

AAO Volunteer Efforts by time commitment: What is a good fit for you?

In my opinion there are three major categories of effort for volunteer time commitment. The first level, that requires minimal time commitment, is making a financial contribution or “donation”. The second level, that requires a little more time commitment is a “one time experience”. Finally, the third level, that requires even more commitment of your time is a “regular ongoing experience”. I will briefly describe how you can get involved/volunteer with the AAO at the commitment levels of “donations” and “regular ongoing experience”, but I will focus on the “one time experience” as it relates to the AAO House of Delegates.

The time commitment for providing a “donation” is minimal. At AAO, two of the opportunities for donations are: 1. American Association of Orthodontists Foundation (AAOF) <https://aaof.aaoinfo.org/select-pledge> that advance the orthodontic specialty by supporting quality education, donated orthodontic services (DOS) and orthodontic research that leads to excellence in patient care; 2. The AAO Political Action Committee (AAOPAC) <https://app7.vocusgr.com/WebPublish/controller.aspx?SiteName=AAO&Definition=PACTransactionEdit> that allows us to pool contributions from members like you, and then make significant contributions to candidates on behalf of the specialty. This approach assures we can have the greatest impact on the issues and candidates that matter most to our specialty.

The time commitment for a “regular commitment experience” varies considerably. These volunteer leadership opportunities are often available at the Component (state or province) level, at the Constituent (regional/Great Lakes Association of Orthodontists) level and/or at the national (AAO) level. At AAO, members get involved by serving Councils, Committees and Task Forces. If this level of volunteerism is of interest to you, reach out to your component organization, to the GLAO or to the AAO to find out what opportunities are available. Some current opportunities are listed on the AAO website @: <https://www2.aaoinfo.org/get-involved/volunteer-leadership-opportunities/>

Finally, the level of commitment that, in my opinion, provides an opportunity for you to “kick the tires” without a huge investment of time is the “One Time Experience”. At this time of year, there is a wonderful “One Time Experience” opportunity for you to understand the direction that the AAO is headed and to provide your personal input into the path that we are taking. In early May 2024, the House of Delegates (HOD) of the AAO will be meeting to chart the course for the AAO in the future. The HOD will be considering resolutions (motions) that will affect how the AAO operates and the member programs and services that we offer. Every member has an opportunity to provide an opinion each resolution through electronic or in-person input.

I wish to keep this simple, so that your “One Time Experience is positive. In early April, the 2024 Book of Reports will be posted on the AAO member website (**QR Code link below**) and the Resolutions (motions) to be considered by the HOD will be posted as well. Please read through these resolutions and, if you have an opinion about any or all of these, share your opinion.

The formal way to provide your input to the HOD is through, what we refer to as, the Reference Committees of the HOD. However, you can always reach out to Dr. Valerie Martone (Chairperson of the GLAO Delegation to the HOD), or myself, to find out how you can share your thoughts about the resolution(s) that are being considered. Although, with only a “One Time Experience”, you may be the “voice of reason” that changes the future of the AAO.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you wish to discuss this further.

Michael Sherman
GLAO Trustee

