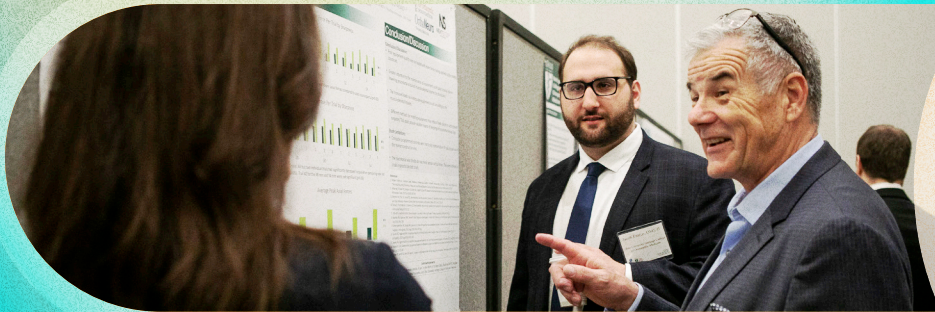


Buckeye Osteopathic Physician



THE OFFICIAL MEMBER PUBLICATION OF THE OHIO OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION

Buckeye Osteopathic Physician

The Buckeye Osteopathic Physician
is published by the
Ohio Osteopathic Association

Summer/Fall 2024 • online
USPS 068-760

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Photos from the 2024 Ohio Osteopathic Symposium, held in April in Columbus. It is the largest osteopathic CME conference in the state with attendees participating in person and online. All OOS photos courtesy Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine.



Heritage
College of
Osteopathic
Medicine



Douglas W. Harley, DO (left) receives a Trillium Award from Kenneth H. Johnson, DO, executive dean at Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine, at the 2024 Ohio Osteopathic Symposium.

Family Physician Leads OOA



Ira P. Monka, DO (left) then president of the American Osteopathic Association, congratulates Douglas W. Harley, DO, following his installation as president of the Ohio Osteopathic Association, April 20, 2024.

Douglas W. Harley, DO, of Fowler, was installed as OOA president for 2024-2025 at a special luncheon during the Ohio Osteopathic Symposium, April 18-21 in Columbus.

He is the Family Medicine Program Director for Cleveland Clinic Akron General. It is a 7-7-7 program that includes a six-year working collaboration with Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine (OUHCOM) for the innovative Transformative Care Continuum program. Dr. Harley has served as program director for the last five years with a total of 15 years in graduate medical education at Akron General.

Dr. Harley has been active within organized medicine since 2005 when he completed his residency and joined the Ohio chapter of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (Ohio ACOFP) Board of Governors. He is a past president of Ohio ACOFP and Ohio Academy of Family Physicians. In 2016, he was named Ohio ACOFP Family Physician of the Year.

The dedicated educator is an advocate for not only the osteopathic profession but also for the education of family physicians and the breadth of services they provide. He has full clinical professor status at HCOM and Northeast Ohio Medical University.

At home, Dr. Harley is a farmer, tending to pigs, chickens, and other animals. ■

It is all about the journey

A message to OOA members

By Douglas W. Harley, DO
OOA President, 2024-2025

The journey I have followed over the last several decades has included organized medicine on both sides of the aisle – osteopathic and allopathic. It has included the opportunity to serve my fellow Ohio family physicians within both the Ohio ACOFP and Ohio Academy of Family Physicians (OAFP), as well as now as your OOA president. My journey allowed for service to my fellow hospital colleagues as part of the hospital medical executive staff of Akron General as we underwent the transition to be part of Cleveland Clinic Foundation.

The journey has included being a mentor, like many of you. Many of you have been my mentor and friend for decades now, thank you for being there as I find my way and repeatedly ask questions. Post COVID our hospital's medical education department formed a First Generation in Medicine mentee group for physicians, residents, and students. As a first in medicine myself, I appreciate hearing the varied journeys of my fellow physicians and learners. The premed and medical students as well as residents discuss and reflect on shared experiences and offer guidance. To students: this is one approach. Find a mentor to help guide you along your journey. Don't worry. There will be pitfalls and obstacles along the way. That is normal. That is what will help to build your character and add its own unique flair to your journey.

Many of you may share similarities to your medical origin stories, it is what makes us who we are today, along with the many teachers and mentors we have had along that way that have helped us find our paths. Thank you to everyone who has been a mentor to a future osteopathic physician. I hope to be that mentor to those that come after me.

We have all experienced change of the last five years. The weight of post-COVID-19 budget cycles particularly comes to mind. It led to personal and professional struggles felt by all of us whether in private practice or part of a larger institution. It has certainly changed the way we practice medicine now and, in the future, bringing virtual medicine into the mainstream. Not so surprisingly, it has showed the value of the holistic views of osteopathic medicine.

Five years ago, my journey almost changed. I found myself on the other end of the health care window as I experienced a major myocardial infarction with post infarct

HFREF requiring a life vest. It dashed my plans to China with International Primary Care Educational Alliance (IPCEA) and changed my perspective on health care. I gained a connection with my patients that I might otherwise have never discovered, through a shared journey of the difficulties of pill burden or a low salt diet. My experienced journey changed who I am.

