

A brown horse with a white blaze on its face is looking down at a black and white cat. The cat is standing on a bed of straw in a stable. The horse's head is framed by a wooden fence. The background shows a grassy field and trees.

AO

VET

North America

Name  
this newsletter

**COMPETITION**

See page 6  
for details

# AO VET news

The newsletter for the AO VET North America community

Fall 2020



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### Don't Miss...

Name this newsletter and win \$100!  
See **page 6** for more details.





# From the Editor

Welcome all to the inaugural issue of the AO VET North America newsletter. Its publication has been a community development goal for quite a while now. Our growing ranks and strong community are reasons enough but of all years, 2020 had just the recipe to catalyze its inception.

**Rebranding.** The AO has expanded rapidly and successfully over the years. The development of new ideas, technology and educational strategies kept, and continues to keep, us at the surgical forefront but also came with some degree of disorganization. Rebranding efforts were initiated in the beginning of 2019 at the apex of our organization. These changes will bring a fresh look to our image and lend cohesion to the channels through which our educational strategies, developmental processes and marketing tactics are implemented. With seamless interface between our in-person and online presences, adaptive technology for management and real-time development of our online presence and new tools to fuel digital learning the AO will move powerfully into 2021.

**The pandemic.** The temporary cessation of travel and face-to-face events has created a void in one of the most important aspects of our organization; the time we spend with each other. This is where friendships are built and ideas are crystallized; this time together is the very thing that breathes life into our network. It is inspiring that in spite of that sacrifice the membership and staff, spanning all clinical divisions, have redoubled their efforts to continue delivery of education in orthopedic surgery at the highest level. Herein you will see just how much has been accomplished in the face of the barriers the world has had to face this year.

**Educational changes.** The cancellation of our face-to-face programs created an educational void in the field of veterinary orthopedic surgery. The staff, AO VET NA Board and faculty met this roadblock with energy and dedication, resulting in the very well received web-based delivery of the didactic portions of our flagship small animal and equine principles courses. This strategy afforded access to our members but also broad exposure to surgeons outside our ranks. Demand was high and the commentary confirmed that online access to surgical education needs be a major part of our way forward. Online delivery, personalization of the curriculum and curated online modules are concepts crystallizing into competency-based training and assessment programs. We may well be at the beginning of the largest paradigm shift to date in our delivery of education.

This newsletter will be published biannually and will include updates as broad as the Foundation level and as focused as our individual AO VET NA subcommittees. It will also keep you current on the AO VET NA Board, opportunities for involvement and the schedule of educational events. We hope it will serve to keep us all that much more connected and serve as a tool for new members to understand the structure of our organization and the directions we are going. Above all, we hope you enjoy it!

Sincerely,

Janik Gasiorowski, VMD, DACVS

# Message from President of AO North America

Amy S Kapatkin, DVM, MAS, DACVS



Dear All at AO VET NA,

I first want to take a moment to acknowledge and thank everyone for your dedication (faculty, committee members, and AO NA staff), during COVID. This team made sure the AO VET learners and community had access to high quality course materials, and continued learning, despite a different format.

All of you made this successful beyond expectations. AO NA is planning and strategizing to ensure the organization can be successful in our changing environment. We recognize we need to align our resources, innovate our infrastructure, be better at outreach, communication and awareness and of course continue to use educational tools for the future.

In order to accomplish these goals, it is important for us as an organization to work on our governance, communications, finances and long-term planning to ensure we remain solvent and relevant. One of my goals as President is to promote programs to ensure we are a diverse group of AO faculty and leaders. AO VET, with Dr. Carl Kirker-Head's vision, successfully launched the diversity initiative and recently the AO Foundation officially endorsed the initiative for all clinical divisions, as [Project Access](#).

AO NA is presently working on their governance documents and structure. To ensure stake holder satisfaction, the Executive Council along with the clinical division boards will be reviewing, working and aligning when possible with each other, while ensuring that AO NA maintains "best practices" as a not for profit organization.

Feedback is possible through the AO VET clinical division board.

AO VET NA recently ran an open election for the VET seat on the AO NA Board of Directors. Vet's present BOD member is Dr. Al Ruggles who has been an icon and leader for AO VET NA for more than 25 years. Amongst his many accomplishments in AO, his participation in helping with the AO NA office reorganization project has allowed AO NA to move forward with their digital transformation and innovation strategies. Al is also credited for securing our AO educational partnership with ACVS that has significantly helped ACVS residents and surgeons engage in our educational programs. My sincere thanks to Al for his service on the BOD that ends in November 2020 and for his continued leadership in the organization.

Communication is paramount and AO NA will have a roll out of the new web site October 2020. The web site will be structured to help our learning and engagement communities. There are many ways to engage in AO NA in addition to faculty teaching, and I am hopeful that as faculty and members you all feel empowered to apply for committees and tasks that are needed. Our governance structure will be available to all once revised and feedback and comments are always welcome. There are too many to thank individually but I can assure you that your dedication to making AO VET NA special is noticed and appreciated.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Amy Kapatkin".

Amy S Kapatkin DVM, MAS, DACVS  
AO North America President



# AO VET International Update

## Dear Colleagues of the AO VET NA Community,

It's my pleasure to bring you this brief report on AO VET's international activities.

As an international organization the AO Foundation typically holds around 800 courses globally each year with over 50,000 participants taught by nearly 9,000 faculty.

Of course, COVID-19 has forced massive adjustments in the medical education landscape with the cancellation of almost all in-person events since early in the year. So how has AO VET been adapting?

"Dynamically" is probably a good word to use. Between March and August 2020 AO VET helped educate more than 10,000 participants from around the world, largely through webinars:

- Between March 25 and August 12, a total of 47 webinars were delivered in four languages. A big shout-out here to our NA Faculty, Officers, staff and others who have been heavily involved in driving this process.
- Global AO VET membership numbers have remained stable at 1,550 (North American figures have actually increased)
- We have seen a huge increase on the number of followers on AO VET's most popular social media channels: Since December 2019, our Facebook followers have increased organically by 60 percent, from 3,700 to 5,900, and our Instagram audience has increased 74 percent, from 1,900 to 3,300.



At the same time, [myAO](#), AO's digital platform, continues to grow with the addition of new features and the launch of case discussions. myAO case discussion groups enable you to interact with peers and discuss and share cases directly on the platform. The new feature provides you with a secure environment where you can engage with only verified veterinarians. It is advertising-free and the data is protected from third parties. myAO also allows you to create your own public or private groups with other peers on the AO network, which is great if you would like to share your cases with other AO members. I invite you to take a drive around the [myao.app](#) and also discover AO VET videos, Surgery Reference, leading veterinary journals, and more.

