

2009/10 ANNUAL REPORT

Regulating and Improving the Practice of Opticians to Ensure
Quality Professional Care for the Consumers of British Columbia.



About the College

The College of Opticians of British Columbia (COBC or the “College”) is the regulatory body established to govern the practice of opticianry in British Columbia. In 1994, Cabinet approved the *Opticians Regulation* which designates opticianry as a regulated profession under the *Health Professions Act*. The COBC is responsible for the administration of the Act and accompanying regulations. The COBC is also accountable to the public through its board.

The mission of the COBC is to ensure British Columbia opticians provide safe and effective care to help people achieve better vision.

The COBC is responsible for:

- ❖ Assessment, registration and licensing of all opticians, contact lens fitters, and refracting opticians in B.C.
- ❖ Interpretation of the *Health Professions Act*, the *Opticians Regulation* and the *COBC Bylaws*
- ❖ Public and registrant complaints and inquiries
- ❖ Establishment of standards of practice and guidelines

About this Report

This 2009/10 annual report presents highlights of initiatives in the COBC fiscal year April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010. This report contains the specific activities and accomplishments of the board and statutory committees, while reflecting the dedication of many volunteers (both opticians and public appointees) who give their time and expertise to working with the College for the advancement of the profession of opticianry for the benefit of the public.

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2010 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING | Sunday, October 17, 2010
Delta Hotel | 4331 Dominion Street | Burnaby, BC

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Reflection on Transitions

This is my last report to you as I have come to the end of the maximum term for my service on the COBC Board of Directors. In that time I have witnessed the growth of the Board and Administration from the early years of a new regulator into a model for others to follow. The COBC has also taken a leading role in building a truly national structure to reduce, if not remove, limitations on the mobility of opticians within Canada. Along the way there have been many hurdles that have only served to strengthen the COBC.

One of those strengths is the skill and vitality of those willing to serve on the Board and committees, and provide stakeholder input. It has been my pleasure to work with such skilled people who have such a commitment to their profession. Every single one of them has impressed me and has contributed substantially to the success of the COBC. At the same time my departure from the Board highlights one of our ongoing tasks, which is to encourage participation and the development of succeeding leaders and those beyond.

One opportunity for opticians to help strengthen the COBC is to participate in specific consultations with members and other stakeholders. Opticians can participate as an individual, as a leader of one of the optician organizations, or even as an interested and engaged member of one of those organizations.

The development of the COBC has benefited from the contributions of many such people and there has certainly been a good deal of change over the last six years. The Board, with the thoughtful assistance of the Registrar, was fortunate and successful in developing a professional development program to ensure that opticians were skilled and prepared to provide automated refraction to increase healthcare choices for consumers. The recent changes in legislation proved the need for this preparation.

Also in my time on the Board, a national mobility system was implemented to help the COBC move into a new phase of improvements and standardization for cost effectiveness, and efficiency. With many thanks to funding from the government of British Columbia, the COBC has designed and implemented an online system as part of the evaluation, testing, and registration of applicants from approved programs and elsewhere – both domestic and international. The COBC worked on this system with the Alberta Opticians Association and the system is being adopted by other provinces across Canada. This will give the COBC the advantage of any other capacity or enhancements added by other provincial organizations.

There are many other high points that I am sure you are aware of or will read in further reports. I must end, however, by saying that the COBC is not just lucky to have had the benefit of many skilled opticians on the Board, it has also benefited from the skills and significant commitment of the members appointed by the government, as it has from a Registrar and staff who I can only describe as supremely qualified and excellent.

Kent Ashby, Chair

(Chair from January 1, 2008 to January 31, 2010)

The Continuation of Growth

I am honored to be the new Chair of the Board of Directors and have the opportunity to advance the College as a leader in opticianry regulation - both nationally and internationally. In the past year, the College has strategically concentrated on enhancing access to quality licensed opticians.

According to the *Health Professions Act*, one of the objects of a college is to collaborate with other stakeholders including colleges, entities in the provincial health system, post-secondary educational institutions and government. Fulfilling this object by strengthening partnerships with national ophthalmic stakeholders has proved to be effective in helping the College fulfill its mandate and meet emerging challenges.

One of the major national initiatives the College has, in its partnership with other Canadian opticianry organizations, is a professional identity awareness campaign. Cooperating with other Canadian opticianry organizations has helped the COBC start developing consistent professional messaging informing the public about the standard of care and accountability the public can expect to see in a licensed optician. We've created a multimedia piece, TV commercial, in-store material, a website, and online database of Canadian optician thus far. As the government of British Columbia works towards implementing a new restricted activity regulatory model and the non-traditional supplies of ophthalmic products and services increases, it is more important than ever for the public to fully understand the importance of maintaining safe vision care and are able to identify appropriately trained and licensed opticians.

The College has also worked productively with the opticianry regulatory body of Alberta, the Alberta Opticians Association (AOA), to develop a national platform for standardizing and streamlining the registration process. With funding providing by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Marketing development, an online assessment and database was fully implemented this past year, ensuring the organizational capacity to register skilled opticians to meet the anticipated growing vision health care demands of the public of British Columbia. Together, the COBC and AOA are planning to explore expanding the national platform to other Canadian opticianry regulatory bodies.

Perhaps the most interesting highlight of 2009/10 was the announcement from the Ministry of Health Services about the amendments to the *Opticians Regulation*, expanding the opticians scope of practice by allowing independent sight-testing by opticians. The College supports the government's direction towards multidisciplinary practice and increased consumer choice, while ensuring patient safety and public protection. I have never been more proud to be a licensed optician and I am excited to guide the College as it starts updating the standards of practice to reflect the change in legislation towards advanced practice of opticianry.

I look forward to serving the Board and working with the most dedicated committee members and volunteers I have ever had the pleasure of working with.

John Kerns, Chair
(Chair from January 31, 2010 to Present)

REGISTRAR'S MESSAGE

A Sustainable Profession

Since 1994, the College of Opticians has governed the practice of opticianry in British Columbia to ensure that licensed opticians are competent, practice to a high standard of care, and held to a higher level of accountability for their actions. With the Ministry of Health Services' announcement on March 19, 2010 to amend the *Opticians Regulation* to modernize regulations for the sale of eyewear and to expand the scope of practice to include independent sight-testing, the College's measure of assurance for quality professional vision care will become even more essential in helping British Columbians identify regulated eye care professionals. To maintain both the government and public's confidence, it is of utmost importance that opticians are prepared to understand the changes to the *Opticians Regulation* and understand the importance of practicing within their scope of training and experience.

