



GEORGIA OSTEOPATHIC
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
— 1902 —

Your monthly GOMA news & update

Welcome to GOMA's monthly newsletter where you can stay up-to-date on the latest osteopathic news and happenings in the GOMA community.

Living History

Piedmont Health System Profiles DO in Honor of Black History Month



Chasity Renee Reese, DO is a family medicine physician at Piedmont Physicians at Northside. There she serves as the senior doctor in the office. She also serves as a preceptor for medical students enrolled at the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine on the campus of Auburn University. Ms. Reese attended Dillard University where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology. She later attended Tennessee State University where she obtained a Master's in Biology.

It was in Nashville that Chasity quickly engaged in volunteering including substantial time at the Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt. Upon graduation, she then moved on to pursue her dreams of becoming a physician. That journey landed her in Blacksburg, VA where she attended Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine on the campus of Virginia Tech till 2011. After successful completion of her medical training, internship at Cooper Green Mercy Hospital and Family Practice residency at Danville Regional Medical Center, she moved to LaGrange, GA where she accepted her first full-time physician job. While there, she met her husband, Attorney Teddy Reese, and moved to Columbus, GA. They are blessed with one daughter, "Lady" Catherine L. Reese.

Despite her very demanding career path, Dr. Reese is not shy about engaging in the community through her civic organizations and events with her husband. Dr. Reese is an active member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Links Inc., Junior League of Columbus, and Young Black and Fabulous Women of Columbus. She serves her church, Greater Beallwood Baptist Church, as a dance instructor for the youth dance troop. Dr. Reese was fortunate to dance one summer with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in New York City, NY. Dr. Reese is a God-fearing woman who loves her family and has a passion for helping the least of these.

When asked about her service, the service of black women generally, and women shattering glass ceilings, Dr. Reese states, "It's been a delight working with women throughout the years who have selflessly given back to their communities to make a difference. The higher we climb, the better positioned we are to help another little girl dream big and break new records." Let's honor and celebrate Chasity R. Reese. She is Black History!!!!

Navigating a Pandemic

GOMA Educates on Coronavirus via Social Media

Can the power of social media battle the wave of the coronavirus?

In mid-March, GOMA shared a Washington Post article that featured simulations of viral spread with quarantining and social separation compared to no restriction. The Facebook post (which was made available to the general public) has been shared hundreds of times. Hopefully, the graphics in the article will impact people's behavior to prevent the COVID-19 pandemic hurting our communities. If you didn't see it, check out [this post](#)



Additionally, GOMA's Facebook page is sharing hints on how to handle the stress on the system including lack of supplies. GOMA continues to share public messages to reinforce the social distancing. These are not traditional activities of a state osteopathic medical society, but these are not traditional times.

For COVID-19 Information and Resources also see the [GOMA webpage COVID-19 page](#)

From the Field...



Larry Anderson, DO, FACOFP dist. is a Past President of GOMA as well as of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians. He has significant activity in the American Osteopathic Association, and he continues to serve his patients as a family physician in Dawsonville, GA. When asked to write about his reflections on the COVID19 crisis, he wrote about his work on behalf of his community in Dawson County. *(continues below)*

"I will just recap what I am doing. My county started a Pandemic Planning Committee with leaders of various sections of the community. We meet on a frequent basis just to share information... I chair the medical section. I recruited several physicians including primary care (family medicine and pediatrics) and two subspecialist (pulmonary and cardiology). We plan on how to serve our community in preventing and treating worse case scenarios. I am also chairman of the county health department. I have a regular column in our county newspaper now, and my third column will be published Wednesday (4/1/2020). I am doing telemedicine both with the internet and telephone."