Our own OOA family experienced change. We welcomed our new Executive Director, Heidi Weber, on March 1 and the 2024 Ohio Osteopathic Symposium was her first annual membership meeting in that role. Thank you, Heidi!

As your OOA president, I'd like to share a bit of my vision over the next year. It comes down to advocacy for the profession—individually and collectively. That is how the OOA has achieved its 125th year; how an AOA-boarded physician is a program director at a traditionally allopathic residency program; how OUHCOM has established three campuses with state-of-the-art facilities; how Xavier planned for a new osteopathic school; and so much more.

Advocacy can take many forms. At my first organized meeting of the allopathic persuasion, I found myself surrounded by other like-minded students from different parts of Ohio who were also passionate about what Family Medicine was and how we could advocate for our fellow students and the profession. I remember being in awe of the experience, breadth of knowledge and professionalism of the attending physicians present for the weekend meetings who took a personal interest in me and my journey through medical school and ultimately residency. As a young osteopathic student sitting in the board room with all of these individuals, I remember thinking that often conversation would center around inspiring Family Medicine interest in the students of the six medical schools, leaving out one, OUCOM. There, I used my voice to advocate for my fellow classmates to bring us into the mix, and today, DOs are essential in the conversation.

Where are you using your voice? We have osteopathic influence on the Relative Value Scale Update Committee (RUC), state medical board, state legislature, and community boards. These are all platforms for us to share the holistic approach to medicine that DOs bring.

As you know, major changes in the health care system, have taken place over the last year, the last two years, the →



A long-standing OOA tradition calls for the outgoing president to gift their successor with headgear. Nicklaus J. Hess, DO (right) presents Douglas W. Harley, DO, with a ballcap following the installation ceremony, April 20, 2024.



last decade. These changes include, but certainly are not limited to the expansion and coverage of telehealth services, ICD-10, electronic health records, and single accreditation. We have seen the decline of solo and independent small group practice, the growth of corporate medicine with more physicians and practices being employed by large systems or even venture capital firms. For many patients, health care has become less affordable and more difficult to access.

One of the most memorable sayings that has stuck with me was to make sure to have a seat at the table or you might find yourself on the menu. This statement has rung true over the years as physicians have experienced changes in scope of practice, interprofessional teams, payment and malpractice reforms, new models of medical school and residency training, preventive and population health with covered lives in risk-management contracts, and the landscape of state and national policies affecting patient care.

Following this continued trend, medicine in the United States still has a lot going on that you can be excited about or angry about, maybe even neutral, but the biggest question is: What are you going to do about it?

I challenge you to join us at the table and make your voice heard. Each of us must commit to doing the right thing every day and remembering that we strive to be the best osteopathic (insert specialty) physician for our patients and community.

There are low level commitment opportunities such as joining workgroups and/or task forces, submitting a resolution for consideration, donating to the Ohio Osteopathic PAC, or sharing your story at the Ohio

Statehouse about how policies affect you and your patients. Simply building relationships with your fellow physicians, legislators, and community organizations allows you to be a resource of relevant medical information that can help guide conversations.

We all can be a strong voice at our hospital or institution of employment advocating for our profession and our patients. Over the years, I have witnessed first-hand the influence osteopathic leadership can have within the hospital culture and the inclusiveness that can come from it. My residency program received Osteopathic Recognition status this year, the first program from our traditional allopathic hospital to join the osteopathic education family. We are seeing increased numbers of DO students in the match, in previously closed residencies or hospital systems, and increasing international recognition. Look how far we have come in the last 125 years!

Stand up, be at the table! **We want to hear your voice, and we want you to be involved on whatever level suits you at this moment in your career.**

I strive daily to give my best to my family, my community, my profession, and my organization. I will represent each and every one of you, no matter what school you hail from, we are all part of the osteopathic family. Especially as we look to the future as Xavier and Duquesne provide additional osteopathic students that will feed into our state.

Thank you and I look forward to this year of working together to continue to advance the osteopathic profession for the state of Ohio and all our communities. Thank you for being a part of the great family of Ohio DOs. ■

Executive INSIGHT

Learning to Adapt: How My Dogs Taught Me to Embrace Change and Uncertainty

By Heidi Weber, MBA, CAE

During the critical years of COVID, while living in Rockville, Maryland, and working for my previous organization, I experienced the profound loss of three beloved dogs. Two of the dogs were elderly, and the third, whom I adopted soon after, tragically passed away a few months later. Like many during the lockdowns and crises, I found myself navigating grief and reflecting on the unique spaces that animals occupy in our lives—spaces filled with loyalty, longevity, and happiness. Grief, as tricky as it is, fosters resilience.

As we approach the seventh month of my tenure as your executive director, I'd like to take a moment and share this about myself. Whether through a love of companion animals, running half marathons (that's another column), or other interests and pursuits, I want to connect with you more personally while acting in my professional capacity.

