• SDOY Essay 1: You are elected AOA President. What would be your platform; and how would proceed to achieve the core priorities of your platform?

I am honored to serve as the AOA President. Over this year, I intend to work toward the platform of the “DO Difference.” I recall my very first day of medical school when then AOA President, John Strosnider, DO, the Dean of my medical school, emphasized the need for our profession to return to the basics that our profession was established upon – the primary care philosophy which focuses upon providing the highest quality care to those in need.

My personal desire is that we not only go back to the basics but we must also remember how we are distinct from our allopathic counterparts. We must value that learning the art and practice of osteopathic medicine is an honor and a privilege. And we must always bear in mind the great DOs who have made this opportunity possible for us.

As DOs, we will always touch our patients, but if we do not strengthen educational standards in osteopathic medical schools, our profession’s identity will be lost. Not only do our standards need to be strengthened but we are obliged to also reach a consensus as to what constitutes osteopathic principles and practice and effectively integrate its tenets into all four years of osteopathic medical education and every year of osteopathic postgraduate training.

We should focus on understanding the philosophy of osteopathic medicine – how we are going to apply it, rather than just the techniques of performing osteopathic manipulation. The true key is to understand the body's structure and the evolution of an individual physician’s interpretation of how to evaluate and treat patients. We must use the basic anatomy and physiology we are taught our first year of medical school to restore the body to its optimal function with manipulation and where necessary, pharmaceutical drugs and interventions like surgery.

As AT Still once said, “To find health should be the object of the doctor. Anyone can find disease.” This is the fundamental difference between our allopathic counterparts. Current medicine has placed the focus on disease, not on health. Primary preventative care is going to be the future of medicine. We, as osteopathic physicians, have been doing this since the start of our profession. Undoubtedly, I believe that this is one of the most important aspects that must return to osteopathic medicine. This is the key difference that can unite the profession and propel the future of osteopathic medicine.

I hope to continue to motivate and encourage others to take an active role in the betterment of our profession while addressing these issues. This is my most important goal as AOA President - to encourage the profession to reach its maximum potential. I believe one’s maximum potential must be built on a foundation of respect, a commitment to excellence, and a rejection of mediocrity.
• **SDOY Essay 2**: Given extensive resources, how would you realistically and effectively promote osteopathic medicine and the D.O. profession?

I believe that the future of osteopathic medicine should be shaped by current technology. In order to most effectively promote osteopathic medicine and the DO profession, we must work on the effective marketing of osteopathic medicine through multimedia efforts and by utilizing network television.

Within the multimedia realm, I will focus on multiple efforts like the World Wide Web, via interactive TV, iPhone and Blackberry applications. I will also continue to engage in the use of social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace where thousands of individuals access information daily. More specifically, I believe an informative website designed for general population use to research their conditions is an excellent way to promote osteopathic medicine. Everyone uses the internet to read about their symptoms, diseases, and diagnosis. However, so many people use websites that do not always present the proper information. Imagine instead of using WebMD, a person uses our website that promotes the “DO Difference” and emphasizes our tenets to read about their conditions. I think that if we are providing accurate information to the American people via the Internet, then we can effectively promote osteopathic medicine.

I would certainly incorporate DOs into television programs like HOUSE, Grey’s Anatomy, Private Practice, The Doctors, where millions of Americans can visibly see the DO credentials on the white coats and in the case of The Doctors, they can receive responses to health questions from expert DOs. If done properly, this is a great way to promote our profession to millions of people each week. In any of these network shows, a character can emphasize osteopathic principles and practices each week and show how DOs are similar yet unique from our allopathic counterparts.

I also believe that working together with all national medical organizations, both osteopathic and allopathic, by establishing a centralized entity that assembles regularly is essential to move the health agenda forward for the benefit of improved health for patients nationwide. This must be done while ensuring that the osteopathic profession, namely the AOA, is at the forefront of the changes being made as health reform takes effect in the coming years. The AOA impacts the daily work of all osteopathic physicians, residents and medical students. We must ensure that this work is living up to its fullest potential.

Drawing on my previous experiences, I will continue to use every challenge promoting osteopathic medicine as an opportunity to broaden my knowledge. My efforts will be devoted toward learning from others, as well as integrating these learning experiences into the advancement of our profession.

I am an osteopathic medical student and I owe my future as a physician to this profession. I will always strive to represent the profession well.