

AWARD RECIPIENTS

The VOA recognizes certain Optometrists and individuals every year. ([Click here for award descriptions.](#)) We are proud to display these exceptional recipients...

Optometrist of the Year Distinguished Achievement Vanguard of the Year Keyperson of the Year Meritorious Service Philanthropist of the Year
Optometrist of the Year



- 2026 Dr. W. Scott Mann
- 2025 Dr. Jacqueline Theis
- 2024 Dr. Gene Sweetnam
- 2023 Dr. Amanda J. Umlandt
- 2022 Dr. Lisa V. Gontarek
- 2021 Dr. Jeffrey C. Michaels
- 2020 Dr. Walt Whitley
- 2019 Dr. Jen Weigel
- 2018 Dr. Adam P. Parker
- 2017 Dr. Robert M. Allen
- 2016 Dr. Christine W. Cook
- 2015 Dr. Gerald R. Neidigh
- 2014 Dr. Robert L. Bass
- 2013 Dr. Shannon C. Franklin
- 2012 Dr. Kurt P. Finney

Award Recipients

- 2011 Dr. George F. Brown
- 2010 Dr. David H. Hettler
- 2009 Dr. Fred E. Goldberg
- 2008 Dr. Jeffrey C. Michaels
- 2007 Dr. A. Susan Keene
- 2006 Dr. Marc A. Hudson
- 2005 Dr. M. E. "Pat" Jackson
- 2004 Dr. Joseph E. Droter
- 2003 Dr. James E. Powers
- 2002 Dr. Carol D. Record
- 2001 Dr. Elton Brown
- 2000 Dr. Roxann L. Robinson
- 1999 Dr. Gary St. Clair
- 1998 Dr. Thomas R. Cheezum
- 1997 Dr. James Cornetta
- 1996 Dr. Benjamin J. Lambert
- 1995 Dr. Charles Harrill
- 1994 Dr. Robert Greenburg
- 1993 Dr. Gordon W. Jennings
- 1992 Dr. John P. Baumgardner
- 1991 Dr. A. Gregory Toler
- 1990 Dr. Samuel C. Smart
- 1989 Dr. Robin P. Rinearson
- 1988 Dr. Lowell H. Gilbert
- 1987 Dr. Kenneth A. Lebow
- 1986 Dr. John F. Jones
- 1985 Dr. Bernard Stier
- 1984 Dr. Stanley L. Jason
- 1983 Dr. W. Ernest Schlabach
- 1982 Dr. Samuel J. Cole
- 1981 Dr. Joel N. Zaba
- 1980 Dr. Benjamin J. Lambert
- 1979 Dr. Edward Millan
- 1978 Dr. Michael J. Obremskey
- 1977 Dr. Charles E. Johnston
- 1976 Dr. James R. Prince
- 1975 Dr. James Fowler
- 1974 Dr. John L. Howlette
- 1973 Dr. J. P. Gardner, Jr.
- 1972 Dr. P. J. McEwen
- 1971 Dr. Andrew J. Metz
- 1970 Dr. Douglas P. Wisman
- 1969 Dr. Bernard A. Morewitz
- 1968 Dr. Frederick U. Baublitz
- 1967 Dr. Howard D. Kahn
- 1966 Dr. Carl A. Kauffman

Award Recipients

- 1965 Dr. Edward W. Gilbert
- 1964 Dr. William M. Turner
- 1963 Dr. C. L. Beauchamp
- 1962 Dr. Gordon S. Buchanan
- 1961 Dr. John L. Miller
- 1960 Dr. Robert R. Burrage
- 1959 Dr. E. B. Gatten, Jr.
- 1958 Dr. John J. Reid
- 1957 Dr. John Baumgardner
- 1956 Dr. L. Paul Quillen
- 1955 Dr. George Hall, Jr.
- 1954 Dr. H. L. Friedenber
- 1953 Dr. H. L. Friedenber
- 1952 Dr. John R. Bell
- 1951 Dr. E. O. Hubbard
- 1950 Dr. W. R. Carper
- 1949 Dr. Frank O. Taliaferro
- 1948 Dr. S. S. Loewner
- 1947 Dr. William M. Turner, Jr.
- 1946 Dr. Carl A. Kauffman
- 1945 Dr. Alma H. Wilcox
- 1944 Dr. F. C. Bullington
- 1943 Dr. Leo C. Ransone
- 1942 Dr. Gerald T. Eaton
- 1941 Dr. William B. French
- 1940 Dr. Louis L. Meyer
- 1939 Dr. C. W. Devier
- 1938 Dr. E. B. Gatten, Sr.
- 1937 Dr. I. J. Mercer, Sr.
- 1936 Dr. I. J. Mercer, Sr.
- 1935 Dr. Herbert E. Cross
- 1934 Dr. E. C. Ellis

Distinguished Achievement

Award Recipients



Special Achievement Award recipient Jeffrey C. Michaels
Vanguard of the Year recipient Jeffrey C. Michaels



Keynote of the Year recipient Jennifer G. Berger
Keynote of the Year recipient Jennifer G. Berger



Philanthropist of the Year recipient Dr. William Christalcomb
Philanthropist of the Year recipient Dr. William Christalcomb



Dr. Teresa Barone, PhD
Dr. Victoria Weiss

Dr. Thomas Mess, Jr.
Dr. Thomas Mess, Jr.