



March 2026



Dr. Mariela Anderson
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Dear Member,

I hope this message finds you well as we move through the final weeks of winter and begin looking ahead to the longer, brighter days of spring.

The GLAO remains actively engaged in advocating for our members, working closely with the AAO and our constituent organizations. Ongoing efforts in Ohio, Michigan, and Ontario continue to address important issues facing our profession, including student debt solutions, specialty advertising, workforce challenges, and promoting transparency in dental care. Your support makes this work possible, and we are grateful for your continued engagement.

This January, the GLAO was proud to support our emerging leaders with ten GLAO members participating in the Leadership Development Conference in Phoenix. It was truly inspiring to connect with the future leaders of orthodontics and to see the passion and dedication they bring to our profession. Thank you to those who took valuable time away from their practices to participate and represent the GLAO.

Looking ahead, we are especially excited to invite you to the GLAO Annual Session, which will be held in Columbus, Ohio, on October 23–24, 2026. This meeting will mark the centenary of our organization - a milestone worth celebrating. With a forward-looking program, confirmed speakers including Drs. Audrey Yoon, Farah Kar, Lucia Cevitanes and Anthony Mair, along with several outstanding orthodontic consultants, this meeting promises engaging and meaningful content for doctors and their teams alike. Registration will open later this year, and we hope you will plan to join us for this special occasion.

Thank you for your continued support of the GLAO and for being part of such a strong and dedicated community. Together, we are shaping the future of our profession.

Warm regards,
Mariela Anderson

Mark Your Calendars and Plan to Attend!

Registration Coming Soon!



Member News

2026 AAO Leadership Development Conference





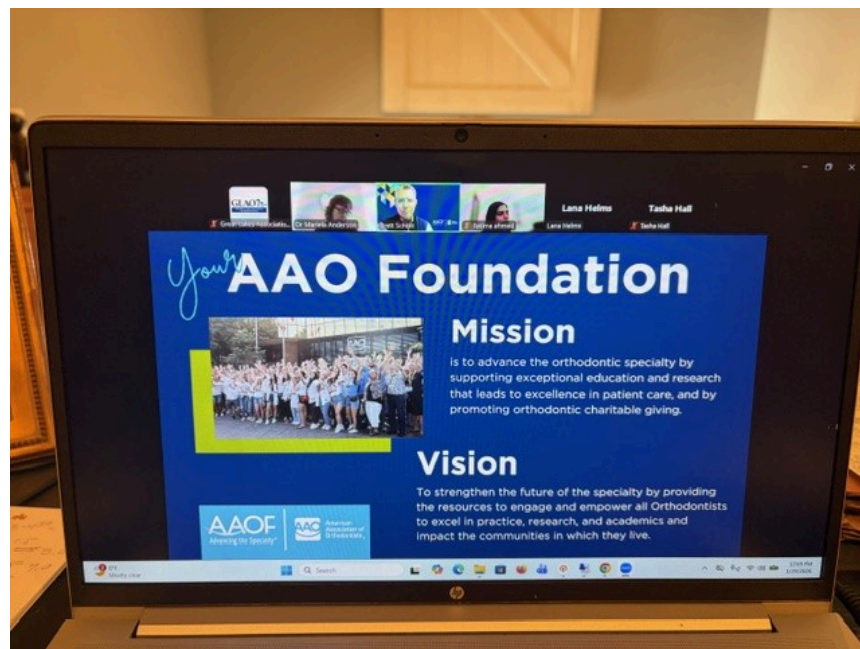
GLAO Constituent Leaders, Component Leaders, and Emerging Leaders participated in the AAO Leadership Development Conference on January 22nd in Phoenix, AZ. The conference provided an opportunity for participants to network with peers, enhance their leadership skills, and learn about available resources! The GLAO was well-represented with participation by the following members: **Dr. Fatima Ahmed (MI)**, **Dr. Mariela Anderson (ON)**, **Dr. Archana Dhawan (MI)**, **Dr. Tarek EIShebiny (OH)**, **Ms. Debbie Nunner (GLAO Executive Director)**, **Dr. Ziad Omar (ON)**, **Dr. Dominic Raggi (PA)**, **Dr. Michael Sherman (ON)**, and **Dr. Leah Stetzel (IN)**. Thanks to all these members who took the time to participate in this conference!

