



OPTOMETRIC SCHOLAR of the Month



OPTOMETRIC SCHOLAR OF THE MONTH: KRISTIN MOHR, OD

PLEASE PROVIDE A BRIEF SUMMARY OF YOUR BACKGROUND.

I grew up in St. Peter, Minnesota, until I was about age 11. From there, our family moved to the town of New Ulm, Minnesota, which I consider to be my hometown—the place that grew and shaped me into who I am today. New Ulm is a big softball and baseball town, and summers were spent outside playing ball for as long as I can remember. Winter and fall were likewise filled with sports (basketball and volleyball). The success and cohesion of a team matters much more than individual performance, and I am so grateful for the lessons I learned on and off the field. I continue to participate in recreational sports today.

My dad comes from a long line of large and small animal veterinarians, and my mom is a food scientist. I like to think I took a bit of both careers as I found my path to optometry. My dad taught me the invaluable lesson that faithful dedication (and a bit of hard work) will take you as far in life as you want to go. My mom gifted me with an analytical mind, a passion to help others, and a love for the sciences. As an ocular disease resident, I apply all that my parents taught me every day in clinic, especially when dealing with complex cases.

I have an older brother and two younger sisters. As the years pass, I grow increasingly grateful for the gift of growing up with siblings who helped me navigate everyday life in adolescence and adulthood. I double majored in microbiology and human biology with a chemistry minor at South Dakota State University. After that, I went straight to optometry school at the

Michigan College of Optometry. I was lucky enough to marry my best friend a few weeks before beginning residency, and we are thrilled that our long-distance chapter is finally over and we are enjoying married life.

DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT SITUATION.

I am completing my anterior segment disease residency in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, at Vance Thompson Vision. This is an OD/MD practice and referral center for Sioux Falls and the surrounding tristate area. As residents, we perform evaluations for cataract extraction, LASIK consults, degenerative or acquired corneal pathology, glaucoma, and postoperative care. Sioux Falls is the largest city in the state of South Dakota, and many patients travel far distances to receive proper care. What I like most is that every day is different; you never know what will walk through the door. The gratification of improving or restoring a patient's quality of life when vision goals are attained is unmatched.

WHAT SPARKED YOUR INTEREST IN OPTOMETRY?

Optometry was not on my radar until I was a sophomore in college. I loved the human sciences, but I struggled to find a specialty that appealed to my interests. I stumbled across optometry and, after shadowing my hometown optometrist, I found that I loved the specificity of eye care and the immediate effect we can have on vision. An optometrist can also diagnose a variety of systemic diseases based on thorough anterior and posterior segment examination, and I think that is so cool.

WHAT CAUSES OR SPECIALTIES ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT?

I am passionate about patient awareness and education. Routine eye examinations are the best way to detect pathology early. I enjoy fitting specialty contact lenses as a treatment of anterior segment pathology, and I am excited to use this in my future practice.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST REWARDING ASPECT OF YOUR TRAINING SO FAR?

Seeing a patient all the way through the surgical process—preoperative to postoperative—from either refractive or cataract surgery. The technology available today to achieve 20/20 vision continually astounds me.

WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND MOST CHALLENGING IN YOUR OPTOMETRIC JOURNEY?

Each patient is different and has different goals and desires. It can be tricky to determine a patient's best surgical option to achieve goals that are realistic and attainable.

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF 5 YEARS FROM NOW? FIFTEEN YEARS FROM NOW?

Time will tell! I would love to continue to serve a community with high demand for eye care. I have loved working in an OD/MD setting, but I can also see myself taking ownership in a practice that best fits the needs of me and my community. ■

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