2012 Diversity Grant Program Recipients

Illinois College of Optometry – *Focus on Your Future Summer Program* – The purpose of the week-long Focus on Your Future Summer Program is to expose underrepresented minority community college, undergraduate, and post-baccalaureate students to the profession of optometry from various levels. Participants will have the opportunity to meet and work with current optometry students, ICO faculty and staff, as well as practicing alumnus. The students will participate in sample lectures, seminars on a variety of topics, admissions workshops, and student/OD panels.

Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry – *The Preparatory Optometry Program (POP)* – This program in conjunction with the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences is designed to evaluate and demonstrate the potential academic ability of a student to successfully complete the professional optometry program. POP students will learn side-by-side with professional optometry and other health professions students at Nova Southeastern University’s Health Professions Division. The POP program provides a unique platform to assist minority students in the pursuit of an optometric education. By offering opportunities to participate in the POP program, NOVA cannot only reach more minority students, but also ensure their success in the professional optometry program.

The Ohio State University College of Optometry – *Community Middle School Outreach: Pipeline to I-DOC* – The goal of this program is to develop a pipeline from middle school, through the I-DOC program, to matriculation at the College of Optometry by encouraging underrepresented minority middle school students in the central Ohio area to stay in school, take science courses to prepare for careers in the health sciences, plan to participate in the I-DOC program, and consider careers in optometry. Staff will visit each middle school four times during the academic year. They will provide four different modules: introduction to optometry, anatomy of the eye, disorders of the eye, and how to examine the eye and visual system.

Southern College of Optometry – *Eye on Success* – The purpose of this program is to strengthen SCO’s commitment to diversity and recruitment of minority students by enhancing the pre-application preparation of competitive minority students through a three-day on campus program. Eye on Success will promote the profession of optometry while emphasizing efficient study skills, note-taking skills, and testing strategies for underrepresented minority undergraduate students.

SUNY State College of Optometry – *Increasing Diversity by Engaging All (IDEA)* – This project involves the creation of a social media platform specifically designed to engage underrepresented minority students in a dialogue. The center piece of this dialogue is the profession of optometry and how students can successfully become optometrists. This project will give underrepresented minority students the tools to successfully apply and be accepted into an optometry program.

University of Alabama Birmingham School of Optometry – *Providing Diversity in Optometric Education through Continual Enhancement of Current Programs that Promote Diversity in Optometry* – These programs were developed to perform two tasks – minority recruitment and minority retention. The Explorers Post program introduces middle school students to the profession of optometry and the Community Outreach Development (CORD) introduces high school and middle school students to the sciences and healthcare professions. UABSO also
continues to enhance relationships with those schools that have the largest minority populations. Once students matriculate, students have access to the Intro to UABSO Program, which assists students adapting to professional school, and the Brown Bag Lecture Series.

**University of California-Berkeley School of Optometry – Berkeley Optometry Opto-Camp** – The goal of Berkeley Optometry Opto-Camp is to introduce underrepresented pre-health science majors to optometry as a potential future career track and to prepare them to be successful applicants to optometry school. This three-day “in-residence” experience will provide participants with opportunities to learn about the profession of optometry and the process of becoming an optometrist. Additionally, by enjoining key faculty and staff members to participate in this program, diversity awareness will be heightened.

**University of Missouri at St. Louis College of Optometry – Eyes on Diversity** – The goal of this program in collaboration with the UMSL Bridge Program is to expose, recruit, and retain underrepresented students into optometry. Eyes on Diversity creates a two-fold program that targets both high school juniors and seniors and optometry students. The program would be a one-week course that employs both didactic and clinical instruction. The primary focus of the program will be to allow students the change to experience optometry school firsthand.

**University of Houston College of Optometry – Texas Optometry Career Opportunities Program (TEXOCOP)** – TEXOCOP is a unique 6-week intense summer academic program established in 1987 as a way to address the recruitment and retention of underserved and/or educationally disadvantaged pre-optometry students. The curriculum plan has three objectives: 1) to provide academic instruction in subjects known to be challenging to first-year optometry students; 2) to introduce prospective students to the rigors of the professional program; and 3) to assist students with the transition from the undergraduate to the professional school environment. Since its inception, TEXOCOP has a proven record of success and participants of the program have demonstrated success, both as students and upon graduation, as optometric professionals.

**Western University of Health Sciences College of Optometry – Eyes on Optometry** – This program is specifically focused on the recruitment and retention of Native Americans, starting during high school. The objectives of this program are: to enhance the recruitment and retention of under-represented students and other disadvantaged students, diversify the student bodies of optometry institutions and the profession, and promote cultural competency in optometry students. The project plan includes a recruitment weekend program, retention help with the use of social media blogging, and parental involvement through a lunch discussion and debriefing session.