

2023-2024 Candidate Statements

Each of the 2023-2024 candidates running for an elected Board or Leadership position prepared a candidate statement to help introduce themselves to the AAOA membership.

Keith Sale, MD, FAAOA | PRESIDENT ELECT ([video](#))

It would be an honor to serve you as AAOA President. I have spent my career building and maintaining an academic otolaryngic allergy practice at the University of Kansas Health System. As an active member in the AAOA I have been engaged in the AAOA's educational and leadership activities for many years. It has been a privilege to watch our members work with our AAOA physician leaders to reimagine how we educate, train, and support Otolaryngology on an annual basis. I have been blessed to serve on the AAOA Board, as a residency program director, and as a health system physician executive. I believe I can leverage these experiences to keep the AAOA at the forefront of member education, research, and advocacy. I am happy to be considered for this position and appreciate your support of the AAOA.

Kevin Wilson, MD, FAAOA | SECRETARY

It is with humility and gratitude that I accept this nomination to continue serving as the AAOA Secretary. I have really enjoyed getting involved in the AAOA since joining 14 years ago. I got involved early with the organization and have served in various volunteer positions, including on different committees, as a Fellow examiner, as faculty at the AAOA basic course, as a board member-at-large, and teaching several courses at the annual meeting. I have practiced in both the academic and private setting and so have some understanding of the challenges and opportunities that face our members. As your secretary, I plan to continue working with other members and leaders to improve recruitment and retention of members and provide palpable value to our membership. I look forward to the opportunity to continue serving you.

Dole Baker, MD, FAAOA | TREASURER

It is an honor to be nominated as Treasurer of the AAOA. I am in South Carolina in private practice as a General Otolaryngologist and Facial Plastic Surgeon and have

been an active Otolaryngic Allergist since becoming a fellow of the AAOA over 20 years ago.

I have had the privilege of serving the AAOA membership and organization since 2007 in a wide variety of roles— Socioeconomic Chair and Board Member and a Board Member at Large; a member of the Finance Committee, Patient and Professional Relations Committee, Audit Committee, and as the BOG representative to the AAO-HNS. As Treasurer, I will work with the AAOA leadership and staff to ensure the AAOA continues to be a financially strong organization. In addition to overseeing the budget along with the Board, we will continue to explore and pursue additional revenue channels to best position the AAOA for continued growth and stability for the future. It will be my privilege to serve the AAOA membership in this capacity.

Robert Stachler, MD, FAAOA | COORDINATOR OF EDUCATION ([video](#))

I am very honored to be selected on the slate for Coordinator of Education this year. My first year as Coordinator of Education has been very successful. I owe this to the great team we have assembled to deliver your educational content. Our approach has been innovative, and our hybrid courses have been well attended and received. We have developed an excellent faculty pool in a very short time frame. I look forward to serving this year and working on providing the most up-to-date content that is available. I would like to deliver cutting edge data for our members to take back to utilize in their practices. Thank you for your continued confidence. Please do not hesitate to contact me through the AAOA if there are any suggestions you may have about educational content.

Farrah Siddiqui, MD, FAAOA | DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

I am very honored to serve as AAOA's Director of Educational Programs again this year. I endeavor to continue engaging more learners by delivering creative formatting, thoughtful programs and user-friendly online resources. This past year, I played an important role in planning and teaching as Co-director for the Basic

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Course, along with participating in the Education and Education Assessment Committee, which allowed me to help out with other AAOA programs including the Annual Meeting, Educational Stacks and the Fellow Exam.

I hope to continue and improve my educational efforts at the AAOA this upcoming year. Having served as an item writer and oral examiner for both the AAOA and ABOHNS, I realize the important role the AAOA serves in the education of our residents, fellows, graduating otolaryngologists, as well as practicing Otolaryngic allergists and their staff. I have been fortunate to be a part of our evolution to engage more effectively in virtual and hybrid learning platforms. These newer educational formats allow the AAOA to reach out to more people throughout the year, giving our learners the choice to pick what works best for them as well as to study at their own pace.

Christopher Brook, MD, FAAOA | *DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT*

It is an honor to be nominated again to serve as the Director of Educational Assessment, a position which I have held for the last two years. I am an academic rhinologist in practice at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, Massachusetts. Allergy testing and management are integral to my practice in rhinology and serve as both a clinical and academic interest for me. I have enjoyed the opportunity of being part of the Basic Course and Annual Meeting faculty for the last 7 years and look forward to continuing to do so.

