

OPHTHALMIC WOMAN 
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ASCRS 2015 issue



Ophthalmic Women Leaders
leadership | advancement | community



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Here's to New Beginnings

With the advent of the Spring season, a familiar process for many of us is to think about “new beginnings” and the goals we want to reach in the coming months. At OWL, we are more excited than ever to embark on a powerful and impactful year as an organization.

Among the best of these new beginnings is the announcement of **Angela Bedell** as OWL's new Executive Director.

Angela brings a wealth of experience in association management that spans 20-plus years. She has worked primarily in healthcare organizations, including the American Academy of Family Physicians, American Nurses Association, American Society of Plastic Surgeons, and the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine.

Not only did our recruitment committee recognize the excellence that Angela brings to the table, but others have recognized her competence as well. She is a certified association executive (CAE) and serves on committees at the national level of the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE). The Kansas City Society of Association Executives recently recognized Angela as a “Distinguished Association Executive.” She is published in national non-profit magazines and has presented at national and international conferences.

Angela is a spirited, energetic, warm person with a can-do attitude. She is enthusiastic about OWL and its vision, mission, and values. She understands OWL's current stage of development and is eager to help us move to the next level of growth and impact in the ophthalmology community.

Look to page 3, where Angela shares some of her thoughts about the strength and value of OWL and its membership.

I have no doubt you will be as impressed with Angela as I am. Please join me in whatever way works for you in welcoming Angela. Her e-mail is: abedell@owlsite.org.

In 2015, OWL has other new important beginnings. OWL recently initiated four new interest groups that will be of particular interest to members. OWL's Program Chair **Tammy Evans** and the respective chairs of these interests groups introduced this concept during AAO.

Each group – led by an experienced OWL leader, and with the help of a committee – will design and deliver program content that will reflect the topics relevant to each interest group. All OWL members are invited to participate in any program, even if their professional function is not in that particular area. We want to make sure our members feel free to learn from each other. Stay tuned for both in-person programs and content on the website that reflects these interest groups.

The interest groups are:

1. Ophthalmic Industry Professional
Those working in industry and related businesses that interface with ophthalmology; Susan Orr, Chair, Kendra Hileman, Vice-Chair

2. Ophthalmic Business Owners

Small business owners, CEOs, and consultants; Ellen Troyer, Chair, Cynthia Barratt, Vice-Chair

3. Professionals in Practice

Clinicians, administrators, technicians; Maureen Tipp, Chair, Audrey Talley-Rostov, MD, Vice-Chair

4. Bright Eyes

Young professional/rising stars/next generation of leaders; Meg Sweeney, Chair, Sumie Takahara, Vice-Chair

I hope you will consider participating in an interest group. It is indeed one of the benefits of OWL membership. Your ideas are welcomed and the chairpersons will be pleased to have your input on the kinds of content that is helpful to you.

With Angela as our new Executive Director, with a strong, dedicated board, and with high levels of membership engagement – we are poised not only for a lot of new beginnings, but for a time in which OWL will experience its most powerful year yet.

May each of you find your own new beginnings as you continue your own development. It is my hope that each of us can commit to OWL's vision: to promote and develop diverse leadership to advance ophthalmic innovation and patient care.

Marsha D. Link, PhD
President, Ophthalmic Women Leaders

First Thoughts

Hello, I'm Angela. It's nice to "meet" you.
I am looking forward to building an exciting professional future for you
through Ophthalmic Women Leaders.



At a retreat just a few weeks ago, your Board of Directors worked very hard to plan the next evolution of the organization. You'll soon see a detailed report of new strategic priorities, which include continuing to build the community, sustainability, and benefits of OWL.

While the strategic priorities make good sense, what impressed me greatly was the process and culture I witnessed while your leaders took on this hard work.

Everyone listened. Everyone was truly encouraged. Never did anyone get upset when a colleague disagreed or offered another viewpoint. This sounds simple, but we know it isn't common.

