



GEORGIA OSTEOPATHIC  
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION  
— 1902 —

## GOMA News & Updates

### Volume 46, June 2024



### **2024 Legislative Update**

Each year this newsletter tries to summarize how medicine will be impacted by the Georgia legislature. GOMA has been active participant in advocacy for many years, but that work has been more impactful by its

work over the past decade with the Patient-Centered Physicians Coalition of Georgia (PCPC). The PCPC is comprised of five groups: Georgia Osteopathic Medical Association; Georgia Academy of Family Practice; Georgia Chapter – American Academy of Pediatrics; Georgia Chapter – American College of Physicians; Georgia OB-Gyn Society

HB 557 allows non-physicians to prescribe opioids and the bill passed the legislature and was signed into law by Governor Kemp on 4/22/2024 becoming Act 394.

HB 1339 was a bipartisan bill that will hopefully improve healthcare outcomes across the state, and update the State Health Plan. It addresses mental health, behavioral health, maternal and prenatal care, and in rural areas, will expand healthcare and provide economic development by eliminating the Certificate of Need regulations. Georgia has the 2nd highest uninsured rate in the nation; hopefully, this bill will help. It passed out of the House and but was amended in the Senate, only to be returned to the House with only the CON changes. It was signed into law by Gov. Kemp on 4/19/2024 becoming Act 384.

HB 1409 will limit liability of mental health providers in lawsuits, except in cases of “gross negligence”. It would also limit punitive damages against mental health care workers unless the claimant proves the provider showed “willful and wanton misconduct, reckless infliction of harm, or intentional infliction of harm.” It passed through the legislature and was signed into law by Gov. Kemp on 5/6/2024 becoming Act 568.

In an effort to have the state to take over local Boards of Health, SB 293 lessens the qualifications for local board of health directors from a medical degree to a master’s degree and shifts the responsibility of appointing these directors from the local board to the state. The bill passed the Senate and the House. It was signed into law by Gov. Kemp on 4/19/2024 and became Act 383.

SB 395 was a bill allows anyone in a school to possess and administer Naloxone, making the drug more readily available. It moved smoothly through the Legislature and was signed into law by Gov. Kemp on 4/23/2024 becoming Act 462.

Bills that didn't get to the Governor's desk follow:

Originally, SB 460 increased from 4 to 8 the number of Advanced Practitioners that physicians can supervise then changed to allow APRNs and PAs to write care plans for home healthcare services, and language expanding CRNA's scope of practice to allow independent practice in 52 rural communities. SB 460 did not get out of legislature. Unfortunately, scope expansion battles continue annually, and GOMA continues to advocate for safety for Georgia's patients.

HB 470 Georgia CANDOR Act (Communication and Optimal Resolution) which ensures a physician-friendly environment in Georgia in relation to tort reform unfortunately did not pass out of the Georgia Senate.

HB 343 "Lowering Prescription Drug Costs for Patients Act" was supposed to fix the Pharmacy Benefit Managers so that patients save money. It did not pass out of the Georgia Senate.

HB 971 would have given a tax credit for purchasing gun safes, and for taking gun safety classes. It got tabled in the Senate, and will have to wait another year.

SB 307 required health insurers to have a program that allows for the selective application of reduction in prior authorization requirements. This bill passed the Senate and an amended version of the bill passed the House, but time ran out before the Senate could pass the amended version of the bill.

On the federal level, GOMA's website (Advocacy Tab) uses tools of the Osteopathic Advocacy Network (OAN) to make it super easy to let U.S. Senators and Representatives how to improve medicine. The AOA is working on your behalf every day, but you are the best advocate for the osteopathic profession and your elected officials must hear from you.



## **PCOM Georgia Commencement**

PCOM Georgia's commencement ceremony was held on Tuesday, May 21 at the Gas South Convention Center in Duluth. The ceremony included all doctoral and graduate programs in the College of Osteopathic Medicine, School of Pharmacy and the School of Health Sciences. The ceremony graduated its fifteenth class of students with the doctor of osteopathic

medicine degree. Suwanee Mayor Burnett congratulated the graduating class and thanked them for all of the community service that they had provided to Gwinnett County over the past four years.

