

FORGING THE PATH TO EXCELLENCE

Charles Daly, MD, FAAOS, hand and upper extremity specialist at the Medical University of South Carolina, follows up with his patient after treatment.



AAOS

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

2024 Annual Report

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Residents get hands-on experience and guidance during an arthroscopy course.



Giselle Hernandez, MD, FAAOS, works closely with her team to treat patients with orthopaedic trauma.



Members step into leadership roles and educate each other during the AAOS Annual Meeting.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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Dino Damalas, MBA, Chief Operating Officer

Laura Abrahams, Chief Human Resources Officer

Nathan Glusenkamp, MA, Chief Quality, Registries, and Government Relations Officer

Anna Salt Troise, MBA, Chief Commercial Officer

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND THE CEO

As we reflect on the past year, we are proud to share how the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) has remained steadfast in supporting our members, improving patient care, and shaping the future of musculoskeletal health.

Last year was one of growth and innovation. With the dedication of our leaders, volunteers, and staff, we have achieved milestones that set the standard for orthopaedic care, education, and quality patient outcomes. In addition, it is clear that what is good for our patients is good for us.

At the AAOS 2024 Annual Meeting, members engaged in dynamic discussions, hands-on learning, and networking. We launched OrthoPitch, a technology competition showcasing innovative products to industry partners and members. Our educational offerings expanded, with online courses focused on emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and robotic surgery. The continued evolution of the Resident Orthopaedic Core Knowledge (ROCK) Program further supports the growth of future orthopaedic leaders.

This year marked significant progress in orthopaedic advocacy. We collaborated with legislators and agencies to secure funding for musculoskeletal research and influence healthcare policy. During Orthopaedic Advocacy Week, members addressed key issues including prior authorization, physician-owned hospitals, and medical liability. Efforts also targeted expanding rural care access, fair surgical reimbursement, reducing regulatory burdens, and enabling general supervision of physical therapist assistants (PTAs) and occupational therapy assistants (OTAs) in private practice settings.

Innovation in quality care remains a cornerstone of AAOS' work. In 2024, advances in OrthoBiologics research and Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) enhanced evidence-based decision-making. Our Registry Program now encompasses 4.5 million procedures, providing a robust foundation for improving patient care.

The AAOS remains committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. By fostering a diverse orthopaedic workforce, we ensure inclusive patient care. In 2024, we expanded

representation, mentorship, and leadership opportunities for underrepresented groups. The AAOS Inspiring Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) Grant Program awarded \$300,000 to organizations addressing disparities in orthopaedics.

Looking ahead, we will carry out our new strategic plan and strengthen AAOS' role as the leading voice in musculoskeletal health. In 2025, we will focus on modernizing our organization's governance, building partnerships at the intersection of technology and orthopaedics, enhancing member engagement, and advocating for better patient outcomes.

As orthopaedic surgeons, we have the privilege and responsibility to improve patient well-being. Together, through collaboration and innovation, we continue to forge the path to excellence in musculoskeletal health. Your trust in AAOS makes these accomplishments possible and inspires our leadership.

Thank you for your membership and the opportunity to serve you.



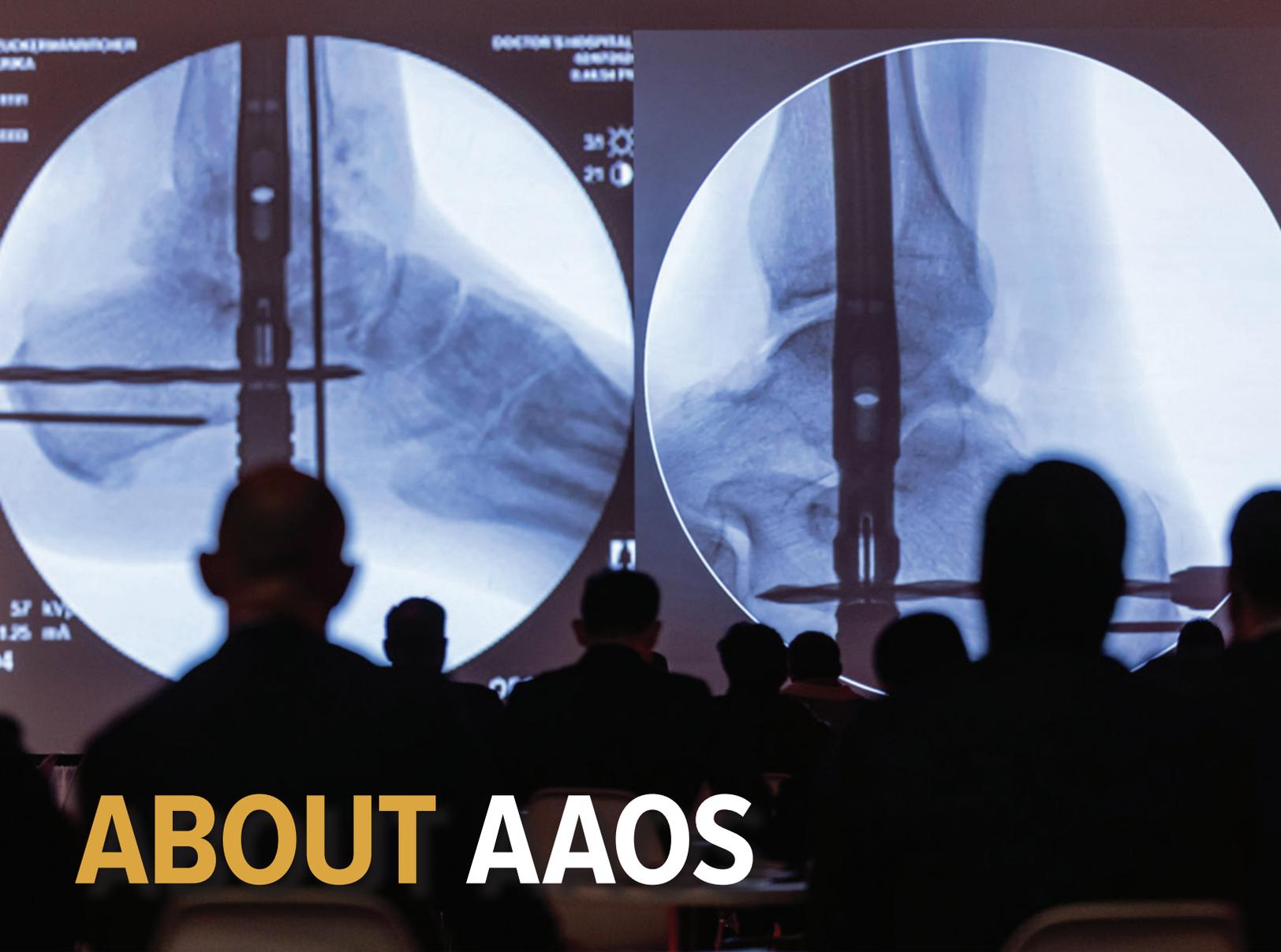
Paul Tornetta III, MD, PhD, FAAOS
AAOS President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Tornetta III".



Thomas E. Arend Jr., Esq., CAE
AAOS Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas E. Arend Jr.". The signature is more stylized and cursive than the one above.



ABOUT AAOS

THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

Founded in 1933, the AAOS is the preeminent provider of musculoskeletal education to orthopaedic surgeons and others in the world. Its continuing medical education (CME) activities include a world-renowned annual meeting, multiple CME courses held around the country and at the OLC Education and Conference Center, and various medical and scientific publications and electronic media materials.

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

Founded by the Academy Board of Directors in 1997, the Association engages in health policy and advocacy activities on behalf of musculoskeletal patients and the profession of orthopaedic surgery. The OrthoPAC is the only national political action committee in Washington, D.C., representing orthopaedic surgeons before Congress.

OVERVIEW

With more than 39,000 members, the AAOS is the world's largest medical association of musculoskeletal specialists. The AAOS provides educational programs for orthopaedic surgeons and allied health professionals, champions and advances the highest quality musculoskeletal care for patients, and is the authoritative source of information on bone and joint conditions, treatments, and related issues.

MISSION

Serving our profession to provide the highest quality musculoskeletal care.

VISION

The trusted leaders in advancing musculoskeletal health.

CORE VALUES

Leading to Serve. Shaping the Future. Excellence Together.

2024 AT-A-GLANCE

3 Congressional testimonies by orthopaedic surgeon advocates

Orthopaedic Advisor's Circle members attended over **40** in-district events and **15** retreats

\$1.4M raised by the OrthoPAC

Successfully prevented **50%** reimbursement reductions by halting BCBS policy implementation

860+ letters written to policymakers and **211** legislators met with during Orthopaedic Advocacy Week

ADVOCACY



EDUCATION

4 new product lines, including over **60** learning experiences tailored to the needs of orthopaedic professionals, introduced by the Learning Innovation Lab

Over **1,620** paper, poster and ePoster presentations at the AAOS 2024 Annual Meeting

Over **190,000** square feet of exhibit space at the AAOS 2024 Annual Meeting Exhibit Hall

83 webinars and **16** live courses held

10 video posts on the JAAOS® Sounds from the Training Room blog

MEMBERSHIP

Active Fellow member benefits valued at up to **\$11,800**

426 applicants for International Surgeon membership, exceeding expectations by over 100%

3 new membership categories

21K+ new followers, **307K+** total engagements and **6.7M+** total impressions on AAOS social media channels

Nearly **5,000** responses to the Member Value and Satisfaction Survey

\$300,000 awarded across 17 recipients through the AAOS IDEA Grant program

Reached a total of **220** Level 1 graduates, **150+** Level 2 graduates, **80+** Level 3 graduates, and **31** Level 4 graduates of the AAOS Leadership Institute

More than **200** orthopaedic professionals convened in Washington D.C. for the combined National Orthopaedic Leadership Conference/Fall Meeting

\$100,000 awarded through the Board of Specialty Societies Research Support Fund

Launched a new **5-year Strategic Plan** with members at the core and increased focus on patient care and collaboration with the musculoskeletal community

AAOS named one of the **Best and Brightest Companies to Work For®** in Chicago and in the Nation for the **4th** consecutive year

AAOS named a Chicago Tribune **Top Workplace** for the 5th consecutive year

6 Spark Sessions held

85% of 2024 strategic goals achieved

LEADERSHIP



STRATEGIC PLANNING



RESEARCH & QUALITY

Surpassed 4M procedures across five AAOS Registries

4 new Member Advantage Program partners

Launched **ACCELERATE** by AAOS, the first member-only job exploration platform

Awarded **\$10,000** for the inaugural Arnold I. Caplan Award for achievement in OrthoBiologics

