

SECO International Receives Association of Optometrists Award

SECO PRESIDENT DR. RON BANNISTER ACCEPTS AWARD IN EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

ATLANTA (June 25, 2010) – SECO International – one of the largest optometry meetings in the world and most comprehensive sources of continuing education for eye care professionals -- has been honored with the Association of Optometrist's Award. SECO's President, Dr. Ron Bannister, accepted the award recently in Edinburgh, Scotland. Presented only three times previously, the award was created by the Association of Optometrists (AOP) to recognize an individual or institution that has made a significant impact on the advancement of optometry within the United Kingdom.

"We are very honored to accept this prestigious award from the AOP," said Dr. Bannister. "The long-time partnership between SECO and the AOP has been a mutually rewarding experience and has resulted in bringing together some of America's and Great Britain's foremost experts in the profession and extending continuing education opportunities to optometrists throughout the UK and US."

SECO and the AOP formed a working relationship in 1997 with the signing of a joint venture partnership agreement and the intent to create an event in the UK similar to that of SECO's annual congress. Over the past several years, the AOP conference has evolved, and in 2009, moved to more of an open arena and presented free CET for all delegates. In 2011, the AOP – in partnership with SECO -- is planning to build on the success of the 2009 event and add another lecture theater and continue to offer free CET for all delegates.

"The AOP has been enriched by its association with SECO," said Michael Charlton, BSc(Hons) FCOptom, Chairman of the AOP. "SECO's leadership has given of their time, their expertise and themselves completely and enthusiastically with a generosity that only they could give."

The AOP Award has been given to only three previous individuals and organizations, and never before to anyone outside the UK. In 2002, the award was made to Optometrist Ted Arbuthnot. In 2004, the award was bestowed on the Wales Assembly Government. And, in 2006, the award was presented to the Scottish Executive Health Department.

THE SECO TRADITION

SECO International is produced annually by SECO International, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Southern Council of Optometrists, Inc. SECO International, headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, is a not-

for-profit membership association founded in 1923, and counts as its members practitioners in the 12 southeastern states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. The annual SECO Congress regularly attracts more than 7,000 national and international eye care professionals, vendors, and allied ophthalmic personnel. SECO International is widely acknowledged as the largest optometric educational meeting in the world.

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