

Mission & Strategic Plan

The mission of the Optical Women's Association is to enhance and promote the leadership role of women in the optical industry through networking, education, and peer support. The organization works to fulfill this mission through four strategic goals:

Value | Accessibility | Engagement | Expansion

By design, our goals are intertwined and dependent upon each other. This represents our belief that, like women in leadership, while we can accomplish great things individually, there is tremendous power when the success of one lends itself to the success of another.

VALUE

We appreciate the investment that our members and sponsors make in our organization, and we are committed to providing all of these stakeholders with programs and resources that deliver value for that investment. As part of this goal, we will promote an open dialogue with our members and sponsors to understand their needs and make ongoing efforts to improve the programs and resources available from our organization.

- Regularly survey our members and sponsors to assess their needs, wants, and satisfaction with offerings from the OWA.
- Incorporate feedback from our membership and sponsors when making decisions about our existing programs or exploring new options to add to our suite of benefits and commit to piloting new programs.
- Continue to challenge the OWA Board Members to explore unique ways to meet the needs of our members and sponsors.
- Create community features that celebrate promotions and accomplishments of current members

ACCESSIBILITY

We recognize that many of the women in our industry are in roles that do not support travelling to industry tradeshows and events, and that this should not exclude them from the benefits of our organization. We will make an effort to provide programs and resources in formats that are accessible to women in the places that are most convenient for them.

- Begin utilizing digital media to deliver recaps/electronic versions of any of our live, in-person events.
- Develop a comprehensive strategy to bring more of our programs to our members in the places they work on a day-to-day basis.

- Encourage members to form local communities and organize local events in support of the OWA mission.

ENGAGEMENT

We know that our ability to succeed in our mission is strengthened with each woman who joins the OWA and takes an active role in joining our efforts. We will ensure that there are ongoing opportunities for members to actively participate in the organization and collaborate with women in the eyecare industry.

- Foster programs that allow our members to have visibility and ownership with other women in the organization.
- Ensure that every program/event we offer incorporates an element that fosters collaboration or inclusion of the participants.
- Provide incentives to engage members in programs available to them locally/online.
- Reinforce a mentorship program.
- Limit committee chair terms to provide opportunities for new members to participate and bring fresh thinking to the committees.

EXPANSION

We know that we have only begun to see the impact of our efforts and we are committed to expanding the reach of the OWA by finding ways to include more facets of the industry and by actively engaging women in roles that are under-represented in our membership base.

- Identify roles that are under-represented in our membership and actively reach out to those professionals with programs designed to serve their development needs.
- Collaborate with key stakeholders from each of our sponsors' organizations to encourage membership from within their organization.
- Develop referral programs that encourage members to help us grow our network.