3 Clinical Practice Guideline statement updates approved

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

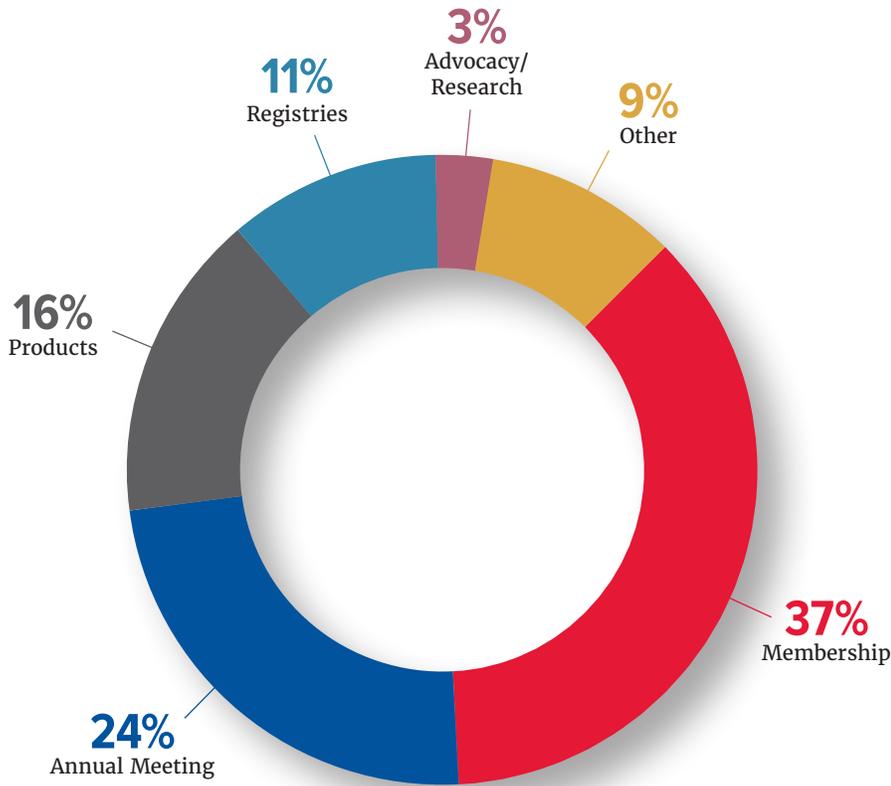
FINANCIAL POSITION (dollars in thousands)

		December 2024	December 2023
Assets	Cash and cash equivalents	32,965	37,930
	Accounts receivable	5,013	5,919
	Investments	137,819	129,105
	Property and equipment	15,378	15,004
	Other assets	22,698	24,011
	TOTAL	213,873	211,969
Liabilities	Accounts payable and accrued expenses	26,843	28,978
	Deferred revenue	20,623	23,097
	TOTAL	47,466	52,075
Net assets	Unrestricted	164,826	157,414
	Temporarily restricted	1,581	2,480
	TOTAL	166,407	159,494

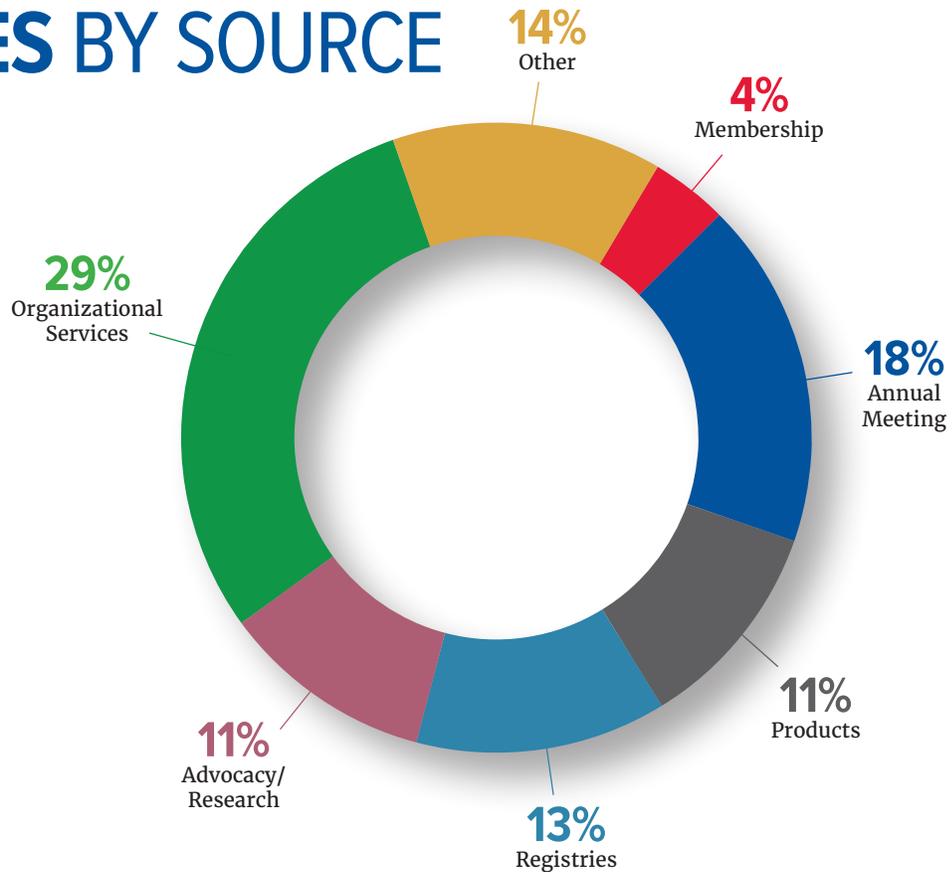
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS (dollars in thousands)

	December 2024	December 2023
Revenues	65,256	65,718
Expenses	64,388	63,523
Net income from operations	868	2,195
Investments	7,993	11,500
Investments in OPLLC	714	188
Investments in projects (from reserves)	(2,821)	(1,784)
Change in net assets	6,754	12,099

REVENUE BY SOURCE



EXPENSES BY SOURCE



EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

Attendees experienced poster presentations, interactive lectures, skills labs, and workshops focused on the latest breakthroughs in orthopaedics at the AAOS 2024 Annual Meeting.



Excellence in orthopaedic practice requires continual learning of new skills, protocols, and best practices. This ongoing need for education is at the core of AAOS' professional development offerings, designed to support every member. In 2024, AAOS advanced its educational initiatives through curriculum innovation, technological integration, and enhanced accessibility.



RESIDENT
ORTHOPAEDIC
CORE
KNOWLEDGE



Advancements in Resident Education

AAOS offers a comprehensive suite of educational products designed to support residents through every stage of their training, from mastering core competencies to excelling in the Orthopaedic In-Training Exam (OITE), and beyond.

[The Resident Orthopaedic Core Knowledge \(ROCK\)](#) program has emerged as a key resource for orthopaedic training. Designed as a standardized educational platform, ROCK offers comprehensive coverage of core and specialty topics essential for residency training.

In 2024, upgrades to the ROCK data analytics introduced valuable metrics that enable deeper understanding of residents' individual learning journeys and overall program performance. Program directors can now monitor residents' study time, visits to the platform, and chapter-completion status, providing real-time insights into progress. In another enhancement to the platform, residents receiving their OITE results report now receive links to recommended ROCK chapters alongside exam questions, answers, and discussions.

ROCK encompasses more than 545 chapters, featuring 1,500 surgical images and 800 videos to enhance learning. It also features pre- and post-test assessments with thousands of questions aligned with the OITE and the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery (ABOS) Part I Exam. For added convenience, program directors can access OITE scores directly on the ROCK platform.



ROCK also pairs seamlessly with [ResStudy](#), a robust question bank designed to provide rigorous exam preparation. The AAOS bundled ROCK, ResStudy, and OITE, three residency program essentials, at a special price. The [bundle](#), meticulously curated by orthopaedic leaders, provides a comprehensive roadmap for residents, blending foundational knowledge, self-assessment, and exam preparation.

The 2024 administration of the [OITE](#) assessed more than 5,000 residents from 233 residency programs from around the world, continuing the exam's long tradition of being the go-to knowledge assessment tool for residents. 2024 was also the fifth year the examination has been statistically linked with the ABOS Part I written examination.

New in 2024, the online dashboard-style score report interface now includes direct access to the previous four years of a program's OITE score data for internal comparison. Additionally, the Education Assessments and Examinations Committee welcomed Yelena Bogdan, MD, FACS, FAAOS, as its new chair.

Self-Assessment Examinations

The AAOS [Special Interest Self-Assessment Examinations](#) continue to be a vital resource for orthopaedic surgeons seeking to enhance their knowledge and maintain board certification. In 2024, AAOS launched four new examinations, providing even greater opportunities for targeted learning across key subspecialties.

These included:

- [The Adult Reconstructive Surgery of the Hip and Knee Self-Assessment Exam](#) (Editor-in-Chief Bryce C. Allen, MD, FAAOS)
- [The Hand and Wrist Self-Assessment Exam](#) (Editor-in-Chief David J. Bozentka, MD, FAAOS)
- [The Shoulder and Elbow Self-Assessment Exam](#) (Editor-in-Chief Walter B. McClelland Jr, MD, FAAOS)
- [The Sports Medicine Self-Assessment Exam](#) (Editor-in-Chief Jonathan D. Packer, MD, FAAOS)

Participation in these exams remains strong, underscoring the commitment of orthopaedic professionals to continuous learning and excellence in patient care.



OLC Education & Conference Center

The [OLC Education and Conference Center](#) stands as a premier event destination, welcoming over 10,000 distinguished medical professionals annually from all 50 states and more than 50 countries. The 14,000-square-foot facility combines cutting-edge technology with hands-on surgical training. As the OLC celebrates 30 years of advancing medical education, it continues to enhance its state-of-the-art facility with significant upgrades:

- Addition of a second demonstration station, enabling dual demo capabilities for simultaneous bioskills and procedural training
- Introduction of professional-grade, OLC-branded scrubs for participants, made possible through the Aircast Foundation
- Comprehensive upgrades to facility-wide AV systems, including expanded content production capabilities with an on-site editing suite

In 2024, the OLC partnered with medical organizations to host innovative courses including:

- American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine/National Hockey League (AOSSM/NHL) Hockey Summit — A landmark event featuring all-star faculty addressing emergency preparedness, injury management, and brain health
- OLC continues to host the Arthroscopy Association of North America/Society of Military Orthopaedic Surgeons (AANA/SOMOS) Knee Course, training military surgeons.
- The Society of Vascular Surgeons continues to host its bioskills lab course at the OLC.
- AOSSM's Global Innovations in Complex Shoulder Surgery featuring demos from multiple international locations with live translation in up to 61 languages.

