Representative John Boozman Receives Special Recognition from ARBO

Representative John Boozman (R-Arkansas) was honored at ARBO’s 88th Annual Meeting in Boston with the first ever “Optometric Public Protection Award.” This award was created by the ARBO Board of Directors to honor those individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the public health and safety in the realm of optometry. Dr. Boozman is the only optometrist currently serving in the United States Congress. He represents the third district of Arkansas. In 2005 he introduced H.R. 371, which became Public Law 109-96 on November 9, 2005. This law provided that all contact lenses, including those that are cosmetic with no prescription power, would be considered medical devices. Boozman worked with both the American Optometric Association and ARBO to insure the passage of this important legislation. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration had previously been reluctant to classify reports of patients who had been harmed by their improper dispensing. ARBO recognized Boozman for his untiring work to pass this important legislation. In comments given when he accepted the Award, Boozman thanked ARBO for its important work in protecting the public interest and safety. He also stated that he was delighted to see a couple of his optometry classmates in the audience! Representative Boozman is a key sponsor of HR 797 which improves compensation benefits for veterans suffering from impaired vision. He has authored an amendment to the bill that provides for an extension to the VA Health Care Eligibility Program. Boozman is a member of the House Committees of Veterans Affairs, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Foreign Affairs. Dr. Janet Carter Assumes Presidency of Optometry’s National Board

Dr. Robert M. Easton, Jr. presents the ARBO Optometric Public Protection Award to Congressman John Boozman.

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I'd like to start by wishing all of our ARBO "family" nothing but the best in the year to come.

This has certainly been a very productive time for ARBO. As your President I have represented the state boards and the public interest in a number of ongoing projects. The activities of the Joint Board Certification Project Team (JBCTP) continue. Representatives of the NBEO, ASCO, AOSA, ARBO, AAO and AOA met in November at the National Board offices in Charlotte, North Carolina. The team worked on defining board certification and outlining the legal and legislative issues that would need to be addressed before a board certification process could occur.

The National Board Exam Review Committee (NBERC) of ARBO will also be meeting in Charlotte, at the NBEO Council Meetings in late January. This committee reviews the NBEO examinations and provides suggestions and comments to insist that they continue to meet the needs of your state boards. The NBEO will review the various examinations the Councils have prepared for 2008, but will also undoubtedly focus on the NBEO exam restructure scheduled over the next few years. The committee will give a complete report at our Annual Meeting in Seattle in June.

Speaking of Annual Meeting, this one may be the best yet! The planning committee is already hard at work to insure that the workshops and presentations are of interest to all board members and staff.

Plan on attending now! Our host hotel, the Fairmont Olympic, is one of the city's only five star properties. We have arranged the use of on-site reviewers for major COPE-sponsored projects. These individuals will be specially trained to attend CE events and insure that the program given is consistent with the outlines and materials submitted for COPE approval. As always, we are looking for more individuals who are willing to be COPE reviewers and/or onsite reviewers. Please contact the ARBO office if you have any suggestions for potential volunteers. We would encourage all board members to consider training to be on-site reviewers as well.

Another major development in the COPE program is the planned adoption of new Standards for Commercial Support over the next year. There will be information on these new standards for commercial support of continuing education programs at the Annual Meeting. We are planning to introduce these standards at a major press conference at the SECO meeting in February/early March in Atlanta. Many of you may wish to attend the March 1st ARBO Regional Meeting at SECO. I’m sure that the new standards will constitute a large portion of our discussions at the regional meeting in Atlanta.

As you can see, ARBO is certainly busy! Our ongoing programs, COPE, OE Tracker, and CELMO, continue to grow and improve. We look forward to seeing many of you at the upcoming regional meetings and in Seattle. Again, let me wish you all a happy and productive New Year!

Christina M. Sorenson, O.D.
President
**CELMO Revises Prescriptive Authority Requirement**

The Council on Endorsed Licensure Mobility for Optometrists (CELMO) met for its annual Fall Meeting on October 21-22, 2007, in St. Louis. In addition to its regular business, the Committee discussed how to better integrate CELMO with ARBO’s other programs (COPE and OE TRACKER), program promotion, applicant support, and reviewed the CELMO DVD for needed updates.

