Women break new ground at WOC 2012

THE first ever Forum for Women In Ophthalmology (WIO) held at WOC 2012 attracted a high-level international panel of distinguished ophthalmologists and specialists.

The Forum, chaired by Dr Susan MacDonald, was set up to enhance and improve the professional environment for women ophthalmologists.

“The first WIO forum covered a diverse range of topics focusing on issues such as the status of women ophthalmologists in different parts of the world, potential career obstacles, equality in training, leadership developments and national and international networking.

WIO leaders say that their experiences can be shared in a proactive, non-competitive climate that is structured to help women ophthalmologists achieve personal goals and keenly manoeuvre their way through professional obstacles.

WIO has created an ‘International Membership Forum’ to help navigate obstacles faced by female practitioners.

Further information about WIO and its activities can be obtained online at: www.wioonline.org.

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Tribute paid to Dr Mark Tso’s tireless advocacy

FULSOME tribute was paid to the tireless advocacy work of Dr Mark Tso who will be stepping down as Director of Education for the International Council of Ophthalmology (ICO) after the World Congress of Ophthalmology in Abu Dhabi.

At a special World Ophthalmic Educational Colloquium luncheon, Dr Tso was presented with a special plaque by Bruce Spivey, President of ICO, in recognition of his efforts to promote ophthalmic education over more than a decade.

“This is Dr Tso’s last year in charge of the WOEC, and I think it is fair to say that without him there might not have been a WOEC at all, and certainly not the successful colloquium we have today,” said Dr Spivey. “We are truly grateful to Dr Tso for all the incredible work he has done over the years. Normally we have a rule in ICO that 8 years is the maximum time that any individual can stay in one post. The fact that Dr Tso has now been Director of Education for 12 years tells you everything you need to know about his inspirational leadership skills and energy,” he said.

Dr Tso said that he believed that the time was right to hand over the reins to someone else and that he had every confidence that his successor, Karl Golnik, would do an excellent job and was ideally equipped to take the WOEC and education issues to the next level.

Looking back over his 12 years in charge, Dr Tso said that there were a number of achievements of which he was particularly proud.

Firstly, he pinpointed the advances made in creating ophthalmic educational curricula.

“When we started 12 years ago, we did not have any good curricula which form the basic framework of education. Now, however, we have curriculum training for residents, medical students, and allied health personnel, which is a hugely positive development,” he said.

Another source of pride is the fact these curricula are now finding their way into training colleges and academies all over the world.

“This has really begun to take off in the last four years. We always had the educational material available online on the Internet but we are now seeing a major push in implementing these curricula which is transforming information into knowledge. The ICO resident curriculum is now recognised by the European Union and it has been translated into a number of languages and is being used in Asia, South America, and Africa which is very encouraging,” he said.

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