



ALBERTA COLLEGE  
AND ASSOCIATION  
OF OPTICIANS

Your Vision, Our Focus



2018 Annual Report

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## OFFICE STAFF

- *Maureen Hussey, RO, RCLP - Executive Director/Registrar*
- *Sandi Williamson RO, RCLP - Regulatory Standards Director (half-year)*
- *Julie Therou Zechel, RO, RCLP - Regulatory Standards Director (half-year)*
- *Kristie Murray - Office Manager*
- *Zaneta Ilievska - Accounting Manager*
- *Kalen Hussey - Digital Communicaitons*
- *Kellie Watts - Registration Assistant*
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# YOUR VISION, OUR FOCUS

## Our Mission

To protect the public by keeping them informed and by pro-actively regulating and educating our members...

## Our Vision

To be dedicated to providing quality service by competent and educated health practitioners. We strive to achieve our vision by being progressive, accountable and accessible to the public and our members

## Our Values

Accountability, Ethicality, Fairness, Effectiveness, Openness, Transparency

# Introduction

## ***About this Report***

The 2018 annual report covers highlights of the College/Association's initiatives for the fiscal year from January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018.

## ***About the College & Association***

The Alberta College and Association of Opticians is the regulatory body established to govern the practice of Opticianry in Alberta.

The Alberta College and Association of Opticians (ACAO) exists to regulate and improve the practice of Opticianry by ensuring that Opticians provide quality professional care in eye health.

The Alberta College and Association of Opticians was established in 1961. The ACAO ensures Opticians are providing competent and effective care to their patients. The main function of the ACAO is to protect the public.

*The ACAO is responsible for:*

- Assessment, registration and licensing of all Opticians and Contact Lens Practitioners in Alberta
- Interpretation of the Health Professions Act, the Opticians Regulation and the Bylaws
- Public and registrant complaints and inquiries
- Establishment of standards of practice and guidelines
- Monitor the competence of Opticians through continuing education
- Protect the public from unsafe or unethical Opticianry practice
- Protect the use of regulated title designation and initials, RO and RCLP
- Review the professional conduct of members based on complaints
- Provide continuing competency to Opticians that will promote ethical practice and provide tools and resources for our Opticians to continue to enhance their knowledge and skills

# Message from the President

## ***Bill 21-An Act to Protect Patients***

As frontline health care practitioners, Opticians have the responsibility to ensure that we keep the safety of the public as our main priority. In the last year the ACAO Council and our very dedicated staff have worked diligently together on projects like Bill 21- An Act to Protect Patients (amendment to the Health Professions Act) that had very tight time constraints. The ACAO board and staff are committed to constantly improving upon how we protect the public.



## ***Scope of Practice***

We continue to pursue the ability to increase our Scope of Practice, we believe that having the ability to be able to refer patients that come to our office with complaints that would indicate that the patient seek treatment directly from an Ophthalmologist. Currently if we have a patient that needs to be treated by an Ophthalmologist we would send them to an Optometrist or direct them to a hospital. We believe we could save the healthcare system time and resources if we had the ability to refer and refract. With the ability to refract without having the prescription signed off by an Ophthalmologist we believe we can continue to save our patients and the health care system, health care dollars.

## ***Quality Assurance Program***

The ACAO continues to move forward with our new Quality Assurance program. This program is a knowledge based program. All opticians will take a self- assessment test to determine areas of improvement, which will allow for Opticians the ability to improve and build upon their skills. Once the program has been rolled-out we will start to implement the ability to become specialized in other areas including low vision, dry eye syndrome and other areas.

## *President Message continued*

### **SAIT**

The ACAO and The Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) have been working closely together on the implementation of a two-year fulltime Optician course. If SAIT is able to offer this course, the program will graduate students with both Eyeglass and Contact Lens. By having both licenses this will address the need in the industry for qualified Opticians in today's market and the market of tomorrow.

### ***Ransomware Attack***

In December of 2018 the ACAO's IT specialist's servers had been hacked and our systems were affected with a ransomware attack. We had just completed a server upgrade and initially lost access to 6 months of data however our IT specialist was able to recover all of our data. The ACAO has since implemented additional security protocols and will continue to upgrade with recommended security protocols from our IT specialist. The ACAO has informed our members on the attack and have requested members to change their passwords, along with information on how to protect from being victims of a similar attack. Reports were also submitted to the Privacy Commissioner's Office.

I've enjoyed serving as President over the past year. It is important to be involved in your profession and it is very important and rewarding to help mold the changes to our future.

*Respectfully Submitted,*



*Dean Thompson, RO, RCLP  
ACAO President*



# Registrar /Executive Director

## **Bill 21 – An Act to Protect Patients**

On November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the Alberta Legislature passed a new law: Bill 21, *An Act to Protect Patients*; the majority of the law will go into effect on April 1, 2019. Bill 21 focuses on patient safety and clear consequences for health professionals who commit acts of sexual abuse and/or sexual misconduct against their patients. The new law applies to all health professionals regulated under the *Health Professions Act*, and as such it is important for opticians to become informed about the bill.



Bill 21 provides survivors of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct with access to treatment and counselling. It also establishes clear mandatory penalties for sexual abuse and sexual misconduct when perpetrated by a health professional on their patient, and requires disciplinary actions for sexual abuse and sexual misconduct to be posted online and be publicly available.

To ensure public safety, regulated members who are found by a hearing tribunal to have committed sexual abuse will no longer be allowed to practice. If a hearing tribunal finds a regulated member's actions constitute sexual misconduct, the health professional's practice permit will be suspended.

The Alberta College and Association of Opticians supports this addition to the legislation, and we want to ensure that all of our members have the opportunity to learn about Bill 21 and the changes that it includes. The vast majority of our members will not notice a difference in the way they practice, however the legislation highlights the importance of being aware of the relationship between health professionals and their patients. The College plans to offer articles and continuing competency courses in relation to Bill 21 to help you become informed.

