Christopher S. Wolfe, OD

Each year the NOA presents an Optometrist of the Year Award to a member who has contributed his or her time and talent in the most outstanding manner for the betterment of the visual health and welfare of the public and to the profession of optometry during the past year.

Dr. Chris Wolfe has been leading by example in every facet of NOA’s advocacy efforts. During the past year, he has been actively engaged and effective as the association’s official key contact with two Omaha-area state senators while helping develop positive relationships and serving as a contact and resource for several others. He is the coordinator of the association’s network of doctors who are actively engaged this year in election campaigns of more than two dozen candidates for the state legislature, assuring and reinforcing optometry’s grassroots presence in these races. He has participated in meetings and interviews with more than a dozen of these candidates during the spring and fall to help educate them about optometry’s issues and assess their level of understanding and support for these issues.

Dr. Wolfe has regularly helped deliver PAC contributions to legislative candidates on behalf of the association and is a top-level PAC contributor himself. He has also been active as a volunteer on behalf of various candidates, assisting with raising money and distributing literature.

In addition, he has had leadership roles in developing and implementing the association’s overall advocacy objectives. He chaired the NOA Legislative Committee this year and was personally instrumental in passage of the legislative bill this spring that removed remaining restrictions on prescribing oral medications and authorizing injections for anaphylaxis. He was a leading spokesperson on the bill throughout the Unicameral session and instrumental in presenting information and providing status updates to the NOA membership related to the association’s legislative initiatives.

A second generation optometrist, this OD is a 2003 graduate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and a 2008 graduate of Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of Optometry.

Previous OD of the Year Award Recipients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scott Reins, OD</th>
<th>Ellen Weiss, OD</th>
<th>Roger Filips, OD</th>
<th>Dean Lauritzen, OD</th>
<th>Bill Koeber, OD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Robert Vandervort, OD</td>
<td>Steve Nicholson, OD</td>
<td>John Crotty, OD</td>
<td>Ed Schneider, OD</td>
<td>Charles Gray, OD</td>
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<td>Jeff Klein, OD</td>
<td>Janet Fett, OD</td>
<td>Richard Powell, OD</td>
<td>John McBride, OD</td>
<td>T.S. Heinecken, OD</td>
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<td>Jim Devine, OD</td>
<td>Joe Shetler, OD</td>
<td>Jerry Vaughan, OD</td>
<td>William Nolan, OD</td>
<td>Rudy Meyer, OD</td>
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<td>Steve Alcorn, OD</td>
<td>Rick Bunger, OD</td>
<td>Wayne Quincy, OD</td>
<td>William Higgins, OD</td>
<td>Bernard Bauman, OD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jerry Vaughan, OD</td>
<td>David Kincaid, OD</td>
<td>Dean Lauritzen, OD</td>
<td>Brad Williams, OD</td>
<td>Bruce Ackerman, OD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steven Wolfe, OD</td>
<td>Kim Baxter, OD</td>
<td>Robert Livingston, OD</td>
<td>Robert Sneller, OD</td>
<td>Richard Macaluso, OD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Craig McCormick, OD</td>
<td>Jim Devine, OD</td>
<td>Robert Vandervort, OD</td>
<td>Roger Dietz, OD</td>
<td>Bill Higgins, OD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gary Pedersen, OD</td>
<td>Jim Kirchner, OD</td>
<td>Steve Gradowski, OD</td>
<td>Paul Todd, OD</td>
<td>Wade Nyquist, OD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teri Geist, OD</td>
<td>Paul Salansky, OD</td>
<td>Bernard Mullen, OD</td>
<td>Louis Amato, OD</td>
<td>Pat Ford, OD</td>
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</table>
The Young Optometrist of the Year Award is presented annually to a member of the NOA who has been licensed for 10 years or less, who has contributed his or her time and talent to the optometric profession, and who has shown remarkable leadership skills when serving their profession, their patients and their community.

