



COPA

Quarterly Newsletter
California O&P Association

CONNECTION

April 2023

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear COPA Members & Colleagues,

Quality orthotic and prosthetic intervention can have a life-changing impact on a patient. Many of us have witnessed the moment of happy tears in an exam room or the handwritten thank you note describing how the device changed their life. Recent research demonstrates that improved mobility has a positive impact on quality of life and makes the recipient less reliant on social programs. What you do makes a difference. However, access to quality care is easy to take for granted. Not everyone in our state has equal access to O&P care and COPA continues to fight to make a change in this area. Medi-Cal beneficiaries in particular deserve access to care that is appropriate and will achieve the desired outcome.

There are many ways that you can help COPA improve access to quality O&P care:

- 1) Identify patients that have experienced challenges accessing appropriate care and who have a compelling story. Reach out to COPA via email (admin@californiaoandp.com) to connect the patient with us.
- 2) Partner with COPA to have your legislator tour through your facility to demonstrate what we do and the impact that we make.
- 3) Volunteer to join a COPA committee to serve our industry and make meaningful progress. (Contact admin@californiaoandp.com)

Access to care is an important issue and COPA is up for the challenge. The invitation is open for you to join our efforts.

In service,

Spencer Greene

Spencer Greene, MS, CPO
sgreene@hanger.com
209-573-1806

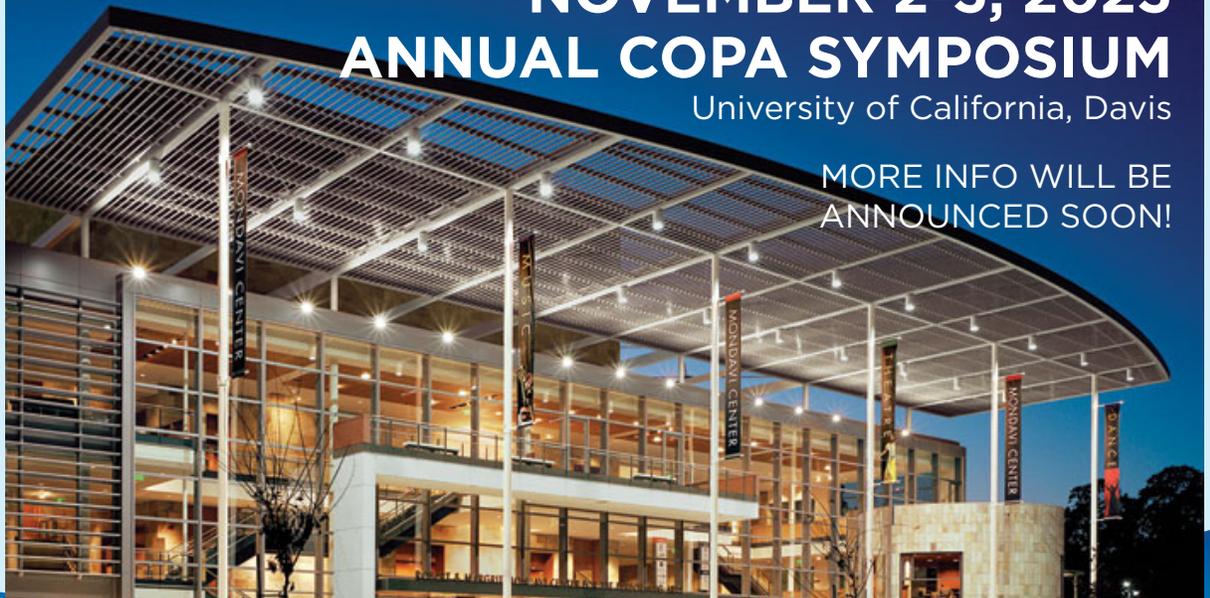
**We're building a program
that may very well change
the way you do business!**

SAVE THE DATE!

**NOVEMBER 2-3, 2023
ANNUAL COPA SYMPOSIUM**

University of California, Davis

**MORE INFO WILL BE
ANNOUNCED SOON!**



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UNDER THE DOME

by Bryce Docherty, COPA Lobbyist

NEW LEGISLATIVE SESSION BEGINS IN SACRAMENTO:

The new Legislature was sworn in on December 5, 2022, and they officially convened the first year of the new two-year legislative session on January 4, 2023. With a record 35 new legislators out of 120, this class has been aspirational as now the Legislature has the largest representation of women in California history at 50 and the largest California Legislative Latino Caucus at 36 legislators. Not to mention the largest LGBTQ+ Caucus in state history at 12. Bottom line ... the most diverse Legislature ever!

