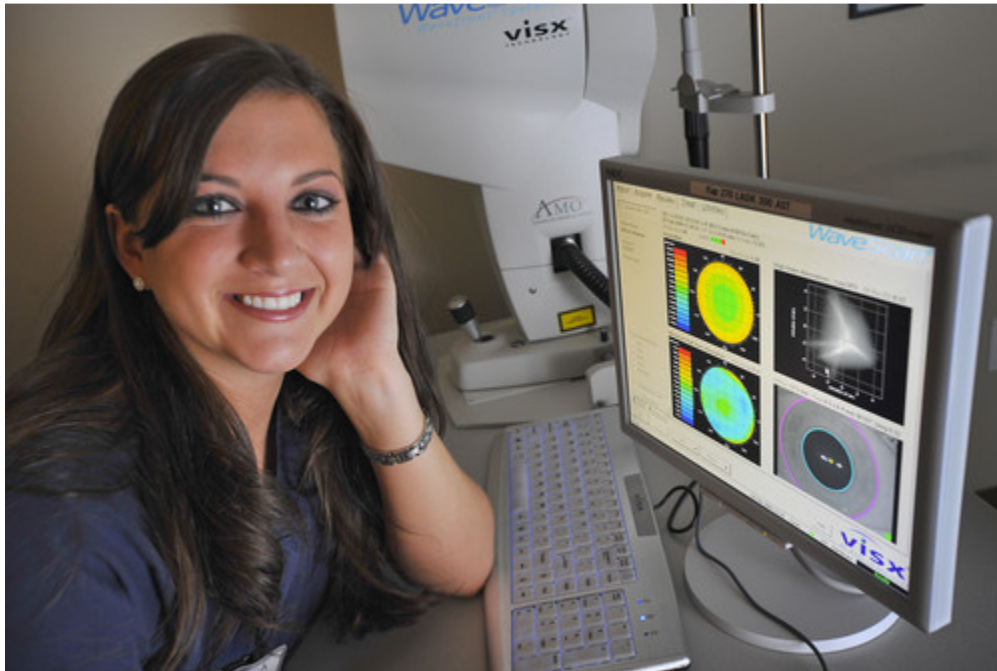


A job that requires vision

Jamie Green, refractive coordinator, May Eye Care Center & Associates, Hanover, Pa.

By Nancy Jones-Bonbrest | Special to The Baltimore Sun
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Jamie Green says allaying patient fears can be a challenge. (Baltimore Sun photo by Amy Davis / February 18, 2009)

Age: 23

Years on the job: One

How she got started: After graduating from West Virginia University with a bachelor's degree in communications and broadcasting, Green decided to move back to her hometown of Hanover, Pa. She said she wanted a job that used her communication skills but where she could also help people. "What I'm doing right now is very rewarding."

Typical day: Green works five days a week, starting at 8 a.m. Much of her job is focused on patient consultations. She serves as the first contact for those considering Lasik eye surgery. She meets with two or three patients each day and the consultations usually last about one hour. During this time, she'll go over the vision correction procedure and answer any questions. She administers a few tests, which include measuring patients' corneas and checking their eye prescriptions.

"I'm really trying to make the patient feel comfortable, answer any questions and educate them and help them take the next step," Green said.

She estimates she sees most patients about eight or nine times, starting with the initial consultation and ending with follow-up visits that include annual checkups.

Although her job is focused on assisting Lasik patients, the center also offers other eye care, including cataract surgery and clear lens exchange, which she sometimes will suggest to patients.

Another part of her job is marketing the eye center. She arranges Lasik seminars, sends out fliers, updates the Web site and places notices on online social networking sites.

Surgery days: Two days a month are set aside for Lasik surgery at the eye care center, with about 10 to 15 scheduled procedures each day. Green is there to greet patients, check them in, and complete charts and paperwork.

Biggest patient concern: Fear of the procedure and cost. "Almost everybody can be put into two categories. Either they're fearful or they feel like they can't spend the money."

Easing fear: The Lasik surgery takes about 20 minutes and eyes are numbed so there's little discomfort, says Green, adding that most people who come in for consultations have thought about having the procedure for at least a couple of years. She uses her own experience with Lasik surgery, performed at the center a few months after she started working there, to help alleviate concerns.

"I was one of those people who was scared, too. It's just so worth it not to have to mess with glasses or contacts."

The good: Meeting people, building relationships and seeing how happy they are when the surgery is completed.

The bad: Helping people overcome their fear can be difficult.

Philosophy: Being friendly, knowledgeable and making people feel comfortable is important, Green said. "I like to treat patients how I would want to be treated."

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