

HALL OF DISTINCTION

Class of 2021

INDUCTION CEREMONY

Thursday, September 30, 2021

Dr. David King

David graduated from Canton South in 1979 and went to The Ohio State University to pursue a Doctor of Optometry Degree, which he received in 1986. His outstanding academics earned him early admission to the College of Optometry. He later served as president of his optometry class, gave the commencement address at his college's graduation, and was named the 1986 Outstanding Graduate of his class by the Ohio Optometric Association.

David also served as a resident advisor for 2 years and as a member of The Ohio State University marching band (playing trombone and trombonium) for 5 years while attending OSU. He enjoyed mentoring others in those positions. After graduating with honors, David completed a year-long ocular disease management residency at the Veterans Administration Hospitals in Columbus and Chillicothe, Ohio.

After applying himself diligently to his studies and earning his degrees, David moved to China Grove, NC, to open a private optometry practice, which he named King Eye Center. Since opening his practice in July 1987, David has grown King Eye Center in revenues and patients to the top 5 percent of practices in the nation.

Not only does David provide comprehensive eye care to his patients, but he also has volunteered for decades to provide eye care to those who cannot afford it at the Good Shepherd's Clinic and Community Care Clinic in Salisbury, NC. He also has provided eye care through numerous medical mission trips to Guatemala. He donates eyewear and services to needy patients at his practice and goes into the office after hours to see emergency patients so they don't have to go to the Emergency Department.

In addition, he worked on the side for 30 years to provide eye care services to inmates at 5 different prisons in the state. When other optometrists started to notice David's commitment to professional excellence, they asked him to serve as a clinical examiner on the North Carolina State Board of Examiners in Optometry.

He has served in this capacity since 1995, testing candidates (through oral examinations) for licensure as optometrists in North Carolina, as well as evaluating and recommending testing formats. Due to the excellence exhibited in his practice and on the Board of Examiners, David was awarded the John Robinson Clinical Excellence Award in Optometry for the state of North Carolina in June 2013. Once the National Board of Examiners in Optometry heard about David's influence and professional expertise, they asked him to serve on the Ocular and Systemic Disease Committee, which develops and assesses content for the Disease portion of the Nation Certification Exam for candidates seeking optometry licensure in the United States. David served the NBEO in this capacity for over a decade.

Not only has David contributed eyecare excellence on the international, national, state, and local level, but he has also displayed a strong commitment

to the growth and development of his local community. He served on the Rowan County Board of Health as a member and eventually chairman, from 1994 to 2003, making and implementing policies related to public health, and overseeing the construction of new Health Department facilities. He served on the Board of Directors for Novant Health Rowan Regional Medical Center for 8 years, the Rowan Bank Board of Directors for 8 years, the China Grove Board of Trade for 10 years, and the China Grove Rotary Club for 10 years.

He recently began serving on the Main Street Marketplace and Meeting Place Board of Directors, which oversees a local food bank that aims to help those it serves eventually find jobs and become self-sufficient. David has been especially helpful during the coronavirus pandemic to establish protocols aimed at reducing risks to employees and clients. He also has been involved in implementing the facility's first self-sustaining hydroponics center. At his local church, he has served on the band and worship team for more than 20 years. He also has served as the church moderator, on the pastor search committee, and on the human resources committee, which he chaired.

In his personal life, he also has maintained a commitment to excellence. He has continued to pursue his love of music, learning to play the piano and guitar after college. He plays the guitar in the band at his church and sings as a vocalist there as well. He became involved in musical theater, having several lead roles in 5 different musicals at Piedmont Players in Salisbury, NC. About 10 years ago, David became interested in Ironman competitions and trained himself to participate. Ironman competitors must swim 2.4 miles, bike 112 miles, and run a full marathon of 26.2 miles, all on the same day. David plans on finishing his 10th full Ironman competition in November 2021. He maintains a personal commitment to health and fitness so he can continue to serve those around him.

David married his high school sweetheart Susan (Mathie) King in 1984, and they have been married 36 years. They have four children, Katie (33), Emily (31), Sarah (29), and Patrick (27). At age 5, Patrick was diagnosed with autism, and David and Susan have been strong advocates, encouragers, and speakers in the autism community. Susan and Patrick published a book, "Optimism for Autism," which became an Amazon bestseller. David's role in Patrick's life is highlighted in the book and serves as an inspiration to others walking this path.

David displays a heart for others, a commitment to professional excellence and service, a love of the arts, personal discipline, and a dedication to family and community. When he gets involved in something, it grows and thrives.

As a classmate of David's and lifelong friend, I have watched him make outstanding contributions to both his profession and community. He pursues excellence on all levels and serves as an inspiration to our students of what can be accomplished in life.