

# StraightTalk

SUMMER 2024



What a Night! Speakeasy Dinner at the 2024 Annual Session in Tampa



## IN THIS ISSUE:

President's Message, page 2 | A Banner Year for Advocacy, page 4 | Member News, page 6-7

## FAO OFFICERS 2024-2025

---

### President

Dr. Arghavan Welch  
Palm Beach Gardens

### Vice President

Dr. John Cordoba  
Lake Mary

### Secretary-Treasurer

Dr. Eddy Sedeno, III  
Miami Lakes

### Directors

Dr. Andy Brown  
Orange Park

Dr. Jodi Prine  
Panama City

Dr. Brett Lawton  
Winter Park

Dr. Nick Mann  
Tampa, FL

### Past President

Dr. John Metz  
Land O' Lakes

### Executive Director

Lissette Zuknick

### FL SAO Director

Dr. Thomas "TJ" Albert  
Naples

### AAO Delegates

Dr. John Beattie  
Orlando

Dr. Jim Wortham  
Clermont

---

### FIND US:

faortho.org  
813-903-8811  
lissette@faortho.org

---

## Change is the Only Constant

Disruptor companies are rewriting the rules in every industry. They promote a culture of change, innovation, and healthy mindset that encourages adaptability — or they risk getting left behind. We cherish our rich history at the FAO, but we are also forward thinking. FAO started as a study club with a hand full of orthodontists in the 1940's and look us now. We're one of the strongest components of the AAO.

This didn't happen by chance. It is a direct result of intentional vision, planning and execution by our fierce members and leaders. I am so proud of our board and everything we have accomplished.

In the spirit of change, we are switching gears and taking our annual meeting to Orlando; this is scheduled for February 27 – March 1, 2025. We hope this centralized, family-friendly location offers convenience and an opportunity for more of our members from across the state to attend. Dr. John Cordoba is planning an amazing scientific session themed around multidisciplinary orthodontics.

Please check out our new website that launched this Spring. The Whiddon Group continues to lead our marketing efforts with a mission of enhanced engagement and communication with our members. ZuBu Management Solutions will serve as the executive director team moving forward.

Words cannot describe how thankful and grateful we are for Lissette Zuknick and her years of wisdom and commitment to the FAO. She will continue to shine her light on the FAO as part of the ZuBu team.

We continue to complete the tasks on our 5-year strategic plan approved January 2023. We are enhancing our communication and strengthening our relationships with the residents and the administration at the three orthodontic residencies in our state. We have been



ARGHAVAN WELCH | FAO PRESIDENT

at the forefront of advocacy in FL and have exhibited exemplary grassroots efforts along with AAO leadership.

My goals for this year include continuing the legacy of those that came before me and championing AAO's mission of diversity and inclusion.

Twelve years ago, I attended my first FAO meeting. So many individuals within our organization inspired me to find my voice. As president, I want to inspire change by encouraging you to get involved. They say service is for givers, but I can think of so many ways I have benefited from FAO. FAO has truly helped me to step out of my comfort zone to find myself and develop my leadership. It has given me a sense of community and friendships I will cherish forever. I can say with confidence that I have left every annual session more self-aware. Private practice can be a lonely place and what better way to meet and interact with like-minded colleagues. If you have ideas, we want to hear from you. As Florida orthodontists, our unity is our greatest strength when navigating the dynamic landscape of our noble profession.

Thank you for entrusting me with the honor of leading the FAO and I'm excited for the year ahead.





**2024  
Annual  
Session**





# A Banner Year for our Advocacy Efforts

## *Governor DeSantis signs into law two bills that support dentistry*

The American Association of Orthodontists, the Florida Association of Orthodontists, and the Florida Dental Association worked together on an aggressive agenda of priorities to benefit our patients and the practice of dentistry and orthodontics in the state. As a result, the 2024 Legislative Session was a BANNER YEAR!

Congratulations to all of our members who supported the AAO and ADA with these initiatives. Your efforts make a difference — responding to emails to send letters, making visits to Tallahassee, setting meetings with your local legislators, and making AAOPAC contributions.

Below are summaries of two new laws. There is always more work to be done to stay on top of laws that affect our profession and the safety of our patients, so mark your calendar for the FDA's **2025 Dentist's Day on the Hill** and make plans to attend on **March 25, 2025**. The FAO has funds available to support your travel expenses (\$400 per attendee). More information will be coming to you through emails and in our fall newsletter.

### HB855 “Teledentistry”

- Require every dentist and certain individuals, partnerships, corporations, and other entities to provide specified information to certain patients
- Require a dentist of record to remain primarily responsible for all dental treatments for a patient treated through telehealth
- Require advertisements of dental services provided through telehealth to include a specified disclaimer for certain dental services, etc.
- Create a standard of care for orthodontic care that includes an in-person examination and review of x-rays prior to the movement of teeth

### SB 7016 “Live Healthy”

SB 7016 contains language appropriating an additional recurring \$8 million to the Dental Student Loan Repayment Program that encourages dentists and orthodontists to serve the Medicaid population in dental health professional shortage areas and medically under-served areas throughout Florida. In exchange for the provider's commitment to that mission, the Dental Student Loan Repayment Program provides \$50,000 in financial assistance per year, for up to 5 years, to go toward repayment of dental student loans.