In September, the OLC hosted the 2024 AAOS Fundamentals of Knee and Shoulder Arthroscopy, which marked a significant milestone by implementing virtual reality pretraining through Osso, per their website. VR's cutting-edge training systems. This approach embodied the essence of next-generation education by allowing surgeons to practice procedures virtually before arriving at the facility and enabling them to focus on advanced techniques during hands-on lab time. The VR system provided real-time feedback on surgical movements and performance analytics, helping instructors tailor their teaching to each surgeon's specific needs.

Orthopaedic Video Theater

AAOS is committed to investing in tools that bring cutting-edge techniques to professionals around the world. Through its growing digital-learning ecosystem, orthopaedic professionals gain immersive access to demonstrations of groundbreaking surgical techniques through the power of the [Orthopaedic Video Theater \(OVT\)](#). In 2024, OVT launched a new channel in partnership with Geisinger to complement the existing library

of hundreds of peer-reviewed videos providing CME credits. Additionally, OVT underwent a branding refresh, introducing a modern look that aligned with its expanded global reach.

With a refreshed look and feel, the OVT platform invites users to watch peer-reviewed videos.



EXPLORE OVT

Webinars

An array of interactive [webinars](#) and virtual courses engaged orthopaedic professionals worldwide. In 2024, AAOS hosted 83 webinars, offering live and on-demand access for orthopaedic surgeons, residents, fellows, and allied health professionals.

The highest-attended webinars of 2024 included:

- Quadriceps Tendon Grafts, Osteotomies, and Lateral Extra-Articular Augmentation for Anterior Cruciate Ligament Reconstruction: When and Why in 2024?
- Rotator Cuff Repair Biologic Augmentation: Options to Improve Healing in 2024
- AAOS and ISCD Present: Osteoporosis in Orthopaedic Surgery
- Evaluation and Treatment of Massive Cuff Tears
- Instability After Reverse Arthroplasty: A Case-Based Discussion of Prevention and Management

2024 Digital Education by the Numbers

Webinars

- Webinars conducted: **83**
 - CME webinars conducted: **54**
- Average webinar registration: **143**
- Webinar On-Demand views: **12,519**

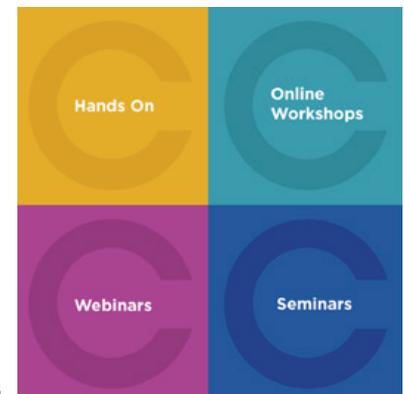
Online Learning

- Unique LMS users: **18,323**
- CME credits awarded on [learn.aaos.org](#): **124,657**

Live Courses

AAOS leverages the expertise of world-class faculty to provide peer-reviewed, high caliber programs that deliver cutting-edge orthopaedic advancements designed to meet evolving practice needs. In 2024, AAOS expanded and refined its [live course offerings](#), providing a more cohesive and impactful educational experience. With 16 courses

and over 1,100 participants, AAOS courses offer unparalleled opportunities for orthopaedic surgeons to refine their skills. Courses provide members access to cadaver labs, live Q&A sessions, networking opportunities, and more. The most popular course, Board Prep and Review, drew more than 200 attendees. This success underscores AAOS' dedication to fostering professional growth and clinical excellence through accessible, innovative education.





Learning Innovation Lab

In 2024, the [Learning Innovation Lab](#) continued to revolutionize orthopaedic education by embracing hybrid learning and virtual models to maximize engagement and retention. These offerings are designed to captivate, challenge, and empower orthopaedic professionals, setting new benchmarks for engaging, high-impact education. Among the 96 idea submissions received this year, AAOS introduced the following products:



- [ICL360](#) offers a deep dive into orthopaedic topics by integrating curated video content, full-text readings from the Journal of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (JAAOS®), technique videos from OVT, and links to external literature and PubMed.



- [Diagnosis Spotlight](#) hones clinicians' skills in identifying challenging musculoskeletal injuries and conditions commonly missed in radiologic imaging. Practitioners can analyze the factors contributing to diagnostic errors and apply best practices for reducing misdiagnosis to improve patient care and limit malpractice claims.



- [Orthopaedic Care for Physician Assistants](#) provides detailed guides about various orthopaedic treatment areas (hip and thigh, knee, shoulder, and sports medicine) for physician assistants and other allied health professionals.



- [Recert Ready](#) helps orthopaedic surgeons prepare for the ABOS Web-Based Longitudinal Assessment recertification pathway by providing a refresher on the key elements of evidence-based medicine and the critical evaluation of research articles in the context of orthopaedic surgery.

AAOS Publications

AAOS continues to serve as the leading source for musculoskeletal content in print, digital, audio and online formats. In 2024, AAOS launched a new online bookstore, providing AAOS members with a 25% discount and free shipping.

Serving as a repository of orthopaedic research, best practices, and innovation, the [JAAOS® Portfolio](#) includes a diverse collection of essential publications.

In 2024, submissions to the “yellow, green, and blue journals” reached a record high of 1,846 — an increase of nearly 6% from the previous year. Additionally, Gwo-Chin Lee, MD, FAAOS, became the new editor-in-chief of [JAAOS Global](#), succeeding Jeffrey S. Fischgrund, MD, FAAOS, who remains the [JAAOS Research](#) editor.

JAAOS expanded its reach in 2024 with innovative communication methods. The [Sounds from The Training Room](#) blog boosted engagement through video and audio clips, while podcasts saw significant growth. The [JAAOS Journal Club](#) more than doubled its downloads, and [JAAOS Unplugged®](#) saw a 14% increase in downloads.

JAAOS® Sounds From The Training Room



OrthoInfo Patient Education

[OrthoInfo](#), the AAOS' patient-facing website, continued to serve a multitude of audiences in 2024. This included people worldwide who were searching online for musculoskeletal health information for themselves or loved ones and patients whose physicians or providers referred them to [OrthoInfo](#) to learn about their diagnoses, treatment options, recovery, rehabilitation, and bone health. Each month, nearly 1.8 million users viewed nearly 2.6 million pages on orthoinfo.org.

More than 90 pieces of [OrthoInfo](#) content were updated or created in 2024, including these new articles:

- [Achilles Tendon Rupture \(Tear\)](#)
- [Awake Spinal Surgery](#)
- [Cortisone Shot \(Steroid Injection\)](#)
- [Cubital Tunnel Release](#)
- [Fracture After Knee Replacement](#)
- [Heterotopic Ossification of the Hip](#)
- [Hook of the Hamate Fracture of the Wrist](#)
- [Iliotibial \(IT\) Band Syndrome](#)
- [Impact of Chronic Illness on Bone Health](#)
- [Progressive Collapsing Foot Deformity \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Thumb CMC Joint Arthroplasty](#)
- [Ulnar Collateral Nerve \(UCL\) Injury](#)
- [Use of Stem Cells in Orthopaedics](#)
- [What to Know About Medical Tourism](#)



OrthoInfo



Education and innovation go hand in hand at the AAOS 2024 Annual Meeting.





AMA EdHub

In its ongoing efforts to expand access to orthopaedic knowledge among physicians and healthcare team members, AAOS now shares select orthopaedic content on [AMA's EdHub](#), a trusted platform for healthcare professionals. This initiative makes AAOS' high-quality online modules, OVT, and OrthoInfo resources more widely available.

National Academy of Medicine (NAM) Core Competency Implementation

Considering the significant and pervasive risks associated with opioid use and abuse, AAOS participated in the [NAM Core Competency Pilot Project](#), a strategic program focused on improving opioid stewardship in orthopaedic care. Through targeted education, data collection, and initiatives supporting the musculoskeletal healthcare community, the goal was to establish a new standard for pain management and sustainability in orthopaedic healthcare. AAOS remains committed to providing educational resources on this critical issue.



AAOS 2024 Annual Meeting

The AAOS 2024 [Annual Meeting](#) in San Francisco brought together orthopaedic professionals from around the world for a week of cutting-edge education, networking, and innovation.

More than 2,000 faculty members provided insights into the latest trends in musculoskeletal health. Through a diverse range of educational formats, these experts showcased recent advancements in surgical techniques, technology, and patient care.

Educational Program Highlights:

- [OrthoDome®](#), an immersive, 4K surgical video education experience showcasing state-of-the-art techniques and devices
- OVT stations, featuring 164 new titles for 2024
- A Spanish-language track pairing U.S. and international speakers to enhance communication and engagement for over 420 learners
- Opioid-prescribing education, ensuring compliance with new Drug Enforcement Administration educational requirements
- More than 1,620 paper, poster, and e-poster presentations that spotlighted the latest research in the field and introduction of the new e-poster presentation format

Attendees experienced the forefront of orthopaedic innovation in the [Exhibit Hall](#), where more than 190,000 square feet of space was filled with over 600 exhibitors showcasing the latest advancements in medical devices and orthopaedic technologies.

The inaugural [OrthoPitch](#) event, a live competition for where companies presented innovative orthopaedic products to industry experts.

Beyond education and innovation showcases, the AAOS Annual Meeting also focused on building connections. Events like the New Member Luncheon, Resident Bowl, and Speed Mentoring for Residents fostered meaningful professional connections.

At the Your Academy event, CNN Chief Medical Correspondent Dr. Sanjay Gupta served as the Presidential Guest Speaker, offering insights into medicine and the media. AAOS also proudly welcomed Chile as the Guest Nation, furthering international collaboration.

FORGING THE PATH TO THE FUTURE: UPCOMING EVENTS

Courses:
The AAOS Courses Program is rolling out a refreshed look and feel as it introduces the new OrthoSkills Courses. These courses are designed to deliver a well-rounded curriculum covering broad orthopaedic topics essential for the generalist orthopaedic surgeon. Upcoming OrthoSkills Courses include [Techniques in Total Knee and Trauma](#) in May and [Techniques in Sports Medicine and Total Hip](#) in September.

Webinars:
In 2025, AAOS aims to expand its offerings with new topics, including AI applications and patient-centered care, ensuring webinars remain an essential resource for orthopaedic professionals.

