



GEORGIA OSTEOPATHIC
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
— 1902 —

GOMA News & Updates

Volume 44, November 2023

GOMA's Annual Meeting on Zoom on Wednesday November 15th at 6:30 PM

The Georgia Osteopathic Medical Association's Annual Meeting will be held virtually on Wednesday November 15 at 6:30 PM on Zoom. Highlights of the agenda include the installation of the new executive board and voting on proposed change to the Bylaws of GOMA. See below for further details.

President: Sonbol Shahid-Salles, DO, MPH

President-Elect: Gregory E. Harris, DO, FACOI

Vice President: William Lagaly, DO

Secretary-Treasurer: L. Michael Waters, DO

Immediate Past President: Dianna H. Glessner, DO

District I

President: Lucie Mitchell, DO

Secretary/Treasurer: Naveen Raj, DO

District II

President: Michael Mangonon, DO
Secretary/Treasurer: Joseph Huang, DO, MS

District III

President: Woodwin “Woody” M. Weeks
DO
Secretary/Treasurer: Alexander Ibezi-Enendu, DO

District IV

President: Bridgett Bailey, DO
Secretary/Treasurer: Karen Turner, DO

The following Bylaws Amendment will be voted on during the Annual Meeting.

Current Language:

Article VIII - Annual Elections

(b) At the Midyear Business Meeting, the following shall be elected in the same manner as officers: Delegates and Alternates, in keeping with the number allotted by the American Osteopathic Association, who will represent the Association at the Annual Meeting of the AOA House of Delegates.

Proposed Change

Article VIII - Annual Elections

(b) At the Annual Meeting, the following shall be elected in the same manner as officers: Delegates and Alternates, in keeping with the number allotted by the American Osteopathic Association, who will represent the Association at the Annual Meeting of the AOA House of Delegates.

[Zoom Meeting](#) ID: 874 5632 0367

Passcode: 982010

On Demand Lectures Available for CME



GOMA realizes that many osteopathic physicians don't think about the CME requirements until the third year of the three year AOA cycle. The mad rush creates anxiety that results in promises to not procrastinate in the future. And now, the deadline is only one year away.

Fortunately, GOMA has its 2023 Fall Conference available for on demand viewing. One can watch all 16 hours in a binge, or one hour at a time. By taking advantage of this opportunity, you will be helping GOMA and yourself. This year's GOMA conference got great reviews for its diversity of lectures and quality of speakers.

You can easily see the schedule and speakers, and register [on the GOMA website](#). The content will be available until December 31.

Emergency Medical Care in the Sky Article in *The DO* by Darren Dillard, DO



Darren Dillard, DO, is a core faculty physician and the Director of Osteopathic Medical Education for the Northside Hospital Gwinnett-Family Medicine Residency Program in Lawrenceville, Georgia.

“Is there a doctor on board? Ethical and legal considerations for in-flight emergencies” is an article in the October issue of *The DO* magazine written by Dr. Dillard that reviews rare in-flight emergencies and the physician liability, ethical and moral issues with these emergencies.

[Read the article here.](#)

Or [watch the AOA short video that featured Dr. Dillard](#) talking about this unique niche of medicine.

Nilam Vaughan, DO's Internal Drive and Indirect Route to Assistant Professorship



Nilam Vaughan, DO, took an unusual approach to her medical career. “I always wanted to be a physician,” she said. “I just took a different route.”

It wasn't until after she earned her degree in occupational therapy and attained a coveted position as an occupational therapist that Dr. Vaughan realized she was in the wrong field of medicine. That's when she knew it was time to go back to school. She enrolled at PCOM Georgia in Suwanee, graduating in 2011. While a student, Vaughan excelled academically and as a leader. She served as vice president of the student government association; as rotation group leader; and as a liaison between her classmates, the Osteopathic

Institute of the South and PCOM Georgia administrators. Vaughan organized an AIDhyS benefit event that raised \$16,000 for a nonprofit organization in the Atlanta area. Vaughan received PCOM's prestigious Mason W. Pressly Memorial Medal in 2011.

