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GEORGIA OSTEOPATHIC
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
— 1902 —

GOMA News & Updates

Volume 48, January 2026

PRESIDENT



William Lagaly, DO

Meet GOMA President William Lagaly, DO

William “Bill” J. Lagaly, DO, is a respected family medicine physician, wound care and hyperbaric specialist based in Athens, Georgia, known for his patient-centered approach and dedication to

fostering trust in the doctor–patient relationship. Starting his career out as a commercial diver in the 1980's, he became a diver medic, inspiring him to go to the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine. Dr. Lagaly graduated in 1994 from the University of North Texas Health Science Center's Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine. Dr. Lagaly went on to complete his internship and residency in Family Medicine at the same facility in Fort Worth. A wound care and hyperbaric oxygen program was simultaneously being developed at the hospital, so he was able to spend free time and electives with the developing program. He practiced family medicine for two years in Arkansas, then developed a hyperbaric and wound care program at St. Vincent Infirmary in Little Rock. After several years in Arkansas, he was recruited to Buffalo, NY and developed a busy program for Catholic Health.

Dr. Lagaly is currently board certified in family medicine, hyperbaric medicine and wound care. He has been practicing wound care and hyperbaric medicine full time for the past twenty years. He moved to Georgia in 2020 to become the medical director of the wound care & hyperbaric program at Piedmont Athens Regional Hospital, serving communities in 17 counties around Athens and northeast Georgia.

In his practice, Dr. Lagaly prioritizes clear communication, ensuring that patients understand their diagnoses and treatment options.

Many patients have noted his ability to explain complex medical issues in accessible terms, a skill that fosters confidence and reduces anxiety. As one patient review put it, “He took the time to explain my diagnosis in a way I understood, and I never felt rushed.”

Beyond the clinic, Dr. Lagaly's life is marked by a balance of professional dedication and personal fulfillment. He enjoys scuba diving, fishing, and making wine—activities that speak to his appreciation for both adventure and craftsmanship. These pursuits not only provide relaxation but also mirror the patience and attention to detail that define his medical practice. His ability to maintain this balance underscores the importance of self-care for

healthcare providers, a principle that ultimately benefits the patients they serve.

Dr. Lagaly is a past president of the Arkansas Osteopathic Medical Association and the Foundation for the Advancement of Wound Care. Knowing the importance of organized medicine, he became an active member of the Georgia Osteopathic Medical Association in 2020. He has served on the GOMA Executive Board including help formulating the strategic plan in 2024 (quick link on GOMA website), lecturing at conferences, and lobbying for the profession at the state capital.

At his inauguration as President of GOMA at the Annual Meeting in November 2025, Dr. Lagaly said, “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.”



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Get Your Kicks in 2026: Renew your GOMA Membership

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 if you haven't yet!](#)

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.