Annual Meeting:
The [AAOS 2026 Annual Meeting](#) will take place March 2-6 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Learning Innovation Lab:
2025 will see the release of another product, the Skillset Series. The series will offer a practical, curated learning experience, including high-quality, relevant content from AAOS' catalog of offerings created and edited by leading experts for all career levels.

EXCELLENCE IN ADVOCACY

Adam Bruggeman, MD, FAAOS, FAOA, chair of the AAOS Advocacy Council, testified twice before Congress in 2024 on key orthopaedic issues.



Excellence in advocacy is characterized by combining knowledge, persistence, passion, and effective communication surrounding healthcare policy. The AAOS focused its advocacy efforts on a variety of key orthopaedic issues that drove meaningful progress during 2024.

Congressional Testimonies

In 2024, Adam Bruggeman, MD, MPH, FAAOS, FAOA, chair of the AAOS Advocacy Council, provided testimony before Congress on two occasions, addressing critical issues impacting the healthcare sector.

In April Dr. Bruggeman appeared before the House Committee on Energy and Commerce to discuss the ramifications of a cyberattack on Change Healthcare, a major healthcare technology company. He highlighted the significant operational disruptions caused by the attack, emphasizing that his staff had to spend considerable time correcting erroneous bills sent to patients as a result of the breach. Dr. Bruggeman underscored the need for enhanced cybersecurity measures within the healthcare sector to protect patient information and ensure the continuity of medical services.

In his May testimony before the House Budget Committee, Dr. Bruggeman addressed the challenges posed by increasing consolidation in the healthcare industry. He argued that the current Medicare physician payment system fails to account for factors such as a doctor's training, experience, and quality of care, leading to a standardized payment approach that disadvantages independent practices. Dr. Bruggeman advocated for reforms, including adjusting the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule to reflect inflation and revising budget-neutrality requirements that force medical specialties to compete over reimbursement rates. He warned that without such reforms, physicians might feel compelled to abandon independent practice due to financial pressures.

Christine Kean, chief operating officer of The San Antonio Orthopaedic Group, also testified before Congress in May 2024, sharing insights from her experience managing a large, independent physician-owned group in San Antonio, Texas. Ms. Kean testified before the House Ways and Means Committee's Health Subcommittee, focusing on the challenges facing independent medical practices. She emphasized the pressing need for permanent Medicare payment reform. Ms. Kean also highlighted how current reimbursement rates and administrative burdens threaten the viability of independent practices, potentially limiting patient access to care.

The testimonies of Dr. Bruggeman and Ms. Kean provided Congress with valuable perspectives on the operational challenges and systemic issues confronting independent healthcare professionals. Their insights underscored the critical need for policy reforms to support the sustainability of independent medical practices and ensure continued access to quality patient care.



Adam Bruggeman, MD, MPH, FAAOS, FAOA, and Christine Kean each testified before members of Congress on key orthopaedic issues.

Prior Authorization Reform

[Prior Authorization](#), the need to acquire approval before certain services, procedures, or medications are provided, is common across Medicare Advantage (MA) and commercial insurance plans. While the aim is to manage healthcare costs, it can have significantly negative effects on patient care and outcomes.

The AAOS' advocacy was instrumental in persuading the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to finalize a landmark rule reforming prior authorization requirements in 2024. This victory streamlines administrative processes by implementing shorter decision timeframes, expanding electronic prior authorization procedures for MA plans, reducing paperwork burdens, and allowing more time for patient care.

The AAOS is continuing to ask House and Senate members to codify this regulation through the Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act (S. 4532), which is expected to be reintroduced in 2025 with strong bipartisan support.

Rural Healthcare Access

Significant progress has been made in the goal of expanding access to orthopaedic care in rural communities. Healthcare consolidation and the resulting hospital closures have left millions in rural areas without access to needed care. In July 2024, a bipartisan group of lawmakers introduced the Physician Led and Rural Access to Quality Care Act (H.R. 9001) in the U.S. House of Representatives.

This legislation aims to address the healthcare shortage in rural areas by promoting the development of new physician-led hospitals and the expansion of existing POHs. These policies will significantly increase patients' access to care, particularly in rural and underserved areas, and strengthen the patient-physician relationship. The AAOS will continue to educate members of Congress on the need for this policy change in 2025 and work on building more bipartisan momentum.

Medicare Payment Reform

AAOS built substantial momentum in [Medicare payment reform](#) through multiple legislative initiatives, with strong congressional support. The AAOS' coalition work successfully positioned orthopaedic priorities at the forefront of the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 (MACRA) modernization discussions, focusing on fair surgical reimbursement and regulatory burden reduction. These efforts have delivered increased bipartisan backing for an overhaul of Medicare payments in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Persistent lobbying efforts are gaining traction in addressing the current physician compensation structure. This bipartisan momentum signals progress towards rectifying the long-standing issues within the physician payment system, reflecting the effectiveness of coordinated advocacy by the medical community.

Access to Medicare Data for AAOS Registries

In September, three of AAOS' champions on Capitol Hill introduced the Access to Claims Data Act (H.R. 9805), which would require the CMS to establish a program that allows clinician-led data registries access to Medicare claims data. These [registries](#), including five musculoskeletal registries operated by AAOS and its partners, are pivotal in gathering data on quality indicators and clinical outcomes. These data are essential to driving health system innovation, quality improvement, and value-based care.

Insurance and Coding Victories

AAOS successfully halted implementation of detrimental Blue Cross Blue Shield [policy changes](#) related to the Modifier 25 policy. The AAOS advocacy prevented a 50% reimbursement reduction for certain evaluation and management (E/M) codes with same-day surgical procedures. The AAOS also resolved nationwide denials of Casting Supply Codes. Additionally, by working with LyricAI, AAOS was able to correct erroneous ClaimsXten software edits, ensuring proper claims processing. Finally, AAOS collaborated with the American Society for Surgery of the Hand (ASSH) to create new Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®) code 25448 for suspension arthroplasty, enhancing coding accuracy for specific procedures.

ORTHOPAEDIC
ADVOCACY WEEK

August 6-8, 2024



2024 Orthopaedic Advocacy Week

During the fourth Annual Orthopaedic Advocacy Week, which took place in August, orthopaedic surgeons across the U.S. were encouraged to spend a few minutes each day participating in online activities to help advance musculoskeletal healthcare policies. This three-day virtual event focused on prior authorization, payment policy changes, physician-owned hospitals and regulatory advocacy. At the end of the event, AAOS saw over 860 letters written to policymakers, and volunteers worked with 135 members of Congress and 76 Senators to advocate for the issues that matter most to AAOS members and their patients.



Physical Therapy Supervision Flexibility

For calendar year 2025, CMS finalized regulatory changes allowing general supervision of physical therapist assistants (PTAs) and occupational therapy assistants (OTAs) in private practice settings, enhancing therapy service delivery while maintaining quality standards. In private practice settings, they are now allowed to work under general supervision instead of under direct supervision.

This finalized change gives practices more flexibility in meeting the needs of beneficiaries and safeguards patient access to medically necessary therapy services. For those patients experiencing challenges accessing these services in rural and underserved areas, these new guidelines are particularly important, aligning with general supervision of PTAs and OTAs by physical therapists and occupational therapists who work with institutional providers.



Orthopaedic Political Action Committee (OrthoPAC)

As the largest political action committee (PAC) dedicated to representing orthopaedic surgeons in the nation's capital, AAOS [OrthoPAC](#) provides one of the clearest opportunities for AAOS to shape the future of musculoskeletal care for members, patients, and the orthopaedic profession, both in Washington, D.C., and across the country. Despite a challenging election cycle marked by political conflict, OrthoPAC remained the second largest PAC in the physician community and raised more than \$1.4 million.

2024 ORTHOPAC BY THE NUMBERS

Total Dollars Raised

\$1,446,674

\$878,420  \$568,254

OrthoPAC Soft Dollars

Disbursements

\$888,827

PAC Charity Match Total

\$42,400

Top five charities supported

1. American Shoulder and Elbow Surgery Foundation
2. Orthopaedic Research and Education Foundation
3. The Wounded Warrior Project
4. The Foundation for Arthroplasty Research and Education
5. The National Multiple Sclerosis Society

Orthopaedic Advisor's Circle

The [Orthopaedic Advisor's Circle](#) was particularly active during 2024. Advisor's Circle members attended over 40 in-district events and 15 retreats with members of Congress, national party committees, and state governor's associations, helping to increase AAOS' political footprint across the country.

Orthopaedic Advisor's Circle Members

American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons
Musculoskeletal Tumor Society
American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics
American Shoulder Elbow Surgeons
American Society for Surgery of the Hand
American Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Society
J. Robert Gladden Orthopaedic Society
Pediatric Orthopaedic Society
American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics
Campbell Clinic Orthopaedics
Fondren Orthopedic Group
Rothman Orthopaedics
Tennessee Orthopaedic Alliance
New Mexico Orthopaedic
Peachtree Orthopedics
Delaware Orthopaedic Specialists
Atlantic Orthopaedic Specialists
First State Orthopaedics
OrthoSC
EmergeOrtho PA
United Musculoskeletal Partners
Premier Orthopaedics Sports Medicine Associates
OrthoVirginia

FORGING THE PATH TO THE FUTURE

New Advocacy Action Center Coming in 2025

The Office of Government Relations is completely revamping how members can engage with the advocacy process in 2025, with a redesigned [Advocacy Action Center](#) and new, easy to use tools that make it simpler than ever to advocate for your profession. The new center will include:

- A single, integrated Advocacy portal where members can access all their advocacy activities, from donating to the PAC and engaging with members of Congress to sharing information for lobbying teams to bring with them to Capitol Hill.
- A redesigned, more user-friendly tool for taking action — whether it be sending letters to representatives, engaging with lawmakers on social media, attending political fundraisers, or sharing stories about how healthcare policy is impacting orthopaedic practices.
- The ability for members to track advocacy activities, benchmark against peers, and receive recognition as they rise up the new advocacy leaderboard.
- More accessible information about where members of Congress stand on the issues that impact the orthopaedic community.

EXCELLENCE IN MEMBERSHIP

In 2024, AAOS welcomed a more diverse class of members than ever before, thanks to three new membership categories.

