

Karen J. Nichols, DO, MA, MACOI is a Past Chair of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education Board of Directors, serving from 2020-2022, following the initial six years as a board member. She was Dean of Midwestern University/Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine - 2002-2018. She was IM Chair at Midwestern University/Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine and Assistant Dean for GME from 1997-2002. A graduate of Kansas City University-COM (KCU-COM), she holds a master's degree in management with a specialty in Health Care Administration. Her academic career followed 17 years in the private practice of internal medicine in Arizona.

Dr. Nichols has received the highest awards from the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, and the state societies of Arizona and Illinois, as well as KCU-COM. In 2024, she received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Osteopathic Foundation. Dr. Nichols holds nine honorary degrees.

She has served as President of the AOA, the American College of Osteopathic Internists, and the Arizona Osteopathic Medical Association being the first woman to hold all those positions. Dr. Nichols created the Costin Institute for Osteopathic Medical Educators in 2003, a one-year fellowship program for educators at COMs, which has graduated over 300 Costin Scholars. Speaking about her book "Physician Leadership: The 11 Skills Every Doctor Needs to be an Effective Leader" has her on the speaking circuit several times a month. She coaches and mentors across the educational spectrum.