

Meritorious Inductee into the Class of 2015:

Dr. Richard James

While running a private optometry practice in East Stroudsburg, PA, Dr. Richard James began to service the area with a second practice – a mobile practice. This practice was built to reach individuals who had a tough time getting into the office to properly care for their vision. These reasons range from age related complications to physical and mental disabilities. The evolution of this pro bono practice started approximately 20 years ago. He began one private care home in one community and another one in another community. He would set aside one day a week to provide services; sometimes, not getting paid for months, or ever, because of cuts and changes in the structure of government systems that funded his efforts.

Flash forward 20 years later. Dr. James has left his private practice completely to dedicate his life, fulltime, specializing in elderly and personal care home facilities. Some of his clients are cared for by home health services, which he has also begun to reach out to when he is in certain areas to help visiting nurses and their agencies.

Dr. James will generally work from 5:30 am returning home at 5:30 pm to break for supper and kids activities and complete more work, sometimes late into the evening, to provide his very special clients with the most comprehensive care they can get.

His reasoning? In many cases with these patients, their vision is their lifeline. One client continues to paint watercolor paintings; she was an artist, blinded in her youth, and can see again because he stepped in to do his best on her behalf. Dr. James has assisted in getting individuals who had been deemed legally blind in their youth, the services and in many times, the state of the art surgeries they require. Some patients who are well into their 90's who have never seen well enough to make out the details of their children's faces, and could only recognize them by the sound of their voices, could now see their children, thanks to the help of Dr. James and his team. "Breathing new life and exposing modern science to a population who simply didn't have access in their youth, because it wasn't invented yet, and restoring 20/20 vision to many, must truly be a most rewarding experience," stated Dr. Len Annetta, a close friend of Dr. James. "Rich is a very humble man. What he has been doing for this population is truly remarkable." "Most visual decline happens later in years and his passion for understanding and correcting vision issues is fulfilled in ways he could not have anticipated."

In 2001, Dr. James started the company *MOBILEYES LLC*, which services 11 counties, a total of 80 nursing homes, with 2,500 new patients per year and approximately 10,000 every 4 years. Out of his own pocket Dr. James funded the necessary state of the art compact and mobile equipment to provide care for this very special population.

MOBILEYES, LLC, is the largest nursing/personal care home mobile optometrist of Northeastern Pennsylvania and Dr. James has personally seen each patient from start to finish. There are no physicians assistants. Dr. James educates his patients with the latest advancements of Optometry and explains how nutrition can help the diabetic slow down the deterioration of visual problems. His services include complete eye exams, cataract, glaucoma, post surgical follow up, preventative care, treatment of infection and glasses repair. He has personally purchased (out of pocket) reading glasses to save time for patients who wanted to read the paper that day.

Dr. Richard James is a man who will sacrifice his time and funds and do whatever it takes to get the job done because he truly cares for his patients. His intuition and lifelong commitment in education to gain knowledge to better help his clients is impeccable.

Dr. James has three children, Tyler 17, Owen 13 and Jaclyn 10. Tyler recovered 2 years ago from 14 years of seizure disorder which developed scar tissue in his visual cortex. Dr. James is a father whose knowledge helped a team of doctors save his own son's vision. Tyler is now driving a car and has great vision and is involved with drafting and engineering programs. Owen maintains honor roll and is an avid snow boarder and soccer player. Jaclyn is in the gifted program and spends her free time with the family horse that was given to Dr. James' family after his previous owner lost his life to cancer.

Dr. James is a terrific father with pure passion for life. In his spare time, he still enjoys many of the same activities he enjoyed while a student athlete at Lake-Lehman. He enjoys fishing, camping, kayaking, horseback riding, mountain biking, carpentry, snowboarding and triathlons!!

Lake-Lehman High School/ Education Program Participation

- 1989 Graduate
- National Honor Society – 4 Years
- Honor Roll – 4 Years
- Peer Counseling
- Student Council
- Football Team – 4 Years (Lettered 3 years)
- Baseball Team – 4 Years (Lettered 3 years)

Honors and Awards

- Graduated from Wilkes University in 3 years with a BS in Biology and continued on to Med School early becoming a Doctor of Optometry from Penn College (now Salus University.)