

StraightTalk

Florida Association of Orthodontists



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Component
American
Association of
Orthodontists

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FL SAO Director

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Merritt Island

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FIND US:

faortho.org
813-903-8811
lisette@wcdental.org

Past {Present} Future

The morning after Dr. TJ Albert passed the FAO presidential gavel to me, I spent a quiet moment thinking about the past, present, and future of our association — and specifically, what it means to me personally. Lisette Zuknick was there with me, and I thought about how many members made the six-year leadership climb to become president under her guidance and direction. I wondered if she could have any idea what this moment meant to me. Lisette, if I did not express my gratitude at the time, THANK YOU for all you do for the organization and the continuity you provide.

The year before becoming the president of the FAO is spent planning the Annual Session. It's a year full of decisions and tasks to help the meeting run smoothly. Now that the meeting was underway, there I was, on Day One of my term as president, thinking about all of the past presidents who inspired me to get involved, and also my fellow members who are on their own journey to lead. In the past, present, future continuum of time — that quiet morning moment was likely the only time I would experience *the present*. It was now time to lead, and 99% of leadership is about the future.

In January 2023, our leadership board met to develop a five-year Strategic Plan for the FAO. This road map that will guide us can be found on page 4. Exciting changes are underway, including moving our Annual Session to cities around the state, expanding opportunities for networking and leadership development, and even some nuts-and-bolts activities such as a new website to launch this year.

I'd like to wish our Vice President Dr. Arghavan Welch all the best as she plans our 2024 Annual Session, which is future-focused on the role of digital orthodontics in our practices. You can check out some of the speakers she has lined up on the back cover. Technology continues to impact the way we treat patients. In the spirit of "the future," I asked ChatGPT to write this letter for me. Check out the results >>>

Not bad, but I have concerns with the emergence of new technology as it relates to our interpersonal relationships. There is nothing like the feeling you get from shaking a hand, giving a hug to a colleague, sharing a laugh, or sharing thoughts in a letter. So far, technology cannot deliver the feelings of interpersonal connection. As we look to the future and adopt new tools, we need to hang on to what makes us human. As I mentioned to a new orthodontic graduate who was impacted by a special guest at her graduation ceremony (one that she had met by getting involved in volunteer leadership): The relationships forged within our associations are irreplaceable for those that make the effort to get involved. Take that ChatGPT, can YOU feel it?



JOHN METZ | FAO PRESIDENT

In the spirit of "the future," I asked ChatGPT to "write a Letter from the President of the FAO about future technology."

Dear esteemed colleagues and members of the Florida Association of Orthodontists,

I am deeply honored to pen this letter to you as your President, and I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for the trust you've vested in me. Our community, dedicated to exceptional service and advancing the art and science of orthodontics, is one of the most vibrant, active, and forward-thinking in the country.

Central to the technological advancements in our field are the innovations in custom aligners and 3D printed braces. These techniques are providing us with unprecedented levels of precision and customization. Custom aligners, tailored to the exact dental anatomy of each patient, can improve the comfort and effectiveness of treatment. Meanwhile, 3D printed braces are increasing the speed and efficiency of orthodontic procedures, enhancing our ability to give our patients the beautiful, healthy smiles they deserve in a timely manner.



**2023
Annual
Session**



MISSION: To engage and inspire our members and promote the value of professional orthodontic care to the public.

Goals and Objectives



A. Create memorable, enriching experiences with fellow orthodontists.

1. Plan and hold exceptional annual meetings, continuing with a doctors-only focus, rotating the venue from Tampa in 2024 to Orlando in 2025 to another major city in 2026 to attract a broader audience of orthodontists.
2. Facilitate additional and expanded gatherings of orthodontists, such as Florida Dental Conference, FAO Happy Hours in select cities, Dentists' Day on the Hill, and FDA Foundation Mission of Mercy (MOM) projects.



B. Increase linkages with key stakeholders and allies.

1. Create high-impact linkages with local/regional study clubs, training program directors, and residents.
2. Establish committees or liaisons/influencers (e.g., annual meeting planning, legislative, diversity/inclusion, marketing) to address specific needs and/or obtain information, and report to Executive Board.
3. Identify and support FAO leaders to become more involved in SAO leadership.



C. Train and mobilize advocates to influence public policy.

1. Recruit and train a new cohort of orthodontists to become advocates in local, state and federal policy.
2. Monitor the upcoming Florida dental practice legislation and use this as an opportunity to protect patients and amplify the role of professional orthodontic care.