The surge in diversity is partly due to newly redrawn districts and open seats that created a window of opportunity for new candidates. There is more potential diversity on the horizon. Largely due to 12-year legislative term limits enacted in 2012, there are at least another 24 seats to turn over in the 2024 election cycle and another 20 in both 2026 and 2028. Senate President Pro Tem Toni Atkins (D-San Diego), the first openly gay Senate leader, is among those terming out in 2024.

ASSEMBLY SPEAKERSHIP FIGHT CONTINUES:

All this election excitement has been shrouded in controversy over who will become the next Assembly Speaker. On May 27, 2022, Assemblymember Robert Rivas (D-Salinas) announced that he has secured enough votes from his Democratic Caucus to become the next Assembly Speaker. Assemblymember Rivas is not termed out until 2030, while current Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon (D-Lakewood) terms out in 2024. Assemblymember Rivas would be the first Assembly Speaker in modern history to represent a predominantly rural district. He currently serves as Chair of the Assembly Agriculture Committee.

However, Speaker Rendon did not give up without a fight. He initially refused to step down and was able to push off a vote on electing the next Assembly Speaker until the new Legislature convened on December 5, 2022. Eventually, the Assembly reelected Rendon as Speaker until June 30, 2023, at which point Speaker Designee Rivas will take over. After which time Rivas will appoint new committee chairs, committee members and Assembly Leadership. Rendon has been Assembly Speaker since 2016.

This all made for riveting Capitol intrigue, as the Assembly Speaker has the sole discretion to appoint policy committee chairs and members of those committees, as well as selecting other Assembly leadership and single-handedly decides the fate of thousands of legislative bills every year. Although powerful, Rendon has also been characterized as vindictive, indignant, and out-of-touch. He was also blasted by the SacBee in June 2022 for his "hubris" and unrelenting desire to hold onto his power as long as possible.

COPA CALL TO ACTION:

Please stay tuned for updates from COPA on how to engage your local State Assemblymember and Senator. Building off advocacy and grassroots successes the last two years, COPA will be embarking on an assertive grassroots site visit program. These facility site visit tours with strategically important. Assemblymembers and Senators are critical in demonstrating the role O&P providers play in the larger healthcare delivery system and punctuate the need for increased Medi-Cal rates in order to continue providing equitable care to California's most vulnerable patient population.

SOME SAY ONE-SIZE FITS ALL

WE SAY one-size fits almost no-one!

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fit

We have big ambitions for the word FIT.

It's given that the AFO should fit and follow the shape of the leg and fit and adapt well to the shoe, for a comfortable wear for each individual. But fit should also mean a good dynamic function for the individual, and

that's where the similarity between a one-size version and an Allard AFO STOPS!

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especially of the important footplate. (Both build height and footplate length can also be adjusted, 1-1.5 cm).

individual





COPA MEMBERSHIP

by Brendan Erickson, COPA Membership Committee Chairman

Hello COPA Member,

As the COPA Membership Committee Chairman, I am pleased to reach out to you to both celebrate a very fruitful 2022 and to share in the excitement of 2023 for the Association. Thank you for being a valuable member. We cannot do it without you.

COPA member involvement is critical to the success of our strategic initiatives and we need your support now more than ever. Our strength is in our members, and our voice grows louder as we expand. To renew your membership, please login to our website here, www.californiaoandp.com. You then must login, click on **My Account** and select your membership type to renew. To make this easier from year to year, we have added a new auto-renew feature. You may also pay over the phone by contacting the administration at **626.244.2696** or by mailing a check to our Pasadena office, **2700 Foothill Blvd., Suite 209, Pasadena, CA 91107**.

I mentioned that with expansion our voice grows louder. I ask you to please refer COPA to any industry colleagues that would like to get involved.

Here are some quick bullet points of COPA's 2022 achievements:

2022 Government Affairs Update/ California Medi-Cal Reimbursement Improvement Efforts

- ◆ Legislative bill AB 1892 was submitted by Assembly Member Heath Flora along with co-authors Assemblymembers Vince Fong, Adam Gray, and Carlos Villapudua on February 9, 2022. The bill passed the CA State Assembly Health Committee on April 5, 2022 and passed the CA State General Assembly on

May 25, 2022. The bill reached the Senate Appropriations Committee.