On the research side, AO VET—recognizing the need to bridge the gap between clinical research and clinical practice—has launched a new and innovative [program](#). The "AO VET Symposium—Bridging the Gap: Translating Clinical Research into Clinical Practice" is an exciting opportunity to present clinical research to a wide audience of specialists, residents, and practitioners from the global AO VET community. Clinically relevant research in all fields of veterinary orthopedics will be presented over four exciting virtual symposia to be held every Monday, from November 16 until December 7, 2020.

One thing we can all be proud of at AO VET is the new Foundation-wide Access initiative launched in June 2020 and setting the course for the organization's future, demonstrating AO's commitment to addressing existing inequalities to entry and advancement within the organization. This initiative found its origin in AO VET and has largely been driven by AO VET Faculty working with President Bob McGuire who has incorporated his own Mentorship initiative under the [Access](#) umbrella. Congratulations to all those involved.

Also in the news, the AO Foundation and DePuy Synthes have recently renewed the cooperation agreement that enables many of our education and community development events globally and, through its support for the AO Technical Commission (AO TC), assists in the development of new veterinary products and related instruments and implants. You can learn more [here](#).

Last, but certainly not least, we are reinventing the AO Davos Flagship Courses to an outstanding online format. The "AO VET Masters Course—Joint-related diseases: Old myths, new truths" will run December 3-6, 2020. [Join us](#) from anywhere around the world for this unique learning and networking experience.

If you have questions or comments, please feel welcome to reach out to me at [carl.kirker-head@tufts.edu](mailto:carl.kirker-head@tufts.edu).

Sincerely yours on behalf of the AO VET International Board,

*Carl Kirker-Head*

Carl Kirker-Head, DACVS, DECVS, Vet.MB, MA



**We need your input!**

## COMPETITION TIME!

### Feeling creative?

Help us to shape  
the future of **your**  
newsletter!

**We know how enthusiastic the AO VET NA community is – and this is your opportunity to make your mark on our newsletter moving forward.**

**We are on the lookout for the title we will use from Issue 2 onwards. AO VET NA News? AO VET NA Journal?**

**There must be some more dynamic names out there!  
Time to get those creative juices flowing.**

Simply email your suggestion to Andrea McClimon, Regional Director VET, [mcclimon.andrea@aona.org](mailto:mcclimon.andrea@aona.org) by **Tuesday, December 1.**

As well as gaining the kudos and bragging rights of naming this newsletter, the winner will receive a \$100 gift certificate!

If more than one person suggests the winning title, then the winner will be selected randomly.

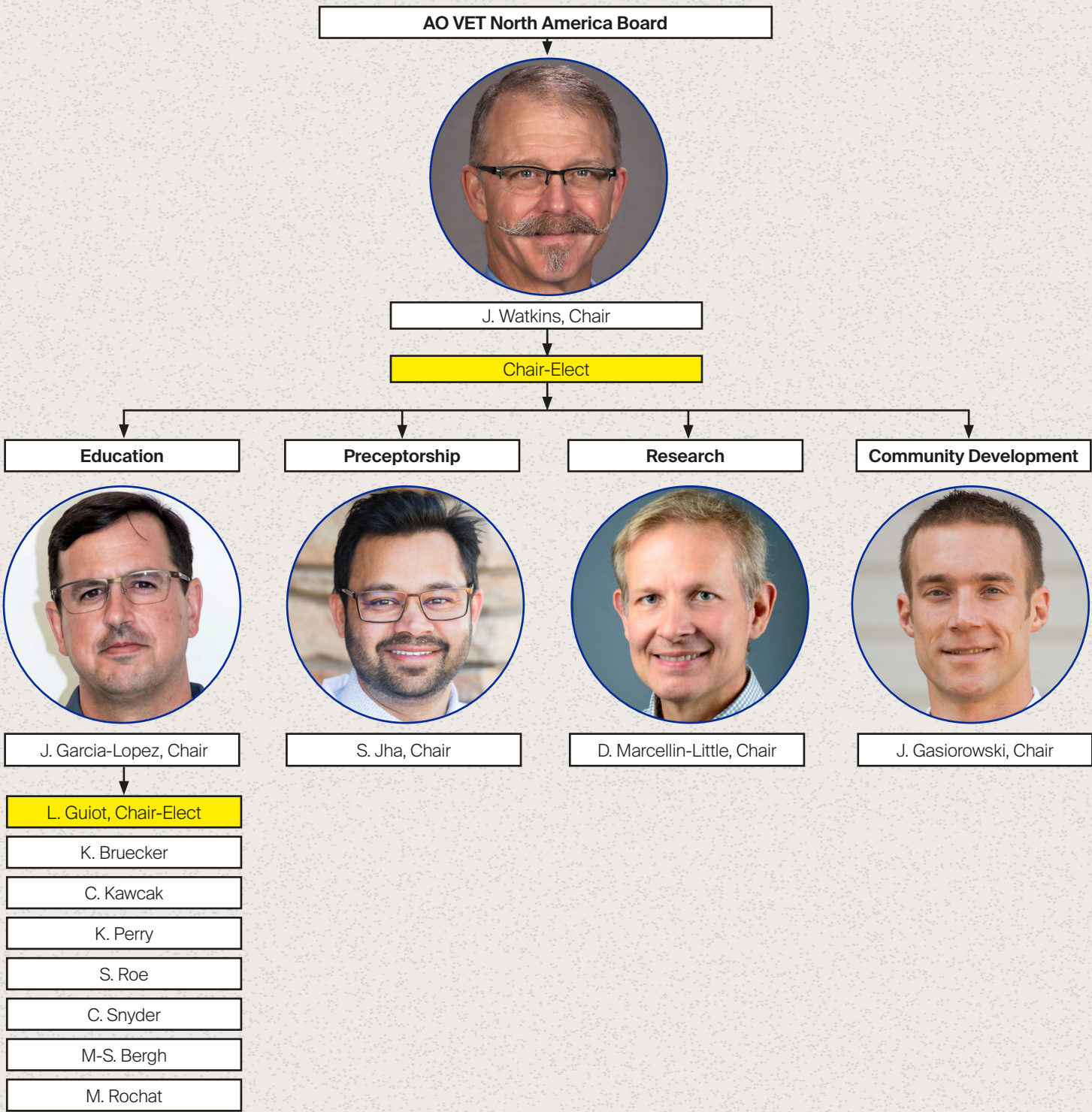
Remember, all entries must be received by December 1.

