NEW ENGLAND COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

The New England College of Optometry (NECO) prepares the next generation of eye care providers, teachers, and innovators through a rigorous curriculum and extensive clinical experiences. NECO graduates compassionate and skilled optometrists prepared to practice in diverse settings. Located in the heart of Boston, the College is a small, independent graduate institution that currently enrolls students from 34 states and 8 countries.

NEW ENGLAND EYE

New England Eye (NEE) is the patient care and clinical education affiliate of the New England College of Optometry. It is one of the largest providers of optometric services in Massachusetts with nearly 90,000 patient visits annually in more than 43 locations, including many of Greater Boston’s community health centers. New England Eye’s doctors and students provide vision care three days a week on the fully-equipped mobile clinic, New England Eye On-Sight, to children, the elderly, and individuals who are legally blind.

NECO and NEE faculty and clinicians are committed to improving access to care, preventing blindness, enhancing quality of life, and developing innovative, economically viable, and reproducible models of eye care.

The Office of the President publishes the New England College of Optometry’s Annual Report in January.

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A CAREER PATH TOWARDS MILITARY OPTOMETRY
NECO prepares students for a career in military optometry by providing leadership opportunities and supporting the Health Professionals Scholarship Program (HPSP), which provides financial support to students in return for active-duty service.

BOARD MEMBERS SHARE THEIR KNOWLEDGE, PERSPECTIVE, & EXPERIENCE
NECO’s Board brings together a unique collection of individuals who volunteer their time, expertise, and passion to provide oversight to the College.

AN ALBERT SCHWEITZER FELLOW MAKING A DIFFERENCE
Noticing a need, Florence Lee, Class of 2016, seizes the opportunity to apply for and receive an Albert Schweitzer Fellowship to provide follow-up eye care for students at a Boston elementary school.

2014 ANNUAL REPORT
At the New England College of Optometry, we encourage our students to become engaged in their careers while they are still learning their profession. Whether it is practicing in a multidisciplinary setting, advocating for new legislation, or reaching out to an underserved patient population, NECO students are mentored by faculty, Board members and alumni. Although we are small, our impact is large.

"A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives." This Jackie Robinson quote underscores how much good can be generated during the professional life of each of our graduates. Seeing the world clearly improves quality of life and creates endless horizons.

NECO assists students to become thoughtful leaders, adaptable clinicians, and culturally sensitive doctors. We realize that we can’t prepare students for every patient care situation they encounter. However, we do provide the clinical training experiences that help them achieve the skills and confidence required to navigate ambiguity, take measured risks, and ultimately, become leaders.

When NECO students graduate, they feel competent to assume their role as optometrists. This includes adapting to the changing landscape of healthcare. We prepare students to be flexible in their approach to practice. We groom them to create an impact on local, national, and international communities, now and in the future. Our efforts have a ripple effect that extends far beyond Boston.

NECO students are immersed in a rigorous educational program, acquiring knowledge and skills, culminating in a rich and diverse clinical experience. We understand that one size does not fit all. We allow students to select areas of study in which they have an interest, but we also require them to participate in areas they might not otherwise have chosen in order to broaden their experiential base.

In this report, you will read about several current and former students who have leveraged their military Health Professionals Scholarships to become optometrists in the armed forces. You will also be introduced to three members of NECO’s Board who, through their individual expertise in legal matters, strategic leadership, higher education, and public health, help shape the College’s future. You will meet a student who, in her first year, applied for and received an Albert Schweitzer Fellowship to assure follow-up eye care for children who were identified with visual problems in screenings.

You, too, are a participant in the NECO experience. Your support helps us attract and retain excellent students, create clinical opportunities, and impact the future of optometry.

Clifford Scott, OD ’68, MPH
President
It is my pleasure to report that New England College of Optometry has experienced another dynamic and highly successful year. Our clinical and academic programs, as well as our financial position, are strong. We continue to have one of the most extensive optometric clinical training programs in the country, where our students experience diverse clinical opportunities in a wide variety of settings.

NECO prides itself in having a strong community. Through the generosity of our extensive network of alumni, friends and volunteers, who contribute time, financial resources and expertise to the College, we continue to attract highly qualified candidates from around the world.

I would especially like to acknowledge the contributions of the Board of Trustees. Our Trustees support the College in many ways. They provide significant guidance by helping to set strategic policy and direction for the College. We have been fortunate to attract and select individuals with vision and who have the ability to take a broad view of the institution, the profession, and health care in general.

Our Board is comprised of members representing optometry as well as medicine, public health, business, law, higher education, and the ministry. Board members freely share their expertise. Each member serves on at least one, and in many cases two or three, standing Board committees that meet several times a year to frame policy issues and make recommendations to the full Board.

This report will introduce you to three current members of our Board: Robert Meenan, MD, MPH, MBA, Joseph Zolner, EdD, and Norman Spector, JD, each of whom brings considerable knowledge and experience to the College.