- ◆ COPA lobbied for a restoration of the 10% Medi-Cal rate that was reduced in 2011. The California Budget was signed on June 30, 2022 and included the 10% Medi-Cal rate increase, effective July 1, 2022. More information can be found here <https://mailchi.mp/californiaoandp.com/sb-184-faq>

2022 COPA Symposium

- ◆ Over 20 Vendors/Exhibitors
- ◆ Over 80 Attendees
- ◆ Hosted at the newly renovated Challenged Athletes Foundation in San Diego
- ◆ For images of the event, visit <https://californiaoandp.com/2022-annual-copa-symposium-photo-gallery/>

Education Webinars

- ◆ Completed 4 Successful Webinars
 - Averaging 75 attendees per webinar, topics included clinical education, business resources & industry trends

COPA Connection Newsletter

- ◆ Association news & updates
- ◆ Letter from the president
- ◆ Supplier member advertisement availability
- ◆ 3,000 industry professionals including 800 COPA members
- ◆ For latest editions, visit www.californiaoandp.com/copa-connection-newsletter

COPA Membership

- ◆ Membership grew to largest amount ever in 2022
- ◆ Over 40 CA O&P Companies are COPA Members
 - Over 300 Proxy Members
- ◆ 13 Supplier Members

Success is now the COPA standard. Let's use our momentum together to make 2023 even better. On behalf of the entire COPA Board of Directors and the membership committee, THANK YOU for being a valued member of COPA. Please continue to be involved in our activities and our success. Cheers to COPA in 2023!

Sincerely,
Brendan Erickson
Chairman, Membership Committee
COPA

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Brendan Erickson,
Co-host



Jacki Green,
Co-host



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CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

by Linda Collins, COPA Co-chair Government Affairs/Payor Relations Committee

UPDATE ON SB 184 - REMOVAL OF 10% SEQUESTRATION FOR O&P

On July 1, 2011, the Medi-Cal program initiated a 10% reduction in orthotic and prosthetic reimbursement as a cost savings measure. The actual Medi-Cal fee schedule was not reduced. Rather, at the time of claims processing, an additional 10% was taken off the claim. This is sequestration.

What has COPA done to change this?

COPA Board of Directors and COPA Lobbyist Bryce Docherty engaged with the CA State Legislature to raise awareness to the value of O&P services for some of the most vulnerable Californians seeking equitable and restorative healthcare to live independent and productive lives. Several COPA members hosted their local State Assemblymember or Senator at their O&P facility to illustrate firsthand the valuable work being provided by O&P providers throughout California. As a result of these efforts, and others at the State Capitol by COPA, SB 184 has been enacted.

When will this be effective?

Effective July 1, 2022, the 10% sequestration for orthotists was removed. The sequestration removal for prosthetists was scheduled for January 1, 2023. This means for Dates of Service July 1, 2022, or after, Medi-Cal Orthotic claims will no longer have the 10% reduction. Prosthetic claims submitted to Medi-Cal will see the removal of the 10% sequestration for claims with Dates of Service on or after January 1, 2023. According to the California Department of Health Care Services, the system implementation of this program will be effective by May 2023. Once finalized, the Fiscal Intermediary will issue an Erroneous Payment Corrections (EPC) to retroactively adjust claims for dates of service on or after the effective date. There is no action needed on the part of the provider for this retroactive adjustment.

COPA will continue to monitor this bill and the implementation. We will keep our members informed. If you have questions, contact us at admin@californiaoanp.com

TIPS TO ENGAGE WITH COPA ON LinkedIn

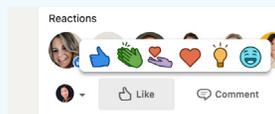
COPA has established a social media page on the LinkedIn platform. Bookmark our LinkedIn page on your browser:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/california-orthotic-and-prosthetic-association>

To keep members up-to-date, COPA posts event news and articles regularly here. To increase possibilities and frequency of COPA's posts appearing on your homepage feed and help COPA gain more visibility, follow these recommendations.

LIKE COPA'S POST:

The easiest way to increase engagement with COPA's post is to hit "Like" under the post. Once you click on the "Like" button, you can select the appropriate emojis you like.



ADD A COMMENT OR REPLY TO A COMMENT:

Just click on "Comment" under the post or "Reply" under a comment. You can make a comment about the post, share your own view or thoughts, or add a mention of your connections to bring their attention to the post. If you add a mention of your connection, they will get a notification from LinkedIn.

