



National Institutes of Health
National Eye Institute
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

August 1, 2005

Larry J. Davis, O.D.
President
Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry
6110 Executive Boulevard
Suite 510
Rockville, MD 20852

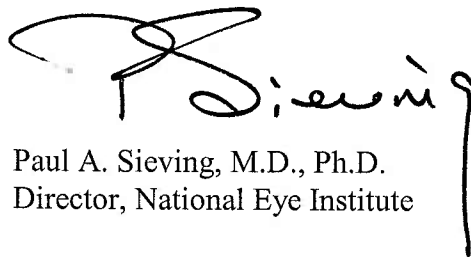
Dear Dr. Davis:

Thank you for your recent letter in which you express continuing concern about the exclusion of optometrists from major meetings generally, and from science educational sessions in particular.

Annual meetings of scientific and professional societies and organizations have been excellent venues for scientific and educational presentations about clinical studies conducted and supported by the National Eye Institute (NEI). This productive and beneficial relationship has served not only to educate the attendees about recent advances but also to stimulate the entire field of ophthalmic research. The recent events that you describe are not helpful in advancing the scientific education of our nation's eye care providers.

It has long been National Institutes of Health (NIH) policy that NIH scientists, Principal Investigators on NIH-funded projects, and grantee organizations are expected to make the results and accomplishments of their activities available to the research community and to the public at large. I will instruct the NEI intramural and extramural program staff to give full and careful consideration of this policy to ensure that the results of clinical studies conducted and supported by NEI, and related press releases and exhibits, are disseminated only in forums which are open and accessible.

Sincerely yours,



Paul A. Sieving, M.D., Ph.D.
Director, National Eye Institute

JAM:cmb