For years, the College worked with other organizations (including the OBC: Opticians of British Columbia) to strategically prepare for a possible expansion in the opticians scope of practice and for the government's implementation of a new restricted activities regulatory model. For example, in 2007 the College added new bylaws requiring all opticians who conducted sight-testing to complete an advanced training course and undergo a COBC certification examination. Also, as the current Chair of the COBC mentioned in his message, the College has been a driving force in developing a national professional identity campaign - creating a multimedia piece, TV commercials, and online information - to help the public understand why they should ask for a licensed optician. These initiatives among others have demonstrated the College has been proactive in preparing opticians to respond and adapt to changes in legislation.

The proposed amendments to the *Opticians Regulation* are part of the government's leadership to expand consumer options to purchase eyeglasses and replacement contact lenses in British Columbia. Legislation has changed in three ways to increase safe vision care services to the public: (1) the public has access to their prescription; (2) freedom of association of professionals across disciplines to allow opticians to hire optometrists in their practice; and (3) independent sight-testing. These three changes by the BC government will create an unparalleled opportunity for regulated opticians to address the public's increasing demand for vision care. The changes in legislation will remove barriers to dispense ophthalmic appliances and allow opticians to meet the expected increased demand for vision care services by the health care consumer.

The government has expanded the scope of practice of opticians to include visual acuity assessments by use of automated refraction. This is an acknowledgment of the decade-long safe practice of sight testing by opticians under supervision of a prescriber as well as the voluntary training and certification completed by the several hundred opticians currently conducting sight testing in British Columbia. Opticians have voluntarily complied with a high standard of care that has been noted by observers. While the government has confidence in BC opticians, registrants will still need to follow legislation to maintain that confidence as a way to encourage the government to continue advancing opticianry for the benefit of the public.

Once again, I am impressed with the Government of British Columbia's determined solution to deal with the imminent demand in health care services by increasing consumer options. Opticians need to embrace the opportunities presented by the modernization our legislation has provided and work within the legislation to ensure a sustainable profession.

Nick Atkinson, Registrar

GOVERNANCE

The College of Opticians of British Columbia (COBC) is the regulatory body established to govern the practice of opticianry in British Columbia under the *Health Professions Act*. The COBC is responsible for the administration of the Act and accompanying regulations and it is accountable to the public through its board.

As a self-regulating profession, the COBC is governed by a Board of Directors composed of elected and appointed members. Of the ten board members, six are elected from the profession and four are appointed by government. Each board member serves a three-year term starting at the beginning of the calendar year. The Board operates on a policy governance model framework. A policy governance board is only involved in governing the College through policy, while the administration is responsible for operations.

Before taking office, a person elected or appointed as a member of a board for a college must take and sign, by oath or solemn affirmation, an Oath of Office:

I solemnly affirm that:

- ❖ I will abide by the Health Professions Act and I will faithfully discharge the duties of the position, according to the best of my ability;
- ❖ I will act in accordance with the law and the public trust placed in me;
- ❖ I will act in the interests of the College as a whole;
- ❖ I will uphold the objects of the College and ensure that I am guided by the public interest in the performance of my duties;
- ❖ I have a duty to act honestly;
- ❖ I will declare any private interests relating to my public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest;
- ❖ I will ensure that other memberships, directorships, voluntary or paid positions or affiliations remain distinct from work undertaken in the course of performing my duty as a board member;

The primary duty of the Board of the College is ensuring that the vision needs of the public of British Columbia are met by BC opticians through safe and effective means. In the course of performing its duties and exercising its powers under the *Health Professions Act* and other enactments, the Board defines the strategic goals and objectives of the College and forecasts the long-term needs of the public.

BOARD'S 2009-2014 STRATEGIC PLAN

2009/10

COBC Board of Directors

As of end of fiscal year March 31, 2010

John Kerns, Chair (started 01/01/2010)

District 3 - Okanagan and Kootenays

Term Start Date: January 1, 2010

Term End Date: December 31, 2012

Kent Ashby, Chair (ended 12/31/2009)

Government Appointee

Term Start Date: April 1, 2008

Term End Date: May 6, 2010

Raheem Savja, Vice Chair (started 01/01/2010)

District 1 - Lower Mainland

Term Start Date: January 1, 2009

Term End Date: December 31, 2011

Stephanie Weir, Vice Chair (ended 12/31/2009)

District 2 - Vancouver Island

Term Start Date: January 1, 2008

Term End Date: December 31, 2010

Dieter Saxer

District 1 - Lower Mainland

Term Start Date: January 1, 2009

Term End Date: December 31, 2011

Aly Jamal

District 4 - Cariboo

Term Start Date: January 31, 2010

Term End Date: December 31, 2010

Bradford Benson

District 4 - Cariboo

Term Start Date: January 1, 2008

Term End Date: December 6, 2009

Lutz Sprecher

District 5 - Contact Lens Fitter

Term Start Date: January 1, 2010

Term End Date: December 31, 2012

June Barens

Government Appointee

Term Start Date: May 6, 2009

Term End Date: May 6, 2011

Elizabeth Cytra

Government Appointee

Term Start Date: May 6, 2009

Term End Date: May 6, 2012

Lesley Wood Bernbaum

Government Appointee

Term Start Date: January 31, 2010

Term End Date: January 31, 2011

KEY OBJECTIVE

To serve and protect the public and to exercise the COBC's powers and discharge its responsibilities under all enactments in the public interest.*

GOAL 1

Enhance the ability of its registrants to respond and adapt to changes in practice environments, advances in technology and other emerging issues.*

GOAL 2

Ensure the public understands the role of opticians.*

GOAL 3

Interprofessional collaborative practice between its registrants and persons practicing another health profession.*

GOAL 4

To govern the registrants according to the Health Professions Act, the regulations and the bylaws of the college.*

GOAL 5

Update and document the conditions or requirements for registration of a person as a member of the College.*

GOAL 6

Collaborative relations with other colleges established, regional health boards designated under the Health Authorities Act and other entities in the Provincial health system, post-secondary education institutions and the government.*

GOAL 7

Utilize COBC's resources to achieve the College's goals in a fiscally responsible manner.*

* BC Laws, "Health Professions Act Part 2 Section 16," http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96183_01 (accessed July 22, 2010)

2009/10 MILESTONES

1st Quarter (APR - JUN)

The COBC met with both the Alberta and Ontario opticianry regulatory body to explore areas to share technical knowledge, data and services. As a result of the meeting, all three organizations will be working together to upgrade database technology, develop digital forms, upgrade online management systems, and standardize the registration system. The integration of technology between the opticianry regulatory bodies of BC, Alberta and Ontario will not only be cost-effective, but also help build knowledge and innovation.

