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SECO 2019 Announces Its 2019 Award Winners

ATLANTA, GA – February 23, 2019 – SECO International, the world’s leading annual conference providing ophthalmic professionals with outstanding educational opportunities since 1923, proudly announces the recipients of its 2019 awards. SECO recognizes the following leaders in optometry and their significant contributions to the profession.

“The ophthalmic profession is strengthened by individual contributions of knowledge, leadership, advocacy and service,” said Emilio Balius, OD, President of SECO International, LLC. “Each year, SECO takes the opportunity to celebrate those that are going above and beyond in their efforts to serve. SECO leadership wants to thank Pete Smith, OD, Melanie Jenkins, CPO, Kayla Campbell, OD, Catherine Amos, OD, FAAO and Jerald Combs, OD for their personal and professional contributions.”

Southern Council of Optometrists’ Optometrist of the South Award
The 2019 Optometrist of the South Award will be presented to Pete Smith, OD of Greer, South Carolina. Dr. Smith has been in private practice in South Carolina for nearly fifty years, alongside his wife and fellow practitioner, Rosalind Overton-Smith, OD. A lifetime member of the South Carolina Optometric Physicians Association (SCOPA) and the American Optometric Association (AOA), Dr. Smith has served on the SCOPA Board of Directors and provided invaluable leadership and advice as a result of his years of experience in private practice. He is a grassroots expert, actively involved in advocacy work to support the optometry profession legislatively and working with legislators to develop their trust when it comes to vision and eye-related issues. Dr. Smith’s
contributions to optometry in South Carolina are immeasurable and he continues to influence and make a difference in the profession.

**Southern Council of Optometrists' Paraoptometric of the South Award**
The 2019 Paraoptometric of the South Award will be presented to Melanie Jenkins, CPO of Spring Hill, Tennessee. Ms. Jenkins is a crucial asset to the office of Rob Szeliga, OD, managing all administrative aspects of Spring Hill Eyecare with heart and creativity. Her involvement and attention to the community are unparalleled, whether it is her commitment to internal office initiatives that put a smile on the faces of Spring Hill Eyecare associates, charitable initiatives that give back to the community, or involvement in the state association officers’ board. Ms. Jenkins' hard work, dedication, and willingness to go above and beyond at Spring Hill Eyecare is recognized and appreciated among optometry professionals.

**Southern Council of Optometrists' Young Optometrist of the South Award**
The 2019 Young Optometrist of the South Award will be presented to Kayla Campbell, OD of Barboursville, West Virginia. Dr. Campbell is a graduate of Alderson Broaddus University where she earned a B.S. in Chemistry and Biology, graduating Magna Cum Laude, before attending and receiving her Doctor of Optometry degree in 2014 from Indiana University School of Optometry. She returned to West Virginia to practice optometry, becoming involved in the West Virginia Association of Optometric Physicians and the community programs they support, including education and leadership programs. In 2019, Dr. Campbell will become the newest Trustee of the WVAOP Executive Board. A devoted mother and wife, Dr. Campbell is an important asset to the optometric program and the West Virginia Association of Optometric Physicians.

**Southern Council of Optometrists' Distinguished Service Award**
The 2019 Distinguished Service Award will be presented to Catherine Amos, OD, FAAO, of Hoover, Alabama. Dr. Amos is recognized for her outstanding service and distinguished contributions to the advancement of continuing education in optometry worldwide during 40 years of service as a dedicated volunteer leader with SECO International. Dr. Amos graduated from the University of Alabama School of Optometry with her Doctor of Optometry degree in 1974, making her the first female graduate of the school. She has served on numerous committees and boards of many professional organizations throughout her career. Dr. Amos has served as President of the Birmingham Area Optometric Society, President and Chairman of the Board of the Alabama Optometric Association (ALOA), among others. She has published eleven refereed papers and presented over thirty continuing education courses. She is currently serving as Chair of the Disaster Relief Committee for Optometry Cares.

**Southern Council of Optometrists' President's Award**
The Southern Council of Optometrists are pleased to honor Jerald Combs, OD, of Martin, Kentucky, with the 2019 President's Award in recognition of his dedicated years and outstanding advancements to the profession of optometry. Dr. Combs received his Doctor of Optometry degree from the University of Alabama School of Optometry before returning to private practice in Kentucky. He previously served as President of the
Kentucky Optometric Association from 1988-1989, President of the Kentucky Board of Optometric Examiners in 2003, 2005, and 2012. His dedication to the growth of optometry serves as an example to the professional community.

Dr. Combs has had numerous professional and civic achievements over the years, including being honored as the Optometrist of the South at SECO 2005.

These optometry experts are recognized for their commitment to the profession and their exceptional skills. SECO congratulates the 2019 award recipients.

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**About SECO International**

The annual SECO meeting is produced by SECO International, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Southern Council of Optometrists, Inc. A nonprofit association founded in 1923, SECO boasts an approximate global membership of 25,000. The annual SECO Congress regularly attracts more than 6,000 national and international eye care professionals, vendors, and allied ophthalmic personnel. SECO International is widely acknowledged as the largest optometric educational meeting in the world.

For more information: [www.AttendSECO.com](http://www.AttendSECO.com), [www.SECOinternational.com](http://www.SECOinternational.com)