## **Standard of Practice for Boundary Violations**

This is the new standard that we sent out to members and stakeholders for comments. I was grateful to get so much feedback and we took much of it into account when we were editing before sending to the government for their review. We sent this to members first, then made changes, sent it to council for approval and finally to the lawyer for his comments. We submitted it to the government before the required deadline and received back from them some suggested changes. Some of the things we were trying to say (particularly our definition of a patient and the amount of time between seeing them as a patient and being able to date) were rejected. We reconsidered our submission, sent it back to council and the lawyer and resubmitted to the government. They have now accepted our standard of practice for professional boundaries as submitted.

We sent out the accepted version to members in a message from the registrar in April 2019. We have also submitted to the government a proposal to revise the entirety of our Standards of Practice.

### ***Continuing Education to Quality Assurance***

June 30 of 2017 was the end of the three-year continuing education cycle for opticians in Alberta. July 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 saw the beginning of the last cycle in the traditional model of continuing education which ends June of 2020. A new requirement introduced this year is the information supporting the government mandated changes to how we treat sexual assault and sexual misconduct. There will be a mandatory continued education piece related to Bill 21 legislation which will be introduced for all opticians to complete in this three year cycle for continuing competency.

July 1<sup>st</sup> of 2020 will launch a new program of quality assurance. One of the focuses for 2019 will be making sure members are informed and understand the coming changes. The majority of optical regulators in Canada are undertaking a change. By working together, we greatly reduce expenditures of time and money. This new program strives to be more adaptive to each member's educational goals. With the new quality assurance program, opticians will be able to identify and correct their individual deficiencies to better strengthen their competence. We have done a series of informative sessions around the province to get the word out and will continue to reach out to members. COBC launched this program last year so we will spend some time working with them to make sure this is right for our members. That means learning from their experiences and making changes.

### ***Communication***

We launched a new website in September that we hope is more interactive and easier to keep updated.

In our effort to get the word out to opticians, we continue with a series of communication strategies. Social Media at the College now includes Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. We have contests aimed at members which offer prizes and hopefully start some interesting discussions. We also have a monthly e-newsletter, the traditional quarterly Eighth Line Newsletter (now available on the website) and a YouTube channel.





On our YouTube Channel, we have videos that the College has produced for members, as well as curated playlists full of informative videos from other YouTube sources. Why would opticians want that? If we have included it in a playlist, the information has been vetted for accuracy. Opticians will find videos on a range of topics, including optical calculations, keratometry, biomicroscopy, radiuscope, and more. It is the ideal place for a student or supervisor to go to get information in easily consumable video formats. We have recently developed a chatroom to be launched this spring which will allow members to interact without the office being involved. We are hoping that this will encourage questions and answers from students and licenses of an optical nature.

### ***Changes to Practice Permits and Receipts***

We are working on processes to reduce the mailing costs that have become very high over the past few years. We have developed a new permit for the members to hang in their offices. The permits sent out last year left something to be desired aesthetically. We have redesigned and are getting ready to send out one final new one.

This certificate of registration will remain in place permanently and be supplemented by an annual permit. The card must be produced upon request, but it can be printed off any time. The member will log into their online profile to access the annual card and any receipts. We are confident that this will reduce office requests and mailing costs.

### ***Financial Outlook***

The Alberta College and Association of Opticians was in a positive position at the end of the 2017 financial year. While this positive balance was just a screenshot in time, we continue to take our planning very seriously. We worked very hard to reverse the position of previous years and were very successful. For the 2018 year we had another healthy positive balance.

Money was taken from the discipline contingency fund for the investigation and hearing costs previously and that money has already started to be replaced as fines and costs are paid by the members who were charged.

We are grateful to all of our opticians for all of their the hard work and professional judgement that they displayed in dealing with the public. Our complaints remain at a record low and opticians should all be commended for being part of that.



## ***Elections***

We had a healthy slate of candidates for elections. Three positions are open and six members have put forward their nomination forms to fill those positions. It is gratifying to see this kind of interest. I hope that the candidates who do not make it onto council this year will volunteer for committees so that they can remain engaged, and I look forward to seeing them run again in the future.

## ***Ransomware Attack***

On December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018, we shut down our server when hackers used a ransomware virus to encrypt our data and hold it hostage. The virus was discovered and quarantined in the same day, and the server was shut down to prevent further access and allow our technical support to take stock of what happened. The server is a shared space, and a few other organizations were also affected by this attack; consequently, we were not the only ones who needed help during the restoration period, which is part of the reason it took so long.

We worked with our providers, the Privacy Commissioner, and the Edmonton Police Service over this time and into 2019. All data was recovered and our financial outlay was mostly covered through our Cyber insurance.

## ***Accreditation of the Educational Institutions***

As one of its primary projects, NACOR is charged with developing, coordinating and managing a national accreditation process for opticianry programs. The primary objective of this initiative is the identification of those opticianry educational programs which meet NACOR academic requirements and criteria for accreditation.



The following Optical Programs have completed the NACOR Accreditation Process:

<b>Educational Institution</b>	<b>Expiry Date of Accreditation</b>
Georgian College Opticianry Program	December 31, 2021
Seneca College Opticianry Program	December 31, 2021
Douglas College Dispensing Optician Program	December 31, 2021
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology Optical Sciences Program	December 31, 2021
Oulton College Optician Program	May 31, 2019
College communautaire du Nouveau - Brunswick	May 31, 2019
Stenberg College Dispensing Optician Diploma Program	November 30, 2019
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology Opticianry Program - French	November 30, 2019

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Maureen Hussey, RO, RCLP  
ACAO Registrar/Executive Director*

# Our Public Members



Judy Todd

The Alberta College and Association of Opticians (ACAO) is required under the Health Professions Act to have three public members on its Board of Directors. The role of a public member is to bring new and different perspectives and expertise to the board's discussions and to ensure the ACAO board acts in the best interest of the public and meets the requirements of the Health Professions Act. The appointments for the current public members Judy Todd, Jennifer Wheaton and Shaffin Kherani run to October 24, 2020.



