

Ophthalmological Societies in USA; An Overview

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Abstract

This is a concise overview in a table format for the current non-profit membership-based ophthalmological societies in USA. These societies played a major role in continuous medical education. There is a clear need for establishing more societies which focus on different aspect of ophthalmology. There is always a potential for improving the benefits of these societies to the professionals and to the public. Social media might be utilized in achieving some of the functions of these societies.

Keywords: Education; Ophthalmology; Society

Ophthalmology in USA has very deep roots [1]. In 1864, the American Ophthalmological Society was established as the first medical specialty organization in the United States, and is the second oldest specialty society in the world and in 1917 ophthalmology became the first branch of medicine to develop specialty board examinations.

Currently, there are several professional ophthalmological societies in USA [2-9]. These organizations are making great contributions to the advancement of ophthalmology. Publishing periodicals and guidelines of care, arranging conferences and supporting researches are just few benefits to names. Just as an example, in 1986, the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) developed national guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of major eye disease [2].

In Table 1, I listed selected professional ophthalmological societies in USA.

Many of these organizations fall under 501(c) organization, also known colloquially as a 501(c), which are a tax-exempt nonprofit organizations in the United States.

American Academy of Ophthalmology is the largest national membership association of Eye M.D.s. More than 90 percent of practicing U.S. Eye M.D.s is Academy members.

Many of ophthalmological societies in USA serve a given city or state. But there are societies which focus on particular field for interested professionals in USA and abroad.

There are also societies with a wider range of coverage. For example, Pacific Coast Oto-Ophthalmological Society is formed by members from predominately the thirteen western states.

It is noticeable that there is a link between ophthalmology and otolaryngology in regards to the formation of many professional societies in USA. For examples, Houston Ophthalmological Society was formed in 1957 as a result of the division of the former Houston Ophthalmological and Otolaryngological Society. This decision to split was made twenty-one years before the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology made a similar decision.

Ophthalmological society in Iowa started in 1961 as the Iowa Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology. In 1989, the IAO incorporated as the Iowa Academy of Ophthalmology. Similar thing in Virginia, it was originally chartered as the Virginia Society of Ophthalmology & Otolaryngology in 1920, then , the Virginia Society of Ophthalmology was incorporated in 1983. In 2009, the membership voted to change its name to the Virginia Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons (VSEPS).

Table.1: Selected professional ophthalmological societies in USA (listed alphabetically):

The society	The year of establishment	Current President	Website
American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO)	1864	David W. Parke II	http://www.aao.org/
American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus (AAPOS)	1974	M. Edward Wilson	http://www.aapos.org/
American Ophthalmological Society (AOS)	1864	Marilyn B. Mets	http://www.aosonline.org/
American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery	1974	Robert J. Cionni	http://ascrs.org/
Arkansas Ophthalmological Society (AOS)	1978	Lydia Lane	http://www.arkeyemds.org/
Austin Ophthalmological Society (AOS)	mid 1970's	Vikram D. Durairaj	http://austineyesociety.org/
Chicago Ophthalmological Society	1893	Dimitri T. Azar	http://www.chicagoeyenet.org/
Christian Ophthalmology Society	1977	Stan Pletcher	http://www.cosw.org/
Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians (CSEP)	1974	Ronald Adelman	http://www.connecticutsocietyofeye-physicians.com/
Florida Society of Ophthalmology (FSO)	1939	Brad Oren	https://www.mdeye.org/
Houston Ophthalmological Society (HOS)	1957	Tien P. Wong	http://www.hosmd.org/
Illinois Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (ISEPS)	1970	Balaji Gupta	http://www.ileyemd.org/
Iowa Academy of Ophthalmology (IAO)	1961	Michael H. Scott	http://iowaeyedocs.org/
The Kansas City Society of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology	1908	Alan Bauman	http://kansascitysoo.org/
Miami Ophthalmological Society	1963	Thomas Albini	http://www.mos-eye.com/
Michigan Ophthalmic Personnel Society (MOPS)	1987	Christel Fugmann	http://005b35e.netsolhost.com/mops.html
Minnesota Academy of Ophthalmology (MAO)	1911	Janice M. Sinclair	http://www.mneyemd.org/
New England Ophthalmological Society (NEOS)	1884	David Lawlor	http://www.neos-eyes.org/
New Orleans Academy of Ophthalmology (NOAO)	1951	Marilyn O'Byrne	https://www.noao.org/
New York State Ophthalmological Society	1957	Gary Hirshfield	http://www.nysos.com/
Ohio Ophthalmological Society	1961	Jim Silone, Jr	http://www.ohioeye.org/
Oklahoma Academy of Ophthalmology(OAO)	1970's	Jean Hausheer	http://www.oklahomaeyes.org/
Orange County Society of Ophthalmology (OCSO)	1960's	Peter Joson	http://oceye.org/
Pacific Coast Oto-Ophthalmological Society	1906	Christine Flaxel and Ut-tam Sinha	http://pcoosonline.org/
Saint Louis Ophthalmological Society	1907	Linda Tsai	http://www.sloseye.com/
South Carolina Society of Ophthalmology (SCSO)	1976	James W. Culclasure	http://www.sceyemd.org/
Tennessee Academy of Ophthalmology (TNAO)	1949	Mark Melson	http://www.tneyemds.org/
Texas Ophthalmological Association	1956	Halsey M. Settle III	http://www.texaseyes.org/
Utah Ophthalmology Society (UOS)	1982	Brian davis	http://utaheyemds.org/
Virginia Society of Eye Physicians & Surgeons (VSEPS)	1920	Geoffrey G. Cooper,	http://www.vaeyemd.org/

Another example is the Kansas City Society of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology which was founded in 1908, the first of the Kansas City area specialty medical societies.

The split from combined specialties societies sound very logic. Not to mention that creating a society on a focused field might be advantageous to its members. One of such societies in the subspecialties of ophthalmology is to AAPOS (American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus) which started as AAPO and in 1976; it changed its name to to AAPOS.

This manuscript is just an overview; however, there is an obvious need for more studies to evaluate the activities of these societies and to find a better ways for these societies to improve their performance.

Each society has to find the best tools to encourage all the members to be active. Duties should not be limited to the members in the leadership positions. Smart phones messages and Social media might be utilized in achieving some of the functions of these societies.

Women and young doctors, in particular, should find a place in the executive committees of these societies.

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