



GEORGIA OSTEOPATHIC
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
— 1902 —

GOMA News & Updates

Volume 47, December 2025

GOMA's 2025 Annual Business Meeting was held Virtually

GOMA's 2025 Annual Business Meeting was held virtually on Zoom on Monday, November 17th at 7 PM. After a quorum was confirmed, outgoing President Gregory E. Harris, DO welcomed the attendees, and proceeded to swear in his successor William "Bill" Lagaly, DO. After GOMA Nominating Chair Sonbol Shaheed-Salles, DO presented the slate of nominees and nominations from the floor were voted on, the new Executive Board and Delegates to the AOA House of Delegates were sworn in to office by President Bill Lagaly, DO.

Membership Report:

152 (On 11/18/24: 163) Paying Members

112 (118) Active Physician Members

10 (11) Retired Members

6 (7) Out of State Members

16 (18) Resident/Intern Members
3 (4) Military or Public Health Members
5 (5) Life Members
122 (90) Students

Financial Report as of October 31st showed: Total Bank Accounts \$135,961.03 with revenue from 2025 memberships at \$36,265 (down 22% from last year) and revenue from 2025 two Virtual CME events at \$21,611 (down 35% from last year). Expenditures this past year totaling \$54,978 (no change from last year).

Reports from the AOA House of Delegates meeting in July by Christian Geltz, DO as well as an Advocacy Report by Karen Turner, DO who highlighted our work with the Primary Care Physicians Coalition (PCPC) that has resulted in bringing Medicaid reimbursement up to 95% of Medicare reimbursement. GOMA will be hosting the Day at the Capital on February 19, 2026 which is a great event to influence laws that impact our medical practices.

GOMA President William Lagaly, DO said:

“Thank you Dr. Gregory Harris. I appreciate all the work you have done over the past year as GOMA President. We do appreciate all that you have accomplished for the organization over the year. For those of you who remember, there was a retreat a year and a half ago, and we came up with several strategic goals. I appreciate you getting started on that and heading us in the right direction.”

“My job, as I see it, for the next year is to guide forward the things that we already established in our retreat a year and a half ago. The goals that we already set – some short-term, some long-term – along with advocacy which is well established. I think letting our new and prospective members as well as our current members know these things that you are all doing and why they need to be members.”



2025-2026 Officers to the Executive Board and Districts

President: William Lagaly, DO (pictured above)

President-Elect: L. Michael Waters, DO

Vice President: Bridgett Bailey, DO

Secretary-Treasurer: Naveen Raj, DO

Immediate Past President: Gregory E. Harris, DO, FACOI

District I

President: Lucie Mitchell, DO

Secretary/Treasurer: Sarah Polow, DO

District II

President: Michael Mangonon, DO

Secretary/Treasurer: William Bostock, DO

District III

President: Matthew Shelnutt, DO

Secretary/Treasurer: Robyn Long, DO

District IV

President: Karen Turner, DO

Secretary/Treasurer: Melissa Broadman, DO

New Physician in Practice Representative: Brittany Woods, DO

Resident Representative: Jordan Bradshaw, DO

PCOM South Georgia Representative: Mark Shearer, OMS-II

PCOM Georgia Representative: J'Nae Taylor, OMS-II

2026 GEORGIA DELEGATION TO THE AOA HOUSE OF
DELEGATES

Christian Geltz, DO, Sr. Delegate

Karen Turner, DO

Sonbol Shahid-Salles, DO, MPH

Gregory Harris, DO, FACOI

William Bostock, DO

L. Michael Waters, DO



AOA is Busy Working for the

Osteopathic Professionals

As we close out the year, the AOA remains fully engaged in advancing policies that protect osteopathic physicians, strengthen the workforce, and improve patient access to care. From recent advocacy efforts on Capitol Hill to key federal and state policy developments, your voice continues to make a meaningful difference in shaping the future of healthcare.

On December 2–3, the AOA hosted affiliate leaders and national advocates in Washington, DC, for a two-day policy and advocacy engagement program that included a leadership fly-in and a Bureau on Federal Health Programs (BFHP) meeting. During the Fly-In on December 2, osteopathic physicians and affiliate leaders from 9 states met with congressional offices to advocate on three urgent priorities:

- Multi-year funding and increased support for the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) program,
- Permanent extension of Medicare telehealth flexibilities through the CONNECT for Health Act (H.R. 4206 / S. 1261), and
- Repeal of the CMS WISeR prior authorization model through the Seniors Deserve SMARTER Care Act (H.R. 5940).