Jennifer Wheaton

The Board as a whole has focused the development of a strategic plan to guide its work. It met with a Board Development Consultant, set a number of goals and put some new structures such as establishing new committees and/or restructuring committees to achieve those goals. A great deal of work was done to update board policies and procedures. As public members we participated in these committees.

One of the most significant things that occurred during 2018 was that the ACAO computer system was hacked. As public members we were very impressed with how the ACAO staff managed this very difficult time. The board was kept well informed and up to date on what was being done and how things were going. With hard work and dedication the staff did an amazing job of keeping the office running while doing its best to recover information.



Shaffin Kherani

Judy Todd is a retired registered Social Worker. She worked for 35 years with Child and Family Services in numerous roles and has been and continues to be an active member of the Alberta Association of Social Worker as a member and on occasion chairperson of their Hearing Tribunals and Hearing Review Committees as well as a complaint investigator.



Jennifer Wheaton is a licensed Paramedic and currently works as a Manager of Quality & Patient Safety for Emergency Medical Services at Alberta Health Services. For many years, Jennifer served the Alberta College of Paramedics as a member of the Conduct and Competency Committee and served as Conduct and Competency Committee Chair for two terms.

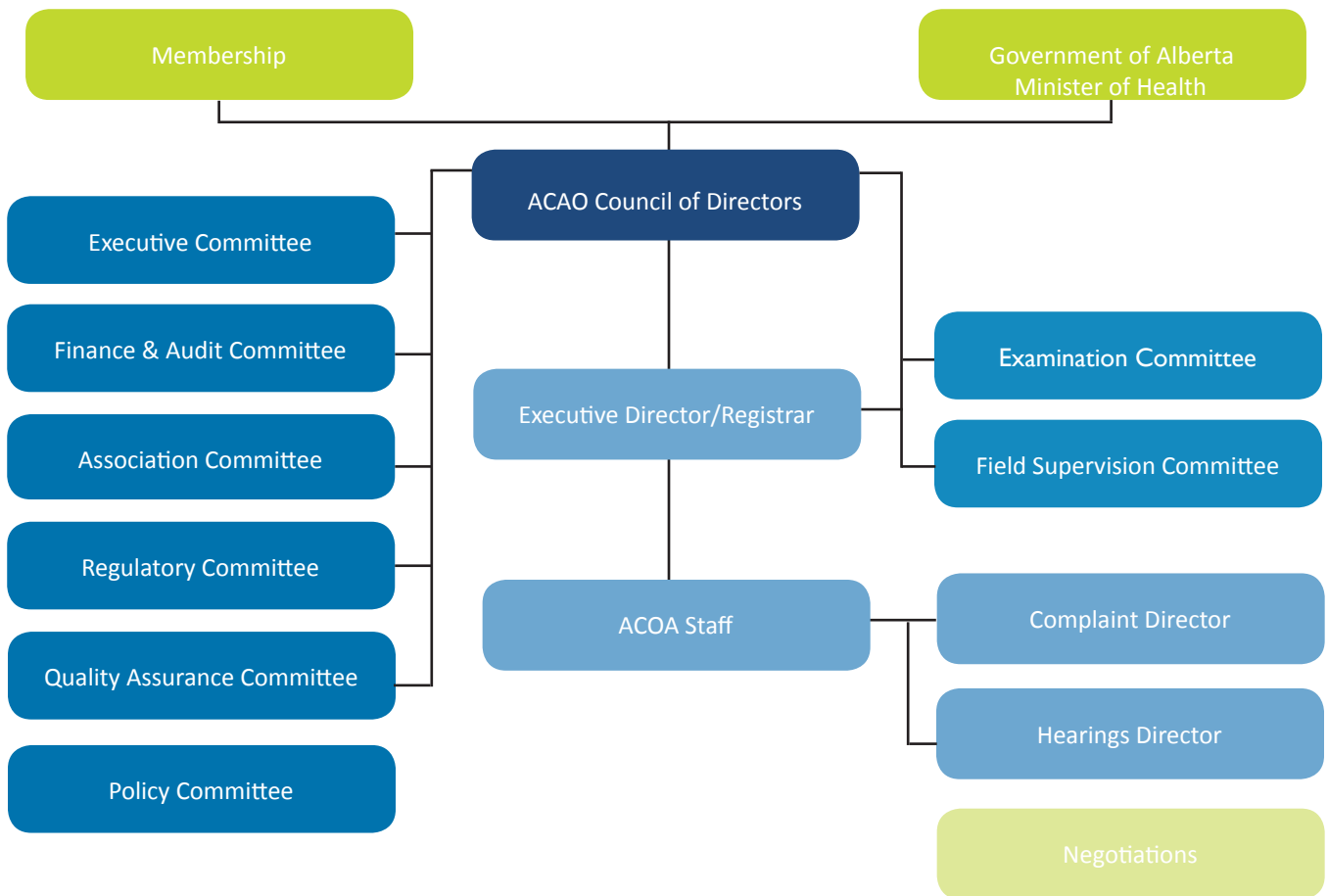
Shaffin Kherani's professional background includes diverse experience in finance, stakeholder relations, policy and operations management with the University of Alberta, Government of Alberta, various private sector industries and now with the City of Edmonton. His post-secondary education consists of two Master's Degrees including an MBA. In addition to the ACAO, he currently serves as a Public Member for the Edmonton and Northern Alberta Mental Health Appeal board and as an Attendance Board Member with the Ministry of Education.

As public members we continue to be impressed with the caliber of the staff in the ACAO office and the knowledge and dedication of the 12 board members to the profession of Optician. The board has taken concrete steps to improve its functioning and value to its members. We look forward to working with the Board over the next year.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
ACAO Public Members*

# Governance & Organizational Structure

The ACAO's committees encompass areas that reflect the Health Professions Act's mandate. These consist of both regulatory and governance committees and are comprised of Public Members and Members of the Alberta College and Association of Opticians. The Negotiations committee is an arms-length committee designed to negotiate fees on behalf of Opticians in Alberta. Field Supervision and Examinations pulls its field supervisors and examiners from the general membership.





