



GEORGIA OSTEOPATHIC
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
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GOMA News & Updates

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Bill Bostock, DO is the New Chairman of Georgia's Composite Board



*Dr. William Bostock, DO, with rest of
Georgia Composite Board at his swearing in*

William “Bill” Bostock, DO was sworn in as the Chairman of the Board of Georgia’s Composite Board of Medical Examiners in early August. Dr. Bostock started his career as a physician assistant

and then obtained his osteopathic medicine degree in 1983 from the University of Health Sciences in Kansas City (now known as the College of Osteopathic Medicine at Kansas City University). He completed a three year residency in family medicine at Medical College of Georgia obtaining board certification from ABFM and ABOFM.

Dr. Bostock explained the track of his career, “I practiced in Lawrenceville Georgia for over 35 years. Grew my practice to around 17 thousand active patients, worked with several employed doctors including our current GOMA president Dr. Dianna Glessner and several mid-levels. After 35 years, I decided to go into more formal teaching of residents and medical students. I sold my practice to Gwinnett Medical Center and became Osteopathic Program Director in 2013. I worked there for 8 years and during that time we graduated five classes of residents where over half were DOs and at least half remained in the state of Georgia to practice. After Gwinnett was acquired by Northside Hospital I decided to work for the Family Medicine residency at Northeast Georgia in Gainesville Georgia in 2021 during the pandemic. We train 12 residents per year in an Allopathic only program. There are usually 2-3 DO residents in each class. I was hired as core faculty with the purpose of getting the program DO certified. Eventually if we are successful they want me to become the Osteopathic Director.”

“I am married to my wife Kathy whom I met when I was an intern at Doctors Hospital in Tucker Georgia. She at that time was a Physical Therapist. She went on to manage my office for over 32years and together we built it into one of the largest Family Medicine practices in the state. We have three adult children and they are all married. I now have five grandchildren. I have two favorite hobbies: Golf (I am not so good at) and Fishing for anything that swims. My passion is for giving all doctors a voice at the Capital. I also want to protect the citizens of Georgia from non-standard practices,” he revealed in our interview. Below are the questions that he answered by email:

Feelings about becoming the chairman of the Georgia Composite Medical Board?

Bostock: I am really honored to become Chairman of the Board. I desire to implement changes so the Board will be more responsive to all licensees. I think the upcoming legislature session will have many medical issues to address: The continuous Opioid problem, the transgender care issues to name a few. This is a great honor for me to be chair but also for all DOs in the state. The Composite Board was only changed to include DOs since around 1982. I would hope that I am selected by the Governor for a second term because I have already been nominated by the GOMA Board.

Earlier this year, the Biden administration proposed new rules for prescribing controlled medications associated with online visits. What is the status of these rules and how does the Composite Medical Board address this issue?

Bostock: These proposed rules are still going through the formal rule-making process. The Board's position at this time is to continue recognizing the federal authorization for the tele-prescribing of controlled substances without an in-person exam as long as it is allowed by the HHS and DEA and practitioners meet the criteria set forth in the DEA policy. As the DEA finalizes rules on their end, the Board will address the matter from a state-level perspective.

The *Atlanta Journal Constitution* reported that a state auditor's report found inadequate oversight of problem doctors leaving Georgia patients unprotected and went on to say that few of the recommended fixes have been implemented. Comments?

Bostock: The Board has fully or partially implemented the majority of recommendations made for improvement. While the death of the previous executive director and staffing changes disrupted some of this work, we are moving forward with implementing the remaining recommendations.

One of the criticisms is that the Board does not mandate a background check for newly licensed doctors. Is that still

true?

Bostock: During the licensure process, a variety of checks are conducted to verify an applicant's background and credentials. The Board utilizes tools like the National Practitioner Data Bank, the FSMB's Physician Data Center, and the AMA's Physician Profiles. These reports detail information about malpractice payouts, Medicare/Medicaid sanctions, DEA restrictions, convictions, and actions from other medical boards. The Board also sources copies of school transcripts and exam scores from primary sources to verify the education and training of applicants. Later this year, the Board will add another layer to its thorough process by implementing fingerprint background checks. This process is already in place for applicants obtaining a Georgia medical license through the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, and the Board will scale this process to all applicants in the coming months.

The physician licensure fees collected by the Board totals \$8.5 million but that is taken by the state legislature and then budgets \$2.6 million for the Board to oversee Georgia's 25,000 working doctors. Is that enough for the Board to do its investigations?

Bostock: We continue to realize cost saving and efficiency measures as we carry out our mission of protecting patients and will continue to work with the Governor's Office and legislature to realize that goal in the most effective way possible.

