

EMPOWER

An OWL Magazine



spring/summer 2021

contents

- 2 President's Letter
by Abigail M. Markward
- 4 OWL Champion Members
- 6 Building a Culture of Innovation
by John Raney
- 10 Charting Your Course: Women Entrepreneurs, CEOs, and Leaders
by John Raney





Perseverance and Transformation

As I write my first letter as President of OWL for EMPOWER, I cannot help but reflect on our world since March 2020. As Hayley Boling noted early in the pandemic, 2020 was supposed to be the year of ophthalmology but instead it became the year ophthalmology came together to “revolutionEYES” our industry. For me, the past year is summarized in one word: perseverance.

“To persevere is to persist in anything undertaken; maintain a purpose in spite of difficulty, obstacles, or discouragement; continue steadfastly.”

To persevere is to persist in anything undertaken; maintain a purpose in spite of difficulty, obstacles, or discouragement; continue steadfastly. I cannot begin to think of a more perfect descriptor of what we individually and collectively have done over the past year. We have persevered through personal and professional loss, fear, depression, and anxiety to come into a more hopeful 2021 with a renewed sense of purpose and motivation.

Similarly, as the OWL organization dives deeper into 2021, we will continue to persevere to strengthen our mission of **advancing diversity in leadership** through education and networking opportunities for our members and the greater ophthalmic community. Inaugural programs for 2021 include the OWL Leadership Summit and the Get-on-Board program.

OWL Initiatives for 2021



Leadership Summit
Mid-Career

OWL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

This must-attend event for future leaders in ophthalmology is designed for mid-career professionals looking to prepare for career advancement. This Live Event will be held **September 23-24** at Balboa Bay Resort in Newport Beach, California.



Get-on-Board with OWL
Senior Level

GET-ON-BOARD WITH OWL

This five-part training course includes a Digital Program and Live Event. Registrants can enroll for the Digital Program only or the Complete Program that includes both the Digital Program and the Live Event. The Live Event to be held **September 22-23** at Balboa Bay Resort in Newport Beach, California.

Continued next page

We will continue to grow our current Fellows Program, develop new and innovative virtual events and continue our Signature Events at ASCRS and AAO.

A major goal for OWL is not only to increase membership but also to expand the diversity of that membership. In order to accomplish this goal, we must not only increase awareness of OWL but also create easy accessibility to our programs and events for all people within the ophthalmic community. To facilitate membership breadth and depth, we have significantly improved reach by developing a more robust and efficient digital platform utilizing social media, virtual events and frequent market research to stay in tune with our members' needs. Our recent Masterclass webinar on Building a Culture of Innovation is but one example.

While 2021 is a time of continued perseverance, it is also a time for transformation and change, which is evident in our new OWL logo. **The challenge was how to visually represent diversity and community in a way that will be recognized as OWL?** To that end the outstretched arms represent diversity/community/inclusion/belonging while the subtle eye and owl imagery are an additive awareness component for OWL. As Ophthalmic World Leaders continues to evolve and transform we hope this logo will continue to persevere and remain a steadfast representation of OWL!

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as the OWL President for 2021. I am honored to lead and support an organization that has been a beacon for so many in the ophthalmic community!

Abigail M. Markward

Abigail M. Markward
OWL President

What do you see in our new logo?



We are so excited to debut OWL's new logo!

Our design:

- Plays with owl imagery (eyes/beak)
- Implies multiple people with arms stretched (representing diversity and community)
- Includes loose eye imagery (the ophthalmic world)
- Uses the blues already in the OWL brand and adds a lighter blue for depth

OWL Appreciates Champion Members*

Champion Members are advocates and champions of the OWL Mission, Vision, and Values; they are leaders in their organizations; they actively recruit new OWL members; and they contribute significantly in OWL by attendance, and leadership at Board or Committee levels. Learn more at www.owlsite.org

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*Champion Members as of 5.22.21



OPHTHALMIC WORLD LEADERS

New for 2021

LEADERSHIP - SUMMIT -

September 23 - 24, 2021
Balboa Bay Resort Newport Beach, CA



Targeted at people in mid-career looking to prepare for career advancement, OWL's new Leadership Summit aims to create skilled future leaders who will build and lead diverse teams.

