



The Diplomat

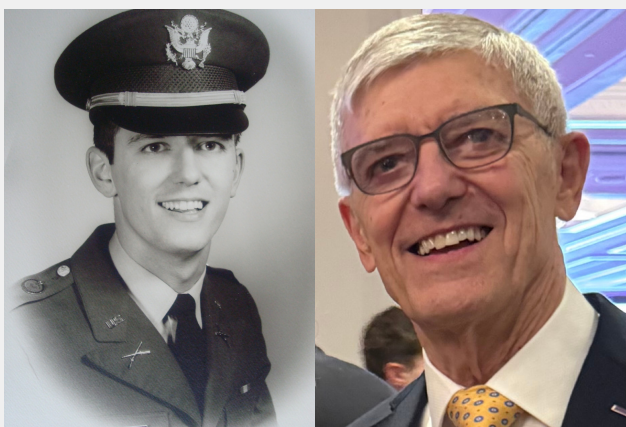
American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

FALL 2026



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Message from the Immediate Past President



Nearly two decades ago, I was given the remarkable opportunity to begin serving the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery as a newly appointed member of the Oral Certifying Examination Committee. As I now conclude my tenure on the Board as Immediate Past President, I find myself experiencing the same two emotions that have accompanied many of the most meaningful moments of my professional life: gratitude and reflection.

I am profoundly grateful to have been recognized, nominated and elected by my peers to serve this organization. There are few greater professional honors than to be entrusted by one's colleagues with the responsibility of helping safeguard the standards of our specialty. I have never viewed that responsibility as a title or position, but rather as an obligation of service—to our Diplomates, our candidates, our patients, and ultimately to the future of oral and maxillofacial surgery.

Over these many years, I have had the privilege of witnessing remarkable change within ABOMS. Perhaps the accomplishment of which I am most proud was helping shepherd the development and initiation of our Certification Maintenance program. We sought to develop a process that moved beyond episodic recertification and instead embraced continuous professional development, the integration of contemporary surgical practice techniques and lifelong learning into the cycle of recertification. Importantly, we were committed to providing this program to our Diplomates without additional cost. Certification should represent an enduring professional relationship between the surgeon and the Board—not simply an examination completed at periodic intervals throughout one's career.

That philosophy reflects what I believe ABOMS represents at its best: maintaining rigorous standards while simultaneously supporting the surgeons who have committed themselves to meeting those standards.

None of these accomplishments belongs to one individual. Throughout my service, I have been surrounded by extraordinary Directors, Examination Committee members, Item Writers, ABOMS Staff, volunteers, and colleagues who have given generously of their time and talents. I have learned from each of you. We have debated, challenged assumptions, occasionally disagreed, and ultimately moved forward because of a shared commitment to something greater than ourselves. I also must sincerely thank my family for the countless accommodations and support they gave me over the years to pursue this endeavor.

Message from the Immediate Past President

I also leave with tremendous confidence in the future of ABOMS. Organizations endure not because of the individuals who temporarily occupy positions of leadership, but because each generation accepts the responsibility to leave the institution stronger than they found it. Our Board must continue to innovate, embrace advances in education and assessment, and ensure that board certification remains meaningful to our Diplomates, our profession, and the public we serve.

As we look toward that future, I would offer one final challenge to our Diplomates and to those who will lead our specialty: we must remain fully integrated within the greater healthcare community. Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery has earned its place as an essential surgical specialty through generations of practitioners willing to care for patients across the entire breadth of our scope. We must resist the temptation to define ourselves more narrowly. Maintaining hospital privileges, participating in hospital-based care and remaining active members of the multidisciplinary healthcare team are not simply vestiges of our past—they are essential to protecting the relevance, identity, and future of our specialty. Our scope will ultimately be defined not only by what we are trained and credentialed to do, but by what we remain willing to do for our patients and our communities.

These nearly twenty years of service to ABOMS has represented one of the greatest privileges of my professional career. I leave proud of what we accomplished together, humbled by the trust placed in me, and deeply appreciative of the friendships and relationships developed along the way.

