



PRESS RELEASE: Ferris State University's MCO to Host Vision Rehabilitation Grand Rounds Workshop

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Included below is a press release regarding the Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University's Vision Rehabilitation Grand Rounds Workshop event that will take place on Friday, April 8 at the new MCO building in Big Rapids. Any questions regarding this press release can be directed to Sandy Gholston, interim assistant director of News Services.

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MCO to Host Vision Rehabilitation Grand Rounds Workshop

BIG RAPIDS – The Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University, through sponsorship from The Ferris Foundation's Exceptional Merit Grants Program, will host a Vision Rehabilitation Grand Rounds Workshop Event on Friday, April 8, beginning at 1 p.m. in the new state-of-the-art educational and patient-care facility.

Visually impaired patient volunteers from the local community will serve as clinical subjects for third-year MCO students to perform complimentary vision rehabilitation examinations on the patients in a small-group workshop format under the guidance of mentoring vision rehabilitation doctors of optometry from around the state of Michigan.

“This grand rounds workshop is significant because it brings together doctors of optometry from across Michigan with our students, faculty and volunteers from the community for the purpose of generating student interest in low vision rehabilitation,” said Dr. Sarah Hinkley, event coordinator and chief of MCO Vision Rehabilitation Services. “The emotional impact of working with a visually-impaired patient for the first time is what leads some students to a career helping patients live happy and independent lives despite visual impairment.”

Hinkley noted that this will be the “first encounter that the MCO students will have with real patients suffering irreversible vision loss and how they can be assisted in their activities of daily living with visual aids and home/workplace adaptations.” The patients will range in age from high schoolers to senior citizens. Organizers believe the workshop will bring together community members, volunteer vision rehabilitation doctors of optometry and MCO students in a unique and real-world way in Ferris' newly-opened, on-campus facility.

“Our community volunteers are eager to share their experiences and visual struggles for the

benefit of student learning,” said Hinkley, an alumna of Ferris and currently a MCO faculty member. “Many of our volunteers ask to be invited back each year. They love to make a difference in the lives of students. Many patients recognize the shortage of low vision rehabilitation providers in Michigan and hope to inspire our students to pursue that career path for the benefit of all with visual impairments.”

The event will be hosted in the new Michigan College of Optometry building at Ferris which opened on Jan. 10 and is located at 1124 South State Street in Big Rapids. The workshop begins in the second-floor classroom at 1 p.m. and moves to the first-floor clinic at 1:30 p.m. until 5 p.m.

The grant amount was \$6,400 and goes toward the purchase of low vision devices and equipment to be utilized in lab-like workshops.

For more information about the Michigan College of Optometry, visit the website at <http://www.ferris.edu/colleges/michopt/index.cfm>.

To learn more about The Ferris Foundation’s Exceptional Merit Grants Program, visit <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/foundation/MeritGrant/meritgrant.htm>.

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