

## IACLE – the most important step in my career



**Eman Alzghoul, the 2016 IACLE Travel Award recipient, describes her experiences of winning the award and the importance of IACLE to her work and career**

When I started teaching contact lens in 2009, resources and materials for educators were quite rare and the whole concept of contact lenses as a medical treatment for corneal irregularities had just been introduced in Jordan.

In 2014 I decided to join IACLE and share contact lens education and practice with other educators around the world, to help us improve the education system and practical teaching methods in Jordan. Joining IACLE was the most important step I have taken in my career because it gave me the chance to utilize IACLE's resources and experience in this field.

IACLE has encouraged me to become a contact lens educator. It helped me learn how to prepare a professional syllabus for good practical sessions, lectures and workshops. Added to this, it gave me the confidence that any questions or problems related to contact lens fitting could be solved with references at hand. Over time, I learnt to use IACLE resources – the IACLE Contact Lens Course modules and videos – effectively, in teaching and in practice. The IACLE network made meeting educators from Jordan and other countries around world much easier.

With a deep hope and an extraordinary passion, I applied for the 2016 IACLE Awards and it was an unexpected surprise when I received the email from Bonnie Boshart telling me I had won the IACLE Travel Award! The award has been the biggest opportunity I have had since I started teaching and practicing contact lenses. Thanks to this opportunity, my experience, knowledge and confidence increased incredibly.

The IACLE Award has also focused attention on the importance of having experienced optometrists in charge of the contact lens clinic along with qualified educators. The award is a great incentive for all educators to keep up with developments and help spread knowledge. I consider this award as a great responsibility to continue enthusiastically in this direction.

I chose to attend the American Academy of Optometry meeting because it is a very distinguished event which anyone involved in the optometry field would like to be a part of. For contact lens practitioners, whether they are involved in teaching, research or the industry, the meeting is considered a remarkable opportunity for career development. I heard lectures from well-known optometrists, academics and practitioners from around the world, all in the same place. I gained great knowledge. The clinical workshops were also very interesting and provided practical information about the latest technology in contact lenses, particularly scleral and sport lenses. I also listened to the latest research in contact lenses, pediatric care and discussions

about hot topics related to the eye. I saw many posters from around the world. The latest contact lenses, solutions, eye health supplements, medications and revolutionary instruments, from almost all the contact lens and ophthalmic companies, were on show at a very large exhibition, which added a different aspect to the conference.

My participation was very fruitful. I will do my best to develop and strengthen contact lens education, practice and research in Jordan. I would like to thank IACLE and all the team for this opportunity.

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