

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Robert Kessler, DO, FAAO

Why I Became an FAAO and Why You Should As Well

One day, 3 years from my planned retirement, I found myself thinking; Why should I study when I have so little time left in my career? When I heard that cross my mind, I recognized it as a dangerous thought. I needed a way to motivate myself to continue along the path of lifelong learning. I needed a mountain to climb. The work of becoming an FAAO was my mountain, and climbing it would keep me moving forward.

The process is in itself educational. I can tell you that after 42 years of practice, the FAAO process made me a better osteopath. My project was really a description of a treatment program I had been using for 25 years. But after my FAAO process, I learned to use that program in better ways. Even after earning my FAAO, while writing the traditional 5-minute summary of my project, my view of osteopathy grew.

Of course, each of us is different, so your goals and desires are all unique. But there are many things we also have in common. We are all in the middle of a difficult time. Many of us feel our life has been on hold. Having a positive goal, your own mountain to climb, can be your reboot button.

For those of you in academia, or who would like to be, becoming an FAAO is an important recognition. As the former chair of my college's Rank and Promotion Committee, I can tell you that it is looked upon very favorably in an application for promotion. For those who are planning on moving between institutions, it would be equally important. Earning an FAAO is being recognized by your peers as having reached mastery in OMM and OMT. Beyond the great honor, this recognition will expand your referral base and your job opportunities.

Becoming an FAAO is not just an academic achievement. It is joining a fellowship in the broadest sense of the word. It is a fellowship of people who are passionate about osteopathy and the osteopathic profession. People who get how you think. And of course, there is the pure joy of marching behind bagpipes.

The process of becoming an FAAO has been revised. Though collegial, the process is still not easy, but if it was, it wouldn't be a mountain worthy of climbing. The Committee on Fellowship in the AAO members will be there to help you. We look forward to learning from and about you. We look forward to your fellowship. ■

Editor's Note

This letter to the editor was written by and represents the opinion of the author. Opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint or official policy of the American Academy of Osteopathy.

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