



# Pathways To Success

September 21, 2011

## Professional Optical Women's Workshops (POWW)

### Educational Opportunities on Topics Important To You

The OWA's Professional Optical Women's Workshops (POWW) provide unique educational opportunities, both regionally and in conjunction with major trade shows, for members and guests to explore topics of interest to women working in the optical industry that will enrich their personal and professional lives.

The OWA's Program Committee launched the first POWW event in California in 2005. This popular event has become an OWA "signature series" with the goal being to provide forums for OWA members to gather and network in various areas of the country while having access to information that will help move them along their career path.

Past topics have included:

- The Lost Art of Writing
- Peak Performance – Communicating at Your Highest Level
- Strategies for Dealing with Difficult People
- Leadership Skills for Professional Women
- How to Meet 1500 People at Lunch
- Secrets of the Successful Optical Woman

All OWA POWW sessions are based on topics important to you.

Today's POWW event, ***Pathways to Success*** is being moderated by **Christie Walker**, *LabTalk* editor and OWA board member.



## **Kathryn Gross-Edelman**

*Director of Education*  
**Pech Optical Corp.**

As director of education for Pech Optical, Sioux City, Iowa, Kathryn spends a lot of her time on the road, traveling to different parts of the country. "I love learning different business approaches to the industry and meeting new people. The best thing about my job is that it's always changing. It's a never ending learning process," said Kathryn.

With 37 years in the optical business, 8 years dispensing and 29 years in sales, marketing, and education, Kathryn has worn many hats including: optometric assistant; special products rep at Walman Optical; dispensing optician, optical dispensary manager, sales rep; and director of marketing and education.

### **What She Loves About Her Job**

*It's the closest thing to teaching mathematics, my life's ambition.*

### **Travel Tips on the Road to Success**

*Always make changes with inspiration rather than desperation.*



**Robin Scheer Ettinger**  
*Vice President of Marketing*  
**Safilo USA**

After supervising the design department at Playtex, Robin discovered she had a knack for marketing. “To be successful,” said Robin, “marketing requires the perfect combination of right brain/left brain (creative & logical) – which describes me perfectly.” Robin worked for Escada, Liz Claiborne, Montblanc and Godiva Chocolate (yummy!) before moving to Safilo. Currently she is in charge of all marketing activities for the America’s for all of Safilo’s brands, marketing programs, budget development and maintenance, plus all corporate initiatives in the U.S. and the Solstice Sunglass boutique marketing initiatives.

Recent accomplishments have included: launching a new trade show booth, growing the Carrera brand, and launching an award-winning advertising campaign in December 2010. Balancing her work schedule with raising a “well-adjusted, smart, sweet, 16-year-old daughter – with my husband,” and you have one busy woman.

### **What She Loves About Her Job**

*I really love mentoring young marketers and helping them to carve out a career path.*

### **Travel Tips on the Road to Success**

*Find something you really enjoy. If you are going to leave your family everyday to go to work, it better be for something you really like to do!*



## **Donna Gindy**

*Chief Operating Officer*  
**REM Eyewear**

Why did Donna get into the optical business? For the same reason many young people seek employment... she needed a job. Her parents hired her – for \$2.00 an hour – to work at their newly acquired company, REM Optical Company. That was January of 1973. “I guess you could say my fate was sealed,” said Donna. Thirty-eight years later, Donna is the chief operating officer of REM Eyewear. Donna’s direct reports include: the V.P. of operations, VP of Finance, Director of Purchasing, Director of Logistics and Human Resources. Her departments also have daily involvement with creative, sales, marketing, and the brand side of the business.

Donna was named as one of the 50 Most Influential Women in Optical, and is involved in several philanthropic organizations including: One Sight, Prevent Blindness and Feed the Child. Working with her brother Mike Hundert, chief executive officer for REM, Donna and Mike have turned the small regional company into an international eye wear house, distributing product to over 61 countries.

### **What She Loves About Her Job**

*My passion at work really is operations; the day-to-day activities of the company and our employees.*

### **Travel Tip on the Road to Success**

*Make sure you are working in a good, solidly financed company where you will be able to create opportunity for yourself.*



**Katheryn Dabbs  
Schramm, FNAO, RDO**  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
**A Child's View**

Katheryn opened her first “A Child’s View” location 26 years ago. Today she has a four-store chain of optical dispensaries specializing in children. Author of numerous multidisciplinary articles, two books, and continuing education courses, Katheryn is currently working with a major pediatric teaching hospital to develop an educational program for pediatric opticians.

When asked, why do you love your job? She related this story: “With the frame adjustment completed on a two-year-old girl, her family prepared to leave. However, when the child reached the door, she turned around and ran back to the trainee grabbing his index finger tightly and tugging with all her might. She wanted him to come home with her! Had she used a fishing pole and lure, she could not have “hooked” him any more effectively.”

### **What She Loves About Her Job**

*It's moments like the above that have hooked me for 26 years.*

### **Travel Tip on the Road to Success**

*Fear complacency. Learn everything you can about all you do; then, do something more... and learn it, too.*



## **Kathy Torrence, FCLSA**

*Product Line Manager*

**Kaiser Permanente  
Optical Services**

Kathy has worn many hats at Kaiser Permanente from contact lens fitter to store manager, to service area manager to her current position as product line manager. Besides her responsibilities as the product line manager for frames and contact lenses for Kaiser, she is part of the optical marketing team, takes part in store design for new locations and remodels, and helped design and launch the KP2020 Web site.

Kathy has been ABO and NCLE certified since 1981 and is a Fellow member of the Contact Lens Society of America. With her educational qualifications, Kathy works on training and education for Northern California contact lens fitters. Named a 50 Most Influential Woman in Optical 2006 and a 20 Most Influential Woman in Optical in 2007, Kathy launched the Contact Lens Service Center for Kaiser, which lets members order replacement contact lenses by phone or Web.

### **What She Loves About Her Job**

*I love the variety of work I get to do – from marketing to patient care. Patient care is always the highlight of my job.*

### **Travel Tip on the Road to Success**

*Be curious and don't be afraid to try a new opportunity that may come your way.*



[www.opticalwomen.com](http://www.opticalwomen.com)