

Biographies of Candidates: Electoral District 1 (Lower Mainland)

Inderjit Bamrah

Born in Kenya 1949 I have been an optician for over thirty years, and have been lucky enough to see the great developments in the field. I left Kenya in 1969 to attend City and Islington College, London, England and train as a Dispensing Optician. I have worked as an optician, manager and owner of various optical stores over the years. These include employment with both small and large corporations as well as running my own stores in London and Vancouver. I immigrated to Canada in 1985 with my wife and two children. I have served as a volunteer with various opticianry associations and have guest lectured at both provincial and national association educational programs. I have participated as an instructor/teacher in various opticians programs and currently serve on the Inquiry Committee and Examination Committee and as an examiner for the College of Opticians of British Columbia.

I have a considerable background of education and training in the field of optics, and feel that I can be a great asset to the College of Opticians. My work with the College committees has prepared me to be able to contribute at the Board level. As a member of the Board, I will be able to do more than just see the changes occurring in optics I will be able to contribute to these changes and work towards development for the future.

Katania Law

My career as a practicing dispensing optician and contact lens fitter spans over 25 years in both the private and public sectors of the optical fields from Newfoundland to British Columbia. I first trained as an optician under an Australia-educated doctor of optometry, while co-owning and managing my own optical company in St. John's. I hold Canada and U.S. Licenses.

I have accrued expert skills, experience, knowledge from my years of dispensing, managing, doing lab work and serving customers. I have worked in retail optical companies and with optometrists as a dispenser, using my fluent Cantonese, Mandarin, and English in translations to clients. Toward the public sector, I served as an Inquiry Committee Member of the College of Opticians of BC from 2003-2006.

I take the initiative to continually educate myself in the new technologies emerging in our optical field. In 2002, for instance, I trained for Sight-Testing from Eyelogic Systems Incorporation. In May 2007, I completed a year curriculum and practicum in the Advanced Sight-Testing Practice 2 (scoring 80% closed-book). I have been conducting S. Testing as a refracting optician achieving 20/20 test results 99.9%.

In 2007, I had the pleasure of working as a contract assistant instructor at the BC College of Optics whereat I helped students hone their lensometry, radius-scope and contact lens skills.

If elected to the Board, I would contribute my cumulative expertise to give concrete ideas on improving the high standards of our Licensed practitioners. My goals would be to open a brain-storming discussion dialogue with our province's fellow members to encourage their feedback. Exchanging troubleshooting skills to further improving customer service.

I am proud of our optical profession and wish to contribute to upholding its quality care and service the BC consumer deserves.

Chris Lee

Name: Christopher W. Lee

Age: 58

Educational Background:

Bachelor Degree – Simon Fraser University.

Sales & Marketing Executives Diploma – University of British Columbia.

Refracting Optician – Northern Alberta Institute of Technology.

Work Experience:

1981 to present – Optician/Contact Lens Fitter – Opticana Eyewear.

There is only one reason why I put myself forward to be your representative at the Board: To work and make the College relevant to us as Opticians. In the past twenty-seven years, I have seen dramatic changes in the field of opticianry, not just in the frames styles, lens designs, dispensing and contact lens fitting skills but also in the changing aspirations of opticians. There are more challenges in both our professional and personal life. For owners/opticians, there are the added challenges of operating a business. Challenges that will require innovative and dimensional solutions to solve. My belief is that the College is there to help us better our profession and business at the same time not losing sight on the public interest. After all, it is the public that is the ultimate evaluator of how well we do, or should perform, our profession and our business. To bring relevancy is to work closely with all stakeholders to bring about and maintain our high standards, skills, and to solve challenges. I will do my best to perform this task if chosen as your Board representative, and my sincere thanks to all of you to have considered my candidacy.

Ted Morse

There are many new issues facing opticianry today. I believe my combination of 24 years of optical industry experience here in BC and my academic credentials will benefit the College Board and its dealings with government over the next few years.

Raheem Savja

I graduated with a BSc degree in Cell and Developmental Biology from UBC in 1994. I went on to pursue an MSc degree in cancer cell research. My career as an optician started part time in 1994. In 1996, I became a licensed optician/contact lens fitter and was promoted to manager. I am currently a manager at Pearle Vision. I have been an examiner for the College of Opticians since 2000, and have been the vice chair of the College of Opticians Inquiry Committee since 2003. I am presently serving as treasurer of the Opticians of British Columbia. In May 2003, I volunteered on an eye clinic mission in Haiti and will do so again in India in November 2008.

As a member of the Board, I would like to focus my efforts in updating the continuing education program for opticians, which would be improved by revising course content, by offering more affordable instruction; and by introducing more flexible class schedules. I would also promote new standards of practice for sight testing for BC opticians. I think that broadening the scope of practice for opticians would contribute to better eye care for consumers. Overall, I hope to use my 13 years of experience as an optician to facilitate further partnerships among eye-care professionals.

Dieter Saxer

Who am I?

In the eyewear industry for over 27 years, trained in Switzerland with (Lehrmeister) Degree. I am a licensed opticians with all 3 mandatory licenses. Started my apprenticeship in the Eyewear Industry at merely 16 years of age, I never looked back with any regrets. I love what we (you and I) are doing and therefore;

My Reason and Vision

I would like to be able to make changes in the day to day business structure of the COBC in a constructive and professional way. I do understand the need of the COBC since we are a Government regulated Profession and make sure ever more so, that we keep the high standard of professionalism.

The standard of practice has to stay high very high but to what price!?

As past President and long term DOABC Board member my mandate has always been in favor of opticians. I brought MCE to opticians in Vancouver, Kelowna and Vancouver Island, and I will continue to do so. I will make sure that we (Opticians) will have free MCE in a less stressful manner. Reduce payments of some Membership Fees and expensive MCE Sundays. I am working hard to get Liability Insurance for the lowest price ever without any Membership Fee built into the Insurance Fee.

Does this sound like a candidate for you?

Lina Tang

After acquiring a Bachelor degree in Geography from SFU in 1979 I found myself employed in the Optical industry a few years later. While proud of being an Opticians for the past 23 years I have seen many changes in the industry. The introduction of licensing gave us regulations to operate under, there are more independent Optical Dispensaries now, and ethnic groups which may have been used to a different way of doing business, serve the clients of their community. Over the past four years I have served as a volunteer for the Dispensing Opticians Association of BC which gave me a great deal of feedback from talking to fellow Opticians such as; the annual College of Opticians of BC (COBC) registration fees are not in proportion to current salaries, there should be an increase in communication between the COBC and the Opticians and the COBC should have contact with Optometrists in order to improve the working relationship between Opticians and Optometrists. As a board member of the COBC I will be able to carry the messages from fellow opticians to the board members and committees that decide how our industry is regulated

Sheree Watson

As the Assistant Program Director at BC College of Optics, it has been my pleasure to direct students to their new career as a health care professional. I have enjoyed working as an Optician in British Columbia for the past seventeen years and have owned and operated my own Optical Dispensary for fourteen years. I began instructing student opticians at BC College of Optics with a part-time position in 1996 and full-time for the last eight years.

There is a need to respond to new changes at COBC. I would like to be a part of that challenge. I want continuing education standards to be improved and to help increase awareness of the public that Opticians are health care professionals.

I commend the past board for their dedicated work in vision screening and automated refraction and I would like to contribute to their efforts in upholding the high standards of opticianry.