Dawson County
Georgia

Thoughts on our Healthcare System in Times of COVID-19

Marc Greenstein is a urologist with Advanced Urology in their Sandy Springs and Johns Creek offices. He submitted the following piece when asked about his reflections on COVID19:

"The Covid19 pandemic has turned our already bad medical system into an even worse medical system. As a Urologist, in practice for nearly 20 years I have seen the ongoing destruction of healthcare by insurance companies *(continues below)*



They have underpaid myself and my colleagues for decades, require mounds of paperwork to get a simple CT scan, mess up patients' deductibles, overcharge patients for medications and so on. I am afraid of what the bills will look like when Covid19 is in the past. Will they raise deductibles, raise rates, cut payment to myself and my colleagues? I suspect the answer is yes. Will the insurance reimburse the hospitals for new ventilators, supplies, medication to keep people alive? I suspect they will pull their typical nonsense and say that a ventilator was not a covered benefit and please call an 800 number to start an appeal. Or nasal oxygen with nebulizers and steroids for COVID-19 is not a hospital level benefit and the hospitalist should have discharged the patient to home.

As a resident, I saw the destruction of the twin towers in NYC, and thought we were going to war (a larger war) after that. I was in private practice during the 2008 recession. At that time, patients were losing their insurance due to unemployment, and patients who were insured were afraid to come to the office or have surgery because of fear they would lose their job by taking time off.

On a personal note, I worked through my son's three brain surgeries to correct his epilepsy. These were in 2013, 2014 and 2015. Those were catastrophic on a personal level and my son is now a shining star and seizure free for 5 years. It was very hard to work while my son was recovering from surgery or hospitalized and I suffered financially from that.

The COVID-19 pandemic will affect my work flow. Social isolation will keep patients out of the office, and it will keep patients from seeing their primary care physicians who refer to specialists like myself. It will delay procedures and surgeries that patients need to treat their urologic [condition]. This will reduce revenue in the office and eventually affect my staff. There will be furloughs and layoffs. Loyal staff will lose their benefits.

Maybe the government will realize that the insurance companies are crippling the physicians' ability to practice medicine. Maybe the government will see that the reason the hospitals and office do not have enough supplies or manpower is because the insurances do not appropriately pay for supplies, medications, physician/nursing time.

Although we do not know the end of this pandemic, I know that we are still in the very beginning. I also know that we will get through this, it will get better and will learn a lot from it."

STUDENTS ON THE GO!

Studying the Anatomy and Physiology of Our Healthcare System



Two PCOM Georgia Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) students recently completed a four-week public policy rotation with the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG). Vash Patel (DO '20) and Yassmin Shariff (DO '20) spent their time under the Georgia State Capitol's "Gold Dome" meeting with state legislators about a wide variety of healthcare policies. *(continued below)*

Donald J. Palmisano, Jr, Executive Director of MAG, said, "It was a real honor and a pleasure working with Yassmin and Vash during their MAG rotation. I have a greater sense of optimism knowing that we have medical students in Georgia who have a genuine interest in the overall healthcare system and who understand the vital role that organizations like MAG play when it comes to the state's practice environment and the policy-making process."

Patel said he enjoyed the rotation because it was different than any other rotations he's completed in the past. "I don't have a background in healthcare policy and I know about as much as the next med student," he said, "but I knew health care was a central debate in the upcoming national elections so it just made sense to try and understand the minutia." Shariff said, "I applied for the rotation to learn more about health policy and how I as a future physician can make a more direct impact. I truly think my short time with MAG at the state Capitol gave me a lot more tools to be a strong advocate for patients."

The two discussed their experience following HB 888, a bill initiated in the state House of Representatives that is aimed at eliminating “surprise billing.” They had the opportunity to see the bill’s verbiage change week to week and to understand who was pushing the changes. “We were on conference calls with more than 30 physicians and MAG leadership to discuss the bill. We sat down with Rep. Lee Hawkins, the bill’s sponsor, to review and modify it alongside MAG,” Patel recalled. “Overall it put a lot of things in perspective for me about why policy often takes such a long time to enact,” he said. “I think it’s rare for a medical student to get an opportunity to watch healthcare policy get made.”