I'm happy to recount that my dog Ruby Two, who was once [featured in People magazine](#), was grieving and uncertain in her old age when I adopted her. Ruby Two, sweet with people but reactive with other dogs, entered my life quickly after I had lost my other dogs. I poured my grief into making her last years the best they could be. Sadly, she passed away nine months later from pancreatic cancer. A week later, I went back to the North Shore Animal League in Long Island, NY, and adopted Blondie, another elderly dog needing a second chance. Blondie and I celebrated three years together recently. I adopted Remy while still living in Maryland. I'm a two-dog human.

My dogs and I have journeyed from Maryland to Tennessee and now to Columbus. While incredible friends and family fill my life in wonderful ways, these dogs have been my constant



companions. I share my love of rescue dogs and adoption and my personal grief story because these experiences have shaped me into a better executive director. These loyal companions have helped me learn how to more easily embrace change, uncertainty, and grace.

For those of you who have a companion animal, you may understand my experience. I appreciate the photos of your pets that many of you have shared, revealing sides of yourself that others might not see. Whether through our animals, or through other values we might share, I hope we can continue to find ways to connect and understand what unites us. ■



Batman and Robin - Nicklaus J. Hess, DO



Spice, Sugar, and Trixie - Jennifer L. Gwilym, DO



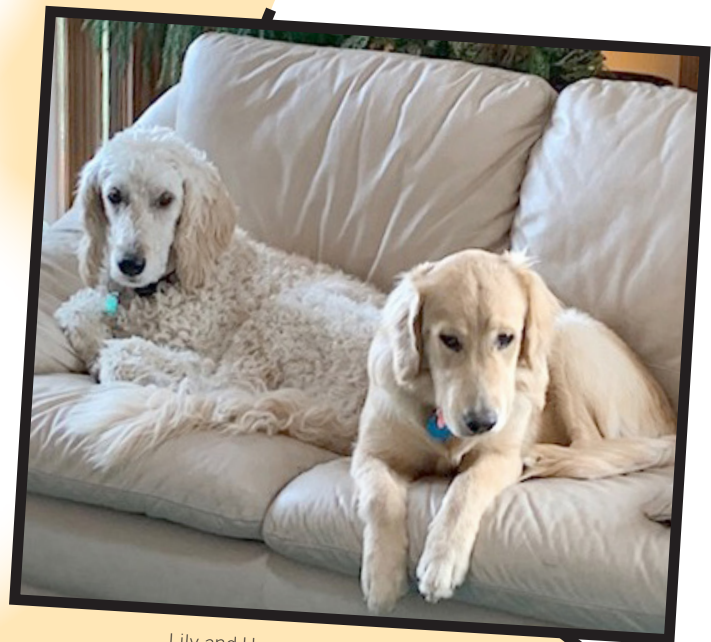
Wayne - William J. Burke, DO

The Power of Pets

The unconditional love of a pet can do more than keep you company. Pet ownership offers a multitude of benefits, particularly in terms of physical and mental health. The companionship of pets can improve mood, reduce stress, and encourage physical activity—all contributing to overall well-being.

According to the Human Animal Bond Research Institute, research shows having a cat can reduce risk of cardiovascular disease and improve heart health, alleviate social isolation and loneliness, and reduce stress. Dog owners, in particular, benefit from increased physical activity due to regular walks and playtime. This consistent exercise can help improve cardiovascular health, manage weight, and maintain joint mobility. The American Heart Association has noted that dog owners tend to be more physically active, which can lead to lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

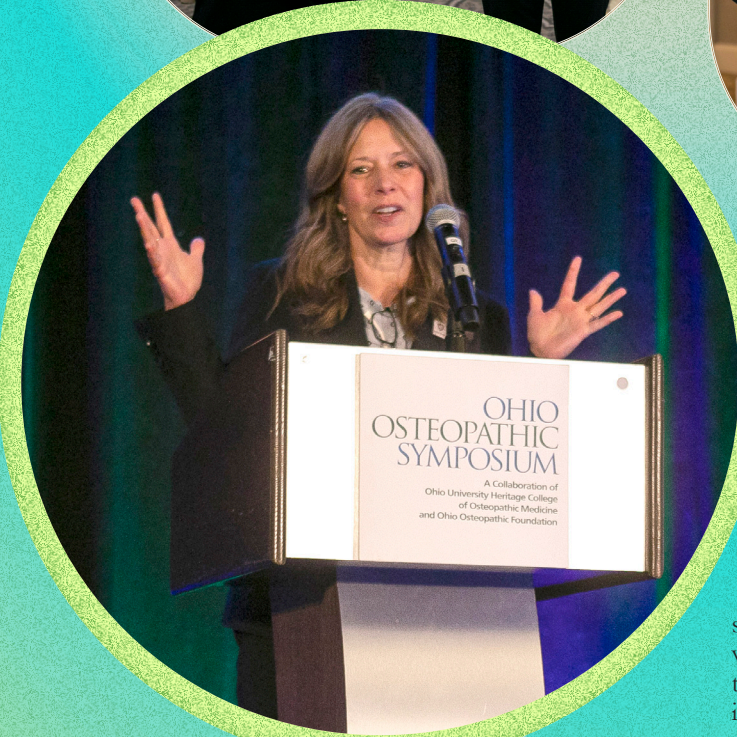
An estimated 66% of US households include a pet. We asked OOA members to share their pet photos with us. ■



Lily and Honey - Charles D. Milligan, DO

2024 SYMPOSIUM

Recap



The 2024 Ohio Osteopathic Symposium, held April 19-21 in Columbus and virtually, was a great way to celebrate Osteopathic Medicine Month, showcase the Ohio profession, network with friends and colleagues, and learn the latest in the art and science of patient care. The event also provided an opportunity to celebrate as the Ohio Osteopathic Association marks 125 years of service.