GLAO Coffee Chats

Did you miss the Coffee Chat on January 29th? Brett Scott, Vice President of the AAO Foundation, shared, **It's All About the HEART: What Exactly Does Our AAO Foundation Do For Us?** Brett provided an update on the progress of the Foundation's current effort to endow Full-time Faculty Fellowships, its commitment to research and education, and Gifted Smiles.

[CLICK HERE](#) to watch the Coffee Chat! This recording will be available until March 31, 2026.

Do you have an idea for a future Coffee Chat? Contact GLAO@AssnOffices.com with your ideas!



Volunteer Leadership Opportunities

The AAO House of Delegates is the highest governing body of the AAO and meets every year at the AAO annual session. Members of the Great Lakes Association of Orthodontists serve as our representatives to the AAO House of Delegates. Delegates and Alternate Delegates are elected annually by the GLAO membership. Those elected will serve a two-year term. **The GLAO Nominating Committee is seeking interested and qualified candidates to serve in the AAO House of Delegates.** [Click here](#) to view the position description. **If you are interested in serving the GLAO as a Delegate at the 2027 and 2028 AAO House of Delegates, please submit a letter of interest to the GLAO office at GLAO@AssnOffices.com by March 12, 2026.** If you have any questions about this position, please contact the GLAO office (GLAO@AssnOffices.com).

GLAO Leadership Spotlight - Meet our Pennsylvania Leaders



[Meet Dr. Martone](#)



[Meet Dr. Rody](#)



[Meet Dr. Wolford](#)

GLAO 100th Anniversary Year!



**Leadership as a Legacy....100 Years of Volunteer Leadership
in the GLAO**

By: Dale Anne Featheringham

In October of this year, the Great Lakes Association of Orthodontists will hit a special milestone—it will be 100 years old! As we prepare for a wonderful celebration of this event in Columbus, Ohio on October 23-24th, it's interesting to think about what has made this organization so successful over the past century. In other words, what makes an organization sustainable and successful? If you talk to anyone who has participated in volunteer leadership, the conclusion that you'll quickly come to is that it's the people who make it great.

The GLAO has a long legacy of great volunteer leaders, but one family's story is unique—the story of the Dellinger family from Fort Wayne, Indiana. The Dellingers have a long history of volunteer leadership within the Great Lakes. Their story began when Gene Dellinger agreed to be on the GLAO board in the 1970s, and eventually went on the executive committee and became president in 1981. His son, Aron, was 9 at the time, and remembers going to his dad's meeting in Hawaii. He said that he remembers “knowing that his dad was doing something important...something that he loved”. He also recalls the kindness of the people that he met as a kid. Those impressions, along with being raised by a mother who “always found time to help out whenever asked” caused Aron to want to get involved with the GLAO when he was tapped on the shoulder by Dr. John Barbour in the early 2000s. He was just a few years out of residency at the time, but Aron ultimately went through the chairs, and became president in 2016—35 years after his father. In addition, Aron's brother, Eric, was also influenced to serve in organized orthodontics. “My brother decided to get heavily involved in the College of Diplomats of the American Board of Orthodontics, eventually going through every position in that organization. He was a responsible, capable and effective leader as they tackled the challenge of revamping the testing format for board certification—no easy task—and continues to be involved with the organization as a trusted advisor to the group”.

I recently sat down with Aron, and we discussed that although the “father-son” aspect of their leadership story is unusual, there are several common themes that all Great Lakes volunteer leaders seem to experience:

[Click Here](#) to read more.