Good luck from the AO VET NA team!

GiftCard

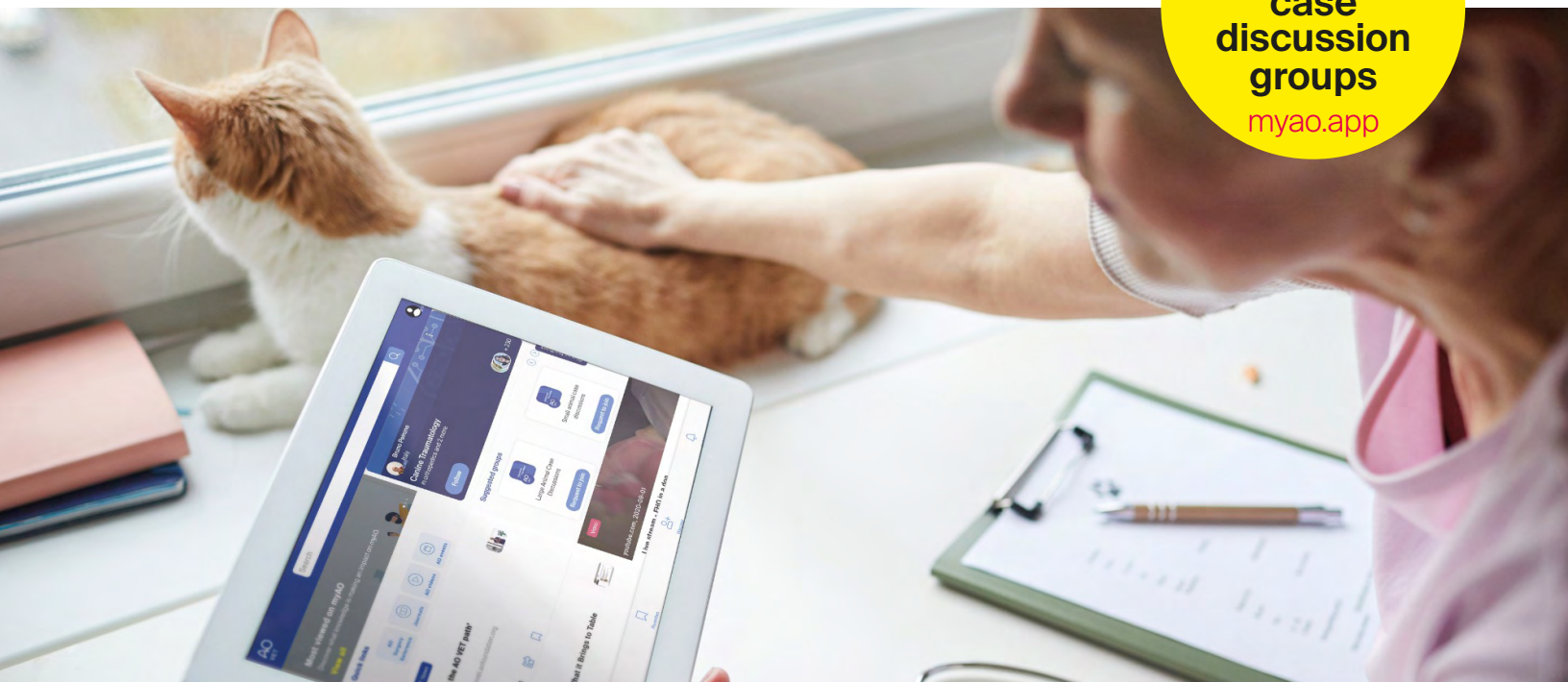
# AO VET North America Board & Committees

AO VET NA has a mission to promote, support, and oversee ethical research that enhances the management of clinical problems affecting animals. Projects may focus on the development or evaluation of novel implants that enhance fracture repair. AO VET NA collaborates with other parts of the world to fulfill its research mission. This year, the AO VET International research and development commission had made \$30,000 available to fund one \$7,500 grant in each of four world regions. The international AO VET R&D commission also promotes collaborative grants with the AO Research Institute and AO's Innovation and Translation Center in Davos, Switzerland. AO VET also supports the AO Program for Education and Excellence in Research (AO PEER), a course focused on teaching the principle of research to young clinician scientists. The first North American AO PEER course was taught in October 2019. The course was hosted by Tufts University in North Grafton, MA. More AO PEER courses are planned in North America. AO VET NA is looking forward to continuing its support of research and research education.



# Engage with other veterinarians in a safe environment

Join  
**myAO**  
case  
discussion  
groups  
[myao.app](https://myao.app)



**myAO** is a secure online environment designed for verified veterinarians, where you can engage with colleagues throughout the world.

Create your own groups—public or private—and network with your peers.

myAO is free to join, there is no advertising, and your data is protected from third parties.

Enjoy myAO your way, whether you prefer a web app or a mobile app.

Visit [myao.app](https://myao.app) and sign up today.



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**AO**  
VET



# Chair's Corner

By: Jeff Watkins, DVM, MS, DACVS  
Chair, AO VET NA

**I would like to welcome you to our inaugural AO VET NA newsletter. Although we have sent out emails in the past to keep everyone up to date on the happenings of AO VET NA, this is our first foray into the world of publishing a de facto newsletter. Thanks go to Janik Gasiorowski, Chair of Community Development and Andrea McClimon, Regional Director for AO VET NA, for initiating this endeavor. Our hope is to better communicate the happenings of AO VET NA, AO VET International, and AO NA. Our intent is to be transparent, informative, and succinct in conveying what you as members need to know, as well as addressing topics of interest to our readers. We welcome your ideas for these topics as well as questions that we, as your representatives, can address.**

Although the topic of governance isn't the most exciting, now is a good time to spend a few minutes going over what is happening in the organization. We are currently reviewing AO NA's bylaws and terms of reference in relation to our status as a charitable trust, as well as our position within the AO Foundation. Rather than bore you with the details, as they are still being processed, we are working to simplify and streamline election procedures and our governance documents to be sure they meet state and federal laws. At the same time, we're working to align and obtain consistency between clinical divisions within AO NA as well as our international counterparts within the AO Foundation.

