

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Leadership—A Journey with Many Paths

Nicole Heath Bixler, DO, MBA, FACOFP

ACOFP President

When you hear the word leadership, what comes to mind? Is it the qualities that a leader possesses, the success of their organization or the impression they have made on others to lead in the future? Is it measured by data points and clear-cut objectives or by an individual's passion and empathy? Does it take place nationally, on a state level or in a small community? Does it occur in a classroom, a boardroom or a patient room? The complexity and simplicity of leadership is that it is all these things—and more.

Great leaders never set out to actually lead; they set out to make a difference. By virtue of the very profession we have chosen, we make a difference every day. We empathize with our patients in their time of need, we advocate responsibly for matters that affect our patients and our profession, we educate the future of our profession by serving as mentors and preceptors, we serve and protect our country through military service and we serve as role models to our community in matters of scientific information by our actions and behaviors. The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly altered many of these roles, requiring us to be creative, adaptable, patient, courageous and humble—or, in other words, has required us to display the very characteristics that make a great leader.

In our profession, leadership is happening all around us, and we are provided with numerous opportunities to lead in ways that are meaningful. This time of the year brings two of those opportunities within ACOFP: 1) to become a Fellow and 2) to lead at a national level on the ACOFP Board of Governors.

The designation, Fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (FACOFP), signifies the recognition of a member's experience, dedication and contributions of the highest order to the advancement of family medicine by his/her peers. To join this esteemed group of approximately 800 osteopathic family physicians signifies outstanding leadership on the state and national level, while demonstrating a commitment to advocacy of the profession through educational endeavors. The call for applications for the 2022 Class of Fellows is available right now with a deadline of September 15.

Fourteen of those Fellows proudly serve on your current ACOFP Board of Governors. On behalf of our Board, I encourage you to consider the opportunity of serving with us by submitting your nomination for the position of Governor, Resident Governor or Student Governor by September 1. These titles are not meant to bestow honor but, rather, to impose a level of responsibility for the betterment of our college and profession through dedication and passion.

Of course, the greatest work and success of our organization is through the collective leadership of our numerous committees, task forces and work groups. Without their energy, wisdom and selfless sacrifice of their time, the objectives set forth by the ACOFP Board and Congress of Delegates could not be met. A quote by the famous coach Vince Lombardi summarizes this best: "Individual commitment to a group effort—that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."

And since football season is right around the corner, let's stick with that theme; as family physicians, we are the quarterbacks of our teams—our medical teams, our educational teams for students and residents, our community teams, our office teams, our teams of wellbeing and our home teams. We are intricately woven into the fabric of our society and with our osteopathic hearts, hands and minds, we make civilization work better.

If you have a desire to serve within our organization, it does not have to start with volunteering for a committee or work group. We encourage your perspective through blog post submissions, participation in our surveys, and through our centralized call for content—a mechanism to share your ideas and expert knowledge on topics of interest for CME and educational webinars. Your contributions in these areas allow an array of diverse voices to shine through—and ultimately lead to improving ACOFP and the profession.

"Individual commitment to a group effort—that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."

—Vince Lombardi, American football coach

You can invest in the future of osteopathic family medicine through a donation to the ACOFP Education and Research Foundation *Forging Our Osteopathic Future* campaign or to sponsor a resident or newly practicing physician to attend the Future Leaders Conference. This conference is an excellent opportunity to achieve

awareness of your own leadership style early in your career and how that impacts your performance. Fifteen years ago, I was fortunate to attend the very first Future Leaders Conference, and, each year, I look forward to reuniting with other alum to engage with a new class of leaders. After all, if your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader—a thought attributed to John Quincy Adams. If you are interested in doing the same, look for more information to be available in Fall 2021 about the next Future Leaders Conference.

It is my greatest honor to serve as your ACOFP president—not because of the title, but because of the opportunity it affords me to collaborate with like-minded individuals with a true passion to reflect the best of what osteopathic family medicine has to offer. In my leadership journey, I have had exceptional role models and unwavering support from my family. ACOFP has been a part of that family for almost 20 years, and my greatest hope is

that during that time I have ignited the desire in someone else to become a leader. My achievements in this position will not be measured by what I have done, but rather what we have done to strengthen the organization through innovation, collaboration and diversification. I challenge you to become a part of this team, to put your thoughts into action and to make a meaningful impact on the future of our profession.

Osteopathically,



Nicole Heath Bixler, DO, MBA, FACOFP

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JULY 23-25, 2021

2021 Intensive Osteopathic Update
ACOFP
Virtual
acofp.org

JULY 29 - AUGUST 1, 2021

MAOFP 2021 Summer Family Medicine
Conference
Michigan Association of Osteopathic
Family Physicians
Muskegon, MI
maofp.org

JULY 30-31, 2021

FSACOFP Family Medicine Update
and Convention 2021
Florida Society of the American College
of Osteopathic Family Physicians
Virtual
fsacofp.org

AUGUST 6-8, 2021

POFPS Virtual Annual CME Symposium
Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical
Association
Hershey, PA
poma.org

AUGUST 12, 2021

B Ready: Hepatitis B Recognition and
Care Determination in Your Primary Care
Practice
ACOFP
Virtual
acofp.org

AUGUST 13-15, 2021

NCS-ACOFP 2021 CME Conference
North Carolina Society of the American
College of Osteopathic Family
Physicians
Pinehurst, NC
nc-acofp.org

OCTOBER 13-17, 2021

45th Annual CME Seminar & Convention
American College of Osteopathic Family
Physicians of California
Anaheim, CA
acofpca.org

OCTOBER 22-24, 2021

OMED 2021
American Osteopathic Association
Phoenix, AZ
osteopathic.org

CME Resource: *Osteopathic Family Physician* Offers 2 Hours of 1-B CME

ACOFP members who read *Osteopathic Family Physician* can receive two hours of Category 1-B continuing medical education credit for completing quizzes in the journal. Visit the eLearning center at www.acofp.org to access the quizzes.