This past year as the American Academy of Osteopathy’s president-elect, I have represented the AAO at various events. Beginning in July, I attended the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Board of Trustees’ meeting from July 22-24 and the AOA House of Delegates meeting from July 26-28. It was an opportunity to collaborate with various parties particularly in the deliberative process on the resolutions and in networking with the various components of the AOA and the nation-wide physician membership.

The highlight of the House of Delegates meeting was my opportunity to be a participant among several specialty colleges in giving testimony to the AOA Bureau of Education in support of Substitute Resolution H-220 that resolved to: Reaffirm inclusion of osteopathic principles and practice in every osteopathic board certification examination, regardless of specialty; continue the opportunity for osteopathic certifying boards to develop and administer OMM/OMT practical examinations which are specific and appropriate for their specialty; allows a requirement for specialty-specific content in CME for recertification/continuing certification beginning with the 2022 CME cycle (though might take effect at an earlier time frame); and continues to encourage the ACGME to include an osteopathic educational component in Osteopathic Recognized residencies. This was a significant victory for our profession and a hopeful trend going forward.

During the AOA Annual Meeting, Dr. Hensel, Ms. Quarles and I had a very productive discussion with staff from AOA Physician Services. Some of the challenges reviewed included insurance reimbursement and documentation issues. It is hoped that more regular communication and updating will help the membership with effective strategies to deal with these issues.

I serve as one of two AOA appointed Academy representatives to the AOA Distinct Osteopathic Certification Committee (CDOC), formerly the AOA Initial Certification Steering Committee. This committee was established to assess the osteopathic content present in all osteopathic specialties and assist in determining what potential content is required for cognitive and performance examination leading to Distinct Osteopathic Certification. I have attended several meetings in May, September, and more recently in February with multiple communications between. Part of my suggestion was in support for a medical specialty job task analysis to assess the osteopathic components in each specialty. An additional consideration is the effect of HOD Substitute Resolution H-220 in the development of distinctive certification. It is anticipated that this process will continue to require significant time and work into the future.

In September, I attended the Washington, D.C. legislative event as one of 42 representatives from eleven osteopathic specialty colleges. I met with seven congressional representatives from the states of Nevada and Montana that included either the senator, congressional representative, or their legislative representative. The unified issues centered on support for three key resolutions before Congress including the reauthorization of the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education Program, protection for patient access to end Surprise Medical Billing and to change Prior Authorization requirements while protecting seniors’ access to care. This event was the first ever by a group of osteopathic specialty colleges which was coordinated by the AOA’s National Osteopathic Advocacy Center.

I have also been involved in work on the AAO Manual of Procedures and Current Committee Structure Task Force, where my activities included dialog with three committees: the Committee on Fellowship in the AAO, the Postdoctoral Training Committee, and the Postdoctoral Standards and Accreditation Committee. Additional meetings will be held to continue the review process set forth.
Barbara Zajdel, DO, FAAO, the 2021 AAO Convocation Program Chairperson and I are developing the educational considerations for this event with the theme focusing on the application of OMM for the Medical Specialties. This theme closely aligns with the multiple ways in which the osteopathic specialties are working to improve collaboration within the profession.

I remain committed to strengthen the role of the Academy in promoting and maintaining the osteopathic profession by engaging the challenges in academic, economic, regulatory and organizational management.

Paul R. Rennie, DO, FAAO