



Asociación Latinoamericana de Optometría y Óptica

ALDOO - Report for WCO GDM Melaka, Malaysia June 5, 2009

ALDOO had new elections during the ALDOO General Assembly on October 17, 2008 during the Congress of the Americas which was held in Puerto Rico.

There were only 5 countries represented: Argentina, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru and Puerto Rico of which 2 were represented/arranged by proxy votes by Mr. Daniel Valverde (Ecuador and Mexico)

New officers were elected for ALDOO Governing Board for the period 2008-2010: Juan Vazquez, OD from Puerto Rico was elected President. Mr. Arnulfo Toledo from Peru was President Elect, Andres Pagan O.D from Puerto Rico was elected Secretary Treasurer, Mr. Daniel Valverde from Ecuador was elected as Representative for South America, Mr. Jesus Dominguez from Mexico was elected Representative for Central America and Nelson Rivera, OD from Puerto Rico was elected Representative for the Caribbean.

The new ALDOO statutes/by-laws were ratified during this meeting. As established by the new by laws, the representatives for WCO Governing Board were be the President (Juan Vazquez), the President Elect (Arnulfo Toledo) and the third member was elected from one of the representatives and so Daniel Valverde got this position.

During the weekend of January 31-February 1, we visited Antigua, W. I. where CARIOA had their board planning meeting for 2009. CARIOA is the Caribbean Optometrists Association, the professional body representing professionals in the English-speaking Caribbean countries.

In the course of this meeting, CARIOA governing board unanimously approved the partnership with ALDOO. We have gained a membership of a very active group, ready to work together for the entire region and the various working committees.

This combined region has over 600 million people, so working together we can accomplish more for both the Caribbean and Latin America.

We have some issues in our region for instance, the different countries with varied levels of professional training in both Optometry and Opticianry which creates a difference in the professional competencies and skills, and thus professionals from different countries, for example, see many constraints for the recognition of their profession by the Ministries of Health in their countries and the the joint development of research programs.

Our challenge has two main objectives:

- 1** - Work for equalizing the professional training programs of our region so that all professionals have access to the same standards of competence. (collaboration with ALDEFO)
- 2** - Working together in the eradication of preventable blindness, according to global programs currently in progress and to achieve this goal we must raise the awareness that the optometrists are primary eye care professionals

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We have another larger challenge- and that is: we need to recuperate our countries' memberships. In the past few years, due to some minor regional differences, many countries' associations have distanced themselves from ALDOO leadership to the point that ALDOO in 2008 may not be accurately representing the majority of the member countries in the region.

Currently we are working in complete reorganization of our efforts and strategies. Unfortunately we have also had some issues to resolve regarding representation at ALDOO Governing Board and WCO GB level and we hope to have these issues sorted out before our visit to Malaysia so we can actively report on the progress of these efforts.

This delicate situation has somewhat slowed down our efforts to nominate the specific working committees (Public Health, Education and Legislation) both as ALDOO and as WCO committees. Again, this is being worked on and we will report our progress in Malaysia. Right now we are writing this report in order to meet the deadline so it could be printed on the GDM booklet.

Once we can move through these hurdles, I am confident we will be able to proceed more proactively and along the way gain back some of those fellow countries who have stayed away from ALDOO. We are looking forward to making ALDOO once again a group truly representing the membership of Latin America and the Caribbean

Best Regards,



ALDOO 2008-2010
Colegio de Optómetras de Puerto Rico