# 2018 Council



Dean Thompson, RO, RCLP



Erin Clarke, RO, RCLP



Gene Kerns, RO, RCLP



Udo Hanebaum, RO, RCLP



Janet Sochatsky, RO, RCLP



Randy Bradley, RO



Sana Manzar, RO



Val Pryma, RO, RCLP



Margaret Cayenne, RO, RCLP



# COMMITTEES

## **Association**

Val Pryma, RO, RCLP - Chair  
Erin Clarke, RO, RCLP  
Udo Hanebuam, RO, RCLP  
Kristin Lindsay, RO

## **Regulatory Committee**

Gene Kerns, RO, RCLP - Chair  
Margaret Cayenne, RO, RCLP  
Judy Todd, Public Member  
Janet Sochatsky, RO, RCLP  
Sukh Garcha, RO, RCLP

## **Finance & Audit**

Randy Bradley, RO - Chair  
Udo Hanebaum, RO, RCLP  
Janet Sochatsky, RO, RCLP  
Shaffin Kherani, Public Member

## **Quality Assurance**

Gene Kerns, RO, RCLP  
Dean Thompson, RO, RCLP  
Sana Manzar, RO  
Udo Hanebaum, RO, RCLP  
Stephanie Amyotte, RO  
Kathleen Plishka, RO

## **Examinations**

Karla Charland, RO, RCLP -Chair  
Chief Examiner - Contact Lens  
Chief Examiner - Eyeglass

## **Field Supervision**

Karla Charland, RO RCLP - Chair  
Field Supervisors

## **Hearings & Complaint Review**

Dan Losey, RO, RCLP - Chair  
Bud Busenius, RO, RCLP  
Sylvia Mik, RO, RCLP  
Jasmina Miskic, RO  
Sukh Garcha, RO, RCLP  
Kathie Melzer, RO  
Debbie Burgess, RO, RCLP  
Laura Lazenby-Pashko, RO, RCLP  
Lois Stedel, RO, RCLP  
Public Member, Appointed

## **Negotiations**

Rick Miller, RO, RCLP - Chair  
Tracey Woywitka, RO

# REGULATORY FUNCTIONS





# CONTINUING COMPETENCE



## Overview

The Alberta College and Association of Opticians is responsible for monitoring Opticians' performance and assuring the public that it meets required standards. The Alberta College and Association of Opticians have committed to ensuring quality improvement for Opticians by mandating our Continuing Competency Program (CCP).

### *Continuing Education to Quality Assurance*

June 30 of 2017 was the end of the three-year continuing education cycle for opticians in Alberta. July 1st saw the beginning of the last cycle in the traditional model of continuing education which ends June of 2020. The majority of optical regulators in Canada are undertaking this change. By working together, we greatly reduce expenditures of time and money. July 1, 2020 will launch a new program of quality assurance. This program strives to be more adaptive to each member's educational goals. With the new quality assurance program, opticians will be able to identify and correct their individual deficiencies to better strengthen their competence. We have done a series of informative sessions around the province to get the word out and will continue to reach out to members.

# Quality Assurance Committee

## Dean Thompson RO, RCLP - Chair



The Alberta College and Association of Opticians (ACAO) Quality Assurance (QA) Committee continues to work in conjunction with the College of Opticians of British Columbia (COBC) QA Committee and representatives from Colleges in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Nova Scotia to develop a new Continuing Competency Program (CCP) that will encourage our members to establish and maintain high practice standards. The COBC rolled out their new CCP in April 2018, to one-third of their membership

with a plan to phase-in their program. The ACAO has benefitted from reviewing the procedures the COBC has employed to introduce the new program to their membership. During our teleconferences with the COBC QA Committee we have been able to identify some of the information they have had trouble communicating to their members about the upcoming changes and how they, the member, would be affected.

The ACAO has taken this information and has regularly published articles in its monthly e-newsletters and quarterly Eighth Line Newsletter, presenting interactive presentations as well as presentations during our AGM which was held in May 2018 and during meet your councillor events where ACAO members can interact with their councillors in a small group atmosphere. The ACAO QA committee is also committed to participating in any live in-person events held by the ACAO over the next two years to continue to keep our members informed of the upcoming changes to their CCP.

We will continue to collaborate with the COBC QA committee as they roll out their program and we finalize our plans. This collaboration has allowed us to share costs and resources which are currently being focused on the development of the necessary software to host an interactive online portal to manage the new CCP.

With the implementation of the new Program in BC this year, I anticipate the ACAO QA Committee will be even more active in 2019, identifying and working on areas of concern and to correct any issues discovered during BC's initial roll out. It is our hope that Alberta will benefit from rolling out two years behind BC and that we will have a seamless transition from our current credit based CCP to the new evidence based CCP.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Quality Assurance Committee*

# Regulatory Committee



## Gene Kerns RO, RCLP - Chair

This past year has been a busy, challenging, but exciting one for all of us that serve on the Regulatory Committee. We have had a number of meetings via teleconference, in person, and of course at the Board level in our semi-annual Strategic Planning sessions. Two of the more relevant tasks that we worked on were:

### ***Code of Ethics***

The upgrade to our Code of Ethics to include any new material that might provide better meaning and understanding of how we practice our Code. Our committee believes that our College and Association have one of the most concise and practical Code of Ethics as compared to other Health Care professional groups. We did add a couple of addendum references for some topics that related to our Standards of Practice to give you an expanded understanding in those areas.

### ***Scope of Practice***

Further efforts to continue the mandate to have some additions and changes to our Scope of Practice. This has been an ongoing commitment of resources and information as we communicate, and meet with Government officials to explain our reasoning for and why we are seeking some specific changes. We are continuing to seek out and meet with the appropriate Ministers and MLA's.

As part of this push we will be seeking support from opticians to assist us in reaching-out to communicate and meet with Government officials in their respective ridings. We believe that strength in numbers is the best to have in this very worthwhile effort. So this next year the Regulatory Committee will continue our efforts to serve opticians and the public interest.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Regulatory Committee*



# Field Supervision and Examinations



## Karla Charland RO, RCLP - Chair

NAIT Optical Science Program registered 74 year- one eyeglass students in September 2018. Of those students three were repeat theory and 11 withdrew from the program between August and December of 2018. Eyeglass year-two registered 69 students with two students repeating theory and two students withdrawing from the program.

