

## **Thomas "Tommy" Rich**

Thomas (Tommy) Rich has had a passion for helping the visually impaired for the majority of his life. As a young child he became involved with the Greensboro Blind Softball team through his father's union, continuing a variety of tasks with the team through his high school years. After high school, Tommy attended High Point University where he received a BS degree in Chemistry and Math. He also began his first work as an optician in the lab at Visionworks in Greensboro. This was in preparation for Tommy to attend Optometry school in Memphis.

After a few years at Southern College of Optometry, Tommy decided that he was meant to serve those in need in a different capacity. He returned to North Carolina and began work as an Optician at Vision Park Optometry in Raleigh, NC. There he began his studies at Durham Tech, where he later graduated with an AAS degree in Opticianry with Honors. In 2008, after he received his optician's license, he began another chapter in his career - working as a Manager for Target Optical. Over the course of 9 years he worked in a variety of capacities including area captain, OneSight captain and recruiting captain. His passions led him to serve on 6 mission trips throughout the US with OneSight. He also dedicated himself to helping more people prepare for the NC State Board Exam by occasionally teaching review classes for anyone who needed the help.

His career and life have now taken him to Hendersonville, NC where he is working as a Licensed Vision Center Manager for Walmart in Asheville. He lives there with his partner of 11 years Heather, along with their 3 cats, 1 dog and a horse.

On July 24, 2018 Governor Roy Cooper appointed Tommy to a 3-year term of Board service that will expire June 30, 2021.