

## **Help Lead the Specialty and Elevate the Standard of Care in Orthodontics as an ABO Director**

### **The ABO Board**

As a board-certified orthodontist, one may consider serving as an ABO director to help further the American Board of Orthodontics' Mission of promoting excellence in orthodontics.

The ABO is led by eight directors, each representing a constituent society of the American Association of Orthodontists (AAO). Members serve an eight-year term which culminates in installation as ABO president.

### **Who Can Serve**

ABO directors must be ABO certified in good standing, with at least two years since initial certification. Candidates should exhibit leadership in orthodontic and dental organizations and/or orthodontic education, licensing boards and outside organizations, or by giving lectures or conducting scientific research. Potential directors must be engaged in full or part-time direct patient care and/or hold appointment as a full or part-time clinical faculty member in a CODA Accredited Orthodontic program.

Qualities sought for ABO directors include ability to think strategically and communicate effectively, willingness to prioritize the good of the organization over self-interest, ability to work collaboratively, and commitment to the highest level of integrity and ethics.

### **The Nomination Process**

The ABO director nominees are selected in consultation with the AAO constituent society which the new director will represent. One eight-year ABO director term is up for election each year. The opening rotates among the eight AAO constituent organizations. The new director elected in 2022 is from the Rocky Mountain Society of Orthodontists; the position up for election in 2023 will represent the Midwestern Society of Orthodontists.

During the year prior to the election, the constituent organization notifies its members of the upcoming open director position. All ABO certified members of the constituent organization who meet the required criteria, are eligible to submit his/her intention/interest for consideration. The constituent organization appoints a nominating committee and outlines a process for soliciting candidates, including a deadline for submitting names and curriculum vitae. By December 1, the constituent's nominating committee is asked to submit to the ABO a list of three to five eligible candidates.

From December through March, the ABO Board considers the constituent organization's nominees. Each nominee submits a personal statement including areas of interest, qualifications, and the nominee's potential contribution to the board. The chair of the constituent organization nominating committee is invited to observe as each nominee is interviewed by ABO directors. The ABO Board then makes a final decision on its nominee and submits this name to the AAO Board of Trustees.

Following approval from the AAO Board of Trustees, the AAO House of Delegates elects one new member to the ABO Board of Directors during the AAO Annual Session.

### **One Recent Director's Experience**

Dr. Valmy P. Kulbersh of Bloomfield Hills, Mich., was elected to the ABO Board in 2013 representing the Great Lakes Association of Orthodontists (GLAO). She served as ABO president in the 2020-2021 year. She was the first female orthodontist to serve as an ABO director and president.

“Due to my many years of clinical practice and involvement in academics, I felt I was qualified to be judged as a competitive candidate for the directorship position,” Dr. Kulbersh recalled.

“The selection process was rigorous but fair and impartial. I was not intimidated by being the only female in the group of highly qualified interviewees, instead, I felt confident that I would be fairly evaluated because I could contribute to the mission of the ABO. When I was selected, I was humbled by the reception I experienced from the seated directors. I became part of a family where respect, encouragement, fairness, excellence, and ethical values were cherished.”

She encourages other orthodontists to seek nomination to the ABO Board. “Any orthodontist who subscribes to the mission of the ABO, could certainly be considered as part of the ABO Board of Directors. If you could afford the time commitment, you will be rewarded with the utmost professional experience of your life. As past president of the ABO, reflecting on my years as ABO director, **if I had to do it again, I would not hesitate!**”

### **Next Steps**

If you are interested in serving on the ABO Board of Directors, please contact your constituent organization for details on its nomination process and when the next opening from your constituent will occur.