

MSI OPTICAL PROGRAM RECEIVES ABO CERTIFICATION

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The American Board of Opticianry & National Contact Lens Examiners (ABO-NCLE) is the largest and most prestigious Opticians' certification organization in the world, recognizing individuals whose Opticianry skills and knowledge meet predetermined standards of excellence. More than 96,000 certifications have been awarded since 1976, and more than 40,000 certifications are currently in force. The Michigan State Industries Optical Theory & Lab Program will proudly be added to this list!

or the Optical Lab Technology class. Out of 31 offenders enrolled, 30 have less than 3 years until their ERD (Early Release Date) and will be eligible to take the ABO certification test.

A perfect partnership between the programs will allow MSI to generously fund each test while the actual ABO certification testing will be administered through Prisoner Education using the PPIN (Prisoner Program Information



(Right): Matt Yeager, Optical Trades Instructor training an offender (Left) how to properly design and generate lenses



An offender tutor instructing another offender student on the lens tinting process

MSI Administrator, Teri Cline and MDOC Prisoner Education Manager, Heather Gay joined forces to create a great collaboration using the Guide to Reentry-Focused Performance Excellence by implementing a key best practice component through ABO certification. Matt Yeager, MSI Optical Lab Technology Trades Instructor was elated to hear the news after a 10 year wait in offering the valuable testing to offenders in his program. Matt stated "with the help of others in the optical industry, we were able to get the ball rolling about six months ago that led to our recent success."

Network) system. Offenders can obtain a BASIC ABO Certification. While no experience is required, offenders with two to three years' hands-on experience or completion of an optical school program are more successful in achieving their basic certification.

A total of 31 offenders are currently enrolled in either the Optical Theory class instructed by Mr. Gerald Johnston,

To earn basic certification, offenders would need to achieve a passing score on an examination. Each exam consists of questions on the skills and knowledge required for competency in ophthalmic dispensing. The National Opticianry Competency Examination (NOCE) is spectacle related and the Contact Lens Registry Examination (CLRE) is for certification in contact lens dispensing.

Both the NOCE and the CLRE exams are psychometrically developed by impartial Subject Matter Experts within the field of Opticianry and Contact Lens Fitting. After test specifications are created (based on the Job Analysis), the exams are written by groups of impartial Certified Opticians and Contact Lens Fitters. The questions are then reviewed by the testing service specialists for proper testing principles and rules of grammar and style. Questions are created to test a candidate's ability to recall knowledge and to apply that knowledge to specific dispensing functions. Matt Yeager stated "Our goal is to have a 100% passing rate for our offenders."

Matt hopes to implement an ABO study program for students who would like to hone their skills before taking the test. The class will have a very high minimum passing grade to assure positive results on the test.

Though Michigan is not a licensed state, the ABO certification is nationally recognized and shows possible employers that MSI offenders have a firm base knowledge of their craft. The BASIC ABO certification can ensure offenders acquire a wide range of optical careers upon release. These jobs can include positions from Optician, Lab Technician, and Lab Manager amongst others.

ABO certification exams are continually refined and updated to reflect current practices and to ensure that they are fair and accurate measures of professional competency. ABO-NCLE meets ANSI Standard 1100 for professional certifying organizations. As a result, ABO-NCLE certification is highly regarded nationally and internationally, earning recognition from state licensing boards, the U.S. military, and public and private corporations. You can't buy it; you have to earn it. Certification is professional distinction – official and public recognition of an offender's achievement that he has met a national set of standards as a qualified Optical Technician. Certification is also assurance that an offender is recognized by employers as acquiring a standard of competence upon reentry.

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