OUR INCREDIBLE SPEAKERS AND PANELISTS WILL HELP ATTENDEES:



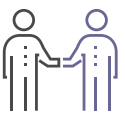
• Learn critical decision-making and team building leadership skills



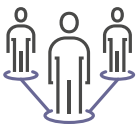
• Build a personal brand with an effective virtual leadership presence



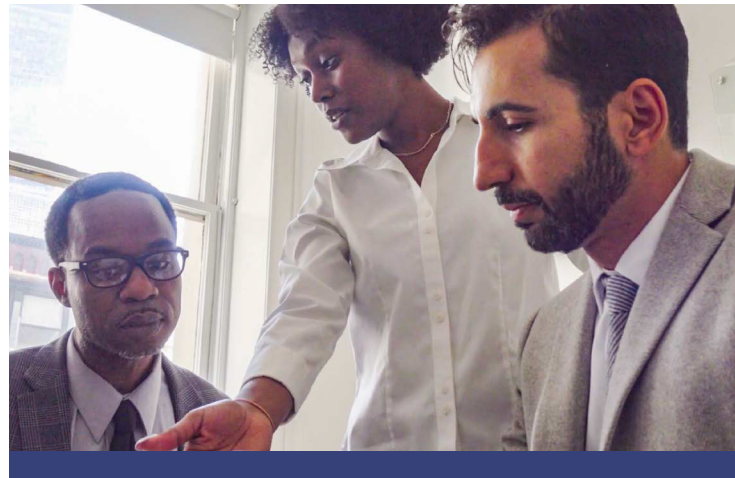
• Deliver an impact from the podium, and how to land and develop internal and external speaking opportunities



• Negotiate with confidence - whether for career advancement, or to become more effective at work



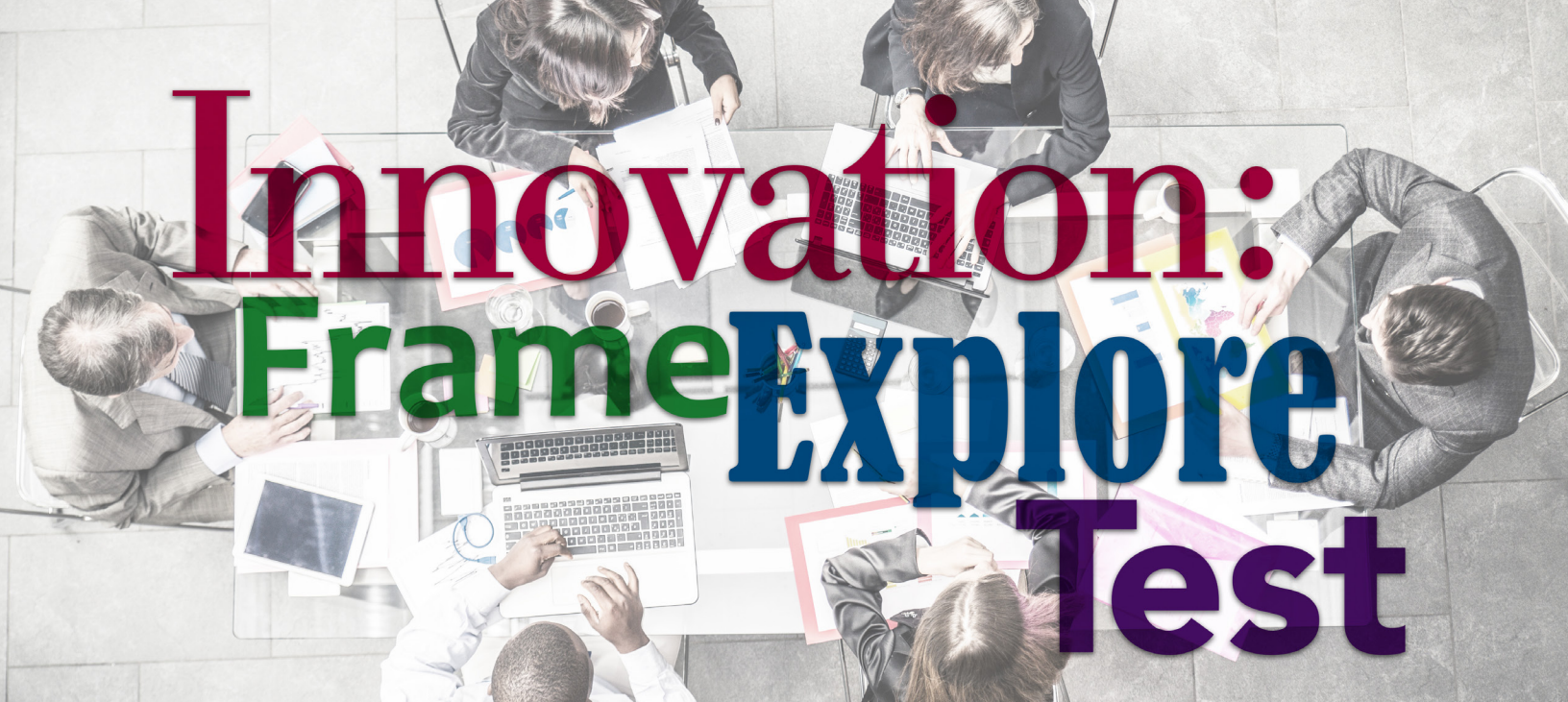
• Networking Opportunities - Connect with senior leaders in ophthalmology