The state auditor's report stated that having more lay members on the 16-member Board would be better. Are there any discussions about changing the makeup of the Board?

Bostock: The Board's composition is enumerated in O.C.G.A. § 43-34-2. The state Legislature determines the laws concerning composure of the Board. We currently have two lay members serving on the Board. I think we should be cautious about the process and if expansion is needed then hopefully the legislature will consult various sources to choose the best composition.

Medical issues are very complex and one must have a general idea of the issues providers deal with on a daily basis.

A 2016 investigation by the AJC entitled “Doctors & Sex Abuse” found that the Board focused on the doctor and whether the doctor learned from their mistake but rarely mentioned the harm suffered by abused patients and their opinion on reinstating the doctor. Comments?

Bostock: The Board takes physician sexual misconduct issues very seriously. We uphold licensees to all relevant standards of practice conduct while also respecting the right to privacy of patients, both a state and federal requirement. By investigating allegations and enforcing the laws and rules with Public Consent Orders, the Board ensures patients can make informed decisions about their choice of health care provider with these publicly available documents. The enforcement part is one of the most visible ways we protect patients. If a sanctioned doctor’s license is ever restored, there is a public document attached to the license so patients can learn about that physician’s history.

In October, you are on the agenda for the Fall GOMA Conference to give an update on GCMB. Do you want to give a preview?

Bostock: I plan to give an update on what the Board does on a daily basis. Also, some ideas on how to make the board more responsive to all licensees.

Thank you Dr. Bostock, and best of luck to you as the

Chairman of the Composite Board!

[Not a Member of GOMA? Join Now!](#)

**GOMA Fall Conference:
Ready to Fulfill Your CME Needs**



This is a continuation from last month's article spotlighting the subjects and faculty of the GOMA Fall Conference. The October 20 & 21 program is virtual and will be able to be watched after those dates until December 31 and doctors can earn up to 16 hours of CME. [The full schedule of the lecturers can be seen here](#). Luckily, GOMA has extended the time to get "[early bird registration](#)" until September 11. Here are more detailed information about the remainder of the agenda.

J. Mark Bailey, DO, PhD is a professor of neurology at University of Alabama who specializes in pain management. He returns to speak to GOMA on "Controlled Substance Prescribing". His two hour lecture on this subject is always well received and satisfies the Georgia licensure requirement.

Joy Zarandy, DO will be speaking on "Physician Burnout". She is an assistant professor of family medicine at PCOM Georgia who has received multiple teaching awards.

L. Michael Waters, DO, FACOFP is the chair of primary care at PCOM Georgia who is an associate professor of family practice and osteopathic manipulation of the faculty of the department of osteopathic manipulative medicine. He is well qualified to discuss "Relative Value of OMM".

"Concussion Update" is the title of the lecture given by Erik Zarandy, DO who is a metro-Atlanta family physician who has a specialty of non-surgical treatment of sports injuries.

Erin Mayfield, DO is a diplomate of the American Board of Osteopathic Obstetrician Gynecologists and as of 2019 a diplomate of American Board of Lifestyle Medicine. While she has retired from her clinical practice, she has become active in teaching about "Culinary Medicine" which promises to be edifying from her training as a Harvard CHEF Coach.

"Breast Cancer Update" is the title of first afternoon lecture on Saturday October 21. It will be given by Gregory Harris, DO, an oncologist at the Harbin Clinic in Rome, Georgia. Dr. Harris has

served on the AOA Board of Trustees (2018 – 2019) and currently serves as the GOMA Vice-President and a Georgia delegate to the AOA House of Delegates.

Rebecca Phillipsborn, MD is an assistant professor with Emory's Department of Pediatrics and Emory Global Health Institute. She is the co-author of Climate Change and Global Child Health with Dr. Kevin Chan in the Journal *Pediatrics* which draws attention to the disproportionate impact of climate change on children in low-resource settings. Dr. Phillipsborn was more recently a contributor to the Global Climate Action Summit. Her lecture on "Climate Change and its Effect on Health" is a timely one.

"Medical Solutions for Weight Loss" will be focused on non-surgical therapies to treat obesity. It is a lecture that helps practicing physicians every day. Anna Bradley, MD is an endocrinologist in Nashville, Tennessee, and graduated from Medical College of Georgia. Her talk on solutions to obesity has gotten rave reviews.