Brian S. Klinger, OD
Chair, Board of Trustees
This year’s incoming students for the four-year program arrived from 25 states, Canada and Ghana, bringing to NECO their dedication and commitment to the field of optometry. Their average GPA score of 3.30 and OAT score of 323 are both on par with those of recent years, according to Kristen Harrington, Director of Admissions. Many of the students received their undergraduate degrees from highly regarded institutions including Boston University, Carnegie Mellon University, College of William and Mary, Dickinson College, McMaster University, University of Michigan, New York University, Tufts University, UC-Berkeley, University of Rochester, Virginia Tech, and Waterloo University. The 135 members of the Class of 2018 were selected from 840 applicants.

MEET SOME OF OUR STUDENTS:

Ashley Szalkowski
Fredonia, New York
Biology, SUNY Fredonia

“My first impression of NECO made me feel like I was at home. The faculty, staff, and students were so welcoming and approachable; I knew it was a place I could flourish and establish a foundation for lifelong learning.”
- Studied abroad in Florence, Italy as an undergraduate
- Attended college in the same town in which she grew up, moving away from home for the first time when she came to Boston
- Intends to pursue a career in the field of pediatric optometry

Benjamin Strake
Scituate, Massachusetts
Financial Economics, University of Rochester

“NECO’s clinical opportunities seemed unrivaled and made it an easy decision for me. Conducting screenings after just a few weeks of school was an amazing experience.”
- Lived in Berlin, Germany for five years
- Worked in a community health center as an AmeriCorps navigator and a patient navigator for two years
- Boston Bruins Fan

Chelsea Crowson
Houston, Texas
Mass Communication and Psychology, Texas State University

“I chose optometry at a very early age because I grew up in a family of artists. So much of art is in the details, and if someone with poor vision is unable to see those details that I love so much, and I can help them get those details back, that’s an amazing thing.”
- Lives on a houseboat built in the 1970s with her fiancée, dog, and cat
- Studied abroad in Costa Rica
- Moved to Massachusetts immediately prior to her NECO interview

Shreya Jayasimha
Toronto, ON (Canada)
Biology and Psychology, McMaster University

“Within the first week of school, it was announced that I was no longer a student, but rather, a doctor-in-training. I adapted quickly to this new reality and now strive everyday to gain as much knowledge and clinical experience as I can during my time at NECO. I intend to eventually become the reliable and giving optometrist that I, the faculty, and my family expects and hopes for me to be.”
- OD1 Class President
- Enjoys fitness and long distance running, is a self-proclaimed gym junkie
- Worked as a professional Bollywood (Indian) dancer in Canada

Vicky Yiannoulis
Bridgeport, Connecticut
Biology, Fordham University

“I chose NECO because of its dedication to helping the Boston community, especially through its clinical education. As a student, it is very important to me that I understand the issues facing the community I am living in.”
- Greek cultural dancer from kindergarten through college
- Growing up, her favorite doctor was her optometrist
- Spent a year as a Jesuit Volunteer/AmeriCorps Volunteer in Hood River, OR

Afua Opoku-Debrah
Dover, Delaware, originally from Ghana
Nursing, Delaware State University

“My grandmother did not realize that her cataracts had rendered her blind for years until successful surgery. My goal is to see that look of utter joy on my patients’ faces when their vision is restored.”
- Worked as a nurse for 4 years
- Born in Zimbabwe, but mostly raised in Ghana and the US
- Enjoys learning about different cultures through their music, dance and especially their food
A CAREER PATH TOWARDS MILITARY OPTOMETRY

Military optometry can be a very satisfying and rewarding career option for graduates. Optometrists can achieve their goal of building a career in the US military while providing the highest quality in patient care. The military optometrist receives support in many different areas and is recognized, not only as a physician, but as an officer as well.

Military scholarships provide financial incentives and help students to develop leadership skills while still in optometry school. Students who are accepted into the Health Professionals Scholarship Program (HPSP) receive funding for 100 percent of their tuition, required textbooks, and academic fees, while also earning a monthly stipend for living expenses. When students graduate, they immediately enter active-duty service as a Captain with a one-year commitment for each year of scholarship. Currently, NECO has three students who hold HPSP scholarships; over the past ten years, twenty-two students have received the HPSP scholarship. Here are the stories of three recipients—Army Colonel Donovan Green, Air Force Captain Nicholas Jones, and current fourth-year student Alina Wheeler—describing their career choices and how their experiences at NECO prepared them to take a leadership role in the military.

Colonel Donovan Green’s path to military service was established while in college when he entered the ROTC. Originally, he intended to pursue a career in medicine and attend medical school upon graduation. He joined the Army to round out his academic portfolio. He soon discovered he wasn’t interested in being a medical doctor, but did want to work in healthcare. It was a visit to an army optometrist that convinced him that optometry would offer what he hoped for in a health care career.
Donovan’s NECO experience provided the opportunity to complete a fourth-year externship rotation in a military hospital. “My first time in a military environment in Europe was on this rotation in Germany. I came away from this experience with an understanding and appreciation of the scope of practice I would enjoy once in active service.” Colonel Green believes his clinical experience at NECO was diverse and extremely valuable. “NECO provided me with extensive patient care experience beginning from year one and prepared me for success in meeting all the challenges I would confront later in my career.”