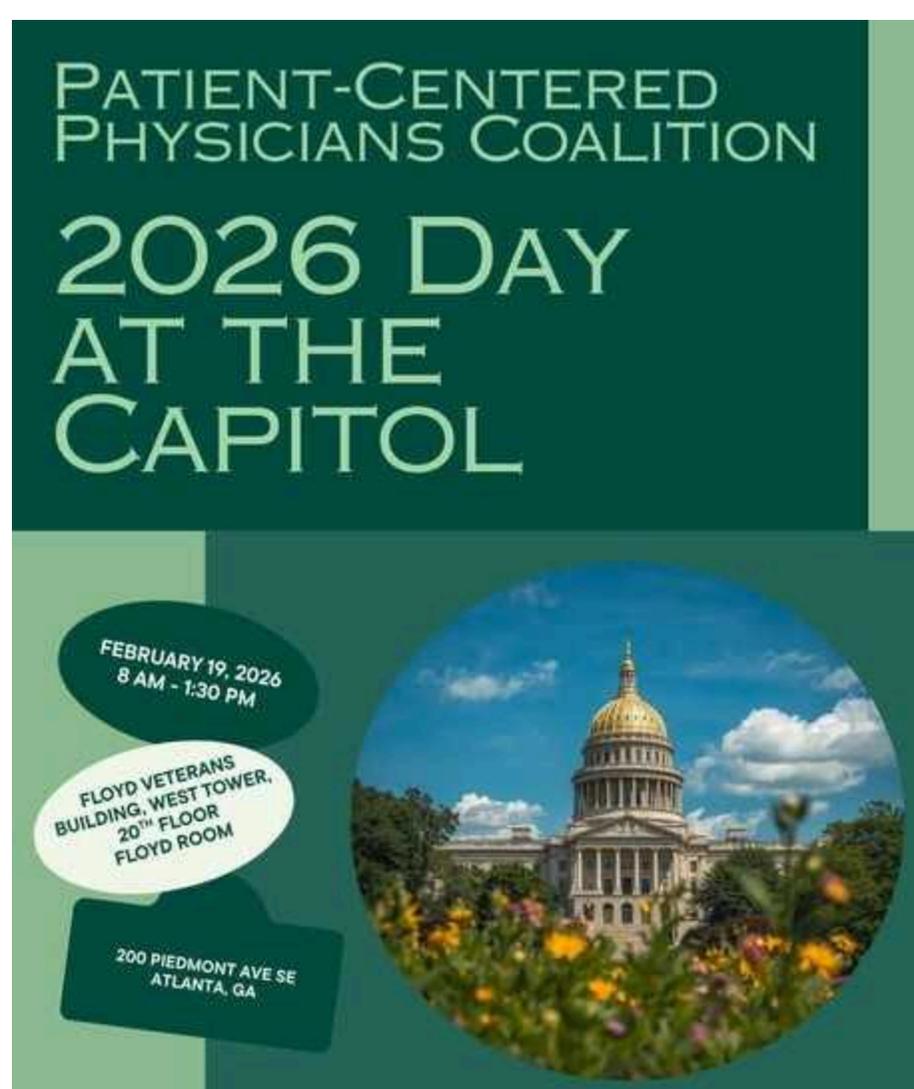
2. Provide quality AOA 1-A osteopathic-specific Continuing Medical Education through the following programming:

GOMA's Fall Conference, 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.



Patient Centered Physicians' Coalition Day at the Capital on Thursday February 19

Join GOMA and other Georgia patient-centered physician organizations for our 2026 Day at the Capitol, Thursday, Feb. 19, from 8 am to 1:30 pm.

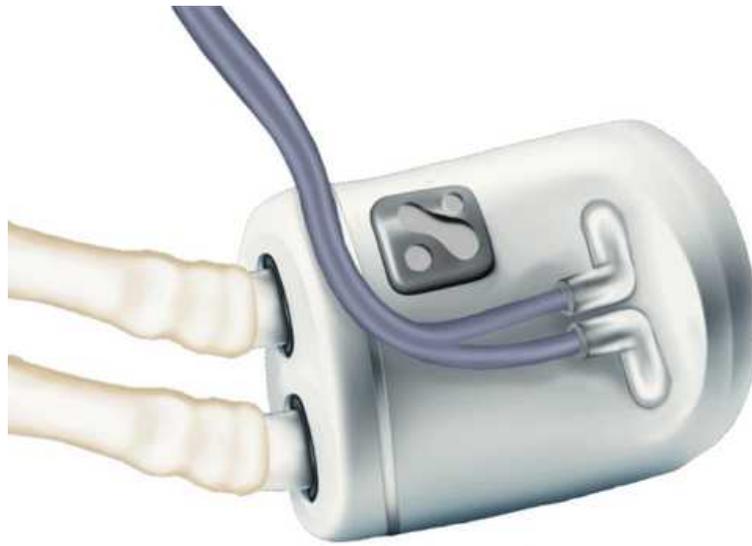
[Register here](#)

Join us for advocacy, networking, and engaging discussions on patient-centered healthcare. In addition to hearing from state officials, there will be time to go to the Capitol and speak to Legislators. Continental breakfast begins at 8 AM, programming at 8:30 AM. Lunch is included.



Lucie Mitchell, DO Named the 2024 Georgia State Emerging Leader by the AOF

GOMA congratulates Lucie Mitchell, DO, a physiatrist at Harbin Clinic Spine & Pain, on recently being named the 2024 Georgia State Emerging Leader by the American Osteopathic Foundation and the Georgia Osteopathic Medical Association (GOMA). She was recognized for her clinical expertise as well as her leadership and dedication to improving healthcare. Dr. Mitchell is actively involved in GOMA, where she serves as a Board Member and District 1 President. This recognition is well-deserved!



Holly™ by Nephrodite is an investigational device and is not yet approved for commercial use.