WELCOME
NEW
AAOS
MEMBERS



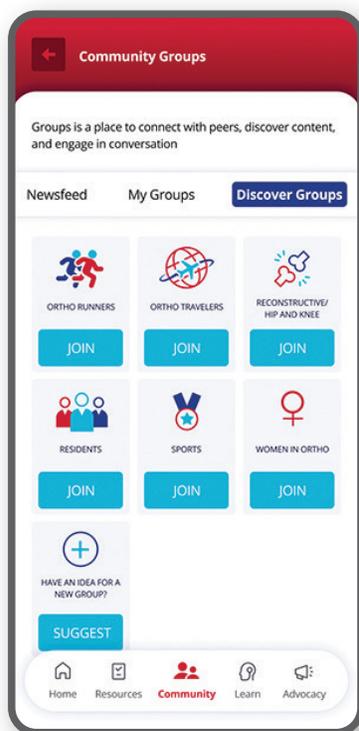
The AAOS continually prioritizes new ways to connect with, elevate, and address the needs of members across every specialty and career stage. The AAOS strives to meet members where they are, providing critical content, opportunities, and support for professional excellence to deliver the highest quality care to patients. In 2024, Active Fellows enjoyed exclusive benefits valued at over \$11,800.

Stronger Connections and More Seamless Experiences

In September 2024, AAOS introduced a redesigned MyAccount portal, offering members comprehensive features and an easier-to-use interface for directory listings, profile updates, educational activities, and CME tracking, including accessing invoices and receipts, and making payments.

The [AAOS Membership App](#), which debuted in the fall of 2023, added expanded features and offerings this year to enhance the user experience, including the abilities to tag members in discussions and receive notifications when tagged, for more impactful networking experiences. In addition, there are HIPAA-compliant Community Groups for members to engage in like-minded interests and practice areas, including Hip and Knee Reconstruction, Sports, Women in Ortho, Ortho Runners Ortho Travelers, and Residents.

To expand its ability to serve more leaders in the musculoskeletal health space, AAOS has introduced [new member categories](#), including Medical Students, Allied Member — Orthopaedic Team, and Affiliate Orthopaedic Surgeons. The addition of these member categories was met with much enthusiasm as AAOS has already accepted over 2,600 Medical Student members and counting.



Increased Social Engagement

Leaning into popular trends and memes in 2024, AAOS broadened its brand personality with a focus on celebrating a more lighthearted and fun side of orthopaedics. From the debut of Skeletoni — a friendly and pun-loving skeleton who’s passionate about musculoskeletal health — to campaigns like [Members of the Month](#), [#AAOSMemories](#), and [#MSKCare](#), the AAOS social presence delivers a variety of important news and content that aims to keep followers engaged, educated, and connected to their orthopaedic community. By leveraging this updated social media strategy, AAOS gained over 21,000 new followers and yielded over 307,000 engagements and 6.7 million impressions in 2024.

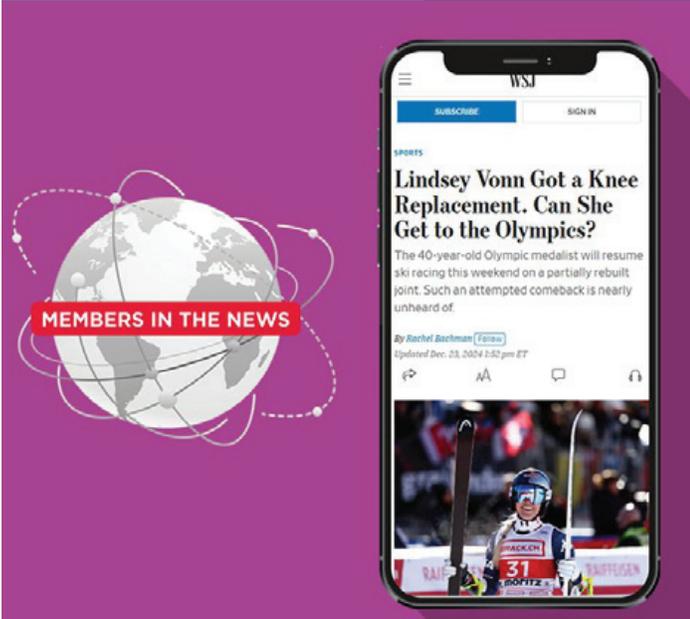
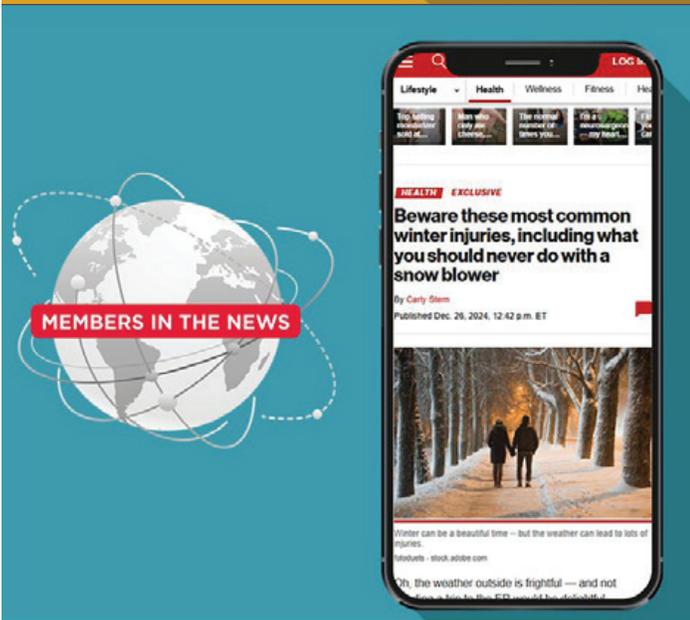
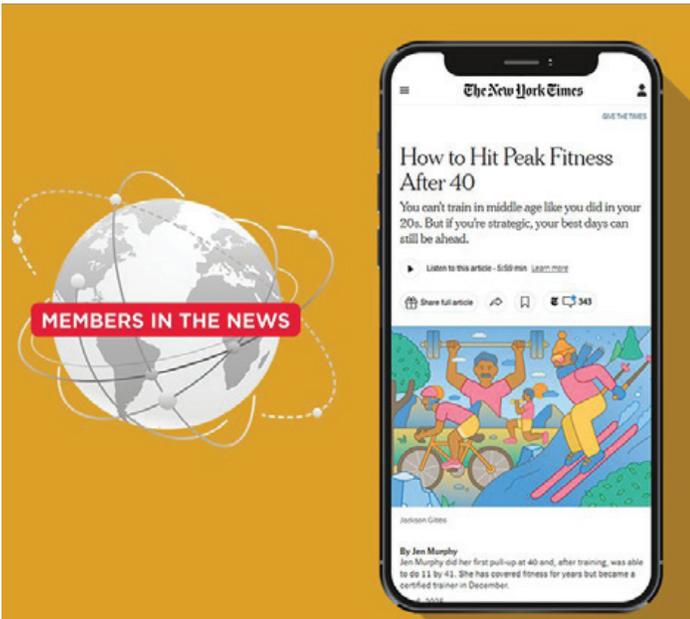


Listening to Members

Each year, the AAOS invites members to “Be Heard” through the [Member Value and Satisfaction Survey \(MVAS\)](#) to understand their needs. The data provided allows AAOS to drive new content, suggest new initiatives, and enhance resources and tools. As a member-focused organization, AAOS uses the MVAS as a powerful way for members to voice their opinions and to advance AAOS as an authoritative, trusted, relevant resource throughout each member’s career.

The data generated from previous surveys has led to improved member offerings, including new functionality for ROCK, the creation of the Learning Innovation Lab, and a streamlined communication strategy and email preference center. In 2024, nearly 5,000 members completed the survey, and their feedback will be incorporated into future programming and features.





Promoting Orthopaedics

AAOS connects members to journalists and media to promote their practices and profession, educate patients, and ensure accuracy of musculoskeletal health in the news. This past year, AAOS members and Fellows have been profiled in [local and national news outlets](#). From discussions about hip and knee replacements, return to sports, inspiring patient stories, and much more, AAOS members have served as spokespersons to highlight critical bone and joint health information in media interviews citing OrthoInfo as a reliable online resource for readers, listeners, and viewers.

In addition, AAOS introduced a new [FAAOS digital badge](#) and window cling to assist Active Fellows with promoting their FAAOS designation to patients and the broader medical community. These tools provide Active Fellows with a tangible way to display their FAAOS designation, both at their offices and across various platforms, including social media profiles. Displaying their FAAOS status provides members an opportunity to showcase their AAOS membership and underscore their commitment to patient care, professionalism, and ethical standards.



International Impact

Connecting with peers around the world is key to the AAOS' pursuit of excellence. The International Committee collaborated with orthopaedic societies from across the globe, with more than 30 AAOS faculty involved in hosting eight programs for 4,500 attendees. In addition, AAOS provided orthopaedic surgeons and residents in low-income countries with reduced membership rates, continuing the success of the program originally piloted in 2023.

For the first time in four years, AAOS exceeded expectations of International Surgeon applicants by 113.60%, with 426 applicants. During 2024, International Surgeon retention remained steadily aligned with 2023 numbers.