It occurred to me on the way home from the retreat that the reason I feel empowered in this role is because everyone in OWL feels empowered. It is the culture, the unspoken law, and how we do business. It creates a feeling of respect and trust, and allows everyone to blossom.

This is one of many reasons I'm looking forward to OWL's next chapter.

Eleanor Roosevelt said, "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

OWL has a beautiful dream, which is expressed in our mission and vision.

Still, the fact is this: OWL members are busy people. To advance our mission, we must advance each member. Strengthen her leadership skills, build her confidence, connect her with mentors, and do it all within the confines of a very busy life.

What experiences have delivered a high ROI on your time? What has been worthwhile?
What investments in your professional life have paid off?

What do you need from OWL and what would you like to see in the next chapter of this organization? Please write to me at abedell@owlsite.org.
I am excited to hear from you.

Sincerely,


Angela Bedell

“...everyone
in OWL feels
empowered.
It is the culture,
the unspoken
law, and how we
do business.”

Angela Bedell

Building Relationships at Work . . . or Anywhere

By Deborah Rodriguez

One of my favorite sitcoms, “*The Big Bang Theory*,” follows the lives of four Caltech employees – three physicists and an aerospace engineer – each more socially challenged than the next.

In one episode, the most socially awkward of the four is shown at a white board mapping an algorithm for creating friendships that he tests out with a colleague whom he’s had a less-than-ideal relationship. The scene is funny and hits close to home for many who wish there was some simple formula when it comes to networking and that awkward first meeting.

Plenty is written about why you should build relationships or network. In the end, the real motivator is that people who build many relationships tend to move ahead faster than those with the same or greater skills but with fewer relationships. And we can all use an “algorithm” that not only is easy, but also painless to follow.

There are no shortcuts to building effective relationships; the process is pretty easy. It doesn’t matter whether you are building relationships at or outside of work. The actions are the same.

1 **Don’t leave an empty seat.** It’s honesty time. How often have you taken a seat at a meeting or event and put your bag on one of the seats next to you? Or, how often have you walked into an event and taken a seat making sure you leave a chair between yourself and others?

Every time I ask this question in a group, almost everyone admits to doing one or both of these things. So, let me say this: This is not Southwest Airlines. You are not stuck in that seat for the entire flight. If you don’t like the person you sat next to, you can always excuse yourself and not come back to that seat.

Putting a barrier or distance between you and others says, “I’m not interested in knowing you or anything about you.” You can’t build relationships that way. Here are five steps to follow when attending any event or meeting:

1. Sit next to someone.
2. Smile.
3. Say, “Hi.”
4. Introduce yourself (name only).
5. Ask a question. This leads to the next key action.

2 **Be interested, not interesting.** If you are like most, you spend a fair amount of time worrying about what you are going to say when introduced to others. The good news is that you no longer need to worry about that because you are going to ask all the questions.

Of all the key actions, this is the one that will pay the biggest dividends. Why? Because the person who talks the most in any relationship is the one who falls in love first. It works in business as well as in personal relationships. When you get others to talk, all they remember about the interaction is what a great conversationalist you are. This is because people love being asked about and talking about themselves.

You only need 5 to 7 questions that you can reasonably ask any person over the age of 10. Ask as many of those questions as you need to get the other person talking. Listen and ask follow-up questions that show you are interested in the person. *Continued on next page*

EXAMPLES OF GOOD FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Question 1: What kind of work do you do?

Follow-up: How did you get into that line of work?

Follow-up: What do you like about it?

Question 2: Who do you work for?

Follow-up: What does the business do?

Follow-up: Tell me more about your business/department/goals.

You will find an unlimited number of follow-up questions to ask if you listen and continue to be interested.

The icing on the cake is that you now have a purpose for every interaction. You'll be amazed at how much easier it becomes when your mind has a reason for networking. Now, some people will turn the tables and ask you the same questions you've asked them; so you do want to feel comfortable telling your story when asked. You'll want to have an elevator pitch ready even if you don't need it.