Dialysis Replacement Created by Nikhil L. Shah, DO, MPH

Nephrodite, Inc., a medical device company developing an implantable, continuous renal replacement system, announced in mid-December 2025 that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has granted Breakthrough Device Designation to the company's Holly™ implantable, continuous dialysis system.

The designation recognizes Holly as a novel, transformative therapy addressing end-stage kidney disease (ESKD) which affects more than 850,000 people in the U.S., costing more than \$50 billion annually. Current treatment options including hemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis limit mobility and patients' quality of life, with no adequately effective alternatives available to patients since the advent of hemodialysis more than 70 years ago.

“I'm proud of our stellar team for earning this extraordinary recognition. The designation reinforces the scientific and clinical significance of what we're building,” said Nikhil L. Shah, DO, MPH, Co-Founder and CEO of Nephrodite. “Holly was designed from the ground up to free patients from the cycle of center-based dialysis. Breakthrough status enables close collaboration with regulators and accelerates our path toward first-in-human studies.”

Data from Nephrodite's successful multi-day large animal study demonstrating sustained kidney function replacement with strong safety and performance outcomes helped enable the FDA's Breakthrough Device Designation. The FDA Breakthrough Device Designation is reserved for technologies that offer more effective treatment for life-threatening conditions and designed to expedite patient access to promising innovations. The designation allows Nephrodite to benefit from expedited review and enhanced FDA guidance.

“Dialysis sustains life, but at tremendous cost to a patient's freedom and physiology,” said Hiep T. Nguyen, MD, Co-Founder and SVP of Science and Technology at Nephrodite. “Holly represents a complete rethinking of kidney replacement, with a continuously functioning implant capable of matching the body's natural rhythm. It's both a scientific milestone and a human one.”

The Holly system is a first-of-its-kind implantable platform engineered to function continuously inside the body, replacing natural kidney function. The proprietary platform combines advanced hemofiltration technology with biocompatible materials optimized for long-term implantation and physiologic performance. The device is designed to continuously filter waste, balance fluids, and manage electrolytes without the need for frequent clinic visits required by traditional, center-based dialysis.

The Holly system integrates intelligent sensors, machine learning algorithms, and secure remote monitoring for physician oversight and individualized therapy. The internal implant is being designed to link through a simple external interface to a small, portable home unit used nightly for dialysis support.

Building on the Breakthrough Device designation and the preclinical animal study findings, Nephrodite is preparing for Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) studies and subsequent regulatory submissions to enable first-in-human clinical trials.

Follow [Nephrodite on LinkedIn](#) and visit nephrodite.com for ongoing updates.

Holly™ is an investigational device and is not yet approved for commercial use.

Nephrodite is a medical device company dedicated to creating a better alternative to dialysis by developing Holly, an implantable, continuous renal replacement device designed to restore freedom, function and independence in people living with end-stage kidney disease. Founded by board-certified urologists Nikhil L. Shah, DO, MPH, and Hiep T. Nguyen, MD, the company combines deep clinical expertise with engineering innovation to deliver a true renal replacement platform. Headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, with operations in Mumbai, India, Nephrodite is backed by leading investors and supported by a robust intellectual property portfolio..



TeleHealth Issues: Response Letter from Sen. Warnock

Thank you for contacting me to discuss expanding access to telehealth services.

While the COVID-19 virus challenged our country, it also pushed our health care system to be more flexible in offering services remotely, enabling Georgians to receive critical care and consultations from their homes. With access to broadband service and connected devices, people across the country, in rural and underserved areas, are able to communicate with their doctors more easily. While

telehealth can never completely replace in-person visits, I understand that many Georgians in every corner of our state have benefited from remote visits.

That is why I am supportive of commonsense measures that improve access to care. For example, I am a proud cosponsor of S. 1261, the Creating Opportunities Now for Necessary and Effective Care Technologies (CONNECT) for Health Act, which would permanently extend and expand the flexibilities for telehealth through Medicare that were put in place during the pandemic. On September 30, 2025, I voted for S. 2882, a funding bill that would keep the government open, extend Medicare telehealth flexibilities and Affordable Care Act (ACA) Premium Tax Credits, and broadly protect health care access for millions of Georgians. Unfortunately, my Republican colleagues voted against this legislation and have repeatedly blocked it on the Senate floor. Instead, Congressional Republicans proposed a bill, H.R. 5371, that would have funded the government and but allowed health care access across our state and country to be gutted. I voted against this legislation because I cannot support a budget bill that will allow for catastrophic cuts to health care for Georgians. Because neither of these efforts passed, on October 1, 2025, the federal government shut down and Medicare telehealth flexibilities expired. Please know that I will continue working with my Senate colleagues to expand access to quality, affordable care, including creating permanent flexibilities for access to telehealth services.