Speaking of elections, congratulations to Denis Marcellin-Little and thanks to everyone who participated in the electoral process. As our newly elected representative to the AO NA Board of Directors, Denis will take over for Al Ruggles. He will interface with representatives from the other clinical divisions in the overarching role as a member of the Board, and we are grateful for his willingness to take on this responsibility.

In the very near future, there will be a call for nominations to replace me as the chair of AO VET NA. The election will be an open vote and all members in good standing will have an equal voice in the selection of the next chair. Therefore, it is important that each member take the time to familiarize themselves with the nominees' credentials. The job description will be provided shortly and, as you will see, it is a big commitment with regard to the operations of our clinical division, and interfacing with both AO NA executive leadership as well as AO VET International. I would encourage those of you who are interested to consider applying and if you have specific questions regarding the duties, feel free to contact me. The successful nominee will assume the Chair-Elect position immediately and begin their 3-year term as Chair in July 2021.

During my term as Chair, we've faced many challenges. The most daunting of these has been maintaining our best-in-class educational programs in the face of ongoing budget reductions. AO VET NA has fared well, thanks to the support of our sister clinical divisions and the AO NA office, with a special shout-out to Mike Lewis, AO NA's

controller. We have continued to provide best-in-class educational offerings, both in number and quality, that have always characterized AO VET NA. It is our commitment to continue providing these exceptional learning opportunities for our constituents. However, in the next few years, all AO NA clinical divisions will be faced with significant reductions in available funding. We are working through various scenarios as how best to accommodate the upcoming reductions, but we have been assured every effort will be made to maintain our educational programs at their current status. This process will be difficult and require substantial compromises within all of AO NA, but especially difficult for us, since AO VET NA's budget is almost entirely committed to educational programs. Our intent is to preserve our current course offerings through this process, but there is concern that for us to meet our projected shortfall, there could be a direct impact on this aspect of our mission.

Maintaining our educational offerings has been especially difficult this year, not because of the budget, but due to the many restrictions as a consequence of the coronavirus. Not surprisingly, our Education Committee and course chairs stepped up and immediately put together online courses to replace the cancelled Columbus, OH, courses and provide interactive events on a weekly basis that were a resounding success by all measures. Overall attendance was over 5000, with an additional 9600 visits to our YouTube channel. As you know, for the remainder of 2020 and early 2021, all in-person courses have been cancelled. We plan to reconvene face-to-face courses with our flagship courses in Columbus, OH, in April of next year. In the meantime, stay tuned. Our ever-active Education Committee and course chairs are working to provide more online learning opportunities.

As I wrap up, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank Al Ruggles for his years of dedicated service in nearly every leadership capacity that exists within AO VET NA. His most recent contribution as AO VET representative to the AO NA Board of Directors comes to an end soon. Thankfully, he will continue to contribute to the organization through his chairmanship of our equine courses. I want to personally thank him for all he's done to move AO VET NA forward, as well as for the advice he's provided me through my tenure as chair.

Jeff Watkins, DVM, MS, DACVS

# Digital Transformation at AO NA—The launch is here!

By: Josh Block, AO NA, Project Manager



AO North America is hard at work with a new and exciting project! We are undergoing a full digital transformation. But what does this mean, and how will it affect you? A digital transformation is a reimagining of business in the digital age, and that's just what we're doing. We are going through the complex and detailed processes of redesigning our website, drafting new communication and social media strategies, and rethinking our online presence. We've chosen to engage in this project because we

are committed to serving the needs of our surgeons and we want to offer them more of what they told us they want and need.

Our new website will feature enhanced capabilities including a personalized experience for surgeons based on their clinical division and experience level, easy access to information about all AO North America initiatives, and increased integrations with the AO Foundation website.

In March, we began the digital transformation by interviewing 23 surgeons across all clinical divisions and levels of experience. From those interviews, we validated our hypotheses and learned new things about our surgeons' needs.

Now, we're embarking on the bulk of the project! All members of the AO NA staff and countless surgeons from the AO North America community are working together to make this project a reality. For now, watch for changes over the next few months in our marketing behaviors, and stay tuned for our new website which will be launching in October 2020. AO North America is entering the digital age! Our staff and countless surgeons have worked tirelessly throughout the year to prepare AO NA for this exciting moment.

This process began with a thorough examination of our total online presence and included in-depth one-on-one interviews with many

members; AO VET NA had a strong representation. New features of this initiative include a complete website redesign and new communication and social media strategies. With these changes, we hope to better serve the needs of our surgeons and function more efficiently as a complete source for learning about new and ongoing AO NA opportunities for personal and professional growth and development while maintaining the highest standards for educational content. Our website ([aona.org](https://aona.org)) has become a new digital environment complete with all AO North America learning programs as well as increased integration with the AO Foundation website.

AO VET North America now has [its own page on aona.org](https://aona.org)! Scroll through the news carousel to stay up to date on events and activities relevant and of most interest to vets; explore upcoming learning opportunities as they are posted; find information about AO VET NA's preceptorship program; and "Get involved" with a variety of programs related to professional and community growth—the most important resources that AO NA offers are now at your fingertips.

And we are happy to say that the new redesigned website is only the beginning of our digital transformation. Our focus is on creating an online presence that will continue to grow and adapt to fit our surgeons' changing needs. We are addressing this in part through the implementation of new communication and social media strategies that will form the basis for fully integrated and efficient marketing efforts, including an intelligent tagging system to help personalize our messaging, as we seek to leverage the most advanced technology available to reach audiences effectively.

Coinciding with the new website and our digital transformation, AO NA is also launching the new AO logo. You've probably noticed it already throughout this newsletter. AO NA is joining the other AO regional locations in a total conversion to the new design. We are excited to officially launch our new look and that of AO VET NA as well.

Be a part of this digital transformation as you engage with us on social media, check out our new website, and watch for frequent AO NA and AO NA VET updates on a variety of platforms!



