

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S 2017-18 REPORT

Executive Director Sherri L. Quarles

This fiscal year has met with a few challenges as you have heard from our secretary-treasurer's report. We experienced a slight decrease in membership due to economic changes which has caused our team to make a careful review of how to move forward strategically. Leading that charge has been 2017-18 AAO President Michael P. Rowane, DO, MS, FAAFP, FAAO, with the assistance of the AAO executive committee, which consists of 2017-18 AAO President-elect Catherine M. Kimball, DO; 2017-18 AAO Secretary-treasurer Judith A. O'Connell, DO, MHA, FAAO; and 2017-18 AAO Immediate Past President Laura E. Griffin, DO, FAAO. As a result, the AAO's Board of Trustees have had a few additional meetings, and they have reached out more than once to the Board of Governors. Each of our leaders volunteers their time and talents to the Academy, while serving on other committees from our partnering like-minded organizations. The common theme from our leaders has been "bring on the challenges and we face them head on." This is all accomplished with the assistance of the Academy staff of six full-time employees in addition to myself. They each have the same passion, and they work to meet the goals set by our leaders and membership.



Meet our team below:

Taylor Bridgeforth, the communications and administration assistant, is often your first point of contact when you call the Academy office. In addition, she is the liaison for the AAO's Membership Committee. Taylor assists with the AAO newsletter and is responsible for the AAO online bookstore. Taylor joined the AAO staff in February 2017.

Debbie Cole, assistant to the executive director and board and committee liaison, coordinates all communications and meetings for the AAO's Board of Governors, Board of Trustees, Awards Committee, Bylaws Committee, Committee on Fellowship in the AAO, International Affairs Advisory Council, Louisa Burns Osteopathic Research Committee and Osteopathic Medical Economics Committee. She joined the staff in August 2007.

Lauren Good is the AAO's communications specialist. She joined the AAO as a part-time publications liaison in August 2013, transitioning to full-time in August 2014. As the AAO's needs changed, Lauren's responsibilities evolved so that she is responsible for the website, the monthly newsletter, the quarterly journal, and other promotional products, such as the Convocation brochures.

Amber Rausch, postdoctoral education liaison and CME coordinator, joined the staff in September 2010. She coordinates communication among all neuromusculoskeletal medicine and osteopathic manipulative medicine residency programs. As we transition to the single accreditation system, Amber's leadership and her ability to "herd cats" is invaluable. In addition, she recently started coordinating all the AAO's cosponsored CME courses.

Bev Searcy, finance and membership assistant, is the financial assistant to the executive director. She is responsible for all the receivables and payables that arrive in the office, whether they are web-based or USPS, and she is responsible for processing all membership applications and

submitting them to the Board of Trustees for review or approval as appropriate. Bev is also the staff liaison for the Student American Academy of Osteopathy and the Osteopathic Education Service Committee. Bev joined the team in October 2016.

Gennie Watts, event planner, joined us in January 2016. As the event planner, Gennie coordinates all the AAO's CME courses, especially Convocation. Her calm approach to solving problems reassures both attendees and staff alike.

Leadership Activities

Underscoring much of what was accomplished this past year were the Academy's efforts to enhance collaboration with the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and other organizations inside and outside the osteopathic medical profession.

Before the AOA House of Delegates in July 2017, AAO leaders maintained our annual meeting with the AOA in an effort to better understand the relationship of the Academy and the American Osteopathic Association. We met with the American Osteopathic Information Association's Mat Kremke, vice president for business development; Sharon McGill, associate vice president for research and development; Sophia Newman, program specialist for international affairs; Jim Swartwout, senior vice president for education and accreditation; and Maura Biszewski, director of postdoctoral training. After these meetings, we had a nice lunch with Lawrence Cunningham, IOM, the director of affiliate affairs and our own personal tour guide; and Elizabeth Harano, CHCP, CME program manager. Our last meeting at the AOA was with Sheridan Chaney, the associate vice president of content and media, followed by a brief tour of the AOA headquarters. These face-to-face meetings continue to help us maintain a stronger relationship with the AOA that both organizations can reach out to each other as needed.

In January, I attended the AOA's LEAD Conference (Leadership, Education, Advocacy and Development) with Drs. Rowane and Kimball in Austin, Texas. During this meeting we had the pleasure of touching base with leaders from the AOA and other affiliate organizations.