In the meantime, I am glad to have also taken steps to ensure more Georgians have access to affordable broadband, which is critical to telehealth. On August 10, 2021, I proudly voted in favor of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. This landmark legislation provides more than \$42 billion through the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program, including \$1.3 billion for Georgia, to expand high-speed internet access to unserved and underserved communities across the country. Though I know there is much more to be done, these programs will help connect more Georgians, enabling them to participate in telehealth and other forms of virtual care.

Please know that I am committed to working with my colleagues in Congress and federal agencies to ensure that telehealth continues to be a reliable option for every Georgian who needs it.

Thank you again for contacting me. Please do not hesitate to do so again in the future if I may be of assistance to you or your family.

Sincerely,

Reverend Raphael Warnock
United States Senator

Revisions to CPT's for Orthopedics due to Outpatient Joint Replacements being done at Surgicenters

On November 21, 2025, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued updates to Medicare payment policies and rates for hospital outpatient and Ambulatory Surgical Center (ASC) services under the Hospital Outpatient Prospective Payment System (OPPS) and ASC Payment System Final Rule with comment period for calendar year (CY) 2026. CMS published this final rule consistent with the legal requirements to update Medicare payment policies for hospital outpatient and ASCs annually. This fact sheet discusses the major provisions of the final rule.

These payment policies affect approximately 4,000 hospitals and approximately 6,000 ASCs. In addition to finalizing the payment rates, this year's rule includes an update to the methodology used to calculate the Overall Hospital Quality Star Rating to emphasize the Safety of Care measure group in hospitals' star ratings. CMS also is finalizing changes to the Hospital Outpatient Quality Reporting (OQR), Rural Emergency Hospital Quality Reporting (REHQR), and Ambulatory Surgical Center Quality Reporting (ASCQR) Programs to further meaningful measurement and reporting for quality of care in the outpatient setting. CMS also discusses comments received in response to a Request for Information (RFI) on future measure

concepts related to well-being and nutrition.

[Read more details here.](#)



Joe Huang, DO & Ms. Alisa Toney Perform in Nutcracker While PCOM Georgia Students Greet Crowd

Celebrating the holidays, PCOM Georgia's partnership with Gwinnett Ballet Theatre, and PCOM's 20th anniversary in Gwinnett, students, faculty and staff had an exciting day at the ballet during the holidays.

During the Gwinnett Ballet Theatre's opening weekend of "The Nutcracker," PCOM Georgia volunteers greeted attendees with giveaways and educational info, while PCOM Georgia alumnus and Emergency Physician, Joe Huang, DO (pictured above with pink hair), and Alisa Toney, senior director of development at PCOM Georgia, even took the stage as special guest performers!

Dr. Huang credits his ballet debut to "I got persuaded by Alisa and my wife to do it."

[Learn more about PCOM Georgia's partnerships with the Gwinnett Ballet Theatre.](#)



PCOM South Georgia Student National Medical Association Gardens at Boys & Girls Club

The Rooted Together garden club is preparing for a new season of growth at the Boys & Girls Club of Moultrie-Colquitt County.

This initiative, led by the PCOM South Georgia Student National Medical Association (SNMA), brings health lessons to life through gardening. Our students mentor local youth on nutrition, responsibility, and academic success. The garden started off with 6 square plant beds where students have grown tomatoes, collard greens, olives, cabbage, various herbs, and so much more.

Recently, the group worked to refurbish the garden after weather damage, planting blueberry bushes and fruit trees that will serve the

community for years to come.

Community Outreach Chair Ty'Tiaunna Thomas (DO '28) and the SNMA team are now looking to expand the space. They hope to secure the resources needed to introduce cooking classes and further skill-building opportunities for the kids..



PCOM South Georgia Students Educate Local Fourth Graders

In December 2025, PCOM South Georgia students visited Norman Park Elementary to help teach fourth grade students about general health and hygiene. This initiative, led by Anatomical Coordinator Jeremy Dickens, also saw each elementary student receiving toothpaste and a toothbrush!

“Don’t be pushed by your problems.
Be led by your dreams.”

– *Ralph Waldo Emerson*