For the second time, the COBC has collaborated with the other major stakeholders in BC opticianry on an award ceremony to recognize Douglas College Dispensing Optician Program graduates into the profession. The COBC is working to build strong relations with registrants from the very beginning of their professional career and maintain strong communication to ensure registrants stay updated with legislative changes affecting their practice and ensure registrants remain competent and accountable to the public.

The COBC, along with the College of Opticians of Ontario (COO) and the National Association of Canadian Optician regulators (NACOR), collaborated to develop a professional identity for Canadian Opticianry to educate and raise awareness among the public about the role of opticians. The professional identity was presented to the Opticians Council of Canada (all twenty-three Canadian opticianry organizations - regulators, associations and educational institutions) at the semi-annual national meeting and was well received. As a result, most Canadian opticianry organizations pledged to support the marketing phase of the professional identity.

2nd Quarter (JUL - SEP)

An environmental scan was conducted to provide the COBC with an overview of the current and emerging issues in the broader environment that are of significance to the College. Information gained by conducting the environmental scan will assist the College to: design more effective initiatives and programs for registrants; develop communication methods; anticipate and respond more effectively to government; and assist in the development of interprofessional cooperative initiatives with other health regulatory bodies.

In 2006, Alberta and British Columbia signed the Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA) to reduce barriers to trade, investment, and labour mobility between the two provinces. To work on bilateralism, the COBC had a joint strategic board planning session with the Alberta opticianry regulatory body, Alberta Opticians Association (AOA). As a result of the joint meeting, the COBC and AOA initiated four high level priority projects: sight testing, internet sales alternatives, public awareness, and joint registration policy.

The COBC participated in a workshop organized by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development to develop a pan-canadian principles-based framework and implementation plan. The COBC has been working with Alberta (AOA) and Ontario (COO) to develop a harmonized assessment and registration process to remove barriers to registration for internationally-trained opticians.

3rd Quarter (OCT - DEC)

The Committee for Succession Planning, Experience & Diversity (CSPED) organized the first registrant outreach and live-election to vote for new COBC board members in efforts to improve the participation of registrants in the electoral process.

The registration committee defined seven steps to registration and the registration process for three types of registration applications: graduates from accredited education, non-accredited education applicants, and nationally registered applicant. The registration committee worked with the AOA to implement a framework to assess the results of the prior learning assessment and recognition process (PLAR) - a process used to allow non-accredited education registration candidates to demonstrate and obtain recognition for knowledge and skills learned outside of formal training.

The COBC launched a media campaign throughout October to warn consumers about protecting their eyesight to from the use of non-corrective colored contact lenses to ensure a safe Halloween.

The Court of Appeal decision on the College of Opticians of British Columbia v. Coastal Contacts Inc. and Clearly Contacts Ltd. found that contact lenses should not be treated as 'over the counter' products and that a prescription is required in order to dispense contact lenses. The COBC welcomed the Court's decision, given that the goal of the College is to have respondents operate within the law and the standards of practice to ensure individual practitioners and companies provide the highest standard of vision care and accountability.

4th Quarter (JAN - MAR)

The first year of the marketing phase for the optician national professional identity campaign was launched internally. The marketing phase will be a long-term campaign aimed at raising public awareness of Licensed Opticians; educating the public about the role and services of Licensed Opticians; and encouraging the public to ask for a Licensed Optician. An educational website, national TV commercial, and dispensary branding collateral materials were among the deliverables created for the campaign.

The Ministry of Health announced proposed regulation amendments to the Opticians Regulation including removing most restrictions on who may dispense corrective eyewear and allowing independent sight-testing by opticians. The COBC immediately started preparing for the expansion in the optician scope of practice and developing communication plans to ensure registrants understand the new changes in legislation and how to adapt to changes in their practice environments.

The database application, data conversion and online competency gap analysis (CGA) portions of the Improving Online Assessment of International and Out-of-Province Applicants Project financially supported by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development was fully implemented and functional. This is a joint project between the COBC and AOA to develop a harmonized assessment and registration process to remove barriers to registration for internationally trained opticians as registrants in British Columbia or Alberta.

REGISTRATION

Registration Committee Annual Report

The goal of the Registration Committee is to ensure the public that only opticians who have met the standards of entry to the profession and demonstrated competencies are licensed to practice opticianry in British Columbia. Regulation reassures the health care consumer that licensed opticians are competent, are practicing to a high standard of care, and are held to a higher level of accountability for their actions. The College provides a measure of assurance to British Columbians that opticians who are registered with the College are properly trained, follow a standard of care, and behave ethically.

Legislation requires the Registration Committee to consider registration applicants from a number of different sources: (1) applicants from other provinces; (2) applicants from other countries and; (3) applicants with experiential learning and/or knowledge. In 2009/10, the Registrant Committee was tasked with reviewing the College's registration process and developing a prior learning and assessment recognition (PLAR) for all registration applicants through a fair, transparent, and open path to registration.

The Registration Committee determined seven steps in the COBC registration process: (1) applicant applies for registration; (2) preliminary assessment of application; (3) competency gap analysis (CGA) and/or interview; (4) registration committee assess information; (5) bridging; (6) examination and; (7) proceed to registration. The COBC bylaws and the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) allow for some registrant applicants to be exempted from certain steps in the registration process.

One of the legislative requirements for registration for opticians is to have completed a course of studies in a recognized program by the Board. Through the Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA), the Registration Committee worked with the National Accreditation Committee Opticians (NACO) to accept their accreditation of Canadian opticianry programs. The accredited status for these programs will be received every six years.

Canadian and international applicants who have not graduated from an accredited and recognized program or are not registered in good standing with another Canadian optician regulator may be accepted for admission where they have a combination of knowledge, skills, experience and abilities, which are, in the opinion of the Registration Committee, substantially equivalent to the requirements set out in the Bylaws for new applicants. An immediate challenge the Registration Committee will be facing is a large influx of students graduating from non-accredited opticianry program(s). As a result, the PLAR process has been carefully redesigned to maintain a valid process that treats all applicants with fairness, consistency, and transparency. The PLAR process also upholds accessibility for applicants, and accountability by maintaining high quality PLAR practices.