Considering if this Summit is Right for You?

Find out more on our website:
owlsite.org/owl-leadership-summit

Contact: www.owlsite.org - gfries@owlsite.org - 919-267-6478



Building a Culture of Innovation

By John Raney

Harvard innovation expert offers metrics and frameworks for catalyzing new ideas in any organization

Even the most popular and innovative products are eventually usurped and their market absorbed by the next innovative product, says **David Ricketts, PhD**, an Innovation Fellow at the Technology and Entrepreneurship Center at Harvard. “That’s why companies need to be constantly inventing to remain successful,” he told a virtual audience of ophthalmic executives during an Ophthalmic World Leaders (OWL) Masterclass.

Ricketts recalled that when Steve Jobs was asked what his greatest innovation had been, he didn’t name any one device or product. Instead, Jobs said that his greatest innovation was creating an organization that could continually innovate. Ricketts, who has won numerous awards from government research agencies and worked extensively with the U.S. military and companies such as MasterCard, Dell, GM, and Disney Research, outlines three key steps to create a culture of constant invention within any organization:

ENGAGE: Bring innovation to everyone in the organization

Kraft Macaroni & Cheese was invented by a lone salesman, who, being on the front lines, was more attuned to what people wanted. Twitter was born from the suggestion of a single employee at a small podcasting company.

“Innovation can come from anywhere,” Ricketts says. To capitalize on this potential, he recommended creating a virtual or physical “idea box” where employees can share their ideas.

“Employees who have an idea should ask themselves two key questions,” he says. “First, what is new, different, or unique about your idea? Secondly, what is the positive business impact if the idea becomes a reality? This gets everyone thinking about how that idea can translate to huge improvement for your organization.”

Continued next page

BUILD: Create a practice of continuous innovation

Ricketts broke down his process for innovation into three parts: Frame, explore, and test.



- **FRAME:** Before you can begin innovating, Ricketts says, you must be sure you are tackling the right issue. He gave the example of a friend who put a tremendous amount of effort into trying to set up rooftop gardens, as an attempt to prevent rainwater from flooding sewers. All along, there was a much simpler solution, a different building material that absorbed and slowly dissipated the excess water. “Innovation should really start with asking the question, are we working on the right problem?” Ricketts says. “Doing this continually will eventually lead you to the true root problem, and thus free you to find novel solutions.”

