



## A Conversation With AAOS President Frederick M. Azar, MD

Peter D. McCann, MD

For the past 8 years, I have interviewed the president of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) to better understand the role the Academy plays in our professional lives in general and the contributions of the AAOS president in particular.

At the 2014 AAOS Annual Meeting this past March in New Orleans, Frederick M. Azar, MD, assumed leadership of the AAOS as its 82nd president. He brings a wide range of orthopedic experience to this role. He has been an Academy volunteer for the last 20 years, and is Chief of Staff at the Campbell Clinic as well as Professor of Orthopedic Surgery and Director of the Sports Medicine Fellowship at the University of Tennessee-Campbell Clinic. He is team physician for the NBA (National Basketball Association) Memphis Grizzlies (see Dr. Azar's article in this issue of *AJO*, pages 267-271) and team physician for the University of Memphis and Christian Brothers University sports teams.

This year the Board of Directors of the Academy completed a revision of the AAOS Strategic Plan, last updated in 2010, under the leadership of David Teuscher, MD. The plan, dubbed "Vision 20/20," includes the following essential elements:

- AAOS Mission: Serving our profession to provide the highest quality musculoskeletal care.
- AAOS Vision: Keeping the world in motion through the prevention and treatment of musculoskeletal conditions.
- Core Values: Excellence, Professionalism, Leadership, Collegiality, Lifelong Learning
- Strategic Domains: Advocacy, Education, Membership, Organizational Excellence, Quality and Patient Value

Fred explained that a fundamental aspect of this revised Strategic Plan is that the AAOS takes ownership of **all** aspects of musculoskeletal tear, not simply surgical management. (For further reading, please visit: [www.aaos.org/about/strategicplan.asp](http://www.aaos.org/about/strategicplan.asp))

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Dr. Azar views his role as president of the AAOS as a temporary steward furthering the goals of the organization and not as a proponent of a particular personal agenda. To that end, Fred hopes to focus on 2 areas during his tenure as captain of the orthopedic ship of state: education and communication.

Paradigm shifts are occurring in health care with the passage of the Affordable Care Act, access to medical information via the Internet, and changes in practice management with the near-universal implementation of electronic medical records. In an effort to address the educational needs of its members, the AAOS will expand its electronic

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media platform and develop mobile apps, ebooks, webinars, and webcasts. In addition, the new AAOS headquarters in Rosemont, Illinois, will house a state-of-the-art Orthopaedic Learning Center. These improvements in education will contribute to the Academy's core value of lifelong learning.

Regarding communication, Dr. Azar believes that it is extremely important that we, orthopedic surgeons, share with our patients just how much orthopedic care contributes to their quality of life, thereby showcasing the great value orthopedic surgeons bring to millions of patients. Finally, communication with regulators and policymakers in Washington, DC, is equally important as is membership support for the Orthopaedic Political Action Committee.

We are indeed fortunate to have someone of Dr. Azar's caliber lead our organization. His extensive experience as an administrator, Academy volunteer, educator, and clinician makes him ideally suited to lead the AAOS during these challenging times in health care. ■