Jennifer Villwock, MD, FAAOA | *PATIENT & PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS CHAIR*

With gratitude, I accept the nomination to continue in my role as the Chairperson of the Patient and Professional Relations Committee. The AAOA is committed to being responsive to the needs of its membership and the PPR Committee one of the ways in which high value content is created and distributed. Members of this committee contribute their experience and knowledge in order to create content that is disseminated to both colleagues and patients. High impact projects have included blog posts, podcasts, and a joint PPR and Education committee initiative to

partner with DosedDaily to provide ENT residents with allergy content that was previously missing from this service. I am excited to continue working on such initiatives with the engaging and passionate members of this committee.

Robert Puchalski, MD, FAAOA | *SOCIOECONOMIC CHAIR*

It is a great honor to be nominated for the position of Chair of the Socioeconomic Committee. I am pursuing this leadership position because I feel I can make a positive impact in this organization and our specialty. I am a private practice Otolaryngologist who is married to a pediatric emergency medicine physician. We met while in medical school at Washington University. We live in Charlotte, North Carolina, where my wife practices and teaches at Levine Children's Hospital. We have four children, three of which are off to college. I have been an active member of the AAOA since joining as a resident member nearly two decades ago. Throughout this time, I have served in various capacities for the organization including participating in a task force to create practice guidelines and administering the Fellowship exam. I have also served on the Board of the AAOA as a Member at Large. I have represented the AAO-HNS as a Delegate to the AMA for 15 years and served as the chairman of both the delegation and the Otolaryngology Section Council. I am grateful for these opportunities and feel privileged to be part of such a successful organization. With your support, I would like to advance the interests of the AAOA to the best of my ability. I pledge that I will dedicate the time and energy necessary to represent the interests of all our members and the patients that we serve.

James Connolly, MD, FAAOA | *BOARD MEMBER AT LARGE ([video](#))*

I am honored to be nominated for the position of AAOA board member at large and truly grateful to be able to serve our community in this way. I am a general otolaryngologist with a subspecialty in sleep medicine and allergy. I have been in private practice since 2005 starting in Florida and currently in Louisiana for the past 10 years. I was introduced to the AAOA as a resident in 2002 and became a fellow in 2014. I had the pleasure to serve the AAOA on the Bylaws, Socioeconomic, and

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Patient & Professional Relations Committees since 2019. I have helped with administering the fellowship exam for several years. Over the years, the AAOA has been so helpful in shaping the specialized allergy care that I provide my patients daily and I feel privileged to be part of such a great organization. I treasure the opportunity to be able to give back to this organization and help our fellow otolaryngologists with their Otolaryngic allergy education needs. I would be honored to continue to serve the AAOA as a board member and I thank you for your consideration.

Christine DeMason, MD, FAAOA | **BOARD MEMBER AT LARGE ([video](#))**

It is an honor to be nominated for the AAOA Board member at-large position. I am a General Otolaryngologist at UNC-CH where allergy has been an integral part of my practice. Over the last few years, I have had the privilege to work with the AAOA in many ways. I have served on the Patient and Professional Relations Committee where I have written questions for DosedDaily as well as written articles for the AAOA website on a variety of allergy topics. I have served on the AAOA Allergy Foundation Research Grant Review Committee and been an examiner for the fellowship examination. AAOA is such a wonderful community to be a part of in learning, teaching, and advocating for otolaryngic allergy with an amazing group of Otolaryngologists. I would love the opportunity as member at-large to continue to grow and advocate for AAOA. Thank you for considering me for the position.

Craig Folsom, MD, FAAOA | **BOARD MEMBER AT LARGE**

It is an honor to be nominated for the position of AAOA Board Member at Large. I am heavily committed to the practice of Otolaryngic allergy. This desire began with my exposure to the AAOA and the basic course as a junior resident. Once my interest was piqued, I completed the fellowship in 2020. I provided didactic teaching in Otolaryngic Allergy to my residents while serving as Assistant Residency Program Director in the United States Navy. Since transitioning to private practice, I have heavily incorporated allergy into my practice in south Florida and have found the value of AAOA and its fellowship to be instrumental. Since completing the fellowship, I have had the pleasure to be

invited to serve on the AAOA Finance Committee and AAOA Investing Committee since 2021. Additionally, I have an interest in innovation in medicine. While pursuing this passion, I developed an AAOA App which aims to increase content delivery to a broad range of members and serve as a resource in the clinical setting to augment the practice of Otolaryngic allergy. I look forward to having continued involvement in the AAOA family and would love the opportunity to join the Board in this capacity. Thank you for your consideration.

