AAO Foundation

FALL 2026 UPDATES



Dr. James Klarsch
AAO Foundation President



2026 Research

The AAO Foundation is making a historic investment in the people and ideas that will shape the future of orthodontics. During its most recent award cycle, the Foundation received 51 applications and approved funding for 33 meritorious proposals—committing more than $**925,000**, the largest annual grant allocation in its history. Awards span biomedical and collaborative research, faculty development, postdoctoral study and early-stage investigation. Together, they support discovery while building a strong pipeline of orthodontic researchers and educators.

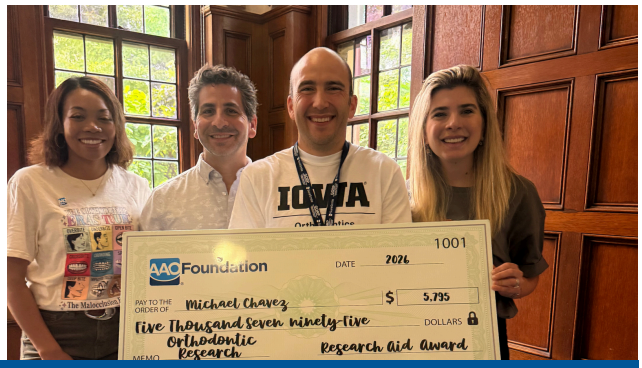
*Deadline for 2027 grants is 10.16.26

Building the Future of Orthodontics

The impact of the AAO Foundation is measured not only in the research funded today, but also in the discoveries, educators and leaders who will shape orthodontics tomorrow.

During the most recent award cycle, the Foundation committed more than $900,000 to support innovative orthodontic research across the United States and Canada—its largest annual research investment to date. These grants will help investigators explore emerging questions, generate new knowledge and translate promising ideas into better care for patients.

The Foundation is also expanding its investment in education and leadership. Support for the Craniofacial Anomalies Fellowship will help prepare specialists to provide exceptional care for patients with complex craniofacial conditions. In addition, Foundation funding for the Institute for Teaching and Learning and the Chairs and Academic Administrators Management Program will strengthen the educators and academic leaders responsible for preparing future generations of orthodontists.



Together, these investments reflect an ambitious vision: a specialty continually strengthened by discovery, learning and inspired leadership. None of this progress happens without the generosity of AAO members and friends. Through your philanthropy, you transform possibility into progress and ensure that the AAO Foundation can continue advancing orthodontic research, education and patient care for generations to come.

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An Extraordinary Donation

Recently, the AAO Foundation received a donation of several “Ortho Line” lithographs created by Vietnam Veteran, Michael Gonzales.

Ask how you can acquire one for your office!

Get Involved

The For the Future Campaign has reached an important milestone: **$2.15 million** in commitments to strengthen the Full-Time Faculty Fellowship and invest in the educators who prepare tomorrow’s orthodontists.

With the AAO’s matching commitment, the campaign is creating a permanent endowment to help sustain this vital program for generations. But the work is not finished. The AAO Foundation will continue building on this momentum through the 2027 Annual Session, inviting members and friends to expand the campaign’s impact. Every commitment helps ensure that talented educators can pursue academic careers and keep orthodontic education strong, innovative and ready for the future.

MSO committed $15,000 to this campaign.

Program Experiencing Amazing Growth



Every child deserves a confident smile. Through Gifted Smiles, eligible children who might otherwise go without care are connected with AAO member orthodontists who generously donate treatment. As demand continues to grow, we need more volunteers nationwide. By giving your expertise and time, you can transform a young person’s health, confidence, and future. Join our dedicated network of volunteers and help ensure that financial hardship never stands between a child and a life-changing smile today.

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