



GEORGIA OSTEOPATHIC  
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION  
— 1902 —

## GOMA News & Updates

### Volume 38, March 2023

#### **VOC Shines Again this Year**

Georgia DOs have turned out so far for The Virtual Osteopathic Conference (VOC). Registrants from Georgia have increased by 20 percent compared to this time last year, and Georgia has the second most registrants among the participating states.

There's still time to see what all the excitement is about! The VOC has up to 48 AOA 1-A and AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™ that can be viewed on-demand until June 30. Don't miss out on this easy and convenient way to earn your CME hours.

[Register here by March 31 before the rates increase!](#)



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### **2023 Day at the Capitol**



On Thursday March 2nd, a delegation from GOMA joined members of the Georgia Academy of Family Physicians, Georgia Chapter or American Academy of Pediatricians, Georgia Chapter of American College of Physicians, and Georgia OB-GYN Society for the annual Day at the Capitol. The five groups comprise the Patient-Centered Physicians Coalition of Georgia (PCPC). Once

again due to Covid-19, each group was limited in attendance and stayed in the Empire Room of the Floyd Veterans Memorial Building to hear about priorities and learn of changes in the state. Pictured above (L to R): William Anderson (DO '26 from GA-PCOM); Destiny Sciuva (DO '25 from PCOM South Georgia); GOMA President Dianna Glessner, DO; GOMA delegate to PCPC Karen Turner, DO; Executive Director Betsy Hilt; Michael Baron, DO and Marla Golden, DO, FACEP who serves as the Associate Dean of Clinical Education, PCOM Georgia and PCOM South Georgia.

The five main speakers at the program were: Grant Thomas, Director of Governor Kemp's Office of Health Strategy; Kevin Tanner, Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities; Megan Andrews, Assistant Commissioner for Policy of the Georgia Department of Public Health; Dean Burke, MD, Chief Medical Director of Georgia Department of Community Health and former state senator; and Sharon Cooper, RN, Republican State Representative for District 45 (Cobb County).

Karen Turner, DO spoke in front of the group and explained the legislative priorities for GOMA: physician workforce sustainability by supporting osteopathic medical schools and residency training programs in the state of Georgia; tort reform with an effort to improve the environment to practice medicine by implementing CANDOR (Communication and Optimal Resolution); health insurance issues such as reducing administrative burden including improving prior authorization, ensuring the adequacy of health insurance networks and improving patient access to medication by advancing pharmacy benefit reform. Lastly, Dr. Turner spoke about scope of practice issues that would undermine patient safety including protecting against title misappropriation and ensuring oversight of non-physician clinicians (see article below).

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**Expansion of Licensure Stopped in Senate Health &**

## Human Science Committee

SB 102 and HB 445 would have allowed CRNAs to practice without the direction or supervision of a physician AND changes the administration of anesthesia from a delegated medical act to a nursing act, which would have removed any oversight by the Composite Medical Board. Due to phone calls and emails, the committees voted on to not pass these bills out of committee. Action by the osteopathic profession helped legislators understand that patient safety is a priority.

## Legislative Update

It is now past March 6 “Crossover Day at the Georgia Capital”. Bills must pass out of one house of the legislature by that day or it is delayed till next year. Although measures that fail to advance could see life as part of other legislation if their language is inserted in other bills that previously cleared a chamber.

Gun safety bills proposed by Democrats did not get a hearing prior to Crossover Day. The House bills regarding gun safety are: HB 44 (private gun sales background checks); HB 45 (three-day waiting period for gun purchases); HB 135 (firearm owners’ responsibility if their firearms were used by a minor); and HB 161 would require that firearms that may be accessible for minors to be stored securely.

There is a rumor that the House Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security will have a hearing on HB 161 now that it won’t be voted on until next year. Email the chair of the committee, Rep. J Collins, if you feel a hearing is appropriate on these bills:

[j.collins@house.ga.gov](mailto:j.collins@house.ga.gov).

Now the bills that have a chance of getting to the Governor’s desk.

They have already passed one house of the legislature. Go to [www.legis.ga.gov](http://www.legis.ga.gov) to find details of the legislation as well as who to contact using the hyperlinks.

HB 143 would require the Georgia Department of Community Health to cover continuous glucose monitors (CGMs) as a pharmacy benefit

through Medicaid. Medicaid recipients would be eligible for this benefit if they have a diabetes mellitus diagnosis and use insulin daily or have a history of problematic hypoglycemia. Furthermore, the patient or caregiver would be required to participate in training for the device, and an in-person or telehealth visit would be required before and after the initial prescription to continually assess the patient's diabetes treatment plan. This bill is in the Senate Health & Human Services Committee.