“When I entered the Army, I was the only eye care provider stationed at the Supreme Headquarters of Allied Powers in Europe (SHAPE) Health Care Facility in Belgium. This experience quickly prepared me to handle any contingency, both related to patient care and to military leadership. Suddenly, there was no one to bounce anything off of or ask ‘Am I doing the right thing?’” Thrust immediately into a leadership role in the military, Colonel Green felt well prepared. “Fortunately at NECO, leadership was an attribute that was fostered from the very beginning of my optometric career.” As a military optometrist, Donovan appreciates the flexibility, variety, and wide scope of practice. “I can practice as taught and based on my own experience; I can prescribe medications and treat complicated cases. I am only limited by what I feel comfortable doing. Because all health care services fall within the military system, it is much easier to co-manage a patient’s care in a multidisciplinary environment.”

On July 3, 2013, 21 years after starting his optometry career at SHAPE, Colonel Green became Commander of the entire Health Care Facility, where he now oversees all medical services and specialties. “When I entered active duty, I never thought I would be in the military 22 years.” But Colonel Green has found opportunities to become a leader in the world of military optometry and health care. “The fact is, when you enjoy what you do, there is motivation to continue. As optometrists, we don’t usually get the opportunity to take command and this role is not only unique for me, but for the College and for the profession as well.”

“Fortunately at NECO, leadership was an attribute that was fostered from the very beginning of my optometric career.”
Recent graduate, Captain Nicholas Jones, entered the Air Force for different reasons; yet his experience has been equally rewarding. During the summer after his first year at NECO, Nick visited a friend in Idaho and began talking about the education debt he was facing. “My friend’s grandfather asked me if I had ever considered serving in the military. When I got back to NECO, I met with a recruiter and got the ball rolling. Six months later, I was commissioned.”

For Nick, the HPSP program felt like a natural choice to manage his debt and secure a career upon graduation. “The military offered to pay for three years of my schooling in return for three years of service on active duty.” Although the decision felt like a good fit, he almost lost his chance to honor his commitment. On a ski trip during his third year at NECO, Jones hit a tree while snowboarding and had to be evacuated by helicopter off the mountain into emergency surgery. When he awoke two days later, the doctors told him he would be out of school for at least one semester, maybe more. He was heartbroken thinking of his friends graduating without him.

According to Captain Jones, NECO mobilized resources to help him continue with his studies. Within days, President Clifford Scott and Dean Barry Fisch contacted him. “Immediately, I was motivated. Teachers recorded every class. Students took notes for me. It was up to me to get back on my feet, but NECO helped me stay on course with my classes. When I got back to school two months later, everyone was supportive. I was also able to make up missed clinical work.”

Nick graduated on time and entered the Air Force feeling competent to manage the responsibility he had in his clinical setting. “Working at Travis Air Force Base in California, I practice the full range of medical optometry including ordering MRIs, co-managing surgeries, and other in-depth work. I’ve seen patients from the ages of eight months to 100. When I joined the Air Force, I felt mentally and clinically prepared, and I owe that to NECO. The professionalism and values that NECO represents mirror the military.”

Captain Jones explains that every day is different. His patients have included a distinguished three-star general, an ambassador to Afghanistan, and the pilot for Air Force Two. “I’ve had interesting experiences with amazing people.” But Jones knows he is an Air Force officer first and an optometrist second. “I have additional duties beyond patient care. I was sent to Randolph, Texas to be trained on night vision goggles. I’m now an instructor and the base expert on night vision goggles. That is one thing I did NOT learn in optometry school!”

“I don’t think I really understood the essence of being an officer in the military when I signed up. If I had not had the diverse clinical experiences at NECO and taken on leadership roles at the College, I certainly would not have been comfortable calling myself a Captain in the military.”
For Alina Wheeler, OD, 2015, her path into Army optometry was almost predetermined. Serving the military is a way of life in her family with her father and brother who both have careers as Army pilots. When Ali decided to pursue a path in the military, she reflected on whether this would allow her to pursue an important long-term goal: having a career that would improve the lives of others. “I am honored that I am one of several optometrists who will practice in uniform, having received the HPSP Army scholarship at NECO.”

While Ali may have grown up with the military, it was not until she heard about the HPSP scholarship that her vision of optometry and military service intersected. “Passion and opportunity are two focuses of my life. While on my path to becoming an OD, the opportunity presented itself to accept this scholarship, which pays for my education and provides a stipend for living in Boston. There is a lot of honor in working with the service in America, as it is an amazing country. I see it not as a sacrifice, as many others do, but as an opportunity.”

Currently in her fourth year, moving from a rotation in China to one in Portland, Washington, Wheeler finds herself in a unique position amongst her peers. “I have a job after graduation!” But getting a job was far from the only reason she chose to pursue the military scholarship. “The military has given a lot to me through my dad and my brother, and I wanted to return the favor in my own way. The best way I know how, from my clinical experiences thus far, is to make a direct impact on the lives of others through improvement and management of individual needs.” Pointing to her brother’s and father’s careers as pilots, Ali is intimately aware of the importance of vision to those in the military. “It is crucial for vision to be maintained at a highly functional level in the military, so I will take pride in being able to care for soldiers and their families through optometry.”