To learn about these bills and more, visit [floridadental.org](http://floridadental.org) and select Advocacy.



# SAVE THE DATE!

**DENTIST'S DAY ON THE HILL**  
Tuesday, March 25, 2025

**fd**a florida dental ASSOCIATION

# Tracing the early steps of HB855

*Dr. Steve Tinsworth shares the beginning of this year's successful legislation*

Efforts for the DIY “Teledentistry” Dental Bill were initiated in the fall of 2022 with a visit by Anita Berry and me with my state Senator Jim Boyd, whom I had know for decades. The bill evolved in the Senate and had a House bill. Though it passed in the Senate, it fell short in the House in the 2023 Session. With renewed focus in 2024 by AAO/FAO, plus targeted financial support by the Florida team of Advocacy, HB855 passed the house and arrived on the Governor’s desk for his signature on behalf of the previously unprotected Florida public. There were no laws about teledental care as it evolved during Covid. Dentistry saw first-hand the adverse impact of teledentistry without professional guidance and rose to be white knights to assure quality care and legal protection for patients. **Well done, FAO and AAO**, being effective advocates for the public and the profession. Let’s keep it going! AAOPAC support and active advocacy is continually needed to move forward on issues at the state and national level. Please join us, with active and/or financial support. AAOPAC contributions can be made at AAOPAC.org or scan the QR code.

Best wishes,

**Steve Tinsworth, DMD**  
Past FAO and SAO President and  
Current Florida Federal  
Captain for NAN



## INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION:

At the 2024 Dentist Day on the Hill, Dr. Steve Tinsworth spent time with a group of four dental students, coaching them on the legislative priorities that the AAO and FDA were advocating for. The students prepared their presentations, each taking an issue to explain to Senator Danny Burgess. If you have never been to DDOH, it can feel overwhelming at first — understanding the various bills and budget items and the language to use when speaking with legislators. Thankfully, there are dentists and orthodontists at the event, like Dr. Tinsworth, to bring new members along to meetings, and provide valuable mentorship to anyone that wants to get involved. Thank you, Dr. Tinsworth, for all of the work you did with these students and on behalf of all members and our patients

## Thank you, Lissette Zuknick, for 25 years

*By Dr. John Metz, FAO Past President*

At the 2024 Annual Session, I was honored to recognize Lissette Zuknick for her 25 years of service as FAO Executive Director. Over the years she created her own executive management firm, with a talented team of professionals to bring her organizational style and association expertise to other AAO components. Countless state presidents have applauded her work. I’d like to share here some thoughtful messages sent in from past FAO leaders. **From Dr. Brian Jacobus:** “From my first introduction to Lissette by Kim Reed, I knew that this was a person, as young as she was, that was personable, self confident and very professional. That opinion has been strengthened and justified over the, dare I say it, the 25 years that I have had the privilege of working with her and calling her a dear friend. Lissette was a mentor to me as I rose through the FAO and the SAO ranks and I could always count on her assistance and wisdom when I needed it. Lissette’s love for the

FAO and its members supersedes any personal wants and needs. Her devotion and care for us is front and center, although she does most of this behind the scenes where many members have no idea how hard she works for us.”

**From Dr. Jeremy Albert:** “Lissette is the ultimate example of professionalism as an executive director and a tireless worker for us as orthodontists and volunteer leaders in the profession. The FAO would not be what it is today without her commitment and continued guidance for the last 25 years.” Congratulations on 25 years, Lissette — and thank you in advance for your continued work for the FAO.





# New Director Spotlight

## Meet Dr. Nick Mann

Dr. Mann is a Florida native — born and raised in the Tampa Bay area. Dr. Mann is a “Triple Gator” with a Bachelors Degree in Mechanical Engineering, Dental Degree and Certificate in Orthodontics all from the University of Florida. While attending residency he met his wife, Brooklynn, with whom he has two children — Jackson and Ila.

After 14 short years of living and learning in Gainesville, Dr. Mann was thrilled to return to his hometown and serve the communities that gave him so much throughout his childhood. In 2016, he purchased an existing practice and rebranded it, establishing the name Mann

Orthodontics. Mann Orthodontics now has four dedicated orthodontic offices and two pediatric offices with three doctors — all Florida Gators!!!

Clearly, Dr. Mann is very passionate about the Florida Gators, but is also passionate about his career as a doctor, owner and educator. In 2018, Dr. Mann took a part time position as an Associate Professor at LECOM School of Dental Medicine where he teaches Fundamentals of Orthodontics to second year dental students. In 2021, Dr. Mann was invited as a guest lecturer at the University of Florida school of Dentistry where he returns now every summer to give several lectures to the



second year dental students as well as spending time with the orthodontic residents.

In his free time, Dr. Mann enjoys watching all Tampa Bay sports, fishing, exercising and spending time with his wife, family and friends. But most of all, Dr. Mann cherishes the many Saturdays a year he gets to spend in Ben Hill Griffin Stadium, cheering for the Florida Gators!