Most importantly, I leave with gratitude—to those who came before us, to those with whom I had the privilege to serve, and to those who will now carry this responsibility forward.

Leadership is temporary. Service is enduring.

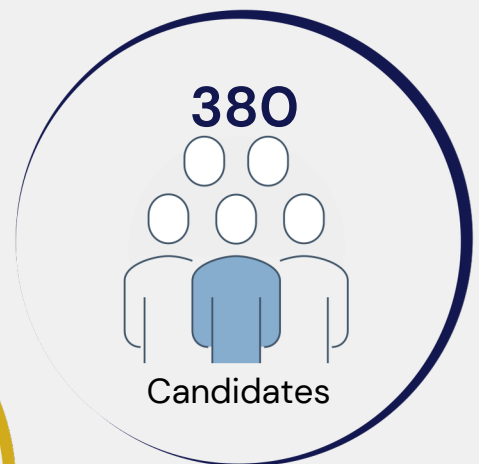
Thank you for allowing me the extraordinary privilege of serving you and our specialty.

In service,



David B. Powers, DMD, MD, FACS, FRCS (Ed)
Immediate Past President
American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

Community Overview



In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that we share the news of the passing of two esteemed past presidents of the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Dr. Robert Bruce MacIntosh and Dr. Mark E. K. Wong.



Robert Bruce MacIntosh, DDS

ABOMS President 1998–1999

Dr. MacIntosh spent more than six decades in the specialty. He pioneered and taught new ways of treating some of the most complex conditions. He also published extensively in textbooks and journals well into his eighties, and carried his expertise to hospitals, universities and operating rooms around the world.

[Click here](#) to read more about Dr. MacIntosh.

Mark E.K. Wong, DDS

ABOMS President 2010–2011

Dr. Wong directed the residency training program at UTHealth Houston from 1996 through April 2025 and was one of the most respected leaders in oral and maxillofacial surgery. He served in countless leadership roles, notably as President of the American Academy of Craniomaxillofacial Surgeons, the International Board for the Certification of Specialists in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, and the Osteo Science Foundation.



[Click here](#) to read more about Dr. Wong.

The Value Proposition of Board Certification



Originally Published in JOMS by Dr. Joseph Cillo

The internet is a vast landscape that allows anyone with an electronic device and internet connection to express their opinions. While this can be a good thing, not everything one reads may be pleasing or agreeable. Recently I read a Reddit post that boldly exclaimed that “Board Certification for ER docs is a scam”.¹ Although not an ER physician myself, I have been part of and a strong supporter of the examination process of the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (ABOMS).

I found this title provocative and felt compelled to pursue it, lest its aspersions reflect negatively upon our specialty. Among the author’s diatribes and arguments against board certification, they concluded that “it simply serves as another hurdle for us to jump just because they can make the hurdle. But that doesn’t mean we should continue to support some worthless exam just because it’s how it’s been done in the past. What a waste of time and money.”¹ Similar concerns in oral and maxillofacial surgery (OMS) are not new, with similar sentiments having been expressed decades ago that the board certification process was “.... inconvenient and expensive....”² This has not changed significantly in recent times as some have considered that the board certification process “.... can be so time consuming, expensive, and for lack of a better term, grueling.”³

Planting the seed that board certification, in general, and the ABOMS process, in particular, is a waste of time and money may grow, if left unattended, into a weed that stifles and robs valuable resources from flowering potential. Current ABOMS-eligible candidates have many challenges ahead of them, both professional and private. Mounting student debt and family concerns coupled with decreased reimbursement and time inconvenience of hospital-based procedures may steer some from the process of board certification to lucrative office-based careers where board certification might not be required or even desired.

It is true that the board certification process is time consuming, can be expensive, and, yes, it can be grueling. However, to paraphrase Theodore Roosevelt, “nothing worth doing comes easy.”⁴ Research has shown that failure to obtain board certification was associated with a higher rate of medical malpractice payments, linking board certification to potential indicators for patient outcomes and practice quality.⁵

We do the things that are hard because they are worth doing and culminate in valuable results. Thus, board certification is a worthy value proposition that solidifies the message of our talents to our community and patients.