Attendees gave Keynote Speaker Amy Acton, MD, a standing ovation following her address, which detailed her experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic when she was director of the Ohio Department of Health. “You can’t legislate your way through a problem that complicated, but you can give people the tools...and let them run with it,” she said about her role during the pandemic. “Every leader in whatever position...everyone had to solve problems in ways they never had before. My job was to hold the space and get information to you.”

Dr. Acton, who called her service “the honor of a lifetime,” →





said she is concerned because the country has yet to do a deep dive identifying best practices. She said the country is at risk if a new pandemic playbook is not developed.

Prior to her presentation, she visited with students who were participating in the Research and Scholarly Activity Competition. After her keynote, she talked individually with dozens of attendees and took photos.

National dignitaries also attended the conference, including AOA President Ira P. Monka, DO, of New Jersey, and ACOFP President Brian A. Kessler, DO, of North Carolina.

The program, which received excellent reviews from attendees, included a variety of medical topics to offer 28 hours of AOA-Category 1-A credit.

The Symposium, which started in 2010, is jointly sponsored by the OOA and Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine, with participation from the Osteopathic Heritage Foundations, which observes its 25th anniversary this year.



THANK YOU TO THE SPONSORS AND EXHIBITORS

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- Northwestern Mutual River Tree Wealth Management
- Ohio Professionals Health Program
- OrthoNeuro
- Orthopedic One
- Phathom Pharmaceuticals
- Premier Health
- Qr8 Health
- The Orthopedic Foundation ■

SAVE THE DATE

Ohio Osteopathic
Symposium
April 10-13, 2025

2024

AWARD WINNERS

Osteopathic physicians across Ohio are doing tremendous work for the profession, their patients, and their communities. Those accomplishments were recognized at a special ceremony and evening reception during the Ohio Osteopathic Symposium, April 20. The Ohio Osteopathic Association (OOA), Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine Society of Alumni and Friends (OU-HCOM), and Ohio State Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (Ohio ACOFP) presented their highest honors. ■

OOA Life Members

Richard W. Adams, Jr., DO
David A. Bitonte, DO
Larry D. Buchanan, DO
Carolyn R. Bullock, DO
Gloria P. Catterlin, DO
Deborah L. Cole-Sedivy, DO
Louise A. Doyle, DO
Maureen C. Gallagher, DO
Paul E. Gray, DO
Douglas C. Gula, DO
Keith L. Henson, DO
Joseph M. Kuhn, DO
David R. Lance, DO
Daniel K. Madsen, DO
Andrew H. McLaughlin, DO
James D. McNerney, DO
Gary L. Moorman, DO
Daniel N. Moretta, DO
Judith A. O'Connell, DO
Terry D. Roode, DO
George P. Saridakis, DO
Charles S. Sheldon, DO
R. Alan Spencer, DO
Mark J. Tereletsky, DO
Michael Vacante, DO

OOA AWARDS



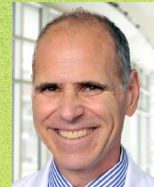
Distinguished Service Award and JO Watson, DO, Memorial Lecture Award
Paul A. Martin, DO
Beaver Creek



Trustees Award
David A. Bitonte, DO
Massillon



Meritorious Service Award
John D. Schriener, PhD
Athens



M. Bridget Wagner, DO, Humanitarian Award
Robert S. Pema, DO
Columbus



George L. Eckert, Jr., DO, Mentor of the Year
Paul M. Levy, DO
Dayton

OHIO ACOFP AWARDS



Family Physician of the Year
Cheryl A. Hammes, DO
Cleveland



Distinguished Service Award
Melinda E. Ford, DO
Athens



Young Family Physician of the Year
Shandra C. Basil, DO
Lockbourne



Family Medicine Resident of the Year
Frances "Frankie" Kokos, DO
Cleveland Clinic Akron General

OU-HCOM AWARDS



Medal of Merit
Ralph Crew, DO
Michigan



Distinguished Service Award
Douglas W. Harley, DO
Akron



Outstanding Alumnus
Sarah Ondrejka, DO
Cleveland



Honorary Alumnus
Laura (Whitt) Yamarick
Columbus



Recent Graduate Award
Stephanie Deuley, DO
Cleveland



Members of the Columbus Osteopathic Association participated in the OOA House of Delegates, April 19, 2024, including (l-r) Jason R. Jackson, DO; Andrew P. Eilerman, DO; Tom Roach, DO; Bailey Hall, OMS; Charles R. Fisher, DO.