These conversations were critical to highlight the role osteopathic physicians play in underserved communities and the need for stable policy solutions that protect patient access to care – especially as osteopathic physicians once again face a looming government shutdown should Congress not act before January 30, 2026. The following day, on Wednesday, December 3, the BFHP convened at the U.S. Capitol for a wide-ranging policy agenda. The Bureau received updates from AOA leadership and engaged with national stakeholders on telehealth, liability reform, artificial intelligence in care delivery, physician payment, and Congressional priorities. An advocacy update from AOA leadership closed the morning session before members moved into executive discussions. The BFHP is the AOA's primary forum where physician leaders, policy experts, and affiliate representatives align federal advocacy priorities, develop policy recommendations for the AOA House of Delegates, and help shape the profession's strategy on issues that impact DOs and their

patients. The two-day event strengthened the osteopathic profession's unified voice in Washington and ensured policymakers understand the workforce, access, and care delivery issues facing DOs and the communities they serve. The AOA will continue to mobilize our advocates to make clear that these challenges cannot be ignored and demand action.

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) filed a lawsuit to protect fair opportunities for physicians and residents. [Read about it here.](#)

An on-demand AOA webinar will outline what to expect from the 2026 CMS Physician Fee Schedule including updates to the Medicare conversion factor, telehealth policies, chronic care payment and key changes to the Quality Payment Program. AOA experts Linda Delo, DO, and Gabriel Miller, AOA Senior Director of Regulatory Affairs, will review the finalized policies and their impact on billing, coding and patient care. The webinar is free for AOA members. Registration is open now, and the recording will be available on December 16. [Learn more and register now.](#)

The AOA challenging American Board of Internal Medicine's policy that limits opportunities for osteopathic physicians. "We're trying to get osteopathic physicians in a position where they can help train the next generation of physicians and instill our osteopathic principles and practices by taking osteopathic boards to fulfill their training," AOA President Robert G.G. Piccinini, DO, D.FACN said. "The policy diminishes the osteopathic perspective in graduate medical education." [Read more about the ABIM challenge.](#)

Registration for DO Day on Capitol Hill Is Now Open!

The AOA is excited to announce that registration is officially open for DO Day on Capitol Hill, the premier advocacy event for the osteopathic profession. Each year, thousands of osteopathic physicians and students come together in Washington, DC, to meet directly with lawmakers, elevate the issues that matter most to our profession, and strengthen our collective voice in federal health policy. Whether you're a seasoned advocate or joining for the first time, DO Day offers the training, access, and inspiration to make a

real impact. Be sure to register early to secure your spot and take part in this powerful demonstration of osteopathic unity and leadership [at this link](#).

- Virtual Event: March 21–22, 2026
 - In-Person Meetings in Washington, DC: March 25–26, 2026
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PCOM South Georgia Names Robert Lloyd, DO, Dean of Osteopathic Medicine Program

After six months of service as interim dean, Robert Lloyd, DO '91, FACOS, has been appointed dean of the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) program at PCOM South Georgia.

Since joining the College in 2020, Dr. Lloyd has been instrumental in providing experienced leadership and continuity, guiding both preclinical and clinical education that has strengthened the campus' momentum and student success.

“This is a pivotal time for our campus, with a growing class size and the continuing evolution of osteopathic medical education,” said Dr. Lloyd. “I look forward to the continued collaboration with students, faculty and staff to foster stability, ensure innovation in our curriculum, and further our commitment to serving underserved communities.”

A 1991 graduate of PCOM (Philadelphia), Dr. Lloyd also completed his general surgery residency at the College in 1996. Following his training, he practiced as a general surgeon in rural East Tennessee for more than two decades, offering comprehensive surgical care across gastrointestinal, laparoscopic and endoscopic procedures. His professional experience has instilled a deep understanding of the needs of rural and underserved communities—an emphasis he brings to his leadership role in South Georgia.

[Read the full](#)



Monica Newton, DO is the new President of the Georgia Academy of Family Physicians

Exciting news! Monica Quinn Newton, DO, founding program director of the Family Medicine residency program at Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC), is the new President of the Georgia Academy of Family Physicians (GAFP)!

“To be selected as president of the GAFP is a great honor,” said Dr. Newton. “The dedication of the academy to the health of Georgians has been critical in advancing the role that family medicine physicians play throughout the state. I look forward to doing everything I can to strengthen the collaboration and efforts of the academy.”

