

# Executive Director's Report: Cheers to 75 Years



**Beth Embry / Executive Director**

Cheers to 75 Years! It is exciting to celebrate our Diamond Anniversary and hard to believe I have been your executive director for 24 of those years. I value your membership, as I realize you have many options and commitments. I hope you find value in your membership. Your MAFF leadership and staff are committed to improving your association by helping you succeed professionally and personally. This December, the MAFF Board will meet to review current goals and reflect, reassess, and revamp our strategies for the next three years.

If I may, I will highlight the five areas of our current strategic plan and share with you the work that is being done. Many of the articles and photos throughout the journal will focus on these five pillars as we use them to create board agendas, the MAFF website, staff direction, and as stated, *The Mississippi Family Physician*.

## ADVOCACY

**Goal: Serve as the unified voice of family physicians and their patients.**

You are well represented at the Capitol by our effective lobbyist, Hope Ladner with The Clay Firm. During the session, Hope meets weekly with the MAFF Advocacy Committee whose focus is to review legislation during the session. The committee fights on your behalf to promote legislative and regulatory policies that protect the practice of family medicine and increase the primary care workforce. This committee also meets with

regulatory boards, statewide leaders, and legislators to advance family medicine.

Members of this committee work to reduce the administrative burden by submitting resolutions to the AAFP and AMA, through the MSMA House of Delegates, as well as directly advocating by meeting with the insurance commissioner and insurance companies.

In 2018, your MAFF created a PAC to increase awareness of family medicine by supporting candidates who support family medicine. During its initial stages, we set and met a goal of raising \$25,000. This year, for our 75th anniversary, our goal is to have 75 members join. I ask every member to join at whatever level you can. Page 22 of this journal lists our members to date and how you can join the FamDocPAC. The FamDocPAC has helped establish relationships as our members personally hand-deliver contributions to legislators during election years, and we are invited to key fundraisers for legislative candidates.

We maintain our visibility with legislators by being at the Capitol every February for Primary Care Day and volunteering to be Doctor of the Day. Our Capitol Day is successful because our members show up! Please mark your calendars for February 4, 2025, and be a part of the voice of family medicine. We will be ready with contact information, a message, and a gift for your legislator.

The family medicine perspective is shared as we have members serving on boards or committees for MSMA, MOMA, Department of Health, Medicaid, MS Board of Medical Licensure, Office of Physician Workforce, and MS Rural Physicians Scholars Program to name a few. Our biggest honor recently is having Dr. Brent Smith from Cleveland elected to the AAFP Board.

## WORKFORCE

**Goal: Expand the family physician workforce to meet patient and community needs.**

To help sustain our fast-growing residencies, we have created a network for the residency coordinators to share resources. The MAFF Foundation hosts this exceptional group at least twice a year at a MAFF meeting to share ideas and challenges, and to just simply offer support.

To develop our relationship with each residency, the MAFF visits each campus every year sharing information about events and educating on tobacco cessation.

The MAFF Spring Fling is held every April to engage students and residents by offering topics sometimes not offered in medical school or residency, and provides an opportunity to run for the Academy and Foundation boards. Our student Academy Ambassador program is one of my favorite programs, as it has successfully recruited many students to family medicine. All we have to do is introduce them to our family of family doctors and they are sold!

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Goal: Provide education to enhance patient care, train physician leaders, and develop faculty and mentors for students/residents.**

Your MAFF is unique, as we offer three opportunities throughout the year to earn quality CME and connect with other family physicians. The spring conference is traditionally in the Jackson area and includes a track for residents and students. Our summer meeting in Destin every July is thoughtfully planned to balance clinical education with ample time for fun for your family. Our fall conference rotates sites and offers a weekend of unbeatable CME. Our dates are listed at the end of this article. Please mark

your calendars and be a part of one or all our events.

### PUBLIC AWARENESS

**Goal: Improve public awareness of the role and value of family physicians.**

The MAFP works hard to keep members connected and informed, as communication is a priority. Our bimonthly membership newsletter, quarterly FutureDOX newsletter (for resident and student members), meeting app, and our social media platforms help deliver up-to-date news. Please follow and engage with us on Instagram and Facebook—especially on our private Facebook page, Family Medicine Strong. Highlighting a member weekly who shares why he or she belongs to MAFP is helping us build a community of awareness of our specialty.

My apologies for the unpunctuality of this journal, as it is another one of my favorite things the MAFP does, but change of staff and the time commitment put us in an unfavorable position. I am happy to share that your

current MAFP team is top-notch and committed to making MAFP stronger. I know you will see the dedication after reading this issue.

The branding of MAFP is a priority, and we love seeing members, family, and our exhibitors wear MAFP shirts, jackets, and sweatshirts. Our sweatshirts are a very popular item, as I have seen them appear in senior portraits, award ceremonies, and family Christmas cards!

This summer we recognized our 2024 Academy Award Honorees whose accomplishments and dedication exemplify the highest standards of family medicine. Help me congratulate these winners found on pages 36–47.

### ACADEMY

**Goal: Ensure a sustainable, engaged, and organized organization.**

As of today, our membership is a total of 1,270 with 578 Active, 116 Life, 171 Residents, and 405 Student members. AAFP reports that MAFP

has one of the higher market shares at 88.2%. Our active retention rate is 92.9%, new physician retention rate is 86.2% with a resident to active conversion rate of 75%.

The MAFP and Foundation own a beautiful building in Ridgeland, and I invite you to stop by any time for a visit. We love hosting students to test, committee meetings, and Board meetings at our headquarters.

Our staff is currently working on a member recruitment campaign, and I invite you to ask your partners and classmates to join our family and keep family medicine strong in Mississippi.



Support family medicine by getting a Live Healthy tag for your car! From each purchase, \$24 goes to the MAFP Foundation. Ask for it at your local tax collector's office.

# SAVE THE DATE

**PRIMARY CARE DAY**  
*at the Capitol*  
**02.04.25**

**ANNUAL**  
*Scientific*  
**ASSEMBLY** **2025**  
**JULY 19-23 | SANDESTIN, FL**

**MAFP SPRING**  
**CONFERENCE**  
**April 11 - 13, 2025**

**MAFP FALL**  
**CONFERENCE**  
**FALL 2025**

Mississippi Academy of Family Physicians | 755 Avignon Drive, Ridgeland, MS 39157 | 601.853.3302