

2024

KAO Directors Report

Greetings all! Thank you for allowing me to serve as your KAO Director to The Southern Society of Orthodontists (SSO) again this year! I hope you have all had a great summer and I hope that all of you and your families, both at home and work, are doing well. The SAO Board of Directors met in March for our ad interim meeting and I will provide a summary below. I will also share some insight into officer duties and other info as my role as director.

SAO/SWSO Merger Update

As you may be aware, Resolution 12-21 SAO/SWSO (S2-BT/S3-SAO) was passed in the AAO House of Delegates in April 2021. This resolution states that the Southern Association of Orthodontists and the Southwestern Society of Orthodontists will merge as one constituent in the American Association of Orthodontists at the appropriate time in the future. For the past 4-5 years, the SAO and SWSO have been in consultations to blend the two organizations with a unified mission statement and strategic plan.

As of June 2024, the SAO and SWSO are doing business as a merged entity. The new name of the merged constituent will be The Southern Society of Orthodontists. The merger will bring together 15 states to help with the economy of scale and will also help strengthen the constituents. There are details to iron out moving forward and Kentucky will have to amend our bylaws to update to The Southern Society of Orthodontists (SSO).

AAO Update

The CEO of the AAO, Lynn Thomas Gordon, retired and was replaced by Trey Lawrence. Trey will be an outstanding leader and will continue to move the AAO and its members forward. Currently, ~86% of orthodontists in the US are AAO members.

AAO Delegate

A big thanks to Dr. Greg Inman for serving in the AAO delegate role. We appreciate Greg for dedication to the profession and his willingness to serve. Please feel free to reach out to Greg with any questions regarding the AAO and the governance of the organization.

SAO/AAO PAC

Please consider donating to the PAC in support of orthodontic legislative issues/concerns. No matter your political affiliation, all support will be for the betterment of the orthodontic specialty. The SAO leads all constituents in number of donors and dollar amount donated.

SAO/SWSO/SSO Annual Meeting

Please make plans to attend the SSO Annual Meeting September 26-28, 2024, at Rosen Shingle Creek in Orlando. Beth Faber (SAO) is our co-president this year and the meeting is a joint meeting with SWSO. The meeting planning team has worked hard, and the speaker line up is excellent and the social activities are top notch as well. Roberto Clemente, Jr is the keynote speaker. Make plans to attend and enjoy the meeting as well as catch up with old friends and colleagues!



Medicaid Reimbursement Rates for Dentistry and Orthodontics

The KAO is continuing to work with the KDA and the KDAPAC to advocate for Medicaid reform. Primarily, we are advocating for increased reimbursement rates across the board for dentistry. We are currently operating at 75% of the 1987 UCR fees. There hasn't been any increase in years and that needs to change. We had a very successful legislative day in January in Frankfort, but unfortunately the legislature didn't include an increase during the budget session. However, they have said they will review the Medicaid increase in 2025 and not wait until the next budget session. Please contact your legislators and encourage them to support the increase in reimbursement rates!

KAO Director Position

My current term as the Director to the SAO will expire at the end of 2024. Normally, this position is a yearly voted in position that can only be help for 3 consecutive years. With the pandemic these guidelines were loosened. The SAO is now getting back to the original terms. Kentucky will need to find a replacement for me soon.

Ideally, we would find someone soon so I can help mentor them and they can possibly attend the KAO and SAO board meetings as a guest.

The duties of the position are as follows:

- The state director serves on the SAO Board of Directors (BOD) and are responsible for attending the meetings respectively. BOD meetings are held in March and in the fall in conjunction with the SAO Annual Meeting. Dates are provided in advance and official meeting notices are emailed well in advance.
- Shall submit a written component director report for each BOD meeting and serve as a liaison and resource to the state leadership.
- Shall lead the state membership retention directive from the SAO/AAO annually.
- Encourage component leadership to submit nominations for leadership positions and awards.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as the director. Please feel free to reach out to me with questions.

AAO Leadership Conference

Part of the duties of the president-elect include attending the AAO leadership conference. We need to send our president elect or someone else from the board to attend. The leadership conference is held in conjunction with the AAO winter conference. The AAO covers the expenses associated with the leadership conference and provides a discount to the winter conference. We need to work hard to have someone from Kentucky attend this year.

Please contact me with any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas Baldwin, DMD, MS
Inman and Baldwin Orthodontics
520 North Miles Street
Elizabethtown, KY 42701
(270)769-1349 – Office
(270)300-0605 – Cell
thomasdmd25@msn.com

