

# MIDWESTERN SOCIETY OF ORTHODONTISTS

## TOP 10 TAKEAWAY'S

### 2025 MSO Ad Interim Meeting and the AAO Advocacy Conference

March 2025

1. Dr. Michael LaFerla, MSO President, presided over the 2025 MSO Ad Interim meeting held earlier this month at the AAO Headquarters in St. Louis.

Pictured left to right: Dr. Katherine Kazak (Manitoba), Gwen Berlekamp (Executive Director), Dr. Heather Horton (MN), Dr. Dennis Sommers (Delegate), Dr. Emily Willett (Pres. Elect), Dr. Nellie Kim-Weroha (Delegate Chair), Dr. Michael LaFerla (President), Dr. Keri Barrow (SD), Dr. Michael Durbin (MSO Trustee), Dr. Jenna Walburn (Delegate), Dr. John Firth (MO), Dr. Estee Wang (Sec.-Treas.), Dr. Bronwen Richards (IL), Dr. Deb Lien (Delegate), Dr. Emerson Ehlis (ND), Dr. Jahnvi Rao (Delegate), Dr. Spencer Pope (Delegate), Dr. Sumit Yadav (NB) and Dr. John Kittleson (WI and Alt. Delegate). Not pictured: Melissa Bernhardt (IA and Alt. Delegate).



2. Delegate Chair Dr. Nellie Kim-Weroha reviewed all the resolutions received to date that will go before the House of Delegates (HOD) at the AAO Annual Session in Philadelphia, April 23-27. In addition to Chair Kim-Weroha, the MSO delegation includes Vice Chair Dr. Emily Willett, Dr. Deborah Lien, Dr. Spencer Pope, Dr. Jahnvi Rao, Dr. Jenna Walburn, Dr. Dennis Sommers and Dr. Bronwen Richards. Alternate delegates are Dr. Melissa Bernhardt and Dr. John Kittleson.

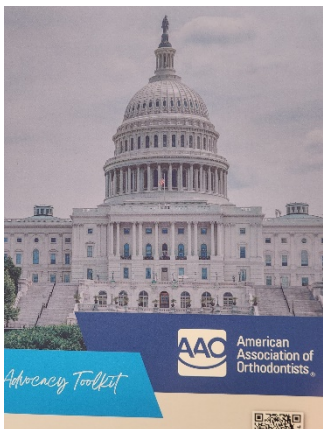
3. Dr. Estee Wang, Chair for the upcoming 2025 MSO Annual Session later this fall in Minneapolis, reported planning is progressing for the Annual Session which will be held at the Radisson Blu hotel at the Mall of America. The meeting will be two full days of a combination of clinical and practice management lectures, Friday, September 12th through Saturday, September 13th. Lecture highlights include:

- Dr. Scott Bolding, oral surgeon who will be speaking on surgical management of sleep apnea,
- Dr. Ilya Lipkin, orthodontist speaking on MARPE technique for airway and breathing,
- Dr. Tarryn MacCarthy, orthodontist speaking to teams and doctors on the Business of Happiness,
- Dr. Jacqueline Schieck, orthodontist speaking about digital work flow,
- Dr. Brandon Owen, orthodontist speaking about TMD therapy and custom bracket solutions, just to name a few.

Evening activities will include a Thursday night opening reception hosted by the MSO Committee on Women Orthodontists. There will be many breaks throughout the lectures including a vendor reception at the end of Day 1. The meeting will be appealing to both doctors and their teams with thought provoking and education packed content and plenty of nearby entertainment. Watch for registration opening in April.

4. On the recommendation of the MSO Awards Committee, the Board of Directors approved the selection of Dr. Ali Fallgatter as the recipient of the 2026 Earl E. Shepard Distinguished Service Award. This award, created in 1987, recognizes those orthodontists who perform service not only in the field orthodontics, but also in other areas of dentistry and/or their state or local community. The award will be presented at the 2026 Annual Board Meeting. The previously announced 2025 award recipient is Dr. Kim Stafford who will be recognized in Minneapolis next fall.

5. Several AAO staff members joined the meeting to provide brief updates in the following areas: Tech Transformation, strategic initiatives, Learning and Professional Development, Membership, Finance and the Foundation. Because the MSO has their Ad Interim meeting at the AAO headquarters we are afforded this unique opportunity to hear firsthand from the national staff on topical initiatives. Pictured right is Brett Schott, Vice President, AAO Foundation, addressing the group.



6. A delegation of MSO members attended the recent AAO Advocacy Conference in Washington, D.C. to meet with members of Congress on both sides of the aisle about issues impacting the profession. The two-day conference featured not only Hill visits and advocacy updates, but also a keynote presentation from Congressman Roger Williams (Texas) and White House Office of Public Liaison Senior Associate Director Karalee Geis.





7. The MSO delegation included (pictured left to right): Dr. Rachel Thorstenson (MN), Dr. Matt Greaves (MO), Dr. Ian Creaser (IL), Dr. Nellie Kim-Weroha (MN), Dr. Mike Durbin (IL), Dr. Deb Lien (MN), Adam Braunmeier (AAO General Counsel), Dr. Manal Ibrahim (IL) and Executive Director Gwen Berlekamp. Visits were made to the Offices of Nikki Budzinski (D-IL), Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), and Senator Eric Schmitt (R-MO).

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Pictured right is Dr. Matt Greaves outside the office of Senator Eric Schmitt.



8. Dr. Deb Lien (pictured left), 2023-2025 Chair of the AAO PAC, presented a variety of recognition awards to 2024 PAC donors during the Advocacy dinner.

9. The MSO has made two recent donations including one to the AAO Foundation in memory of those deceased MSO members from 2024, and the other to the GORP 2025 event taking place later this summer in Kentucky.

10. **Save The Date** for the 2025 MSO Annual Session. Registration, schedule and speaker information coming in April!