OOA House of Delegates Sets Policy

Physicians and students from across the state convened, April 19, to elect officers, consider resolutions, and adopt new policy positions at the annual House of Delegates meeting held in Columbus in conjunction with the Ohio Osteopathic Symposium. Speaker of the House David A. Bitonte, DO, presided over the meeting. At the conclusion, he retired as Speaker, a position he held since 2019.

The elected slate of officers includes President-Elect Edward E. Hosbach II, DO; Vice President Andrew P. Eilerman, DO; Treasurer Katherine H. Eilenfeld, DO; Speaker of the House Michael E. Dietz, DO; and Vice Speaker of the House Nathan P. Samsa, DO. President Douglas W. Harley, DO, and Immediate Past President Nicklaus J. Hess, DO, also serve on the Executive Committee.

Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws were approved and adopted, as were updated guidelines for the Ohio delegation to the AOA House of Delegates. In addition, delegates adopted seven new policy statements regarding:

- Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP), Obstructive Sleep Apnea

- Attending and Faculty Physician Participation in Ohio Osteopathic Symposium Poster Presentation
- Recognizing Breast Implant Illness and Promoting Informed Consent for Breast Implant Procedures
- Against the Use of High Fructose Corn Syrup
- Access to Kidney Replacement Therapy for Undocumented Immigrants with Kidney Failure
- Support of the Physical Exam in Education and Practice
- Support for the Creation of Specialty and Sub-Specialty Osteopathic Recognition Training Exams

As part of a five-year review, delegates reaffirmed position statements on a variety of topics. Two resolutions were referred back to the author/district. Five resolutions



OOA Executive Director Heidi Weber, MBA, greets physicians and students at the OOA House of Delegates, April 19, 2024.

were forwarded to the American Osteopathic Association House of Delegates.

Delegates also heard an advocacy report from OOA Lobbyist Danny Hurley; an OOPAC update from Jennifer L. Gwilym, DO; and a State of the State from Dr. Hess, who concluded his one-year term. ■

THROUGH IT ALL

OOA MEMBER WRITES HIS MEMOIR

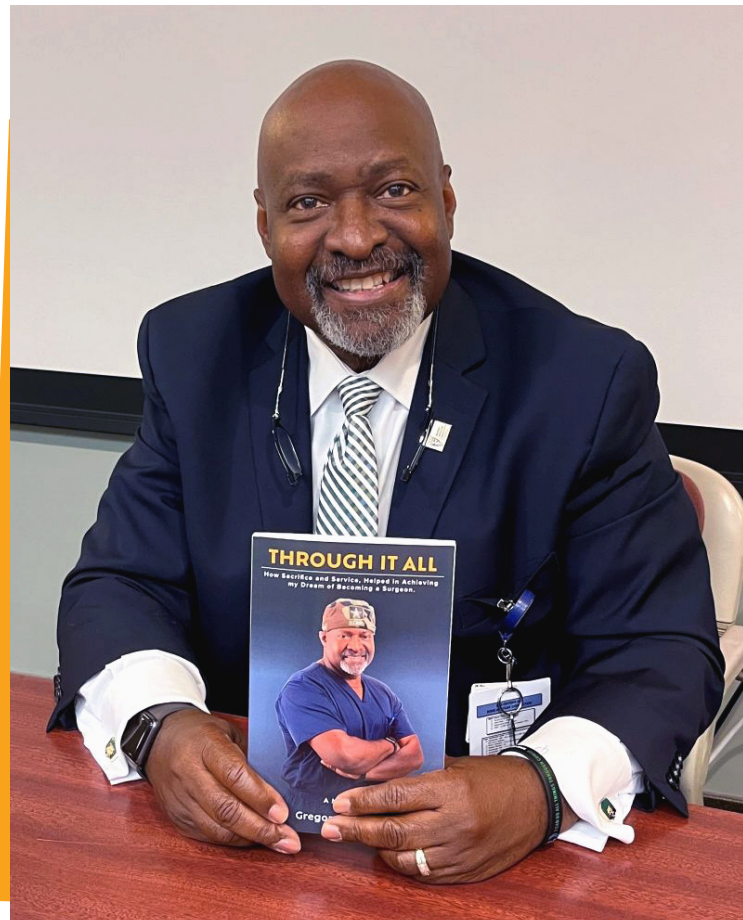
A board-certified orthopedic surgeon, chair of the department of surgery and Orthopedic Surgery Program Director at Western Reserve Hospital, clinical associate professor at OU-HCOM, Ohio University Foundation and Ohio Osteopathic Association trustee, and Retired Lieutenant Colonel in the Ohio National Guard and the United States Army Reserves, Gregory Hill, DO, can now add author to his resume.