# AO VET North America 2021 Education

## In-person courses (tentative)

Date	Activity
April 14, 2021	Equine Principles Online Course—Lab / AO Skills Lab—Face to Face event (Hilton Columbus at Easton Hotel, Columbus, OH)
Date TBA	AO VET NA Course—Principles in Small Animal Fracture Management (Location TBA)
April 15-18, 2021	AO VET NA Course—Advanced Techniques in Small Animal Fracture Management (Hilton Columbus at Easton Hotel, Columbus, OH)
April 15-18, 2021	AO VET NA Course—Advanced Techniques in Equine Fracture Management (Hilton Columbus at Easton Hotel, Columbus, OH)
July 29-30, 2021	AO VET NA Masters Course—Feline Orthopedics (with feline anatomical specimens) (Viticus Center / Oquendo Campus—Lab, Las Vegas, NV)
August 31, 2021, September 1-2, 2021	AO VET NA Course—Operative Treatment of Veterinary Craniomaxillofacial Trauma and Reconstruction (with canine and feline anatomical specimens) (Oquendo Center - Lab / Renaissance Las Vegas Hotel, Las Vegas, NV)
September 22-25, 2021	AO VET NA Course—Principles in Small Animal Fracture Management (Harrah's Las Vegas Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV)
September 22-24, 2021	AO VET NA Master's Course—Surgical Management of Injuries in Canine Sports Medicine with Wet Lab (Viticus Center / Oquendo Campus—Lab; accommodation at Harrah's Las Vegas Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV)

## Webinars

Date	Topic
January 20, 2021	Gunshot Wound Management Moderator: C. Snyder Speakers: S. Kerwin / K. Latham (AO CMF NA)
March 17, 2021	Management of Spine and Cervical Injuries in the Horse Moderator: A. Ruggles Speakers: F. Rossignol (AO VET International—France) and S. Reed
August 18, 2021	MIO in Small Animals Moderator: K. Perry Speaker: L. Dejardin
October 20, 2021	Prevention and Treatment of Complications of Equine Fracture Repair (excluding Infection) Moderator: A. Ruggles or L. Bramlage ● Panel: D. Richardson, J. Gasiorowski

# LEARNING MATTERS

Chitra Subramaniam, PhD—AO NA's Chief Learning Officer



## Pivoting to Online Learning

The COVID-19 situation has challenged us to think innovatively about reaching out to our learners and engaging them in the learning process about which we are all passionate. Many organizations, universities and other education providers are converting to online delivery very quickly. AO North America is no different. I want to share my utmost gratitude and a heartfelt THANK YOU to all the faculty who took the chance and helped establish our online footprint. Questions that I am trying to answer are “Is there going to be a new norm? Is learning going to be different? What is the new normal going to look like? I am sure all of you are probably asking the same

questions. While we wait to see what happens, I wanted to write about something that might be useful to you as you are all involved in teaching online and are virtual faculty.

Researchers have made significant advances in studying the application of cognitive processes to learning (Weinstein, Yana & Madan, Christopher & Sumeracki, Megan. (2018). Teaching the science of learning. Cognitive Research: Principles and Implications). These studies have provided us with several teaching strategies that help to maximize learning efficiency. These strategies are applicable to both face-to-face and online learning. For now, let's think about how they apply to online learning.

**Table 1: Learning strategies to maximize learning efficiency**

Strategy	Description	Application
<b>Spaced practice</b>	Several research studies that support creating a schedule for continuous learning that spreads out over a period. Key concepts delivered with multiple developmental milestones delivered over a period of time. The advantage for memory is greater. Repetitions spaced over time lead to greater retention than the same number of repetitions close together. It promotes deep learning and retention.	Weekly, bi-weekly or monthly recurrence of topics and discussions rather than massing or cramming all together at one time.
<b>Interleaving</b>	Taking ideas and concepts and mixing them up or switching between ideas and changing the sequence or order in which they appear over time.	Present a concept and discuss three different case examples or switch between worked out/solved examples and those that the learner needs to solve in one session. When you summarize or reinforce the concepts, relate and link back to the case study examples in a different sequence from how they were originally presented.
<b>Elaboration</b>	Process of adding features to one's memory. For understanding to happen, new information needs to be connected to pre-existing knowledge. Promotes deep learning.	Elaborative interrogation: small group discussions that highlight the “Why and How” questions and responses. Concrete case studies, examples and sharing of experiences help elaborate a concept and its meaning. Presentation of the same concept and its application in different formats—visuals, video, and other media after it is once shared. Allowing learners to answer questions during an online session, present solutions and self-explain strategies that helped solve the problem or the concept of self-explanation.
<b>Concrete examples</b>	Reinforcing concepts or principles with multiple examples.	Novices, in contrast to experts, focus more on the surface details in examples. Experts can extract underlying problems and stay focused on them. Thus, multiple different representations of the same concept are essential for learners. It is, however, the instructor's role to make the connection explicit for the learners, thus, the need to use the right examples, case studies and challenges for the right group of learners at the right time!
<b>Dual Coding</b>	When text is combined with visuals, our learning is enhanced since text and visuals are processed through separate channels and there are two ways of remembering the information later.	Text descriptions with relevant images. Images with labels that describe different parts of the image. Visual cues on images to focus the learner. Procedural videos (with no audio) with text annotations.
<b>Reinforcement (Retrieval practice)</b>	Bringing information to mind from memory to support long term learning.	Review of what was previous learned; assignments, activities, and tests that help retrieve and apply concepts. Online discussion forums to promote retrieval and application of concepts. Provide feedback.

Note: adapted from Weinstein, Yana et al. Understanding How We Learn: A Visual Guide (Routledge, 2018).

# LEARNING MATTERS

Continued

Chitra Subramaniam, PhD—AO NA's Chief Learning Officer



It's not a lecture online. It's an active learning session online. The packaging of the content to allow for interactions and the effective use of technology to promote some of the above principles and augment the learning is key.

Also, when you are in cyberspace you feel isolated though you are with your learners (in synchronous settings) because you cannot see them. That presents a challenge.

But chats, question-and-answer, group discussions, and opportunities for learners to self-explain, create the interaction needed.

- **Engage with learners**—Sessions need to be dynamic, to encourage interactions, comments and collaboration with co-faculty to drive concepts.
- **Create a supportive environment**—Do your check-ins after every 10 minutes, let the conversation flow well and do not be too prescriptive. Recognize challenges and difficulties and respond to questions with the help of moderators.
- **Use a mix of learning tools**—Make the interaction dynamic; audio, video, tools, additional resources, discussions, and other complementary interactions will help.

- **Provide ongoing feedback**—Response to assignments, coaching sessions, access to experts.
- **Make content mobile**—Bite-size chunks of content easily accessible through different devices that can be easily digested.

Even when learning in the virtual world, it would be important to stay connected to the “Deep Smarts” (Leonard-Barton & Swap, 2004)—those who have built up technical, professional and business expertise through years of experience, which makes them wisely think critically, make swift decisions and effectively problem solve.

Deep Smarts do not just have facts and data that one can access, they have “know-how”, skilled ways of thinking and associated behaviors that consistently lead to success. Learners need to take every opportunity to identify such “Deep Smarts” and pull knowledge from them, be open to mentoring, receiving feedback and reaching out frequently to access the expertise available to them. Expert panels, virtual coaching and mentoring are key to the success of online learning as well.