The Value Proposition of Board Certification

Underlying the value proposition of OMS board certification is a promise to our patients that, as opposed to similar options from providers who offer comparable procedures, our services are benchmarked to the highest standards of quality and skill. Board certification in OMS is a process that demonstrates a high level of expertise and provides a variety of benefits to both our patients and us. It can instill confidence in our patients that, as professionals, we have undergone rigorous peer assessments and have followed the principles and ethical standards established by our specialty board. When we look at ourselves as professionals, board certification and maintenance can help identify knowledge gaps and refocus our learning while providing the tools to help make informed clinical decisions.

The path and history of our hard work in board certification and maintenance has helped, in no small part, make the specialty of OMS into the entity that it is: a specialty that is respected and trusted for its commitment to continuous self-improvement and unceasing enhancement in quality patient care and safety. I continue to encourage those who may have veered from the path of board certification to reconsider and those in the process of obtaining or maintaining board certification to continue the hard path. The value proposition that board certification demonstrates a high level of expertise and commitment to quality care is one that is worth achieving. Worthy enough, at least, for an internet post.

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The Value Proposition of Board Certification



More About Dr. Cillo

Joseph E. Cillo Jr., DMD, MPH, PhD, FACS

Dr. Cillo was drawn to oral and maxillofacial surgery because of the profound difference the specialty can make in patients' lives. From orthognathic and sleep apnea surgery to maxillofacial trauma, reconstruction, and tumor surgery, the breadth of the specialty offers countless opportunities to restore function, improve quality of life, and help patients and their families move forward. For Dr. Cillo, there is no greater reward than seeing a successful surgical outcome and knowing it has made a lasting difference in a patient's life.

Elected to the ABOMS Board of Directors in 2024, Dr. Cillo was inspired to serve by a mentor and teacher who had previously held a position on the Board. The positive example of that mentor during his formative years shaped Dr. Cillo's own commitment to giving back. Today, he is proud to extend that service beyond his patients to support the Candidates and Diplomates who make up the ABOMS community.



Certification Maintenance Update

New This Year: Annual Registration Opens Early

Beginning this year, 2027 annual registration will open in **October** and will be due **December 31, 2026**, aligning its deadline with all other ABOMS Certification Maintenance requirements.

This means that you can pay your 2027 annual dues, respond to credentialing questions, and complete your online learning modules by the same December 31 deadline.

2027 annual registration opens in October to renew for next year. Don't wait until the end of the year! Complete your registration early and stay on track with ABOMS Certification Maintenance.

One Deadline for All Your Annual Requirements!



Diplomates Making a Difference



Richard Lee, DDS

A Career Dedicated to Service of His Country and Patients

ABOMS Diplomate and former member of the Examination Committee Dr. Richard Lee served as a First Lieutenant in Vietnam before he was a surgeon. He was highly decorated, including awards such as two Purple Hearts and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm. His years serving in the military helped guide him to his career in oral and maxillofacial surgery through a series of chance meetings.

Dr. Lee's passion for the specialty began in high school when he participated in a local mentorship program with a local oral and maxillofacial surgeon. He had the opportunity to observe several surgeries which ignited a lifelong passion.

During his military service in Vietnam, Dr. Lee was wounded on a dangerous mission to rescue a stranded platoon. While recovering on the hospital ship USS Sanctuary in the South China Sea, Dr. Lee often thought about what his career and what life would look like after his service. Remembering his passion for OMS from his high school mentorship program, Dr. Lee discussed the logistics and realities of a future career in the specialty, a conversation that happened to be with an oral and maxillofacial surgeon. Following that conversation, he took the Dental Administration Test while still in Vietnam, and with his wife's help, navigated the application process from the other side of the world.

Dr. Lee completed his training at Loyola University's Chicago School of Dentistry. He went on to complete a 40-year career in oral and maxillofacial surgery in Findlay, Ohio.