Shariff said she learned how important it is to be a part of advocacy organizations like MAG. “Legislators don’t always have a background in medicine and physicians in the community can be particularly helpful by advising on healthcare policy or running for office themselves,” she said, calling the rotation “one of the best in medical school.” Patel added, “Having completed the rotation, I would say that it very much lived up to my expectations and went beyond. I would recommend this rotation to everyone who plans on working in health care.”

Palmisano was complimentary of Shariff and Patel. “They represented PCOM and their fellow medical students in exemplary ways, and I am confident that they’re going to be delivering some excellent patient care for many years to come,” he said. “The future of the medical profession in Georgia is clearly in good hands.”

PCOM South Georgia Student Works Part-time as RN

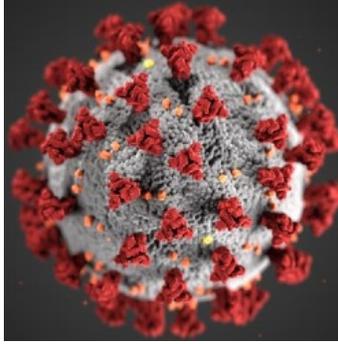


Amidst these trying times, PCOM South Georgia student Daaniya Jamal (DO '23) is on the frontline of patient care. While now completing her first-year medical school classes online, she is also working as a Registered Nurse at Grady Hospital in Atlanta. “I have an obligation to serve. I could not stand by and simply watch my colleagues handle a high patient load, with an increase in the severity of critical illnesses on the unit, while being short-staffed. I have the opportunity to see firsthand what our healthcare system lacks in terms of resources, and emergency preparedness for future pandemics. Conditioning myself now to fulfill double roles will only strengthen me as a future physician, as we have to be able to juggle an intense patient load, and continue to learn new innovations to improve our craft.” We are unbelievably proud of students like Daaniya Jamal who are choosing to use their skills, background and education to serve our citizens.

Crunching the Numbers

GOMA Explains Economics





In addition to COVID-19 medical news, there has recently been a lot of news about economics. The COVID-19 crisis has resulted in three large bills in regards to finances that GOMA is going to try to summarize to help physicians and the people around them. While this is not complete, hopefully it will be helpful.

STUDENT LOANS: The new law automatically postpones borrowers' payments for six months. From March 13, 2020, through Sept. 30, 2020, the interest rate is 0% on most loans except those owned by commercial lenders. Suspended payments will count toward Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) as though you made on-time monthly payments. If a payment was withdrawn during those dates, you can request a refund from the lender.

UNEMPLOYMENT: Workers who have lost their jobs or income through no fault of their own should immediately file a claim with the Georgia Department of Labor. The GDOL have stopped the in-person filing requirement, suspended the work search requirement and allows the first \$300 of income to not impact benefits. Yes, website and phone line problems have occurred as the department is jammed with the unusual volume. Keep trying because while it may take several weeks to process a claim, benefit payments will be retroactive to the date of unemployment. One of the changes made by the \$2.2 trillion economic package is that individuals that are self-employed, a contractor or a gig worker are eligible to claim unemployment benefits. You may also be eligible for aid if your hours were reduced. You may be able to receive benefits if you are ill unless you are getting full pay through sick leave or paid family leave. The length of time in which individuals may receive unemployment benefits has been extended from 14 weeks to 26 weeks. The new federal funds supplying \$600 a week extra still have not been implemented due to the rules are pending.

\$1200 CHECKS: The CARES Act provides a one-time payment of \$1200 for all Americans earning less than \$75,000 a year. This payment is unrelated to unemployment benefits. The payments are reduced for those with incomes above \$75,000 for individuals/\$150,000 for couples filing jointly and drop to zero for individuals earning above \$99,000/above \$198,000 for couples. Direct deposits will start April 13, and paper checks will begin to be mailed May 4 (but may not be sent till August 17 due to the high number of payments. Children under 17 years old will get \$500 each.

