



June 2, 2009

Paul Sieving, M.D., Ph.D., Director
National Eye Institute/National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 6A03
31 Center Drive, MSC2510
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-2510

Dear Dr. Sieving:

On behalf of the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) and our 20 member institutions, I wish to offer congratulations to you and your staff on the National Eye Institute's 40th anniversary.

ASCO's member schools and colleges are proud to be playing a growing role through NEI-supported research in the battle against vision impairment and eye disease. In 2006-2007, ASCO member institutions were engaged in 116 NEI funded research projects totaling over \$23 million, which represents our members' largest source of research support. Current NEI-sponsored research spans the vision life cycle from pediatric eye disease to macular degeneration.

Our school and college based clinics and member institutions' alumni also serve on the "front lines" in the fight against eye disease and have experienced firsthand the advances in diagnosis and treatment that have emerged from NEI funded research. We are especially pleased that the NEI has been a leader on the NIH campus in the translation of its basic research, and the optometric community is pleased to serve in these clinical research networks. We also pay tribute of NEI's leadership in population-based research in areas such as vision disparities among diverse ethnic populations.

We look forward to working with NEI in the future as the incidence and burden of eye disease will grow larger with an aging and more ethnically diverse population. We wish the NEI continued success in the decades ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John F. Amos". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

John F. Amos, OD
President