Dr. Jonna (O’Connor) Kohle joined Dr. Gildersleeve at O’Neill Family Eyecare in February 2010.

Dr. Kohle is a 1997 graduate of Atkinson West Holt High School and a 2001 graduate of the University of Nebraska at Kearney. She graduated from Indiana University School of Optometry in Bloomington, IN, as a member of the Beta Sigma Kappa International Optometric Honor Society, receiving her doctor of optometry in 2006. As a student she was active as an assistant instructor for several optometry courses and was awarded the John P. Davey Award, the Dr. and Mrs. Lewis Scott Scholarship, the Rosemore Scholarship, and the Lippincott Williams and Wilkins New O.D. Scholarship.

Dr. Kohle was an active member of the Indiana University chapter of the Voluntary Optometric Services for Humanity (VOSH) which included three service trips to Mexico. She also completed externships with the Pensacola, FL Veterans Administration Hospital, Bennett and Bloom Retinal Specialists and Refractive Surgeons in Louisville, KY and the University of Nebraska Medical Center Department of Ophthalmology in Omaha. Dr. Kohle then completed a one year residency in Ocular Disease and Low Vision at the Kansas City Veterans Administration Hospital in Kansas City, MO.

In 2007 Dr. Kohle joined the Nebraska and Western Iowa Veterans Administration Hospital – Lincoln division as the first staff optometrist in the VA system in Nebraska. In November of 2009 she obtained her Fellowship of the American Academy of Optometry. She is a member of the Nebraska Optometric Association, the American Optometric Association and the American Academy of Optometry. For the Nebraska Optometric Association she has served as a legislative contact person, periodically assists with the Third Party Newsletter Website upkeep and is currently active on the NOA CPT committee.

Previous Charles Seeger Young OD of the Year Award Recipients

- Chad Hudnall, OD
- Chris Wolfe, OD
- Brian Brightman, OD
- Creston Myers, OD
- Cheryl Chapman, OD
- Corey Langford, OD
- Josh Hopkins, OD
- Darren Wright, OD
- Brad Blumenstock, OD
- Jeff Robbins, OD
- Steve Miller, OD
- Jeffery Saum, OD
- Ellen Weiss, OD
- Joe Shetler, OD
- Steve Wolfe, OD
- Scott Gutshall, OD
- Howard Christman, OD
- Janet Fett, OD
Distinguished Service Award

Teri Geist, OD

Persons nominated for this award shall be optometrists, members of the Nebraska Optometric Association, who, over a span of years, have rendered outstanding and exemplary service to their community and profession, and who have distinguished themselves as exemplary citizens and optometrists of the state of Nebraska.

Dr. Geist is a comprehensive optometrist who specializes in routine and problem-focused eye examinations, pediatric eye care, urgent eye care, and pre- and post-operative examinations.

Dr. Geist was raised in western Nebraska. She received her bachelor of arts degree from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln and her doctor of optometry degree from Pacific University in Portland, Oregon. While at Pacific University, Dr. Geist completed an externship at the Portland VA Medical Center and was active in contact lens research. Dr. Geist worked in a rural-based vision care practice in South Dakota immediately after her graduation in 1996 and joined Midwest Eye Care in 1997.

Dr. Geist is licensed for the practice of optometry by the state examining boards of Nebraska and Iowa. She is a member of both the Nebraska Optometric Association and the American Optometric Association. She is a past president for the Nebraska Optometric Association, and the North Central States Optometric Council. She provides volunteer services for the Nebraska Optometric Association “See to Learn” program and the Hope Medical Outreach Coalition. She is an Assistant Clinical Professor in the Creighton University Department of Allied Sciences.

Dr. Geist received the “Young Optometrist of the Year” award from the Nebraska Optometrist Association in 2001; the same group bestowed the “Optometrist of the Year Award” on Dr. Geist in 2005.

