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NEWS FROM ROBERTSON OPTICAL LABORATORIES, INC.

SERVING THE EYE CARE INDUSTRY SINCE 1958

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the Lens Leader

Robertson Optical of Greenville Launches Eye Care Boot Camps

GREENVILLE, SC – Owners of Robertson Optical Laboratories have stated they are committed to serving as "partners in education" with ECPs. One strategy that reinforces this commitment is the implementation of Eye Care Boot Camps by Robertson Optical of Greenville. Held on Saturday mornings at least quarterly, the boot camps are conducted at the Greenville lab, or if requested, at ECPs' offices. Robertson Optical customers and prospective customers are able to participate by calling the lab and making an appointment.

"We've held two Eye Care Boot Camps," said Chip Robertson, vice president of Robertson Optical of Greenville, "and they were quite successful."

"The Eye Care Boot Camp creates an opportunity for ECPs to develop extraordinary skills and abilities," said practice growth consultant Mark Hinton, president of eYeFACILITATE, who, along with Tebbe Davis, creative director of ImageClarity/eYeFACILITATE, a marketing specialist for vision care practitioners, helps facilitate the education at the boot camp. "Typically, eye care practices tend to do things the way they've always done them. The boot camp helps uncover phenomenal practice-building opportunities beyond the basic, traditional strategies."

Some opportunities explored at the boot camps include new techniques for effective communications between the practice and the patient consumer, how to improve photochromic sales, maximizing revenues through promoting additional products, enhanced "teaming" (discovering how to recognize each practice members' gifts, knowledge and skills, especially those they enjoy, and building a successful team from those skills), and learning how to brand the eye care practice, not just the products. "We learned a lot about the importance of branding our own name, not just the manufacturer's name," said optician Greg



Above, Blue Ridge Vision Center ECPs join Boot Camp co-facilitator Mark Hinton. (L to R): Leanne Lawson, Gordon Johnson, OD, Ashley Cooper, Hinton, Jana Johnson, and Angie McCarter



ECPs from Hillcrest Eye Care of Simpsonville, SC, join Mark Hinton. (L to R): Crystal Vital, Marian Hughes, Hinton, and Jennie Kester.



Griffith of Pelham Vision Center in Greer, SC, who attended the spring boot camp and said he found it very valuable. "We discussed various strategies for branding our name such as including our business cards with every pair of glasses given to patients and marketing our products through posters in our dispensing area, but making sure our practice name is on them. In addition, we learned about the importance of 'whaming' the patient. We were encouraged to craft each pair of glasses tailored to meet each patient's individual needs, thinking in terms that we are not just an optician, but a fashion designer, architect, optics specialist, and much more."

"The boot camps, which include some role playing, provide value-added education for ECPs, including unique practice-building strategies, dispensing ideas, branding, sales techniques, onsite lab education, and helping ECPs to explore newer opportunities for their practices," said Robertson. "We strive to teach ECPs how to create lasting impressions, so their patients will return."

"We found the boot camp very helpful," said optometrist Gordon Johnson of Blue Ridge Vision in Greer, SC, "not only for me, but especially for my staff." He added, "There was excitement generated among my staff from learning new practice promotional techniques, new ideas for enhanced interaction with patients, and important vehicles for educating patients."

Johnson said that touring the lab at Robertson Optical was very valuable. "By allowing my staff to actually see the lab, technology and equipment, it helped them understand the whole lens fabrication process, which



Greenville's Eye Care Boot Camps create an opportunity for ECPs to develop extraordinary skills. Far left (L to R): Jan Standard, Lauren Laico and Greg Griffith of Pelham Vision Center in Greer, SC and Chip Robertson of Greenville's Robertson Optical. Middle (L to R): Gordon Johnson, OD of Blue Ridge Vision in Greer, SC and Boot Camp co-facilitator Tebbe Davis. Top right (L to R): Schwana Boyd and Jan Standard of Pelham Vision Center.



helped them see how the lab services integrate with their practice services, thus adding to their overall picture of the whole eye care industry."

Optician Jennie Kester of Hillcrest Eyecare in Simpsonville, SC, echoed the importance of touring the lab, stating, "Seeing what goes on behind the scenes is very helpful."

"It was nice to see the complete process of what actually happens when we order glasses from the lab," said Marian Hughes, an optician at Hillcrest. "I had never seen this before."



Gordon Johnson, OD

Kester said she also learned a lot about the importance of being open-minded to new opportunities for practice development. "You just can't stay within your walls, but going outside of the walls is important." She found it valuable to hear the importance of capitalizing on each staff member's strengths. "Discovering what each staff member enjoys, where their strengths lie, and building a team from their combined talents will certainly help your business to grow."

"We want to ensure that the practices learn to stretch and change habits," said Robertson. "And we want the professionals with each practice to learn how to create an exceptional team that works well together, highly contributing to quality eye care and phenomenal growth for the practice."

Kester supports the boot camps because she said she is a big believer in ongoing eye care education. "Education is paramount, and we all need to be partners in education". ■

Robertson Labs Offer Multigressiv^{ILT} and Multigressiv^{ILT} XS Lenses by Rodenstock

Robertson Optical is now offering Multigressiv^{ILT} and the Multigressiv^{ILT} XS by Rodenstock.

Greg Ballew, sales manager of Rodenstock, said "Replacing the Multigressiv2, the world's first successful, truly tailor-made lens, the Multigressiv^{ILT} and the Multigressiv^{ILT} XS upgrade the technology of the first atoric/aspheric, back surface lens design." He explained, "The Multigressiv2, released in 1999, utilized Rodenstock's technology of grinding and polishing an aspheric/atoric back surface. The Multigressiv^{ILT} and the Multigressiv^{ILT} XS advanced this technology by incorporating a spherical, single vision front surface with the progressive properties ground on the back surface."