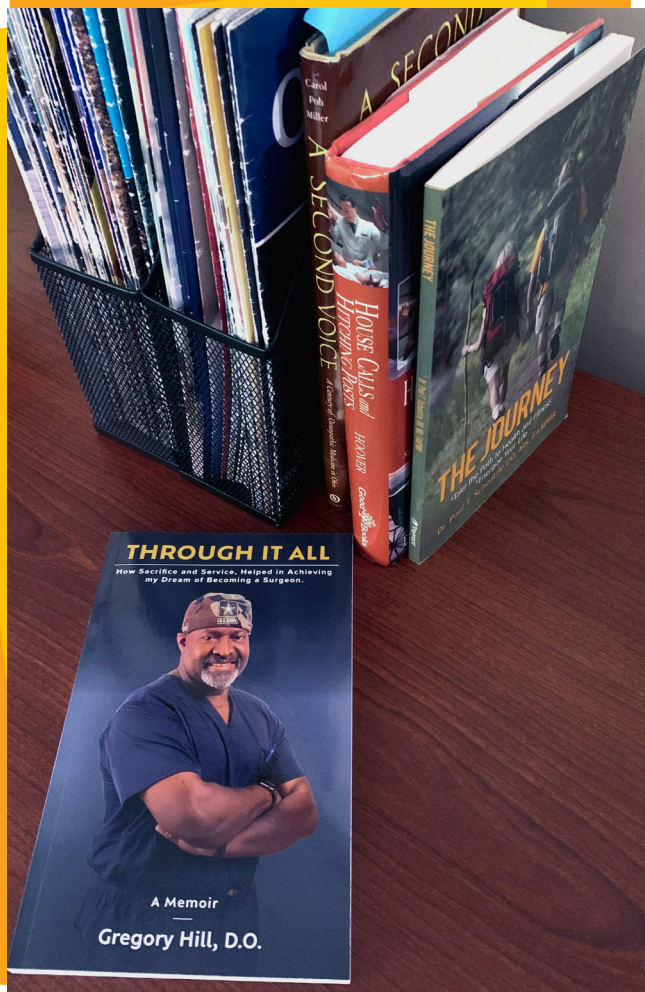
Through It All: How Sacrifice and Service Helped in Achieving My Dream of Becoming a Surgeon is a story of perseverance, faith, and dedication. Dr. Hill, who grew up in Akron, shares the life challenges, financial difficulties, and other obstacles he overcame in his journey to becoming a surgeon. His story also highlights the importance of role models in shaping the future of young, aspiring individuals.

The book is sure to encourage and inspire potential medical students and others to pursue excellence and achieve their dreams. Below is a Q&A with Dr. Hill.

Share the inspiration behind your book and what motivated you to write it?

In the fall of 2022, I had the opportunity to participate in a community healthcare project involving public high school students. The project was a collaboration between Northeastern Ohio Medical University, Summa Health System, Western Reserve Hospital, and Black Men in White Coats. Black Men in White Coats, an organization founded by Dr. Dale Okorodudu, aimed to show young people that there are many black doctors in white coats. I was one of the physicians invited to participate in the interactive day with the students. Dr. Dale later reached out to me and asked if I had ever considered writing a book and that started my book writing journey. I felt my story was interesting, and others needed to hear it. From that point, I began to write *Through It All*. →





What do you hope readers will gain from your story, especially those in the medical field?

I hope young people and others will realize from my story that financial, academic, and familial challenges may surface along their journey, but perseverance, resilience, faith, and mentoring are essential to reaching one’s dreams. Also, the aforementioned challenges, coupled with the insurmountable workload, demanding hours, and the stress of matching one’s career choice, can be daunting.

Your memoir highlights the importance of a strong support system. Mentorship is an important component of osteopathic medicine. Who have been some of your mentors?

A couple of mentors come to mind: Frank C. Forshew was a hand surgeon at Akron City Hospital while I was in college and working at Akron City Hospital as a surgical technician. I had the opportunity to work privately for him prior to being accepted into medical school. He was able to share valuable information about his journey of becoming a hand surgeon as well as the challenges of attending medical school. The other mentor who comes to mind is Dr. Milton Hamblin, a retired obstetrician and gynecologist from Akron. Dr. Hamblin was my mother’s doctor and would counsel me on which classes to take and also shared insight when it was time to apply to medical schools.

Do you have any advice for medical students seeking a mentor or building their support system?

My advice for medical students is to seek out a mentor as early as possible to determine if they’ve made the right career choice and what obstacles may lie ahead. Shadowing in a medical office, emergency room, or operating room may also provide real-world experiences for students preparing for medical school. Remember that mentors can come from a variety of professions. For example, a college professor or advisor may be able to provide wise counsel regarding one’s career choice and academic progress.

How has the response been from your colleagues and patients regarding your book?

The response from my colleagues and patients has been very positive. Many of my colleagues and quite a number of my patients have purchased my book and actually bring the book to my office to have their copy signed. Our CEO and President, Dr. Robert Kent, also submitted my name to the Midwest Optum CEO, Dr. Daniel Castillo, who invited me to share information about my book in the Midwest Town Hall meeting. Also, I’m proud to say Western Reserve Hospital sponsored my book signing on August 16, 2024.

You have a busy surgical practice, are involved in your community, and serve the osteopathic profession in many ways. How did you find time to write?