AAOS

LAUNCHPAD

Prepare for Takeoff

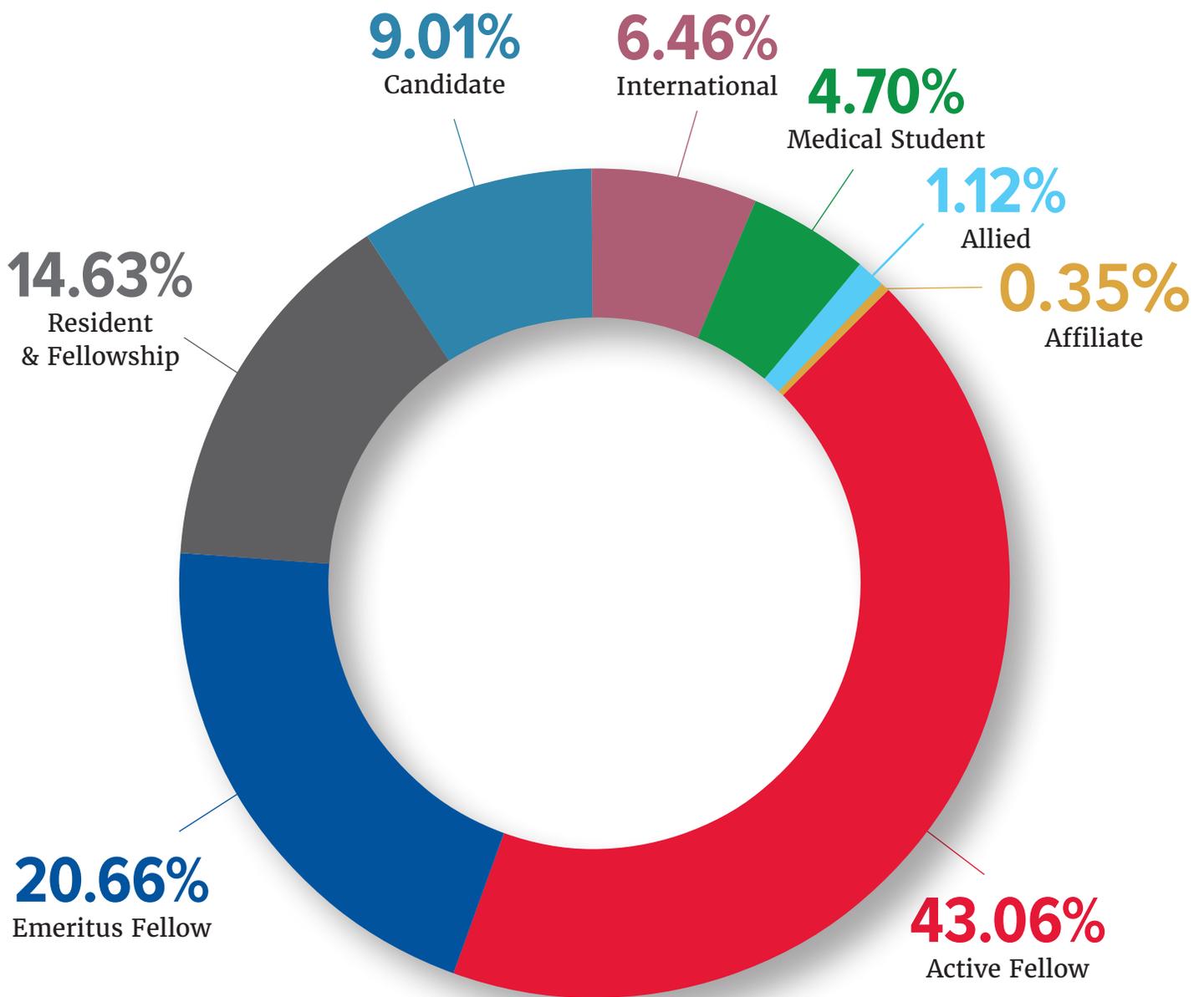


FORGING THE PATH TO THE FUTURE

AAOS Board Approves Early-Career Pilot Program

The AAOS Board of Directors has approved an early career pilot program for postgraduate year 5 resident members, offering a “bridge” experience from free to paid membership. The program, called the [AAOS Launchpad](#), aims to provide a high-value, time-bound experience that increases member satisfaction and fosters a long-term connection to AAOS.

MEMBERSHIP BY TYPE



EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP

Paul Tornetta III, MD, PhD, FAAOS, delivered remarks highlighting the importance of putting patients first during the 2024 Your Academy Event.



The AAOS continues to evolve, shaping the future of orthopaedic care with a focus on leadership development. This year saw the continuation and expansion of several key initiatives aimed at fostering a collaborative environment for our members while preparing them to lead within both AAOS and the broader orthopaedic community.



Fostering Future Leadership

At the heart of the AAOS' leadership development efforts is the [AAOS Leadership Institute \(ALI\)](#), established to cultivate leadership skills among members and prepare them for service within the organization. ALI's four-tiered program supports participants' growth and education in a progressive platform. Since its debut, nearly 220 members have completed Level 1, with more than 150 projected to complete Level 2 by March 2025. Additionally, more than 80 members will have completed Level 3, and 31 will graduate from Level 4. Notably, 114 members who have completed one or more levels of the program are currently serving on the AAOS Board of Directors or on an AAOS council or committee.

One of the highlights of ALI this year was the introduction of a [new module in Level 2](#) focused on professionalism. This module delves into the AAOS Standards of Professionalism and the Professional Compliance Program, offering members an essential foundation for upholding ethical standards in their interactions with patients and colleagues. The new module reflects AAOS' commitment not only to developing leadership but also to ensuring that our leaders maintain the highest ethical and professional standards.

Medical Student Engagement Forums

To further engage future orthopaedic surgeons at the medical student level, AAOS holds quarterly Medical Student Engagement Forums. These forums serve as a resource for early-career professionals navigating the day-to-day responsibilities of practicing medicine, and they provide guidance on how to get involved in both AAOS and orthopaedics in general.

Strengthening Volunteer Leadership

The AAOS thrives on the dedication of its volunteers, who shape the organization's future with their time and expertise. This year, AAOS enhanced its [Committee Appointment Program \(CAP\)](#), increasing participation and standardizing processes. In 2024, the CAP Committee standardized its application period, setting it to begin at the start of the Annual Meeting and end on August 1



Daniel Guy, MD, FAAOS, speaks on the benefits of participating in the ALI program.

of each year. This change aims to establish a consistent timeline, making it easier for members to know when to apply for positions and contribute to the mission and vision of AAOS. This newly streamlined timeline led to a rise in average applications per position — from 1.48 in 2023 to 1.97 in 2024.

Volunteer service offers members an invaluable opportunity to shape the direction of AAOS, expand their professional networks, and develop leadership skills. With nearly 600 members currently serving on 70 AAOS councils, committees, or the Board of Directors, the CAP program continues to be a vital channel for member involvement in governance.





Joel Mayerson, MD, FAAOS, Chair of the Board of Councilors, discusses the importance of collaboration with state and specialty societies.

Supporting States and Specialties

To ensure that the orthopaedic community speaks with a united voice, the [AAOS Board of Councilors \(BOC\)](#) launched an initiative aimed at enhancing bidirectional communication efforts between AAOS and state and regional orthopaedic societies. The effort included a series of structured, regional meetings to facilitate real-time exchange of ideas and concerns with AAOS leadership while keeping state and regional leaders abreast of AAOS news and initiatives.

To further demonstrate the AAOS' commitment to facilitating orthopaedic partnerships, multiple funds have been established over the years to contribute to the advancement of orthopaedic research and advocacy and foster development of the individual state and specialty societies.

The [Board of Specialty Societies \(BOS\) Research Support Fund](#) awarded \$100,000 to Jay Wunder, MD, FAAOS, for his study, "Evaluating the Implementation, Utility, and Clinical Importance of the Patient-Reported Outcome Measure Information System (PROMIS) in Sarcoma Patients: A Multi-Centered Prospective Cohort Study." The fund was also awarded in 2023 to Mohan Venkatnarsimha, MD, FAAOS, for his study, "Validation of the PROOF Questionnaires as a Patient-Reported Outcome Measure and Clinical Decision Support Tool for Fractures in Children"; and to Joseph John King III, MD, FAAOS, for his study,

"Multicenter Prospective Study for the Optimization of Treatment and Followup for Proximal Humerus Fractures."

Meanwhile, the BOC administers two funding opportunities for state and regional orthopaedic societies. The [BOC State Orthopaedic Societies \(SOS\) Assistance Fund](#) was designed to strengthen and foster development of the state orthopaedic societies through projects that support education, technology, outreach, membership, and governance initiatives. Funds in 2024 were awarded to the New York State Society of Orthopaedic Surgeons, the Mississippi Orthopaedic Society, the North Dakota Orthopaedic Society, the New Mexico Orthopaedic Association, and the Hawaii Orthopaedic Association. The AAOS Board of Directors approved a \$40,000 increase in annual funding for the SOS Assistance Fund, raising the total to \$60,000 per year for a three-year pilot program. The decision underscores the Board's commitment to supporting state and regional orthopaedic societies.

Finally, AAOS supports the [BOC Health Policy Action Fund](#), which is designed to provide funds that activate state orthopaedic society initiatives that respond to various local, legislative, and regulatory issues affecting the practice of orthopaedics and patient care. The two 2024 funding cycles awarded funds to orthopaedic associations and societies including those in California, Georgia, Rhode Island, Minnesota, Oklahoma, among others.



Orthopaedic leaders come together to discuss governance, advocacy, and the future of AAOS at the Combined NOLC/Fall Meeting.

Combined National Orthopaedic Leadership Conference (NOLC)/Fall Meeting

AAOS Board of Directors, BOC, BOS, ALI Level 4 participants, residents, and other invited leaders convened at the 2024 AAOS [Combined NOLC/Fall Meeting](#) in Washington, D.C., to discuss critical orthopaedic issues including:

- Effective governance and proposed changes to the AAOS bylaws
- Data insights and innovations for the AAOS Annual Meeting
- AAOS collaboration with state and specialty societies
- The impact of CMS policy changes
- Prior authorization



The IDEA Grant Program

Since 2022, the [AAOS Inspiring Diversity, Equity, and Access \(IDEA\) Grant Program](#) has been pivotal in funding initiatives that create a welcoming environment in orthopaedics. In 2024, 17 recipients received grants totaling \$300,000 to support DEI projects. These grants focus on reducing bias and discrimination while expanding access to orthopaedic education and career opportunities.

Demonstrating how these funds create a lasting and measurable impact on the advancement of diversity in orthopaedics, recipients of the 2023 IDEA Grant used the funds to promote the professional development of women in orthopaedics by sending female medical students to orthopaedic meetings and networking events. Others created programs aimed at exposing local students to career paths in orthopaedic surgery.

Promoting Transparency: The New Disclosure Program

To promote transparency and confidence in the educational programs, publications and decisions by all Governance Groups of AAOS, a comprehensive AAOS [Mandatory Disclosure Policy](#) helps guide AAOS members in reporting conflicts of interest. To support this initiative, AAOS has implemented the use of Convey®, a global disclosure system developed by the Association of American Medical Colleges, to simplify the collection, review, and management of disclosure information, ensuring consistency with AAOS policies.

Diversity in Leadership

AAOS worked throughout 2024 to promote and encourage diversity within both membership and leadership. AAOS Presidential Line continues to meet with leadership of societies such as Ruth Jackson Orthopaedic Society (RJOS), J. Robert Gladden Orthopaedic Society (JRGOS), American Association of Latino Orthopaedic Surgeons (AALOS), and the SOMOS to further collaborate for the advancement of diversity in orthopaedics. Communication and promotion of available leadership positions through the CAP system were funneled through to specialty societies represented in the [AAOS Diversity Advisory Board](#).

AAOS publishes an annual [Governance Diversity Report](#), presenting statistics on composition, selection, and engagement in AAOS governance.

Finally, several forums for training and discussion were hosted by AAOS to provide guidance and solicit feedback on members' experiences with diversity topics. These forums included a Diversity Town Hall, virtual IDEA Grant Town Hall, a networking breakfast in partnership with the International Orthopaedic Diversity Alliance, and a symposium titled "Addressing Discrimination, Bullying, and Harassment in the Orthopaedic Workplace: A Leadership Roundtable."