TAXES: The deadline to file both federal & state taxes has now been extended to July 15.

UTILITIES: Water companies, Power Companies and other companies have agreed to suspend disconnections due to non-payment. Foreclosures and evictions will be suspended until the end of April for people living in HUD housing. The Georgia Insurance Commissioner has issued an order to ban cancellations of insurance policies during the pandemic.

SMALL BUSINESS OPTIONS: The main decision small business owners have to make is between a U.S. Small Business Association (SBA) Disaster Loan and the Small Business Loan from the CARES Act. A key provision of the 7(a) Loan Program within the CARES Act states that businesses who receive Disaster Loans are not eligible for the enhanced benefits of the 7(a) Loan Program. Therefore, businesses must make a quick cost-benefit analysis to determine which program best fits their needs.

SBA Disaster Loan amounts available to borrow will be calculated by multiplying a business's gross profit, as stated on their most recent tax return, by 50%. The repayment term will be 30 years, the first 12 months of which will be deferred with no payments. The interest rate for for-profit businesses set at 3.75% and there is no pre-payment penalty. It has been reported that the SBA website can be slow during the day, but may work better late at night. It is necessary to have a complete understanding of your business' corporate structure and current debts.

The new subsection 36 of Section 7(a) of the Small Business Act is also known as the CARES Act's Paycheck Protect Program (PPP). The loans may be used for a variety of purposes, including payroll costs, rent, utilities, mortgage interest (not principal) and interest on debt existing prior to February 15, 2020. The Loan Amount can equal up to 2.5 times monthly average payroll, group health care benefits/insurance premiums, mortgage/rent, and utility payments based on

trailing 12-month average up to \$10 million. The repayment term will be 10 years, the first 12 months of which will be deferred with no payments. The interest rate for for-profit businesses set at 4 % and there is no pre-payment penalty. Loan proceeds used for payroll, rent, mortgage interest and utilities will be forgiven if the average number of full-time equivalent employees at the end of 2020 is the same as at the end of 2019. The local banks have been assigned the major responsibilities for this program so going to your main bank is the best chance of success in getting these funds. Unfortunately, the local banks are struggling understanding the rules with the CARES Act and that has created delays.

SMALL BUSINESS GRANTS: Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) and Emergency Economic Injury Grants program has actually been in place since January 31, 2020. EIDLs are low interest loans of up to \$2 Million, with principal and interest deferment available for up to 4 years, which are available to pay expenses that could have been met had the disaster not occurred, including payroll or other operating expenses. The Emergency Economic Injury Grant are an emergency advance of up to \$10,000 to small businesses and private nonprofits that have been harmed by COVID-19. The grants are funded within three days after the EIDL application is received by the SBA. The grants do not have to be repaid under any circumstance, but are deducted from the forgivable portion of any PPP Loan.

“BUSINESS INTERRUPTION” INSURANCE: About one-third of U.S. businesses have “business interruption” insurance, which is intended to cover losses from an event that forces companies to suspend or stop operations. But according to insurance experts and regulators, most companies will probably find it difficult to get an insurance payout because of policy changes made after the 2002-2003 SARS outbreak. Insurers knew the damage a viral pandemic could wreak on businesses so they excluded coverage.

OTHER OPTIONS: Facebook is offering \$100 million in loans to support small businesses during this time. City of Atlanta’s Mayor Bottoms issued an executive order to provide \$7 million in emergency funding for COVID-19 crisis. She has allocated \$1.5 million to support small businesses. Please reach out to the head of Invest Atlanta for more information at investatlanta.com.

In summary, at this time, we recommend businesses eligible for the disaster relief loans apply now. The volume of applications will be massive, and we do not know how quickly they can be processed. The program is open until June 30, 2020, we encourage you to apply as quickly as you can because there is a funding cap and lenders need time to process your loan. Visit the Small Business Association website.

Support GOMA! Join or Renew Today!