Outside of his practice, Dr. Lee also enjoyed volunteerism including roles in civic and service organizations such as serving as a delegate for AAOMS, participating in ABOMS exams as a member of the Examination Committee, and serving on hospital committees. He also enjoyed the opportunity to serve as President of both the Ohio Society of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons and the Great Lakes Society of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons.

Dr. Lee's journey to oral and maxillofacial surgery was a unique experience of chance encounters from his high school mentorship program to a life changing conversation during his recovery aboard the USS Sanctuary. These remain defining moments in a life and career dedicated to service of his country and his patients.

Recently Retired Diplomates

Congratulations on Retirement!

ABOMS extends our sincere congratulations to the following Diplomates who retired this year. We also want to express our deep appreciation for their years of dedication, service, and contributions to the oral and maxillofacial specialty.

Dr. Timothy Atkinson in Mountain Top, PA
Dr. James Baker in Oklahoma City, OK
Dr. Mark Bennett in Roseburg, OR
Dr. J Boyd in Morristown, TN
Dr. Amy Brooks in Morganton, NC
Dr. Norman Cavanagh in Glastonbury, CT
Dr. Garey Chayra in Austin, TX
Dr. Chris Choukas in Barrington, IL
Dr. James Christian in Memphis, TN
Dr. James Coleman in Universal City, TX
Dr. Philip Conforti in Hamden, CT
Dr. David Dattilo in Pittsburgh, PA
Dr. I E Davis in Lexington, SC
Dr. Frank Falcone Jr. in Rehoboth, DE
Dr. Lawrence Falender in Carmel, IN
Dr. Trent Filler in Horseshoe Bay, TX
Dr. Brent Garrison in Fishers, IN
Dr. John Hackenberger in Grosse Pointe Park, MI
Dr. Michael Hoffman in Stow, OH
Dr. Anthony Immediata in Raleigh, NC
Dr. Paul Iverson in Fargo, ND
Dr. Mark Knibbe in Florence, KY
Dr. Gary Koehl in San Antonio, TX
Dr. Bernard Krupp in Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Dr. David Kung in Chevy Chase, MD
Dr. Joyce Lee in Atlanta, GA
Dr. Hal Levine in Orlando, FL

Dr. Steven Levy in Atlanta, GA
Dr. Chawket Mannai in Bayonne, NJ
Dr. E. Steven Moriconi in Pittsburgh, PA
Dr. David Moyer in Poland, ME
Dr. Syamak Nasser in Potomac, MD
Dr. William Nelson in DePere, WI
Dr. Carl Peoples in Winston Salem, NC
Dr. Jay Schulhof in Pittsburgh, PA
Dr. Alan Schwimmer in Piermont, NY
Dr. David Seago in Jackson, MS
Dr. Scott Searcey in Okc, OK
Dr. Andrew Slavin in West Palm Beach, FL
Dr. Harvey Wank in Malvern, PA
Dr. Donald Woehling in Delavan, WI
Dr. Terry Wood in Visalia, CA
Dr. Duncan Puffer in Hermantown, MN
Dr. James Strauss in Stuart, FL
Dr. Godfrey Funari in Glen Mills, PA
Dr. Lee M Whitesides in Greensboro, GA
Dr. Bryan Bailey in Amarillo, TX
Dr. Mark Johnson in New Bern, NC
Dr. Paul Cullum in Columbia, TN
Dr. John Kelly in Charlotte, NC
Dr. Amy Field in Hollis, NH
Dr. Joseph Arnone in Little Elm, TX
Dr. John Bozich in Portland, OR

Have you recently retired?

Please contact the ABOMS office so we can update your status to **retired**. This status honors your distinguished career and lasting impact on both your patients and the specialty as a whole.

 312.642.0070  info@aboms.org

Upcoming Events & Deadlines

ABOMS OCE Applications

June 10 – September 23, 2026

ABOMS Exam Committee Applications

August 11– October 8, 2026

AAOMS Annual Meeting

September 28 – October 3, 2026 in Seattle, WA

ABOMS Certification Maintenance and 2027 Annual Registration Deadline

December 31, 2026