The CELMO requirement, specific to an applicant’s prescriptive authority, was reviewed and extensively discussed. The Committee approved a motion to recommend to the ARBO Board of Directors that the wording on prescriptive authority be changed to: “The optometrist must hold the highest level of prescriptive authority in the state in which they currently practice.”

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The Committee also discussed the need for “track courses” to meet specific needs of state licensing boards for licensure by endorsement and changes to scope of practice. The Committee approved a request that the COPE Committee establish a category of CE courses for this purpose. If you would like more information on CELMO, contact Karen Donica by email at Karen@arbo.org or by phone at 314-785-6000.

The CELMO Committee members are: Laurie Mickelson (MN), Chair; Dr. Elizabeth Eisinger (VA); Dr. Linda Tharp (TN); and Dr. Jack George Zarybnisky (ID). Consultants to the Committee are Dr. Sharon Green (KS), Dr. Jerry Rich (TN), and Dr. Penny Walker (AFOJ). ARBO’s Board Liaison to CELMO is Dr. Steven Eyler (NC).

**OE TRACKER Committee Reviews Program’s Progress**

ARBO’s OE TRACKER Committee met in St. Louis, MO on September 22. The Committee reviewed the program’s progress to date, discussed additional methods of tracking and recording attendance at CE programs, and set goals for the coming year.

Recently, the 2006 and 2007 optometry school graduates were added to the OE TRACKER system. Total optometrists in OE TRACKER now exceed 40,000, and are projected to exceed 40,200 after licensing information is located for the recent additions.

For the calendar year of 2007, total CE attendance records will exceed 155,000. This represents a significant increase in activity over 2006, during which 72,322 attendance records were uploaded.

In early 2007 ARBO will once again share with all Member Boards the data contained in OE TRACKER, and ask that it be reviewed. This annual project helps ensure that the National Optometric Database remains the most accurate and complete database of optometrists in the country.

Members of the OE TRACKER Committee are: Dr. Fred Darin, Chair (MI); Dr. Dane Danie (UT); Dr. Howard Flipping (AR); Dr. Ty Hubbard (MS); Dr. Richard Orgain (TN); and Dr. Michael Ohlson (IA). Dr. Jack Terry (NBOE) serves as a consultant to the Committee and Dr. Robert Sorrell (OH) is ARBO’s Board Liaison to OE TRACKER.

**Bylaws Committee Conducts Extensive Review of ARBO’s Bylaws**

The Bylaws Committee of ARBO has been very active under the guidance of chair Patricia Bennett of Maryland. The committee has met twice by conference call and plans on a “live” meeting in St. Louis in early February. The committee’s goal is to complete an extensive review of ARBO’s bylaws and present proposed changes prior to the Annual Meeting in Seattle. The committee is reviewing all of the articles for relevancy and appropriateness to our mission of public protection.

Any amendments to the bylaws must be made by the House of Delegates at the Annual Meeting and require a two-third vote of approval. If any member board wishes to propose a change to the bylaws, they should submit it to the Secretary of ARBO at least 90 days prior to the Annual Meeting. Any proposed changes must then be distributed to all the member boards at least 30 days prior to the meeting. This gives an opportunity for the member boards to be prepared for the discussion and votes at the annual meeting, so watch your mail!

The Bylaws Committee welcomes the input of member boards to this very important task. Committee members include Penny Bowie (KS), Dr. Jeff Kraskin (DC), and Dr. Murray Turner (IN). Dr. Janet Carter is the Board Liaison and Dr. Robert Sorrell serves as Consultant. If your boards have any suggested changes or comments on the existing bylaws, please feel free to contact the ARBO office. A copy of the ARBO bylaws can be found on our website, www.arbo.org.
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The CELMO Committee at its annual Fall Meeting in St. Louis.

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The Council on Optometric Practitioner Education (COPE) has been working hard on a number of new programs designed to ensure the integrity and validity of optometric continuing education. In the next year COPE will be introducing new Standards for Commercial Support (SCS) as well as intensifying on-site monitoring of continuing education programs. The COPE committee, chaired by Dr. Robert Smalling (AR), has met several times already this fall, both in person and by conference call, and will continue regular meetings over the next several months. COPE welcomes input from the Member Boards of ARBO on any aspect of optometric continuing education.

