

“RAISE THE BAR” Campaign starts simultaneously in Four States

The Tenth of August, 2007 may go down in the history of Opticianry as the date when the leadership of four Optician State Societies (Georgia, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, and Texas) started the campaign to “RAISE THE BAR” for all Opticians in every state to have at least a two year college education in Optical Science. The tenth of August will be remembered as the date when all the right pieces fell together. It will be the date that the leadership of each of the previously mentioned state societies set aside their differences and became dedicated to the common goal of encouraging all Opticians in every state to earn academic credentials from one of the many fine colleges that offer an Optical Science education. The tenth of August will be the date that will be remembered as when technology finally made it possible for the average working Optician to attend college classes in Optical Science via their home computer where ever they now live. The tenth of August will probably even be a date that will be asked as part of an entry level examination to qualify to call them selves an Optician in the future.

There is no longer a good excuse for not having at least a two year college education in Optical Science. If you are new to the industry, earning a two year college education in your new profession should be considered a minimum requirement. If you have been working in the Optical industry twenty or more years and know a lot about what an Optician should know, then the two year college education should be nothing more than a review and should not put too much of a burden on you. Some of the colleges offer credit for life experience or industry certifications, which mean that a two year Optical Science education may only require one year effort and expense.

If we as professional Opticians are ever going to earn the respect of the other optical professions in the United States, we must enter the ranks of the other academically educated professionals. Our profession has hung on to the old ways of apprenticeship and OJT for way to long. All we have to do is look around and see how the old ways have not served our profession well in the last twenty or thirty years. **The time has come for all Opticians to pull together and encourage each other to take a step towards academic credentials. I believe that if most Opticians could agree that it is necessary for all Opticians to have academic credentials in order for our profession to survive into the future and start working towards this goal, we could accomplish this most worthy goal within the next six to eight years.**

“RAISE THE BAR”,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sam Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and "J".

Sam Johnson, ABOM, NCLE-AC
President Registered Opticians Association of Texas