As an emergency medicine physician, Vaughan's compassion for people in underserved areas has taken her across the country to help people in some of the most rural areas of Alaska, Nebraska, and South Georgia. She has worked with four distinct tribes of Native Americans. Vaughan now calls Atlanta home. She serves as an assistant professor of emergency medicine at PCOM South Georgia in Moultrie and as an emergency medicine physician at Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital in Albany.

[Read the Q & A with Dr. Vaughan about her view of the medical field in the *Moultrie Observer* from in early October here.](#)

David Conaway, DO: Bones, Bikes and Bass



David J. Conaway, DO was awarded Outstanding Osteopathic Physician Award by GOMA in 1988, but he has been a renaissance man for his entire career.

At the end of that year, the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against Dr. Conaway (orthopedics), Gary M. Silverstein, DO

(ophthalmology) and Richard L. Lieberman, DO (otolaryngology) in their lawsuit against Hospital Authority of Gwinnett County, Georgia (GHA). The three DOs had challenged the constitutionality of the GHA bylaw provision, which requires specific postgraduate specialty training or residency in order for physicians to be eligible for admission to the Medical Staff of the Gwinnett Hospital System. “There wasn’t a state law,” explained Dr. Conaway about the ruling, to allow osteopathic physicians equal rights. The ruling is [available on line here](#).

The following year, Dr. Conaway was appointed to the Composite Medical Board of Georgia to serve as an arbiter of quality for the physicians in the state over the next three years. Dr. Conaway was also a delegate at the AOA’s House of Delegates for approximately five years.

Dr. Conaway states that the best gift that he ever received was “the opportunity to do an orthopedic residency”. He graduated in 1967 from College of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery in Des Moines (now Des Moines University’s College of Osteopathic Medicine). He left his home state of Iowa to do his internship at Oklahoma Osteopathic Hospital in Tulsa. His post-graduate training continued at Detroit Osteopathic Hospital (DOH) with a four year orthopedic residency that he graduated from in 1972. Des Moines University COM alumnae Fred Katz, DO and Terry Schwartz, DO graduated one year ahead of him and also were at DOH. They started a movement to the south by many osteopathic physicians including OB/GYNs Chris Geltz, DO and Shelley Baum, DO; Glenn Kasow, DO (urology); Gary Silverstein, DO (ophthalmology); Neil Nickelsen, DO (pediatrics); Roger Sorg, DO (pathology) and Richard Lieberman, DO (otolaryngology). Doctors’ Hospital in Tucker, GA on Idlewood Road was recruiting specialists for the growing medical community. Dr. Conaway followed in 1972, and became the first osteopathic orthopedic surgeon in Georgia.

Initially, his office was on Northlake Parkway in Tucker, but he later moved to Lilburn, GA. “People really appreciated what I did for them. They would express that. Even their families were

appreciative. I'm talking about total joints or a torn cartilage, it changed their life." Reflecting on his osteopathic training and how it influenced his practice, Dr. Conaway said, "The training had a better understanding of the whole patient and it really helps understand what patients go through. Like after an accident, encouraging families to talk to the patient. Express positive thoughts during the surgery so that patients could hear."

After 35 years of practice, he semi-retired, but worked for different locum tenens companies in hospital affiliated clinics in several different states. Each short term contract would last three months, and he enjoyed not having to worry about managing the office. "They were all good experiences", Dr. Conaway said. He would be joined by his second wife Martha for 2 -3 weeks at a time. By that time, their blended family of three boys and their daughter Kinley that they had together were grown. He quit practice of orthopedics entirely in 2015.

Fellow Award from American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopaedics confirmed his achievement of excellence. Dr. Conaway enjoyed lecturing to physical therapy students at Emory and Georgia State, and osteopathic students from the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine would rotate with him as Clinical Associate Professor of Orthopedics for the school.

At the time of this interview, Dr. Conaway just returned after visiting his son with special needs who has many advanced degrees and teaches students as a professor at a university in the Iowa.

