

Harris Receives Excellence Award From St. Louis American



Photo by Wiley Price

Alexander Harris, O.D.

Dr. Alexander Harris ('86), Chief of Externships at the School of Optometry, received an Excellence Award from the *St. Louis American*.

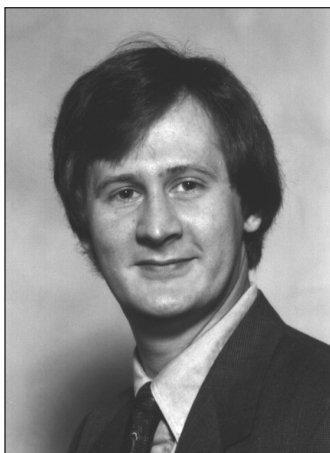
"The awards are given to educators who demonstrate that potential can be realized," said Donald M. Suggs, publisher of the *St. Louis American*. "These educators are fine examples of optimism, hard work and caring that can overcome the odds."

Harris was the first Director of Minority Affairs at the School of Optometry and is also an assistant clinical professor. As chief of externships, he advises minority students and helps place fourth year students in their clinical rotations. He also speaks to elementary and high school students. Harris was the first African-American president of the St. Louis Optometric Society.

"The Excellence Award is the best honor I have ever received," Harris said. "I can't think of anything else that parallels it in any way."

Harris formally received the Excellence Award at the 11th Annual St. Louis American Salute to Excellence Scholarship Awards Banquet held Friday, September 11th at the America's Center.

Roberts Joins Optometry as Development Officer



Huck Roberts

Early this fall, the School of Optometry took a step forward in its plan to secure additional sources of funding with the hiring of a new Development Officer. Huck Roberts comes to UM-St. Louis after having worked as Executive Director of the American Foundation for Vision Awareness for the past six years.

"Two of our priorities will be lessening the debt load of our students through additional scholarships and obtaining greater involvement of our alumni," stated Roberts.

Huck may be reached at (314) 516-6030 or email at ophthrobe@umslvma.umsl.edu.

Davis Celebrates 30 Years with UM-St. Louis



Sharon Davis

Sharon Davis began her career with the University 30 years ago as a member of the printshop. After wearing many hats in several different departments, including Academic Affairs, Dr. Arnold Grobman (Chancellor Emeritus) presented her with an enticing offer. Davis would be responsible for admissions into the (yet to be approved) School of Optometry. The Dean had not been chosen yet so she relied on her contacts in Admissions, Registration and Financial Aid to assist her in getting started. In 1980, she and founding Dean Dr. Jerry Christensen opened the doors for the first class in the School of Optometry.

When asked about future plans Davis said "I hope to improve the admission process and student services for our currently enrolled students. Dr. Ralph Garzia developed a 'Commitment to Personal Excellence' which includes a statement about leaving this a better place for those who follow. That's what I intend to do even if it is one goal at a time."

School Briefs

Alumni

Dr. Karen Rosen ('86) has been re-appointed to the Missouri State Board of Optometry and will now serve until June 3, 2003.

Faculty

Dr. Edward Bennett participated in an invited lecture as a visiting faculty member at Beijing Medical University, in Beijing, China on June 10-19, 1998.

Dr. Monica Harris ('94) published an article in the *Journal of Optometric Vision Development* Vol. 29 (1), Spring 1998 entitled "Optometric Intervention in a Case of Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy."

Drs. Ed Bennett, Stephanie Stule ('95), **Carl Bassi**, C.M. Schnider, **Bruce Morgan, Vinita Henry, Beth Henderson** and **S. Roskam** published an article in the July 1998 issue of *Optometry and Vision Science* entitled "Effect of Patient Personality Profile and Verbal Presentation on Successful Rigid Contact Lens Adaptation."

Dr. Edward Bennett and **Dr. Monica Harris** attended the Summer Invitational Research Institute at the Southern California College of Optometry. This four-day workshop was co-sponsored by the American Optometric Association's Council on Research and the American Academy of Optometry's Research Committee.