Food for thought! How do you learn and make yourself an expert? What helps build such Deep Smarts?

**Until our next article!**



# AO VET Masters Course— Joint-related diseases: Old myths, new truths (online participation)

**December 3–6, 2020 • 12:00–15:00 CET**

Online from Davos, Switzerland

**This online course will focus on orthopedic diseases and trauma cases. Top experts in the field will show the evidence and discuss the current state of treatment. Participants will learn the best options to avoid complications, and how to select the best treatment for fractures and soft-tissue injuries.**

- Lectures presenting the state-of-the-art of controversially debated, joint-related topics
- Panel discussions between key opinion leaders
- Demonstrations of arthroscopic techniques
- Small group discussions
- Our online platform will enable you to engage and interact with other course participants, faculty, and the AO VET team
- If you happen to miss an educational activity, you will be able to view on demand it shortly afterwards

Chairpersons: Stefan Scharvogel, Bruno Peirone  
Assistant Chairpersons: Julien Cabassu, Philipp Schmierer

## Learning objectives

Upon completion of this course participants will be able to:

- Recognize evidence and absence of evidence for the treatment options for complex orthopedic diseases
- Select the best treatment option for fractures and soft-tissue injuries
- Select the best solution for bone and joint diseases
- Describe the best way to achieve good outcomes
- Apply strategies to manage complications

## Registration fees

Register today and save up to 20 percent with a special early bird discount!

### Early bird until October 25:

Regular CHF 540

AO VET Member CHF 480

### After October 26:

Regular CHF 600

AO VET Member CHF 540



# Committee reports

## AO VET NA Education Committee



**Jose Garcia-Lopez, VMD, DACVS, DACVSMR**  
**Chair Education**



**Laurent Guiot, DVM, DACVS, DECVS**  
**Chair-Elect Education**

As you all are aware, 2020 has been a very challenging year not only for all of us in North America, but also on a global scale. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the cancellation of all our face to face courses from April through the rest of 2020. However rather than taking the “easy” way out and cancelling our courses, we used this challenge

to test new ways to deliver courses. Thanks to the incredible work by our amazing Course Chairs and Faculty, together by a Herculean effort from our AO NA staff and education group lead by Chitra Subramaniam, we were able to deliver our Small Animal Principles and Advance Courses, as well as our Equine Principles course on a weekly online format. Not only were our courses highly successful, reaching over 6,900 attendees and hundreds of visits to our AO VET NA YouTube Channel, we were also able to do our part in providing world class veterinary orthopedic education to colleagues around the globe from 80 different countries. This is something that all of us as members of the AO VET community should be very proud of as we were able to carry our education mission in the face of some incredible circumstances.

For 2021, as we begin to surface from this global pandemic, we look forward to gradually resuming our face-to-face courses (beginning in April), following the necessary guidelines that will ensure the safety of our participants, staff and faculty. Details for all our courses will be forthcoming so make sure to visit our new website! In 2021 we will use some of the experiences learned while giving our online courses to enhance how we teach and deliver knowledge moving forward. For next year, we will be offering courses in Craniomaxillofacial (CMF) surgery, Feline Orthopedics, Surgical Management of Injuries in Canine Sports Medicine, Limb Alignment and Deformity Correction (Online), Solutions to Difficult Equine Orthopedic Problems (Online), as well as our SA Principles and Advance and our Equine Advanced courses. We are very excited about being able to offer all of these courses and look forward to seeing all of you in person in 2021!

## AO VET NA Preceptorship Committee

AO VET NA has been actively involved in bridging the gap in surgical residents’ exposure between academia and industry. The core value of this program is to add to the confidence of a budding surgeon (an ACVS resident) and the mission is to connect residents in training to the industry. A framework has been created that helps residents (preceptee) in training to select an AO VET NA facility/institution for a term where he/she can develop confidence and autonomy. The program has several sites across the country which host a preceptee for a defined period during which he or she is instructed by a preceptor. The Preceptorship program has a pool of preceptors who are dedicated, knowledgeable AO VET NA surgeons. The preceptors take one to two ACVS registered residents under their wings and teaches them several nuances of their jobs. This program contributes to the development as an autonomous professional, refines surgical and communication skills, values, and behaviors to continue their journey of life-long learning. Several residents have gone through this program and many are on the list for the coming years. All of them have unequivocally mentioned that this program trains the next generation of surgeons and preserve AO VET NA’s rich traditions of training and educating one another to the highest level of the gold standard of surgical care. AO VET NA looks forward to assisting future preceptees.

### Preceptorship Participants

- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Callie Blackford  | 6. Raz Peress        |
| 2. Emily Pearce      | 7. Sarah Holman      |
| 3. Jannah Pye        | 8. Caroline Constant |
| 4. Lauren Richardson | 9. Tiffany Kimbrell  |
| 5. Lea Mehrkens      |                      |

**Shanti Jha, DVM, MS, DACVS**  
**Chair Preceptorship**



### Testimonial from Dr. Pye

“ I spent two weeks at Mid-Atlantic Equine Center working with Dr. Janik Gasiorowski, as arranged through the AO VET North America Preceptorship Program. I learned a huge amount and gained valuable experience in approaching equine surgical orthopedic cases. Dr. Gasiorowski’s caseload comprises a large number of high-value racing and sport horses, and it was great to see the variability in common presenting orthopedic conditions between breeds and disciplines. Dr. Gasiorowski is a great teacher, very willing to answer questions, and partake in discussion regarding any cases I was involved in. The team at Mid-Atlantic was friendly, inclusive, and efficient. I am very grateful to AO VET North America for affording me this opportunity and would highly recommend the preceptorship program to other equine surgery residents.

”

# Committee reports

## AO VET NA Community Development Committee



**Janik Gasiorowski,  
VMD, DACVS  
Chair Community  
Development**

The community development committee (CDC) is dedicated to raising awareness of the AO, outside our membership and within our own ranks. We work with the larger AO CDC at the international level but are also in touch with the CDCs of the other clinical divisions in North America. The AO VET NA CDC has a highly capable and enthusiastic support from the staff at the AO NA headquarters in Wayne, PA.

Rebranding is underway. Change is never pain free but the fresh and unified look to be released formally this month was a necessary overhaul. From the logo and color palate to the photos and videos we use in our education and marketing materials, everything is now optimized for digital use. Synchronizing the websites of the various regions and clinical divisions with the parent Foundation website offers a much cleaner experience to the user. Content is better organized, and the flow is seamless.