GOMA President Reaches Out



Dear Colleagues,

I am Craig Kubik, DO, gastroenterologist in Waycross, Georgia and Georgia Osteopathic Medical Association President for 2019-2020.

With COVID-19 disrupting all our lives, I realize this is a tough time to ask you to pay dues and join or rejoin GOMA. Our organization is a small one, however, and without dues we will soon be in the red.

Bear with me and read on to see what value GOMA can bring to you:

- Ongoing representation to lawmakers, insurance companies, and hospital administrators in our ongoing fight to gain and maintain parity with our allopathic colleagues. While discrimination is more rare than when I was a medical student and resident, it stills occurs and needs to be fought. Our predecessors fought for parity, and we need to remain vigilant.
- The 2020 ROME CME Meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19, but GOMA is working to make those first-class lectures available online as webinars. We will have lectures on Multicultural Medicine, topics not easily found for CME credit.
- Federal and State government are making Personal Protective Equipment available to hospitals, but physician offices are being largely left out. If offices close, all patients will be forced to visit overcrowded Emergency Departments for any problem. GOMA is pursuing being able to tap into those reserves to protect physicians still seeing sick patients in the office. Updates are being made daily on the

There is value in Georgia D.O.'s having an independent organization and voice in Georgia. If you agree, please pay your dues at your earliest convenience.

Thank you, and stay safe.

Craig M. Kubik, D.O.

[CLICK HERE to: Renew or Join GOMA!](#)

IN OTHER WORDS...

COVID19 Inspirational Reading by Anonymous

When you go out and see the empty streets, the empty stadiums, the empty train platforms, don't say to yourself, 'It looks like the end of the world.' What you're seeing is love in action. What you're seeing, in that negative space, is how much we do care for each other, for our grandparents, for our immuno-compromised brothers and sisters, for people we will never meet.

People will lose jobs over this. Some will lose their businesses. And some will lose their lives. All the more reason to take a moment, when you're out on your walk, or on your way to the store, or just watching the news, to look into the emptiness and marvel at all of that love.

Let it fill you and sustain you. It isn't the end of the world. It is the most remarkable act of global solidarity we may ever witness

***Ticker TALK* is Available to Help Patients Modify Cardiac Risk**

Dia Smiley, DO released her book entitled *Ticker TALK* on Wednesday April 1, 2020. She is an Atlanta

cardiologist that will be profiled in next month's newsletter. Dr. Smiley feels this will be a read that patients can benefit from by learning about risk modification. Dr. Smiley realizes that she is not the only clinician that has limited time, and so she felt that DOs in Georgia who want their patients to understand and implement preventative care would be able to recommend the eBook for \$2.99.

Be In The Know

2020 ROME Southeast Cancelled due to COVID-19

The 2020 ROME Southeast meeting scheduled for June 12-14, 2020 was cancelled by the American Osteopathic Association due to the pandemic. Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina agreed in light of the lack of certainty around the COVID-19 crisis timeline. If you had already booked a room, please contact the Canopy by Hilton Southpark Hotel in Charlotte, NC by calling (704) 552-1715 to cancel



Physician Support Line
Free Confidential Peer Support Line by
Volunteer Psychiatrists for US Physician Colleagues
during the COVID19 Pandemic

1-888-409-0141
NOW LIVE

7 days a week
8am - 12am EST

www.physiciansupportline.com

On April 6, 2020, a free confidential peer support line by volunteer psychiatrists was started. It is supported 8 AM to Midnight seven days a week. **(See left)**

Mona Masood, DO is a general adult psychiatrist in the greater Philadelphia area is the founder and chief organizer of the Physician Support Line.

The American Osteopathic Foundation's (AOF) State Emerging Leaders Award was created in 2019 to recognize outstanding new physicians in practice across the country. Nominations are currently being accepted by state associations; Nominations close on May 1, 2020. Visit the [AOF award page for full information](#).



CELEBRATING
70 YEARS
1949 - 2019

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