As a student leader, I worked closely with the administration; this will be helpful for my future as an officer.”

As immediate past president of the Student Council, Ali Wheeler feels that her leadership role at NECO and the intense clinical immersion have been the most advantageous experiences to prepare her for her career. “As a student leader, I worked closely with the administration; this will be helpful for my future as an officer. Clinical care is still very exciting to me, and I have learned more than I thought possible in these last three years; I cannot wait to see what the next three bring. I have appreciated getting exposure to alumni, networking, and having top-notch preceptors and mentors.”

Reserve Lieutenant Wheeler is looking forward to making an impact on individuals connected to the military while serving her country. “Service has many different definitions, depending on who you ask. I can serve the American people and practice optometry. Individuals like my father and brother, both of whom I greatly respect and admire, will walk into my office, and I will be responsible for their visual needs while they are ensuring my freedom and safety. It’s truly a privilege.”

To Colonel Green, Captain Jones, and Reserve Lieutenant Wheeler, the military HPSP scholarship provided the opportunity to pursue a unique opportunity. Each is thankful for the NECO experience that prepared them as leaders in their field.
Board members take considerable pride in their roles as overseers of the College and advisors to President Scott. Each brings a wealth of experience that helps NECO maintain its role as a center of ocular knowledge and education, major provider of visual services, and regional resource for eye research. Three non-optometrist Board members, Robert Meenan, Joseph Zolner, and Norman Spector, share how serving on the Board has impacted NECO and their own professional lives.
Robert Meenan, MD, MPH, MBA has been Dean of Boston University’s School of Public Health for more than two decades. He is the longest serving dean of a school of public health nationwide and the longest serving dean at BU. He serves on the Executive Committee and is Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee on NECO’s Board. He brings his perspective on addressing problems and finding solutions within an academic health care setting.

Why do you think you were invited to serve on the Board of Trustees?
RM: NECO was seeking a Trustee with academic experience and credentials to chair the Board’s Academic Affairs Committee. Bob Gordon, a college dorm mate and former NECO vice president, nominated me to the Board for consideration. I was impressed by the commitment and energy of those whom I met. A small but important factor in my decision was my background in eye disease. My first two summers in medical school were spent conducting ophthalmology research. During my fellowship in rheumatology, my mentor had a particular interest in the ocular manifestations of rheumatic diseases.

What do you bring to the NECO Board of Trustees?
RM: I have devoted my entire professional life to academia. For the first 15 years, I was a researcher and clinician at Boston University School of Medicine. Now, in my 22nd year at BU as the Dean of Public Health, I oversee 150 faculty members, 1,000 students, and an annual operating budget of $80 million. I am very knowledgeable about the issues that concern faculty as well as the business model of higher education. I understand the importance of strategy and the challenges of managing revenues and costs to balance a budget.

What current issues do you think NECO needs to address?
RM: In my view, the single most important issue in higher education is the management of faculty. They are the most important asset of any school, and their salaries are typically the single largest expense in a school’s annual operating budget. Schools are challenged to use their faculty resources more effectively and efficiently. The faculty is challenged to redefine their complex role pursuing a mix of teaching, scholarship, and clinical care activities. Tenure and governance issues are two particularly complex faculty issues that higher education boards must wrestle with.

What changes has NECO implemented based on your input?
RM: I have helped NECO better understand the increasingly competitive environment of professional school admissions. In the past, the mind set of schools such as NECO and BU School of Public Health has been that accepted students were lucky to have been admitted. Now, it is a much more competitive admissions environment in which students choose schools even more than schools choose students. In business terms, admissions has shifted from a sellers’ market to a buyers’ market. Because of this, the admissions process has to be very sophisticated and schools need to invest resources in activities aimed at yielding accepted applicants, including financial aid programs. Since NECO is a small school that is highly dependent on enrollment and tuition, its margin for error in this new admissions market is fairly narrow.

What have you learned from NECO?
RM: I have experienced the difficulty of running a small, independent higher educational institution in the 21st century. I’ve also learned the real challenges of trying to make big changes while simultaneously needing to stay successful in an increasingly competitive environment.
JOSEPH ZOLNER, EdD

Joseph Zolner, EdD is Senior Director of the Harvard Institutes for Higher Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. In this role, he oversees the planning and delivery of professional development programs for leaders in higher education. Zolner joined the NECO Board after working with President Scott when he attended the Institute for Educational Management (IEM), a two-week immersion course for senior-level administrators at Harvard. Dr. Zolner brings his passion for leadership development in higher education to his NECO Board role, where he currently serves as Vice Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee and as a member of the Development Committee.

Why did you choose to serve on the NECO Board?
JZ: My service at NECO has been an interesting opportunity. I've been a lifelong student of higher education and my involvement on the NECO Board has enabled me to extend this interest in very applied and practical ways. In my role at Harvard, I interact with college and university leaders from across the United States and throughout the world. My Board involvement has provided a valuable real-world context to better appreciate how the issues discussed in our leadership development programs actually play out in the field. NECO has given me an opportunity to see how challenges facing a wide range of higher education leaders are handled at the ground level. Seeing how NECO addresses economic, academic, and strategic issues from an “insider” perspective has enlightened and informed the teaching I do for leaders from all sectors of higher education.

