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Greetings!

I hope this finds you beginning to enjoy the first signs of spring such as warmer weather, longer days, hearing and seeing songbirds, blooming flowers and budding trees, the smell of fresh cut grass, new butterflies, new young horses, calves and other animals, new fruit and vegetables such as strawberries, onions, asparagus, the opening of the snow cone concession, and many others; I am also looking forward, here in Tennessee, to going to some of the many festivals, taking short road trips to various places in our beautiful state. I also hope you're on the path to getting fully vaccinated against COVID (if not already finished with that) and looking forward to the TOMA Annual Convention and Scientific Seminar (more about that later).

TOMA continues to be very active on behalf of all DOs, osteopathic medical students and others in the profession through a variety of activities, such as the 2021 DO Day on the Hill where DOs and others engaged in meetings with lawmakers to discuss health and educational policy issues favorable to DOs and their patients; this year, DOs and other representatives from Tennessee were part of over 850 physicians, medical students, and affiliate leaders who not only met with members of Congress to address various health policy issues but also to enhance their advocacy and leadership skills. This ongoing advocacy of and for our profession and others on a national level resulted in Congress including \$330 million of additional funding for the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education Program with the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, that was signed on March 21, 2021. On a local level, TOMA continues to actively participate with other physician organizations to protect the health and safety of the people of Tennessee from threats which include unfounded desires to expand scope of practice for non-physicians who do not have equivalent, let alone sufficient, education and experience.

TOMA is represented on the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners' Special Commission for Osteopathic Medical Licensure to, after gathering feedback, provide additional input to stakeholders and review, recommend, and promulgate options for verification of clinical skills in the licensure process for the graduating classes of 2021 and 2020, and later, the Class of 2022, from our Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine. This Commission was necessitated by the surprise announcement by the National Board of Medical Examiners and the Federation of State Medical Boards that they were discontinuing the USMLE Step 2- Clinical Skills examination.

TOMA has also participated in a survey developed by the Coalition for Physician Accountability's UME-to-GME Review Committee, which is charged with obtaining knowledge about innovative or creative solutions that our medical schools and residency and fellowship programs can use/develop, along with sponsoring institutions and specialty societies, to improve the transition from medical school to graduate medical education; this will add to the newly developed comprehensive resources provided from a consortium of organizations such as the

American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, to assist medical school graduates' transition into the all-important foundational first year of postgraduate medical education and training.

The 2021 TOMA Annual Convention and Scientific Seminar is upon us! It will be held in Cool Springs, TN, south of Nashville (we've been there before, some of you may recall); as usual, there will be lots of excellent CME, a virtual pre-convention CME accredited program from LMU-DCOM devoted to preceptor education, the annual business meeting and installation of new officers, and the always exciting poster competition (we have received 13 abstract submissions already!) in addition to other events. The Convention Committee (made up of Drs. Michelle Dilks, Travis Groth, and David Florence, along with LMU-DCOM students Michael Harber, Anantha Singarajah and Kristin Wethington, under the leadership of chair Dr. Tim Bell, along with the outstanding TOMA staff, Betsy Hilt and Annette Miller) has done an excellent, year-long job of putting together what looks like an outstanding program, which will be conducted with appropriate safety measures and precautions. Registration is going well so far; attendance is encouraged, preferably in person, but a virtual option is available for those unable to attend in person. I hope to see many of you there for a great time of education and long overdue fellowship.

TOMA will also be well represented by membership, staff, and others at the upcoming AOA House of Delegates and Annual Business Meeting which will be held in Chicago this coming July.

TOMA has increased its financial support of the Tennessee Medical Foundation (TMF), whose Physician Health Program addresses health concerns specific to health professionals while working to protect the safety of patients in Tennessee. The TMF, which has a TOMA member on its Board of Directors, our own past president Dr. Michael Miller, operates solely on contributions from individuals, hospitals, and grants as well as contributions from organizations. TMF provides valuable, often life or career-saving services to health professionals (and has served many TOMA members in the past) with substance use/abuse and other issues and is a program used as a model for other states around the country; TMF also provides the Tennessee Professional Screening Questionnaire, a safe and secure non-crisis online voluntary free anonymous and confidential mental health screening tool for physicians, PAs, veterinarians, podiatrists, chiropractors, optometrists, x-ray technologists, and clinical perfusionists who are having trouble dealing with or feel overwhelmed by family, professional, relationship, grief, stress, or financial issues (available at www.tn.providerwellness.org). Use of this tool can provide access to appropriate resources for health professionals. TOMA feels the TMF has earned and deserves our support based on its services to not only our members but also to other health professionals and the educational programs it does for health professionals in training throughout Tennessee. I encourage you to [consider your support as well on an individual basis](#).

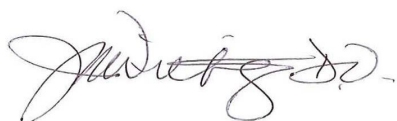
Finally, my time as your president is about to end. It has been my honor, privilege, and pleasure to have the opportunity to serve TOMA in this position and I will continue to do so in a new role as the Immediate Past President and in other state-level roles. I have been blessed to work with an incredible, hard-working executive committee and board of directors, as well as TOMA staff who serve all of you, and others, so very well every day. I am grateful for the new and ongoing friendships, for your ongoing support and loyalty to the profession and this association, and hope you feel our efforts this year to strengthen and expand TOMA's sphere of influence, while maintaining its usual essential services to its members, have been successful. It has been a team effort and TOMA is blessed with great leadership. We are indeed in good hands with our next president.

As always, TOMA stands ready to serve you and welcomes your questions, input, and active participation in our committees and other activities. I urge you to become involved in your association and to contact your legislators to advocate for the safety of the people of Tennessee, our patients.

Sincerely,

Michael Wieting, DO
President

Fraternally,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Michael Wieting, DO". The signature is fluid and includes a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Michael Wieting, DO
President