

## President's Insights July

### Optoglobe: toward an international student community

When I was an optometry student there were few student organizations. The student activities revolve primarily around local school events. Although the American Optometric Student Association (AOSA) was founded in 1968, it was not officially affiliated with the American Optometric Association (AOA) until 1988. Since then, AOSA has become a pillar of student leadership in the schools and colleges of optometry in the United States.

However, until recently, no optometric student organization with a global perspective has existed. Optoglobe has changed this. A genuine group propelled by students, it boasts an international board of directors. The board comprises students from Australia, Ghana, Haiti, Jordan, Nigeria, Pakistan, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

This July, they held a 4-day Zoom summit where invited speakers were asked to present their views on the importance of a global optometry student community. I was glad to present and interact with a group of international students on this exciting subject.

Optoglobe provides a unique opportunity to develop the leadership skills of our students on a global scale. Optoglobe can also be a worldwide network that shares knowledge and best practices. It creates an opportunity to participate in international conferences and workshops. It can sow the seed for future educators and professional leaders. Very critically, it allows the promotion of the cultural competencies of our future practitioners.

Besides our clinical humanitarian work, VOSH/International is committed to developing optometric education, advocacy, and leadership. Not surprisingly, VOSH/International was the proud sponsor of the Optoglobe event. Our Executive Director, Mrs. Maria Arce, provided her expertise and technical support for the event.

We pledge our continuing support to Optoglobe and its leadership. We encourage SVOSH members to consider joining. Working together, we can make a difference!

You can learn more about Optoglobe at their website:  
<https://optoglobe.simdif.com/>

Here you can [find a link to my Optoglobe presentation.](#)

Regards,

Héctor Santiago, OD, PhD, FAAO  
President