HB 129 is in the Senate Children & Families Committee. It seeks to improve the maternal health of extremely low-income pregnant women by expanding the eligibility criteria for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits to pregnant women. Here's the background on TANF: it is a federal block grant which the state combines with its own funding to meet the program's goals of providing temporary support to very low income families so they can achieve financial independence. Each state establishes its own policies for exactly who can get help, how much they can receive, and for how long. Representative Michelle Au, MD provided some math to the House regarding the current qualifications here in Georgia, which illustrated how the current criteria make it almost impossible to qualify for TANF. The minimum work requirement and the wage threshold worked out to making \$8.50 per hour which is less than the minimum wage. This is likely to be addressed next year to account for inflation and minimum wage.

HB 85 filed by Cobb County state Rep. Sharon Cooper, RN is bipartisan measure that would encourage better health outcomes for all Georgians, especially those with cancer. HB 85 would require health insurance benefit policies in Georgia to cover biomarker testing for the diagnosis, treatment, management or ongoing monitoring of a disease or condition, such as cancer. Each person's cancer has a unique pattern of biomarkers that can help clarify a diagnosis and even determine the best treatment for an individual. While biomarker testing is most commonly used for cancer, it could soon be used for other conditions, such as Alzheimer's. This legislation would afford Georgians coverage for this innovative approach to testing and help individuals figure out if treatment

would be effective or not, saving them valuable time and money. It is in the Senate Health & Human Services Committee.

The Georgia Senate passed SB 65, the Governor's bill to replace the federal healthcare.gov insurance marketplace with a Georgia state insurance market, GeorgiaAccess.gov. Unlike healthcare.gov, the new Georgia Access website does not compare insurance options, making it necessary for consumers to call multiple brokers individually. It is in the House Insurance Committee.

SB 76 passed the Senate on March 6. It will cap the cost of a 90-day supply of insulin for state employees at \$105. This will result in savings for 2,400 teachers, firefighters, and public servants across the state. While this isn't a full cap on insulin, it is a first step to ensuring access to this critical, life-saving medication.

On March 6 the House passed HB 181, a proposal to make kratom a Schedule I narcotic (like heroin, cocaine, etc.) which would ban it and criminalize it. Kratom is currently legal in Georgia, and its proponents passionately testified that it had helped with their anxiety, lack of energy, and even withdrawal from opioid addiction. Its opponents were equally passionate, complaining about the lack of enforcement on labeling and sharing stories of loved ones who were harmed by Kratom.

As you can see, legislators continue to influence health care, and it is imperative for physicians to educate them on how to get it right.

**Vickie Bryant-Harris, DO**  
**Updates on Gambling Disorder**



It appears that sports betting will be legalized this year. Sports betting seems to come up every year in the General Assembly, and this year is no different. However, usually it's brought up as a constitutional amendment which requires 120 votes (2/3 of the House members) in order to pass. **HB 380**, the Georgia Lottery Game of Sports Betting Act, posits that online sports betting is simply an extension of the state lottery and therefore would only need 91 votes to pass.

It has been estimated that \$2 billion was wagered a few weeks ago on Super Bowl Sunday. Sports fans are already inundated with FanDuel, DraftKings, Ceasars, BetMGM and on-and-on. Who is making the money? It isn't the gamblers. And now, Amazon is entering the sports betting arena.

The 20% tax revenue from legalized sports gambling would go towards the Lottery for Education account. Currently, lottery proceeds go toward tuition grants and scholarships for 2.1 million undergraduate college students in the state as well as to the Georgia Prekindergarten Program for 1.7 million 4-year-olds.

Currently, as the most significant legal gambling option in the state, the Georgia Lottery takes seriously its charge to promote responsible gambling. In fact, it contributes \$400,000 each year to the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and

Developmental Disabilities specifically to help fund research, education and treatment of gambling addiction.