REGISTRATION COMMITTEE

Raheem Savja, Chair

John Kerns, Chair

Term Ended: January 31, 2010

Stephanie Weir, Vice Chair

Kent Ashby

Term Started: January 31, 2010

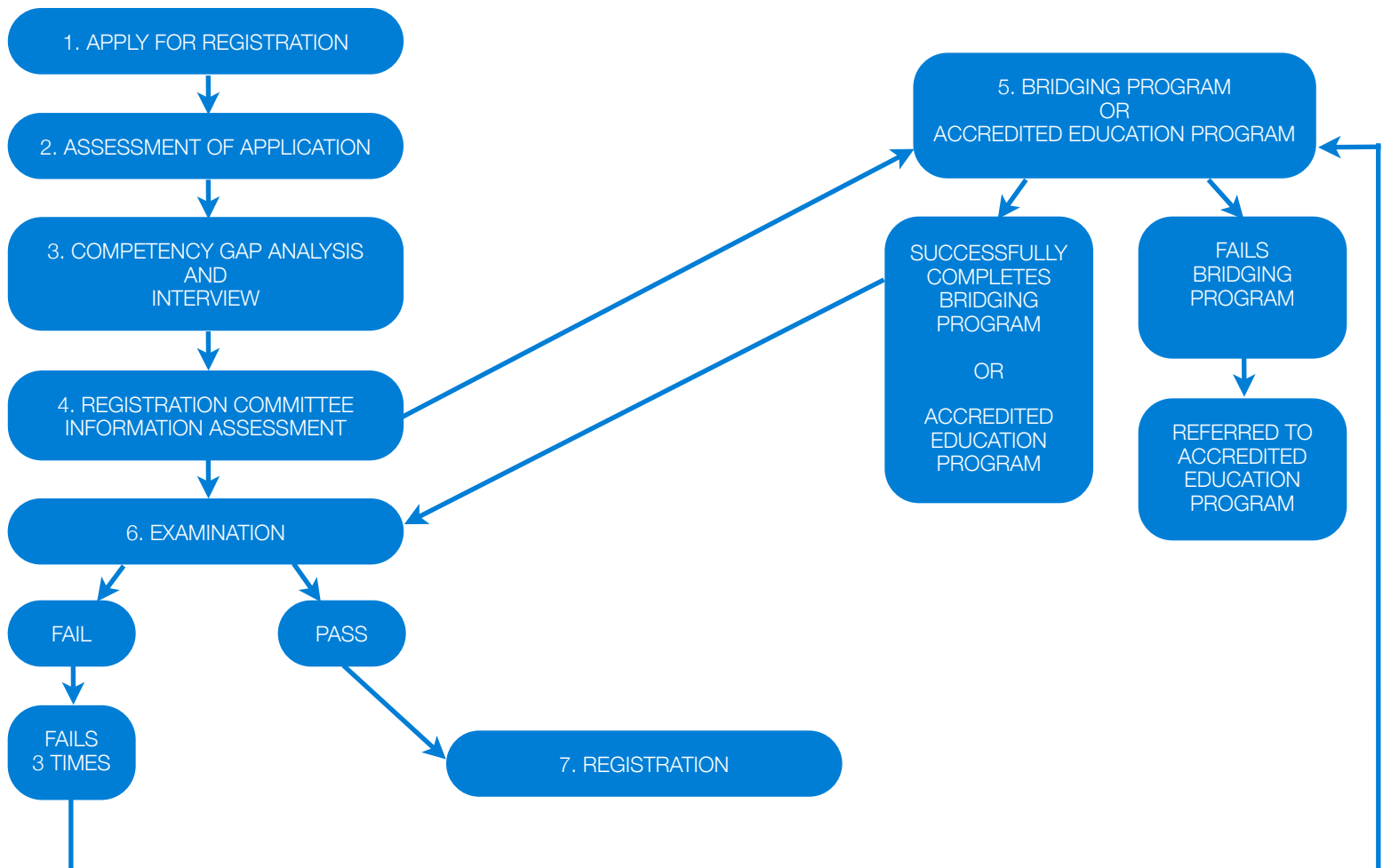
June Barens

Wayne Mullen

The Registration Committee continued to work with the optician regulatory body in Alberta to improve the online assessment tools of international and out-of-province applicants. This project was funded by a grant received from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development. In 2009/10, the COBC and AOA enhanced the registry databases, websites, and implemented an automated secure online competency gap analysis. As a result, BC and Alberta will increase access to the opticianry profession in the two provinces.

The core of registration is patient relations - ensuring that only qualified and competent opticians that can deliver quality vision care are registered. To build trust with BC's healthcare consumers, the College is obligated to educate the public and ensure they understand the skills and services of opticians. The new amendments to the Opticians Regulation, giving healthcare consumers more options but more responsibility for their own vision health decisions, further affirms the College's obligation to raise public awareness about choosing safe vision care from licensed opticians.

7 STEPS TO REGISTRATION



Registration Statistics

As of end of fiscal year March 31, 2010

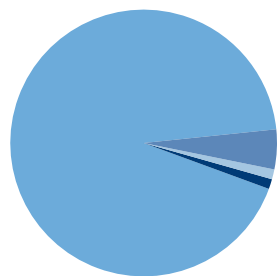
REGISTRATION RENEWAL

TOTAL ACTIVE REGISTRANTS	2009	2008	2007
Total	1127	1132	1160
Dispensing Opticians	419	424	440
Contact Lens Fitters	637	635	629
Non-practicing Registrants	71	73	91

NEW REGISTRATION APPLICANTS

TOTAL NEW APPLICANTS	2009	2008	2007
Total	321	243	372
New Dispensing Opticians	33	47	95
New Contact Lens Fitters	109	116	95
New Non-practicing Registrants	14	2	31
New Student Contact Lens Fitters	165	78	151

LETTERS OF GOOD STANDING



Total Request = 83

- Alberta 4
- Manitoba 1
- Nova Scotia 1
- Ontario 77

Canadian opticians have always recognized the importance of labour mobility occupational requirements across Canada. Currently nine provincial regulatory bodies, including the COBC, have signed the MRA to ensure that no barriers exist regarding labour mobility for Canadian opticians.

SUSPENSIONS

TOTAL SUSPENSIONS	2009	2008	2007
Total	146	125	124
Dispensing Opticians	37	33	37
Contact Lens Fitters	84	68	47
Non-practicing Registrants	25	24	40

EXAMINATIONS

Examination Annual Report

To qualify for registration, dispensing optician and/or contact lens fitter applicants are required to successfully pass the National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators’ (NACOR) national optical sciences examination. NACOR administers the national examination across Canada and the examination is used by nine provincial opticianry regulatory bodies as their entry-to-practice examination. To measure the key competencies required of entry-level opticians for safe and effective practice, eligible candidates are examined on the national Optical Sciences 1 - Eyeglass and Optical Science 2 - Contact Lens examinations.

The national examination is held in British Columbia over two weekends a year - one spring and one fall session. Applicants also have the option of writing the national optical sciences examination in any other province NACOR administers the examination. The administration of examinations requires close cooperation between COBC and NACOR. Since examinations are held in various locations throughout Canada, NACO sends an Examination Moderator to each sitting of the examination to ensure uniformity of exam application. The three-day examination sessions also require time, commitment and dedication from registrants to help run the examinations by working as examiners.