D. Enhance marketing and communications to tell our story.

1. Design and launch new website.
2. Expand storytelling using custom videography and photography.
3. Mix phone calling/texting with traditional methods to communicate about meetings and opportunities.
4. Adopt and utilize Customer Relationship Manager (CRM) solution to track and analyze membership, engagement, and communications.



E. Strengthen governance and management to secure FAO's future.

1. Institute Microsoft Teams, update the Policy Manual, and embed strategic plan report in every meeting.
2. Plan and hold a leadership retreat every 2½ years (June 2025, January 2028).
3. Explore alternatives to existing leadership ladder.
4. Update agreement to ensure executive management capacity and effectiveness.

VISION: FAO excels in engaging its members, elevating awareness of orthodontics as specialty throughout the state, and promoting laws and regulations that enhance patient health and safety.

Update from Florida's 2023 Legislative Session

By Dr. Andy Brown, FAO Director

For the first time in quite a while, the FAO, with big backing and support by the AAO and their hired lobbying firm Johnson and Stewart, and equal support from our FDA lobbyists on the ground as well ... *We got in the game!*

In the name of better quality healthcare, and better outcomes and accountability to and for patients within the State of Florida, and with the new world of “telehealth,” we took a big look at the current workflow by dentists using that model of patient care. The goal is to bring to the *Dentistry Statutes of the State of Florida* definitions for “digital scanning” that did not exist 20 years ago when many of the latest changes were re-worded, and reinforcing the accountability and requirements to the “dentist of record” who signs the prescriptions for Class II medical devices, like aligners, and other laboratory produced prosthetics and devices as well. It puts in Statute the requirements for the licensed dentists to have ways for the patients to reach out in emergencies, and likewise still require the license numbers for providers to be incorporated in all dissemination of advertisements and billboard material used to market the business itself. The advertisements would also have to include wording stating seeing a dentist “in person” before beginning treatment is recommended.

How did things turn out during this session?

Senator Jim Boyd's bill **SB 356: Defining Direct-to Consumer Products and Teledentistry** passed all three Committees of reference, and passed off the Senate floor unanimously! Representative Kim Berfield's **HB 503** passed the first two Committees, but was not heard in the last Committee stop, and thus the overall outcome failed for this session. We have great insight as to how to move forward next year, and both sponsors look forward to re-introducing these Bills next year, and having the outcome being different! We need to start early on grooming fellow orthodontists, and perhaps even patients who would be interested and available to testify at Committee stops next year.



Great props for all the work done by Anita Berry, Joe Anne Hart, Alexandra Abboud and our other lobbyists that did the prep work before and after Session. More props for all those orthodontists hitting the **Dentist Day on the Hill** in Tallahassee during session to fight for the bills we wanted to pass, and getting the legwork done throughout Session to make the great strides we did! We have a great team, but we need more support going forward, and we hope we will have even more engagement from our orthodontists throughout the state, even if it is just responding to the emails to contact the legislators as the Committee stops are noticed. We will work to get all dentists involved in responding to these missives going forward. They are counted and cataloged by each of the legislators, and especially from those responders within their own districts.

With those same partners mentioned above we did have good advocacy and subsequent great outcomes with funding the **Dental Student Loan Repayment** opportunities included in the state budget with RECURRING funding going forward of \$2 million per year. This will allow dentists to practice in under-served areas of the state, and to be able to get their loan values reimbursed up to \$50k/year, and for up to five years. We look forward to implementing the programs within the state very soon.

Fellow orthodontists, advocacy is a year round engagement with those that make decisions on our bailiwick of dentistry. We are here to help kindle your fire to help the profession, and ultimately all patient care going forward. With that, contributions to our AAOPAC and FDAPAC also work wonders keeping our lobbying efforts moving forward as well, and the lobbyists do have the most constructive relationships with legislators overall. Tell us what you need to get started, and we will all move forward, stronger together, for doing so!

New Director Spotlight

Meet Dr. Brett Lawton

Brett Lawton is a sixth generation native to Central Florida, and he enjoys practicing orthodontics in Winter Park and Oviedo. He practiced together with his father and past-President of FAO, Dr. Tom Lawton, for 17 years and truly feels blessed to have worked alongside his best friend and mentor. Brett attended Vanderbilt University, the University of Kentucky and the University of Florida for undergraduate, dental and orthodontic training. Yes, he is partial to the SEC conference! He is married with three children, and enjoys aviation, scuba diving and playing guitar in his free time.



