



For Immediate Release  
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### Salus University Professor Featured as “Race in Optometry” Panelist



**Elkins Park, Pa.** — Salus University Pennsylvania College of Optometry (PCO) Assistant Professor Ruth Shoge, OD '06, was recently among the featured panelists for a timely discussion about how race affects optometric training and clinical practice, hosted by the State University of New York (SUNY) College of Optometry. The virtual panel addressed the lack of diversity and exclusion in optometric education and the profession, emphasizing conversations about race to increase awareness within the eyecare community and eliminate racial disparities.

For Dr. Shoge, who also serves as chair-elect for the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry (ASCO) Diversity and Cultural Competency Committee, understanding the terms diversity, equity and inclusion and how they relate to cultural competency is the short-term strategy to influence longer-term individual, structural and culture change.

“Sometimes the resources need to be distributed based on need. That's equity and making sure everybody has a proportionate access to the resources,” said Dr. Shoge. “Then we have inclusion, meaning is all of the variety of voices who are present, do they have a seat at the table? We want to translate all of this into patient care because, at the end of the day – that's what matters.”

Panelists included Dr. John Flanagan, University of California Berkeley School of Optometry dean and professor; Dr. Joy Harewood, Bronxcare Health System attending optometrist and SUNY College of Optometry adjunct assistant clinical professor; Dr. David Heath, State University of New York (SUNY) College of Optometry president; Dr. Edwin Marshall, Indiana University professor emeritus of optometry and public health; Dr. Sherrol Reynolds, National Optometric Association (NOA) president and NSU College of Optometry chief of advanced ophthalmic care.

In addition to serving on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee at Salus, Dr. Shoge helped relaunch a summer enrichment program at Salus PCO with a 37-year history serving underrepresented minority students, offering a six-week immersive on-campus experience. Postponed due to the coronavirus, the program's new relaunch date is June 2021.

For more information about the University's DEI Committee and additional DEI resources, visit [salus.edu/dei](https://salus.edu/dei).

### **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 Philadelphia and Montgomery counties that provide highly specialized vision, hearing and balance, and speech-language pathology services. The University has more than 1,200 students, and more than 14,000 alumni worldwide. For more information, please visit [www.salus.edu](https://www.salus.edu).