What do you contribute to the NECO Board?
JZ: I believe I have a reasonable understanding of the issues, challenges, emerging trends, and industry developments that are currently unfolding in the world of higher education. When these issues are discussed at NECO, I hope to bring this broader knowledge of the higher education sector to bear on issues of direct interest to the College. I also hope to raise questions and encourage reflection among the Board and senior campus leaders. “What is the logic underlying particular institutional policy? Why are we doing what we are doing? What ramifications might a proposed course of action have for the College and its various stakeholders?” By asking more open-ended questions, it's my hope that more thoughtful and comprehensive solutions will be identified and adopted by the Board and the College.

What issues do you think NECO should address?
JZ: NECO is a “high-touch” place that offers an intensive and individualized learning experience. For all its clear advantages, this form of education is a resource-intensive undertaking. As the College looks to the future, it will become increasingly important to preserve this personalized teaching/learning model in ways that are economically viable and sustainable.

What does the Board do to help students succeed?
JZ: There is a genuine interest among Board members, faculty, and staff to seek student views and input to help guide our discussions. Communication channels are already in place to foster two-way communication between students and the College. Through the Board's standing Student Affairs Committee, Board members have an opportunity to interact periodically with current students, and the college administration is also in regular contact with the student body. Given the small and intimate nature of the NECO community, I think it is fair to say that students will always have a presence at the Board level.

What have you learned from NECO?
JZ: As someone who has worked with hundreds of higher education leaders over the course of my career, my service to NECO has provided an invaluable reminder that it is much easier to talk and strategize than it is to actually lead and implement change. No matter how comprehensive and pristine one's analysis of a problem may be, it's an entirely different proposition to actually do something about the problem. I have gained a much finer appreciation for the inevitable challenges associated with converting aspired direction into doable action. I believe this insight has enhanced the work I do with other college and university leaders, all of whom face similar issues. My NECO Board involvement has enabled me to adopt a more grounded, realistic, and informed approach to leadership development for the higher education institutions with whom I work in my “day job.”

What has NECO learned from you?
JZ: I hope that I've been able to add a thoughtful “outsider” perspective to supplement the optometric professionals who are leading and governing the College. I try to help ensure that institutional decisions are made thoughtfully and comprehensively. Since there will always be new challenges facing NECO, multiple campus constituencies — the Board, faculty, staff, and students — all have important roles to play in the future stewardship of the College.
NORMAN SPECTOR, JD

Norman Spector, JD is a senior partner at Burns and Levinson, LLP, specializing in banking and corporation law. He has been at the firm for 45 years and brings his experience from the corporate and financial world to help guide NECO. His involvement with the Board dates back to the 1970s when his firm served as counsel for NECO and his mentor and firm founder, Larry Levinson, served on the Board. Eventually, Spector became a Corporator, and then a Trustee, serving as the Chairman of the Board from 1999 to 2004 and then serving on the Executive Committee and as Chair of the Governance Committee.

What do you like most about NECO?
NS: I absolutely love the mission. I love the outcome that the gift of sight can open up a new world for people. A skilled optometrist can go into an underserved community and improve the vision of people who may never have had access to vision care.

How would you describe NECO?
NS: NECO gives students a first-rate education and clinical experience, preparing them to be excellent optometrists and part of a patient’s overall health care team. The intimacy of the College is different than big schools. Faculty and administrators are accessible and welcoming.

What does NECO do to help students succeed?
NS: One way NECO helps students is by listening. A few years ago, we created a Student Affairs Committee. Three times a year, the Committee meets with 15-20 students and has a dialogue to learn what is working and what could use improvement. Topics have included scheduling, housing, and clinical placements. One thing we’ve learned through these discussions is that we’re doing a lot of things really well and have caring people at the College. We want students to succeed and to have an enriching and enjoyable experience while studying in the Boston area.

What have you learned from NECO?
NS: I find my work within the educational component of the College fascinating. I have enjoyed learning how the curriculum fits together and how the College provides clinical services to extend this learning.

What skills do you bring to the NECO Board?
NS: As an attorney, I have provided legal advice and helped to establish strategic direction. I bring my ability to listen and to facilitate those with whom I work to find a solution. I help bring people together to accomplish a purpose, be it financing for a new building or finding a new president. I think about how different pieces fit together and how one decision might impact many others. Every decision we make impacts the students, faculty, and staff at NECO, so we make every effort to be thoughtful and forward thinking in our decisions.
New England College of Optometry is committed to providing exemplary education to future optometrists and has created a culture that encourages students to embrace opportunities beyond the Beacon Street campus. For Florence Lee, OD ’16, this meant applying for and being selected as an Albert Schweitzer Fellow for the 2013-2014 academic year.

