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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear COPA Members & Colleagues,
2023 has been another eventful year for COPA. Our dynamic Board of Directors has diligently organized educational opportunities, hosted networking events, facilitated legislator tours of clinics, and submitted a 2024 state budget proposal to increase Medi-Cal reimbursement for O&P devices. We hope that each of you had an opportunity to participate in one or more of the events. If not, we invite you to join us in 2024 as we continue to serve the O&P industry in California.

As I reflect on the year, I am very thankful for the time and energy put forth by COPA's management team, lobbyist, and Board of

Directors. This is a group of people that genuinely cares about the overall well-being of our industry and spends a lot of time and energy to serve you, the COPA membership.

I am also thankful for the efforts put forth by COPA's membership to help move each of our key initiatives forward. It truly takes a village. Cheers to making each year more productive than the last!

In service,

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

COPA 2023 NEW MEMBERS

COPA is pleased to report its success in recruiting new members in 2023. Apart from corporate suppliers, we have expanded our student members significantly through our partnership with Loma Linda University. Thank you all for being part of COPA. We hope to meet each and everyone of you at our events.

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*Wishing all a joyful season
and a Happy New Year!*

Let's ring in the New Year at COPA's Happy Hour
on January 24th at Lawless Brewing Co. in
Los Angeles. RSVP: californiaoandp.com



COPA LEGISLATOR TOURS IN FULL SWING:

As previously reported, COPA under the leadership of the Government Affairs Committee has identified almost two dozen legislative targets for grassroots facility tours this fall. These 23 legislators are strategically critical in securing MCO Tax revenue for an increase in Medi-Cal O&P reimbursement rates. This strategy includes every legislator who sits on the Assembly and Senate Budget Subcommittees on Health. All legislative targets COPA has identified will need to see and experience first-hand the unique role that O&P providers play not only in the Medi-Cal Program but the larger healthcare delivery system.

COPA has already completed 10 tours and four more are planned before the year ends. These tours have proven invaluable in making our case for increased reimbursement in Medi-Cal O&P rates. During every tour we also make sure to have at least one patient there to tell their story about how life changing their O&P experience has been and why more needs to be done. This is our "secret sauce" in breaking through all the noise around the hundreds of other competing stakeholders at the State Capitol also seeking increased Medi-Cal reimbursement rates.

After legislators take the local tour and meet with patients, they're "emotionally wrecked" and often ready to act and help champion our cause. For example, Assemblymember Jim Patterson (R-Fresno) was toured by Jason Schott with Advanced Prosthetic and Orthotic Design in Fresno. When Assemblymember Patterson arrived, he was very skeptical of our request to increase Medi-Cal reimbursement rates for O&P and stated, "Good luck and get in line." According to Jason, "By the end of tour, after meeting with 6-7 patients today and seeing first-hand the challenges that face those with Medi-Cal, in contrast to those that have Medicare and other private insurance, he was truly burdened and touched. Every patient in the office today was either bilateral, trilateral, or quad." Assemblymember Patterson even went out of his way to post the visit on his social media channels. Visit

<https://tinyurl.com/ywunndft> to see what he put on Facebook where he stated the following:

"This morning I toured the Advanced Prosthetic & Orthotic Design facility in Fresno. There, I met with patients and heard their stories of the remarkable progress they have made as a result of the professional and caring craftsmanship of CEO Dr. Jason Schott (<https://www.facebook.com/jason.schott.52>) and his team."

"However, facilities like this are under a huge financial challenge because the California Medi-Cal reimbursement rates remain so intolerably low, many are facing the real prospect of closing."

"These dear people touched me deeply, as did the passion and devotion of Dr. Schott. I will be taking their needs to Sacramento when we reconvene in January. California must keep faith with these patients to make sure places like Advanced Prosthetic & Orthotic Design can continue to work miracles."

Please stay tuned for updates from COPA on how to engage your local State Assemblymember and Senator and please be willing to tour your local legislator if called upon by COPA. This ongoing endeavor builds off the advocacy and grassroots success over the last two years. It's imperative for COPA members to punctuate locally the need for increased Medi-Cal rates to continue providing equitable care to California's most vulnerable patient population.

"If you miss a day 'Under the Dome,' you miss a lot!"



L-R: Assemblymember Jim Patterson (R-Fresno) and a patient from Advanced Prosthetic and Orthotic Design.

SOME SAY ONE-SIZE FITS ALL

WE SAY one-size fits almost no-one!

allard^{INC}

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!

We offer different models for different needs of support and stability. Our 25 years experience and development of composite AFO confirms the necessity of variety to meet and fulfill the need from patients in the best possible way, not only one way!

Responding footplate is a key

function for control, safety and comfort. Within each model we offer 4-5 different sizes (XS-XL) to match different foot sizes and heights of users. All sizes have

individual composite lay-up to optimize dynamic response.