Dr. Newton’s appointment reflects her longstanding dedication to medical education and community health. As a leader in family medicine, she has played a pivotal role in shaping the next generation of physicians through her work at NGMC and her involvement with GAFP.

Dr. Newton began her medical journey at Auburn University undergraduate and her osteopathic medical degree from Midwestern University in Chicago in 1997, where she served as national president of the Student Osteopathic Medical Association. She completed her Family Medicine residency at the University of Alabama at Birmingham in 2000, earning a Master of Public Health in International Health simultaneously.

Driven by a commitment to underserved communities, Dr. Newton taught at UAB-Selma while completing fellowships in obstetrics and underserved medicine. She founded the award-winning “Family Doc in a Bus” free clinic, supported by grants from the Alabama Department of Public Health and FEMA. Her leadership extended to public service as a Selma City Council member and regional vice president of the Alabama Academy of Family Physicians.

After 11 years as an associate professor, Dr. Newton joined the Northeast Georgia Physicians Group in Gainesville, Georgia. In 2019, she was named founding program director of the Family

Medicine residency program NGMC, which is now home to 36 residents.



DOctors in the Making — PCOM Georgia is Celebrating 20 Years in Suwanee

For two decades, PCOM Georgia has been dedicated to training compassionate, community-focused healthcare professionals through an osteopathic approach that treats the whole person. Dean and Chief Academic Officer of Osteopathic Medicine, Andrea Mann, DO, shared in a recent feature by Suwanee Magazine, “We’d love for more people to know that we’re here... Our mission is to recruit from Georgia, train in Georgia, and keep in Georgia to help alleviate the healthcare shortage in our state.”

[Read more about our impact on the community and the future of healthcare in Georgia.](#)



Michael Briones, DO Co-authors Research on Treatment for New Pediatric ITP Cases in JAMA

The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) from November 25, 2025 included clinical research (PINES trial) to determine if the proportion of patients with a platelet response is significantly greater in patients with newly diagnosed immune thrombocytopenia (ITP) treated with eltrombopag (Promacta) than in those treated with standard therapy. Michael Briones, DO, a pediatric hematologist/oncologist at Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, was one of the thirty nine nationwide authors of the study. Six of the authors were osteopathic physicians. An editorial in this issue of JAMA pointed out that most pediatric ITP cases will resolve spontaneously and that severe bleeding is rare even when severe thrombocytopenia occurs. After years of clinical trials, 3 thrombopoietin receptor agonists (eltrombopag/Promacta; avatrombopag/Doptelet; romiplostim/Nplate) are approved by the US FDA for childhood ITP, but reserved for persistent or chronic disease when cumulative bleeding risk and long-term quality-of-life imitations tilt the balance toward pharmacotherapy. Although there was no difference in high bleeding scores, fewer patients in the eltrompag group required rescue therapy (17% [13/78] vs 38% [15/39] in the standard therapy group). The current first-line options for new-onset ITP, which have remained unchanged for decades (corticosteroids, intravenous immunoglobulins, and less commonly anti-D immunoglobulin) are only temporizing, not universally effective, and do not influence ITP resolution. Eltrombopag, an oral, once-daily thrombopoietin receptor

agonist) can now be considered as an option for children who are likely to benefit from therapy.

Dr. Briones graduated with his D.O. degree in 1996 from the Des Moines University Osteopathic Medical Center and then completed his pediatrics residency as well as the pediatric hematology/oncology fellowship at Emory University School of Medicine. He is an associate professor in the Department of Pediatrics at Emory University School of Medicine. Dr. Briones also serves as program director of the Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Fellowship Program at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. He is a member of the Discovery and Developmental Therapeutics Research Program at Winship Cancer Institute.



Emily Reagin (DO '27) Recognized as Medical Student of the Year by Colquitt County Medical Society

The Colquitt County Medical Society (CCMS) recently recognized outstanding medical professionals during its annual awards ceremony, held at Colquitt Regional Health System's Ameris Bank Medical Education Building. The event brought together physicians,

residents, medical students, and health system leaders to honor individuals whose contributions reflect excellence in clinical care, service, and commitment to the community.

Dr. Gary Swartzentruber presented the Medical Student of the Year Award to Ms. Emily Kate Reagin, a third-year student at PCOM South Georgia. Selected by members of the Colquitt County Medical Association, the award honors a medical student who has demonstrated exceptional potential during clinical rotations. Student doctor Reagin, a graduate of Valdosta High School and the University of Georgia, has completed rotations in both inpatient and outpatient settings, earning outstanding evaluations for her clinical ability, professionalism, and patient interactions. Several physicians noted that her name repeatedly rose to the top during committee discussions. Patient feedback consistently reflected appreciation for her compassion and attentiveness.