## Dr. Andy Brown Named ADA Trustee-Elect

Florida Association of Orthodontists (FAO) Executive Committee member and Florida Dental Association (FDA) Past President Dr. Andy Brown will represent the 17th District as a member of the American Dental Association (ADA) Board of Trustees. Members of the 17th District delegation elected Dr. Brown at their January 2024 meeting and the FDA House of Delegates unanimously ratified his election on January 20, 2024. He is currently ADA trustee-elect and will be installed as trustee in October.

The ADA Board of Trustees is the managing body of the association; its voting members consist of 17 trustees (one from each trustee district), the president-elect, two vice presidents and the new dentist committee chair. The president, treasurer and executive director are non-voting members of the board which is responsible for the ADA's success and growth.

An orthodontist practicing in Orange Park, Fla. since 1984, Dr. Brown has been actively involved with organized dentistry throughout his career.

He is a past member of the FDA's Board of Trustees, is a member of the Governmental Action Committee (former chair) and is a liaison for the Council on Dental Health. He previously served the ADA as a delegate and as vice chairman of the Council on Dental Practice. Dr. Brown is also past president of the Clay County Dental Society and previously ran the Peer Review program for the Northeastern District Dental Association for nearly three decades.

While many of the ADA's districts are comprised of multiple states, Florida is its own district — the 17th Trustee District — in the ADA governing structure. Dr. Rudolph “Rudy” Liddell is currently serving as the 17th District's trustee.



# In Memory of Two Past Presidents

## Dr. Peter Bayer

April 13, 1939 — December 16, 2023

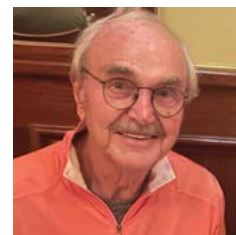
*It is with great sadness that we announce the loss of Dr. Peter Bayer, FAO President from 1986-1987 and father of current member Dr. Leigh Curtis. We asked Dr. Billy Neale, a long-time colleague of Dr. Bayer, to write a few words:*

In my mind, we lost an orthodontic legend in the passing of Dr. Peter Bayer on December 16, 2023.

Thirty-seven years ago, I started my orthodontic practice in Fort Walton Beach, FL., and Pete was a prominent local orthodontist and the then FAO president. He reached out to invite me to my first FAO annual meeting. He described the meeting as a unique setting where Florida Orthodontists come together to learn, and develop life-long professional and personal relationships, checking the competitor label at the door. He described it as meeting to experience true camaraderie, which is defined as

“spirit of friendship and community between two people or a group of people, where the members of the group are comfortable around each other and they support each other.” This definition has truly described my experience over the years at the FAO annual meeting, and it continues to draw me back, year after year. His legacy is that he brought the concept of camaraderie back to the local competitive arena successfully by spreading the spirit of friendship and community within our local orthodontic and dental environment. He opened lines of professional communication, organized study groups, encourage involvement in dental societies, mentored the developing orthodontic and dental professionals. He was involved in the general community as well, delivering that same spirit of friendship and community. His impact can be seen in his influence in developing

leadership in FAO’s Northwest District in Dr. Randy Rigsby (RIP), Dr. Leigh Curtis (his daughter), and myself. I never considered myself for leadership, but with his encouragement and support (push), I opted to serve, which to my surprise was very rewarding. Even our current NWD director, Dr. Jodi Prine, has likely been influenced in some way by his concept of camaraderie.



***“A spirit of friendship and community between two people or a group of people, where the members of the group are comfortable around each other and they support each other.”***

Rest in Peace My Comrade,  
Dr Billy Neale

## Dr. Clare McCleary

October 18, 1916 — November 15, 2023

*In November 2023, we lost Dr. Clare McCleary, former FAO President, who served from 1955-1956. If you look at the list of past presidents on our website, you will see that Dr. McCleary led our organization within its first ten years. Dr. John Harrison wrote this about Dr. McCleary:*

Jon Wilson and I recently had a wonderful talk with Clare, who retired over 30 years ago. He was a charming, interesting person and an early responder to the Begg light round wire technique, developed in Australia in the 1960’s, but technically difficult and did not convince the diehard edgewise orthodontist. I doubt that it exists anywhere in practice. Clare played singles tennis at 102, regretfully having to play doubles until 104, when he gave up tennis for pool. All his adult life he sang tenor in Barbershop Quartets and was greatly admired by all the women at the Senior Center where he lived. He loved fly fishing and fished the lake on the campus to stay outdoors. He looked and acted like he was 65 — no one would ever guess he was 107.



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

PRESORTED  
FIRST CLASS  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
TAMPA, FL  
PERMIT NO 3311

## FAO 2025 Annual Session Hilton Orlando February 27 - March 1, 2025

Our annual meeting is moving to Orlando,  
centrally located and renowned for its  
world-class dining and major theme parks.

Come for the meeting  
and stay for the weekend!



*Let's Go!*

**ORLANDO**