Dr. Conaway start biking in the early 1990s after having suffered from a heart attack in 1987. He started on the stationary bike, but then progressed to riding with local biking groups. Neil Nickelsen, DO became inspired by his biking and joined him after retiring from pediatrics. Drs. Conaway and Nickelsen started to contemplate cross country bike rides in 2005, and after planning and training for a couple of years, they used itineraries from Adventure Cycling to go from San Diego to Tybee Island. Every bicyclist has a fall off a bike. Dr. Conaway's came as the two DOs were cycling the

Imperial Sand Dunes of California with a destination of Phoenix, AZ. A combination of helmets covering ears and wind noise created communication problems between Conaway and Nickelsen. Dr. Conaway ran into Dr. Nickelsen's bike that has slowed down to look back. Dr. Conaway broke two teeth, one of which was saved by an oral surgeon, and created a mallet finger of his left 4th finger that was diagnosed by an X-ray using the dentist's X-ray equipment. The injuries didn't stop Dr. Conaway from biking to their destination, but his lip sucking into the incisor gap with each deep breath of cycling was only solved after putting in a mouth guard for the rest of the ride.

Biking, gardening and singing have fulfilled his time during retirement. Dr. Conaway said, "The singing is really great. I've learned so much about music in that time ... The one thing about the rehearsals and the performance, you go in thinking about the stresses of the day. And it all goes away as the singing starts." Dr. Conaway started with the Michael O'Neal Singers (MOS) in 1987. He sings bass in the chorus of over one hundred. The group has traveled to Carnegie Hall, and he has participated in smaller groups that have traveled to Europe to perform four times.

The picture above is from after the MOS performance of "Bernstein on Broadway" at Roswell United Methodist Church (UMC) in Roswell, GA on October 8th. Left to right: William "Bill" Cox, DO; Terry Schwartz, DO; Michael Baron, DO; David J. Conaway, DO & his wife Martha; Christian Geltz, DO; and GOMA President Dianna H. Glessner, DO.

Dr. Conaway spends most of his time now with caring for his house and yard in Alpharetta, GA , visiting his wife Martha at a memory care unit, visiting with friends, biking and singing. Many would call it music therapy.

If you would like some music therapy, check out the Michael O'Neal Singers performing "A John Rutter Christmas" featuring Victoria Hill (Miss Georgia 2019; Miss America Runner-Up 2020) at Roswell UMC on Sunday December 3rd at 3 PM. Another upcoming

performance is “Messiah Sing-Along” at Kingswood UMC (Dunwoody, GA) on Sunday December 17 at 3 PM. [More details are available here.](#)

DEA Extends Pandemic Rules for Telehealth Prescribing through 2024 as Agency Irons Out Policies

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) said in early October that it will extend telehealth flexibilities that enable clinicians to virtually prescribe controlled medications to their patients through 2024 as it mulls permanent policy changes. The agency recently held two-day listening sessions to inform the agency's regulations on prescribing controlled substances via telemedicine.

Telehealth leaders and doctors urged the DEA to allow prescribing via virtual care, arguing that mandates that require in-person doctor visits for patients to get prescriptions for controlled drugs, such as Adderall or buprenorphine used to treat opioid use disorder, severely restrict access to care and could increase patient harm. The American Telemedicine Association (ATA) cheered the news that telehealth flexibilities were extended through 2024.

"We are thrilled that the DEA is taking such a thoughtful and thorough approach to creating the right rules around the prescription of controlled substances. This is a critical issue for millions of individuals and their families, as well as clinicians wanting to provide care to their patients, wherever and whenever they need it," said Kyle Zebley, ATA senior vice president for public policy and executive director of ATA Action, in a statement.

He added, "What this means is that next year is shaping up to be the Super Bowl for telehealth, with many of the telehealth flexibilities enacted during the public health emergency set to expire at the end of 2024, including the High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) and Health Savings Account (HSA) telehealth tax provision, geographic and originating sites flexibilities, forestalling implementation of Medicare's telemental health in-person requirements, Medicare face-to-face telehealth requirements for hospice care and the Acute Hospital Care at Home Program. It is time to quadruple down on our efforts leading into 2024. This is a historic opportunity to make

crucial changes to our healthcare system that will appropriately expand access to urgently needed care to some of our most challenged and underserved patient populations. This is not rhetoric, it's real opportunity that we must not squander.”