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

individual



COPA 2023 SYMPOSIUM *ENGAGING AND EVOLVING*

Event Recap by COPA President Spencer Greene

"I've been to a lot of state O&P meetings and the COPA meeting is the best one." The comment was music to my ears after months of preparation for the 2023 COPA Symposium.

This year's agenda was keynoted by Drs. Andrew Li and Jonathon Schofield from UC Davis. They presented their cutting edge research that resonated with all in attendance. The audience was filled with attendees from O&P businesses large and small and supported by nearly 20 manufacturing partners. Part of COPA's value proposition is to provide high quality education to the field and I believe that we have delivered in 2023.

The COPA board is already discussing the venue for 2024 in Southern California so I hope that you will join us. Cheers to camaraderie in O&P across CA.



COPA President Spencer Greene welcomes attendees and kicks off the 2023 COPA Symposium.



Laduan Smedley, Jr. receiving an appreciation plaque from COPA President Spencer Greene on behalf of UC Davis who has graciously hosted this event.



Board members at the Symposium (L-R): President Spencer Greene, Linda Collins, Trevor Townsend, Riley Liddell, and Andy May.

Left Photo: L-R: Board Treasurer Maynard Carkhuff with Tyler Hyatt of College Park Industries.

Middle Photo: L-R: Symposium attendee with Tom Cacciato from Aether Biomedical and Stephen Kirk Wilson.

Right Photo: L-R: Board member Andy May, Tom Cacciato (Aether Biomedical), and Sarah Nakamoto (Cascade Orthopedic).





Mark Clary, CPO, FAAOP, Vice-Chair of NCOPE presenting "Current State of O&P Education."



Speaker Karl Lindborg, CPO/LP Clinical Practice Consultant/Upper Limb Specialist CPO/LP of Intersect OPS presenting "The International Transradial Adjustable Limb (ITAL)."



Keynote Speakers Dr. Andrew Li and Dr. Jonathon Schofield (not pictured), on "Working Towards Prosthesis Embodiment: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach."



"Engaging the Next Generation of O&P Professionals" - A Panel Discussion by Riley Liddell, Gary Berke, Mellisa Warden, and Linda Collins as Moderator.



Julie Gross, PT presenting "The PT Role in Limb Loss Multi-Disciplinary Team Rehabilitation."



A Huge Thank You to all Sponsors and Exhibitors who Supported the 2023 COPA Symposium!



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THE COPA SYMPOSIUM HAPPY HOUR

SPONSORED BY



Attendees of COPA's 2023 Annual Symposium hosted by UC Davis gathered for an evening Happy Hour event, immediately after the first day of presentations. Thank you to our generous sponsor Alps South for making this Happy Hour possible.

COPA members enjoyed each other's company and discussed the lectures they attended. Many took the opportunity to engage the speakers they saw earlier and further their understanding of topics such as Prosthesis Embodiment which aims to give users increased control as well as provide sensory feedback without adding complexity to the design of the device.

Other conversations revolved around how to best engage future generations of care providers within the field of O&P. Many took the opportunity to share common business trends they are noticing within their respective markets. The state of California's devotion to providing high quality Prosthetic and Orthotic care was in full display throughout the evening.

Be sure to join us at our Jan. 24th Happy Hour at Lawless Brewing Co. in Los Angeles.



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Riley Liddell, CPO
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Prosthetic & Orthotic Group
of Orange County, LLC

Matt Swiggum
Proteor USA

Andy May
Fillauer

Trevor Townsend, CPO
Valley Institute of
Prosthetics & Orthotics

COPA Happy Hour

Lawless Brewing Co.
5275 Craner Ave,
Los Angeles

 Wednesday
January 24, 2024

 5:30 - 7:30 PM

COPA invites you to our Happy Hour event!

SPONSORED BY:



HOW WE CAN BECOME MORE UNITED AS STUDENTS/ RESIDENTS AND ESTABLISHED PRACTITIONERS

Qualified mentors are essential parts of our ongoing education in order to continue problem solving, develop new products and methods, and advance in our profession. We have two outstanding universities producing future leaders in California, but this is not enough to be successful in our fast-changing, ever evolving field. Before we can lead, we need to learn from the best, who currently propel the field forward. So how can we be successful doing that?

First, "Be the person you needed." Who doesn't remember starting at a new job and receiving specific training? Perhaps the manager saw potential, so they offered opportunities for advancement, becoming someone who shaped your future. The goal of the mentor-mentee relationship is to assist and guide future and new practitioners to not only further advance the field, but help them find success for their patients, the clinic, and themselves. We do not need to reinvent the wheel every time someone enters the field. As I tell every individual I have mentored over the past 20 years, my job is to help you not make the mistakes I did. If I am truly successful, they will eventually outperform me and take some of what I have taught them to help others. And in the process, I normally learn a few things from them.

