

Patrice A. Harris, MD, wins office of AMA president-elect

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The AMA House of Delegates elected Patrice A. Harris, MD, a psychiatrist from Atlanta, as its president-elect at the AMA Annual Meeting in Chicago. She is the first black woman to win the office, and when she assumes the post of AMA president in June 2019, Dr. Harris also will be the Association's first African-American female to hold that office.

"It will be my honor to represent the nation's physicians at the forefront of discussions when policymaker and lawmakers search for practical solutions to the challenges in our nation's health system. I am committed to preserving the central role of the physician-patient relationship in our healing art," said Dr. Harris.

"The American Medical Association has well-crafted policy concerning the changing health care environment in this country and I look forward to using my voice to help improve health care for patients and their physicians," she added.

First elected to the AMA Board of Trustees in 2011, Dr. Harris has held the executive offices of AMA board secretary and AMA board chair. Dr. Harris will continue to serve as chair of the AMA Opioid Task Force, and has been active on several other AMA task forces and committees on health information technology, payment and delivery reform, and private contracting. She has also chaired the influential AMA Council on Legislation and co-chaired the Women Physicians Congress.

Dr. Harris continues in private practice and consults with both public and private organizations on health service delivery and emerging trends in practice and health policy. She is an adjunct assistant professor in the Emory Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences.

New trustees elected

The newest members elected to the Board of Trustees include a Massachusetts cardiologist, a Georgia internist and an Arkansas radiologist.

Sandra A. Fryhofer, MD, a board-certified internist also from Atlanta, has been an active AMA member since 1983. She has served as chair of the AMA Council on Science and Public Health and a liaison to the Centers for Disease Control Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. She has been a delegate for the American College of Physicians to the AMA House of Delegates since 2000.

“Now more than ever, our future—and that of our patients—truly depends on the house of medicine speaking with one voice through the AMA’s policy and advocacy efforts,” Dr. Fryhofer said. “The future can be bright if we make the effort to listen and learn from each other, and put what we learn into action. I have dedicated my career to improving the lives of physicians and patients, and I look forward to helping lead the AMA into the next decade.”

Mario Motta, MD, a board-certified cardiologist, has been in practice at North Shore Medical Center in Salem, Massachusetts, since 1983, and his practice is at North Shore Physicians Group, cardiovascular division. He served as president of the Massachusetts Medical Society from 2009–2010. Dr. Motta has been an AMA delegate since 2003 and served for eight years on the AMA Council on Science and Public Health.

“Today’s physicians face a myriad of issues, from burnout to the exorbitant cost a medical education,” Dr. Motta said. “Our patients are challenged by the ever escalating prices of medications. I have a proven record of activism, and I will be a strong, knowledgeable advocate both for patients and physicians.”

“I have spent my career fighting to preserve physician choice and autonomy, patient protections and the physician-patient relationship,” said Dr. Ferguson. “I look forward to continuing that fight and serving as an advocate for patients and physicians alike.”

Scott Ferguson, MD, has been an Arkansas delegate to the AMA House of Delegates since 2009 and now serves as chair of the delegation. He is also chairman of the AMA Council on Legislation and serves as vice chair of the AMA Radiology Section Council.

An active participant at the state-level, Dr. Ferguson previously served as president of both the Arkansas Medical Society and the Crittenden County Medical Society. He served two terms in the Arkansas House of Representatives where he worked on landmark legislation on children’s insurance, immunization, and enhanced medical care for pregnant women, newborns and mastectomy patients.

Since leaving office, he has spearheaded efforts for tort reform, network adequacy and expansion of health care coverage. He also championed medical education at the University of Arkansas Medical School on the admissions committee and has worked to add additional residency slots in Arkansas.

Dr. Ferguson is a diagnostic radiologist in West Memphis, Arkansas, practicing at his office Outpatient Radiology Clinic for the past 33 years.

The new chair of the AMA Board of Trustees is Jack Resneck, Jr., MD, a dermatologist from San Rafael, California. Jesse M. Ehrenfeld, MD, MPH, an anesthesiologist from Nashville, Tennessee, was named chair-elect.

Other trustees

The other executive officers on the AMA Board of Trustees for 2018-2019 are:

- Susan R. Bailey, MD, an allergist practicing in Fort Worth, Texas, the newly re-elected speaker of the AMA's House of Delegates.
- Gerald E. Harmon, MD, a family physician from Pawleys Island, South Carolina, the newly instated immediate past chair.
- Russell W.H. Kridel, MD, a facial plastic surgeon from Houston, Texas, the newly inducted secretary.

The returning members of the AMA Board of Trustees are:

- Willarda V. Edwards, MD, an internist from Baltimore, Maryland.
- William E. Kobler, MD, a family physician from Rockford, Illinois.
- William A. McDade, MD, PhD, an anesthesiologist from Metairie, Louisiana.
- S. Bobby Mukkamala, MD, an otolaryngologist from Flint, Michigan.
- Albert J. Osbahr III, MD, a family and occupational physician from Hickory, North Carolina.
- Ryan Ribeira, MD, MPH, a resident physician in emergency medicine at Stanford University from Mount View, California.
- Karthik V. Sarma, a medical student at the University of California, Los Angeles David Geffen School of Medicine.
- Bruce A. Scott, MD, an otolaryngologist from Louisville, Kentucky, the newly re-elected vice speaker of the AMA's House of Delegates.
- Georgia A. Tuttle, MD, a dermatologist from Lebanon, New Hampshire.
- Kevin W. Williams, a former senior executive at General Motors from Nashville, Tennessee, the public member of the AMA Board.

Council elections

In competitive elections for council seats, seven delegates were selected by their peers to serve.

Elected to the AMA Council on Medical Service were:

- Betty S. Chu, MD, ob-gyn, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.
- Stephen K. Epstein, emergency physician, Boston.
- Asa C. Lockhart, MD, anesthesiologist, Tyler, Texas.
- Sheila Rege, MD, radiation oncologist, Pasco, Washington.

Elected to the AMA Council on Science and Public Health were:

- Kira Geraci-Ciardullo, MD, allergist-immunologist, Harrison, New York.
- Michael M. Miller, MD, addiction medicine physician, Oconomowoc, Wisconsin.
- Padmini Ranasinghe, MD, internist, Baltimore.

Read more news coverage from the 2018 AMA Annual Meeting.