

Optimum VA



The Official Newsletter of the
National Association of Veterans Affairs Optometrists

Winter 2009

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Department of Defense/Veterans Affairs Vision Center of Excellence and Military Eye Injury Registry

Rep John Boozman, O.D. (R-AR), an optometrist and member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, introduced the Military Eye Trauma Treatment Act in 2007. This piece of legislation was designed to address the increasing number of eye-related injuries among troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan and to develop a permanent framework to aid injured troops and veterans with combat-related vision damage.

Under the Military Eye Trauma Treatment Act (METTA), a Center of Excellence within the Department of Defense for the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment and rehabilitation of military eye injuries will be created. The primary responsibility for the Center of Excellence will be to develop, implement and oversee a "Military Eye Injury Registry."

The Registry will contain up-to-date information on the diagnosis, treatment and follow-up for each serious eye injury received by any member of the armed forces while serving on active duty. The Registry will include input from optometrists and ophthalmologists from both the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

METTA also requires a joint DoD-VA program for service members and veterans affected by visual dysfunction related to traumatic brain injury. Statistics indicate that over 50% of service members treated at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and over 70% of those treated at VA Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center in Palo Alto, CA for traumatic brain injury reported vision problems.

The bill has the support of the American Optometric Association as well as the American Academy of Ophthalmology. Colonel Donald Gagliano, M.D. was recently named the Director of the Vision Center of Excellence. Claude Cowan, Jr., M.D. will serve as the Center's Deputy Director.

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

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Blinded Veterans Association

With the VA's recent move toward low vision and the increasing number of veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan with sight-threatening injuries, the Blinded Veterans Association is a resource every VA optometrist should be embracing. The Blinded Veterans Association is an organization of blinded veterans helping blinded veterans. Their mission is to improve the lives of blinded veterans through service programs, regional groups, and advocacy before the legislative and executive branches of government. All legally blinded veterans are eligible for BVA's assistance regardless of whether they became blind during or after active military duty. Their services are free of charge and membership is not a prerequisite to obtain help.

The need for the educational services, counseling, representation, and peer support offered by the Blinded Veterans Association has never been greater. BVA is committed to locating blinded veterans who need the services that will help them overcome the challenges of blindness and lead productive and fulfilling lives. The Association's leadership, membership, and staff are anxious to guide blinded veterans through the rehabilitation process and to continue their work as advocates for blinded veterans and their families in the public and private sectors.

The BVA fulfills its mission by:

- Promoting access to technology and the practical use of the latest research.
- Supporting vocational and recreational programs that foster rehabilitation.
- Offering encouragement and emotional support
- Providing role models who have conquered seemingly insurmountable challenges.
- Serving as a medium of communication for and about issues of concern to blinded veterans and their families

BVA employs seven full-time staff members as [Field Service Representatives](#). The Reps have been strategically placed in different geographical areas throughout the United States. Their goal is to locate and assist blinded veterans in overcoming the challenges inherent in sight loss. Since all of the Field Reps are legally blind veterans themselves, they can be effective role models in demonstrating that fellow veterans can take charge of their lives. Field Reps are responsible for linking veterans with local services, assuring that the newly blinded take advantage of VA Blind Rehabilitation Services, and assisting them with VA claims when necessary. When blinded veterans are ready to return to the workforce, BVA Field Reps can assist them with employment training and placement.

The center of BVA's communications and public relations efforts nationally is the BVA Bulletin, a periodical sent in printed form to all blinded veterans and their families for whom the Association has contact information. Members only receive an audiocassette version. The Bulletin focuses on issues and events relating to blinded veterans, but also covers general topics about veterans. It strives to keep blinded veterans abreast of services, benefits, and legislation.

The publication provides as much detail as possible on issues relating to blind rehabilitation and the blind and visually impaired communities at large. As it seeks to address the concerns of BVA's members and friends, the

Bulletin serves as one of the organization's most vital public relations tools and, more importantly, a vehicle by which the Association fulfills its Congressional charter to motivate and inspire veterans to return to their rightful place in society. The circulation of the Bulletin also provides opportunities to locate and interest potential Association members. Regional group officers, Visual Impairment Services Team (VIST) Coordinators, and the BVA general membership all use the Bulletin for such a purpose. The publication is also sent to libraries, resource centers, medical services organizations, and agencies that serve the blind nationally, locally, and on state/regional levels.

The Blinded Veterans Association holds an annual conference usually in August. Visually impaired service team coordinators, blind rehabilitation specialists and low vision optometrists are encouraged to attend.