Haidy Marzouk, MD, FAAOA | **BOARD MEMBER AT LARGE ([video](#))**

It is my honor to be nominated for a Member At Large position with the AAOA. As a member for over a decade, I am appreciative for the fellowship, support, and opportunities that the AAOA has provided. It is with the training and support provided by the AAOA that I have been able to establish otolaryngologic allergy as part of my practice, both in private practice and academia. Within the organization I have participated as faculty at the annual meetings, written articles and blogs, and worked on the patient and public relations and education assessment committees. It is with this gratitude and desire to give back that I seek to serve this amazing community and promote inclusiveness among our growing member base.

Matthew Patterson, MD, FAAOA | **BOARD MEMBER AT LARGE ([video](#))**

It is an honor to be nominated for the position of AAOA Board Member at Large. I am pursuing this position in the leadership of our organization because I am committed to promoting the practice of Allergy within our Otolaryngology community. If elected, I will work to promote the education of the members of our organization and their practice staff and to promote programs within our organization that support the success of our members in their practices. I have practiced Otolaryngology for more than 25 years and I have been a member of the AAOA for more than 15 years. I have served as a Proctor and Examiner for the Fellowship Examination of the AAOA for the past six years. I provide didactic education in the field of Allergy to the Residents of the Department of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery at the University

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of Minnesota where I have been on faculty for the past six years. I have served on the AAOA Finance Committee since 2017 and as a faculty lecturer at the Annual AAOA Meeting yearly since 2018. I serve on the AAOA Allergy Foundation Research Grant Review Committee and I am a member of the American Academy of Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery Allergy, Asthma and Immunology Committee. I am an Oral Board Examiner for the American Board of Otolaryngology. I appreciate the opportunities to have participated in various aspects of our AAOA and I would be grateful for your support to allow me to further my participation as an AAOA Board Member, Education, and advocacy. As an otolaryngologist in private practice with over 20 years' experience in Otolaryngic allergy I can attest to the critical role the AAOA has played in all three of these arenas. In addition, while not specifically stipulated in the mission statement, the AAOA through its meetings and ongoing educational opportunities fosters community and communication among all of us practicing Otolaryngic allergy. I will do my best to serve the AAOA as it strives to fulfill these aims.

Melissa Hertler, MD, FAAOA | AUDIT COMMITTEE

It is an honor to serve the members of the AAOA in any capacity. I am especially grateful for this nomination to serve on the Audit Committee. I have been actively involved with the AAOA first as a resident member, then a fellow, as a Board-Member-at Large, on several committees, teaching at educational courses, and presenting at annual meetings. I have practiced in academic, private and employed settings, which has also prepared me for serving in this role. I intend to confirm that the organization maintains its financial objectives and transparency and will continue to have the resources necessary to continue to provide quality education and advocacy for Otolaryngologists and our patients now and into the future.

Wesley VanderArk, MD, FAAOA | AMA PHYSICIAN DELEGATE

It is again an honor to be nominated for the position of AMA delegate for the AAOA. I have been active with the AAOA since joining the AAOA as a resident and attending my first Basic course in 1996 and eventually

becoming a fellow in the organization a few years after that. I have continued as an active member of the association serving in a number of different capacities as a member of the Patient and Professional Relations and Socioeconomic Committees, Chair of the Patient and Professional Relations Committee, American Medical Association Alternate Delegate, Delegate to the AMA, Secretary, and President of the organization. I have had the opportunity to participate in a number of leadership and academic positions within the organization and now most of my involvement is in advocacy efforts for the organization. Involvement with the AMA allows our organization to have a voice and effect change on Capitol Hill in an effort to protect and preserve the ability of our members to continue practicing Otolaryngic Allergy. Our AMA involvement in the past, while working with sister organizations, has been instrumental to maintain viral mixing reimbursement and also affect more favorable language with USP 797 revisions. Your membership in the AMA allows us to continue to be part of the AMA in order to affect that change, so I urge you also to become a member of the AMA for us to keep that opportunity alive for our organization. I am grateful to have been a part of these efforts through the AMA in the past, and honored to be nominated again as the AMA delegate for the AAOA. I appreciate your support in this election.

Alpen Patel, MD, FAAOA | AMA ALTERNATE DELEGATE

It is a great honor to be nominated for the AAOA AMA Alternate Delegate. I have been an active member of the AAOA since I joined as a resident member over two decades ago. During this time, I have served in various capacities for the organization. I have participated in several AAOA Academic Workshops, instructed at the Annual Scientific Meeting as well as at the Basic & Advanced Courses, administered the Fellowship exam, represented this organization as well as AAO-HNS at the AMA, lectured at various AAOA Symposia and Courses, and served as Board Member-at Large as well as on the Research, Nominating, Corporate Development, Compensation, Finance, & Investment Committees. In addition, I have recently served as President of the AAOA. I am grateful for these opportunities, and I feel privileged to be part of such a successful organization. With your support, I would like to represent the AAOA membership to the best of my ability.