

DEPARTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL AFFAIRS
Martin S. Levine, DO, Chair

The following provides an update of bureau, council, and committee activities from October 2008 through January 2009.

BUREAU OF ETHICS – William S. Mayo, DO, Chair

The Bureau of Ethics (BOE) meets on a quarterly basis to review complaints against member physicians and other ethical issues presented for review. Proceedings involving complaints against AOA members are confidential. The BOE met in October 2008 by telephone conference and reviewed several complaints against members. Additionally, the BOE reviewed and provided comment on a draft position paper entitled “Family Caregivers, Patients and Physicians: Ethical Guidance to Optimize Relationships,” which was submitted to the AOA by the American College of Physicians. Additionally, at the request of the Chair of the Bureau of Federal Health Programs, the BOE also discussed proposed revisions to the code for interactions with healthcare professionals of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America. The BOE expects to have two additional telephone conference meetings prior to the July 2009 Board of Trustees meeting.

BUREAU OF INSURANCE – Howard L. Neer, DO, Chair

The Bureau of Insurance (BOI) is scheduled to meet in the spring of 2009 via conference call. The Bureau has been working closely with Aon Affinity Insurance Services to develop and rollout the AOA’s new group insurance programs. Applicable records for medical, life and disability accounts have been transferred from Marsh Affinity Group Services is participation is equal to point of time transfer. Aon is conducting a market review of AOA programs. They are committed to growing the AOA programs using a multi-channel approach included web and direct mail promotions. Aon is pleased to announce the offering of a multi-carrier medical platform for both individual and small group health with Augeo Benefits. Aon is evaluating property and casualty carriers as well as assessing options for exclusive professional liability insurance. The Bureau will continue to assess the relationship with Aon and growth in the AOA’s insurance product offerings and participation in them by members.

BUREAU OF MEMBERSHIP – William S. Mayo, DO, Chair

The Bureau of Membership (BOM) met in Chicago during the November 2008 cluster meetings. Total membership as of January 09, 2009, is at 38,587, an increase of 1,933 members over the same point last year. The market share is 57.3%, a gain of 0.1% from this same time last year. Recruitment efforts, via the gift membership campaign, continue with 995 gift memberships being activated for the 2008/2009 fiscal year; of which 602 are due to AOA staff participation in the recruitment campaign. The percentage of retained members from last year’s campaign is at 46.5%. Total dues revenue is at \$14,612,011, which is 98.2% of the projected budget.

The BOM approved for recommendation to the Board of Trustees: one physician for reinstatement; three physicians for revocation of membership; eight individuals for associate membership; and 205 physicians for life member status beginning in FY2010 (June 1, 2009). (See resolutions)

Other actions of the Bureau included: 1) extended the one year waiver to members who are deployed to a combat zone for more than 30 days; 2) inactivated the board certification of 839 AOA board certified members whose FY2009 dues and/or certification fees remained unpaid with the stipulation that their certification will be reactivated immediately upon payment of membership dues and/or certification fees;

3) approval of two new member benefit program, one with Epocrates for a software for mobile devices such as PDAs and smart phones and a non-exclusive cell phone program with T-Mobile; 4) and reaffirmed their prior policy regarding organizations appearing on the AOA dues bill as a voluntary check-off for AOA members.

The BOM discussed a proposal for affiliate membership status for organizations with follow up conversations to be conducted with the chairs of the departments of Education, Professional Affairs, Bureau of Membership and Council of Continuing Medication Education.

COUNCIL OF INTERNS AND RESIDENTS – Andrew Farber, DO, Chair

The CIR reported its activities to Bureau of Membership at its November 8, 2008 meeting. The CIR hosted a very successful Congress of Interns and Residents in conjunction with the AOA Convention in Las Vegas. Delegates from the OPTIs, specialty colleges and ACGME programs met to discuss issues most important to postdoctoral trainees, including AOA President DiMarco's OGME Development Initiative, governmental issues related to OGME trainees, and the AOA internship change. Each program in attendance delivered a verbal report of recent ongoings and concerns; four OPTIs delivered PowerPoint presentations that showed their progress in developing intern and resident committees for trainees to be more involved in their programs and leadership opportunities. Attendance was improved over prior Congresses; there were 30 official delegates with 15 non-registered attendees, both postdoctoral trainees and osteopathic medical students, observing. Evaluations have been positive: participants rated Congress an overall 3.5 out of 4. Many attendees stated that a longer meeting would be helpful in the future.