This year's PCOM Georgia Commencement speaker was Mr. Nick Masino who is the President & CEO Gwinnett Chamber and Partnership Gwinnett. After receiving an honorary doctorate of humane letters from PCOM Georgia, Mr. Masino explained to the new DOs that it is important to find a mentor; find time to play; keep a good attitude, not be afraid to make mistakes, and embrace change and innovation.

[See graduation ceremony here](#)

Ceremony starts at 40:00 mark; Mayor Burnett spoke to audience at 60:00; Mr. Nick Messino gets his honorary degree at 1:04:00; and gives commencement speech at 1:08:00 – 1:17:00; Andrea Mann, DO addresses the DO graduates at 1:17:00; Presentation of Degrees at 1:21:00.



**PCOM South Georgia Commencement**

PCOM South Georgia's Commencement ceremony was held on Thursday, May 16 at the University of Georgia Tifton Campus Conference Center. The ceremony graduated its second class of students with the doctor of osteopathic medicine degree. This year's PCOM South Georgia Commencement speaker was H. William Craver III, DO '87, FACOS, who served PCOM for three decades, including administrative positions at each of the College's three campuses. He was instrumental in establishing the Moultrie campus, and when he retired in April 2023, Dr. Craver was PCOM South Georgia's dean and chief academic officer. Impressively, it was pointed out that the Class of 2024 has done 900 hours of community service in South Georgia at 75 different events.

[See graduation ceremony here](#)

Ceremony starts at 33:30 mark; Dr. Craver gets honorary degree at 52:30 mark; and gives commencement speech from 57:30 – 1:08:00 about Mirror Therapy, a program designed to encouraged people to improve themselves; Marla Golden, DO addresses the graduates from 1:09:00 – 1:14:30; Presentation of Degrees at 1:17:00.

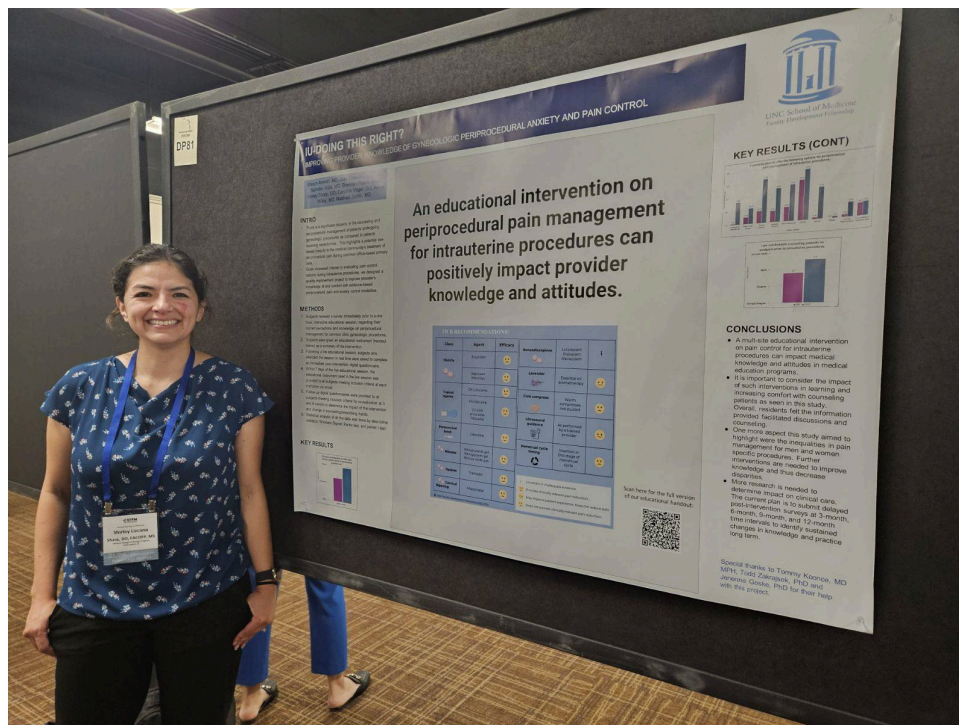
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## **Janis Coffin, DO Educates about the Effects of Social Media and Online Reviews on Healthcare**

Janis Coffin, DO, FAAFP, FACMPE is a Professor of Family Medicine at the Medical College of Georgia/Augusta University. Recently she had her article about the effects of social media and online reviews on healthcare, published in an issue of the journal of the American Association for Physician Leadership.