Albert Schweitzer, physician and humanitarian, noted, “The purpose of human life is to serve, and to show compassion and the will to help others.” Dr. Schweitzer lived this philosophy by dedicating his career to underserved populations and seeking ways to improve their lives. The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship was created to honor Schweitzer’s legacy and his work. The Schweitzer Fellows represent academic disciplines such as optometry, medicine, occupational therapy, public health, and social work. It awards graduate student leaders a stipend around $1,500 to address a social factor affecting health care in their area of expertise or interest.
Florence first heard about the Fellowship during her first week at NECO. “What drove me to apply was my favorite class, Vision Health Care, taught by Dr. Gary Chu. This class, along with my early clinical experience of conducting vision screenings, set the stage for my fellowship project.” As Lee began to explore the idea, Dr. Chu offered to be her mentor.

During her first year at NECO, Lee and classmates had conducted vision screenings in Roxbury’s Higginson-Lewis School. “I quickly realized that following a failed screening, few of the children referred for a comprehensive eye exam actually received one. Many of the families did not realize that the screening was not a replacement for a comprehensive eye exam. For my fellowship, I wanted to find a way to ensure that people got the vision care they needed.”

Lee was one of fifteen area graduate students to receive the 2013-2014 Albert Schweitzer Fellowship. In her work at Higginson-Lewis, Lee partnered with Lena Galloway-Reddick, Director of Community and Partnership, who already had a five-year grant from the Department of Education to set up special programs for students. Lee’s project fit in perfectly with this model of community outreach. “I learned so much being at this school. Many of the kids didn’t have basic things that most people would deem as necessary.” The two attended vision screenings with first-year NECO students and focused on identifying those who needed follow-up care. Ms. Lee then worked with Dr. Chu to schedule visits from New England Eye’s On-Sight mobile eye clinic to provide comprehensive eye exams and eyeglasses. Ms. Lee also worked with the school nurse to provide follow-up care after the fellowship ended, building in a level of sustainability.

“We tracked screenings, eye exams, and glasses dispensed and then conducted follow-up interviews to see if the students were still wearing their glasses weeks and months later.” In these conversations, Ms. Lee began to understand that providing education on the correlation between healthy vision and academic achievement was necessary. “I learned about the barriers we face for delivering comprehensive eye care to underserved populations. For instance, how do you demonstrate a need for glasses if a child’s parents don’t read or speak English?”

During her fellowship, Ms. Lee met like-minded people from different backgrounds who shared their ideas and learned from each other. The experience has taught her about the challenges of community health and the limitations of her work. Despite the challenges, she felt supported by the College during her fellowship. “Dr. Scott provided three scholarships for students to attend the Schweitzer Leadership Conference in Boston.” According to the conference website, “The Schweitzer Leadership Conference is an opportunity for established and emerging professionals interested in creating healthier communities to learn from leaders who are shaping the way we think about, talk about, and act on health equity, health care, social change, and public policy.”

Ms. Lee has appreciated the numerous opportunities she has found at the College. At NECO, students are inspired and motivated to make an impact beyond the College itself and into various communities. “For instance, I was a competitive fencer for many years. When I heard that there were some blind fencers in the area, I talked to Dr. Richard Jamara who connected me with them and the experience was incredible. I also had the opportunity to travel to Aalen Germany through a NECO program. I had the chance to meet Peter Baumbach, former director of R&D at Rodenstock, who helped create and patent certain modern progressive lens designs. We also visited the Zeiss and the Rodenstock factories. I even stayed with a family in Germany where both the husband and wife were opticians! This allowed me to learn more about the role of optometry and opticians in Germany and connect to a new culture.” Ms. Lee believes that “NECO opens up many doors, but it is up to students to take the first steps. Your experience at NECO really is what you choose to make it.”

“NECO opens up many doors, but it is up to students to take the first steps. Your experience at NECO really is what you choose to make it.”
The Philanthropist’s Society 2014
(Cumulative giving of $50,000 or more)

Members of The Philanthropist’s Society are recognized for their cumulative giving to the New England College of Optometry and New England Eye. This distinguished group has demonstrated their exceptional commitment. We are pleased to express our gratitude for their philanthropic leadership.

**Visionary**
($500,000 and greater)
- Bausch and Lomb
- Lester Marcus, OD ‘54*
- Massachusetts Commission for the Blind

**Humanitarian**
($250,000-$499,999)
- Alcon Laboratories
- Stella Beider*
- CIBA Vision
- Essilor of America, Inc.
- G. Burtt Holmes, OD ‘52
- Marco Family Foundation
- Maurice Saval*
- Vision Service Plan
- Vistakon*, Division of Johnson and Johnson Vision Care, Inc.
- Clinton Wilson, OD ‘43*

**Benefactor**
($100,000-$249,999)
- American Diabetes Association
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- The Ludcke Foundation
- Luxottica Group
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- Polymer Technology
- Drs. Mary and Clifford Scott ‘68
- Carl and Ruth Shapiro Family Foundation
- State Street Foundation
- The Whitaker Foundation

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($50,000-$99,999)
- Anonymous
- Allergan, Inc.
- B&R Foundation
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
- The Boston Foundation
- Elizabeth Chen and Richard Edmiston
- Citizens Bank Charitable Foundation
- Friends of the Disabled
- Gould Family Charitable Foundation
- Edith Hochstadt*
- Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation
- Arnold Katz, OD ‘50
- Montie Kofos, OD ‘43*
- Joseph Molinari, OD ‘74
- Melvin Stack, OD ‘53
- William Tolford, OD ‘55*

The Legacy Society 2014

The Legacy Society honors individuals who have remembered the New England College of Optometry in their estate plans. We recognize this esteemed group of individuals with deep gratitude for their commitment to the future success of the College.