Once again, take advantage of the discount offered to doctors who register for the GOMA Fall Conference before September 11. It is high quality 16 hours of CME and super convenient by being virtual. The lectures can be viewed until the end of the year. [Act now to register!](#)

AOA House of Delegates Report by Christian Geltz, DO



Pictured above left to right: GOMA VP Gregory Harris, DO; GOMA President-Elect Sonbol Shahid-Salles, DO; GOMA Secretary/Treasurer Karen Turner, DO; Christian Geltz, DO; Thomas Le, OMS; Emma High, OMS & president of SGA at PCOM South Georgia; Tyler Key, OMS & VP of the SGA at PCOM South Georgia.

The AOA House of Delegates (HOD) was held in Chicago July 21-23, 2023. Delegates from Georgia were Christian Geltz, DO, Karen Turner, DO, and Gregory Harris, DO. Georgia PCOM Georgia was represented by Thomas Le, OMS and Emma High and Chadwick Key were the student representatives from PCOM South Georgia.

Thursday evening before the HOD started we had a meeting of the United Federation of Osteopathic Societies (UFOS). The UFOS is a coming together of smaller D.O. states to vote as a block at the HOD. By voting as a combined block the small states can advance physicians from smaller Osteopathic states onto the AOA Board of Trustees.

Friday morning started with the moving presentation of colors by the Emerald Society Bagpipe Band, the Pledge of Allegiance, National Anthem and the Osteopathic Pledge of Commitment. Dr. Dolansky reported that there are now 38 schools with 62 locations and a couple more coming on board soon. He also reported a 91.6% match success in the primary match and a 99.5% rate after the scramble. D.O.s now fill 17% of the residency programs. There are 27,000 D.O.s presently in training.

Dr. Ernest Gelb presented the new AOA CEO, Kathleen Creason, MBA. Previously, Ms. Creason was Executive Director of the American Osteopathic Information Association. Prior to that she was the Executive Director of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons of California. Dr. Gelb followed this with the 2022-2023 Presidential address.

Ross Zafonie D.O., editor in chief of the JOM, stated that the JOM is now 100% online. They have now significantly decreased the time of submission to publication from 230 days to 38 days. The JOM now has

an impact factor of 1.5 which places it in the 53rd percentile for medicine.

Friday afternoon was when the reference committees met. Our Dr. Karen Turner was on the Ad Hoc Committee. There were about 140 resolutions to be discussed in committee and presented to the entire HOD on Saturday for possible amendment and approval.

Friday concluded with a 10:00 p.m. meeting for the ratification of the proposed slate of officers for AOA President Elect and Board of Trustees members. Thankfully, this was a smooth, uncontested event. Saturday is a day of work and play. The morning begins with reference committee reports. The resolutions that spurred vigorous floor debates were H623 – Invisible Disabilities, H631 – Implementing Land Acknowledgements at AOA events, H318 – Healthcare Providers right of Conscience, H343 – Workplace Violence Against Healthcare Providers, and H345 – AOA Support for the Fair Access in Residency. All resolutions can be viewed on the AOA website.

After working through the many resolutions, we were enlightened with the A.T. Still Memorial Lecture by Kenneth Veit, D.O. Dr. Veit discussed the 2023 challenges we face:

- 1) AI and increasing integration into allopathic medicine
- 2) Growth of Healthcare Mega Systems
- 3) Growth of physicians as employees
- 4) The dilution of D.O. identity into brand identity of the hospital systems

Following Dr. Veit's lecture, the OPAC Scholarship was awarded to Jordan Paluch, OMS III West Virginia. She started a Pre-Osteopathic Medical Club to expand the college student's exposure to Osteopathic medicine. Numerous other awards were presented at this time.

Later Saturday afternoon we attended the Inauguration of 2023-2024 AOA President, Ira Monka D.O. from New Jersey. Dr. Monka's family and friends were present for this occasion.

Saturday evening was capped off with a reception honoring the 127th AOA President-elect, **New Jersey Family Physician Ira P. Monka, DO, MHA, FACOFP, is the AOA's 2023-24 President**
by Anne Unger, AOA senior executive communications specialist



AOA delegates from Georgia: Christian Geltz, DO & Karen Turner, DO with AOA President Ira Monka, DO and his wife Esti



GOMA President-elect Sonbol Shahid-Salles, DO with Ira Monka, DO

The AOA's 103rd House of Delegates (HOD) annual meeting drew more than 1,100 osteopathic physicians, medical students, delegates and guests to Chicago in July, where Ira P. Monka, DO, MHA, FACOFP, was installed as the AOA's 127th president during the weekend's most anticipated event.

During his inaugural address, Dr. Monka shared how working as an osteopathic family physician for Atlantic Health Systems in New Jersey for the past 38 years, in addition to taking on other roles, such as chair of the family medicine department and Atlantic ACO, prepared him as a leader.