The first meeting was a breakfast meeting with the AOA staff, affiliate staff and affiliate volunteer leaders. The AOA reviewed the work that had been completed by the Affiliate Alignment Task Force, on which I serve. In addition, Ron Burns, DO, an AOA trustee and the chair of the task force shared AOA Board of Trustees' strategic recommendations. Every leader in the room was given the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions if needed.

The LEAD Conference itself is a combination of what used to be two separate meetings: Advocacy for Healthy Partnerships (AHP) and Osteopathic Medical Educators & Leaders (OMEL). This integrated experience included keynote speakers for all attendees and networking opportunities, allowing professionals across the career spectrum to learn from each other. Breakout sessions gave individuals a chance to choose the topic areas that best met their career and leadership development needs. The closing session focused on why osteopathic leaders' unique expertise is so essential in the ongoing effort to elevate patient care and health care delivery in the U.S.

The newly designed program was very dynamic and allowed for a much greater network opportunity in a gathering of like-minded individuals. It was a very open concept that allowed for a greater flow of information.

Drs. Rowane and Kimball and I ended the day by having dinner with Ronald Burns, DO; Robert Piccinini, DO; James Lally, DO; and Jim Swartwout, SVP. This dinner was organized in the spirit of President Baker's commitment to "unify the osteopathic profession, improve communication and enhance relationships with the AOA and Affiliates." The AOA created unique opportunities for smaller groups of affiliate leaders and AOA leaders to discuss the direction of the osteopathic profession, strategic direction of the AOA and/or any other matters of importance to the affiliate organization over dinner. These family dinners were a great opportunity for staff and leadership to share ideas, comments and feedback on how we can continue to effectively work together to serve our members and support the sustainability of the profession. The AOA board leaders and AOA staff that attended our dinner were attentive to all our needs and questions. This was a nice way to end the evening.

I also am expanding the Academy's influence by continuing to participate in the activities of the Society of Osteopathic Specialty Executives (SOSE) and the Association of Osteopathic State Executive Directors (AOSED).

Technological Advances

This is the second year AAO has released a mobile app for Convocation. We have made several changes and took your comments into consideration. As a result, the mobile application has a security code so this year you will not receive emails or notification from anyone that is not in attendance. Other features of the mobile app include up-to-date scheduling, customized scheduling, notifications, professional networking, group discussions and frequently asked questions. The mobile app will allow users to stay updated on everything happening at the AAO's 2018 Convocation. I would like to take the time to thank our staff for continuing to make improvements for a more smooth running process.

To make it easier for members of the public to find osteopathic manipulative medicine providers, the AAO licensed the vanity URL www.FindOMM.org, which takes viewers directly to the Academy's Find a Physician web page. We are happy to announce that the next phase of the website development has been completed and this is the enhanced Find a Physician search. Your concerns about our search engine were heard loud and clear, so please take a moment to head over to our website and check out your local listing. As with any products, we will continue to make enhancements.

AAO at OMED 2017

The American Osteopathic Association held its annual Osteopathic Medical Conference and Exposition (OMED) in Philadelphia, Oct. 7-10, 2017, and Leslie M, Ching, DO, chaired the AAO's program, "Using Osteopathic Principles and Philosophy in Specialty Medicine." At the Academy's program, attendees learned about various viewpoints on incorporating osteopathic principles into the practice of different specialties, with clinical experience in internal medicine, neurology, psychiatry, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, family medicine and sports medicine.

The AAO joined forces with American College of Osteopathic Internist, the American College of Osteopathic Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American College of Osteopathic Neurologist and Psychiatrists, the American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians, the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians, and the Academy of Sports Medicine. In addition, Kenneth J. Lossing, DO, delivered the 45th annual Thomas L. Northup Lecture.

Where We Are Now

As reported by the secretary-treasurer, the AAO ended the year with a little bit of excess revenue. However, we still suffered a loss of members, so it is our goal to see if we can re-capture some of the members that did not renew, and we will continue to work on additional ways to gain members.

The AAO leadership is ready to develop a new strategic plan. We've examined what went well and what didn't go as well previously, and with your feedback, we develop a 2019-22 strategic plan that will carry the AAO into the future confidently and securely.

The AAO's office has a great crew and I look forward to working with each of them every day. If you take a moment to get to know them, you will appreciate the staff as much as I do. I always say it takes a team, and that is what the Academy has: a team of devoted individuals who care about the osteopathic profession.

Thank you for the continued support of the AAO leadership, members and staff.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sherri L. Quarles". The signature is written in black ink and has a fluid, personal style.

Sherri L. Quarles