That pitch should be no longer than 30 seconds and should answer the first four to five questions you plan to ask others. The point is to be succinct and not ramble. Practice your answers on the way to the event so they flow easily. But again, while you want to sound intelligent when answering a question, your purpose is not to be interesting but to be interested. People will remember you more positively when you let them do more of the talking.

3 Be of value to others. This action comes from the best-selling book, *"The 7 Habits of Highly Successful People,"* by Stephen Covey. We often start networking because we need something, like a job. The problem with this is that relationships are like bank accounts – you can't make a withdrawal unless you've made a prior deposit. Covey calls it an "emotional bank account."

If you are truly focused on being interested and asking questions, you will eventually learn about something with which you can help the other person. Maybe she is hiring for an administrative assistant and you can connect her to a great candidate or recruiter; maybe he is struggling with a problem you've either solved before or have some insight into; or, maybe you know someone this person wants to meet.

One final point on being of value. A former boss once told me, "You never know who you might be working for." You never know who might be the most helpful for you in the future, and for this reason, it is wise not to "status network" or avoid people who are not at your level or higher or those who you think can't help you. If you do, you may be making a big mistake.

4 Remember, it is about building trust. Once a relationship has been initiated, you need to begin to build a foundation of trust, especially with those who you are expected to interact with regularly. Others need to feel that you have their back, to feel safe with you. It starts by them believing you care about them.

If you don't know anything about the personal lives of those who work with you or about their goals or what is important to them, that is a good place to start to demonstrate that you care.

5 Be a positive force. Make a commitment to being a positive force in all your relationships. As your mother said, "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all." I used to advise people not to gossip until someone pointed out that they didn't believe it was gossip if it was true. So, the action here is not to repeat negative stories even if they are true.

Make it a point to speak positively about your co-workers, especially when talking to your boss about others. People who gossip and repeat negative stories do so because they want others to believe they are in the know, but really, they come across as untrustworthy and small.

Negativity comes in others forms, such as complaining, never complimenting others, and not giving others the benefit of the doubt. It exhausts the people who have to listen to it and does nothing to enhance your relationship with them.

These actions are really simple and easy to follow, but you do have to work at this. Go to lunch, have coffee, or just get away from the office from time to time with others. Make it a goal to get up and walk to a co-worker's office rather than firing off an e-mail, or build in a couple of 10- to 15-minute walks around the office to connect with people during the day. ■

Deborah Rodriguez is senior vice president of talent, ALPHAEON Corp. She presented a variation of this article as a guest speaker last fall at OWL's Southern California Chapter event.



Deborah Rodriguez

Product Development BOOT CAMP:

OWL, Gavin Herbert Eye Institute
Collaborate for Innovation

By Jennifer Simpson, MD



A step-wise approach using four critical factors for advances in ophthalmic products.

Ophthalmology has a rich history of innovation that has helped the field continue to expand and offer exciting opportunities for all its members, while serving the changing needs of patients.

Traditionally, however, that innovation has been driven by a relatively small subset of the ophthalmic community.

Judy offered a series of recommendations based on her observations of numerous projects:

- Build a team of experts with interest and experience in the product being developed.
- “Right size” the quality and regulatory activities.
- Identify a pathway to proof of concept in validated models.
- Early clinical trials.

In an effort to expand this pool of innovators, OWL and the Gavin Herbert Eye Institute (GHEI) jointly organized an Ophthalmic Product Development Boot Camp, which attracted more than 100 participants during the institute’s recent annual colloquium on the UC-Irvine campus.

Speakers included several OWL members, and attendees comprised clinical and research personnel and trainees from UC-Irvine and the community, as well as industry personnel (including several OWL members).

Four critical topics – the product development process, the business model, internal and external organizational factors, and leadership – were addressed in the program through a series of presentations, case studies, and panel discussions.

Product Development

OWL member **Judy Gordon, DVM**, founder of ClinReg Consulting, provided a comprehensive overview of the regulatory pathways for both drug and device products, focusing on the unique factors for ophthalmic products (localized treatment and adverse events, established safety and efficacy measures).