"I worked tirelessly to establish one of the largest multispecialty groups within the Atlantic Health System—we grew our practice year after year and always maintained the highest level of professionalism and patient satisfaction. This growth and the challenges that came with it taught me a lot and made me the leader I am today," said Dr. Monka.

He also acknowledged that the opportunities he had this year to represent the AOA at state and specialty affiliate organizations gave him the knowledge and experience to easily step into his new role as president.

Presidential priorities:

Developing and implementing strategies to enhance the value of AOA membership, including long and short-term membership recruitment and retention programs, will be a high priority for Dr. Monka during his presidential year. Another big priority for the year will be to refine the process of AOA board certification, focusing on osteopathic distinctiveness, user-friendliness and cost-effectiveness.

We have a responsibility to take care of the physical and mental well-being of those in our care. This is a noble calling and one that requires dedication, compassion and a commitment to lifelong learning.

One major goal is to further position osteopathic certification as the preferred pathway for all DOs.

This year Dr. Monka initiated two workgroups—one for membership and the other for board certification—to evaluate strategies to improve growth in these areas. These established workgroups are made up of 20 members each and include students, residents, new physicians in practice and seasoned veterans.

Osteopathic state and specialty affiliates were identified as key stakeholders to position AOA board certification as the premier choice for DOs and to drive Osteopathic Continuous Certification (OCC) enhancements for current diplomates.

Dr. Monka committed to creating a strategic budgeting process to ensure expenditures of the AOA's resources are linked to the organization's strategic plan. He also pledged to continue establishing strong working relationships with key strategic partners with the goal of advancing osteopathic medicine on a national level and positioning DOs as innovative leading medical experts.

Dr. Monka's message wasn't all business, though. He addressed lifestyle and shared a bit about his personal journey with fitness. Prior to the pandemic, he was out of shape, considered obese, fatigued and had hypertension and sleep apnea before committing to making significant lifestyle changes a few years ago.

Sharing three key points from a recent seminar on health and wellness, he suggested attendees take note. The takeaways, Dr. Monka shared, include:

- Take care of yourself. Regular exercise and a healthy diet are critically important.
- Emotional support. Get it from your partner, family, friends, fellow students and colleges. And return it.
- Spiritual support. Get it in whatever way works for you.

He talked about completing his 1,000th workout using a Peloton bike and proudly shared a congratulations video from the organization. "Peloton helped me reach my goals. Slow, steady changes can create lifelong changes that will improve you physically, mentally and spiritually," he said.

He encouraged everyone to ask themselves what A.T. Still, DO, MD, might ask: "Do we practice osteopathically, and do we live every day as an example of what an osteopathic physician should be?"

He added that it's a question DOs should ask themselves every day.

"We have a responsibility to take care of the physical and mental well-being of those in our care. This is a noble calling and one that requires dedication, compassion and a commitment to lifelong learning," he said.

Read the Q & A with Dr. Monka and 4th year osteopathic medical student Stephanie Lee [here](#).

Malachi Groover, DO: From Patient Care Tech to Family Medicine Resident



Malachi Groover, DO grew up in the world of medicine: His father is a doctor, specializing in hospice and palliative care. When Dr. Groover was 15, he joined his father, a few family members and a medical team on a mission trip to Ethiopia.

For several weeks, Dr. Groover got to see his father in action, as the team worked with a local hospital. His father taught the medical staff about current U.S. standards and best practices and offered trainings. It was an eye-opening experience for young Groover.

“It was inspiring to me,” he says now. “That’s when I said, ‘Okay, this seems like a really cool job.’”

In college, Dr. Groover applied himself (admittedly more than in high school) and was invigorated by success—realizing he could go further when he gave homework and class the attention they demanded. “I thought, ‘Why not go as far as I can with it to help other people?’”

Dr. Groover, a Lawrenceville native, became a certified nursing assistant and eventually went to the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine - Georgia. During college, he worked for a few years as a medical scribe for the Emergency Department at then - Gwinnett Medical Center, an experience he considers a

great entrance for someone who was already planning on attending medical school. Dr. Groover went to class full-time and worked nights in the hospital throughout college. It was a challenging time, he shares.

But the uncertainty and perseverance led him back to Northside Gwinnett Health System, where he's a second-year Family Medicine resident. His journey in medicine took him back to where he began as a patient care technician in college.

"I remember walking into the hospital as an employee for the first time, and it was a big shock—a big, exciting thing for me to realize I was working in a hospital. It was cool and scary," recalls Dr. Groover. "It was my first step."

Though Dr. Groover thought he wanted to be an Emergency Department doctor, given his experience, he's changed directions during his residency, focusing on outpatient medicine—maybe sports medicine (time will tell). He enjoys the relationships he can develop with patients and the opportunity to dig deeper and diagnose.

