Dr. Alexis Vogt, SPIE Honoree, Journeys on Exile

"It's a tremendous honor," said Dr. Vogt. "But more than that, it is validation that we're on the right path toward strengthening the optics manufacturing workforce." Dr. Vogt received the SPIE Marie J. Wellner Educator Award, recognizing outstanding contributions to optics education.

"The national demand is so great, companies across the United States have contacted us to hire recent grads."

The award is the latest in Dr. Vogt's distinguished career in optics spanning both academia and industry. As Endowed Chair and Professor of Optics at Monroe Community College (MCC) in Rochester, NY, Dr. Vogt took a moment to reflect on how the optics program has come over the years. She admits it has been quite the journey.

AmeriCOM Technical Advisors Solve Big Challenges in Pursuit of a Bigger Goal

Think of it as a part-3 Jigsaw puzzle with complex pieces that often change, but somehow you have to make them fit all together. That is the task of AmeriCOM's Technical Advisory Group, whose members work with community colleges that are part of AmeriCOM's optics ecosystem to establish and build optics training labs. So do you go about putting the puzzle together? You start by assigning the right team.

How Can Your Company Help Grow the Optics Workforce?

Whether or not your optics manufacturing company is in a region where AmeriCOM is establishing an optics ecosystem, you can be part of this national initiative. Here are ways your company can get involved:

- **Talk it up** - Every employer can also be an ambassador for the industry.
- **Support your nation's community colleges** - Suggest AmeriCOM's Technical Advisors, the optics program at each community college has an advisory board to advise on curriculum, provide support to students, and more.
- **Pay it forward** - Share your knowledge as an adjunct instructor. If you're always thought about teaching but aren't sure how to start, read about a Technical Specialist from Lands' End and his journey helping to start.
- **Elevate your shining stars** - Support apprenticeships to prepare tomorrow's industry leaders.
- **Tell us your stories** - AmeriCOM is constantly looking for technicians to feature in our national marketing campaign. If someone on your team has a compelling story we can feature, contact our National Marketing and Workforce Development Operations Director, Jessica Delacruz.

AmeriCOM Kits Introduce HS Students to Optics

"I wish I knew about this career path when I was in high school."

That's a common refrain from optics technicians who say a career in optics isn't the road for most high school students. AmeriCOM has a plan to change that, and a former teacher is leading the way.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- SPIE Defense and Commercial Sensing
  - May 17-20, 2023
- Hyperion Innovation Conference
  - May 22-24, 2023
- Education in Optics & Photonics (EOP)
  - May 25-27, 2023

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We are pleased to share this edition of our newsletter with you. If you enjoy this content, please share with someone else that may also appreciate it.

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