Once I committed to writing the book, I had to create time in my schedule to ensure steady progress. One way I stayed on schedule was to do a weekly check-in with my book coach, Dr. Dale, to provide word counts and share any challenges I had experienced. Considering my work schedule, the best time to write was the weekend.

Can you describe your writing routine or process? Do you have any specific rituals or habits that help you write?

Initially, I created an outline of my journey and began to work to find the optimal days when I could maximize my thoughts and writing. Also, on occasion, I dictated, which was a little easier than sitting down at the computer. On Fridays, my wife and I normally had dinner, and later at night, I would write for several hours, often into the wee hours of the morning. Saturdays and Sunday evenings were also good times to really gain traction.

You write about your own story. Was there anything surprising that you discovered about yourself during the writing process?

Once I committed to writing the book, I relied on commitment, perseverance, and open-mindedness to make steady progress in completing the book. In retrospect, life’s negative experiences and challenges gave me the motivation to enter the uncharted waters of writing a book.

What has been the most rewarding aspect of publishing your first book?

The most rewarding aspect of the book has been the positive response of friends in person, on social media, and colleagues at the hospital. We had our first book signing on June 30 at a local restaurant and the response in sales and attendance was incredible. ■



OOA ADVOCACY UPDATE

135th General Assembly Takes Summer Recess After Flurry of Activity

by Danny Hurley, Capitol Consulting Group

State lawmakers wrapped up their spring work period and headed out on the campaign trail following action on a number of notable pieces of legislation. Barring an emergency, the General Assembly will not return to action until after the November Election when lawmakers will close out the current legislative term with a lame duck session. Any bills not enacted before the end of the year will need to be reintroduced and restart the legislative process in the 136th General Assembly.

The most significant bill passed before the recess was House Bill 2, sponsored by State Representatives Al Cutrona (R-Canfield) and Terrence Upchurch (D-Cleveland). HB 2 was the vehicle for the State Capital Budget as well as appropriations for the One Time Strategic Community Investment Fund (OTSCIF) created in HB 33 (State Operating Budget) last year. HB 2 will result in nearly \$1 billion in spending on community projects including cultural facilities (museums, theaters, zoos), parks and recreational trails, health care facilities, and other public or nonprofit assets. Governor DeWine signed HB 2 on June 30 and the measure took effect immediately.

The Governor also enacted a handful of health care bills including House Bill 47, sponsored by State Representatives Adam Bird (R-Cincinnati) and Richard Brown (D-Canal Winchester). HB 47 is an OOA-supported bill to require schools and public recreation facilities to have AEDs on site and to provide training to staff on their use. Many schools and public libraries already have AEDs on site. The Governor also signed Senate Bill 28; sponsored by State Senator Kristina Roegner (R-Hudson), so Ohio can enter the Interstate Physician Assistant Licensure Compact. Senator Roegner has sponsored several compact bills in recent years, including SB 6 (134th General Assembly), which entered Ohio into the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact.

Lastly, the DeWine Administration carefully reviewed and then signed Senate Bill 144, which notably expands the scope of practice for pharmacists, pharmacy techs and pharmacy interns →

related to the administration of vaccines to children. Sponsored by State Senator Mark Romanchuk (R-Ontario), SB 144 seeks to codify in the Ohio Revised Code authority granted to pharmacy-based providers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The new law allows pharmacists and other staff to administer any ACIP-recommended vaccine to a child as young as five. Previous law permitted this for children 13 and older. The House Health Provider Services Committee added a handful of amendments to SB 144, including language that sunsets the Ohio Medical Quality Foundation (OMQF)—which the Governor vetoed. OOA opposed SB 144 and will continue to work with allies to promote comprehensive primary care for all Ohio patients.

DeWine’s line-item veto noted dissolving the OMQF was “not in the best interest of Ohioans.” Longtime Statehouse observers may recall the OOA, along with Ohio State Medical Association and Ohio Hospital Association, helped create the foundation in the 1990s. It was funded from unclaimed funds in Ohio’s Joint Underwriting Association and Stabilization Reserve Fund, established in 1975 by state legislators in response to the medical liability insurance crisis at that time. The nonprofit foundation, overseen by a 13-member board of trustees, is charged with issuing grants to fund programs to enhance medical education, quality assurance in hospitals, and more.

Following the November Election, lawmakers will return to action for a lame duck session that often features more than a few surprises. There are several health care bills that could reach the Governor’s desk. They are as follows:

House Bill 24: Sponsored by State Representative Andrea White (R-Kettering), this legislation requires health plans and Medicaid to cover biomarker testing. HB 24 passed the Ohio House of Representatives on a bipartisan vote and will likely be referred to the Senate Insurance Committee for further consideration.

House Bill 49: Sponsored by State Representatives Tim Barhorst (R-Urbana) and Ron Ferguson (R-Wintersville), HB 49 creates a parallel state law to current federal regulations regarding hospital price transparency. The bill could see consideration by Conference Committee later this year after the House voted not to concur to Senate changes made earlier this year.