The contacts Lens program registered 19 students in September 2018. Of those students, two are repeating the theory and one student withdrew. In January of this year 37 more students registered to take the eyeglass program with seven of them being repeat theory students and four students dropped out of the program.

The field supervisors are representatives of the Alberta College and Association of Opticians. There are currently 14 field supervisors conducting onsite or phone call interviews with both students and preceptors around the province. The field supervisors reach out to the eyeglass year one students in the first semester to address any questions or concerns regarding the program. Generally the year-two eyeglass students are contacted in the second semester as they have more questions about the final exam, application to NACOR and their fees with the ACAO. The contact lens students receive two onsite visits from the field supervisor, one in each semester. These interviews are generally lengthier as the student and preceptor(s) have many questions about the clinical, labs, RGP fits, and practicum hours.

Thank you again to all the field supervisors around the province for their time, hard work and commitment to the success of this program. We will be adding another field supervisor to the Calgary area this September 2019.

I wish to thank Jeannie Barr, Spencer Gringas and Sheila Enright from NAIT Optical Sciences and Maureen Hussey and Ruta Nuguse from ACAO for their continued support with the Field Supervision Program.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Field Supervision & Examinations Committee*

# 2018 REGISTRATION SUMMARY



The Alberta College and Association of Opticians developed and launched a series of videos on Becoming an Optician. These videos were created in partnership with our national regulator groups. You may view these videos at [www.acao.ca/becoming an optician](http://www.acao.ca/becoming-an-optician).

Provisional Opticians are those who have completed the education and are awaiting the National licensing Examinations. This group practice under supervision. Students (associates) are not a regulated category of member. We monitor their supervision while they are training through a cooperative program with NAIT called Field Supervision.

The final numbers for our registration for 2018 was 1,186 members and 105 registered as non-practicing members.

# By the Numbers



## Regulated Members

1081 Active Practicing Members

105 Non-Practicing Members

1186

## New Registrants & Return to Practice

4 Reinstated Licenses

58 New Registrations

5 PLAR Applications Approved

75

## Supensions & Retired

38 Suspended Non-Payment of Fee

12 Left the Province

4 Retired

## Demographics

78% Female Registrants

22% Male Registrations

31 Members Over Age 65

# PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT



## *Complaints*

The Alberta College and Association of Opticians (ACAO) is mandated by the Health Professions Act (HPA) to manage complaints, investigations, and the discipline process in an effective and timely manner.

Our website continues to dedicate a specific area for the public or anyone wanting to navigate through the ACAO complaint process. This information can be found at: [acaocanada.ca/public/complaints-and-disciplines](https://acaocanada.ca/public/complaints-and-disciplines).

The ACAO responds to several inquiries from the public, its regulated members, and other health care practitioners throughout the year, but most of these inquiries are dealt with by providing answers to their question, clarifying regulations or legislation, or, occasionally, contacting the member involved to mediate the situation.



This process is much more efficient than the process involved when a formal complaint is filed and finds a satisfying resolution for the person inquiring. The ACAO works with everyone to ensure they understand their right to file a formal complaint, and what the resolution was if this more informal process was utilized.

The majority of inquires received at the ACAO in 2018 involved concerns about unregulated staff performing restricted activities, and dissatisfaction with products and services received.

### *Hearings*

There were no hearings held during this reporting period.

<b>Complaints and Disciplines Summary</b>	<b>2018</b>
Number of new complaints received	0
Number of complaints carried over from previous year (2017)	0
Number of complaints closed	0
Number of complaints still open	0
Number of complaints dismissed, redirected or resolved informally	0
Number of complaints referred to alternative complaints resolution	0
Number of complaints referred to investigation	0
Number of complaints referred to hearing	0
Number of hearings held	0
Number of hearings closed to the public	0
Number of appeals	0
Number of members dealt with under s.118	0

*Respectfully Submitted*  
*Sandi Williamson, Past Regulatory Standards Director*





# ASSOCIATION FUNCTIONS



# Updates



## ***Amendments to the Health Professions Act: Bill 21 - An Act to Protec Patients***

In accordance with the legislation changes regarding sexual abuse and misconduct, we are now requiring a criminal record check for new registrants. Additionally, we have changed how we receive applicants from other jurisdictions, including requiring a criminal record check from them before acceptance. College staff has had Trauma Informed Care training, and we have encouraged registrants to take Alberta Health's online Trauma Informed Care modules. We are also in the process of developing optician specific education about sexual abuse and sexual misconduct to familiarise our registrants with the legislation changes. We have updated our website to include information about sexual abuse and sexual misconduct, the complaints process, the patient relations program, and help for victims of sexual abuse. We currently do not have any sexual abuse or sexual misconduct hearings or decisions; however, we have a designated place on our website to put them should one arise.

## ***Alberta Retired Teachers Association (ARTA) Partnership***

This year the ACAO has partnered with ARTA, a voluntary Retiree Benefits Plan. ARTA Retiree Benefits Plan offers options for different levels of coverage; these options provide the freedom to select the coverage level that's right for members and their families. The purpose of this program is to provide an opportunity to our retired members to receive health benefits with many options included.

## ***Chatrooms***

This year the ACAO launched an online chatroom. The chatroom allows members to ask questions, have conversations or leave comments. It gives Opticians and students a place to start conversations with others and learn more about the field from fellow Opticians.

## ***Chatterhigh***

This year the ACAO partnered with Chatterhigh, an innovative learning resource used in schools throughout Canada to help students learn about different careers. Through interactive quizzes and games, students learn about what it means to be an Optician. The ACAO has created questions that engage students and raise awareness and knowledge for students, parents and teachers about Opticianry. This has helped get information across to a younger audience, and increase the exposure of our profession.