- Arthur Baker, OD ‘67
- Stella Beider*
- Larry Clausen, OD
- Carl Doughty, OD ‘69
- Joseph Feldberg, OD ‘52*
- Marion and Dr. Eugene Fischer, ‘61*
- Kristen Kay Griebel, OD ‘97
- David Helfman, OD ‘69
- Edith Heymans*
- Edith Hochstadt*
- G. Burtt Holmes, OD ‘52
- Arnold Katz, OD ‘50
- Benjamin Lambert III, OD ‘62*
- Joan C. and Alton W. Lamont, OD ‘55
- Lester Marcus, OD ‘54*
- Joseph Molinari, OD ‘74
- Jean T. and Pasquale Palomba, OD ‘38*
- Andrew Portoghese, OD ‘60
- Harvey Rappoport, OD ‘75
- Maurice Saval*
- Norman C. Spector, Esq.
- Melvin Stack, OD ‘53
- Timothy Tolford, OD ‘79
- William Tolford, OD ‘55*
- Roger Wilson, OD ‘80
- Harry Zeltzer, OD ‘52, DOS

(*) Indicates that the donor is deceased.
We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of our many supporters. The following list reflects gifts received between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014. We apologize for any errors or exclusions.

The President’s Circle 2014

The President’s Circle recognizes alumni and friends whose gifts to the 2014 Annual Fund totaled $1,000 or more. Members of this prestigious group are among the College’s most loyal supporters. They are recognized at the following giving levels.

**Diamond**
($100,000-$500,000)
Massachusetts Commission for the Blind

**Ruby**
($50,000-$99,999)
Reader’s Digest Partners for Sight Foundation

**Emerald**
($25,000-$49,999)
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**Platinum**
($10,000-$24,999)
Allergan, USA
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**Gold**
($5,000-$9,999)
Carl Ziess Meditec, Inc.
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HOYA Vision Care, North America
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**Silver**
($2,500-$4,999)
Paul C. Ajamian, OD ’80
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and Joan Exford, OD
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Khuong An Nguyen, OD ’03
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Douglas P. Benoit, OD ’83
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Mary A. Torraca
Kristen Cheryl Totonelly
Ruth A. Trachimowicz, OD ’87, PhD
Glenda Underwood
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Margery Warren
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Duan Wu, Esq.
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Norman Young
Andrew D. Zodikoff, OD
Delphine and Lenard Zohn

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Boston Yacht Haven Inn
Nancy Broude, EdM
Celebrities for Charity
Dr. David & Claire Helfman
Drs. Michael Cohn ’77 and
Suzanne LuCash Cohn ’79
Essilor Vision Foundation
Harvard Club
Harvard Club of Boston
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Luxottica Group
M.K. Benatti Jewelers
Mistral Restaurant
New England Eye
Top of the Hub
Tresca
Volk Optical, Inc.
### NEW ENGLAND COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY AND NEE CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

#### June 30, 2014 and 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>$3,913,906</td>
<td>$2,795,727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash on deposit with trustee</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>170,014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts receivable, net</td>
<td>941,679</td>
<td>1,223,900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepayments and other assets</td>
<td>608,013</td>
<td>506,783</td>
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<td>Contributions receivable, net</td>
<td>290,439</td>
<td>200,518</td>
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<td>Student loans, net</td>
<td>8,152,476</td>
<td>8,039,065</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>14,843,249</td>
<td>12,984,976</td>
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<tr>
<td>Property, plant, and equipment, net</td>
<td>11,403,587</td>
<td>11,604,113</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$40,153,349</strong></td>
<td><strong>$37,525,096</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liabilities and Net Assets</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liabilities:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts payable and accrued expenses</td>
<td>$1,366,001</td>
<td>$1,153,303</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annuity obligations</td>
<td>106,645</td>
<td>126,688</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deferred revenue</td>
<td>2,202,838</td>
<td>1,981,669</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest rate swap</td>
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<td>523,179</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bonds payable</td>
<td>7,695,000</td>
<td>8,200,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Line of credit</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>242,096</td>
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<tr>
<td>Refundable U.S. government grants</td>
<td>7,381,703</td>
<td>7,207,660</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total liabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>$18,752,187</strong></td>
<td><strong>$19,434,595</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Net assets:</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
<td>$13,349,338</td>
<td>$11,096,138</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temporarily restricted</td>
<td>5,817,361</td>
<td>4,788,216</td>
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<tr>
<td>Permanently restricted</td>
<td>2,234,464</td>
<td>2,206,147</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total net assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$21,401,162</strong></td>
<td><strong>$18,090,501</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total liabilities and net assets</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total liabilities and net assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$40,153,349</strong></td>
<td><strong>$37,525,096</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### NECO Operating Revenues