Two serial entrepreneurs – **Vicken Karageozian, MD**, chief technical officer, Allegro Ophthalmics, and **Ram Rao**, chief executive officer, 2C Tech Corp. – each gave case presentations on their respective companies. Products being developed offer exciting potential treatments in retinal disease.

Take-home messages offered by Vicken included focusing on problems with a few unknown variables, “torture-testing” ideas early in the process, and carefully choosing a team. Ram emphasized the benefits of efficiently getting to proof of concept via a virtual corporate organization before establishing a “real” infrastructure.

Business Models

Veteran entrepreneur and venture capitalist **Bill Link, PhD**, gave an overview of different business models applicable to ophthalmology – emphasizing the benefits that recurring revenue streams (single-use drugs/devices, procedure fees) have for the success of both product and company. *Continued on next page*

Boot Camp *continued from pg. 6*

According to Bill, the business model frames the financial profile of the business and ultimately defines the capital required and target profitability – thereby driving product development and commercialization planning and execution.

Scott Cooper, chief financial officer of WaveTec Vision, highlighted his experience with business models for two ophthalmic innovations: IntraLase and WaveTec. The evolution of WaveTec’s monthly subscription business model is particularly instructive, resulting in high utilization and customer satisfaction, while providing the company with critical recurrent revenue with which to drive further development.

Organizational Environment

OWL board member **Jane Rady** – divisional vice president-business development at Abbott Medical Optics – led a section on external and internal factors that typically affect how business organizations behave.

External factors (including the economy, technology, markets, and government) all can have an impact on product development and corporate success.

Examples cited included the availability of capital after the dot-com crash and the CMS decision to allow balance billing for premium IOLs.

Internal factors (including strategy, competencies, capacity, and investors) also play an important role.

Ron Kurtz, another serial entrepreneur, discussed how some of these factors played a role in IntraLase and LenSx, as well as the growth of refractive surgery and the establishment of the premium IOL market.

Leadership

OWL president **Marsha D. Link, PhD** – principal at Link Consulting – led a discussion on leadership.

Jim Mazzo, chief executive officer of AcuFocus, also joined the panel, which discussed critical attributes of leaders and relayed leadership challenges they had faced during their careers.

Marsha shared her own experiences working with leaders, concluding with a review of the five key leadership practices identified by authors, James Kouzes and Barry Posner, through their research on leadership listed below:

- Model the way
- Inspire a shared vision
- Challenge the process
- Enable others to act
- Encourage the heart

(Kouzes, J. & Posner, B. (2012) *The Leadership Challenge*: Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA)

The organizers hope to build on the success of this initial collaboration with GHEI and look forward to future programs that further the goal of expanding the community of ophthalmic innovators. ■

Jennifer Simpson, MD, is clinical professor of ophthalmology, Gavin Herbert Eye Institute, University of California, Irvine, and a member of OWL.

Jennifer Simpson, MD





Joelle Vega



Member Profile: Joelle Vega

By *Adrienne Resek*

The stereotypical information technology (IT) whiz may be introverted and tend to have far more programming skills than people skills. But for every mold, someone is bound to break it. Such is the case with Joelle Vega, president of Accutome.

With more than 20 years of experience working in the medical device industry, Joelle spent the first decade of her career in IT. Joelle was supporting the sales team at a Johnson & Johnson company when she made the move from behind the scenes to center stage and joined the sales team.

The leap from IT took Joelle into the areas of general surgery, followed by gynecology and cardiac surgery, where she eventually became the regional director responsible for half of the cardiac surgery line at Johnson & Johnson.

“I was always fascinated by the medical side of things, and when I found out that the sales team actually donned scrubs and worked with doctors in the surgery suite, I was even more intrigued,” Joelle recalls. “Moving into sales brought me closer to fulfilling my wish to develop new products that benefit patients.”

When Edwards Lifesciences purchased the cardiac business, Joelle moved with her products and broadened her skills to marketing and general management. She also expanded her focus to include emerging markets and other international opportunities.