## ***Moodle***

Over the years, the ACAO has offered continuing education courses in a variety of platforms. We have made continuing education courses available online through Moodle to allow for easier access to courses for members. There are both free and paid courses available on Moodle, along with interactive games. There are currently 19 courses available on Moodle that members can submit for continuing education credits.

# Association Committee



## Val Pryma RO, RCLP - Chair

### ***Appy Nights & Board Recruitment***

This past year the committee has made a big push towards member engagement, and board recruitment. With this in mind, we decided to bring back the appy nights. We held five events in Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge, Grand Prairie and Sherwood Park. Issues with filling gaps and weakness on our Council were addressed throughout the year. We decided to take a different approach in terms of how we select and approach potential candidates for council and committee members.

Part of this included re-working the volunteer form and adjusting some of our information brochures and elections forms to include areas of expertise and to provide specific areas of strength we are looking for i.e. finance, governance, policy, advocacy, specialties etc. Some discussion has taken place about the possibility of creating a nomination sub-committee, which would allow for the vetting of candidates interested in running for the Council in order to identify specific skill-sets or interests and that can be utilized by the Council. Another focus will be to create a mentoring system for new council members in order have a more efficient board.

### ***Tri-City Tours***

The first of three city tours was held in Medicine Hat which was attend by Maureen Hussey, Sandi Williamson and Udo Hanebuam August 26, 2018. The next of the tours is scheduled for the fall of 2019

### ***Board Evaluation***

The Council participated in a board evaluation to address gaps and areas of improvement. A recommendation that came as a result of Board Evaluation was implementation of Exit Interviews for members leaving council when their terms are up, this could include what's working and what's not. Some of the next that the committee will focus on will be with regard to the volunteer program and how we better utilize our volunteers. We've had tremendous success with having members sign up for volunteering however we do need some work on retaining those volunteers and properly applying their expertise. We also want to have a look at our volunteer recognition program and re-vamping how we recognize our volunteers.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Association Committee*

# Policy Committee



## Margaret Cayenne RO, RCLP - Chair

The committee has spent the year reviewing and working on templates and additions to the current list of policies. Last May an amended bylaws motion was brought forward to reflect the changing landscape of digital communications, and meeting formats that sometimes take place remotely.

From that time, the committee along with help from the College staff have restructured how and when the policies will be reviewed. All policies will now have a three- year rotation for review and proposal of changes. These documents will all use the same language and format. There is now a naming system to find these various policies, and a time table to review policies on a yearly basis. A significant amount of time was spent reviewing and updating the governance policy. How the College functions day to day and who is responsible for different tasks is all described within the document.

We have reviewed policies regarding visual screening, and PLAR registration. We will continue to action reviews of policies on a rotating basis. We were tasked with potential changes of policies, and bylaws all relating to Bill 21. Much of the tasks of several committees were in response to the changes this bill will bring about. We are feeling the impact this legislation will make on many of the regulatory colleges here in Alberta.

We have been tasked with how to implement mandatory reporting, changes to investigation, and tribunal hearings, all dealing with the theme of sexual assault and sexual misconduct. It is a very broad area and a lot of consultation has yet to take place with the new legislation to take effect April 1, 2019. We will try to keep you updated to what this legislation means and the changes that will affect our members and of course our patients. We are working on changes again to our bylaws to reflect the mandated roles of reporting any abuse and directives of mandatory sanctions, and reporting or publishing on our website.

Much of the language and structure of this has been dictated to us by the government, and we will have exact language and policy changes taken from that. We will continue to work on these policies and procedures that will fall in line with legislative changes coming from the government.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Policy Committee*

# Negotiations



## Rick Miller RO, RCLP - Chair

Negotiations committee is a separate committee of from the ACAO.

I am trying to fill Udo Hanebaum's big shoes on this committee, now that he is a Director on the College Council. It's my first time serving on this committee and I am still trying to learn the ropes. I have already had the pleasure of meeting with Chad Mitchell and his staff a couple of times on your behalf. He is the Executive Director of pharmaceutical and health benefits for the Alberta government. He and his staff are very nice and helpful and he comes from a pharmaceutical background so I feel we have a lot in common. They are also new to their positions so it has been a learning experience for us all. We have been in the process of negotiating the new Alberta human services contract for Opticians. It is pretty much renewed and signed and hopefully we will be able to post it on the ACAO website soon.

The bad news is: there are no increases and it will be the same as the last contract. The good news is: there are no decreases. Considering the shape of the Alberta economy right now this is a win. Also as you all are probably aware there will be a pretty major event happening in Alberta April 16th called an election. So for now it's the status quo. We will be starting to negotiate our next contract with them in the fall so hopefully the economy will have improved and we will know who is calling the shots in the province.

Also I would like to thank Tracy Woywitka my other committee member for all her help and input, if you know Tracy and have some input on the new contract please let her know. Or if you want to be involved on the committee let the office know. Once I have made some headway with the Alberta government I will be working on the federal government with the Non Insured Health Benefits.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Negotiations Committee*

### ***Approvals Under Section 27***

Approval received from the Government for the running of this arm's length committee set up to deal with the negotiation of fees for contracts for Opticians. Opticians have the right to opt out of the contract but may not pick and choose areas where they will opt in or out. It is either honour the agreement in full or do not participate. This position was filled by acclamation.