Ballew added that the placement of the progressive corridor on the backside of the lens provides the patient with "dramatically reduced peripheral aberrations, for rapid patient adaptation". He said that the result is clear vision in all areas. "Utilizing individual lens technology, the Multigressiv^{ILT} and the Multigressiv^{ILT} XS offer the ultimate choice in clear, comfortable vision at all distances with a wider near viewing area. These lenses truly provide complete individualism for the patient, as individual as the patient's unique eyewear needs." ■



New Sales Representative Begins with Robertson Optical of Albany

ALBANY, GA – Lisa Vinavong has been named the new sales representative for Robertson of Albany. She will serve as a liaison between eye care professionals and Robertson, interacting with customers in south Georgia (south of Macon), along with parts of Alabama and Florida. Lisa has been with Robertson for three years assuming positions in customer service, billing, and edging.



Lisa Vinavong

"I have been involved in the optical field for a few years and have fallen in love with it," said Vinavong. "I am very excited about calling on ECPs, being able to introduce them to the quality, state-of-the-art products and services offered by Robertson. I have acquired an enormous amount of optical knowledge by studying the multitude of lenses, products and materials, and I am eager to share this with the eye care community." ■

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Robertson of Columbia Celebrates Grand Opening of New Building and In-House AR Coating with Mexican Fiesta and Ribbon Cutting

COLUMBIA, SC – Robertson Optical of Columbia celebrated the grand opening of its new state-of-the-art building in May with approximately 300 eye care professionals and guests attending a Cinco de Mayo Mexican fiesta. The new building houses South Carolina's only full-service, in-house anti-reflective coating lab, allowing the lab to produce Teflon® Clear Coat lenses and Carl Zeiss Vision coatings in-house. Robertson of Columbia and Atlanta, GA are the only two independent labs in the southeastern U.S. able to produce Teflon® Clear Coat lenses in-house. The fiesta featured a Mexican-style ribbon cutting, pinata bursting, a live Mariachi Band, and special drawings including a grand prize for a Mexican vacation donated by Zeiss.

(From left): Larry Patton, sales manager for Robertson of Columbia; Jack Howard, VP of Robertson of Columbia; Scotty Scott, VP of Robertson of Columbia; Gordon Scott, VP and consultant for Robertson of Columbia; and Kelly Bowling, VP of Robertson Optical of Atlanta, GA.



Edward Lemmon, OD of Barnwell, SC tries his hand at the pinata bursting. Dr. Lemmon also won an ipod for the best male Mexican costume.

(From left): Runner-up for having the best female Mexican costume was Linda Senn, optician apprentice for Sawyer Opticians in Columbia, SC, who won a tote bag donated by Sydney Love, filled with cosmetics and skin care products donated by Vision Ease; and winners of Sydney Love luggage for the best female Mexican costumes were from the practice of John L.W. Smith, OD, in North Augusta, SC: Amber Bishop, dispensing and contact lens specialist; Toni White, bookkeeper; and Angie Light, optician.



Larry Patton (left), sales manager for Robertson of Columbia, and Christie Cornetta (right), regional marketing manager of Carl Zeiss Vision, congratulate Karen Vest (center), office manager of Edisto Vision Center of Orangeburg, SC, on winning a vacation for two to Cancun, Mexico, compliments of Zeiss.

Hank Sawyer, OD of Marion, SC enjoys the tasty Mexican food at the fiesta.



Larry Patton (left), sales manager for Robertson of Columbia congratulates Toni White on winning a flat panel HDTV TV donated by Signet Armorlite.

Steve Dean, OD, of H. Rubin Vision Center of Sumter, SC, finishes his tour and enjoys the fiesta.



Robertson expresses thanks to all manufacturers and vendors who contributed to the grand opening, including: Carl Zeiss Vision, Teflon®, Signet Armorlite, Rodenstock, Sydney Love, Vision Ease, Optima, Inc., Titmus, and DAC.

As Red Tray Optical Lab Partners, Robertson Brings Savings To ECPs



All Robertson Optical locations have become partner labs with Red Tray Optical, a purchasing group for ECPs, which was founded by Jerry Hayes, OD of Vicksburg, MS. Red Tray offers its members the 'maximum published discounts' from a select group of renown optical labs and frame suppliers.

Robertson is currently offering Red Tray members exceptional specials as a "thank you for working with Robertson," according to Gordon "Scotty" Scott, Jr, vice president of Robertson's Columbia, SC location.

"I believe we are introducing the strongest discount plan ever offered to independent practice owners for both optical lab services and frames," said Hayes, who started the HMI Buying Group 25 years ago.

According to Hayes, "Unless a practice is already getting the maximum discount from every lab and frame supplier they use, Red Tray is going to save them money and increase profitability of the optical side of their practice."

There is no cost to join Red Tray Optical, and HMI Buying Group members in good standing are pre-approved for membership. Additional information is available from the company's website www.redtrayoptical.com.



Sydney Love Frames Continue High Sales

"The sell in on Sydney Love frames continues to be very strong," says John Barry of Sydney Love. "The initial release in May will be followed up with other releases slated for early fall."

Every Sydney Love style is consistent with the design intent of the designer, Christine De Gennero. She works from her design studio in Florence, Italy and continues to design new and fun whimsical patterns for handbags and accessories," Barry adds.

"Eye Q Eyewear has infused every frame style with appropriate elements of Christine's bold patterns, vibrant colors and effervescent polka dot linings," Barry explains. "The result is that the styles are very whimsical and wearable."

"The Sydney Love case that is included with every frame completes the look and is 'Sydney Loved' by patients who have selected Sydney Love Eyewear," he concludes.

These frames can be ordered through all Robertson labs.