The CIR met December 13 in Chicago to discuss issues most important to postdoctoral trainees, including: promotion of OGME programs and assisting the AOA in its OGME initiative; communicating with all DOs in postdoctoral training programs, especially those in ACGME programs; and helping osteopathic medical students remain in touch with their osteopathic family after graduation. The CIR has plans to expand its new section on DO-Online, which was launched in October. Working with AOA staff in the Departments of Membership and Communications, CIR members are developing profiles that give an overview of their osteopathic postdoctoral training programs to be posted on DO-Online. Other interns and residents, including those who are representatives on the various AOA Bureaus, Councils and Committees (B/C/Cs), will also be featured on DO-Online to help promote OGME programs and serve as points of contact for osteopathic medical students who are interested in entering AOA-accredited programs. The CIR had a working lunch to connect with the Council of New Physicians in Practice (CNPP) and to discuss topics of mutual interest, including OGME program opportunities and issues facing DOs transitioning from residency to attending positions.

The CIR is currently accepting CVs and letters of intent from fourth-year osteopathic medical students, interns and residents who are interested in serving on an AOA B/C/C as the intern/resident representative. Each year, the CIR reviews applicants and makes recommendations to the AOA President-Elect for his appointment upon taking office. The application deadline is March 1, 2008.

COUNCIL OF NEW PHYSICIANS IN PRACTICE – Robert Pedowitz, DO, Chair

The Council of New Physicians in Practice (CNPP) reported its activities to Bureau of Membership at its November 8, 2008 meeting. The Council conducted two very successful events at the AOA's 113th Annual Convention and Scientific Seminar held in Las Vegas.

On the morning of Sunday, October 26 the CNPP's General Council Meeting drew 25 attendees representing 20 osteopathic state and specialty associations. This was the strongest attendance for this event in the past five years. Council members and affiliate representatives discussed strategies for successfully forming and

maintaining new physician in practice committees and creating events that focus on this audience and encouraged membership. The importance of attracting the growing number of DOs with ACGME training and ABMS board certification was recognized by all in attendance, as was the importance of getting DOs and osteopathic medical students involved as early as possible. Mentoring and the incorporating of more busing training into the profession's residency programs were both seen as important to achieving greater success in the practice of new DOs. For the first time, this year's General Council Meeting included a CME lecture entitled *The Automated Office: How to Make Health Information Technology Work for Your New Practice*. It was presented by Thomas Stevenson, DO, Chair of the American Osteopathic Association of Medical Informatics and was highly rated in the evaluation forms submitted by attendees.

Later the same day, the CNPP's Practice Enhancement Workshop (formerly known as Prep for Practice) also drew a record crowd of over 350 attendees. This year's event was themed "Lessons Learned" and featured presentations on opening, maintaining and expanding a practice by John H. Pham, DO, 2007 AOA Mentor of the Year; influencing healthcare policy by staff from the AOA's Department of Government Relations; and coding and revenue enhancement Don Self, CSS, BFMA. The event also included an address from AOA President Carlo J. DiMarco, DO and the raffling of three iPods engraved with the logos of the AOA and the event's sole sponsor the American Osteopathic Foundation. This event also received excellent reviews from attendees.

The CNPP held a meeting via teleconference on October 15 and face-to-face on December 13. The latter included a joint session with the Council of Interns and Residents for a discuss issues of interest to both groups. The CNPP also selected topics for its Practice Enhancement Workshop at the AOA Convention this coming November including: Medical Home, Retirement Planning, Professional Liability Insurance, and ICD-10 Coding.

Several Council members were recently interviewed by a reporter from *The DO* magazine for a feature article they are developing on the issues facing new physicians in practice. This article is scheduled to appear in the March issue. The CNPP is also working on the development of its own articles featuring new physicians in practice for possible publication in *The DO* magazine.