Dr. Randy Rigsby honored with the 2022-2023 FAO Distinguished Service Award

By Dr. TJ Albert, Immediate Past President

This year, the FAO Board unanimously selected Dr. Randy Rigsby as the recipient of its Distinguished Service Award. Though Dr. Rigsby was unable to attend the Annual Session in person, members created a video of congratulations for him, and Dr. Billy Neale (in photo, on left) and Dr. Brian Jacobus (in photo, on right) personally delivered the award. We were saddened to learn that Dr. Rigsby passed away on June 5, 2023. Though we will miss him dearly, it brings us comfort to know he witnessed our appreciation as we celebrated his lifetime of accomplishments as a leader in orthodontics and a champion in his local community.

Randy served as our FAO President from 2008-2009 and then as the SAO President from 2017-18. He was also a Past President of the Escambia-Santa Rosa County Dental Association as well as the Northwest Florida District Dental Association. In addition, he served on the statewide committee of Children's Dental Health Month, served as a FDA Delegate of the Northwest District for 10 years, and on the FDA President's Ad Hoc Committee on Licensure. Randy served the FAO as a director of our Expanded Functions Program for Orthodontic



Assistants for 10 years and as an AAO delegate. The FAO continues to thrive and be recognized as one of the best components of the AAO largely due to the exceptional leadership of members like Randy Rigsby. His example of servant leadership will continue to inspire future leaders for generations to come. Rest in peace, Dr. Rigsby.

Orthodontic Residency Program Updates

University of Florida

- Our 2023 Class graduated on May 19, 2023. Congratulations to Dr. Krystal Gage, Dr. Eric Rabinowitz (chief resident), Dr. Chantal Peterkin, and Dr. David Jensen (pictured left to right). They will all be practicing in Florida except Dr. Jensen, who will be in Hawaii.
- After 16 years, Dr. Andy Brown retired in December 2022 as a courtesy faculty. Dr. Lori Aiosa, from Orange Park, became our new courtesy faculty. Our other courtesy faculty include Drs. James Morrish, John Metz and Leandra Dopazo. Dr. Bill Layman gives Business Management Lectures monthly.
- This past year, Dr. Sarah Abu Arqub joined our faculty.
- Our second-year residents received a research award from the SAO.



- Our incoming residents are Dr. Monique Nguyen from the University of Pacific, Dr. Shyamaly Premaraj from University of Nebraska, Dr. Brittany Morgan from Nova Southeastern University and Dr. Saloni Mehta from University of Michigan.

Nova Southeastern University

- Our Class of 2023 graduates on June 16, 2023. Congratulations to Dr. Emilio Hernandez, Dr. Mandi Hirsch, Dr. Karen Nachum, Dr. Aaron Schubel, Dr. Marissa Solares, and Dr. Beatriz Tejera
- The program is currently searching for part-time clinical instructors. Interested individuals should contact Dr. S. Prem Premaraj, Professor and Chair, at spremara@nova.edu.
- From Dr. Premaraj: “The FAO’s continued generosity towards NSU’s orthodontic program is greatly appreciated! Thank you for allowing full-time faculty and residents to attend the annual meeting without registration fee. I am proud of the progress we have made in the last year, and it would be impossible without the dedicated faculty, residents and staff. I think partnership with our alumni is essential and important for the successful operation any our program. I look forward to work with our NSU orthodontic alumni and friends to enhance the educational experience we provide.”
- We are happy to welcome the following candidates who have been matched with our program and will begin their training on July 5, 2023: Dr. Austin Chikamoto (NYU), Dr. Kim-Sa Kelly (UCLA), Dr. Diana Kim (NYU), Dr. Julia Kohler (NYU), Dr. Christopher Mariani (NSU), Dr. Komal Virk (School of Dental Science, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland).
- These part-time faculty continue to provide excellent clinical instruction in the program on part-time basis: Dr. Malcom Meister, Dr. Jorge Coro, Dr. Nelson Diaz, Dr. James Ginzler, Dr. Piero Palacios, Dr. Daniel Camacho, and Dr. Don Wexler (Clearwater Campus).

PO Box 611
Brandon, FL 33509
813-903-8811

Digital Orthodontics: OUR FUTURE

FAO ANNUAL SESSION

February 29 – March 2, 2024 | Tampa, Florida

**THESE
SPEAKERS
AND MORE:**

Dr. Maz Moshiri
Sponsored by Invisalign

Dr. Chris Bonebreak Jackson
Sponsored by LightForce

Dr. Alyssa Emory Carter
Sponsored by Dental Monitoring