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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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NEW HOME FOR THE WORLD COUNCIL OF OPTOMETRY

June 27, 2008, Elkins Park, PA USA... Speaking to the American Optometric Association's House of Delegates in Seattle today, 27 June 2008, World Council of Optometry (WCO) President Robert Chappell announced that with effect from 1 July 2008 the WCO and its charitable arm, the World Optometric Foundation (WOF), will move to the College of Optometrists in the United Kingdom. The WCO selected the College after a competitive bid involving five other organisations from four continents.

The Secretariat will move from its current home at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry (PCO), where it has been located for the past twelve years. WCO and PCO are experiencing significant growth involving restructuring to build upon their current momentum.

The College of Optometrists is the Professional, Scientific and Examining Body for Optometry in the UK, working for the public benefit. It was founded in 1980 by the amalgamation of the British Optical Association, the Scottish Association of Opticians together with the professional examining

function of the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers. Its aims and objectives are closely aligned with those of the WCO and WOF, and it has extensive experience in association management.

Dr Chappell commented “I am delighted that the contract has been awarded to the College, which made an outstanding presentation against very stiff competition from the other applicants. I look forward to working with our new partner in our joint aims of improving the quality and availability of eye and vision care internationally.”

College President Rob Hogan added, “This is a significant achievement of which the College team is justifiably proud. It provides a real opportunity for us to enhance the UK’s international reputation and voice while strengthening our relations with the international community. We look forward to working closely with the WCO and its stakeholders to ensure that we deliver a successful and lasting legacy.”

In paying tribute to the support of PCO and in particular the work of past Executive Director Anthony Di Stefano and current Executive Director Melissa Padilla, Dr Chappell said, “World optometry will be forever in their debt for their achievements in establishing WCO as an effective international organisation. During their tenure, the WCO earned official relations with the World Health Organisation, launched Optometry Giving Sight and developed new programs and partnerships.”

About WCO

WCO is an international organization dedicated to the enhancement and development of eye and vision care worldwide. Representing over 200,000 optometrists from 75 member organizations in 43 countries, WCO serves as a forum for optometric organizations to respond to public health needs and opportunities around the world. The WCO is a member of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness and maintains official relations with the World Health Organization.

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