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## NSU Oklahoma College of Optometry to create Walls Vision Center

(Broken Arrow, OK)—A new low vision center will serve as the cornerstone objective for Embrace the Vision, an initial comprehensive campaign for the Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of Optometry.

The **Lesley L. Walls Vision Center** at NSU-Broken Arrow will operate as a premier resource and service facility to meet the needs of the elderly, veterans and other patients seeking to recover from decreased vision and function due to brain injury, retinal degeneration and other causes.

“Conceptualized as an adaptable, flexible-function, clinical center of excellence, the Walls Center will offer patient care and education and facilitate inter-departmental and inter-institutional collaboration for NSU and its sister institutions in eastern Oklahoma,” said Dr. Leland Carr, professor and assistant dean of development at the Oklahoma College of Optometry.



NSUOCO founding dean, Dr. Lesley Walls and his wife Mary Ann review details for the newly announced Lesley L. Wall Vision Center at Northeastern State University-Broken Arrow.

Patients with low vision or oculomotor and visual perception impairment resulting from stroke, concussion and other brain injuries will be able to access interdisciplinary care through the clinic.

“A major goal is the provision of service to returning veterans with visual disorders resulting from military actions in the Middle East,” said Carr.

A tribute recognizing the contributions of Dr. Lesley L. Walls, NSUOCO’s founding dean, to the college and profession, the Walls Center will offer services currently unavailable in the Tulsa metropolitan area.

“The naming of our new optometry clinical facility at NSUBA after Dr. Walls could not be more fitting,” said Dr. Douglas Penisten, dean of the Oklahoma College of Optometry at NSU. “Dr. Walls has always been driven by the passion of providing patients access to the best in eye and vision care.”

According to Carr, NSUBA has dedicated 7,000 square feet for the clinic and has actively supported the optometry college in fundraising.

“This initiative is long overdue, and it seems a perfect way to honor the legacy of Dr. Les Walls,” said Carr. “This is a man who has made a difference not only at our school, but at all schools in all states working tirelessly as a teacher, leader, role model and consultant.”

Carr said he challenges practicing optometrists to take a minute to assess their scope, confidence and competence.

“Do any of us think we would be where we are if it had not been for the dedication and service of Dr. Walls?” Carr asked. “He has earned this honor.”

Carr said no one was surprised that, when approached with the idea, Walls and his wife Mary Ann made the first financial commitment to support the center.

“I’ve known Les for approximately 25 years, and there is no doubt he would be successful at anything he attempts,” said Dr. John Pembroke, assistant professor at NSUOCO. “We are fortunate to have Les working on our team in addressing the many educational and political challenges which continually face optometry.”

Dr. David Lewerenz, associate professor at NSUOCO, said local and state agencies have approached the college with requests to bring vision remediation education and care into Tulsa to enhance access to services. Lewerenz has accepted the tasks of detailing and designing the clinic.

More than 90 percent of people with vision loss have usable vision, said Lewerenz, including more than 75 percent who are considered legally blind.

“This means their vision could be enhanced with specially designed glasses, magnification devices, illumination and contrast enhancing devices and electronic aids—basically the things we will be doing at this new clinic,” said Lewerenz.

Low vision rehabilitation is supported by nearly every national and international organization concerned with eye and vision care, including the American Optometric Association, American Academy of Optometry and the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

For more information about the Lesley L. Walls Vision Center or to support its development, visit [Embrace the Vision](#).

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