FORGING THE PATH TO THE FUTURE: ALI ENHANCEMENTS

In 2025, the ALI program will incorporate participant feedback to better prepare members for leadership within and beyond AAOS, reinforcing the AAOS' commitment to exceptional experiences and valuable resources.

EXCELLENCE IN

RESEARCH & QUALITY

The AAOS' efforts in OrthoBiologics are intended to help guide orthopaedic surgeons and vastly improve patient care within the biologics space.

CLAIM create significant, meaningful clinical improve



The AAOS empowers its members to set the standard for excellence in their practices and institutions as the leaders in musculoskeletal care. With a strong focus on innovation, resources and programs have made significant strides in quality, leading to a year of growth and progress in supporting physicians to improve patient care and outcomes during 2024.



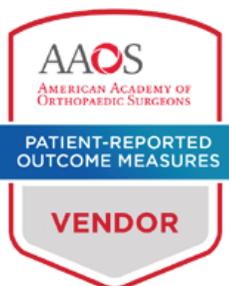
AAOS PROMs in Practice

AAOS [Patient-Reported Outcome Measures \(PROMs\)](#) are regularly utilized to evaluate outcomes of a surgical procedure and facilitate capturing of this useful data. By systematically measuring this information, orthopaedic surgeons and team members can improve clinical decision-making, monitor treatment effectiveness, and identify areas for improvement to deliver better patient care. The AAOS keeps building this resource, and 2024 was no exception.

In 2024, AAOS deployed the AAOS PROMs Usage Survey to assess members' familiarity with, adoption, engagement, and perceived importance of the AAOS PROMs program.

Key findings include:

- Nearly 60% of respondents rated themselves as “very familiar” with PROMs.
- About 50% of members reported collecting PROMs, with the highest rates in adult reconstructive surgery (68%) and hip and knee specialties (87%).
- Roughly 40% of members use PROMs in practice, with Candidate members and those under 40 being the most likely to utilize them (61%).
- The top barriers to adoption were cited as staff burden and patient completion, and 65% of nonusers indicated they would adopt PROMs if barriers were removed.



A key new component is the tailored [PROMs Vendor Program](#). The program offers a curated list of technology vendors who support orthopaedic surgeons and their teams in measuring patient outcomes data.

The AAOS selects vendors based on criteria such as their ability to collect and submit patient-reported outcomes data. With this rich library

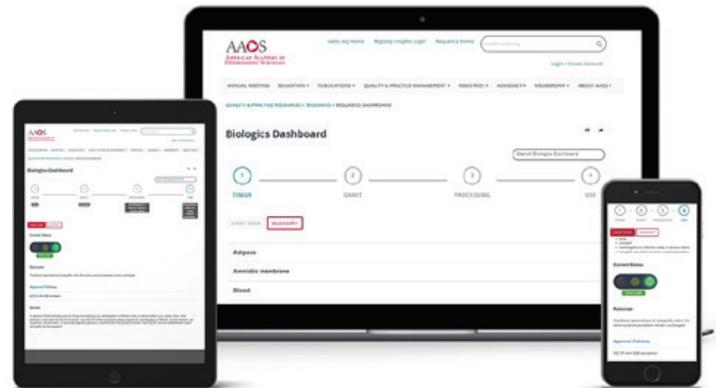
of technology vendors, AAOS is equipping members with user-friendly resources to increase awareness and understanding of the benefits of PROMs and PROM utilization at the point of clinical care.

Biologics Dashboard Update

The [Biologics](#) Dashboard, an interactive web-based tool developed and maintained by the AAOS Committee on Devices, Biologics, and Technology, underwent a significant update aimed at simplifying the search process for users.

Now, the [dashboard](#) allows users to search for biologic products directly by name. This enhancement significantly narrows down the search process, getting users closer to the precise information they need about a particular product.

The dashboard serves as a centralized platform where AAOS members can access important data about biologic products used in orthopaedic procedures. It offers insights into the regulatory status of these products, helping clinicians make informed decisions about their use in patient care.



Enhancements to the Biologics Dashboard now allow users to search for products by name.

Committee on Healthcare Safety

The AAOS Board of Directors approved three clinical practice guidelines updated by the Committee on Healthcare Safety in 2024, including:

- [Use of Structured Communication Tools to Improve Surgical Patient Safety](#) (Revised Information Statement)
- [Disruptive Behavior and Orthopaedic Patient Safety](#) (Revised Information Statement)
- [Delineation of Clinical Privileges in Orthopaedic Surgery](#) (Revised Position Statement)

Quality Support for Members

Quality products and programs are created for the continual support of members, their practices, and their patients. The AAOS [Member Advantage Program](#) partners with leading providers of rental cars, financial solutions, and wealth management, among others, to offer members efficient and money-saving solutions. In 2024, AAOS added a provider of employment contract review and salary data.



Because AAOS is dedicated to offering benefits to members at every stage of their career, a new resource launched in 2024 that supports members in their job search. The AAOS debuted [ACCELERATE by AAOS](#), an exclusive member-only career exploration platform designed to make the processes of job searching and hiring easier.

The intuitive map-based platform allows members to create a more relevant career search experience. It helps members evaluate all community and professional aspects in one easy-to-navigate tool that features virtually every orthopaedic surgery employer on the market.

American Joint Replacement Registry (AJRR)

AJRR AMERICAN JOINT REPLACEMENT REGISTRY More than 4 million procedures submitted from 1,447 institutions across all 50 states and the District of Columbia make up this year's update to the AJRR. This milestone solidifies the [AJRR](#) as the largest orthopaedic registry by annual procedure count. Another major AJRR milestone in 2024 included launching the Quality Improvement Scorecard on the Institution and Surgeon Dashboards in [RegistryInsights®](#). The scorecard enhances transparency, allowing participants to track performance, benchmark against national standards, and support practice improvements. In addition, AJRR completed the foundational work in 2024 to launch its first risk-adjusted dashboard measure in 2025.

The AJRR also implemented support for the CMS [Inpatient Quality Reporting \(IQR\)](#) Total Hip Arthroplasty/Total Knee Arthroplasty (THA/TKA) Patient-Reported Outcomes Performance Measure (PRO-PM). This program focuses on outcomes to assess pain and functional status improvements of patients following THA/TKA procedures. A February update to AJRR added three PRO-PM-specific data elements to the AJRR specifications and made available an IQR PRO-PM report within the [RegistryInsights®](#) platform. The report allows sites to track their PROMs completion and scores and is formatted for direct submission to the Hospital Quality Reporting portal.

Fracture & Trauma Registry (FTR)

FTR FRACTURE & TRAUMA REGISTRY In 2024, the [FTR](#) grew to over 19,000 procedures submitted by 25 sites. This milestone highlights the growing importance of data in advancing fracture and trauma care.

Two leading institutions, St. Luke's University Health Network in Pennsylvania and Stanford Medicine in California, implemented the FTR Powered by PatientIQ solution in 2024. PatientIQ simplifies data collection by integrating surgeons' workflows, automating key aspects of data submission, and reducing barriers to data tracking.

Musculoskeletal Tumor Registry (MsTR)

MsTR MUSCULOSKELETAL TUMOR REGISTRY The AAOS Registry Program is continuing its commitment to advancing care for the underserved community of patients with orthopaedic cancer by leveraging data-driven insights to address research gaps, improve treatment strategies, and enhance long-term patient outcomes. Over 1,900 procedures from six institutions have been submitted since the establishment of the [MsTR](#). In addition to requiring more comprehensive provider-entered information on bone and soft tissue tumors, MsTR enhancements in 2024 also included the standardization of SmartForms in the EPIC Community Library. These forms are tailored to capture essential sarcoma details to ensure precise and efficient documentation and enhance the registry's ability to report meaningfully on clinical outcomes.

Shoulder & Elbow Registry (SER)

SER SHOULDER & ELBOW REGISTRY Now in its fifth year, the [SER](#) includes 56,000 procedures from 82 participating facilities, experiencing significant growth from 2023 to 2024. The SER made substantial enhancements to the [RegistryInsights®](#) dashboard in 2024, including advanced data visualization and new report card features.

American Spine Registry (ASR)

American Spine Registry  The [ASR](#), a collaborative effort between the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) and AAOS, introduced several dashboard updates in 2024, including three new filters. These enhanced filters, Institution Type, Teaching Status, and Bed Count, are designed to deliver better benchmarking capabilities. During the 2024 Spine Summit, the ASR hosted a Data Alignment Workshop, which emphasized the importance of delivering a robust data set that serves as a single source of truth for outcomes of patients undergoing spine care. The ASR continues to experience year-over-year growth in participation, representing a 5.65% increase in institutions contributing to the registry and a 17.86% increase in procedures.

Registry Publications

During 2024, the AAOS Registry Program published various supplements that analyze the important data gathered. Manuscripts, posters, and podium presentations are among the increasingly used and cited Registry Program data at orthopaedic conferences around the world. In 2024, a total of 72 publications and 13 conference presentations referenced data from AAOS Registries.

Members are encouraged to learn more about U.S. orthopaedic patterns and trends through these publications:

- [AJRR Annual Report and Annual Report Supplement](#)
- [AAOS FTR Fact Sheet](#)
- [AAOS MsTR Fact Sheet](#)
- [SER Annual Report](#)
- [ASR Fact Sheet](#)



Registry Quality Collaborations

AAOS registries play a critical role in tracking patient outcomes and driving data-driven improvements in orthopaedic care. As a key mechanism for measuring quality and performance, the registries provide participating sites with actionable insights that support clinical decision-making, benchmarking, and continuous improvement. As part of its broader data reuse initiatives, AAOS is [collaborating](#) with the [Blue Cross Blue Shield Association \(BCBSA\)](#) and continues its collaboration with [The Joint Commission \(TJC\)](#) to enhance the value of registry participation for hospitals and healthcare providers.

Through its partnership with BCBSA, AAOS enables consenting participants in the AJRR and the ASR to have their quality outcomes data used in the evaluation of current and prospective Blue Distinction® Centers. Blue Distinction Specialty Care is a national designation program recognizing healthcare professionals who demonstrate expertise in delivering high-quality, cost-efficient specialty care. This collaboration reduces the administrative burden on hospitals by aggregating and stratifying the required BCBSA quality measures, including race and ethnicity breakdowns across key performance metrics, streamlining the designation and redesignation process.