Student doctor Reagin's award presentation included comments from physicians who supervised her training. During her OB/GYN rotation, Dr. York shared that Ms. Reagin "experienced fetal loss and the joys of bringing a newborn into the world. Her passion for medicine has branched into a strong desire for women's health. She will continue to perform well if she maintains the same standards both personally, professionally, and academically that she has built in the start of this clinical journey." On her hospitalist medicine rotation, Dr. Cardwell remarked that she "always did what was asked of her and did it well."

Student doctor Reagin said, "Love being on rotations at CRMC!"

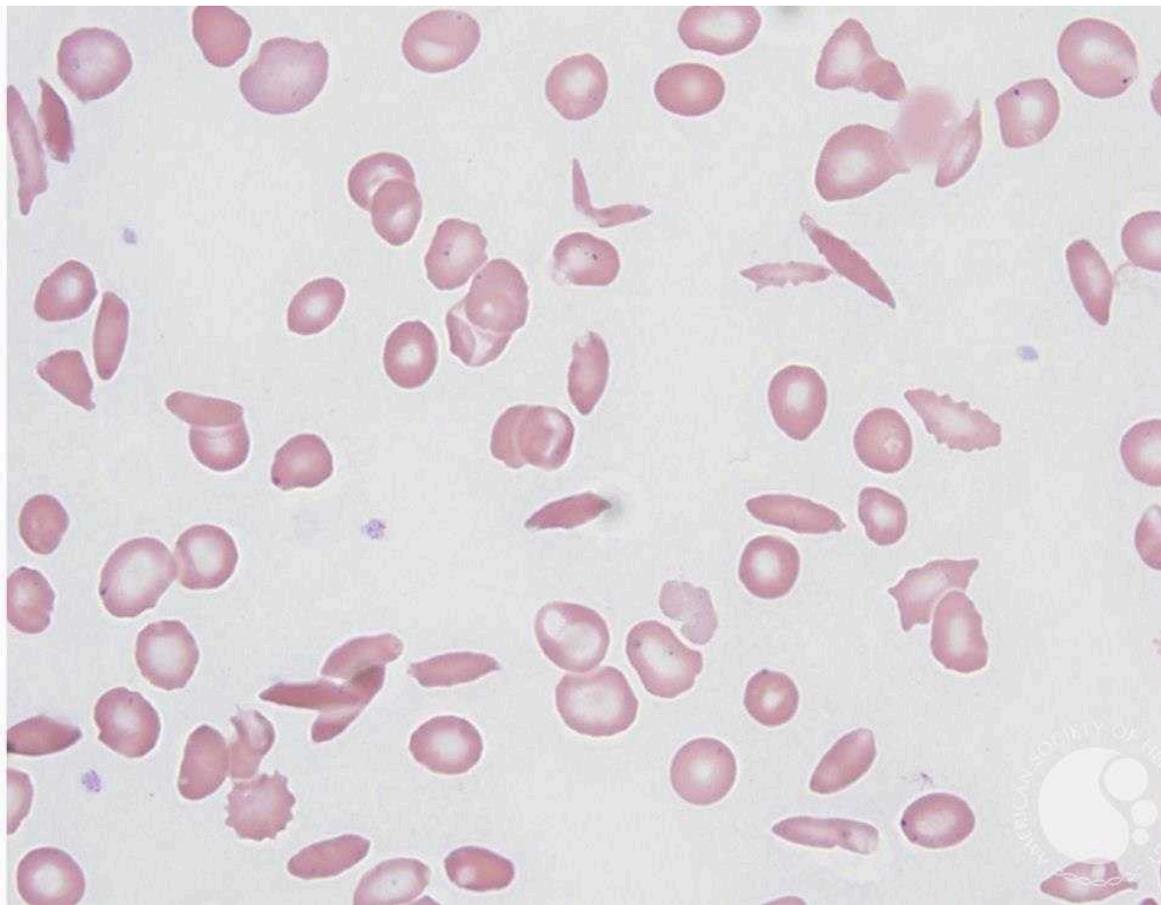
[Read more about the recognition.](#)



A Ray of Prevention: How One Student Is Promoting Sun Safety in Her Community

“We have hand sanitizer dispensers everywhere and sunscreen is just as important, so I knew I wanted to get involved somehow.”