**Digital transformation:** This goes beyond the rebranding. The main focus was the migration of the AO NA website to the new AO Sitecore platform. That platform will offer new dynamic capabilities to anticipate user needs in an effort to be more relevant to each user and drive their engagement with AO NA. Several of these enhancements, including personalization, social media strategies, and new communications, will continue to evolve as the changes are implemented, greatly improving the total web experience. All existing digital material has been formatted for online use, and our mobile websites have been optimized for use on handheld devices. The horse, dog and cat versions of the AO Surgery Reference are complete and are accessible to members online and on handheld devices. Separate but intimately associated with the digital transformation, the Education Committee is studying digital delivery of education and how to assess its efficacy in efforts to revolutionize the pedagogy of surgical education.

**ACVS & VOS:** We sponsor events at both of these meetings. This encourages networking amongst existing members and showcases AO VET to non-members. This year's focus is on creation of a digital presence, from marketing and membership materials on the Virtual Marketplace to online continuation of the Mark Bloomberg award at VOS and the OneAO award at the resident's forum at ACVS. We look very much forward to reinstatement of face-to-face events as they bring new and old friends together and are highlights of these conferences.

**Student Initiative:** Developed by Al Ruggles and the CDC in 2014 this initiative involves AO VET faculty members giving lunch-talk type presentations in 4-6 veterinary schools each year. The AO is often overlooked and underutilized at the student level, so this program was developed to drive exposure to the next generation of learners.

The CDC is a great place to begin or further your engagement within the organization. Whether you are AO faculty capable of giving a student lecture, someone who knows how to drive engagement in a particular social media sphere, or just looking to get involved, reach out, we'd love to get you onboard!

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## AO VET NA Research Committee



**Denis Marcellin-  
Little, DEDV, DACVS,  
DACVSMR  
Chair Research**

AO VET NA has a mission to promote, support, and oversee ethical research that enhances the management of clinical problems affecting animals. Projects may focus on the development or evaluation of novel implants that enhance fracture repair. AO VET NA collaborates with other parts of the world to fulfill its research mission.

This year, the international AO VET International research and development commission had made \$30,000 available to fund one \$7,500 grant in each of four world regions.

The international AO VET R&D commission also promotes collaborative grants with the AO Research Institute and AO's Innovation and Translation Center in Davos, Switzerland. AO VET also supports the AO Program for Education and Excellence in Research (AO PEER), a course focused on teaching the principle of research to young clinician scientists. The first North American AO PEER course was taught in October 2019.

The course was hosted by Tufts University in North Grafton, MA. More AO PEER courses are planned in North America. AO VET NA is looking forward to continuing its support of research and research education.

# Harnessing The Potential of Social Media

By: Karen L. Perry BVM&S CertSAS DipECVS  
MSc Vet Ed FHEA MRCVS, Associate Professor in  
Small Animal Orthopedics, Michigan State University



AO North America is poised for growth. We are exploring new educational methods, inflating brand awareness, expanding our community and increasing diversity. When so many changes are being made simultaneously, it is important to maintain a unified voice that drives results in all these areas.

Social media will play an integral role in this respect. Social media is not a linear transfer of information or opinion. It breaks down barriers between a foundation and a human being or potential member. It puts a human face on an organization and allows its members to become an extension of the brand.

By embracing a tactical social media strategy, we have the potential to increase brand affinity, improve outreach, continue provision of our online resources and increase usage of these, create a vibrant online social community and become the exemplar for postgraduate education.

Social media are dynamic and interactive computer-mediated communication tools that have high penetration rates in the general population in high-income and middle-income countries. However, in medicine and health care, many stakeholders remain unaware of social media's relevance and potential applications in their day-to-day activities. The ubiquitous nature of social media is undeniable and social media sites and applications have found their way into the toolboxes of medical students, residents, physicians and medical educators across the globe. Given this, harnessing social media's potential to enhance the objectives of AO NA is a logical step in our evolution.



There currently exists a rich and diverse ecology of social media sites, which vary in terms of their scope and functionality. Social networking sites help organizations connect online and share information and ideas; media sharing sites are invaluable for increasing brand awareness and audience engagement; discussion forums are excellent resources for market research while bookmarking and content curation networks may be used to drive website traffic.

Whether they are being used for marketing, to connect with people or for education, different technologies have a variety of advantages and disadvantages when used for distinct purposes and in diverse settings. It will therefore be critical for AO NA, and each clinical specialty, to be present across all platforms and to use the appropriate platform for the objective.

In order to create, and nurture, an engaged community across all social media platforms, an AO NA communication and social media taskforce has been formed with representation from all clinical divisions.

- Dr. Karen Perry (Chair)
- Dr. Michael Sirkin (Co-Chair)
- Dr. Eben Carroll (AO Trauma NA representative)
- Dr. Emily Keener (AO Trauma NA representative)
- Dr. Kati Glass (AO VET NA representative)
- Dr. Brandon Lawrence (AO Spine NA representative)
- Dr. Oswaldo Henriquez (AO CMF NA representative)

The overall charge to this taskforce is to serve as a resource for the adoption and implementation of the new communication and social media strategies. The members will review the social media strategy to ensure that it meets the needs and expectations of their respective clinical divisions, co-ordinate activity across the different clinical divisions, drive the social media strategy and act as liaisons with their respective community development committees and the AO NA board.

There will be many exciting developments to look out for in the coming months from this taskforce. We plan to create content that will drive engagement from our core audience, build community, emphasize what AO NA stands for and reflect what our audience cares about. We hope to engage many AO NA members in our quest to develop this content, as we consider that the best way to educate, inspire and excite our community members lies with the AO faculty. We need to showcase their expertise, their skill set and the AO NA values in every touch point and in the way we communicate. Development of each faculty member as a personal brand, with each contributing to the overall brand of AO NA, will create exponential growth, making AO NA so much more than the sum of its parts. After all, the best way of driving connections, particularly with younger people, is peer-to-peer connectivity rather than institution to delegate. Younger people do not engage with institutions or brands, they engage with something that provides them with meaning, and it is people that give people reasons to believe.

# Diversity: Employee DEI Update

By: Andrea Mower, Chief Human Resources  
Officer AO North America



In June, the AO Foundation launched the Foundation Board approved Access, which establishes the diversity, inclusion, and mentorship initiative firmly within the AO. Their Diversity statement, below, has been adopted by AO North America.

