

Bennett McAllister, OD, FAAO
Diplomate, Low Vision



Never one to settle for one field of endeavor, Dr. McAllister changed undergraduate degree tracks four times before earning a customized BA in Social Science with Honors in 1978. This was followed closely by a BS in Physiological Optics in 1979 and a 1981 OD from the University of California, Berkeley with a special interest in low vision rehabilitation and pediatrics. His thesis project involved work at the Lawrence Berkeley Lab in conjunction NASA and the Department of Energy quantifying how outer space simulating high energy particles contribute to cataract formation. Entering private practice upon graduation was not completely fulfilling so a one day per week teaching position for fourth year interns was accepted at an external site for a college of Optometry as an adjunct clinical professor. There at the Center for the Partially Sighted in the mid-1980s, Dr. McAllister initiated a program for multiple handicapped youngsters with vision impairment and the first specialty low vision clinic for people with AIDS. This led to a guest faculty appointment at the University of California, Los Angeles school of medicine's geriatric program. As a proponent of life-long learning, he has attended the American Academy of Optometry for many years, earning his Fellowship in 1987. Continuing his interest in vision rehabilitation, he became only the fifty-fifth Diplomate in Low Vision in 1995. Along the way in private practice, Dr. McAllister published a number of articles and presented numerous lectures. In 2010, he chose a new direction in order to give back to the profession as a full time professor at the Western University of Health Sciences, College of Optometry. Privileged in the clinic services of Primary Care, Pediatrics and Low Vision, he also teaches the Neuro/Behavior Medicine course and Special Procedures for Clinic. He sits on the national committee rewriting the clinical practice guidelines in the evidence based model. Personally, he plays cello in the La Verne Symphony Orchestra and has ridden his bicycle across America from

west to east. Greatest blessings are his three sons and seven grandchildren. Through it all, he contends that he has never examined eyes, only people.