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Salus University Names New Dean of Pennsylvania College of Optometry

Salus University has named Dr. Melissa Trego '04 OD dean of the Pennsylvania College of Optometry (PCO). In her new role, Dr. Trego, a Solebury, Pa., native, will be responsible for the development, implementation and assessment of PCO's academic programs, personnel and fiscal resources, as well as maintaining the program's accreditation status.

Dr. Trego has served as interim dean for PCO since May 2016. "I am honored and humbled to be selected as the next Dean of PCO," she said. "I am fortunate enough to be working closely with some pretty incredible faculty every day, educating our students and caring for our patients. My hope has been and always will be to make PCO a little bit better every day."

Dr. Trego, who is the first female graduate of PCO to hold this position, brings more than 10 years of optometric clinical expertise and academic leadership to the position. After earning her Doctor of Optometry from Salus PCO in 2004, she held a two-year primary care residency at The Eye Institute (TEI) of Salus University. She then became an instructor for PCO and a preceptor at TEI, while earning her Ph.D. in Cellular and Molecular Biology from Cardiff University in the United Kingdom. From there, she rose through the ranks as an assistant professor, associate dean of Optometric Academic Affairs, associate dean of the Accelerated Scholars Program and ultimately interim dean. Dr. Trego was instrumental in the development of the University's Accelerated Scholars Program, the first three-year Doctor of Optometry program in the U.S., which has seen much success in its first graduating class this past May.

<http://www.salus.edu/News/News-Stories/Unique-Optometry-Program-to-Graduate-First-Class-i.aspx>

As a program, we've started to make our stride in moving forward and we are ready to start the next chapter in PCO's innovative history," she said. "My hope is to facilitate and support this pathway."

University provost Dr. Janice Scharre cites Dr. Trego's leadership skills and innate passion for the optometric profession as immense assets as she transitions to her new role.

"Dr. Trego brings significant experience as a classroom teacher, clinician and administrator to the position," she said. "She is a strong advocate for the optometry profession, program and students."

Dr. Scharre noted that as interim dean "she has led a major curriculum review with the faculty, successful accreditation from the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education, and a significant faculty development project." In addition to being an active administrator and faculty member of the innovative Scholars Program, Dr. Scharre is excited for the next chapter. "We are confident that under her leadership, PCO will continue to be innovative and progressive in optometric education, leading through change," she said.

In addition to her work at Salus and TEI, Dr. Trego holds an array of leadership positions; she is the Chief Academic Officer of for PCO with the American Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) Special Interest Groups as well as serving on ASCO's board of directors. She has also served as residency accreditation team member for the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE). She has published various peer-reviewed abstracts and presented professionally both nationally and internationally. Throughout her career, she has won various awards, including Alcon's Clinical Excellence Award, Clinical Excellence in Low Vision, National Optometric Student Association (NOSA) Faculty Recognition Award and Outstanding Optometry Professor of the Year.

About Salus University

Salus University, founded as the Pennsylvania College of Optometry in 1919, today is a diversified, globally recognized professional academic center of learning that offers a wide range of degree programs in the professions of Optometry, Audiology, Physician Assistant, Public Health, Blindness and Low Vision Studies, Biomedicine, Occupational Therapy and Speech-Language Pathology. Salus operates four clinical facilities in the Philadelphia area that provide highly specialized vision, hearing and balance, and speech-language pathology services. The University has more than 1,200 students, including PhD candidates, and more than 11,300 alumni worldwide. For more information, please visit www.salus.edu.

