

Missouri

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Well, one advantage of being the Director during a pandemic is the relative calm in the dental/orthodontic field. If your office is anything like mine, staffing has been your largest issue. These times are different but, hopefully, we will see a bright and wonderful 2022.

Nearly all meetings have been available only virtually which is a huge change. Soon the MSO in Milwaukee will allow us to gather for education and friendship. And don't forget about the change in venue for the 2022 Annual Session from Hawaii to Miami Beach, Florida in May. Hopefully, it will go forward without a glitch.

One of the best things I love about the orthodontic profession is the friendly nature of orthodontists. The past year has been a challenge for many but recently I firsthand witnessed the overwhelming support of orthodontists. One of my friends and colleagues had a medical emergency that has left him with a long rehabilitation, but due to the kindness of so many orthodontists in Missouri, his practice has pieced together a schedule to continue care for his patients, staff and his family. Thanks go out to so many and prayers for a recovery for our friend.

In Joplin, KCU's new dental school has broken ground and is under construction. The initial class, which was scheduled to start the fall of 2022 has been postponed to 2023 due to delays from COVID-19. The school has been completing the accreditation process and hiring the initial staff. KCU's medical school in Joplin graduated its first class in May 2021, which happens to coincide with the 10-year anniversary of the EF5 rated multiple vortex tornado that destroyed so much and killed so many. From such terrible destruction arose a medical school and now dental school that will save and help improve many lives.

Michael LaFerla

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