Social media has emerged as a powerful tool for communication, information sharing, and collaboration in many different fields, including healthcare. Physicians and healthcare professionals are increasing their use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram to engage with patients, share knowledge, and stay informed about new developments in their field. Although social media has many positive effects on physicians in healthcare, it also has presented many new challenges and risks. It also has had a significant impact on the healthcare industry, changing the way physicians and patients interact, and transforming the way healthcare organizations manage their operations.



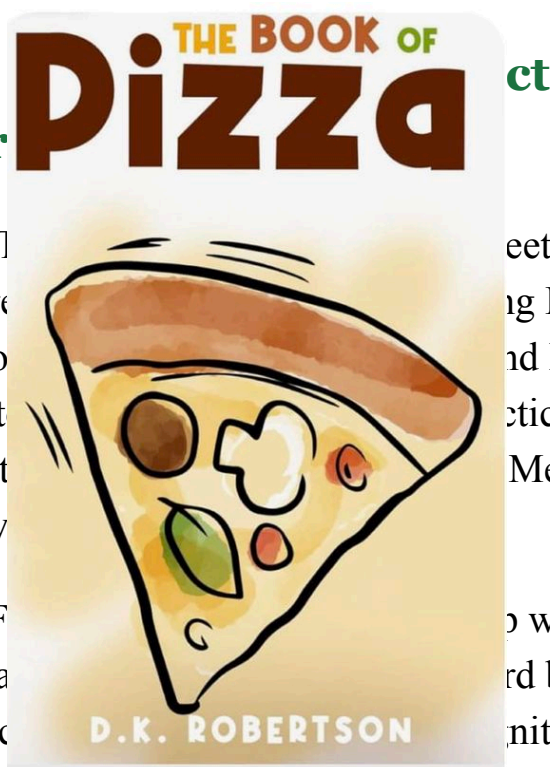
## Shirley Sharp, DO by Sharing her

In May at Society of Gynecology and Obstetrics, Shirley Sharp, DO presented her research on "Knowledge of Gynecologic Periprocedural Anxiety and Pain Control". Dr. Sharp is the Director of the Women's Health Practice Residency and Associate Director of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Georgia/Augusta University.

Also in April at ACOG, Dr. Sharp was honored with the 2024 New Osteopath Award by the American College of Osteopathic Obstetrics and Gynecology. This recognition highlights Dr. Sharp's dedication, commitment, and contributions to the field of osteopathic medicine. Way to go Dr. Sharp!

## Pizza Book written by Scott Keller, DO Under Pseudonym Raises Money for Grace Clinic

We have just learned that D.K. Robertson is a pseudonym for Scott T. Keller, DO who is raising funds for the Grace Clinic in Clarkston, GA. The book is geared towards kids. Dr. Keller summarizes it: "It's really about how pizza has different toppings, but still be pizza - just like people." He





requests that everyone follows the author D.K. Robertson on Amazon and buy a copy or two for the children (and to support Grace Clinic).

D.K. Robertson is an "old, country family doctor who serves as medical director of a nonprofit medical clinic in one of the most diverse cities in the U.S. He has been on over twenty medical missions in over eight countries but still finds time for music, painting, fishing, and writing children's books. His favorite hobby is playing with grandchildren who all know where there can always find comforting arms, a prayer, and a great homemade meal."

[Join GOMA or Renew Your Membership Today!](#)



## **Elizabeth "Libby" Lirette, DO is Honored with GOMA Trimble Award at PCOM Georgia**

Elizabeth "Libby" Lirette, DO's first exposure to osteopathic medicine was through her primary care physician in college who was a DO. Although she

knew she wanted to go into the medical field since late high school, she was considered a nontraditional student having worked in multiple roles including customer service representative at Navy Federal Credit Union, monitor technician, emergency room unit secretary, and retail pharmacy technician. She graduated with a BA in International Studies from University of West Florida (2016) and a MBA in Healthcare Management from Western Governors University (2020). She reflects on her various experiences and education stating, “I learned a lot about medicine and the healthcare system in these different roles and I believe that those experiences helped me throughout medical school and will continue to help me be a better physician.”