House Bill 73: Sponsored by State Representatives Jennifer Gross (R-West Chester) and Mike Loychik (R-Cortland), this legislation expands current protections for off-label prescribing by physicians. The bill has received pushback from hospitals and pharmacists who feel the bill oversteps their authority and creates legal concerns. The bill is backed by anti-vaccine groups, though there is intense pressure on the Ohio Senate Health Committee to vote the measure out later this year.

Hearing Aid Coverage: A pair of bills that have both cleared the Ohio House and are pending in Senate Committees could ease the cost of hearing aids for children. House Bill 152, sponsored by State Representatives Bob Young (R-Green) and Casey Weinstein (D-Hudson) would require health plans to cover hearing aids (up to \$2,500) and any related services for children under age 21. HB 152 passed the Ohio House of Representatives more than a year ago and is held up in the Senate Insurance Committee. Recently, the House Finance Committee amended HB 152 into House Bill 7, the *Strong Foundations Act*. Sponsored by State Representatives Andrea White (R-Kettering) and Latyna Humphrey (D-Columbus), HB 7 includes a number of provisions aimed at addressing infant mortality and early childhood development; the bill cleared the Ohio House and is likely to see movement in the Ohio Senate Finance Committee.

Senate Bill 60: Sponsored by State Senator Theresa Gavarone (R-Bowling Green), SB 60 would establish a new provider license for certified mental health assistants. Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) would establish the education curriculum for these providers. SB 60 requires that certified mental health assistants have a supervisory relationship with a physician, however the bill still faces opposition from the Ohio Psychiatric Physicians Association. SB 60 could see movement in the House, where a companion measure (HB 97) has already received hearings.

OOA is actively monitoring and lobbying on several other pieces of legislation and will provide updates as needed. Health care policy remains a top issue at the Ohio Statehouse, and we routinely engage in more than 50 pieces of legislation in each General Assembly. ■



The Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine held graduation, Saturday, May 11, at the Athens campus for the Class of 2024.

Record Number of DOs Started Residency this Summer

As a result of the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP), a record-high 8,117 osteopathic medical students were accepted into residency positions for 2024, representing a 99% placement rate for graduating seniors. The 2024 graduates started medical school during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The comprehensive placement numbers reflect the variety of paths available for residency placement. While the NRMP's Main Residency Match saw a record number of DOs matching during Match Week in March, other opportunities for students to place included the Military Match, the San Francisco and Urology matches and the NRMP's Supplemental Offer and Assistance Program.

A record 8,033 osteopathic medical students participated during Match Week, with 8,195 seeking placement through all avenues.

Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine (HCOM) enjoyed similar success, with a 99% match rate. Of those, 69% matched in Ohio, and 47% matched in a primary care specialty. One-third of the students matched in primary care in

Ohio.

"As a Family Medicine residency program director, I've seen the dedication and passion of our osteopathic medical students firsthand," said OOA President Douglas W. Harley, DO. "So, I'm not surprised they are so highly sought after by residency training programs in all specialties. HCOM's impressive match rate also underscores the value of osteopathic medicine's holistic approach and the caliber of OU's graduates."

In total, the 2024 NRMP match included 6,395 certified programs offering 41,503 PGY-1 and PGY-2 training positions, the largest number in the NRMP's 72-year history. Offerings included 125 more programs and 1,128 more positions than the 2023 main residency match.

According to a whitepaper published by the NRMP, DO seniors had the highest placement rate of all applicant types last year.

This year was the fifth match to take place since the transition to the single graduate medical education accreditation system was fully implemented. ■



A.T. Still fit for life

FUN RUN 2024

Advocates for the American Osteopathic Association

TEAM OOA

OHIO OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION

Walk or Run with TEAM OOA!

Each year at OMED, the Advocates for the American Osteopathic Association host the AT Still Fit for Life Fun Run, a timed 5K run/walk race. The live event is Sunday, September 22, in San Antonio, but you can participate on TEAM OOA whether or not you attend OMED.

TEAM OOA members are invited to walk or run at OMED or any time on their own during the September 20-22 weekend. You get some exercise and enjoy the fall weather while supporting the osteopathic profession with your registration fee. That's a win!

Entry fee is \$35. [REGISTER HERE](#) and be sure to select TEAM OOA in the dropdown box.

\$125 FOR THE 125TH

The OOA has launched *\$125 for the 125th*, a fundraising campaign to celebrate 125 years of dedicated service to promote and advance Ohio DOs and the osteopathic profession.

Your donation to the Ohio Osteopathic Foundation, the OOA's charitable arm, will support the profession through education and outreach, leadership development, and community health initiatives. Many of the current projects focus on the future of the profession, specifically students at Ohio University Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Over the years, the OOF has donated more than \$2 million to support the development of HCOM through capital improvements and grants to strengthen osteopathic education and research. This includes a \$200,000 gift from the Warren General Hospital Fund for the naming of the OMT suite at HCOM's Cleveland campus and sponsorship of the Student Government Association office at HCOM's newest medical education building in Athens, Heritage Hall.

Your contribution has the power to strengthen Ohio's osteopathic roots and grow the profession for generations to come. Make your tax-deductible donation at OhioDO.org/OOF. ■