Additionally, AAOS registries support TJC's certification programs, including the Advanced Certification in Spine Surgery and the Advanced Total Hip and Total Knee Replacement, by providing a structured framework for hospitals, outpatient centers, and ambulatory surgery centers participating in AJRR and ASR to leverage registry data in meeting certification requirements. By integrating registry-derived insights into both payer and accreditation pathways, AAOS strengthens its commitment to improving patient outcomes, reducing reporting burdens, and driving continuous quality improvement across the orthopaedic community.

Evidence-Based Quality Products

AAOS provides evidence-based programs for current orthopaedic diagnostic treatment and postoperative procedures.

The 2024 Clinical Practice Guidelines releases include:

- [Acute Isolated Meniscal Pathology](#)
- [Management of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome](#) (Update to the 2016 Guideline)
- [The Prevention of Total Hip and Knee Arthroplasty Periprosthetic Joint Infection in Patients Undergoing Dental Procedures](#) (Jointly Developed by AAOS and the American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons)

AAOS Toolkit Portfolio

AAOS unveiled its newly redesigned [Toolkit Portfolio](#), overseen by the Committee on Healthcare Safety and consisting of 15 comprehensive toolkits tailored to support orthopaedic surgeons, surgical teams, and patients.

The AAOS Toolkits are meticulously curated by member volunteers to provide a wide array of resources aimed at enhancing members' clinical practice. They offer a blend of education materials for clinicians and patients, evidence-based quality-improvement tools, strategic practice-management insights, and essential advocacy and regulatory information.

Each toolkit is dedicated to a distinct aspect of orthopaedic practice, whether to enhance surgical techniques, optimize patient care pathways, or stay ahead of regulatory changes.

The portfolio includes:

- [Biologics Toolkit](#)
- [Hand and Wrist Toolkit](#)
- [Osteoarthritis of the Knee Toolkit](#)
- [Pain Alleviation Toolkit](#)
- [Pediatric Toolkit](#)
- [Shoulder and Elbow Toolkit](#)
- [Sports Medicine Toolkit](#)
- [Surgical Risk Reduction Toolkit](#)
- [Total Hip Arthroplasty](#)
- [Total Knee Arthroplasty](#)
- [Trauma Toolkit](#)
- [Upper Extremity Fractures Toolkit](#)
- [Decision Aid Implementation Toolkit](#) (Endorsed)

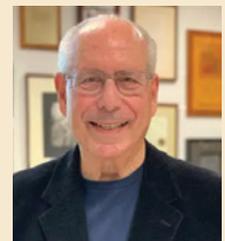
The portfolio also includes two newly added toolkits:

- [Wellness for Healthcare Professionals Toolkit](#): Provides valuable resources for addressing burnout, mental health, and resilience, supporting clinicians as they manage the emotional and psychological demands of their profession.
- [Workplace Violence Toolkit](#): Offers practical strategies for preventing, responding to, and recovering from incidents of violence, a growing concern in healthcare.

Both new toolkits are easy to find through the toolkit interface and provide crucial support for challenges that impact clinicians' daily lives, ensuring they have the resources to enhance their personal well-being and maintain a safe work environment.

FORGING THE PATH TO THE FUTURE

- Looking ahead, members can anticipate a modernized data submission platform for all registries, making the user experience more efficient and accessible.
- MsTR is developing the Alternative Entry Pathway as an easy place for sites to start with essential data and then transition to full participation once the site secures necessary resources.
- The inaugural recipient of the [Arnold I. Caplan Award](#), which recognizes the legacy of Arnold Caplan, PhD, a pioneer in the fields of OrthoBiologics and Medical Signaling Cells, will be recognized at the AAOS 2025 Annual Meeting.
- AAOS is continuing communication and collaboration with CMS and the Food and Drug Administration.



Arnold I. Caplan, PhD

EXCELLENCE IN

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Volunteer leaders forge the path towards the Academy's future by collaborating on the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan.

Strategic Plan

Improve musculoskeletal health through collaboration, innovation, and patient focus.

MEMBERS

Be the professional home for our members throughout their lifetime.

PATIENTS

Lead health transformation to optimize value for all.

AAOS

CULTURE

Modernize governance to ensure an adaptive, inclusive, and sustainable organization.

MSK COMMUNITY

Engage the musculoskeletal community to advance knowledge and improve health.

Serai

Elizabeth Wall

C

Michael W. Park

Connie Thauer

Ally Burg

R. P. ...

MSK = musculoskeletal

As AAOS navigates the evolving healthcare landscape and the needs of the orthopaedic profession, the Board of Directors has finalized and launched the [2024-2028 Strategic Plan](#) to build upon established core tenets and promote the value to members at every stage in their careers.

With an unwavering commitment to members, excellence in governance and transparency, and the goal of fostering leadership and diversity, this new plan expands AAOS efforts to enhance patient involvement and strengthen collaborations within the musculoskeletal community.

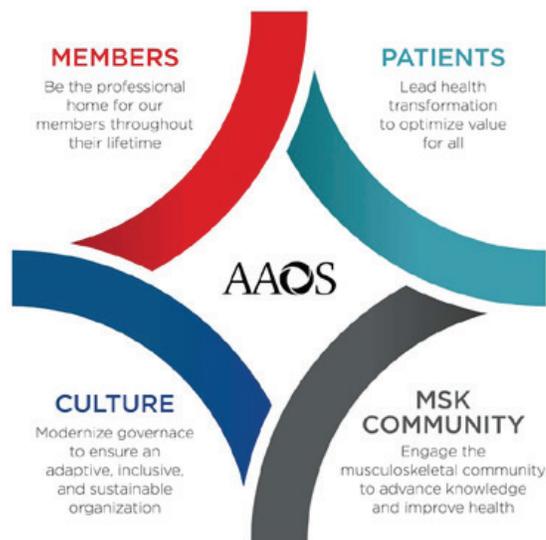
The AAOS will introduce fresh initiatives to drive these commitments forward under the following strategic goals:

Members: The AAOS aims to be the professional home for members throughout their lifetime, offering a wealth of opportunities for leadership, service, and value along with comprehensive educational and quality resources and robust advocacy efforts. Its goals are to support member needs and career development, continue to personalize the member experience, and serve as the go-to source of information for professionals in the orthopaedic field.

Available resources to support these goals for members include ROCK, ACCELERATE by AAOS career platform, CME courses, advocacy on issues that impact member practices, and membership resources to recruit, retain, and deliver value to members.

Patients: The AAOS is leading health transformation to optimize value for all by supporting its members and their patients, emphasizing quality initiatives, care evolution, and patient-focused advocacy. Plans include expanding a patient-centric approach by increasing direct patient engagement and education, and empowering practice improvement through quality initiatives like AAOS Registries and Clinical Practice Guidelines. The AAOS also is forging the path in health system delivery and payment models, focusing on value-based care and supporting members through this shift. Additionally, AAOS leverages its credibility through OrthoPAC and the active support of its members. OrthoPAC allows AAOS and its members to have an even stronger and focused impact on patient health and health equity.

Culture: The orthopaedic profession continues to evolve due to key changes in employment models, government regulations, and care-delivery methods. Likewise, professional associations are adapting to address those trends and navigate generational differences. The AAOS is working to modernize governance to ensure an adaptive, inclusive, and sustainable organization with a strong culture and nimble structure that can build trust, enable execution, and support the achievement of the full strategic plan. The AAOS will continue to establish pathways to leadership, acting strategically and with transparency and bidirectional communication, to build trust and best serve its members.



As part of this modernization, the AAOS Board of Directors has proposed new bylaws amendments for consideration by the Fellowship.

The proposed changes would:

- Enable a well-informed and high-performing Board that has the most complete information to support the AAOS mission
- Create an agile, responsive, and efficient volunteer leadership structure that serves our members and the musculoskeletal (MSK) community to provide the highest quality of care
- Help the AAOS remain the voice for all orthopaedic surgeons

MSK Community: The AAOS introduced this new tenet of the strategic plan to engage the full MSK community, taking a leadership role and partnering more broadly to advance knowledge and improve health — not just MSK health. The AAOS will work to maintain and strengthen partnerships with orthopaedic specialty societies, emphasizing mutual value and benefit through joint activities in advocacy, quality, and education. It will also engage and collaborate with other diverse clinicians, ranging from primary care physicians and specialists to physical therapists and athletic trainers. Because MSK health occurs in many places, AAOS and its members can help ensure the best care is delivered. The AAOS also fosters partnerships with payers, employers, industry, government, and patient organizations. Finally, AAOS will continue to be positioned as the trusted voice in musculoskeletal health and will leverage its strengths in advocacy, education, research, quality, and practice management, along with its ability to convene stakeholders, engage members, and deliver thought leadership for the profession.



Spark Sessions

In 2024, the Learning Innovation Lab began working with AAOS staff to seek out innovative ideas for future products and programs. Spark Sessions were held to ignite creativity, engage staff in personal and professional development, and focus on different aspects of creative thinking, collaboration, and problem solving in each session. These meetings align with the Academy's strategic goal of achieving organizational excellence and highlight the culture of creativity, innovation, and collaboration within AAOS. They are slated to continue throughout 2025.

Session themes included:

- Unleash Your Inner Innovator
- Fail Forward: Turning Setbacks into Springboards
- Design Thinking for Member-Centric Solutions
- SPARKxInnohub: Fast-Paced Brainstorming
- The Idea Gallery: Where Creativity Takes Center Stage
- Design Sprint: Innovation in Action

Commitment to Workplace Excellence and Staff Culture

AAOS proudly received three workplace awards in 2024. Firstly, AAOS was recognized as one of the [Chicago Tribune's Top Workplaces](#) for the fifth consecutive year. The Chicago Tribune Top Workplace Award is based on employee feedback gathered through an anonymous survey that measures various aspects of workplace culture, including company values, leadership, and employee satisfaction. This prestigious accolade underscores AAOS' commitment to fostering a positive work environment and employee engagement.

AAOS' was also named one of the [Best and Brightest Companies to Work For®](#) in both Chicago and the nation by the National Association for Business Resources. Last year marked the fourth consecutive year AAOS received both honors. The Best and Brightest program celebrates organizations that demonstrate a commitment to excellence in human resource practices and employee engagement.

These esteemed recognitions reflect AAOS' commitment to encouraging an inclusive workplace culture and investing in employee wellness.



“Our employees are our greatest assets, and we strive to create a supportive and inclusive environment where everyone can thrive. This award reflects our commitment to not only advancing orthopaedic care, but also investing in the well-being and development of our team.”

— Thomas E. Arend Jr., CAE
AAOS Chief Executive Officer



Every member has a voice in deciding the strategic priorities of AAOS.



Members pose with Skeletoni at the AAOS 2024 Annual Meeting in San Francisco.



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