We interviewed Vickie Bryant-Harris, DO to better understand the health risks of gambling. Dr. Bryant-Harris is a 1992 graduate of the Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine who completed her general psychiatry residency with an emphasis in addiction medicine at St Barnabas Hospital in Bronx, New York after completing a medical internship at Northlake Regional Medical Center in Tucker, Georgia (1992-1993). Dr. Bryant-Harris currently is working at Aspire Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities in Albany, Georgia diagnosing and treating outpatient adults with severe and persistent mental illness. She is an award-winning Clinical Assistant Professor at the PCOM Georgia. Her research interests are depression in minority populations, prolonged grief and mental health issues in women. In November 2022, Dr. Bryant-Harris spoke at the American College of Neuropsychiatrist/American College of Osteopathic Neurologists Virtual Conference on “Depression Treatment Updates”. She has been married for the past 34 years and has one daughter, a son-in-law and a 5-year-old granddaughter. Her most recent hobby is African dance and drumming. She serves on the Board of Directors for House of T.I.M.E which serves woman with addiction and mental health issues as well as volunteering with the Association of Sickle Cell Lower Chattahoochee Region assisting with their monthly mobile clinic.

Dr. Bryant-Harris gave us some history saying, “Referred to as pathological gambling when first included in the DSM- III 1980. It was placed in the impulse-control disorders category.

Pathological gambling was renamed Gambling Disorder (GD) in the DSM-V and moved to the new category of Addictions and Related Disorders.”

“Like all psychiatric diagnosis the disorder has to cause a clinically significant distress or impairment within daily life activities - school, relationships, and occupation. There is also a



time component with all psychiatric diagnosis. The DSM5 TR describes gambling disorder with 2 main Criteria:

“Criteria A: A persistent and recurrent problematic gambling behavior leading to clinically significant impairment or distress, as indicated by the individual exhibiting 4 or more behaviors in a 12-month period:

1. Needs to gamble with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve the desired excitement.
2. Is restless or irritable when attempting to cut down or stop gambling.
3. Has made repeated unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop gambling.
4. Preoccupied with gambling (reliving past gambling experiences, handicapping or planning the next venture, thinking of ways to get money for gambling).
5. Often gambles when feeling distressed (helpless, guilty, anxious, depressed).
6. After losing money gambling, often returns another day to get even (“chasing” one's losses).
7. Lies to conceal the extent of involvement with gambling.
8. Has jeopardized or lost a significant relationship, job, or educational or career opportunity because of gambling.
9. Relies often on others to provide money to relieve desperate financial situations caused by gambling.

“Criteria B: The gambling behavior is not better explained by a manic episode.

“Specify if: Episodic vs. Persistent; Early remission or sustained remission; Mild (4-5 criteria met), Moderate (6-7 criteria met) or Severe (8-9 criteria met)”

We asked her about the differential diagnosis, and Dr. Bryant-Harris gave the following four:

“1. Nondisorder gambling: Can be professional or social. Risks are limited and discipline is central in professional gambling. Social is limited time period of gambling with acceptable losses.

There may be problems associated with loss of control or chasing behavior but it does not meet full criteria.

"2. Manic episode: loss of judgment and excessive gambling may occur during a manic episode-when the mania is over gambling normally stops but if individual has a maladaptive gambling behavior not explained by mania than an additional diagnosis of GD can be given. Some individuals may exhibit manic like behavior but when away from gambling, manic like features disappear.

"3. Personality disorder: May occur within individuals with antisocial personality disorder and other personality disorders.

"4. Gambling symptoms due to dopaminergic medications: some individuals taking dopaminergic medications may experience urges to gamble and impairing them enough to meet criteria for gambling disorder."

Dr. Bryant-Harris went on to discuss treatment options, "Therapy can help people understand gambling and think about how gambling affects them and their family. Group therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), psychodynamic therapy, and family therapy. Gamblers Anonymous. Individuals will need to have the readiness to change and or recognize the problem and share with a health care provider to intervention"

Dr. Bryant-Harris further edified with statistics and perspective.

"DSM 5 TR Prevalence in the general population, lifetime prevalence rate is 0.4%-1.0%. Women lifetime prevalence rate is 0.2 % vs. men 0.6%. 12-month prevalence of DSM 5 gambling disorder among ethnoracial groups in US:

"0.52% African Americans; 0.25%LatinX; 0.23 % non LatinX whites

"Women more than likely men with GD to have depression, bipolar disorder, and anxiety disorders. Women seek treatment sooner than men and they may experience more shame related to gambling and they may gamble as a maladaptive approach to negative affect and men may gamble more for the thrill. In a US national sample, individuals with GD had poor general health and utilized medical services at high rates. Comorbidity: Medical

issues such as tachycardia and angina are associated with GD then in the general population. Substance usage, depressive disorders, anxiety disorder and personality disorders. Some disorders may have preceded the GD, such as bipolar related, anxiety disorders and substance use disorders.

