

August 17, 2020

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As Corona Summer 2020 winds down and routines beg to find their way back into our lives, even schools are screaming to resume in some manner, shape or form; my fervent prayer is that everyone is and remains healthy during these challenging and uncertain times. I am extremely thankful for the opportunity to provide you with an update on the Great Lakes Association Orthodontists (GLAO).

Our Annual GLAO Meeting will be virtual this year and is scheduled for Saturday, September 26th at 8:00 am. This is a first for the GLAO and our Planning Committee has worked diligently to present a meaningful and informative meeting which includes: aligner therapy face-off, customizable appliances and practice management tips for these trying times. Also, there are several hours of staff recordings that offices can use on demand for training, education, etc. Registration is currently open; CE is available and best of all - it's FREE - did I mention FREE!

Due to ongoing concerns surrounding Coronavirus and the safety of everyone involved, a unanimous decision was made in May to cancel the in person annual meeting in Cleveland. Because numerous contracts were in place well ahead of the meeting, a financial impact to the association was anticipated. Much to the board's delight, we are happy to report, no significant penalties were incurred. Many of these were mitigated by shifting the annual meeting back to Cleveland in 2022. A big Hooyah to our very own Debbie Nunner and staff for their tireless efforts made on our behalf.

For many of us, these challenging and unprecedented times have required extreme actions in ways we have never expected. I'm reminded of Abraham Zaleznik, a Harvard Business School professor, who described the *Transformative Process on Leadership Formation*, during a major event. A leader often turns inward in order to reemerge with a created sense of identity, hence "Twice Born." Each of us has had to endure uncomfortable or unpleasant adjustments in this reality forced upon us these past few months. How has this experience affected the way you practice or how you interact with your family, etc.? We all have been impacted by COVID-19 and weathered this storm and had to find innovate ways to cope and survive. Seize this opportunity to use your creative talent to the fullest. I would encourage everyone to utilize the full complement of resources available on our website and on the AAO's website.

As frustrating as our current situation is, surprisingly many positive advances have altered the world in which we live in for the better. For example, would you believe that the air quality index in Los Angeles was one of the best in the world these past few months? My point is why would we want to go back in time and return a city to pre-corona levels of air quality. Indeed, there have been positive changes in the world, our society and our practices that we should

embrace as we move forward. As Seneca stated, “Difficulties strengthen the mind, as labor does the body.” We are a very resourceful group.

Lastly, I’ve endeavored to serve this association with pride and integrity. My actions intentionally have utilized, “consequential thinking,” whereby I’ve tried to consider many of the outcomes before acting. Time will tell, but know that your Board and I have given much time and energy into our decisions and I hope we’ve represented the association in a committed and dedicated manner. In these challenging times I am also mindful of part of the Navy Seal Creed, “I preserve and thrive on adversity. If knocked down, I will get up, every time.” While perhaps we have heard these words, they’ve never rang truer as we do our own self introspection. We have proven how resilient we are in the face of this adversary, much like the country at large and have pivoted with a great display of ability and agility. I remain optimist that the best is yet to come; for our patients and for our practices.

Thank you again and remember, “Walk slowly, but never Backward.” - Abraham Lincoln

Walter W. Schratz, DMD, MSD

President, GLAO

“Challenges are what makes life interesting...overcoming them is what makes life meaningful”

Joshua J. Marine