Dr. Bruce Morgan and **Dr. Edward Bennett** presented a seminar and workshop on RGP contact lenses at the Northeastern State University College of Optometry in Oklahoma on August 27 & 28.

Dr. Vengu Lakshminarayanan presented three posters at the annual Optical Society of America. The

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Optometry Announces Scholarships

The School of Optometry is proud to announce several new scholarships have been established and awards have been made for 1998-99 school year. The scholarships are: The Helen L. Gadell Scholarship in Optometry; The Dr. William R. Jackson, Jr., Memorial Scholarship sponsored by the Missouri Optometric Foundation; The Robert A. Koetting Scholarship for Beginning Fourth Year Optometry Students; The Second Sight Laser Technology, Inc. Scholarship; The A.M. Skeffington Memorial Scholarship; Optometry Alumni Scholarship

Through the generous contributions of our alumni sufficient funds were raised to offer four Optometry Alumni Scholarships for \$587.50 to a student in each class of the program. The recipients demonstrated academic achievement and financial need.

If you would like to make a contribution to the Optometry Alumni Scholarship or establish your own scholarship to benefit optometry students at the University of Missouri - St. Louis, please contact Huck Roberts at (314) 516 - 6030.

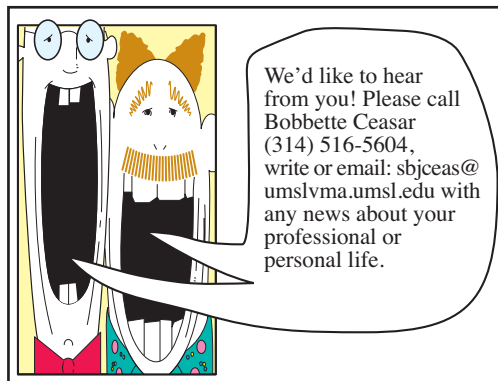


Alums will be contacted at the end of October.

Lower Cost Loans Lead to a Refinancing Opportunity

As a result of changes to the Higher Education Act during reauthorization the interest rates on new federal student loans dropped .8%. For new loans with a first disbursement after July 1, 1998 the interest rate will drop from 8.25% to 7.46% during repayment and 7.66 percent to 6.86 for periods while the student is in school. The new rate applies to William D. Ford Federal Direct Consolidated Loans, Federal Family Education Loans, Federal Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Stafford Loans.

This new lower interest rate applies to any new William D. Ford Federal Direct Consolidated Loans for a limited time only. If you currently have any Stafford Subsidized or Unsubsidized loans you are eligible to consolidate or refinance at the new lower 7.46% rate but only through January 31, 1999. After January the rate on refinanced loans will be the average rate of the loans being consolidated, but capped at 8.25%. Since it can take 60 to 90 days for a Consolidation Application to be processed the time to act is now. For more information, call the Federal Direct Loan Consolidation Office at (800) 557-7392. If you prefer, you may download a Consolidation Loan Application from the Internet site <http://www.ed.gov>. Once there choose "Direct Loans" and then select "Direct Consolidation Loan Information" to access more information and an application.



Optometry Student Wins Award for Work with Special School District



Dax Gay, a fourth-year optometry student at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, recently received the Award of Excellence from the Special School District for performing eye exams on students with disabilities. Gay was one of several UM-St. Louis School of Optometry students who participated in the program where fourth-year students, under the supervision of Dr. Monica Harris, visited one of the Special School District schools each week to perform free eye exams.

"For many of our students, simple things like eye exams are beyond the family budget," said Corinne Harmon, superintendent of schools for the Special School District. "I personally applaud Dax for taking such an active interest in our students. We anticipate that he will have an outstanding career in the field of optometry and we appreciate his help."

Gay was presented the first ever Award of Excellence for his proficiency in working with disabled children and excellent clinical and interpersonal skills. He was nominated for the award by the Special School District vision department, nurses and a clinical faculty member from UM-St. Louis School of Optometry.

