Dear Members of the AOCD,

Welcome to another issue of our journal! Under the leadership of Dr. Karthik Krishnamurthy and his dedicated board of editors, we are seeing another issue of the Journal of the American Osteopathic College of Dermatology come to fruition.

Speaking of issues coming together, this past February, I was invited to represent the AOCD at a meeting hosted by AAD President Dr. Brett Coldiron. The topic of discussion was the proposition to create Board certification for “micrographic surgery and dermatologic oncology.” This proposal was favored by many of the organizations represented there. The discussion focused on the potential outcome of mending the division between “fellowship trained” and “society trained” Mohs surgeons with a new category of “Board certified” Mohs surgeons. It was noted that the new Board certification would bring recognized expertise in cutaneous “surgery” and “oncology” to the house of dermatology. This recognition by other medical specialties within the ABMS would further elevate the status of dermatology within the broader house of medicine.

However, this effort to define surgical subspecialization is not without its drawbacks. The further division of dermatology into “medical” and “surgical” dermatology is a potential outcome. This point was emphasized by some of the attendees. Concerns about the increased potential legal risks when a general dermatologist decides to perform an excision or electrodessication and curettage also were raised. In the case of a bad outcome, the decision is more difficult for a general dermatologist to defend legally if a micrographic surgeon/dermatologic oncologist was available.

It was proposed that there be a five-year grandfather period during which any provider who practices Mohs surgery at least 20 percent of the time may take the examination. The candidate also will need to be board-certified by the American Board of Dermatology. However, ABD certification will not apply to our members who are board-certified by the AOBD. We will continue to monitor this effort to create a subspecialty board certification and how it will impact osteopathic dermatologists and the field of dermatology as a whole.

In the meantime, I look forward to seeing many of you at our spring meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina. Dr. Dan Ladd, the program chair, has put together a highly educational program. The latest dermatological concepts and practice-management pearls will be presented. In addition, we are privileged to have Dr. Nicole Owens, chair of ACGME’s Residency Review Committee for Dermatology, address our membership.

On a final note, I would like to say that the future of our College, as with any College, is dependent on its members. To face the challenges ahead, I encourage you to reach out to the AOC Secretary of Trustees to share your thoughts and volunteer your time. We are looking for members who would like to play significant roles in the leadership of the AOC. In the years to come, the survival of our College will impact our future recertification process. With the ACGME merger, our future is in a state of flux. Only through the dedication of our members will we be able to chart our future, rather than have it decided for us.

Rick Lin, DO, MPH, FAOCD
President, American Osteopathic College of Dermatology