Congratulations to Our Newly Retired Members!

Dr. Brad Bauer - *Oakmont, PA*
Dr. Stephen Begezda - *Poland, OH*
Dr. Charles Gulland - *Hermitage, PA*
Dr. James Hickman - *Manotick, ON*
Dr. Charles Pfister - *Medina, OH*

The GLAO has been notified of the passing of this member. Our thoughts are with the family members.

Dr. John D. Jacob - *Worthington, OH*

AAO Trustee Report

Consider Serving as a Delegate of the Great Lakes Association of Orthodontists to the AAO House of Delegates

Serving as a Delegate for the Great Lakes Association of Orthodontists (GLAO) in the American Association of Orthodontists (AAO) House of Delegates can provide one of the most meaningful professional roles of your career. It offers a rare opportunity to advocate for colleagues across our region and to help shape the future direction of our specialty at the national level.

[Click Here](#) to read more.



Dr. Michael W. Sherman
msherman@aaortho.org

ABO News and Information

The American Board of Orthodontics (ABO) remains committed to elevating the quality of orthodontic care for the public by promoting excellence through certification, education, and professional collaboration. Currently, 65% of AAO orthodontists are board certified, a significant milestone that reflects a strong collective commitment to excellence within our specialty.

Written Examination:

The 2026 exam will be held on April 7, 2026 at Pearson Vue Professional Centers throughout the U.S and Canada. Registration for the 2026 exam is now closed.

[Click Here](#) to read more.



Dr. Anthony M. Puntillo
ABO Director
dr.p@pandcsmiles.com

AAOF

AAO Foundation Highlights:

- Save the Date for the **AAO Foundation Celebration Breakfast** on Saturday, May 2, 2026 at the Orange County Convention Center.
- The **For the Future Faculty Fellowship Campaign** has raised 80% of its fundraising goal of \$1,800,000. The Full-Time Faculty Fellowship is a two-year, \$30,000 annual award designed to supplement the salaries



Dr. J. Martin Palomo

of those who choose to dedicate their careers to orthodontic education.

GLAO Representative to
AAOF
jmp5@case.edu

- The AAO Foundation's **Planning and Awards Review Committee (PARC)** recommended nearly \$1 million in grant funding following its January meeting.

[Click Here](#) to read more.

AAOPAC

Another great year for AAOPAC!

Last calendar year, the PAC raised \$454,942.60 – the third consecutive year that the PAC raised over \$450,000. By contrast, in 2020, AAOPAC raised \$198,307.13. We are getting close to that long sought after goal of \$1,000,000 per election cycle. Could this be the year? Will the GLAO be the constituency that carries the PAC to the goal? Total percentage of eligible AAO members who contributed in 2025 was 5.7%.

[Click Here](#) to read more.



Dr. Phil Beckwith
GLAO Representative to
AAOPAC
pjbortho@aol.com

AAO National Advocacy Network (NAN)

There are many opportunities within the National Advocacy Network (NAN). The Component Advocacy Liaison (CAL) is open to U.S. and Canadian members, and the AAOPAC Captain is open to US citizens and permanent residents only, due to FEC regulations. Members are invited to join the candidate search in each state and province across the United States and Canada. The AAO will continue to build state Component Advocacy Liaison teams in all states. So, even if a CAL has been identified in your state, we encourage you to reach out to be considered as part of the NAN Team in your state. Interested AAO members can reach out to Kim VanVeen, AAO Specialist of Grassroots and Digital Advocacy, at KVanVeen@aaortho.org, to complete your NAN Pre-Interview survey and Kim will set up time to discuss the opportunities upon its completion.

Thanks to the following GLAO members and residents who are participating in the AAO National Advocacy Network!