Previous Distinguished Service Award Recipients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Joseph Shetler, OD</th>
<th>Kim Baxter, OD</th>
<th>Dean Lauritzen, OD</th>
<th>Jack James, OD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul Salansky, OD</td>
<td>Donald Witte, OD</td>
<td>Bernie Mullen, OD</td>
<td>John Butler, OD</td>
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<td>David Kincaid, OD</td>
<td>Robert Todd, OD</td>
<td>Brad Williams, OD</td>
<td>Larry Garrett, OD</td>
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<td>James Kirchner, OD</td>
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<td>Ed Schneider, OD</td>
<td>Wade Nyquist, OD</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Brian Brightman, OD

The NOA Keyperson of the Year Award recognizes an NOA member who has helped advance the Association’s advocacy efforts through effective involvement in political or regulatory affairs on behalf of optometry, with special emphasis on building and maintaining effective relationships with state or federal legislators or regulators.

Dr. Brightman graduated from the Illinois College of Optometry in 2002 and is a member of the American Optometric Association and the Nebraska Optometric Association. He has served as the Nebraska Optometric Association Political Action Committee chairman since 2011. He serves patients in need with the VSP Mobile Eyes® program and is a provider of Infant See® eye exams and See to Learn® vision assessments.

Dr. Brightman managed to use his charismatic approach to persuade fellow optometrist Dr. Courtney Brightman to marry him, and together, they enjoy spending time with their three children.

Keyperson of the Year

Chris Wolfe, OD
Corey Langford, OD
John Crotty, OD
Chad Hudnall, OD

Jim Devine, OD
Robert Vandervort, OD
Brad Blumenstock, OD
Steve Wolfe, OD
The NOA Mission:

- to improve the quality, availability and accessibility of eye and vision care in Nebraska;
- to represent the optometric profession to government, third parties, and the public;
- to assist members in conducting their practices successfully in accordance with the highest standards of patient care and efficiency; and
- to develop a sense of community among members, thereby creating commitment to the profession of optometry.

The NOA encourages high ethical standards and continued post-graduate level professional education and research. The NOA utilizes its resources to promote and maintain high professional standards of eye care in Nebraska.

2015 AOA Membership Awards

60 Year Award
William Grange, OD

40 Year Award
John Lange, OD

25 Year Award
Scott French, OD
Daniel Mickey, OD
Steven Sandman, OD
Darren Wright, OD

10 Year Award
Andrea Eigenberg, OD
Tanner Gates, OD
Steve Gildersleeve, OD
Ryan Stevens, OD

Presidential Citations

Jeremy Baumfalk, OD
Andrew Bateman, OD
Corey Langford, OD
Dan Novak, OD

Eyes on Nebraska Award

Shelley Fastenau
Sen. Ed Schrock
Sen. Dennis Byars
NFCV
Nebraska Lions Club
Miriam Fastenau
Delta Gamma Fraternity

Sen. Don Wesley
Mildred Moseman
Tom Brock
Ak-Sar-Ben
Jacklyn J. Smith
Jim Ryan
Bob Devaney

Para Past Presidents

1978 - 1979 Mary McCartney
1980 - 1981 Marge Wubbels
1982 - 1984 Linda Sturgeon
1984 - 1985 Gail Walker
1988 - 1989 Linda Sturgeon
1990 - 1991 LaRee Peterson Ahlers
1991 - 1992 Sally Conner
1992 - 1993 Sally Conner
1994 - 1996 Inta Larson
1996 - 1997 Jill Luebbert
1997 - 1998 Tami Franklin
1998 - 1999 Dawn Cech
1999 - 2000 Linda Sturgeon
2000 - 2001 Cleo Ellis
2001 Michelle Bentley
2002 Stacy White
2003 Sandy Authier
2004 Penny Adkisson
2005 Linda Schutt
2006 Kirk Kastens
2007 Jill Luebbert
2008 Kara Stokey Brashears
2009 Sonja Hansen
2010 Ann Utter
2011 Doug Wright
2012 Rhonda Gregory
2013 Brook Hutson
2014 Matt Farritor
Paraoptometric of the Year

Deb Gasper, CPO

The NOA Paraoptometric of the Year Award is presented to a paraoptometric who has made outstanding contributions to the fields of paraoptometry and optometry, been an asset to their doctor(s), advanced themselves with continuing education and a commitment to the profession with a number of years in the field. Self-discipline and professional conduct are also criteria for which the award is judged, along with the paraoptometric’s accomplishments in the profession.