A major source of motivation and support during Dr. Lirette’s journey has been her family and friends. She grew up in Pace, Florida, a small town outside of Pensacola. “My mom is a nurse and my dad is an aircraft mechanic. I am the middle child with two sisters and have a niece and nephew from my oldest sister.” Throughout medical school, Dr. Lirette has lived in a travel trailer with her pets. “My three cats: ‘Pearl’, ‘Pikachu’, and ‘Sunny’ have been with me throughout medical school. I got my golden retriever, ‘Olaf’ during my Level 1/STEP 1 board preparation. I am definitely a major cat lady that also has a dog,” she writes. “We have traveled to many of my clinical rotation sites from Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, and Louisiana.”

Dr. Lirette explains her future plans, “I will be starting my Internal Medicine residency at Southeast Health in Dothan, AL which was my number one choice. After residency, I hope to find a position where I can work in both outpatient and inpatient settings. I want to be able to incorporate OMT into my practice and help medical students to do the same. I think osteopathic medicine will influence how I approach patient care in every way. I think our training as osteopathic physicians prepares us to be able to truly listen to patients so we can form the best treatment plan for them. It reminds us of the honor we have to care for people in some of their most vulnerable moments. Osteopathic medicine also gives us additional tools like OMT to help treat patients with various symptoms.” Elizabeth “Libby” Lirette, DO was awarded the GOMA Trimble Award by GOMA Immediate Past President Dianna H. Glessner, DO and Dean of PCOM Georgia Andrea Mann, DO in May. Her embodiment of the

principles of osteopathic medicine in the way she treats not only patients, but also her peers and other health professionals makes Dr. Lirette the perfect honoree!



## **Zhi Quan Kuat, DO is this Year's Trimble Award Winner from PCOM South Georgia**

Zhi “Zee” Quan Kuat, DO was surprised to be selected for the Trimble Award. Dr. Kuat was recognized by the faculty of PCOM South Georgia in Moultrie for his excellent academic standing along with his lighthearted nature balancing his strong work ethic and professionalism. This made him the perfect person to be recognized for this annual award sponsored by the Georgia Osteopathic Medical Association.

Dr. Kuat’s path to osteopathic medicine started when he learned of the holistic philosophy from a friend who was applying to medical school as well as DOs that he shadowed. He feels that the patience, compassion and

empathy that his early osteopathic mentors exhibited were an inspiration for him to apply solely to osteopathic medical schools.

Dr. Kuat was born and raised in Penang, Malaysia. He is a first generation immigrant and the first physician in his family. He is proficient in four languages: English, Malay, Mandarin and a dialect called Hokkein. He is the process of learning his fifth language: Spanish. His parents are retired in Malaysia and his brothers work in Singapore.

Starting his internal medicine residency this July at St. Luke's University Hospital in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania takes Dr. Kuat back north. He received his bachelor's degree in Medical Technology from the University of Buffalo and then moved to Chicago to work as a medical laboratory scientist for a few years before starting medical school. Initially, he thought he wanted to become a hospitalist. "However, after my rotations in Moultrie and elective rotation in Michigan, where I had the privilege of taking care of underserved populations and LGBTQ+ patients on hormonal therapy, I'm considering either primary care or a fellowship in endocrinology," Dr. Kuat wrote. He was traveling when we caught up with him to interview him for this article. Dr. Kuat enjoys traveling. "Traveling is the perfect outlet to decompress, reconnect with my soul, and challenge myself to step outside my comfort zone, indirectly fostering personal growth and a broader view of different cultures." He reports recent travels to Prague, Vienna and Budapest.

"Osteopathic medicine has made a significant impact on how I will practice medicine. I've been and will continue to ask my patients what they'd like to accomplish by the end of each visit and the priority of their concerns. I anticipate more personalized care with a strong emphasis on patient-centered care by giving patients options that align with their values and involving them in the decision-making process regarding their care. Last, but not least, I will incorporate OMT into my practice by explaining and offering to perform simple techniques for interested patients."

