



## AAO FOUNDATION

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Dear Colleagues and Friends,

It is an honor to serve as President of the AAO Foundation, and thanks to your generous contributions and kindness, the Foundation is excited to share with you the meaningful difference this has made in our Orthodontic Specialty.

The impact of focused philanthropy continues to elevate our association, and the Foundation's commitment to research, education, and charitable giving helps us grow our vision: To strengthen the future of the specialty by providing the resources to engage and empower all Orthodontists to excel in practice, research, and academics and impact the communities in which they live. Our goal is to continue to advance the specialty and to shape the future of orthodontics.

This year, the Foundation approved a strengthened way forward with its strategic plan, VISION 2030. This strategic approach will carry us through for the next five years, and we can't wait to communicate the impact to our profession. In fact, that is one of the tenets of our plan – To Communicate our Impact.

We also initiated a campaign to establish an endowed Fund to support Full-time Faculty Fellowships. Our For The Future initiative, a collaborative effort with AAO was unanimously ratified by the House of Delegates at the Annual Session in New Orleans. Our goal, to raise \$1.8 million – to be matched from the AAO – will create a \$3.6 million endowed fund for three two-year fellowships every year. This invests in our specialty, supporting the very best orthodontic faculty for the future. We're excited to be part of the continued success of the Full-time Faculty Fellowships Program.

We are growing the Gifted Smiles effort to expand your charitable impact by linking you with children in your community to provide orthodontic services. This is a life-changing impact for families that cannot afford treatment. We now have nearly 400 AAO-member volunteers and continue to welcome more volunteers every month.

And our hallmark program – the AAO Foundation Research Grant Awards – surpassed \$16 million. For three decades, the Foundation has been a driving force behind groundbreaking orthodontic research. We've provided the first crucial grant for many orthodontists, empowering both new and experienced researchers to advance the field. This ensures that the next generation of orthodontists has the resources to innovate and lead. Your support makes this impact possible.

I hope you take pride in what your generosity accomplishes. A quote from Kathy Calvin, "Giving is not just about making a donation. It is about making a difference." Great things continue to await our specialty and our members. I look forward to the years ahead and sharing more stories about the real, measurable differences in orthodontic education, research and patient care.

With sincere appreciation,

Dr. Lili K. Horton, DMD, MS