Deb Gasper, ABO, has over 40 years of optical experience. She has been a crucial reason for years of business growth and excellent patient care since joining Millard Family Eyecare in 2002. As an integral part of the management team her duties include: Optical Manager, direct supervision of team members, maintaining optical inventory and patient orders, team member scheduling and team unity. She is involved with the hiring process and oversees the training of new team members. She works with patients in optical care and works directly with doctors on any patient or team member concern. She currently serves as the Vision Source Representative for Millard Family Eyecare.

Deb can often be found going beyond the call of duty, coming in early and staying late when needed. Deb does whatever needs to be done including: taking deposits to the bank, decorating parade floats, planning employee baby showers, scheduling office lunches and planning office fun days. Outside of the office, she has volunteered with her local church, rang bells for the Salvation Army, been a member of the Millard Lions Club, volunteered at Opening Eyes with Special Olympics, and the Open Door Mission. She and her husband, Joe, currently sponsor four children in third world countries. She has even used her optical skills on a VOSH trip to the Dominican Republic, providing eye care and glasses to over 800 underserved people.

Deb’s enthusiasm, caring heart, work ethic and integrity inevitably rub off on co-workers. She has an amazing way of leading by example with a combination of friendship, humor and mothering when needed. These attributes have earned her the respect and endearment of the doctors, teammates and patients. She is a true leader and a valuable part of the Millard Family Eyecare team.

Deb and her husband Joe have been married for 38 years. They enjoy spending time with their son Matthew and his new wife Brittany. They are avid Kansas City Chief and Royals fans, and can be found many weekends in Kansas City at a football or baseball game.

Previous Para of the Year Recipients

| Sue Seger | Darcy Popple | Susan Wortman |
| Melanie Swift | Sandy Heuer | Kelly Travis |
| Jennifer Smith | Shelly Long | LaRee Ahlers |
| Sonja Hansen | Melanie Swift | Deb Philips |
| Rhonda Gregory | Cathy Kahny | Marlea Kittle |
| Kara Stokey Brashears | Bonnie Kettler | Linda Sturgeon |
| Katie Circo | Sandy Authier | Gail Walker |
| Elizabeth Brockhaus | Jill Luebbert | Lois Harder |
| Melia Hefti | Inta Larsen | Sally Conner |
| Linda Schutt | Tami Franklin | Joanie Smith |

Previous Para Distinguished Service Award Recipients

| Tami Franklin | Linda Schutt |
| Sandy Authier | Sally Conner |
| Cleo Ellis | Jill Luebbert |
| LaRee Ahlers | Carol Bothwell |
NOA Past Presidents