With a keen interest in dermatology, and after learning about national non-profit IMPACT Melanoma’s sunscreen dispenser initiative, Darya Khani (DO ’26) reached out to IMPACT Melanoma and pitched the idea of bringing a sunscreen dispenser to Moultrie and Colquitt Regional Medical Center. [Read more here.](#)



Contraceptive Options for Sickle Cell Disease Patients Survey

Ms. India Stevenson is a Public Health Program Associate who is working on an Emory University study related to contraception for women with sickle cell disease. She is hoping to recruit clinicians to participate in an interview for the Reproductive Health of Young Adult Women Who have Sickle Cell Disease Study (SCARF 2.0). The purpose of the SCARF 2.0 study is to learn what clinicians consider when discussing contraceptive options with patients who have sickle cell disease. Participation for eligible clinicians involves a 45 – 60 minute interview, and participants will receive a \$50 gift card for their time. [More information about the study as well as a form to see if you are eligible to participate can be found here.](#)



The Best Holiday Gifts for DOs and Osteopathic Medical Students in 2025

The Hoperan Heated Stadium Seat (\$80) is a great cozy gift for parents. It works great whether you are camping, glamping or going to a football game or concert. This backpack-like heated stadium seat keeps your back and bottom warm, and keeps your snacks and drinks at hand.

Warmies Fully Microwavable Luxury Cozy Slippers (\$36) is a great cozy gift for her. All you have to do is toss them in the microwave then slip them on.

Wine Enthusiast VinoView 24" Smart Wi-Fi Undercounter Wine Cellar Panel Ready (\$1599) is great for those who love their wine collection. The patented VinoView™ matrix shelves displays bottles label-forward; accommodates up to 46 standard Bordeaux bottles, and has built-in Wi-Fi allowing you to manage your cellar from your smartphone using the free Wine Enthusiast Smart Cellar Remote App. The sleek undercounter cooler with panel-ready front door allows you install your own custom-made panels and handle (both not included) to match your kitchen cabinet. Adjustable temperature range for storing and serving red and white wines: 40 - 72°F. Designed for built-in or freestanding applications

The Popcorn Bowl with Kernel Sifter (\$50) keeps rogue kernels from ruining your batch of popcorn with this innovative bowl. The clever, colander-inspired bottom filters out all the kernels that just couldn't get their act together. A secret compartment catches the kernels for convenient disposal— just lift out the removable filtering disk. Made from durable, twice-fired stoneware (heavy enough to prevent accidental spills) and glazed. The Popcorn Bowl is for serving, not popping. Microwave safe. Hand wash.

[The DO magazine has more options that allow you to peruse great gifts for DOs and students, from a quality water bottle and book light to a personal memoir kit, a doctor's bag and more ...](#)

New Year's Resolution: Stay Active as a Member of GOMA

Thank you for being part of the Georgia Osteopathic Medical Association for the past year. GOMA is the only organization in the state specifically providing services and advocacy for all osteopathic physicians licensed in Georgia.

[Click here to renew your membership!](#)

Over the past year, your membership has allowed GOMA to do the following:

1. Advocate specifically for osteopathic physicians.

- GOMA has continued our advocacy at the Georgia Legislature, proactively focusing on threats to your ability to practice at the state level. This effort that will continue in 2026 with the GOMA Day at the Capitol on Thursday, Feb. 19. We encourage you to register now to join us in a day of advocacy for the osteopathic profession.

- In collaboration with the American Osteopathic Association, monitor activities at the Federal level and respond to threats that could have adversely affected your ability to practice.

2. Provide quality AOA 1-A osteopathic-specific Continuing Medical Education through the following programming:

- [GOMA's Fall Conference](#) (available through December 31), which includes required controlled substance training, Georgia DOs are able to earn all of their CME cost-effectively with GOMA.

- Access to the [Virtual Osteopathic Conference](#), with up to 48 credits.

- At [The CME Center](#), osteopathic CME credits are available anytime you need to pick up one or two credits. Choose from hundreds of CME programs produced by TOMA and other state osteopathic organizations.

Help GOMA continue and expand our activities supporting Georgia's Osteopathic Physicians by [renewing your membership now](#) to remain active through December 31, 2026.

We hope you will renew your membership and remain part of the GOMA community. We look forward to continuing our work for you.

GOMA wishes all of our members
a Merry Christmas
and a Happy Hannukah!

“The biggest happiness is when at the end of the
year you feel better than at the beginning.”

– *Henry David Thoreau, American poet and philosopher*