Examination Statistics

As of end of fiscal year March 31, 2010

EXAMINATION RESULTS

TOTAL EXAMINATION CANDIDATES	OPTICAL SCIENCES 1 - EYEGLASS	OPTICAL SCIENCES 2 - CONTACT LENS
Total	140	123
Passed	130	93
Failed	10	30

EXAMINATION STAFF

Debra Szteina, Chief Examiner

PATIENT RELATIONS

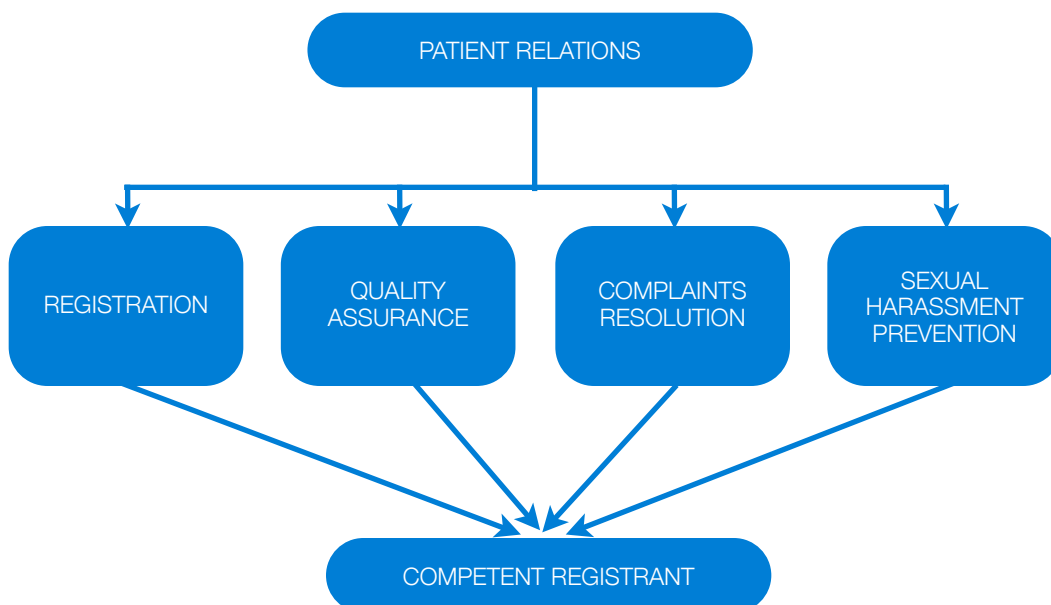
Patient Relations Committee Annual Report

During the past year, the College Board redirected the Patients Relations committee to widen its program from a prevention of professional misconduct of a sexual nature, as stated in the *Health Professions Act*, to a broader and more comprehensive program. After reading the patient relations program recommendations from the Ontario Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council (HPRAC)¹, the Board believes that the College should integrate patient relation activities through its operations.

According to HPRAC, the benefit of including other aspects of the professional-patient relationship is the improvement of health through developing the relationship between health care providers and patients. The purpose of each statutory program (registration, quality assurance, complaints resolution, and sexual harassment prevention) is to maintain competent health professionals to provide effective care in order to fulfill the College's underlying mandate of protecting the public.

The Patient Relations Committee will be adopting HPRAC's recommended framework to begin developing elements of a broad and comprehensive patient relations program: (1) Governance; (2) Information for the Public; and (3) Information for Members.

COLLEGE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK



¹ Ontario Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council. 2008. *A Report to Minister of Health and Long-Term Care on the Health Profession Regulatory Colleges' Patient Relations Programs*. http://www.hprac.org/en/reports/resources/hprac-PatientRelationsReportMay_08EnglishPDF.pdf (accessed June 14, 2010)

PATIENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

June Barens, Chair

John Kerns, Vice Chair
Term Started: January 31, 2010

Rajbinder Mann
Term Ended: January 31, 2010

Antonella Milani
Term Started: April 11, 2010

Dieter Saxer
Term Ended: January 31, 2010

Lina Tang
Term Ended: January 31, 2010

Wilson U

Lesley Wood Bernbaum
Term Started: January 31, 2010

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality Assurance Annual Report

According to the *Health Professions Act*, Part 1 Section 16 (2)(e), one of the duties and objectives of a College is “to establish and maintain a continuing competency program to promote high practice standards amongst registrants.” The continuing competency program is one of several quality assurance initiatives of the COBC designed to promote quality practice for the public’s protection.

Currently, the College supports opticians in maintaining acceptable standards and competence through mandatory continuing education for both practicing and non-practicing opticians. The COBC’s current mandatory continuing education (CE) model requires each optician to complete CE activities to obtain a number of continuing education credits within a thirty-six month period.

In 2009/10, the Quality Assurance (QA) Committee worked with various stakeholders, including continuing education providers, to develop a new CE model. While the purpose of CE activities is to obtain education, the general feedback from registrants is they attend CE activities to obtain credits. Apathy towards continuing education is a challenge facing all health professionals. The new CE model will be focused on directed learning, using the COBC’s online Competency Gap Analysis (CGA) tool to ensure opticians are learning and meeting competencies.

QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

Dieter Saxer, Chair
Term Started: January 31, 2010

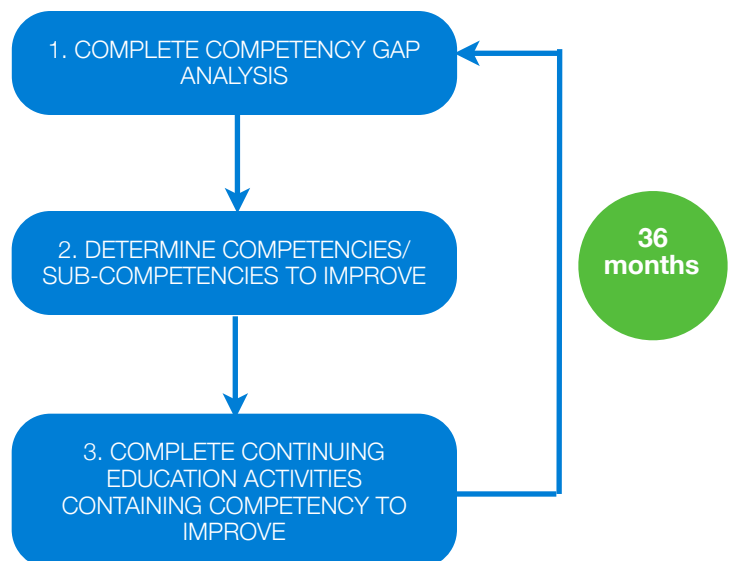
Herbie Kalsi

Christopher Lee

Aly Jamal

Lesley Wood Bernbaum
Term Started: January 31, 2010

NEW CONTINUING EDUCATION MODEL STEPS



The CGA was designed to meet the Canadian Competencies for Opticianry. Competencies set standards for professional qualification that all opticians in British Columbia must meet for registration. The CGA identifies any gaps in the competencies taught to the applicant and the competencies required to be an entry level optician in British Columbia.