REPOST COPA'S POST:

Click "Repost" under the post to share with your connections. The "Repost" option allows you to repost with your thoughts or repost directly without thoughts. If you are reposting with your thoughts, please consider mentioning COPA (by adding #COPA or typing @California Orthotic and Prosthetic Association). You can also select who you want to repost to in the dropdown option below your name.

SEND COPA'S POST:

You can also click on "Send" under the post to send the post to specific connections for their attention. It will be sent as a private message.



TAG COPA IN YOUR POST:

We also recommend that you add hashtags #COPA, #californiaoandp and mention @California Orthotic and Prosthetic Association in your own post.

COPA MEMBER:

If you are a COPA member, add member of California Orthotic and Prosthetic Association to your Experience section in your profile. If you have this you will get an alert every time COPA makes a post.

Happy Posting!

ANN'S ADVOCACY MADE A DIFFERENCE; YOURS CAN, TOO!

by Teri Kuffel, JD, President of the American Orthotic and Prosthetic Association (AOPA)

Ann is a beautiful example of an advocate. She is a bilateral BK who lost her legs at an early age due to secondary complications of diabetes. She is in her mid-50s and qualified early for Medicare benefits. She is married, has a wonderful supportive family and enjoys life to the fullest.

I asked Ann to join me in Washington, DC at the AOPA Policy Forum in 2016, a critical time for our profession. As an amazing example of a Medicare beneficiary who needed access to prosthetic care, Ann walked and rolled with us for a full day of Senate and House visits to share her story. She explained to our legislators how any delays to her care negatively impacted her daily activities, and had the potential of causing her more harm. She explained her full confidence in her prosthetist's and her physicians' capabilities. She explained how they work together, even in the finest details of her written medical records, to be in sync so that her documentation supports her medical need for her prosthetic prescriptions. She explained how incredibly important her relationship is with her prosthetist.

Ann's visits that day made a difference in our journey for our O&P documentation to be recognized as important in the medical record and collaborative to the physicians.

This is why we advocate. For and with our patients, our advocacy efforts make a difference and change lives. We educate and we advocate all for the purpose of improving access to care for those in need of O&P care.

Please join me and bring a patient to the **AOPA Policy Forum May 10-11 in Washington, DC.** Either start or continue your journey assisting our O&P patients beyond the exam room. My guess is, it'll be an experience you will not only enjoy, but treasure. Giving of our time and talents always is.

REGISTER HERE:

<https://www.aopanet.org/legislative-regulatory/2023-policy-forum/>



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**Tentative Schedule of Events:
 Wednesday, May 10**

- 8:00am - 3:30pm Registration
- 8:00am - 10:00am Student Breakfast
- 9:00am - 10:00am State Reps Meeting
- 11:30am - 1:00pm Opening General Session
 Lobbying 101 Luncheon
- 1:00pm - 3:10pm General Session
- 3:10pm - 3:30pm Break
- 3:30pm - 5:00pm General Session or Breakouts
- 5:30pm - 6:30pm Congressional Fundraiser
- 7:00pm - 9:00pm DC City Tour (optional)

Thursday, May 11

- 7:00am - 8:30am Breakfast and Remarks
- 8:00am - 3:00pm Congressional Appointments
- 11:30am - 1:00pm Lunch (on own or available at Marriott)

Reviewed Article Title: *Mechanical Testing of Transtibial Prosthetic Sockets: A discussion paper from the American Orthotic and Prosthetic Association Socket Guidance Workgroup*

Published: Prosthetics Orthotics International, 2023

Authors: Gariboldi F., Cutti A.G., Fatone S., Nickel E., Dickinson A., Steer J., Erenstone J., Zahedi S.

Article Summary and Analysis: Gary M. Berke MS, CP, FAAOP

SUMMARY

Prosthetic sockets serve as the link between the patient and their prosthesis, yet no common guidelines exist to test sockets' mechanical strength. Without standardized testing methods, the socket structural properties are largely unknown. Therefore, the practice currently is to reinforce the socket until safety is assured, essentially over fabricating the socket.

In order to ensure compliance with increasing regulatory requirements, decrease the cost of fabrication, and ensure the safety of the user, an AOPA workgroup was formed to identify gaps in knowledge and to achieve these goals.

The workgroup identified knowledge gaps as they pertain to socket strength testing: 1. Shape and composition of a mock limb; 2. Coordination of alignment and socket systems; 3. Components and requirement of test specimens; 4. Test conditions, loading parameters and acceptance criterion. These gaps need to be addressed by researchers, manufacturers and others that are suggesting changes in previously engineered socket designs and materials.

