and sons, Mark and Michael.



Donald E. Studt, OD, '51

Dr. Donald Studt passed on Sept. 30, 2022. Dr. Studt was a 1951 graduate of the Los Angeles

College of Optometry, his father's alma mater, Walter Studt, who graduated in 1919. He was the co-founder of The Studt Foundation and a loyal supporter of SCCO for decades. The Studt Center for Vision Therapy at the University Eye Center at Ketchum Health was named in his honor to recognize his philanthropic and research contributions to vision therapy.



Janet Armstrong, OD, '82

Dr. Janet Armstrong passed away on Sept. 2, 2023. A longtime faculty

member, Dr. Armstrong served 21 years as an assistant professor at SCCO. She will be remembered as a passionate advocate for pediatric vision care, a generous and kind health care provider and a capable, dedicated professor. She is survived by her daughter Kayla Rouse.

William Buethe, OD, '54

Rodney Embree, OD, '87

Norman Gordon, OD, '64

James Holder, OD, '63

Irving Kahn, OD, '55

Melvin Kranseler, OD, '58

Candria Krywko, OD, '10

Kenneth Lawenda, OD, '70

Scott Lewis, OD, '77

William Malone, OD, '88

Donald Matsumoto

Carl Milkie, OD, '58

Richard Minogue, OD, '61

Arthur Muccilli, OD, '68

Ernest Nankas, OD, '57

Akira Tajiri, OD, '51

John Wells, OD, '67

Gene Wilkins, OD, '61

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

SCCO Alumni in Hawaii Pitch in on Maui Fire Relief Efforts

Early this fall, Dr. Geoff Reynolds, Dr. Mily Wu-Reynolds, Dr. Evan Tanaka, Dr. Keri Chang-Moises, and fourth-year student Richard Nguyen were privileged to serve in a coordinated health care initiative in response to those affected by the fires in Maui.

Representing a collaborative undertaking between VSP Global and the Hawaii Optometric Association, these relief efforts established two temporary yet fully equipped mobile examination stations in one room at a provisional Department of Health facility in Lahaina, where every Thursday over a number of weeks in September and October, nearly 200 individuals received free vision care and over 150 pairs of glasses were prescribed.

From the day the disaster struck Maui, Dr. Reynolds, who runs a private practice in Oahu with his wife Dr. Mily Wu-Reynolds, was motivated to figure out a way that he could provide meaningful assistance in his capacity as an optometrist. As a board member of the Hawaii Optometric Association (HOA) and an ambassador for VSP Global, Dr. Reynolds had no shortage of highly structured and well-equipped channels through which he could offer his help, and he was ready to go right away. However, he and his colleagues at HOA and VSP Global understood that the most appropriate way to prioritize and magnify their efforts in the Maui community would be to follow the lead of those doctors situated there, and so they remained on standby until such a time as they were needed.

Several weeks after the fire, they got the call. Maui is atypical in the sense that even when times are good, there are too-few optometrists as compared to the number of residents, so natural disasters have an outsized effect on the ability of local doctors to serve the needs of the entire community. This made the efforts of the volunteer optometrists crucial for filling in the gaps and alleviating some of the pressure caused by interruptions in service that resulted from the fires. Every Thursday for weeks, Dr. Reynolds, his fourth-year SCCO student intern Richard Nguyen, and their colleagues boarded pre-dawn flights to Maui and worked at the emergency mobile clinic until every last patient for that day was examined, before flying home to Oahu in the evening.

For Dr. Reynolds, the tight-knit sense of community woven into every Hawaiian's understanding of themselves, combined with the responsibilities he shoulders as a health care provider, made his desire to aid in the relief efforts automatic. "It was a fantastic coming together of the profession to help," he says. "It was very long days, but it felt like nothing in the grand scheme of things. It was our pleasure to be able to go there and provide that kind of care. As health care providers, it's what we signed up for."

And while every student at SCCO typically gets a persuasive lesson in the importance of compassion in serving their communities, Richard Nguyen got a front-row seat to an aspect of health care and optometry that not everyone is lucky enough to witness at that stage in their career. Dr. Reynolds made sure he was able to bring Richard along, as this lesson was an essential part of his own education at SCCO. "I recall from my days as a student at SCCO a



number of inspirational quotes around campus," says Dr. Reynolds. "One was, 'The price of greatness is responsibility.' Not that we walk around thinking we're great, but if you're going to leave that campus with the title of doctor and be able to do all these things, you have a responsibility to make sure that your knowledge is used properly. That's the way we run our practice in Oahu, and it's what we try to teach Richard here as well."



Dr. Evan Tanaka is a friend of Dr. Reynolds and serves with him on the board of the HOA. Having been born in Hawaii, he echoes the notion that the state's unique identity means that the optometrists on the different islands share a unity that goes beyond their membership in the HOA. He too was eager to help in any way he could, and he counts it a privilege to have witnessed this unity in action among the more than 30 volunteers in that small examination room each Thursday. "It was amazing to see the amount of effort to get each and every patient there the best care possible," recalls Dr. Tanaka. "There were no shortcuts from any provider – it was as if there were all in their own offices. It was pretty neat to see everyone giving their best efforts to get the job done, no questions asked."

Dr. Tanaka also sees his time at SCCO as formative in terms of always asking how he can best serve the needs of his community, and he considers it an honor that he's serving the community he grew up in. "SCCO created the type of patient-first and community-first culture during my time there that has shaped the way I approach care for my patients and the community," he says.

Both Dr. Tanaka and Dr. Reynolds returned to the islands of Hawaii after completing their studies at SCCO, to give back to a place from which they received so much. Their participation in the emergency relief efforts, while of course notable, was a natural byproduct of a mindset that was instilled in them from the beginning. "The profession, the school, and the community have given me and my family so much," said Dr. Reynolds. "Any way at all that we can give back and do something positive in the community, to be able to go and help when help is needed, we just don't think twice." ♥

Faculty

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