2009 NAVA O Membership Dues

This is a reminder that current members are now able to renew their membership online by logging into the members area of the NAVA O website and clicking on the "Dues" button. Please note that renewal fees received after January 31, 2009 will be subject to a \$5 late fee. Please disregard this message if you have already renewed your dues for 2009.

New NAVA O members should click on the "Existing VA Optometrists" link under the "Join Us" tab of the NAVA O website to register.

Please note that if paying by credit card, your statement will show payment made to TransAct International Ltd.

Please see the attached letter from the NAVA O with instructions for current members and new members about the online registration process.

Open VA Optometrist Positions

FACILITY	CONTACT INFORMATION	CLOSING DATE	POSITION INFORMATION
The Veterans Health Care System of the Ozarks, Branson, Missouri Outpatient Clinic	Dr. Mary Jo Horn (479) 587-5859 mary.horn@va.gov	03/27/09	<p>1 Full-Time Permanent (FTP) Position</p> <p>The Veterans Health Care System of the Ozarks, Branson, Missouri Outpatient Clinic is seeking a full time optometrist to provide full scope patient care. This is a new clinic that will be staffed with 2 full time optometrists and support personnel. Optometric residency training is preferred.</p>
Columbia, SC VAMC	Sheri Hanna (803) 776-4000 x6735	03/31/09	<p>1 Part-Time Permanent (PTP) Position</p> <p>The Wm Jennings Bryan Dorn VAMC is recruiting for a part time Optometrist with low vision experience.</p> <p>In the low vision clinic, a moderate breadth and level of complexity of low vision services are provided. The moderate spectrum of low vision devices available for prescribing include, but are not limited to, spectacle prescriptive considerations such as height of bifocal segment, frame size and shape to allow use of the preferred retinal locus, tints for contract and glare, specialized coatings, etc., specialty contact lenses for low vision, etc., spectacle microscopes, handheld and stand magnifiers, handheld and simple spectacle mounted telescopes, absorptive lenses to control glare and photophobia and enhances vision and various non-optical aids (large print, illumination controls, etc.) as well as other emerging technologies that may be evaluated and prescribed. The Low Vision optometrist who has been trained in vision rehabilitation will provide these services and directly supervise allied health professionals in some aspects of the clinical low</p>

			<p>vision examination and prescription of devices.</p> <p>Tour of duty will consist of five 8 hour work days per two-week pay period. Those five days are negotiable.</p> <p>A RELOCATION/RECRUITMENT INCENTIVE IS AUTHORIZED.</p> <p>Applications received by February 25th will receive first consideration. If the position is not filled, applications received by March 13th will be considered. Then applications received by March 31st.</p>
Beaumont, TX Outpatient Clinic	Human Resources (713) 794-7458	04/22/09	<p>1 Full-Time Permanent (FTP) Position</p> <p>The incumbent will perform full eight point eye exams to all eligible veterans (best corrected vision with a refraction, external examination, pupil examination, visual field by confrontation; slit lamp examination, intraocular pressure, motility examination, and fundus examination). The incumbent will have prescribing privileges on all formulary medication for treatment of ophthalmic diseases and procedures. The incumbent will develop initial diagnoses from examinations and document this in the Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS). The incumbent will be responsible for referral of patients to the Michael E. DeBakey VAMC Eye Clinic for cases requiring more specialized treatment than can be provided on an outpatient basis.</p>
Lake City, FL VAMC	Joan Kelley (352) 376-1611, Ext. 5083	03/30/09	<p>1 Full-Time Permanent (FTP) Position</p> <p>The incumbent will serve as Associate Chief of the Optometry team working closely with the Chief of Optometry, Gainesville to provide eye care to veterans in the NF/SG system. Performs administration of the eye clinic to include</p>

			<p>developing plans and procedures to enhance eye care delivery, leadership in the residency training, and management of personnel issues for the optometry team. The Associate Chief is responsible for and renders optometry services by conducting regularly scheduled clinics. Provides diagnostic, preventative, and therapeutic health services to patients. Contributes to the teaching, supervising, and administration of optometric externship and residency programs. Integrates eye care service with other professionals in a tertiary eye care setting. This position may require travel to Gainesville or outlying clinics several days per year.</p>
<p>Beckley, WV VAMC</p>	<p>John Jones (304) 255-2121 john.jones12@va.gov</p>	<p>03/16/09</p>	<p>1 Full-Time Permanent Position</p> <p>The Beckley VA Medical Center is located in beautiful southern West Virginia. Local four-season recreational activities include snow-skiing and white-water rafting. West Virginia is home to tourism and technology amid three national parks in the heart of the grand Appalachian Mountains.</p> <p>More than just a great place to work, Beckley is an ideal place to live. A low crime rate (West Virginia has enjoyed the nation's lowest crime rate for a half century) attracts many of our new residents as well as easy access to multiple higher education facilities. While enjoying your new job, don't neglect the lofty plateaus of forests and farmlands for which this part of the country is known.</p>

