South Carolina family physician Gerald E. “Gerry” Harmon, MD, has won the office of president-elect by acclamation at the 2020 AMA Special Meeting, an abbreviated virtual gathering of the AMA House of Delegates (HOD) held June 7 in place of the in-person Annual Meeting due to the physical distancing requirements of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I am honored to be elected by my peers as president-elect of an organization dedicated to driving the future of medicine and improving health care for patients and physicians,” said Dr. Harmon. “I look forward to continuing the AMA’s work to shape America’s health care system and lead transformation in health care delivery to ensure physicians can continue to provide exceptional care and comfort to our patients.”

Following a year-long term as president-elect, Dr. Harmon will assume the office of AMA president in June 2021.

Dr. Harmon has been an AMA Board of Trustees member since 2013, serving as board chair from 2017 to 2018. Prior to his election to the AMA board, Dr. Harmon served on the AMA Council on Medical Service. Additionally, Dr. Harmon has held several leadership positions with the South Carolina Medical Association, including chair of the board of trustees and president.

Practicing for more than 30 years as a family medicine specialist in his coastal South Carolina hometown of Georgetown, Dr. Harmon is a clinical professor at two South Carolina medical schools, as well as a member of the clinical faculty for the Tidelands Health Family Medicine residency program. Dr. Harmon also serves as an adviser to the board of trustees of a community health system and as vice president in a multispecialty physician practice. He also serves as medical director for several organizations including a nonprofit hospice, and volunteers as medical supervisor for his local school district’s 23 schools.

Dr. Harmon received his undergraduate degree in physics and mathematics from the University of South Carolina and has since been recognized as a distinguished alumnus. He received his medical degree from the Medical University of South Carolina and completed his family medicine residency
training with the U.S. Air Force at Eglin Air Force Base in western Florida.

In a 35-year military career, Dr. Harmon served as chief surgeon for the National Guard Bureau and as assistant surgeon general for the U.S. Air Force before retiring as a major general. His military decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal, and the Humanitarian Service Medal.

Other elected leaders

Delegates also reelected Bruce A. Scott, MD, an otolaryngologist from Louisville, Kentucky, as its speaker. In this position, Dr. Scott presides over 640 physicians and medical students who comprise the policymaking body of the nation’s largest physician organization. Read more about Dr. Scott in this AMA Moving Medicine profile, “The speaker steps up.”

Meanwhile, Lisa Bohman Egbert, MD, an ob-gyn from Dayton, Ohio, also was reelected in her position as vice speaker. Dr. Egbert has been an active AMA member since medical school and has held several leadership positions within the AMA over the years. She previously served on the governing councils of both the Resident Physicians Section and the Young Physicians Section, as well as chair of the Young Physicians Section. Additionally, she has served on the AMPAC Board of Directors and the Women in Medicine Advisory Panel.

Also winning reelection, to the AMA Board of Trustees, was Willarda V. Edwards, MD, MBA. She is an internist in a two-physician private practice in Baltimore who has been a member of the HOD for nearly two decades. Having served as chair of the AMA Council on Constitution and Bylaws, chair of the AMA Women Physicians Congress Governing Council and chair of the Maryland delegation to the AMA House of Delegates, Dr. Edwards was elected in June 2016 to the AMA Board of Trustees. Watch Dr. Edwards’ candidate video.

3 new trustees voted in

Los Angeles ophthalmologist David H. Aizuss, MD, is one of three physicians newly elected to the AMA Board of Trustees.

“We are facing unprecedented times as a profession and as a country,” Dr. Aizuss said in his video speech to the House of Delegates. “While we battle the frontlines of COVID-19, we must look ahead to the future and ensure that we are working as a united voice, advocating for our profession, for our patients and for our communities.”

Dr. Aizuss is a longtime leader in organized medicine; he is the immediate past president of the
California Medical Association (CMA) and a current member of the AMA Council on Legislation. During his tenure as CMA president, he was personally responsible for implementing a new organizational emphasis on diversity and inclusion. His guidance led CMA to significantly increase diversity in its council and committee leadership, as well as in their AMA delegation. Dr. Aizuss has also been at the forefront on issues such as physician scope of practice, vaccines, mental health and gun violence.

The HOD also elected Maryland internist Ilse R. Levin, DO, MPH, to the Board of Trustees.

Dr. Levin is a board-certified internist and epidemiologist with deep roots in organized medicine, beginning in medical school and continuing with leadership positions in the AMA, the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), and the National Commission on Correctional Healthcare.

“As a medical student in California, I witnessed how organized medicine could shape how we practice medicine and improve patient care,” Dr. Levin said. “As the current pandemic has shown, physician leadership is needed—from the community level to the national level. The AMA is ideally positioned to provide that leadership.”

Watch Dr. Levin’s candidate video.

Another internist, Thomas Madejski, MD, also won election to the Board of Trustees.

Dr. Madejski grew up in a family of pharmacists in Buffalo, New York. His upbringing helped inspire his career interest in advocating for the improvement of the national health care system.

Board-certified in internal medicine, geriatrics and hospice and palliative care medicine, Dr. Madejski holds faculty appointments as a clinical instructor in pharmacy at the University of Buffalo and clinical instructor in medicine at the University of Rochester.

Watch Dr. Madejski’s candidate video.

“I’m deeply honored to be elected by my peers to the AMA’s Board of Trustees,” said Dr. Madejski. “We live in a new age of medicine, yet remain challenged with public health crises, disparities and inequities in care. I’m committed to becoming an integral part of improving health outcomes, physician professional satisfaction and the wellness of our patients and country.”