

## **Commendation Resolution To the 2023 House of Delegates**

**WHEREAS**, in the year 1906, after California passed one of the first optometry laws in the nation (1903), George Schneider began guiding the process which eventually would establish a course in the Science of Optometry at the University of California; and

**WHEREAS**, the first meeting to discuss such a proposal with the University President Benjamin Ide Wheeler occurred in 1907; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1912 Bay Area optometric associations availed themselves of special lectures in physics, anatomy and physiology given by the University of California Extension Division; and

**WHEREAS**, despite there being only two regular courses in optometry in the nation at the time (Columbia and Ohio Universities), Schneider forecast that a course in optometry at the University of California will “set the pace for the optometry world”; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1915/1916 Ralph Minor taught fifteen lectures on optics in South Hall (then the Department of Physics building); and

**WHEREAS**, the Alameda/Contra Costa Counties Optometric Society (ACCCOS) sent a letter to President Wheeler indicating it was “prepared to pay the instructors’ fees and to meet a charge for janitor service and lighting” in order to provide for the public need for intensive optometric research and instruction at an academic institution; and

**WHEREAS**, the founding of the School of Optometry at Berkeley was made possible by the petitioning of the Governor by the ACCCOS and support for a legislative bill which would overcome the financial objections of such establishment of a course in optometry; and

**WHEREAS**, on May 23, 1923, despite opposition, even within the ranks of optometry at the time, George Schneider’s sixteen-year crusade was realized with the passage of a \$10.00 state licensure fee, for which \$8.00 would be designated for the University of California; and

**WHEREAS**, this is the first instance on record of a profession taxing itself to provide and to encourage higher education for students coming into that profession; and

**WHEREAS**, in June 1923, UC President Barrows formally approved an optometry curriculum and appointed Professor Ralph Minor as its chair, and George Schneider as the program's first lecturer; and

**WHEREAS**, the inaugural class entered the program on August 17, 1923, with an annual tuition of \$25 (\$75 for out-of-state students); and

**WHEREAS**, in 1939 Optometry became a separate Department within the College of Letters and Science, and in 1941 became an independent School of Optometry. In 2003 the School became a graduate program and in 2021 was renamed the Herbert Wertheim School of Optometry and Vision Science; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1946 the Physiological Optics Graduate Research Program was formed, changing its name to the Vision Science Graduate Group in 1989; and

**WHEREAS**, distinguished faculty and alumni of optometry and vision science have contributed enormously to eye care, vision health and scientific discovery, ensuring fulfillment of the School's mission to "advance optometric education, clinical practice, and vision research for the benefit of society"; and

**WHEREAS**, Berkeley Optometry and Vision Sciences continues to fulfill Schneider's vision for setting "the pace for the optometry world" and for ensuring the independence of the profession of optometry; **THEREFORE**, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the California Optometric Association recognizes and congratulates Berkeley Optometry on its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and on its outstanding educational and professional legacy.