[Read more about this extension of telemedicine rules here.](#)

Rural Georgia Fills with Osteopathic Interns

It has been well documented that physicians frequently practice within a short distance of where they do their residency. So, this month we tried to group the first year osteopathic residents that have rural internships. While Rome, Georgia and Columbus, Georgia are small cities, most of the others listed are located in places that might surprise some. South Georgia Medical Center is located in Valdosta. Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital is in Albany, Georgia. Archbold Medical Center is located in Thomasville. On the other hand, Gateway (Savannah), Atrium Navicent (Macon), Piedmont Columbus, Atrium Floyd (Rome) and August University's Athens Campus are located in small cities.

Taylor Martin, DO	IM	South Georgia Med Ctr	PCOM-South GA
Justin Owens, DO	IM	South Georgia Med Ctr	PCOM-GA
Christiana Anyanwu, DO	FP	Phoebe Putney	NYIT COM
Jordan Bradwell, DO	FP	Phoebe Putney	LMU-DCOM
David Dukes, DO	FP	Phoebe Putney	Alabama COM
Jessica Cauthen, DO	Psych	Gateway	VCOM – Carolinas
Blake Dallon, DO	Psych	Gateway	A.T. Still Univ – Arizona
Jessica Ray, DO	Psych	Gateway	LECOM – Bradenton
Abhiram “Abhi” Srivatsa, DO	Psych	Gateway	PCOM-GA
Christian G. Edwards, DO	FP	Georgia South Moultrie	PCOM-South GA
Shelby McCoy Flowers, DO	FP	Georgia South Moultrie	PCOM-South GA
Allison J. Tresner, DO	FP	Georgia South Moultrie	PCOM-South GA
Keith W. Gramling, Jr., DO	Psych	Georgia South Moultrie	PCOM-South GA
Syeda Nausheena, DO	Peds	Atrium Navicent	Alabama COM
Shannon Vogel, DO	OBG	Atrium Navicent	Alabama COM
Sabrina Weeks, DO	Psych	Piedmont Coliseum	PCOM-GA
Darshit Patel, DO	IM	Piedmont Coliseum U of New England	COM
Alexander Hatanaka, DO	FP	Piedmont Columbus	Alabama COM

Christopher Hudspeth, DO	FP	Piedmont Columbus	VCOM - Louisiana
Ansa Riaz, DO	FP	Piedmont Columbus	NOVA SECOM
Gerald Wang, DO	FP	Piedmont Columbus	LMU-DCOM
Jordan Bradshaw, DO	FP	Atrium Floyd	PCOM-GA
Linzee Clark, DO	FP	Atrium Floyd	VCOM – Carolinas
Trent Griner, DO	FP	Atrium Floyd	PCOM-South GA
Eunice Lee, DO	FP	Atrium Floyd	PCOM-GA
Winter Scott, DO	FP	Atrium Floyd	NYIT COM
Zac Wood, DO	FP	Atrium Floyd	VCOM – Auburn
JonHenry Allen, DO	IM	Augusta Athens	PCOM South GA
Carla Erb, DO	IM	Augusta Athens	LECOM
Hevinkumar Patel, DO	IM	Augusta Athens	VCOM – Auburn
Christopher Schrock, DO	IM	Augusta Athens	PCOM-GA
Maryam Tarar, DO	IM	Augusta Athens	WVSOM
Rishi Kalia, DO	IM	Archbold	Nova SECOM
Julia M. Patterson, DO	IM	Archbold	PCOM-South Georgia
Xavier Y. Taylor, DO	IM	Archbold	PCOM-South GA

From Undocumented Immigrant to Osteopathic Student at PCOM South GA: Mauricio Soto



Mauricio Soto (DO '27) remembers going to the doctor with his grandmother. Her appointments were frequent because of her chronic health issues. He was only in his early teens, but Soto's grandmother

spoke no English. She needed him to translate for her so she would understand instructions from her doctor. Those appointments and missed days of school left a lasting impression on young Soto.

“Sometimes I’d have to miss school,” Student Doctor Soto said. “It was OK because this was my grandma. I loved her. I remember picking up all the pamphlets that were around and reading them. I started retaining that knowledge. That’s how I got introduced to health care.” As he grew older, Soto realized that he wanted to be a doctor. He also began to question why there weren’t translators to help non-English speakers. During a recent visit to a local health department for his own vaccinations, Soto heard a page over the intercom for the Spanish translator. “That made me happy to hear that things have improved from when I was younger,” he said with a smile.