Since October of 1997, Harris estimates about half the special needs students they've examined have been given glasses free of charge. The Special School District and the UM-St. Louis School of Optometry were awarded the Missouri School-Age Children's Health Services grant from the Missouri Department of Health, which provides for the cost of services and eyewear. In addition, the School of Optometry also received the prestigious Ambassador's Award from the Special School District.

Distinguished Scholar Award Given to Garzia

Dr. Ralph Garzia, interim dean, was recently elected as a Distinguished Scholar in optometry in the National Academy of Practice (NAP). Garzia will receive a NAP medallion at an official NAP gathering.

NAP is composed of 10 academies representing dentistry, medicine, nursing, optometry, osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, podiatric medicine, psychology, social work and veterinary medicine. The organization was founded in 1981 in recognition of the need for interdisciplinary collaboration in health care. NAP is the nation's only interdisciplinary health policy forum.

"It is a distinct privilege to be named a Distinguished Scholar in the National Academy of Practice in optometry," Garzia said. "It is truly an honor to be associated with such distinguished practitioners from the primary health professions."

Bennett Granted Prestigious Award by CLMA

Dr. Edward S. Bennett, co-chief of contact lenses, has been chosen to receive the prestigious Dr. Josef Dallos Award given by the Contact Lens Manufacturers Association (CLMA).

The award recognizes his outstanding contribution to the development and advancement of the contact lens industry and for service to humanity. Dr. Bennett will join other distinguished recipients such as Dr. Irvin Borish, Dr. Robert Mandell and Dr. Robert Morrison.

The award will be presented at the CLMA's 37th Annual Meeting & Exposition October 22-24, 1998 at the Hyatt Regency Union Station in St. Louis, Missouri.



School Briefs

posters were entitled: "Dioptic Power, Lie Algebra and Optical Aberrations," "Analysis of ERG Signals Using Wavelet Transforms," "Application of the Decomposition Method to Solve Waveguide Problems."

Dr. Monica Harris, along with several optometry students, appeared on *Window on St. Louis* on August 20, 1998 to promote the See to Learn program. Denise Johnson coordinated the event. The Center for Eye Care is participating in a new preventative health program with the Eye Care Council. See to Learn is an innovative program designed to ensure that children entering school can see to learn and to educate parents and teachers about the warning signs of vision problems in children of any age.

Staff

Congratulations are in order for **Sharon Davis**, Coordinator of Student Affairs, on her 30th anniversary with the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Sharon has been with the School of Optometry since 1980. (See article on page 1).

Welcome to our new staff members: **Glenda Jackson** (fiscal officer), **Denise Johnson** (Center for Eye Care promotions and quality assurance), **Alice Gettis** (front desk staff Center for Eye Care), **Connie Long** (department assistant for Student Affairs), and **Huck Roberts** (development officer).

Lis Ellerbusch has assumed the role of coordinating continuing education for the School of Optometry while **Bobbette Ceasar** will be focusing her efforts on community and alumni relations.

Calendar

October 11

Distinguished Speakers Series
Clinical Decisions in Glaucoma (8 hrs.)
Richard K. Parrish, M.D. and Elizabeth
Hodapp, M.D.
For info. call Lis (314) 516-5615

October 13

St. Louis Optometric Society Meeting
Grand Rounds - 2 hrs.
"Neuro Ophthalmology"
Clayton Holiday Inn

November 10

St. Louis Optometric Society Meeting
"Ophthalmic Medication Update"
Clayton Holiday Inn

December 8

St. Louis Optometric Society Meeting
"Computer Technology Update"
Clayton Holiday Inn

December 10-14

American Academy of Optometry
San Francisco, CA

1999**January 11, 1999**

TPA
For info. call Lis (314) 516-5615

February 11, 1999

Heart of America
Alumni Reception
Kansas City

March

Mid-America Vision Conference



See a complete list of all faculty
and staff email addresses!



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