- **EXPLORE:** Ricketts discussed a clever method for finding new approaches to your problems: “Find someone with the same problem, but in a different context.” For example, a sandwich shop that sought to improve its workers’ efficiency ended up drawing on a completely unexpected source – a Formula One racing pit crew. Their expertise in quick nonverbal teamwork provided an excellent model. The Orlando airport used the methods of Disney World to handle the issue of long lines. Finding how problems have been addressed in different contexts can lead to transformative innovations, Ricketts says.

- **TEST:** Solutions that you come up with must be prototyped, tested, and refined, Ricketts says. He recommends making a space – either physical or virtual – for people to collaborate, create, and test their prototypes.

Webinars

OWL Members will find On Demand webinars in their membership online account.

Examples include:



Webinar 1: March 2021

Charting Your Course | Women Entrepreneurs, CEOs and Leaders

An Interactive Discussion of What It Takes to Be a Female Leader in Eye Care and beyond

Women entrepreneurs, CEOs and organizational leaders share their stories, experience and lessons learned to inspire and educate others interested in pursuing similar paths.



Webinar 2: April 2021

Building a Culture of Innovation: A Masterclass

Dr. David Ricketts, an Innovation Fellow in the Technology and Entrepreneurship Center at Harvard.

It's important to build a culture of innovation in our organizations. This masterclass combines the best practices of problems solving and creativity using extensive material from engineering, industrial design, and the arts.

Continued next page

EXECUTE: Make the innovations you have created so that they deliver results

The first step to executing on your innovations is to measure them, he says, proposing three key metrics:

- The number of new, relevant ideas introduced
- The time it takes to tell if the idea is a good one or not (an amount of time that should be trimmed as much as possible, he noted)
- The number of new business or value opportunities found or created.

Ricketts also suggested clarifying what assets the organization has or is missing, what types of projects you work on, and your strategy for working on them, which will in turn clarify the problems to be tackled.

“The biggest mistake in innovation is leaving employees’ ideas as sticky notes on a wall rather than putting in the effort to explore their potential and make them happen,” Ricketts says.

By following these steps to create a culture of innovation, companies can identify the transformational ideas needed to be successful and solve each problem they tackle. ■

For more information on Dr. David Ricketts, visit:
<https://drdavidricketts.com/>

Webinars

Examples include:



Webinar 3: April 2021

The Inequity of COVID-19 - Part I: The Impact on Women & Minorities in the Workplace

An Interview with Kweilin Ellingrud, Senior Partner at McKinsey & Company.

Hosted by OWL Board Member, Kristen Ingenito, we will learn from Kweilin what the data/trends show with respect to the effect of the pandemic on our workforce. We'll discuss what we can do NOW to address this and support



Webinar 4: May 2021

The Inequity of COVID-19 - Part II: Effective Leadership for Diverse Teams through a Pandemic and Beyond

Join Kristen Ingenito, OWL Board Member and Vice President of Market Scope, Kweilin Ellingrud and our panel for an in-depth discussion on what the future holds and how we can prepare our businesses and teams for what comes next. We'll share what changes we should keep and what we can say goodbye to, what panelists have found

Join us on **July 25, 2021**
Mandalay Bay Resort Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada

Register now to attend at:
<https://owl.wildapricot.org/event-4234999>

**OWL
Signature
Event
@ ASCRS
2021**

NEW for 2021

If you have considered serving on a corporate board, this new course is for you!



GET-ON-BOARD WITH OWL

The objectives of this new program are to increase diversity on Boards and interrupt the current situation where a majority of board seat nominations come from referrals from other board members.

OWL members may enroll for the Digital Program or the Complete Program that includes the Digital Program and the Live Event. For dates, pricing and registration, go to www.owlsite.org/programs-events/get-on-board-program/

- 1 DIGITAL: So You Want to be a Board Member?**
Understand the role/responsibilities of a Board member and recommend pre-requisite knowledge needed
- 2 DIGITAL: The Nitty Gritty**
Includes information about personal liability, time commitments and compensation structures
- 3 DIGITAL: How to Gain Access to a Board Seat**
Preparing your resume, board selection process, seeking opportunities
- 4 DIGITAL: The Journey to the Top**
Key learnings and experiences and what I wish I would have asked from those who've been there
- 5 LIVE EVENT: September 22-23, 2021 at the Balboa Bay Resort in Newport Beach, CA**
The in-person conclusion to this program offers you the opportunity to devote yourself to fully preparing for a board seat, as well as connecting with Recruiters who can help.