ANALYSIS

This important article is the beginning of the understanding of the issues around socket strength and safety. Historically, this issue went unaddressed as there were few alternatives to the standard thermoset approach to socket

fabrication. 'Over fabrication' (the arbitrary adding of material and thickness) was the only alternative to improve durability and occurred on an individual socket level. The International Standards Organization (ISO) created the standards for testing of components in ISO 10328 (latest edition 2016), as the need to demonstrate safety and standardization became more apparent. The current ISO standards do not address socket strength, as ISO requires filling the socket with a rigid material prior to testing, thereby bypassing the strength of the materials within the socket. Simply claiming that a socket 'passed ISO' is inadequate as a reasonable test of strength and should not be seen as the standard of care, nor as a standard for socket safety.

Determining socket strength is not a simple task. Socket shape, size, materials, trimlines, limb length, activity level, time of use, will all affect socket strength over time. The cost and ease of implementing a testing protocol is also a concern. However, this article presents an opportunity to advance the profession and presents a path to move forward to advance research in socket strength testing.

Several prototypes of socket testing standards have been suggested and are making their way toward publication, if not published already. The works by Xtremity, WillowWood, the Veterans' Administration, South Hampton, Inail (Italy), University of Washington and Blatchford (to name a few) will help to better define the process and improve the design and safety of sockets going forward. This work will ensure that sockets continue to become safer, lighter, and thus improve patient outcomes. Congratulations to this committee for getting us to this point and moving closer to appropriate socket testing protocols.

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The 2022 COPA Symposium Recap

The 2022 COPA Symposium was hosted by the Challenged Athletes Foundation (CAF) on November 3 & 4 at their venue in San Diego. We extend our sincere gratitude to CAF for their kind generosity and support.

CAF is a nonprofit organization committed to providing opportunities and support to people with physical challenges, enabling them to pursue active lifestyles through physical fitness and competitive athletics. CAF believes that involvement in sports at any level enhances the quality of life, encourages independence, and boosts self-esteem.

This partnership between COPA and CAF has created a unique platform to share knowledge, ideas and promote collaboration among O&P professionals. We encourage all COPA members to visit the CAF website to learn more about their mission, events, and resources.

<https://www.challengedathletes.org>



We also invite you to save the date, November 2 & 3 to attend the 2023 COPA Symposium at UC Davis where we will gather again to discuss the latest research, innovations, legislative updates, and best practices related to the O&P industry.

These companies are our 2022 COPA Symposium sponsors and exhibitors. Join us in thanking them by considering the use of their products and services. Visit their website for more information. We hope to see them again at our 2023 COPA Symposium at UC Davis in November.

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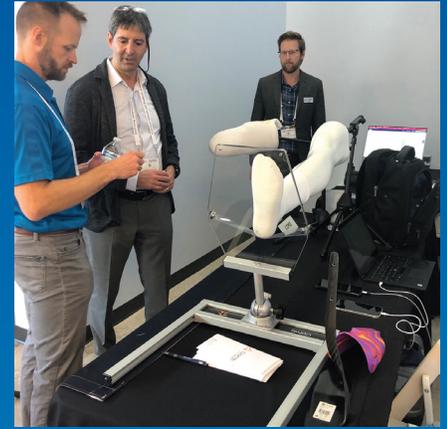
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*All three items must be included
in a single purchase to receive the discount.

Scenes at the 2022 COPA Symposium. Be sure to Save the Date, November 2 - 3 for our 2023 Symposium at UC Davis!



COPA 2022 Symposium kicked off on Nov. 3 in San Diego. Thank you Challenged Athlete Foundation for graciously hosting our event at their lovely center. Rudy Garcia-Tolson, Program Manager, Athlete Relations accepts our thanks from Spencer Greene, COPA's President.



Spencer Greene, COPA's President, delivering an appreciation message.



Justin Pratt, CP of Össur presenting "Power Knee – The Next Generation"



Cosi Bellosso, MSPT, Owner of Palanca, Inc. presenting "Communication, Proprioception, and Other Ways To Think Outside the Box."



Ashlie White, MA of Amputee Coalition presenting "A Collaborative Approach to Improving the Healthcare Access Landscape for Patients Living with Limb Loss and Limb Difference."

Getting Started In Digital Workflow: Scanning Amputees, And Scanning AFO/KAFOs in Neutral with an Adjustable Triplaner Scanning Fixture by Jon Naft, CPO, GRE, MyoMo



View more photos here: <https://californiaoandp.com/2022-annual-copa-symposium-photo-gallery/>