BUREAU OF STUDENT AFFAIRS – Boyd W. Bowden II, DO, Chair

The Bureau of Student Affairs oversees the AOA's involvement in the Student Osteopathic Medical Association's (SOMA) membership drive. The AOA provides an *Atlas of Human Anatomy* by Frank Netter, MD, as an incentive to join SOMA; each book is marked with a sticker that identifies the book as a gift from the AOA. Cost-saving measures for the program were enacted this fall, including eliminating an AOA and SOMA t-shirt and working with the publisher to identify less-expensive shipping options for books. Of the 4,583 first-year osteopathic medical students this fall, 75% (3,629) of students joined SOMA; this is slightly down from recent years' numbers, as 78% of first-year students joined SOMA in 2006 and 2007. However, this number is still significantly larger than 53% membership in 2003, prior to the launch of the Netter's Campaign.

The BSA hosted a Student Forum in conjunction with the AOA Convention in October to bring together student leaders from SOMA and COSGP to discuss important hot topics with AOA leadership and staff as well as AACOM leadership and AACOM's Board of Deans. Students identified concerns over rumored changes to the COMLEX exams, and discussed ways to further engage students who serve on the AOA's B/C/Cs. One product to come out of the Student Forum is a new form for student representatives to complete after their B/C/C meets. The form is to be completed and posted on DO-Online for all students to understand what it is that the B/C/Cs accomplish and to demonstrate the leadership positions available for osteopathic medical students.

The BSA Chair, Boyd W. Bowden, II, DO, spoke to SOMA and the Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP) at their meetings held in conjunction with the AOA Convention, addressing what the AOA and the BSA does for students, including: leadership positions on the bureaus, councils and committees; the *Tips, Tactics and Truths* student guide, which was mailed on jump-drives to all first-year students and is available on DO-Online; and opportunities for students on DO-Online. AOA President Carlo J. DiMarco, DO, President-Elect Larry A. Wickless, DO, and Executive Director John B. Crosby, JD, also spoke to SOMA and COSGP at their respective meetings, highlighting Dr DiMarco's focus on OGME development and AOA advocacy. AOA leadership presented the new SOMA chapters at Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine and Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine with \$2,500 each to help develop their new student organizations.

BUREAU OF OSTEOPATHIC HISTORY AND IDENTITY – DO, Chair

COMMITTEE ON AWARDS – Thomas Ely, DO, Chair

The Committee on Awards reports that the 2008 Mentor of the Year Selection Committee (MYSC), under the leadership of Kristina Manion, OMS IV, named the five finalists for 2008: David L. Dora, DO, Muskegon, MI; Michael J. Fugle, DO, of Waterford, MI; Joanne Kaiser-Smith, DO, Voorhes, NJ; James M. Lally, DO, Chino, CA; and Reza Nassiri, D.Sc., (LECOM), of Erie, PA. The finalists and all other nominees were recognized at the Distinguished Mentor Reception prior to opening ceremony of the 113th AOA Convention & Scientific Seminar. James M. Lally, DO, was named the 2008 Mentor of the Year and presented with the award by the Chair of the MYSC. This program is in association with Pfizer Inc.

The recognition program is a part of the AOA's iLEARN Mentor Program. The exchange portion of the program continues to grow. The iLEARN Mentor Program site will relaunch a new design and user-friendly tools in March 2009. The site will include video interviews with the 2008 Mentor of the Year and the finalists.

OSTEOPATHIC FAMILY RELIEF FUND – Mark A. Baker, DO, Chair

The Board of the Osteopathic Family Relief Fund met on October, 25, 2008. Mark Baker, DO, Chair appointed Board member Barbara Walker, DO as the Fund's Treasurer. The Board extensively reviewed its criteria for evaluating grant requests and determined they were appropriate to meet the goals and purpose of the Fund. The Board then reviewed the two pending grant requests and concluded they did not meet the necessary criteria. The Fund raised the total of \$24,563 from 307 contributors in 2008.