



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The Responsibility of Torch Bearing



It is a time-honored Olympic tradition: passing the torch around the world from one runner to another, until it reaches the Olympic venue and lights the Olympic flame that burns for the duration of the games.

It is a real privilege to carry the torch, and only a select few can be chosen for the honor. Each runner has a few simple tasks: run a few miles with the torch, try not to stumble, avoid the occasional protestor eager to ruin your three miles of glory, and keep the flame lit. These tasks end with the ultimate responsibility of an Olympic torch bearer: Pass the darn torch!

It wouldn't be quite as special if one guy, in all his glory, ran around the world by himself to light the flame. Everyone would get tired of seeing him, and he probably wouldn't make it around the globe in time for the games to begin.

The obvious lesson in all this: Leadership and representation work better when they are passed on. Leadership is a relay, not a solo sprint. When you have been given the privilege to carry the torch, you also carry an obligation to ensure it is passed on.

Passing the torch, however, is not without risk. There is much unknown, a period of uncertainty, perhaps even a change in course. This can generate a great deal of anxiety.

For organizations like UCAOA, managing successful leadership transition requires a refocusing of core values, a re-statement of mission, and a recommitment to those the association serves. It is vitally important to effectively communicate the transition, and provide overlap through the initial phases. The UCAOA Board of Directors is deeply committed to effective leadership transition on behalf of its members. The governance process and transmission management are in place to ensure years of effective representation.

With that said, it is an honor to introduce to you UCAOA's President-Elect, Dr. Donald F. Dillahunty. Dr. Dillahunty is the chief executive officer/president of PrimaCare Medical Centers, which is headquartered in Dallas, TX and one of the largest urgent care providers in the Dallas metro area. Dr. Dillahunty is board certified in Family Practice, with an added qualification in Occupational Medicine. He is additionally certified as a Physician Executive by the Certifying Commission of Medical Management, and completed the medical mini-MBA program through the University of Texas at Arlington.

Don has served as a member of the UCAOA Board of Directors, and currently chairs the organization's Quality Committee. He brings substantial experience in organizational management and healthcare policy to UCAOA's leadership team, and will lend much-needed expertise to this critical phase of the organization's growth. Complex challenges lie ahead, and I am confident that Dr. Dillahunty is the perfect choice to be our guide.

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It has been a genuine privilege to serve as president of UCAOA over the last two years. I am extremely proud of the exceptional work this group has accomplished in such a short period of time. We have made tremendous strides in establishing and legitimizing urgent care medicine as a discipline and as an integral piece of the healthcare delivery fabric. I am confident that all of our achievements were made possible through a singular focus on the group. With an emphasis on representative governance, the interests of "all" have superseded the interests of any one individual. This approach has catapulted the organization to great heights and, hopefully, an eternal flame.

The official "passing of the torch" begins at UCAOA's April convention in Las Vegas. Please join us as we mark this important milestone in the organization's history. ■

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