Jasvir Benipal



Annette Clavette



Joephrey Catapang



Shareena Wilkins

# Student Achievement Awards

## Awards & Recognition

The Alberta College and Association of Opticians is proud of our Student Award Program. The success of this program could not be possible without the generous sponsorship from our sponsors. The 2016/2017 Student Award recipients are as follows:

Cecil Oxenbury Award for Highest Achievement on Practical Licensing Exam Contact Lens - *Sponsor: Johnson & Johnson Vision Care*  
Jasvir Benipal

Cecil Oxenbury Award for Highest Achievement on Practical Licensing Exam Contact Lens - *Sponsor: Johnson & Johnson Vision Care*  
Annette Clavette

Justin Holmes Award for Highest Achievement on Practical Licensing Exam Eyeglasses - *Sponsor: Essilor Group Canada Inc.*  
Joephrey Catapang

Stan Souch Award for Highest Achievement First Year Optical Sciences-  
*Sponsor: TD Insurance Meloche Monnex*  
Marc Hodgins

Highest Achievement in Second Year Optical Sciences - *Sponsor: IRIS*  
Shareena Wilkins

Highest Achievement Advanced Practice Contact Lens 2018 - *Sponsor: TD Insurance Meloche Monnex*  
Jennifer Nurcombe-Richardson



# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS





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## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

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To the Members of  
Alberta College and Association of Opticians

### *Opinion*

We have audited the financial statements of Alberta College and Association of Opticians (the College), which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2018, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the College as at December 31, 2018, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

### *Basis for Opinion*

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the College in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with those requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### *Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements*

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the College's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the College or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the College's financial reporting process.

### *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements*

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the College's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the College's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the College to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Edmonton, Alberta  
March 2, 2019



Chartered Accountants



## Statement of Financial Position - December 31, 2018

	2018	2017
<b>ASSETS</b>		
CURRENT		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 930,735	\$ 803,399
Accounts receivable	2,889	22,638
Prepaid expenses	11,532	7,869
	<u>945,156</u>	833,906
CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 4)	386,889	408,680
TRADEMARK (Note 5)	886	1,051
	<u>\$ 1,332,931</u>	<u>\$ 1,243,637</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 41,601	\$ 41,315
Goods and services tax payable	37,420	36,151
Deferred membership fee revenue	787,428	770,477
	<u>866,449</u>	847,943
<b>NET ASSETS (LIABILITIES)</b>		
Unrestricted	(207,050)	(276,911)
Invested in capital assets	387,775	409,731
Discipline contingency fund (Note 7)	235,757	212,874
Change project fund (Note 8)	50,000	50,000
	<u>466,482</u>	395,694
	<u>\$ 1,332,931</u>	<u>\$ 1,243,637</u>

## Statement of Operations- December 31, 2018

	2018	2017
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Advertising	\$ 4,150	\$ 3,050
Application fees	15,791	26,651
Continuing education programs	6,750	18,100
Convention	21,697	26,740
Discipline <i>(Note 7)</i>	22,883	75,796
Examination	41,737	45,736
Field supervision	16,000	16,500
Foreign Qualification Recognition Innovation Fund grant <i>(Note 6)</i>	-	22,444
Membership fees	813,439	797,521
Outsourcing staff	-	14,000
Sundry	700	10
	<b>943,147</b>	<b>1,046,548</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Advertising	2,093	16,241
Amortization	43,681	52,387
Bad debts	-	2,155
Committees	5,000	10,000
Council expenses	25,020	26,881
Education awards	700	1,400
Equipment lease	8,070	8,360
Examination expenses	17,039	18,975
Field supervision expenses	11,825	12,289
Insurance	6,494	3,454
Interest and bank charges	25,540	29,631
Laddering project	10,270	8,011
Meetings and convention	40,495	66,275
Membership fees	28,638	41,311
Office	131,971	75,262
Prior learning assessment and recognition costs	-	22,443
Professional conduct matters	24,986	38,492
Professional fees	14,180	15,000
Salaries and benefits	413,555	408,662
Sub-contracts	40,500	40,000
Telephone	7,414	7,578
Utilities and property taxes	14,888	12,913
Vision screening	-	3,507
	<b>872,359</b>	<b>921,227</b>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 70,788</b>	<b>\$ 125,321</b>

## Statement of Changes to Net Assets - December 31, 2018

	2017 Balance	Excess of revenues over (under) expenses	Invested in capital assets	Transfers	2018 Balance
Unrestricted net liabilities	\$ (276,911)	\$ 91,586	\$ (21,725)	\$ -	\$ (207,050)
Invested in capital assets	409,731	(43,681)	21,725	-	387,775
Discipline contingency fund (Note 7)	212,874	22,883	-	-	235,757
Change project fund (Note 8)	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
	<b>\$ 395,694</b>	<b>\$ 70,788</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 466,482</b>

	2016 Balance	Excess of revenues over (under) expenses	Invested in capital assets	Transfers	2017 Balance
Unrestricted net liabilities	\$ (368,837)	\$ 101,912	\$ (9,986)	\$ -	\$ (276,911)
Invested in capital assets	452,132	(52,387)	9,986	-	409,731
Discipline contingency fund (Note 7)	187,078	75,796	-	(50,000)	212,874
Change project fund (Note 8)	-	-	-	50,000	50,000
	<b>\$ 270,373</b>	<b>\$ 125,321</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 395,694</b>

## Statement of Cash Flows - December 31, 2018

	<b>2018</b>	2017
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Cash receipts membership fees and other revenue	\$ <b>894,720</b>	\$ 908,551
Cash receipts from courses, exams and training fees	<b>85,125</b>	155,817
Cash paid to suppliers and employees	<u><b>(830,784)</b></u>	<u>(853,315)</u>
Cash flow from operating activities	<u><b>149,061</b></u>	211,053
<b>INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Purchase of equipment	<b>(24,580)</b>	(9,986)
Proceeds on disposal of equipment	<u><b>2,855</b></u>	<u>-</u>
Cash flow used by investing activities	<u><b>(21,725)</b></u>	<u>(9,986)</u>
<b>INCREASE IN CASH FLOW</b>	<b>127,336</b>	201,067
Cash and cash equivalents - beginning of year	<u><b>803,399</b></u>	<u>602,332</u>
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS - END OF YEAR</b>	<u><b>\$ 930,735</b></u>	<u>\$ 803,399</u>

# Notes to Financial Statements - December 31, 2018

## 1. PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION

The Alberta College and Association of Opticians (the "College") is a self-governing professional organization established pursuant to the Opticians Act of Alberta. On March 23, 2011, the Opticians Act of Alberta was repealed and transitioned to the Health Professions Act of Alberta. As a result, the College is now governed under this Act which also resulted in a name change for the organization. The proclamation of Bill 14: Health Professional Amendment Act (2016) on May 27, 2016 resulted in another name change for the organization. The College is a not-for-profit organization, as described in Section 149(1)(l) of the Income Tax Act, and therefore is not subject to income taxes.

