

What can the Virginia Optometric Association do for you?

A Guide to VOA Student Membership Benefits

Volunteer OD mentors – You will have access to a volunteer mentor practicing in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Contact them about any questions you might have about Optometry. Our mentors will make the commitment to contact you at least once a quarter.

VOA website access – You will have access to the Members Only section of the website so that you can stay updated on VOA happenings. The website is a good resource and has an on-line directory of members.

VOA quarterly newsletter – You will have the newsletter delivered to your e-mail address as a PDF. The newsletter contains valuable announcements. Also, at reduced rates, you can place an advertisement announcing your availability.

Job placement assistance – You can enroll in the job placement assistance program once you start your job search at no cost to you. Attending meetings as a student is also a great way to network your way into a practice.

* **Reduced meeting registration fees** – You know that it's financially hard being a student, and the VOA recognizes this, too. You will receive significant discounts on your meeting registration. You may be asked by the VOA office to "work" at the registration tables in between classes or as a CE monitor. This will give you a chance to meet current active members of the VOA.

Subsidies to defray associated meeting costs – You can apply for a subsidy to further help with meeting costs. The VOA recognizes that you have to get to the meeting, stay there, and fill your stomachs, too.

Email updates – You can opt to receive the same email updates that are sent to all members by the VOA Office. The emails are sent frequently to keep members informed about the status of Optometry in Virginia.

Leadership opportunities – You can start to contribute to the VOA now. Just for starters, you can maintain the state club at your school or provide student input to the Membership Committee. If you are interested on working with another committee, the VOA will make it happen.

Student VOA Legislative Advocacy – You can assist the VOA staff and the Legislative Committee at meetings with legislators during the legislative session (Jan-March). You can visit the VOA office to learn what goes on behind the scenes.

VOA Student Ambassador – You can be invited to attend the annual VOA leadership meetings in person. These meetings (Board of Trustees and Annual Membership Business Meeting) are held during the VOA Annual Conference in June each year.

VOA Staff resources – You can ask them about ... anything! Remember, as a member, they work for you. Ask them about DEA registration, how to get a license, or what a buying group is.

Invitation to social and networking events – You can meet Virginia practicing doctors of optometry at the Annual Conference and Fall Conference. This would be an excellent time to meet others with similar interests, find out about practice opportunities, and enjoy the fun of being a VOA student member.

Note: explanation of Special VOA Student Registration Fees and Discounts at VOA Educational Conferences is on the following page.

*** Explanation of VOA Student Meeting Registration Fees**

In order to receive reduced meeting registration fees, one must be a VOA Student Member in good standing.

VOA Student Members are eligible for reduced meeting registration fees of \$10 per day of attendance.

- Example: An active VOA Student Member wants to attend all three days of the VOA Annual Conference. 3 days * \$10/day = \$30 paid by the student. This registration fee is used to cover part of the student's estimated food/beverage costs for the meeting.
- The student's commitment: When registering for a meeting, the active VOA Student Member is required to attend all events for the day of registered attendance, inclusive of classes, socials, and networking events.
- Note that students are not eligible for CE credit when they attend classes. They are allowed to audit these classes only.

The VOA Membership Committee will then pay for the balance of the student's estimated food/beverage costs.

- Example: The above student's estimated food/beverage total is, for discussion purposes only, \$75 for the VOA Annual Conference. The student put \$30 toward defraying this cost. The Membership Committee funds the balance of monies due to the VOA Annual Conference. \$75 total - \$30 student payment = \$45 expected payment from the Membership Committee.
- Our commitment: When a student registers for a VOA meeting, it will be the responsibility of the VOA Membership Committee to host the student. The Membership Committee will, to the best of its abilities, make announcements regarding student attendance, enable interactions with actively practicing member doctors, promote networking activities, and ensure attendance at all events.

All other expenses including transportation, room, and board are the responsibility of the student. The VOA does not cover these expenses at this time.

If a student is NOT a VOA Student Member, they are NOT eligible for these special benefits and discounts. However, students who apply for VOA student membership when they register for a VOA conference shall be entitled to the reduced VOA student member registration fee, subject to the final approval of their VOA student member application.

Last revised on March 10, 2011 and subject to change.