

Serving as Your GLAO Trustee: Reflections and an Invitation

By: Dr. Michael Sherman

As I step into the role of Secretary-Treasurer of the American Association of Orthodontists (AAO), I begin my eighth year serving our membership as GLAO Trustee on the AAO Board of Trustees. It has truly been an honor and a privilege to represent you in this capacity. With the election of my successor approaching in the summer of 2027, I would like to share an overview of the Trustee role for those who may be considering a candidacy.

The AAO Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees shall consist of one (1) Trustee from each constituent organization, and up to three (3) Trustees At-Large (selected based on demographic diversity or expertise), the President, the Speaker of the House of Delegates, and the Editor-in-Chief. The Editor-in-Chief and the Speaker are ex-officio members without the right to vote. All the Trustees (Constituent Trustees and Trustees At-Large) shall constitute the voting membership of the Board, except that the President may vote in the event of a tie.

Eligibility

Any active member of the AAO is eligible to serve as a Trustee.

Term of Service

Constituent Trustees serve two-year terms and may serve a maximum of four terms (eight years). The second most senior Trustee may be nominated to serve as Secretary-Treasurer, subject to election by the House of Delegates. This role leads sequentially to President-Elect and then President of the AAO. A constituent-elected Trustee may therefore serve a total of nine years on the Board.

Role of the Board

The Board of Trustees is the managing body of the AAO. It is responsible for overseeing the business and strategic direction of the Association in accordance with state law, the AAO Bylaws, and the directives of the House of Delegates.

POWERS AND DUTIES:

1. POWERS:

- a. Establish rules and regulations not inconsistent with these Bylaws to govern its organization and procedure.
- b. Direct the President to call a special session of the House of Delegates as provided in these Bylaws.
- c. Exercise full discretion in effecting publication in, or omission from, any official publication of the Association, in whole or part.
- d. Establish ad-interim policies when the House of Delegates is not in session and when such policies are essential to the management of the Association; provided, however, that all such policies must be presented for review at the next session of the House of Delegates.
- e. Establish an Executive Committee composed of five members: The President, the President-Elect, the Secretary Treasurer and the two most senior Trustees. This Committee shall have the power to act for the full Board of Trustees in the interim between sessions of the Board, and it shall report such actions to the Board at its next meeting.
- f. Employ a Chief Executive Officer.
- g. Appoint consultants, advisors and at-large members whenever necessary.
- h. Appoint a member from CONYM or a new and younger member as an Advisor with full voting rights on councils/committees.
- i. Nominate honorary members.
- j. Approve bulk AAO membership dues amounts that may be negotiated with international orthodontic societies.

DUTIES:

- a. Provide for the maintenance and supervision of the executive office and all the property owned or operated by the Association.
- b. Appoint an Editor-in-Chief of the Association.
- c. Determine the time and place for convening each annual session of the Association and to provide for the management and general arrangements for each annual session.
- d. Cause to be bonded by a surety company all officers and employees of the Association entrusted with Association funds.
- e. Cause all accounts of this Association to be audited by an independent certified public accountant at least once a year.
- f. Prepare and submit to the House of Delegates a budget for carrying on the activities of this Association for each ensuing fiscal year. In the event a deficit budget is proposed to the House of Delegates, the Board of Trustees will propose recommendations to all

constituents prior to the yearly ad interim meetings for how a balanced budget could be achieved.

- g. Submit nominations for council membership to the House of Delegates at the first session of the annual meeting.
- h. Transmit to the House of Delegates a nominee for Director of the American Board of Orthodontics.
- i. Appoint annually the chair of each council from nominations submitted by the respective councils and designate one member of the Board to serve as an ex officio member, without the right to vote on each council of this Association.
- j. Review the reports of the councils and committees of the Association and make recommendations concerning such reports to the House of Delegates.
- k. Submit an annual report of its activities to the House of Delegates.
- l. Serve as a nominating committee for the elective officers of this Association.
- m. Elect all classifications of members except Honorary.
- n. Perform such other duties as may be prescribed by these Bylaws.

In short, the Board ensures that the AAO operates responsibly, transparently, and always in the best interests of its members.

Meetings and Time Commitment

The Board meets three times annually at AAO Headquarters in St. Louis, as well as before and after the AAO Annual Session. An additional summer planning session is also held each year. Trustees are expected to attend the full AAO Annual Session, Board Orientation (during or prior to the first year), the Leadership Development Conference (LDC), and the Professional Advocacy Conference (PAC). Attendance at the ADA Annual Meeting and the AAO Winter Conference may also be required.

Each Trustee serves as a liaison to one or more AAO Councils, Committees, or Task Forces and is expected to attend both in-person and virtual meetings. Virtual meetings and e-ballots are frequent, and responsibilities increase with seniority.

The GLAO Board of Directors

The GLAO Trustee serves as a voting member of the GLAO Board of Directors and attends the GLAO Annual Session, Annual Session Board Meeting, and Ad Interim Board Meeting. The Trustee submits written reports for each board meeting and for the quarterly e-news publication. The Trustee participates on the Executive, Awards and Finance Committees.

Personal Reflections on Serving as Trustee

While any active AAO member is eligible to serve, I firmly believe that my prior experience in AAO and GLAO governance was invaluable preparation for the role as Trustee. Service in the House of Delegates, on AAO Councils, the GLAO Board, and as a GLAO officer provided me a strong foundation for this role.

The time commitment is substantial. Although an honorarium is provided, it does not offset time away from one's practice. This past year alone, I spent 59 days traveling on behalf of AAO (excluding preparation time) My time commitment to AAO will increase further in my role as Secretary-Treasurer.

That said, the rewards have been profoundly meaningful. Through my service, I have formed lifelong friendships within the GLAO, across North America, and around the world. The sacrifice, however, has been real. Missing family events and milestones such as birthdays, sporting events, and graduations has been one of the most difficult aspects of serving.

An Invitation to Serve

The GLAO is fortunate to have many exceptional members who possess the leadership skills, sound judgment, and genuine passion to serve as our next Trustee. For most potential candidates, the greatest challenge is simply finding the time. I will always be grateful to the GLAO for providing me the opportunity to serve as your Trustee. It has been a true privilege, and I look forward to mentoring the individual elected to succeed me.

1. If you are an active member, interested in serving as GLAO Trustee, and wish to be included on the list of candidates proposed to the membership, submit a letter of interest, addressed to the GLAO Nominating Committee to GLAO@AssnOffices.com by 9/8/26.
2. Candidates that meet the qualifications of the Trustee position, and who have expressed interest by 9/8/26, shall be presented to the membership, by the GLAO Nominating Committee, at the GLAO Annual Business Meeting on 10/23/26 at the Hilton Columbus Downtown in Columbus, Ohio
3. Additional nominations for the position may be made from the floor at the GLAO Annual Business Meeting in October. After nominations are closed, no additional names can be added. Each candidate will be provided up to five (5) minutes to address the members present.
4. The GLAO Nominating Committee will vet the candidates and present a slate of all the eligible candidates to the GLAO Leadership at the March, 2027 Board Meeting. The GLAO Leadership will determine no more than two (2) Trustee candidates to put forward to the membership for their vote in the summer of 2027.
5. The elected GLAO Trustee will begin to serve in May, 2028.