The framework for the new CE model will require registrants to complete the CGA prior to choosing any CE activities. After the CGA results have been assessed to identify a registrant's weakness, he/she will identify CE activities that contain the competencies he/she needs improvement. The College will be working with CE providers to determine a series of competencies their CE activities will teach. Registrants will be awarded for completing the two halves of learning: (1) identifying their weaknesses and what they do not know and (2) pursuing directed learning.

This new CE model can help CE providers use their resources to make learning effective by teaching based on competency outcomes and giving registrants a directed reason to learn. In addition, the model can provide a solution to change registrant's mindset that they are completing CE programs not for credits but to obtain competencies. The ultimate goal of the new CE model is for registrants to have the ability to assess competency gaps and pursue a path of directed learning to achieve lifelong competency.

COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION

INQUIRY COMMITTEE

Lutz Sprecher, Chair

June Barens, Vice Chair

Alan Cheng

Zuheir Merali

Sara Moshurchak

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

Kent Ashby, Chair

Stephanie Weir, Vice Chair
Term Started: January 31, 2010

Herbie Kalsi

Rebecca Sit

John Moss

Ron Philip
Alternate member

Floyd Steinky
Alternate member

Rino Pirroddi
Alternate member

Inquiry and Discipline Annual Report

The College has the duty of investigating all complainants related to an opticians' professional practice. Complaints are typically initiated by members of the public and, to a lesser extent, other health care professionals. The COBC provides an online step-by-step guide to the complaints process and a standardized complaint form to ensure the public easily understands what to expect when filing a complaint. There is also a COBC staff member designated to explain the complaints process to complainants if necessary.

The Inquiry Committee endeavors to investigate each complaint in an unbiased, thorough and timely manner. Before coming to a resolution, the Committee will invite the registrant to respond to the complaint. However, without a response by the optician, the committee may act unilaterally. During the course of the investigation, the Committee may inspect products, interview and obtain statements from witnesses or other persons, inspect records and authorize undercover investigations. The Committee may take the following actions to resolve a complaint:

- ❖ Take no action (if the complaint is found to be trivial, frivolous or submitted in bad faith);
- ❖ Take any action it considers appropriate to resolve the matter between the complainant and the registrant;
- ❖ Reprimand or remedial action by consent; or
- ❖ Refer the matter to the Discipline Committee.

The majority of complaints are resolved through the Inquiry Committee process with only one complaint referred to Discipline in the past year.

Previously, if the complainant was dissatisfied with the decision of the Inquiry Committee, he/she had the right to appeal to the Board of the College. Under new legislation, the complainant, if he/she wishes to seek review of the decision, can do so through the Health Professions Review Board (HPRB). The HPRB is an administrative tribunal created under the Health Professions Act. Complainants may seek reviews regarding the timeliness and disposition of complaints. The HPRB provides a neutral forum where members of the public and health professionals can seek independent reviews of the College's decisions.

The Inquiry Committee will continue to ensure that the College's complaint, inquiry, and discipline processes are transparent and fair to the public of British Columbia.

Complaints Resolution Statistics

As of March 31, 2010, no files remained open.

COMPLAINTS SUMMARY

TOTAL COMPLAINTS	2009/10
Total	23
Allegations of unauthorized practice	5
Allegations of breach of professional conduct	0
Allegations of breach of Standards of Practice	12
Allegations of breach of the Health Professions Act	0
Allegations of breach of professional ethics and/or business practice	3
Allegations of false and misleading advertising	3

File Submissions:

- 2007/08 = 1
- 2008/09 = 5
- 2009/10 = 17

COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION SUMMARY

TOTAL COMPLAINTS RESOLUTIONS	2009/10
Total	23
Resolved by signed undertaking	2
Resolved by letter to remind registrant of the Standards of Practice	0
Resolved by mediated result	5
Resolved by remaking eyewear	2
Resolved by registrant-initiated resolution	2
Dismissed after inquiry committee investigation	10
Dismissed due to frivolous nature or complaint does not contain allegations that are subject to investigation	0
Complaint withdrawn	2

Discipline Statistics

As of end of fiscal year March 31, 2010

DISCIPLE SUMMARY

There was one file referred to the Discipline Committee in 2009/2010. The registrant was issued a citation at the direction of the Inquiry Committee. The registrant submitted a proposal for the resolution of the citation, which was endorsed by counsel for the College.

The proposal submitted by the registrant, pursuant to subsection 37.1(5) of the Health Professions Act, and endorsed by counsel for the College, was accepted by the Inquiry Committee.

Statement of Agreed Facts and Proposed Consent Resolution:

- ❖ The registrant undertakes not to fill or refill contact lenses or to fit contact lenses until he has completed a training program, passed the National Contact Lens Examinations, and registered with the College as a contact lens fitter;
- ❖ Serve a two week suspension;
- ❖ Pay a \$1000 fine; and
- ❖ Publication of the file summary on the COBC website.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

As of end of fiscal year March 31, 2010

STANDING COMMITTEES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Kerns (District 3), *Chair*
 Raheem Savja (District 1), *Vice Chair*
 Dieter Saxer (District 1)
 Stephanie Weir (District 2)
 Aly Jamal (District 4)
 Lutz Sprecher (District 5)
 Kent Ashby (Appointed)
 Elizabeth Cytra (Appointed)
 June Barens (Appointed)
 Lesley Wood Bernbaum (Appointed)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

John Kerns, *Chair*
 Raheem Savja, *Vice Chair*
 Elizabeth Cytra
 Stephanie Weir

REGISTRATION COMMITTEE

Raheem Savja, *Chair*
 Stephanie Weir, *Vice Chair*
 Kent Ashby
 June Barens
 Wayne Mullen

INQUIRY COMMITTEE

Lutz Sprecher, *Chair*
 June Barens, *Vice Chair*
 Alan Cheng
 Zuheir Merali
 Sara Moshurchak

PATIENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

June Barens, *Chair*
 John Kerns, *Vice Chair*
 Antonella Milani
 Wilson U
 Lesley Wood Bernbaum

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

Kent Ashby, *Chair*
 Stephanie Weir, *Vice Chair*
 Herbie Kalsi
 John Moss
 Rebecca Sit

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Elizabeth Cytra, *Chair*
 Nick Atkinson
 Michael Tsao

QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

Dieter Saxer, *Chair*
 Aly Jamal
 Herbie Kalsi
 Christopher Lee
 Lesley Wood Bernbaum

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Elizabeth Cytra, *Chair*
 Keon Kwan, *Auditor*

ADMINISTRATION

Nick Atkinson, *Registrar*
 Michael Tsao, *Deputy Registrar*
 Connie Chong, *Assistant Registrar*
 Brandi Park, *Assistant Registrar*
 Sherry Kaiway, *Office Manager*
 Debra Szteina, *Chief Examiner*

AD HOC COMMITTEES

POLICY GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Lutz Sprecher, *Chair*
 Elizabeth Cytra
 Scott Kling

COMMITTEE FOR SUCCESSION PLANNING, EXPERIENCE & DIVERSITY

Raheem Savja, *Chair*
 Elizabeth Cytra
 Michelle McLeod
 Dieter Saxer
 Clara Tam
 Stephanie Weir

MESSAGING COMMITTEE

June Barens, *Chair*
 Stephanie Weir
 John Kerns
 Lutz Sprecher

FINANCE

Financial Management Annual Report

The COBC remains committed to financial accountability and sustainability, and has control practices place to ensure these principles are maintained. The COBC Finance Committee delivers timely disclosures about the COBC's financial situation, and the Board of Directors regularly reviews the financials situation at every board meeting. The Chair of the Finance Committee is a publicly appointed member who meets independently with the Auditor.

Total expenses were higher than the previous year due to usual costs: legal costs for responding to challenges from BC College of Optics, and disciplinary hearing costs for responding to unauthorized practice. Approximately 50% of total legal costs were incurred due to legal challenges from BC College of Optics.

As a result, COBC incurred a \$139,503 deficit this year; however, the Board expects a decrease in legal fees for the upcoming fiscal year. This deficit lowers the total amount of (unrestricted Net Assets) money on reserve for 2009/10 to \$334,789, which can be used as a contingency fund to cover approximately six months of COBC expenses.

The COBC continued to undertake two major projects:

1. A public awareness and professional identity strategy to improve the public's understanding of the profession. The goal is to help the public understand changes to the profession and understand emerging issues relevant to their eye care. The COBC continues to champion and contributor to this project.
2. The COBC applied for and was awarded a grant of \$131,250 from the Government of British Columbia. Payments of \$47,000 were received in 2009/10 for the completion of the project. The COBC gratefully acknowledges the financial contribution of the Province of British Columbia and the Government of Canada in supporting the Improving Online Assessment of International and Out-of-Province Applicants Project.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Elizabeth Cytra, Chair

Nick Atkinson, Registrar

Michael Tsao, Deputy Registrar

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Elizabeth Cytra, Chair

Keon Kwan, Appointed Auditor

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

As of end of fiscal year March 31, 2010

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- 25** Statement of Cash Flow
- 26** Statement of Financial Position
- 27** Notes to Financial Statements



Auditor's Report

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE OF OPTICIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

I have audited the statement of financial position of the College of Opticians of British Columbia as at March 31, 2010 and the statements of operations, changes in net assets, and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the College's management. My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit.

I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that I plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In my opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the College as at March 31, 2010 and the results of its operations, changes in net assets, and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Burnaby, B.C.
July 7, 2010

Keon Kwan & Company
Certified General Accountant

Statement of Operations

As of end of fiscal year March 31, 2010

	2010	2009
REVENUES		
Registration fees	\$ 516,956	\$ 508,050
Examination fees	94,500	78,400
Contribution from the Province of British Columbia	25,250	- 0
Interest income	9,214	22,001
Amortization of deferred contribution (Note 7)	8,646	- 0
Administrative fees and other income	6,882	5,648
Contribution from National/Provincial Associations	- 0	17,000
	661,448	631,099
EXPENSES		
Accounting and audit	5,000	5,000
Amortization of capital assets	4,150	7,298
Amortization of database	6,511	- 0
Bank and credit card charges	15,230	14,310
Board and committee meetings	40,883	25,243
Dues, licenses and insurance	11,977	13,840
Examinations	38,751	43,400
Hearings	29,542	- 0
Legal	150,507	63,355
Office supplies and services	40,606	22,898
Postage	8,189	12,220
Printing	12,637	17,319
Professional development - Directors	15,791	2,505
Professional development - Staff	3,611	3,575
Public awareness and promotion	84,201	73,920
Rent	52,666	46,380
Salaries and benefits	285,652	247,817
Travel	45,128	29,188
Expense recoveries	(50,081)	- 0
	800,951	628,268
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	\$ (139,503)	\$ 2,831

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

As of end of fiscal year March 31, 2010

	Invested in Capital Assets	Unrestricted	2010	2009
NET ASSETS				
Balance, beginning of year	\$ 5,764	\$ 475,522	\$ 481,286	478,455
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses	(4,150)	(135,353)	(139,503)	2,831
Investment in capital assets	4,710	(4,710)	- 0	- 0
Balance, end of year	6,324	335,459	341,783	481,286
Accumulated unrealized gains and losses included directly in net assets, beginning of year	- 0	(2,386)	(2,386)	- 0
Unrealized gains and losses on available-for-sale financial assets	- 0	1,716	1,716	(2,386)
Accumulated unrealized gains and losses included directly in net assets, end of year	- 0	(670)	(670)	(2,386)
	6,324	334,789	341,113	478,900

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

Statement of Cash Flows

As of end of fiscal year March 31, 2010

	2010	2009
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses	\$ (139,503)	\$ 2,831
Adjust for non-cash items:		
Amortization of deferred contribution	(8,646)	- 0
Amortization of capital assets	4,150	7,298
Amortization of database	6,511	
Loss on disposal of capital asset	- 0	243
	(137,488)	10,372
Changes in non-cash working capital items:		
Goods and services tax recoverable	(3,926)	- 0
Accounts receivable	(17,051)	- 0
Prepaid expenses	(108)	(3,165)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	81,810	18,647
Deferred registration fees	(220,490)	11,531
Cash provided by (used for) operating activities	(297,253)	37,385
FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Proceeds from deferred contribution	21,750	82,000
Cash provided by (used for) financing activities	21,750	82,000
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Proceeds from investments	110,785	9,585
Proceeds from disposal of capital asset	- 0	315
Purchase of capital assets	(4,710)	(1,704)
Database development expenditures	(52,282)	(25,855)
Cash provided by (used for) investing activities	53,793	(17,659)
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH	(221,710)	101,726
CASH, BEGINNING OF YEAR	322,532	220,806
CASH, END OF YEAR	\$ 100,822	\$ 322,532