Web Links

Associations, Institutes, Organizations, Societies

[All About Vision](#)
[Alliance for Aging Research](#)
[American Academy of Ophthalmology](#)
[American Academy of Optometry](#)
[American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
[American Optometric Association](#)
[American Optometric Foundation](#)
[Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry \(ARBO\)](#)
[Council for Refractive Surgery Quality Assurance](#)
[Eye Advisory](#)
[Eye Surgery Education Council](#)
[Glaucoma Research Foundation](#)
[Healthy Vision 2010](#)
[International Glaucoma Association](#)
[NASA Vision Group](#)
[National Eye Research Foundation](#)
[National Keratoconus Foundation](#)
[National Optometric Association](#)
[NBEO](#)
[Optometric Extension Program](#)
[Optometric Refractive Surgery Society](#)
[Optometrists.org](#)
[ORMS](#)
[Parents Active for Vision Education](#)
[RGP Institute](#)
[Schepens Eye Research Institute](#)
[Vision Council of America](#)
[World Council of Optometry](#)

Conventions and Meetings

[Great Western Council of Optometry](#)
[Heart of America Contact Lens Society](#)
[Midwest Vision Congress & Expo](#)
[Southern Council of Optometrists](#)
[Vision Expo East](#)
[Vision Expo West](#)

Government Health

[Armed Forces Optometric Society](#)
[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
[ClinicalTrials.gov](#)
[Federal Registry](#)
[NAVAO](#)

Journals

[American Journal of Ophthalmology](#)
[American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery](#)
[Archives of Ophthalmology](#)
[British Journal of Ophthalmology](#)
[Digital Journal of Ophthalmology](#)
[Eyeworld](#)
[Ocular Surgery News](#)
[Ophthalmology Times](#)
[Ophthalmology](#)
[Primary Care Optometry News](#)
[Primary Eye Care News](#)
[Review of Ophthalmology](#)
[Review of Optometry](#)

Low Vision and Vision Therapy

[American Foundation for the Blind](#)
[Canadian National Institute for the Blind](#)

[Eschenbach Optical](#)
[Foundation for Fighting Blindness](#)
[Lighthouse International](#)
[Low Vision Gateway](#)
[NORA - Neuro-Optometric Rehabilitation Association](#)
[Ocutech](#)
[Prevent Blindness America](#)
[State License Renewal Requirements](#)
[Vision and Computers](#)

Ocular Disease

[AMD Alliance International](#)
[American Macular Degeneration Foundation](#)
[Lutein Information](#)
[Macular Degeneration Foundation](#)
[Macular Degeneration International](#)
[Macular Degeneration Network](#)
[Macular Degeneration Partnership](#)
[Macular Disease Society](#)
[MAXIVISION](#)
[Center for Keratoconus](#)
[Chua Eye Page](#)
[Collaborative Longitudinal Evaluation of Keratoconus Study \(CLEK\)](#)
[EyeCancer Network](#)
[Ophthoguide](#)
[Ophtholinx](#)
[Trials Summary](#)

Systemic Disease

[American Diabetes Association](#)
[AskPhysicians.com](#)
[National Headache Foundation](#)
[Sjögrens Syndrome Foundation](#)

Ophthalmic Equipment and Medications

[Alcon Laboratories](#)
[Allergan](#)
[BOTOX®](#)
[Carl Zeiss Meditec](#)

[Hilco](#)
[Lombart Instruments](#)
[Medtronic Solan](#)
[Merck](#)
[Novartis Ophthalmics](#)
[Novartis](#)
[Reichert Ophthalmic Instruments](#)
[Reliance Medical Products](#)
[Topcon](#)
[Wilson Ophthalmic](#)

Optometry Schools

[Illinois College Of Optometry](#)
[Indiana University](#)
[Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University](#)
[New England College of Optometry](#)
[Northeastern State University](#)
[NSU College of Optometry](#)
[Ohio State University](#)
[Pacific University](#)
[Pennsylvania College of Optometry](#)
[Southern California College of Optometry](#)
[Southern College of Optometry](#)
[SUNY State College of Optometry](#)
[UAB School of Optometry](#)
[University of California - Berkeley](#)
[University of Houston](#)
[University of Missouri - St. Louis](#)

State Optometry Associations

[Alabama](#)
[Alaska](#)
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