Free programs to help your patients include: Georgia Lottery's option to join its voluntary self-exclusion program which blocks from any online or mobile lottery program (may have a similar option for sports betting); Georgia's gambling hotline is 866-922-7369 with specialists available 24/7; National Problem Gambling Helpline Network is available 24/7 by calling 800-522-4700 or online chat at [ncpgambling.org/chat](http://ncpgambling.org/chat); Gam-Anon which offers support to family members and friends of problem gamblers; Gamblers Anonymous and GamTalk is an online discussion forum that functions like Gamblers Anonymous.

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## **Georgians Featured in The DO Article Celebrating Black History**

In last month's article about Black history by second year family medicine resident at New York Presbyterian Hospital Aerial Petty, DO, The DO magazine featured four osteopathic physicians with connections to Georgia. We are including those profiles in this newsletter. If you want to read the other twelve biographies, go to <https://thedo.osteopathic.org/2023/02/celebrate-black-history-month-with-these-black-do-physicians/>



### **William G. Anderson, DO: First African American AOA Board Member and President**

Born in 1927 in Americus, Georgia, William G. Anderson, DO, has spent his entire life fighting for the rights of Blacks and African Americans. After graduating from Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine and completing a surgery fellowship, Dr. Anderson returned to Georgia to practice medicine. However, segregation in 1957 limited his ability to do so.

In response, he founded the Albany Movement, working to register African Americans to vote, developing ways to end racial segregation and leading the civil rights movement in southwest Georgia, which ultimately contributed to civil rights on a national scale.

After becoming the first African American to serve on the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Board of Directors, Dr. Anderson in 1994 became the first African American to be elected president of the AOA. A founding member of the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine's Board of Directors, a past president of the American Osteopathic Foundation (AOF), Michigan Osteopathic Association and Wayne County Osteopathic Medical Association and a former veteran, Dr. Anderson has received 12 honorary degrees.

Dr. Anderson was married to the late Norma Dixon, who was also a civil rights leader. Together, in 2004, they published

“Autobiographies of a Black Couple of the Greatest Generation.” Today, the proceeds of their autobiographies fund minority scholarships for the AOF. Read more about Dr. Anderson’s life and civil rights work.



### **Aldwin Soumare, DO, MS: Co-Host of MelaninWhite Coats**

Originally from the Bronx, New York, Aldwin Soumare, DO, MS, received his bachelor’s degree in psychology from Rutgers University-Newark in 2013, his Master of Medical Science from Morehouse School of Medicine in 2016 and his Master of Biomedical Professions at Lincoln Memorial University shortly after. As a medical student at PCOM Georgia, which he graduated from in 2022, he served as chapter president of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA), MAPS Liaison for SNMA Region IV and Osteopathic Committee Chair for SNMA on the Board of Directors. He was also awarded PCOM Georgia Ambassador of the Year during the 2018-2019 academic year and given the Presidential Award for Diversity and Inclusion at graduation. Dr. Soumare is in his first year of a psychiatry residency at University of Connecticut in Hartford, and plans a future in neuropsychiatry, forensic psychiatry and mental health policy.

In addition to his academic achievements, Dr. Soumare is a podcast host and author. He currently serves as co-host of the “SNMA Presents the Lounge” podcast and founder of the MelaninWhite

Coats podcast, which covers society, culture and medicine. Dr. Soumare has an upcoming book entitled “Tools of Excellence: From Hood to Hooded: Becoming the Physician You Dream.”



### **Kala Hurst, DO: Past SNMA Region IV Director**

Kala Hurst, DO, is currently a dermatology resident at Case Western Reserve University, University Hospitals. During medical school, she served as the 2020-2022 Region IV Director of the Student National Medical Association. She consistently advocated for the voices of students of color within her school in meetings with faculty and administration.

Dr. Hurst also coordinated a summer academy for underrepresented high school students to learn about the medical profession and receive mentorship from both medical students and physicians. Upon her graduation, Dr. Hurst was named the 2022 PCOM Georgia recipient of the Mason W. Pressly Memorial Medal, the college’s highest student honor, which recognizes outstanding achievement and service to PCOM Georgia, the community and the osteopathic profession.

As a resident at Case Western Reserve, an institution she chose due to its connection to the Black community of Cleveland, Dr. Hurst serves on her program’s DEI committee to encourage more Black medical students to join the field and advocate for minority patients. Dr. Hurst has spoken on numerous dermatology interest

group panels about her experience as a Black medical student and resident.