"NGHS was my first choice once I found out about the Family Medicine program, so I was really happy to get in," says Dr. Groover. "The GME staff are really down to Earth, open and honest...We have a very supportive program."

When Dr. Groover delivered his second child, as a resident, a newborn hearing screener asked him about his journey, seeking advice for her own aspirations. He told her what he tells anyone who asks: "You are cut out for it. You may feel small and like it's out of reach, but it's not. With discipline and integrity, you can do it."

**Raise Your Voice to Support
Osteopathic Medical Education**

#AACOMADVOCATES

AACOM ADVOCACY DAY 2023

Raise your voice to support
osteopathic medical education!



On October 17 and 18, join osteopathic leaders, students, faculty, residents and physicians and help us motivate Congress to support osteopathic priorities! AACOM Advocacy Day features Members of Congress, congressional staff and government relations professionals presenting on the Congressional landscape, effective advocacy tools and AACOM's federal policy priorities. Participants will have opportunities to engage directly with lawmakers and participate in coordinated calls to action urging Congress to support policies and programs critical to the osteopathic community. (All activities are virtual, and there is no cost to attend).

Register [here](#).

Julia Patterson, DO Steps Up and Answers the Call to Serve



Julia Patterson, DO, from Doerun, Georgia, was a member of PCOM South Georgia's inaugural DO class (2023). But before she was an osteopathic medical student, Dr. Patterson was a senior at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in Tifton, where her 2018 college essay won awards. It described her work with AHEC since high school as well as her participation in the SERVE (Students Embracing Real Volunteer Experiences) program and her volunteer work for the Farmworker Health Project. [In her essay, she described the challenges of healthcare in south Georgia.](#)

According to Patterson, her generation must be the one that steps up and answers the call to serve the region. As she is just starting her internal medicine residency at Archbold Hospital in Thomasville, Georgia, it appears that her career will be consistent with her written words in 2018.

As told by Jennifer H. Shaw, PhD, chair and associate professor of physiology, Department of Bio-Medical Sciences, PCOM South Georgia:

“Julia arrived as one of our inaugural students from a small nearby town, Tifton. I was assigned to check in with her regularly as her faculty mentor.... The first six or eight weeks of the DO program are a bit daunting. Things feels scary and overwhelming. And then, as she worked through that – I know it's a process, but it seemed like a light switch flipped, a spark ignited. When Julia realized that she could do this, she belonged here. What I saw was the change in her confidence – really becoming successful in the classroom and

seeing herself for who she is and all her talent ... That inaugural class is very tight. It was a brand-new campus – brand-new everything – and they built strong friendships and provided each other with a lot of support.... Julia arrived at PCOM South Georgia with a tremendous service record in rural health working with migrants. She was part of the Moultrie Farmworker Health Project – this is one of the largest agricultural areas east of the Mississippi. She’s also worked with Called to Care, a faith-based organization that supplies children in foster care with clothing and necessities. She’s worked with Habitat for Humanity and Adopt a Mile. She’s involved with Hope House in Moultrie, a center that helps women with unplanned pregnancies, providing necessities and also parenting education. ... While at PCOM, she participated in the Scholars Program of the Southwest Georgia Area Health Education Center, a community-driven nonprofit seeking to increase access to healthcare by improving the number and distribution of healthcare providers in 38 counties. This offered hands-on training and the opportunity to work with students in other health professions, as well as increasing her professional contracts. ... Julia will begin her residency as an internal medicine physician at Archbold Hospital in Thomasville, GA , which is just 20 miles south of Moultrie and not far from Tifton. Where residency training takes place is where physicians are more likely to stay.... Julia is exactly the kind of student were looking for. She’s South Georgia bred, and when she’s speaking with patients here, these are the people who helped raise her, the community she grew up within. Patients know she understands their experiences.”

PCOM Georgia Students Go to Tanzania



Advocacy Webinar Replay

GOMA, along with the other organizations of the Primary Care Physician Coalition of Georgia, hosted a webinar on Wednesday, Aug. 30, titled "It's August, Do You Know Where Your State Legislators Are?" If you missed the webinar, or just want to view it again, it is [available to view here](#).

The webinar reviews the importance of getting to know your legislators now, well before the start of the 2024 Legislative Session, and how helpful it is to have that relationship in place when you want to voice your opinion on a proposed bill with your legislators. Check out the recording, and be ready to assist GOMA when needed!

BCOM Georgia Professor and Chair of Clinical Education Donald W. Penney, MD, MsC, FACEP. [Learn more here](#).