1906  Dr. C.C. McLeese  1954  Dr. Paul R. Todd.  1985  Dr. Charles Seeger
1907  Dr. C.C. McLeese  1956  Dr. Robert Schwaner  1986  Dr. Robert Livingston
1908  Dr. Fritz Hofer  1957  Dr. Harold Riggert  1987  Dr. Larry Garrett
1909  Dr. M.L. Jones  1958  Dr. Vern Hybl  1988  Dr. Wayne Quincy
1910  J.G. Preston  1959  Dr. J. S. Stanard  1989  Dr. Jerry Vaughan
1911  Dr. C. A. Hewitt  1960  Dr. Clifford Erickson  1990  Dr. Steven Gradowski
1912  Dr. B. B. Combs  1961  Dr. Donald Fox  1991  Dr. Larry Malicky
1913  Dr. B. B. Combs  1962  Dr. Walter Ford  1992  Dr. John Crotty
1914  Dr. A. W. Neihart  1963  Dr. Jack James  1993  Dr. James Kirchner
1915  Dr. A. S. Miller  1965  Dr. Robert Sneller  1994  Dr. Richard Bunger
1916  Dr. Max Egge  1966  Dr. Robert Patrick  1995  Dr. Paul Salansky
1917  Dr. F. C. Calhoun  1967  Dr. W. W. Nyquist  1996  Dr. Paul Salansky
1918  Dr. H. R. Tittotson  1968  Dr. William Higgins  1997  Dr. James Devine
1919  Dr. C. B. Morgan  1969  Dr. L. R. Wallace  1998  Dr. Kim Baxter
1920  Dr. Ray C. Kingsley  1970  Dr. Richard Macaluso  1999  Dr. Joseph Shetler
1921  Dr. Ray C. Kingsley  1971  Dr. L. R. Whitaker  2000  Dr. Janet Fett
1922  Dr. Ray C. Kingsley  1972  Dr. Charles Gray  2001  Dr. Roger Filips
1923  Dr. G. S. Dunlap  1973  Dr. Patrick Crotty  2002  Dr. Ellen Weiss
1924  Dr. J. M. Perrigo  1974  Dr. Ronald Conrad  2003  Dr. Mark Blackledge
1925  Dr. Leo C. Hewitt  1975  Dr. Roy Peck  2004  Dr. Steven Wolfe
1926  Dr. Leo C. Hewitt  1976  Dr. James Stansberry  2005  Dr. Craig McCormick
1927  Charles S. Dixon  1977  Dr. James Nedrow  2006  Dr. Teri Geist
1928  Charles S. Dixon  1978  Dr. Bernard Mullen  2007  Dr. Jeff Pape
1929  Charles S. Dixon  1979  Dr. Richard Powell  2008  Dr. Brad Blumenstock
1930  Dr. L. C. Stoll  1980  Dr. Robert Bowen  2009  Dr. Ted Vorhies
1931  Dr. C. L. Moore  1981  Dr. Ed Schneider  2010  Dr. Steve Miller
1932  Dr. E. E. Bilon  1982  Dr. Brad Williams  2011  Dr. Corey Langford
1933  Dr. E. E. Bilon  1983  Dr. Dean Lauritzen  2012  Dr. Chad Hudnall
1934  Dr. O. J. Melvin  1984  Dr. Robert Todd  2013  Dr. Scott Reins
1935  Dr. Leo G. Miller
1936  Dr. B. G. Bauman, Sr.
1937  Dr. N. C. Morrison
1938  Dr. N. C. Morrison
1938  (10 Mos) Dr. C. H. Schwaner
1938  (2 Mos) Dr. C. H. Schwaner
1939  Dr. John F. Hoeft
1940  Dr. Paul J. Wurn
1941  Dr. Paul J. Wurn
1942  Dr. M. D. Crossett
1943  Dr. M. D. Crossett
1944  Dr. M. D. Crossett
1945  Dr. T. S. Heinecken
1946  Dr. Thomas F. Maher
1947  Dr. Leo G. Miller
1948  Dr. Floyd G. Sneller
1949  Dr. Rudolph J. Meyer
1950  Dr. Rudolph J. Meyer
1951  Dr. B. G. Bauman, Jr.
1952  Dr. B. G. Bauman, Jr.
1953

Inscription Included with the NOA Gavel
Tucson, Arizona - April 19, 1958

To: William A. Koeber
Wayne, Nebraska

Dear Bill:

I am sending to you under separate cover a gavel made of Nebraska wood. The yellowish wood is osage orange--common hedge--from Adams, Nebraska. The walnut is from a tree grown across the street from our Wahoo home on Linden Avenue. The white in the inlay is from an old school house bench once used in the Wahoo schools, The silver was purchased here at a local dealer and the little stone in the end of the handle is chrysocolla from a copper mine hear Tucson.

Will you present it to the 53rd convention at Hastings?

Signed,
M. D. Crossett, OD