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## 2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

### Basis of accounting

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

### Measurement uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amount of assets and liabilities, disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the period. Such estimates are periodically reviewed and any adjustments necessary are reported in earnings in the period in which they become known. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

### Financial instruments

#### Measurement

The College initially measures its financial assets and liabilities at fair value, except for certain non-arm's length transactions. The College subsequently measures all its financial assets and financial liabilities at amortized cost. Financial assets measured at amortized cost include cash and cash equivalents and accounts receivable. Financial liabilities measured at amortized cost include accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

#### Impairment

Financial assets measured at cost are tested for impairment when there are indicators of impairment. The amount of the write-down is recognized in net income. The previously recognized impairment loss may be reversed to the extent of the improvement, directly or by adjusting the allowance account, provided it is no greater than the amount that would have been reported at the date of the reversal had the impairment not been recognized previously. The amount of the reversal is recognized in net income.

#### Transaction costs

Financial instruments that will not be subsequently measured at fair value are adjusted by the transaction costs that are directly attributable to their origination, issuance or assumption.

### Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents consists of balances with banks and short-term investments that are cashable or with maturities of three months or less.

*(continues)*

## Notes to Financial Statements - December 31, 2018

### 2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES *(continued)*

#### Capital assets

Capital assets are stated at cost less accumulated amortization. Capital assets are amortized over their estimated useful lives at the following rates and methods:

Building	25 years	straight-line method
Computer equipment	30%	declining balance method
Computer software	30%	declining balance method
Examination equipment	20%	declining balance method
Office equipment	20%	declining balance method

#### Trademark

Costs incurred to develop and secure the College's logo and slogan are capitalized and amortized using the straight-line method over 10 years.

#### Long-lived assets

Long-lived assets consist of capital assets and trademarks. Long-lived assets held for use are measured and amortized as described in the above accounting policies.

The College performs impairment testing on long-lived assets held for use whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying value of an asset, or group of assets may not be recoverable. Impairment losses are recognized when undiscounted cash flows from use and disposal are less than an asset's carrying value. Any impairment is included in income for the year.

#### Revenue recognition

The College follows the deferral method of accounting for membership fees and other unrestricted revenue. Restricted revenue is recognized in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Revenue is only recognized when received or receivable and collection is reasonably assured.

Membership fees are recognized as revenue in the fiscal year to which they apply. Deferred membership fee revenue consists of membership registration fees collected for the following year.

Revenues from convention, discipline courses, examinations, field supervision and other sources are recorded when it is earned and collection is reasonably assured.

#### Contributed goods and services

The College records the fair market value of contributed goods and services only in the circumstances when the fair market value is determinable and when the goods and services would otherwise be purchased by the College.



### 3. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The College is exposed to various risks through its financial instruments. The following analysis provides information about the College's risk exposure and concentration as of December 31, 2018.

#### Credit risk

Credit risk arises from the potential that a counter party will fail to perform its obligations. The College is exposed to credit risk from advertisers and educational institutions. This is minimized through the College providing services to well-established advertisers and education institutions. The College performs continuous evaluation of its accounts and records an allowance for doubtful accounts when necessary.

#### Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the College will encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with financial liabilities. The College enters into transactions to purchase goods and services on credit, borrow funds from financial institutions and leases office equipment from various creditors for which repayment is required at various maturity dates. Liquidity risk is measured by reviewing the College's future net cash flows for the possibility of a negative net cash flow. The College manages the liquidity risk resulting from the accounts payable and operating leases through the preparation and monitoring of budgets and maintaining cash on hand.

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### 4. CAPITAL ASSETS

	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2018 Net book value
Building	\$ 507,372	\$ 191,194	\$ 316,178
Computer equipment	185,962	146,306	39,656
Computer software	91,256	69,764	21,492
Examination equipment	15,519	9,174	6,345
Office equipment	62,529	59,311	3,218
	<u>\$ 862,638</u>	<u>\$ 475,749</u>	<u>\$ 386,889</u>
	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2017 Net book value
Building	\$ 507,372	\$ 170,899	\$ 336,473
Computer equipment	161,381	134,578	26,803
Computer software	91,256	60,553	30,703
Examination equipment	21,399	11,135	10,264
Office equipment	62,529	58,092	4,437
	<u>\$ 843,937</u>	<u>\$ 435,257</u>	<u>\$ 408,680</u>

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## Notes to Financial Statements - December 31, 2018

### 5. TRADEMARK

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
Trademark - cost	\$ 2,485	\$ 2,485
Accumulated amortization	(1,599)	(1,434)
	<u>\$ 886</u>	<u>\$ 1,051</u>

### 6. DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS RELATED TO GRANT

The College from time to time is approved for grants restricted for specific projects. The following is a summary of the grant fund received and amounts disbursed during the prior year related to the Foreign Qualifications Recognition Innovation Fund grant.

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
Foreign Qualifications Recognition Innovation Fund Grant <i>(Grant for the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition project)</i>		
Opening balance	\$ -	\$ 17,385
Funding receivable	-	5,058
Less authorized expenditures	-	(22,443)
	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

### 7. DISCIPLINE CONTINGENCY FUND

A discipline contingency fund has been established to fund unforeseen expenses associated with discipline activities. Council has approved the annual contribution to the discipline contingency fund be equivalent to the revenues received from discipline online courses and fines and cost recoveries associated with member discipline. In 2018, Council did not approve any transfers (2017 - \$50,000) to be transferred from this fund to operations.

### 8. CHANGE PROJECT FUND

A change project fund has been established to fund expenses associated with bringing awareness to the College and the optician profession. Annual contribution to this fund will be determined by the Council. In 2018, Council did not approve any transfers (2017 - \$50,000) to be transferred from operations to this fund.





# Alberta College and Association of Opticians

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