### **Danielle Ward, DO, MS: Plastic surgery resident, author & blogger**

Danielle Ward, DO, MS, is a plastic surgery resident physician, author and blogger. In 2013, she created the Aspiring Minority Doctor blog in order to document her journey in medicine and provide inspiration for pre-medical and medical students. Dr. Ward graduated from PCOM Georgia in 2018 and completed a General Surgery Traditional Rotating Internship at PCOM in 2019.

From 2017-2018, Dr. Ward served as the first osteopathic medical student to be elected national president of the Student National Medical Association, and in 2020, she published her first book, titled “Atypical Premed: A Non-Traditional Student’s Guide to Applying to Medical School.” Dr. Ward is currently a second-year plastic surgery resident at Larkin Community Hospital – Palm Springs Campus in South Miami, Florida.

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## **The Rest of the Osteopathic Interns in Georgia**

The last two issues have listed the newest osteopathic residents in the state, and this listing finishes up the 2022-2023 osteopathic interns in Georgia.

### **Northside Gwinnett Med Ctr**

Catrina Kure, DO	IM	PCOM-GA
Ken Johnson, DO	IM	PCOM-GA
Shannon O'Reilly, DO	FP	VCOM – Carolinas
Veer Patel, DO	FP	LECOM – Lake Erie
Amy Tran, DO	FP	PCOM-GA

### **Northeast Georgia Medical**

Erin M. Harvath, DO	EM	WVSOM
Hawa Henderson, DO	EM	Kansas City Univ COM
Siedah Morgan, DO	EM	PCOM-GA
Amy Spence, DO	EM	PCOM-GA

### **Wellstar Douglass Hospital**

Sanisha Balsara, DO	FP	PCOM-GA
Jeane Khoo, DO	FP	Lincoln Debusk COM

### **Floyd Medical in Rome, GA**

Sierra Arbrust, DO	FP	PCOM-GA
Sophia Kirchhoff, DO	FP	VCOM – Auburn
Gracie Grant Murray, DO	FP	VCOM – Auburn
Taylor Murray, DO	FP	VCOM – Auburn

### **Advent Redmond Medical in Rome**

Omer S. Baig, DO	IM	Ohio University COM
Ernest Paul Dalton, DO	IM	LECOM - Bradenton
Rachel Davis-Marshall, DO	IM	PCOM-GA
Christian Knoblock, DO	IM	Rocky Vista Univ COM
Michael Skinner, DO	IM	VCOM - Auburn
Trevar D. Anderson, DO	Trans	Alabama COM
Zachary Cook, DO	Trans	VCOM – Auburn
Blair Davis, DO	Trans	VCOM – Auburn
Matthew S. Gunter, DO	Trans	Des Moines Univ COM
Rebecca Sekulich Lynn, DO	Trans	Lincoln DeBusk COM
Thomas S. Moss, DO	Trans	VCOM – Carolinas
Amrutha “Neha” Mylarapu	Trans	PCOM-GA
Rajpriya Venkatarajan, DO	Trans	Lincoln DeBusk COM

### **Piedmont in Columbus, GA**



Amirah Nicole Hill, DO	FP	PCOM-GA
Addison Taylor Moore, DO	FP	VCOM-Auburn
Zachariah Scott Smith, DO	FP	Campbell Univ SOM
<b>Hughston Orthopedic Hospital</b>		
W. Cole Connelley, DO	Ortho	Arkansas COM
Tyler Hunt, DO	Ortho	VCOM – Auburn
Jonathan Sledd, DO	Ortho	VCOM – Auburn
<b>Navicent in Macon, GA</b>		
Jonathan A. Dyas, DO	OBG	VCOM – Auburn
<b>Colquitt Regional</b>		
Shin Xuan Ouyan, DO	Psych	Alabama COM
Monica Drummond, DO	FP	Campbell Univ SOM
<b>Piedmont Coliseum in Macon</b>		
Mathew Daniel, DO	EM	VCOM - Auburn
Sameer Irfan, DO	EM	VCOM - Auburn
Ryan O’Neill, DO	EM	
Amber Watts, DO	EM	VCOM - Auburn
Nicholas Michalakis, DO	IM	Kansas City COM
Hamid Shirazi, DO	Psych	PCOM-GA
Abhinav Arora, DO	Trans	PCOM-GA
Reid McCullough, DO	Trans	Arkansas COM
Ohm Pandya, DO	Trans	Univ Incarnate Word
COM		
Archit S. Patel, DO	Trans	VCOM – Auburn

## In Other Words

*“At the racetrack, I follow horses, and the horses I follow, follow other horses.”*

– Joe E. Lewis, comedian