

May 15, 2024

As I craft this message to you all, we have already traversed 21 weeks of 2024 and are rapidly approaching the end of the spring. Over the last several months, each of you have explored and implemented various strategies to enhance the productivity of your clinics, expand your knowledge and abilities through continuing education, and realign your efforts to cultivate a better work/life balance. These numerous actions have led to various outcomes, including the enhancement of your professional experience. However, American philosopher and psychologist, John Dewey, wrote “**We do not learn from experience...we learn from reflecting on experience.**” As you recall, the 2024 GLAO/MASO Annual Session theme is **Reflect, Refresh, and Renew** and this is an excellent time to revisit the first component of that theme, *Reflect*. Dewey’s insightful remarks strongly resonate with me, and I completely agree with his opinion on this point. Action without reflection does little to help one overcome obstacles or attain higher heights, either professionally or personally. So, as you reflect on the first portion of the year and the decisions that you did or did not make, there are numerous questions that could be asked. What clinical/business goals were a success and which were failures? What kept some of your team members from succeeding in their assigned roles? How efficient have you been with your time and what prevented you from being more effective with time management? I acknowledge that each of us work in unique environments and possess distinctive responsibilities, goals, and needs. And due to this, the reflection process may look differently for each of us. However, the aim here is to make engaging in a reflective process a priority for you. Reflection is an important and impactful process that is vital for promoting the most optimal trajectory for our professional growth and ability to maximally impact our respective communities.

We as an organization have engaged in some significant reflection over the last few months. Your leadership team has completed its comprehensive review and update of our strategic plan. As I shared previously, this document will serve as the roadmap for all of the organization’s activities for the next 3 years. Our strategic plan now also includes metrics that could be used to measure how successful we are at promoting and/or achieving various initiatives. This will help to elevate our ability to be successful as an organization and also ensure optimal transparency, as well as accountability. The [2024-2027 GLAO Strategic Plan](#) is now available on the [GLAO website](#).

I am also pleased to share that the GLAO delegation was extremely influential during the 2024 AAO House of Delegates (HOD). Our constituency proposed numerous resolutions and resolution modifications that helped to promote future policy and programming within the greater AAO environment. Notable contributions include the maintenance of AAO membership dues, funding allocation to enhance the utility of the AAO website for all members, funding to support early career full-time faculty, and the establishment of a taskforce to review the implications of the SAO/SWSO constituency merger. I want to thank all the GLAO members who actively engaged in the HOD activities this year, your presence and thoughtful engagement are extremely appreciated. We have also continued our pursuit of increasing member engagement through our virtual programming. We had an extremely insightful April GLAO Coffee Chat with **Dr. Laurie Houston** on Sustainability

in Orthodontics. Our next GLAO Coffee Chat is schedule for Saturday, June 15 with **Dr. Dale Anne Featheringham**, who will be discussing federal and state level advocacy efforts and opportunities. If you have other topics and that you would like to see the organization explore through our virtual offerings, please share your ideas with Debbie, Karla, or any of the GLAO leadership.

I am very happy to share that registration for the **2024 GLAO/MASO Annual Session** at the **Westin Frenchman's Reef** in St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands on **October 18-20, 2024** is now open! We have already received a tremendous response from the orthodontic community and as of May 1, there were already approximately 120 registrants from all over the country. We are very excited about this year's annual session and believe it will provide a rich opportunity for growth and relaxation for you and your entire team. If you have not made your plans to join us in St. Thomas this October, I encourage you to go to our [2024 GLAO/MASO annual session](#) website and register today!

In closing, I would again like to extend two challenges to each of you. First, I challenge you to allocate some time over the next week to engage in some meaningful reflection on the first half of the year. I am confident that this will be a valuable and productive experience for you. Next, I strongly encourage you to share your thoughts and recommendations to the GLAO Leadership by completing the following survey (use the provided QR code to access). We are actively working to identify the needs and preferences of our members and your feedback would be invaluable in our efforts to develop professional development and networking opportunities that meet your needs.



Respectfully submitted,

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GLAO President