Indiana:

Dr. Tasha Hall - AAOPAC Captain

Michigan:

Dr. John Monticello - Component Advocacy Liaison

Dr. Jashleen Bedi - AAOPAC Captain

Dr. George Bork- State Legislative Captain

Ohio:

Dr. Parker Heiner - Component Advocacy Liaison
Dr. Dale Anne Featheringham - AAOPAC Captain
Dr. Tommy Lau - Resident Captain
Dr. Raurie Petrich - State Legislative Captain

Ontario:

Dr. Mariela Anderson - Component Advocacy Liaison
Dr. Jennifer Seo - COA & Dental Specialty Provincial Liaison

Pennsylvania:

Dr. Marian Wolford - Component Advocacy Liaison
Dr. Jonathan Shue - Opposition Research & Innovation Captain
Dr. Sherry Yang - Resident Captain

GLAO Component Updates

Below are links to the most current reports.

Indiana

Dr. Lana Helms..... lrhelms@sbcglobal.net

Michigan

Dr. Brandon Shoukri..... bshoukri@umich.edu

Ontario

Dr. Girish Deshpande..... drgdeshpande@gmail.com

Ohio

Dr. Dale Anne Featheringham..... dafortho@yahoo.com

Pennsylvania

Dr. Wellington Rody, Jr..... Wjr34@pitt.edu

AAO Council Featured Reports

AAO Council on Orthodontic Practice (COOP)

This year, COOP has met three times, twice virtually (July 25 and January 26) and once in-person (November 25). The work of COOP has primarily been focused on 4 topics since reorganization following the 2025 AAO meeting:

- 1) Practice Management Forms and Public Facing Brochures: this subcommittee is ongoing. We have discussed some new potential additions/modifications to existing AAO practice management forms including a gingivectomy consent supplemental form,



Dr. Lana Helms

[Click Here](#) to read more.

AAO Council on Membership, Ethics, and Judicial Concerns (COMEJC)



To review the House of Delegates Resolutions, current membership trends, and member programs, [Click Here](#) to view the full report.

Dr. Riyadh Al-Qawasmi
alqawara@udmercy.edu

Below are links to the most current AAO Council Reports.

[Council on Communications \(COC\)](#)

Dr. Jashleen Bedi.....jbedidmd@gmail.com

[Council on Governmental Advocacy \(COGA\)](#)

Dr. Valerie Martone.....valeriemartone2@gmail.com

[Council on Membership, Ethics, and Judicial Concerns \(COMEJC\)](#)

Dr. Riyadh Al-Qawasmi.....alqawara@udmercy.edu

[Council on New and Younger Members \(CONYM\)](#)

Dr. Javen Durham.....DRD@eaganortho.com

[Council on Orthodontic Education \(COE\)](#)

Dr. J. Martin Palomojmp5@case.edu

[Council on Orthodontic Benefits \(COB\)](#)

Dr. Tasha Hall.....tashahall828@gmail.com

[Council on Orthodontic Practice \(COOP\)](#)

Dr. Lana Helms.....lrhelms@sbcglobal.net

[Council on Scientific Affairs \(COSA\)](#)

Dr. Marilia Yatabe Ioshidamsyatabe@umich.edu

GLAO MEMBERS:

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the AAOPAC and consider making a contribution.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the AAO Foundation and consider making a donation.

GLAO Information

Share your knowledge and expertise:

Submit an article for consideration in the GLAO e-news, our quarterly e-news bulletin, by emailing GLAO@AssnOffices.com. GLAO Coffee Chats provide informal opportunities to engage with other members. If you have a topic in mind or would like to facilitate a discussion, contact GLAO@AssnOffices.com!

Get Connected

Join the **GLAO Facebook Page!**

[Click Here](#) and sign into Facebook and follow our page.



NEW! Join the **GLAO on Instagram!**

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Make sure the AAO has your current **email address** on file. We use that email address to stay in touch with you via e-blast like this one.

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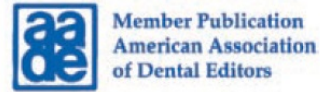
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