Questions? Contact Gaynor Fries, Executive Director of OWL at gfries@owlsite.org

Thank you to our Partners for making events like this possible





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Charting Your Course: Women Entrepreneurs, CEOs, and Leaders

By John Raney

Four female leaders share experiences and insight on how to navigate and excel in the business world.



For International Women’s Day this year at OWL, **Beth Marsh**, the immediate past President of OWL and Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Apellis Pharmaceuticals, brought together four female leaders to discuss their experiences navigating their careers:

Q Beth Marsh:
Did you know you wanted to pursue your current path from the beginning, and if not, how did you chart your course to where you are today?

A Elizabeth Yeu, MD:
What I wanted to do was be as excellent as my mentors. To do that, I had to learn as much as I could, but also accept the pressures it came with. If you focus on what you want to work on clinically, and then cultivate it, you find what it is you ultimately want to do.

Q Marsh:
What’s the greatest challenge you’ve faced in your career as a female leader, and how did you handle it?

A Tamara Fountain, MD:
The toughest time for me was my residency. I was not supported by some of the faculty and expectations for me were low.

Continued next page

A Tamara Fountain, MD continued:
There were mentors who looked out for me and saw something in me. You have to recognize the mentor figures who will support you, advocate for you, and help you advance your career.

A Kerrie Brady:
It was much harder working as a woman early on, with fewer role models. But I think that by following your interests and finding role models you develop an inner compass for where you want to go. And I think that as women we put extra pressure on ourselves to be perfect. We need to give ourselves permission to fail, and share the lessons we've learned from those experiences with other women.

Q Marsh:
Tell me about a mentor who has meant a lot to you.

A Heather Attra:
A mentor who resonates with me said you need to have a passion for what you do and be connected to your purpose, and if you do that you'll excel.

A Fountain:
I was on the board of the Ophthalmic Mutual Insurance Company, and the most junior person there, so I thought I had nothing to contribute. And a man named Bruce Spivey encouraged me to speak up. You have to believe in your voice and believe that you have something to contribute even if you're not the most experienced.

Q Marsh:
How do you manage multiple leadership and workplace roles?

A Yeu:
You have to put the effort in and be confident in your ability to handle new tasks, without becoming arrogant.

A Fountain:
Leadership opportunities arise when you show up to meetings, listen, ask questions, and network. It's important to be comfortable with communication, both orally and in the written word.

A Attra:
I learned from starting in entrepreneurial startups to avoid saying "not my job" and help wherever it's needed, and that let me build the good relationships needed to get the work done.

Q Marsh:
How can organizations like OWL help women progress into leadership roles?

A Brady:
OWL does great work in providing role models, mentorship, and training, and the membership can help by letting the leadership know what you would like to see.

A Attra:
I agree, members have to speak up and remain active to find their path. To know what you're looking for in your journey, we have to know what your journey is.

A Yeu:
You shouldn't be afraid to just ask for mentorship and support from people you look up to. Organizations like OWL give you the chances to get your foot in the door and make connections with the mentors and role models who will carry you forward.

Q Marsh:
What is the best piece of advice you received in your career?

A Attra:
The best piece of advice I've gotten was to take advantage of mentorship, to be a mentor and be a mentee, but also to seek out a sponsor. Which is different; a sponsor is an advocate who champions you, while a mentor helps you grow.

A Brady:
We've all heard "Don't bite off more than you can chew." Well, the best advice I've gotten was "Bite big and chew hard." You should take on any project you would regret not doing.

A Fountain:
Recognize an opportunity when it's in front of you, use your voice and contribute, and be grateful and show gratitude to the people who help you along the way. Show up, speak up, and follow up. ■

John Raney is a writer living in Apex, North Carolina. He has a degree in Literature from UNC Asheville, and enjoys freelance writing work.

John Raney



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