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

Statement of Financial Position

As of end of fiscal year March 31, 2010

	2010	2009
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$ 100,822	\$ 322,532
Goods and services tax recoverable	3,926	- 0
Accounts receivable	17,051	- 0
Prepaid expenses	18,373	18,265
	140,172	340,797
INVESTMENTS (Note 3)	414,951	524,021
CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 4)	6,324	5,764
DATABASE (Note 5)	71,626	25,855
	\$ 633,073	\$ 896,437
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (Note 6)	\$ 155,256	\$ 73,447
Deferred registration fees	41,600	262,090
	196,856	335,537
DEFERRED CONTRIBUTION (Note 7)	95,104	82,000
	291,960	417,537
NET ASSETS		
Invested in capital assets	6,324	5,764
Unrestricted - cumulative excess of revenues over expenses	335,459	475,522
Unrestricted - unrealized loss on financial assets	(670)	(2,386)
	341,113	478,900
	\$ 633,073	\$ 896,437
Commitments (Note 8)		
Contingent liabilities (Note 10)		

APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

Notes to Financial Statements

As of end of fiscal year March 31, 2010

1 GENERAL

The College of Opticians of British Columbia (the "College") was established under the Health Professions Act of B.C. in December 1994. Operations commenced in April 1995.

The mandate of the College is to serve and protect the public by regulating the practice of opticianry in British Columbia in Accordance with the Health Professions Act, Opticians Regulation and By-Laws.

2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Revenue Recognition

The College follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. More specifically, revenue from courses, examination fees, and for other programs where revenue is identified with delivery of services, is recognized when the courses, examinations and other services are provided. Amounts charged for all other fees are recognized as revenue in the year received.

Unrealized gains and losses on available-for-sale financial assets are included directly in net assets until the asset is removed from the statement of financial position. Unrealized gains and losses on held-for-trading financial assets are recognized in the statement of operations. Other unrestricted investment income is recognized as revenue when earned.

Investments

Investments are classified as available-for-sale and recorded at market value.

Capital Assets, Database and Amortization

Purchased capital assets and the cost of the database upgrade are carried at cost less accumulated amortization. The College provides for amortization of these assets on a three year straight-line basis.

Income Taxes

Income taxes are not reflected in these financial statements as the College is a not-for-profit organization.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the financial position date and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the year. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

Financial Instruments

All financial instruments are classified into one of five categories: held-for-trading, held-to-maturity, loans and receivables, available-for-sale financial assets or other financial liabilities. All financial instruments are initially measured on the statement of financial position at fair value. Subsequent measurement and changes in fair value will depend on their initial classification. Loans and receivables, held-to-maturity investments and other financial liabilities are measured at amortized cost. Held-for-trading financial assets and liabilities are measured at fair value and changes in fair value are recognized as revenue in the statement of operations. Available-for-sale financial assets are measured at fair value with changes in fair value recorded directly in net assets until the asset is removed from the statement of financial position.

The College has classified its cash as held for trading and its investments as available-for-sale which are both measured at fair value. Accounts payable and accrued liabilities is classified as other liabilities which is measured at amortized cost.

3 INVESTMENTS

	2010	2009
Bonds	\$ 100,461	\$ 98,226
Canadian Money Market mutual fund	211,125	204,580
Guaranteed Investment Certificate	100,000	100,000
Accrued interest	3,365	3,365
Cash at broker account	- 0	117,850
	<u>\$ 414,951</u>	<u>\$ 524,021</u>
Investments with maturities within one year	<u>\$ 314,951</u>	<u>\$ 322,430</u>
Investments with maturities longer than one year	<u>\$ 100,000</u>	<u>\$ 201,591</u>

The cost plus accrued interest of the College's investments at March 31, 2010 was \$415,621 (2009 - \$526,407).

4 CAPITAL ASSETS

	2010			2009
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net	Net
Computer equipment	\$ 35,812	\$ 30,384	\$ 5,428	\$ 3,014
Office furniture and equipment	40,689	39,793	896	2,750
	<u>\$ 76,501</u>	<u>\$ 70,177</u>	<u>\$ 6,324</u>	<u>\$ 5,764</u>

5 DATABASE

The College completed the upgrade on its database application on January 2010. The cost of the upgrade will be amortized on a three year straight-line basis from the date of completion.

	2010	2009
Database, beginning of year	\$ 25,855	\$ 0
Expenditures during the year	52,282	25,855
Less: amortization of database	(6,511)	- 0
Database, end of year	<u>\$ 71,626</u>	<u>\$ 25,855</u>

6 ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCRUED LIABILITIES

	2010	2009
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 117,706	\$ 38,855
Payroll deductions payable	6,469	5,129
Goods and services tax payable	- 0	7,725
Vacation payable	31,081	21,738
	<u>\$ 155,256</u>	<u>\$ 73,447</u>

7 DEFERRED CONTRIBUTION

The College completed the upgrade on its database application on January 2010. The cost of the upgrade will be amortized on a three year straight-line basis from the date of completion.

	2010	2009
Deferred contribution, beginning of year	\$ 82,000	\$ 0
Contributions received during the year	21,750	82,000
Less: amortization of deferred contribution	(8,646)	- 0
Deferred contribution, end of year	<u>\$ 95,104</u>	<u>\$ 82,000</u>

8 COMMITMENTS

(a) The College's premises are leased under a sublease arrangement expiring on June 29, 2013. The total rent to that date is \$88,796 plus its proportionate share of operating costs. Included in the sublease arrangement is a cancellation clause allowing the sublandlord to terminate the lease by giving eight months notice to the College. Assuming the cancellation clause will not be exercised, the minimum lease payments due for the next four years is as follows:

2011	\$	27,322
2012		27,322
2013		27,322
2014		6,830
		<u>88,796</u>
	\$	88,796

(b) The College has a photocopier lease expiring on October 1, 2015. The total rental to that date is \$7,980. The minimum lease payments due for the next five years is as follows:

2011	\$	1,680
2012		1,680
2013		1,680
2014		1,680
2015		1,260
		<u>7,980</u>
	\$	7,980

9 LINE OF CREDIT

The College has a loan facility with its bank consisting of:

Operating Line of Credit	\$	50,000
Corporate Visa		10,000
		<u>60,000</u>
	\$	60,000

The operating line of credit carries an interest rate of prime plus 1%. As at March 31, 2010 there was no amount outstanding on the operating line of credit.

10 CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

The College has been named as a defendant in the following lawsuits:

- a defamation suit from Coastal Contacts and Clearly Contacts
- an interference with business statement of claim from the B.C. College of Optics

Legal counsel to the College is unable to assess its potential liability, if any, resulting from the lawsuits. No provision for possible loss has been included in these financial statements.



COLLEGE *of* OPTICIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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