## **AO Foundation Diversity Statement:**

The AO is an international network of surgeons specializing in the treatment of trauma and musculoskeletal disorders. The AO recognizes that a diverse and inclusive community of surgeons, operating room personnel, health care professionals, and researchers is of paramount importance in its mission of promoting excellence in patient care and outcomes. The AO will focus on recruiting staff, faculty, and leaders that represent the cornerstone of this diverse, global, network. The AO is committed to cultivating diverse leaders who are passionate about advancing its mission and enhancing its position as a world leader in education, research, innovation, and clinical practice.

AO NA is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion. At the employee level our first steps included the formation of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee and an employee policy.

There are the typical policies that one can find in any employee handbook. The Diversity policy goes above and beyond those stagnant policies. Highlights of the Diversity policy below:

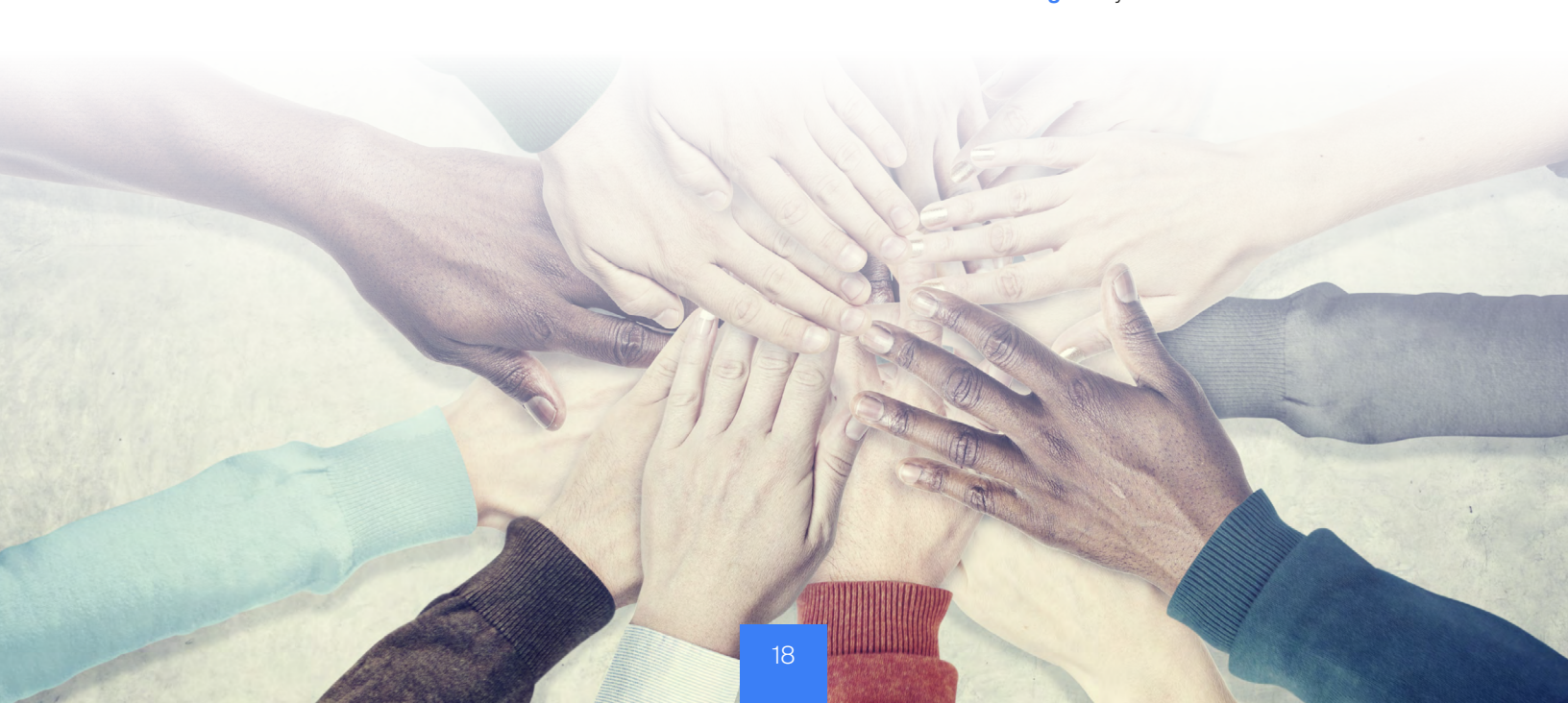
This philosophy is built on the premise of gender and diversity equity that encourages and enforces:

- Respectful communication and cooperation between all employees
- Teamwork and employee participation, permitting the representation of all groups and employee perspectives
- Work/life balance through flexible work schedules to accommodate employees' varying needs
- Employer and employee contributions to the communities we serve to promote a greater understanding and respect for the diversity

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee had its' kick-off meeting in September. An overwhelming number of employees volunteered. We needed to limit the number of participants to roughly one third of the staff and we needed to have an uneven amount for tie breakers for matters which will require a vote. For the first year the chair will be Andrea Mower and the co-chair will be James Morgante, Manager of Measurement and Evaluation. We will "elect" a recording Secretary and establish the bylaws. We envision a rotating committee and elections for the chair and co-chair moving forward. We also welcome input from non-committee members.

The kick-off meeting will be somewhat informal as we want to introduce a safe environment. Every opinion and idea need to be heard. We are going to talk about very sensitive topics. The pre-meeting assignment for the the team is to bring with them a perception people have about them, and to also share something about themselves that no one knows. The information we share about ourselves will help us bond. Then we will get into the typical forming, storming, and norming that needs to take place on a committee before the performing can really begin.

Encouraging and supporting a culture of diversity (a mix of minds, backgrounds, and experiences) will make AO NA an even better organization! Our committee welcomes feedback and ideas. Please reach out to me at [mower.andrea@aona.org](mailto:mower.andrea@aona.org) at any time.



**Save the date!**



**One AO 2021**  
A Virtual Meeting



**Theme: Innovation**  
**Saturday, February 13, 2021**



Your **voice**  
is **important**

**We want to  
hear from you!**

What would you like to see in this newsletter?  
Would you like to write an article?

Send an email request to:  
**mcclimon.andrea@aona.org**

## In the Summer 2021 Issue...

- Continuing with our Digital Transformation
- Changes in education
- What's happening with courses and face-to-face events?
- Updates from Davos 2020 and Columbus 2021

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