



Michigan Osteopathic Association

2021 President's Report

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My term as President of the Michigan Osteopathic Association (MOA) certainly began like no other, with a virtual swearing-in ceremony as part of our House of Delegates and the traditional opening remarks for our virtual convention delivered via Zoom. I am proud to say we pivoted from what would have been our 121st in-person Annual Spring Scientific Convention to a virtual format in a matter of weeks.

The House of Delegates (HOD) was also forced to transition to an online format. The HOD convened, virtually, on May 30, 2020, with over 100 delegates logging in to a Zoom webinar. Speaker of the House, Craig H. Bethune, DO, adroitly managed the proceedings as effectively as he has managed our in-person meetings. Although the regular procedures and presentations were limited without the ability to meet in-person, the post-event comments we received were overwhelmingly positive.

In June, the MOA delivered 16 AOA Category 1-A CME credits to over 500 attendees on the new MOA Learning Center online educational platform. While the platform cannot replace in-person meetings, we were hoping to gain financial stability through Learning Center. I can proudly say that our online program not only succeeded—it flourished. Over 50 attendees had no previous record of attending MOA in-person conventions. Attendees viewed our program from as far away as Alaska.

With the new format, the MOA began a digital marketing campaign. While we continued marketing the CME event in our traditional channels, mailings, emails, newsletters and social media, we also used Google and Facebook advertising to reach DOs who have not recently engaged with us and attendees who had never attended an MOA event.

As COVID-19 cases continued to be reported, the in-person Autumn Convention was also adapted to the virtual format. What would have been our 16th annual Autumn Scientific Convention in Grand Rapids was presented via the Learning Center with 17 Category 1-A CME credits. Without the draw of the Amway Grand Plaza and the amazing shops and restaurants of Grand Rapids, our expectations were fairly grounded. But with the success of the Spring event and continued marketing in both traditional and digital channels, the 2020 Autumn Scientific Convention set a record with 434 attendees, and a record number of 55 presentations submitted to the Science Research Exhibit event.

As our governments, both state and federal, attempt to address issues reverberating from COVID-19, I cannot stress enough—now more than ever—we need to invest in our profession. Donate to MOPAC. As legislation is crafted to address reopening our economy and create options for how physicians can treat patients, the MOA needs to ensure our legislators are representing osteopathic physicians.

The COVID-19 vaccines are being administered and helping to open our state. While our Spring convention was again required to be presented online, we are optimistic that we will meet in-person in 2022. What I would really like to convey is that I attribute the quick turnaround and the success of our virtual events to the patience and trust our members have in the MOA.

The MOA partnered with the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) on several campaigns, including combatting the disparaging comments regarding DO's on MSNBC and other media, as well as the controversial advertisements from FIGS. Our partnership with the AOA has never been stronger.



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The MOA advocacy efforts have continued, although somewhat limited based on the intermittent legislative schedule.

Advocacy efforts have included:

- COVID-19: MOA is partnered with Martin Waymire and MDHHS to promote confidence in the COVID-19 Vaccines AND to continue with #MaskUpMichigan campaign
- We have also partnered with Martin Waymire and MDHHS to raise awareness on Wellness issues like gambling addiction and opioid addiction
- Prior Authorization: Continued the ApproveMyCare efforts (www.approvemycare.org)
- Partnered with the AOA to reform Surprise Billing opposing House Bills 4459 and 4460
- Supported the AOA Virtual Advocacy Day, through newsletters and social media
- Promoted and participated in the AOA DO Day on the Hill (March 7 & 8), Kris Nicholoff, Dr. Rachel Young and Dr. Stephen Bell recorded a session for the event: Affiliate Advocacy – Strategies and Best Practices for Enhancing Member Value
- Vaccinations for children: Working with Parent Information Network to promote children vaccinations, getting back on track to get vaccination rates higher in Michigan

Although the legislative efforts have seen some delays, we have been in constant contact with Kevin McKinney to be prepared for specific bills once they are presented.

Our association was established in 1898. Over the years it is hard to fathom the changes that have been navigated. This year, we all are a part of a tremendous series of challenges to our organization and our communities. I am honored to have served over the past year and I am so proud of how we have risen to those challenges.