

# EDITOR'S MESSAGE

## A legacy of leading with purpose to improve patients' health outcomes

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"Standing on the shoulders of giants allows us to see far into the future with a clearer vision" is an often-quoted phrase attributed to John of Salisbury in the twelfth century (1159). We celebrate past leaders who made our learning and profession. The giants of the past moved through the education and healthcare landscapes skillfully navigating uncertain opportunities and uncertain futures.

We are forever indebted to the giants of the past as leaders and mentors as they looked ahead to effortlessly steer us into the future—or so it seemed. Our ACOFP past presidents carried heavy responsibilities and anticipated future challenges as they steered through payment and contracting issues such as initiating diagnostic-related groups and subsequently value-based care, new and clinical challenges with emergent diseases such as HIV and hepatitis C, and even a pandemic, of all things!

Our past is full of admirable and impactful leaders: people who weathered storms and guided our entry into many of these mandated areas. Widespread uptake of the EMR, and the changes the EMR has subsequently had on practice styles, has often challenged us and made us recorders of information. We look ahead to a future where information is fed directly into EMRs by medical devices, changing our engagement with patients to having immediate recall of information at our fingertips rather than fragmented information that is retrospectively reviewed. Other tools available include virtual monitoring, exam and care of our patients, and the ability to help our patients remotely. Disabilities can be avoided by intervention virtually with patients and units at the patient's home. Stroke and cardiac care are now started in the home before patients are transported to hospitals or healthcare facilities. This small change in care can prevent damage to organ systems that was once so commonplace and hopeless. Monitoring that goes directly into the patient's chart and day-to-day intervention will lead to healthier patients rather than the fragmented care our patients may have experienced in the past. Morbidity and mortality can be changed for the better through monitoring and by making adjustments prior to an office visit. Patients can be treated at home and brought into the clinic if needed.

The leadership of ACOFP's past presidents has been instrumental in working with the government to advocate changes for our students, and our physicians and have shouldered the burden of an uncertain future. They've advanced our profession into an ever-growing part of the healthcare system: since 2016, unified accreditation has allowed more choices for osteopathic students. And by 2030, 30% of all medical students will be osteopathic students. But the task is not complete. Continued advocacy to show parity in our testing, curriculum, and outcomes has to be known. Using tools that improve the diagnosis and care of patients, with high touch and high treatment to ameliorate disease and improve function, osteopathic physicians have contributed to bettering our nation's health outlook. We consider the entirety of the patient, and social determinants of health have long been part of our understanding and care. Osteopathic physicians give advice on nutrition and how to achieve a healthy lifestyle. This has been the beauty of the curriculum, as we consider not only the disease but also the path to overall wellness. Osteopathic physicians are leaders and care deeply for the communities under our care.

Join me this month in appreciating our past leaders, who were instrumental to our organization working for the best of everyone.