Second, show initiative. New practitioners need to put effort in to earn the opportunity and knowledge of the individual

mentoring them. Most practitioners are short on time and as much as they want to help, it can cause additional stress. Offer to clean, do inventory, answer phones, break out casts, and pay attention to what you can do to help the workflow. Learn every position in the office so that you have value. Every time I have interned or worked at a facility, it began with offering to clean, answer phones, assist with shipping and receiving, or help the techs and learn their ways. In a few cases, the practitioner was not sure they wanted an intern, so each day I asked if I could return, and eventually I was given more responsibility and expected to be there. It demonstrated initiative and drive. Every time I have earned my opportunity to be at a clinic, it led to a paid position. If you want to be valuable, you must show what you can do to help the person(s) you are asking help from.

Third, Communicate. When being mentored, you have access to a wealth of knowledge, so ask questions when the timing is appropriate—NOT in front of patients. This means taking notes to later clarify or remind you of the technique. Ask in advance when the best time is to ask questions and receive feedback. This is also an opportunity for the mentor to lay down guidelines and expectations. Just as practitioner-patient communication is key to success, so is mentor-mentee communication.

By Mellisa Warden, CSUDH student

I urge practitioners to take time to learn from the mentees, as well. With technology rapidly advancing, it is likely the newer generation has had exposure and potentially experience to tools that could assist you in growing your practice. By being open-minded and asking for their input on a new technique or tool, you are teaching them to become the leader you are and showing value in them.

The path forward in growing the O&P field is hands-on, real-world education, but we need mentors to help and advise future practitioners. Those looking for mentors need to put effort in and be willing to earn the opportunity to learn from masters. While students and residents may not have years of experience in the field, they bring value to businesses with experience with new technologies and techniques. Those joining the field need to take initiative in meeting and working with practitioners and demonstrate the value they have by learning different jobs in the clinic and establishing communication. There is an opportunity to collaborate and develop lifelong relationships that reward collaboration and problem solving through the mentor-mentee relationship.

TIPS FOR O&P SHIPPING DURING THE 2023 PEAK HOLIDAY SEASON

by SPS | *More than Distribution: Partnership*

It's time to break out the cozy sweaters and grandma's recipe book: the holiday season is here. As we enter this festive time, it's crucial to understand the current state of the shipping industry to ensure timely deliveries and a smooth ordering experience. Despite economic uncertainties, consumers continue to defy expectations by opening their wallets. Gross domestic product (GDP) grew at an annual pace of 4.9% in July, August, and September—outpacing the 4.7% estimate.

Much of the spending is being done online. Deloitte is forecasting a 10.3% to 12.8% increase in 2023 holiday e-commerce sales compared to the 7.9% growth witnessed last year.

This year, as in the past, we can anticipate the usual challenges of the holiday shipping season. Shipping costs have stabilized, yet carriers have again implemented a "peak season" charge through early January 2024. Additionally, unpredictable weather conditions like snow, rain, and sleet can lead to bottlenecks and delays.

To help you and other O&P professionals ensure timely deliveries of critical devices for patients, we've put together some best practices for the peak holiday season:

BEST PRACTICES FOR ORDERING O&P DURING THE PEAK HOLIDAY SEASON

Patient Planning:

Review the carrier's holiday schedule and any changes to service time-in-transit windows when scheduling patient visits and make necessary adjustments. Keep in mind that the busiest period for shipping is from December 14 to December 24. If possible, plan in advance to ensure the package is in transit prior to December 14.

Upgrade Your Shipping Method:

Upgrading the shipping method to expedite shipments should be considered to meet scheduling deadlines for sensitive deliveries. We recommend customers upgrade when ordering a high-dollar and/or highly time-sensitive item. However, keep in mind that choices such as shipping Priority Overnight versus Standard Overnight can have cost impacts.

Sign-up for Notifications:

Sign up to receive advance shipping notifications via your ecommerce platform or parcel carrier. Reach out to your SPS Sales Account Manager today to sign up!

Hold at Locations:

Check to see where your nearest Hold at Location is for your carrier and use this service to pick-up packages outside of normal clinic hours.

Nobody enjoys waiting for packages, but by leveraging tools available and with a little strategic planning, your clinic will navigate another peak holiday shipping season successfully.

Interested in learning more about the ways SPS can save you time and money this holiday season? Reach out to SPS Sales Account Manager, Michelle Purvis at 346-266-5148.

References:

<https://www.bea.gov/news/2023/gross-domestic-product-third-quarter-2023-advance-estimate>

<https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/press-releases/deloitte-holiday-retail-sales-expected-to-increase.html>

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