When he is not working, studying or traveling, Dr. Kuat confesses to his hobby. "I'm also a big fan of Pokemon. I've got Pokemon GO on my iPhone, Pokemon games on my Nintendo Switch, and a collection of 300+ Pokemon mini figurines!" It makes sense that he describes his personality as "humorous and lighthearted in nature".

GOMA is excited to have Dr. Kwat join the osteopathic profession and be this year's Trimble Award winner from PCOM South Georgia!

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## **2024 Match is a 100% Success for Georgia's DO Students**

Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) students in the Class of 2024 at PCOM Georgia and PCOM South Georgia have navigated a challenging journey marked by resilience and determination. From entering medical school amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, these students faced uncertainties about the unfolding years ahead. Yet, their perseverance bore fruit on March 15, 2024, as they celebrated Match Day — a pivotal moment in their medical careers.

Match Day, an annual tradition coordinated by the National Resident Matching Program, is a day filled with indescribable emotions as students anticipate learning where they will embark on the next phase of their medical journey through residency placements across the nation. Andrea Mann, DO, FAAP, dean and chief academic officer of PCOM Georgia's osteopathic medicine program, captured the essence of the occasion, "This is a day of ineffable emotion. In just a few minutes, you get to find out where you will be training for residency; finding out where you will further learn and perfect your craft."

Addressing his PCOM Georgia classmates moments before the envelope-opening ceremony, Class Chair Dominick Ricci (DO '24) expressed gratitude for the shared experiences and growth they had encountered together, "It has been the honor of a lifetime to spend these last four years with all of you, learning and growing. The people are what make this school truly great."

Surrounded by the support of family and friends, the students eagerly awaited the revelation of their residency matches. The atmosphere filled with excitement as envelopes were opened, revealing the destinations of where they would hone their skills.

PCOM Georgia and PCOM South Georgia students celebrated a 100% match rate. Each match represented not only a professional milestone, but also a testament to their dedication and perseverance.

As the DO Class of 2024 at PCOM Georgia and PCOM South Georgia embarks on the next chapter of their medical careers, they carry with them the lessons and determination that propel



## Obituary for Terrence Wogan, DO

Dr. Terrence Lee Wogan passed away on Easter Day, March 31, 2024, in Pensacola, FL, surrounded by his loving family. A beloved father, veteran of the U.S. Army, and an esteemed Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine for over four decades, Dr. Wogan dedicated his life to serving, helping, and caring for others.

Born January 25, 1947, in Beaver County, PA, the older of two children of John E. and Marguerite J. "Peggy" Wogan. He grew up in Beaver Falls, PA, where he was an All-Star athlete in both baseball and basketball. His stand-out career on the baseball diamond continued at both Wake Forest University and Geneva College. He continued making headlines in both basketball and baseball for several more years until enrolling at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, which laid the foundation for his remarkable 40-year career in medicine.

After earning his Doctor of Osteopathy Degree at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine in 1978, he immediately joined the U.S. Army; serving four years as a Military Flight Surgeon, attaining the rank of Captain, and earning the Army Commendation Medal while serving overseas.

As a family practitioner, Dr. Wogan touched countless lives in various locations, including Century, FL, Flomaton, AL, Wilcox County, GA, Crisp County, GA, and Rhine, GA. He provided compassionate and comprehensive care to patients of all ages, devoting his undivided attention and time to each individual he treated. Dr. Wogan's commitment to his patients went beyond his extensive medical expertise; he built lasting friendships with the families he served, earning their trust and gratitude. His thirst for knowledge was insatiable, evident in his library comprising thousands of books, each of which he read with enthusiasm. His love for reading was not just a hobby; it was a way of life, enriching his understanding of the world and deepening his empathy for others. It was his joy of learning (and sharing what he'd learned) that earned him the light-hearted, loving moniker "The Compendium of Useless Knowledge."

Dr. Wogan's lasting impact extends far beyond the love of his family and walls of his practice. He gave all of himself in the service of others,

touching the lives of all who knew him and leaving in his wake a legacy that will continue to inspire generations to come.

GOMA's members hope that Dr. Wogan's family, patients and co-workers can find comfort in the memory of him. [Read the complete obituary here.](#)

## In Other Words

**“The past and the present wilt. I have fill'd them, emptied them,  
And proceed to fill my next fold of the future.”**

**— Walt Whitman**