It took some time to realize that her East Coast family was not very compatible with a California-based company, and Joelle finally made the leap to Accutome (Malvern, PA), which has significantly lightened her travel load as well as brought great new opportunities for professional growth.

In terms of managing professional and personal growth, Joelle advises that young professionals be aggressive about asking for what they want.

“You can have it all – I am a successful professional, mother, and wife,” she says. “You just have to define what that means to you rather than let anyone else define your success. Sometimes we have to learn to say ‘No, we can’t take on everything,’ but we also need to speak up for ourselves.

“As I get older, I am more secure and am overcoming the female tendency to sit back and wait for someone to notice me,” Joelle adds. “Don’t be afraid to ask for responsibility, as well as flexibility, so you can manage your personal and professional life. If you are a good performer, people will help you find the means to get where you want to go.”

Adaptability is one of Joelle’s trademarks, and that spreads to all facets of her life.

Continued on next page

Member Profile

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“Traveling when you have a family is challenging, and I have always been a heavy traveller,” she says. “Rather than say I can’t participate in activities because I’m not home, my family has found ways to work around that. I shop online, I do homework with my kids via FaceTime, and I do a lot of carpooling on the weekends to balance the ones I miss during the week.”

Joelle’s career philosophy also relies heavily on relationships. She succeeded in sales because she fostered strong relationships of trust with surgeons. As a leader, she seeks to hire people who think differently from her, and then empowers and trusts her team.

“Diversity is the starting point for innovation and collaboration,” she says. “I believe that if I surround myself with great people and make them happy working here, they will take care of me.”

Joelle is one of the rare individuals who spent most of her career at the same company, working her way up. Accutome is really only her second company, and ophthalmology is a whole new industry for her.

In this respect the strength of OWL has come into play.

“OWL has all of these great females with deep industry relationships, and this has become an excellent avenue for me to meet people and learn from their expertise and relationships,” she says. “My very first official mentor has been through OWL, and although our backgrounds are very different, she has given me a lot of insight. She has been a great asset.”

Joelle says OWL’s executive roundtables in particular provide a different perspective on how women have managed their careers. The participants are always very personal in sharing information about themselves and things they have done, and it is wonderful to participate. ■

Adrienne Resek is a medical writer based in Mesa, AZ.

Adrienne Resek



As I get older, I am more secure and am overcoming the female tendency to sit back and wait for someone to notice me.

Don’t be afraid to ask for responsibility, as well as flexibility, so you can manage your personal and professional life.

If you are a good performer, people will help you find the means to get where you want to go.

Joelle Vega

Run, OWL, Run



Run for Fun.
Run for You.
Run for a Cause.
Run for Sight.

Join OWL’s Run for Sight team in San Diego during this year’s ASCRS meeting.

April 19, 2015
6:30 to 8 a.m. (PDT)

San Diego Embarcadero Marina Park South

Registration is \$30. All money raised through the race directly benefits needy patients through the ASCRS Foundation’s ongoing humanitarian programs in the United States and Ethiopia.

To register, go to the ASCRS Foundation/TearLab Run for Sight website: <http://bit.ly/1ApyoJh>

Career Path: Tips for Identifying Strategic Partnerships

*How leveraging partnerships can
lighten the load, help achieve things
otherwise potentially unattainable*

By Brad McCorkle

As I've written previously, my passion outside of work is coaching basketball, where teamwork is the supreme strategy. We've extended the concept of teamwork to our business, and the result has been fruitful for both Local Eye Site and our partners.

Identifying and pursuing relationships with other companies, associations, and individuals that present an opportunity for both groups to benefit from cooperation has been a foundational principle at Local Eye Site. One example is our ongoing partnership with the Association of Technical Personnel in Ophthalmology (ATPO).

Four years ago, we approached ATPO with the idea of allowing Local Eye Site to "power" its already-functioning online "Career Center." Our vision was that our singular focus and top-line technology in combination with ATPO's industry influence would create a tool that would well serve the industry, as well as be more productive for ATPO and Local Eye Site.