The new COPE Standards for Commercial Support are meant to be proactive in light of recent federal scrutiny of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME). COPE’s goal is to delineate the appropriate manner in which commercial financial support of COPE-approved CE events occurs. COPE plans to identify areas of inherent conflict of interest for both administrators and instructors that exist when there is commercial support of their programs. These conflicts will be required to be resolved in a transparent manner. One manner in which this will be accomplished will be by requiring standardized contractual agreements between the administrators and supporting companies. In addition, instructors will be required to agree to ethical standards that will be developed to reveal all potential conflicts of interest through mandatory full disclosure to the audience prior to the presentation. Finally, a system for monitoring compliance with these standards is being developed. COPE is confident that this will provide assurance to our member boards that continuing education events are of the highest educational integrity and free of commercial influence. The Onsite Reviews (OSR) system for COPE-approved continuing education has been initiated. A password-protected area of the ARBO Web site will be required to agree to ethical standards.

President’s Message

I’d like to start by wishing all of our ARBO “family” nothing but the best in the year to come.

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Speaking of Annual Meeting, this one may be the best yet! The planning committee is already hard at work to insure that the workshops and presentations are of interest to all board members and staff. Plan on attending now! Our host hotel, the Fairmont Olympic, is one of the city’s only five star properties. We have arranged a very competitive rate for ARBO attendees, and the property is only a few blocks from the AOA meeting location if you wish to stay the week. We will be sending out registration materials to all member boards shortly, and you will find more information on the Annual Meeting and on the beautiful city of Seattle elsewhere in this issue of the Green Sheet.

COPE also continues to be very active and proactive in our mission to protect the public and insure that continuing education of optometrists is valid and appropriate. We are launching the use of on-site reviewers for major COPE-sponsored projects. These individuals will be specially trained to attend CE events and insure that the program given is consistent with the outlines and materials submitted for COPE approval. As always, we are looking for more individuals who are willing to be COPE reviewers and/or onsite reviewers. Please contact the ARBO office if you have any suggestions for potential volunteers. We would encourage all board members to consider training to be on-site reviewers as well.

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Plan Now to Attend ARBO’s 2008 Southern Regional Meeting

ARBO will host its 2008 Southern Regional Meeting in Atlanta, GA during the SECO Annual Congress:

Saturday, March 1, 2008
1:00—5:00 p.m.
Omn Hotel at CN Center

In addition to reports by representatives of state boards and optometry schools in attendance, information on the activities of the ARBO Board of Directors, ARBO committees, and the NBOE will be provided. Soft drinks and light refreshments will be provided. So that we may insure adequate accommodations at the meeting, please let us know you plan to attend by registering online at http://www.arbo.org and click the Meetings link. You may also include suggested agenda topics.

2008 Will be a Banner Year for COPE!

Seattle has so much to offer, when making your travel plans to attend ARBO’s 2008 Annual Meeting. (June 22-24) you may want to add a day or two to your trip. There is the Space Needle, a “must see” for those who haven’t visited the area before. If open-air markets引起你的兴趣, Pike Place Market is the oldest continually operating farmers’ market in the US and offers over 300 shops and restaurants filled with antiques & collectibles, fresh seafood, locally grown fruits & vegetables, exotic foods, and more. While there, you’ll be entertained by street performers, musicians, and craftspeople.

Love the water? Travel a short distance to San Juan Island’s historic seaport Friday Harbor. Go on a whale watching cruise and see Orca whales, sea lions, and seals at play while majestic eagles soar overhead.

Music your thing? Be sure to visit Music Project—an interactive music museum originally planned as a memorial to native Jimi Hendrix. Record a CD, play the drums (or let your fingers do the walking—across a keyboard), you can even rock out in front of “live” fans... From “Louie Louie” to gunfire, it’s all here!
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Representative Boozman attended the University of Arkansas and played football with the Razorbacks while completing his pre-optometry requirements. He graduated from the Southern College of Optometry in Memphis in 1977, and co-founded the Boozman-Hof Regional Eye Clinic in Rogers, Arkansas that same year. His clinic continues to be a major provider of eye care to Northwest Arkansas. Boozman currently serves on three House committees: Veterans Affairs, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Foreign Affairs. He currently serves as Assistant Minority Whip. Boozman, 56, is married to the former Cathy Marley, and the couple has three daughters.