Soto was born in Monterey, Mexico. He and his family came to the United States in 1997 when he was 6 and settled in Ambrose, a small town in Coffee County, Georgia, near his mother’s sister. As he grew up, Soto learned English and excelled in academics. During that time, he and his family members overstayed their visas. They became undocumented immigrants.

“My academic career has always been full of uncertainties,” Soto said. “Even though I graduated as the salutatorian of my high school class, I just didn’t have the finances or know how to proceed. Being an undocumented immigrant comes with a lot of responsibility.” He graduated from Coffee County High School in Douglas in 2011, but college was not guaranteed.

“A lot of it is because of the language barriers,” he continued. “Your parents expect you to read these legal documents at the age of 14 or 15, just to translate for them and do the best you can to help them out. As the oldest in my family, I felt that pressure as well. I was just growing up fast and trying to figure out what to do, especially as a first-generation college student.” With his immigration status in question, Soto found many opportunities that were open to his classmates where doors closed for him, but he didn’t give up. Instead, Soto began writing letters to senators and representatives sharing his story and asking for

help. One of Soto's letters found its way onto the desk of a physician who decided to sponsor him and pay his tuition to earn a bachelor's degree in biology at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in Tifton in 2016. After ABAC, Soto began working at Valdosta State University with the College Assistance Migrant Program. The grant-funded program paid students from migrant and agricultural backgrounds and provided resources to help them succeed.

During his time working at VSU, Soto obtained residency status, which allowed him to apply to medical school. He chose PCOM South Georgia. "It felt like home whenever I visited," he said. "I saw the diversity of the student population here. And it is here, smack dab in the middle of the community that I want to serve. What's a better opportunity than this right now? It just felt like a calling."

[Read the complete inspirational story of Mauricio Soto, first year DO student at PCOM South Georgia.](#)

[And watch local news station featuring student doctor Soto.](#)

**“Welcoming you to the osteopathic profession”
-- DO schools in Georgia hold White Coat Ceremonies**



PCOM SOUTH GA CLASS OF 2027



PCOM GA CLASS OF 2027

The class of 2027 at PCOM Georgia in Suwanee and PCOM South Georgia in Moultrie were presented with their white coats on October 13th. This annual event is always exciting for the first year osteopathic medical students and their families. It is filled with smiles, and, of course, inspirational words from osteopathic physicians who have the benefit of experience and knowledge of the road ahead for the students.

PCOM South Georgia's newest class of 59 student doctors received their white coats in a ceremony held in the auditorium at Southern Regional Technical College's Moultrie campus.

"These white coats represent the medical profession, certainly replacing the doctor's black bag and maybe even the stethoscope in their symbolism," said Robert Lloyd, DO '91, interim dean of the Osteopathic Medical program at PCOM South Georgia. "What we want to emphasize here today is not the symbolism of our profession, but the recognition of the transformation occurring in your professional identity. As a member of the osteopathic profession, you are accepting the fundamental principles of medical professionalism and medical ethics."

The guest speaker for the ceremony was Ethan McBrayer, DO, who graduated from PCOM Georgia in 2019. McBrayer, a native of Tifton, also earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Georgia and graduated from Georgia South Family Medicine Residency Program in Moultrie. He now practices as part of Sterling Physician Group in Moultrie.

"This coat is a tangible reminder that you all are meant to be here," McBrayer said. "Let it serve as that pat on the back saying those challenging moments and late-night reviews will help you continue to push through. Use your coat wisely. Fill those pockets with resources to soak up every experience. Allow it to be stained. Those stains will serve as a reminder of the lives that you needed to touch."

At the PCOM Georgia White Ceremony held in the Infinite Energy Forum in Duluth, the 140 members of the class of 2027 were addressed by featured speaker Ankur "Andy" B. Patel, DO, RPh, founder, director and CEO of the Southern Pain and Spine Associates. As a member of

the third class to graduate from PCOM Georgia, Dr. Patel asked his mother to retrieve his white coat from his medical school days. Sixteen years later and he was still able to fit in the coat. “You will rise to the challenge ... You guys are in for a wonderful ride,” Dr. Patel told the first year students.

In Other Words

*“The death knell for any enterprise is to glorify the past,
no matter how good it was.”*

– Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon, 2013