Four years later, the results have been terrific for everyone involved, including a clearly more helpful job site for the ophthalmic job seekers and employers that utilize it. Here are some questions and tips that should help identify potentially lucrative strategic partnerships:

1. What are your business or personal goals, and who can help you get there? What are the things holding you back from success? Are there key relationships or access to capital you lack? Maybe it's technology or expertise for which you are looking to access? Now, just look around, and identify the people or organizations that may be able to help you.
2. Now that you've identified who can help you, what do you have to offer them? Think creatively about the unique strengths, ideas, or assets that you bring to the table. How might your strengths be put together with another's in order to create a mutually beneficial relationship?
3. Think beyond just what's in it for you, and your potential new partner. Would cooperation create a solution that better serves your industry or community? Creating a better way that represents good for those around you can be part of your negotiation with your potential partner.
4. Look for organizations that already have other strategic partnerships, as it's a good sign for the success of your proposal.
5. Look to partner with organizations whose brand reputation will bolster yours. Our success or failure is in some regard the result of those with whom we associate.

Continued on back

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OWL Sponsorship

OWL programs are supported by industry partners and individual donors. Their support means that OWL is able to provide an expanding menu of programs in the spirit of our core principles of leadership, advancement and community. We thank our financial supporters for their leadership and for the critical role they play in our organization. If you are interested supporting OWL, email support@owlsite.org or call 415-751-2401.

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Join OWL in San Diego!

OWL • ASPENS Event

Friday, April 17

5:30 - 7:30 pm

Hilton San Diego Bayfront

Room: Indigo 202

Don't miss the inaugural, collaborative event between Ophthalmic Women Leaders (OWL) and ASPENS.

The program will enable networking with women who are advancing the practice and business of ophthalmology and will feature an inspiring, joint speaker program focusing on "Competence, Confidence and Courage."

OWL Reception

Sunday, April 19

5:30 - 7:30 pm

Hilton San Diego Bayfront

Join us for OWL's annual reception and award ceremony honoring three outstanding women as recipients of: The Visionary Woman's Award, the Catalyst Award and the Rising Star Award!

Included in the evening will be an exciting program revealing the results of the "Women's Leadership Trends" survey that OWL and the Fundingsland Group created. Don't miss hearing the results from this "first-ever" survey reflecting the status of women in the ophthalmic space.

OWL Interest Group Programs

OWL Suite

Hilton San Diego Bayfront

Visit www.owlsite.org for details on significant programming hosted by OWL's exciting new interest groups:

- Ophthalmic Business Owners (O.B.O.)
- Ophthalmic Industry Professionals (O.I.P.)
- Professionals In Practice (P.I.P.)
- Bright Eyes (B.E.)

In addition to benefiting from relevant programs and lively discussions, OWL members will have the opportunity to connect with friends in the industry.

Advance registration is required at www.owlsite.org.

Career Path *continued from pg. 10*

A few things to consider as you identify good partners and partnerships:

1. Do your personal ideals, objectives, or corporate cultures match-up? If the two people or groups see the world through a very different lens, you may want to scrutinize this partnership.
2. Carefully consider what extraction from a partnership would look like, should it not work out, or just naturally need to come to an end.
3. An initial short-term relationship may be best in order to give things a test-run before committing to a longer partnership.
4. Both sides should negotiate a partnership that is fair and equitable for both parties. An inequitable term in a contract, even if it's to your advantage, presents the opportunities for significant headaches down the road.
5. Communicate well with your partners. As with any relationship, regular communication about what is working well or not so well for each team will keep the partnership on track.

Where it makes sense, in my personal and professional life, I always want to create a situation where 2 plus 2 equals 5.

I think most people do, but sometimes we don't think strategically about the ways that we can help one another get where we're going.

Strategic partnerships can lighten the load, and help you achieve things otherwise potentially unattainable. Much success! ■

Brad McCorkle is founder of Local Eye Site.

Brad McCorkle