- **Grants & Contracts**
- **Patient Care**
- **Contributions**
- **Tuition & Fees**
- **Interest Income**
- **Other Sources**

### NECO Operating Expenses

- **Institutional Support**
- **Clinical Instruction & Patient Care**
- **Student Services**
- **Academic Support**
- **Research**
- **Instruction**

---

22 2014 ANNUAL REPORT
### Consolidated Statements of Financial Position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operating Revenues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition and fees</td>
<td>$19,229,341</td>
<td>$18,347,847</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less scholarships and grants</td>
<td>(388,779)</td>
<td>(361,478)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuition and fees, net</td>
<td>18,840,562</td>
<td>17,986,369</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>130,107</td>
<td>445,448</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patient care</td>
<td>4,262,753</td>
<td>3,932,764</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants and contracts</td>
<td>1,084,493</td>
<td>2,233,405</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest income</td>
<td>24,517</td>
<td>33,338</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other sources</td>
<td>195,941</td>
<td>109,895</td>
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<tr>
<td>Auxiliary enterprises</td>
<td>113,149</td>
<td>113,880</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Operating Revenues</strong></td>
<td>24,651,522</td>
<td>24,855,099</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets Released from Restrictions</strong></td>
<td>391,203</td>
<td>391,203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Operating Revenues and Net Assets Released from Restrictions</strong></td>
<td>25,042,725</td>
<td>24,855,099</td>
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### Consolidated Statements of Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operating Expenses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical instruction and patient care</td>
<td>8,385,894</td>
<td>8,027,234</td>
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<td>Instruction</td>
<td>5,324,443</td>
<td>5,353,463</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>1,076,715</td>
<td>1,735,410</td>
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<td>Academic support</td>
<td>1,785,812</td>
<td>1,540,364</td>
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<td>Student services</td>
<td>1,514,243</td>
<td>1,475,504</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional support</td>
<td>5,688,037</td>
<td>5,370,970</td>
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<tr>
<td>Auxiliary enterprises</td>
<td>237,320</td>
<td>242,033</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Operating Expenses</strong></td>
<td>24,012,464</td>
<td>23,744,978</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Change in Net Assets from Operating Activities</strong></td>
<td>1,030,261</td>
<td>1,110,121</td>
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</tbody>
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### Non-operating Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investment return</td>
<td>1,162,986</td>
<td>1,218,100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change in value of annuity obligations</td>
<td>(5,727)</td>
<td>(11,467)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in value of charitable remainder trust</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22,207</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change in fair value of interest rate swap</td>
<td>65,679</td>
<td>295,580</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Change in Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>2,253,199</td>
<td>2,627,072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets as of Beginning of Year</strong></td>
<td>11,096,138</td>
<td>15,463,429</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets as of End of Year</strong></td>
<td>$13,349,337</td>
<td>$18,090,501</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From an early age, Dr. Burtt Holmes was interested in science, technology and health care. A conversation with a practicing optometrist led him to apply to the Massachusetts College of Optometry, NECO’s predecessor. Upon graduating in 1952, he served in clinical practice for the next thirty years.

Today, Dr. Holmes still credits the College with shaping his career path. “Optometry was responsible for so many positive things in my life. The Massachusetts College of Optometry gave me a good education and a perspective on clinical practice, research and other related scientific fields. It also gave me the basis to stimulate scientific thinking and to interact between different sciences and disciplines.” This passion for science was the basis for his growing interest in biomedical engineering. Eventually, this led to Dr. Holmes’ appointment as Chairman of The Whitaker Foundation, which supported scientific research and education in biomedical engineering.

Burtt Holmes is an optometrist whose enthusiasm knows no bounds. “You can be guided by your interests throughout your career. You may find that your early goals change as new opportunities arise.” For Dr. Holmes, this included international eye care. “I’ve always had a global perspective and an interest in international affairs. As President of the American Optometric Association (AOA), I had the opportunity to serve as the first American President of the International Optical League”. His work strengthened the conversation about international guidelines for the education of optometrists and standards in eye care. In 1993, Dr. Holmes was awarded International Optometrist of the Year.

Throughout his career, Dr. Holmes has found many opportunities to contribute to the field. He has served as Chairman of the NECO Board, on the Board of Florida Gulf Coast University Foundation and the Better Vision Institute, and as Vice President of the National Health Council. Additionally, during his tenure as President of the AOA, Dr. Holmes served as founding Chairman of the AOA’s Contact Lens and Cornea Section (CLCS). He also acted as a consultant for several companies such as Bausch and Lomb and Allergan.

As a NECO donor for more than 50 years, Dr. Holmes urges all optometrists to support the institutions that have afforded them a rewarding profession. “I have given consistently because I believe the College gave me the foundation for my successful career.” Dr. Holmes urges current students to “approach life with an open mind and a positive manner. Always stay current in optometric practice by interacting with associations and current research. Think with a broad, not narrow scope. Learn what other disciplines have to offer. The world of optometry holds many paths, enjoy your journey without boundaries.”

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