

iLEARN

YOUR OSTEOPATHIC MENTORING MOMENT #1: “About the AOA/AOF iLEARN Mentor Exchange Program”

In concert with the focus of AOA President Martin S. Levine, DO, on “thinking osteopathically” in their daily lives, a large pool of DO mentors participate in the iLEARN Mentor Exchange Program. The Program helps pre-meds, osteopathic medical students, and postdoctoral trainees find physicians who are willing to guide and encourage them throughout their careers.

Nurturing grassroots initiatives with divisional and specialty affiliate groups is one aspect of iLEARN Mentor Exchange program enhancement. Our program consultant has had many fruitful conversations with affiliates over the past months. Some affiliates have posted iLEARN links on their websites; others have requested articles about mentoring for their newsletters, both online and print. *Your Osteopathic Mentoring Moment* is a series of occasional articles responding to that request.

In this first *Mentoring Moment*, we take a look at the iLEARN process. The web-based Mentor Exchange Program allows mentees to search for mentors using specific criteria such as location, specialty, and preferred method of communication.

To sign up for the Mentor Exchange Program:

- An email address is required to sign up for iLEARN
- Go to www.iLearn.osteopathic.org and click on Mentor Exchange at the top of the page, then choose ‘I want to be a mentor’ or ‘I want to find a mentor’ in the right sidebar
- Sign in using your AOA/ID Username and Password (DOs and osteopathic medical students)
- Pre-meds can log in and create an account using an email address and password
- Answer a series of questions to facilitate the matching process

To select potential mentors, mentees do the following:

- Select criteria to generate a list of mentors by geographic location or field of interest
- Choose potential mentors – multiple mentor requests are allowed and encouraged
- Create a short introduction with information about themselves and their goals for the mentoring relationship
 - Pre-meds might be looking to shadow, to learn more about osteopathic medicine and to secure a letter of recommendation for COM applications
 - Osteopathic medical students might search for DOs in specialties or locations for guidance as they ponder career decisions
 - Early career DOs might seek longer-term relationships as they launch their careers

A match is made:

- iLEARN generates invitations that are sent by email to the selected mentors
- Mentors log in to the iLEARN website and either accept or decline the requests
 - Accepted mentees receive contact information for their mentors
 - Declined mentees receive a brief explanation from the mentor they requested

From this point, the progress of the mentoring partnership is up to the active participation of mentors and mentees. Next time in **Your Osteopathic Mentoring Moment**, we will share some tips on “Becoming a Mentor.”

*The AOA, with the support of a generous grant from the American Osteopathic Foundation (AOF), is focused on expanding and enhancing the iLEARN Mentor Exchange Program, one of the three branches of the AOA/AOF iLEARN Osteopathic Mentor Program. Other branches include the Mentor Recognition Program and the Mentor Hall of Fame, both done in association with Pfizer Inc. All branches are dedicated to advancing the profession and the unique philosophy of osteopathic medicine through mentoring. **Your Osteopathic Mentoring Moment** occasional articles are produced thanks to the AOA/AOF commitment to mentoring. If you have topics you would like to see covered, contact iLEARN consultant Mary Ewert at 312-202-8102 or iLearnMentoring@osteopathic.org.*



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