

# UPDATE

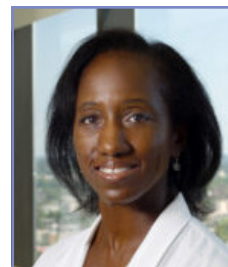
Association of University Anesthesiologists UPDATE | 2024 | Summer Issue

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

I am very excited about the direction of the Association of University Anesthesiologists (AUA) and for the opportunity to serve as your President! Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine this. Even so, I know that no one gets here alone. So first I would like to send heartfelt thanks for our members, our previous presidents, Drs. Kronish, Avidan, Kirsch and Mashour, as well as our previous Executive Director, Ms. Vivian Abalama, for their unwavering support, thoughts and actions that provided the energy and focus for clearing the path forward for “Shaping the future for Academic Anesthesiology.” This is an important task. Our universities house our most precious persons, our resident and fellow learners that become our academic faculty! Hence, with this trust we must partner with our anesthesiology and multidisciplinary university faculty, staff and academic leadership in order to provide a strong future for all of these wonderful persons by being true to our mission: To promote excellence in academic anesthesiology through mentorship; promotion of diversity and inclusivity; and professional growth throughout the careers of educators, academic leaders, and researchers. While our mission has many key words, it is my opinion that the most significant of these words is to provide this mission “throughout the careers of educators, academic leaders and researchers.” It is this promise that requires sustainable change and targeted implementation.

You may have noticed a few things. First, this year we returned to our home, the university. This pivot was made possible by the combined support of our members, executive council, our Boards and my department, medical school and university at Washington University in St. Louis. Secondly, within these meeting days from Friday to Sunday (March 22-24, 2024), we provided an academic program. We included the current standards pre-meeting workshops and critical content from our advisory boards, as well as an intriguing and thought provoking host, president and women in Academic Anesthesiology Networking program.



**Dolores B. Njoku, MD**  
*President, AUA*  
 Washington University in  
 St. Louis  
 St. Louis, MO

*continued on page 2*


## CONTENTS

President’s Message .....	1-2
Call for Content.....	2
Communications & Website Committee Report .....	3
MEB Report .....	4
LAB Report: .....	5-6
LAB: Professional Meaning .....	7-9
Spotlight On Research: ANESTHESIOLOGY® 2024.....	9
SAB Report .....	10
AUA Officers.....	11-12

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Since our annual meeting we have been busy with our transitions. Association Resource Center (ARC), a familiar name in academic Anesthesiology, is our new management company. So, behind the scenes, I have been busy working with Andrew Bronson, our new Executive Director, with on-boarding our newly minted advisory board leaders and members, as well as providing critical support for those continuing in their roles and maintaining our programs. In addition to this work I have disseminated our mission, vision and purpose along with American Society of Anesthesiology and American Medical Association leadership at the Anesthesiology section of the National

Medical Association. These critical partnerships provide strength in numbers as we move forward in shaping the future of Academic Anesthesiology.

It is my opinion that our anesthesiology societies should find ways to come together on shared values regarding our academic missions. In 2025, our annual meeting will be in Boston, MA and just happens to coincide with International Women's Day! Make your plans to come together and share your voice as we continue to shape the future of Academic Anesthesiology! Working together we can get this done! 



**AUA**

Association of University Anesthesiologists

**CALL FOR  
ABSTRACTS**

**AUA 2025  
Annual Meeting**

**March 7-9, 2025**

**Boston,  
Massachusetts**  
*Hosted by Harvard  
University/Harvard Medical  
School and the Harvard  
Anaesthesia Executive  
Committee*

# Communications & Website Committee Report

I am honored to provide the AUA Communications and Website Committee report for this newsletter at a pivotal time for the organization. First, I warmly welcome Dr. Dolores Njoku as the newly appointed President of the AUA. Dr. Njoku has long been an exemplary leader in our specialty, with a remarkable track record of contributions across key academic organizations. She succeeds Dr. George Mashour, and together they have shepherded important initiatives that reflect a deep cultural transformation within the AUA, focusing on increasing value for all members and positioning the Association within an independent, university-based framework once more. Dr. Njoku's leadership, alongside key Council members such as Drs. Mashour and Michael Avidan, was instrumental in the success of the 2024 AUA meeting held at Washington University, St. Louis.

In this issue, I invite you to read Dr. Njoku's insightful President's Message, alongside reports from the Board and an engaging article by Dr. Liz Duggan.

Looking ahead, we are thrilled to announce that the 2025 AUA Meeting will be hosted by Harvard's Anesthesia Executive Committee in March, set in Boston's prestigious Longwood Medical Area. This gathering promises to be a monumental event, featuring in-depth discussions, groundbreaking presentations, and collaboration opportunities for anesthesiologists across the globe. Boston, as a center of medical and academic excellence, will provide an ideal backdrop for this exchange of knowledge. We encourage members to submit their Abstracts, as we strive to create world-class sessions complemented by ample networking time for fostering new connections and scientific collaboration.

The Communications and Website Committee is proud to be supported by an impressive and diverse group of leaders. Notably, Dr. Christina Pabelick from Mayo Clinic chairs the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), Dr. Arna Banerjee from Vanderbilt chairs the Educational Advisory Board (EAB), and Dr. Ted Sakai from UNC leads the Laboratory Advisory Board (LAB). Additionally, Dr. Valerie Armstread from Temple University and Dr. Michael Aziz from Oregon Health & Science University co-chair the Membership Engagement Board (MEB). Our team is further strengthened by respected members such as Dr. Ronald George from Mount Sinai, Toronto, Dr. Jaime Aaronson from Cornell, and Dr. Jingping Wang from Massachusetts General Hospital. Together, this dedicated group ensures AUA remains at the forefront of academic anesthesiology, fostering collaboration and excellence.

The committee is also adapting to a significant organizational transition. The ARC administration team now manages the AUA's operations, marking a fresh chapter after our departure from the IARS. This new partnership with ARC is an exciting opportunity for streamlined operations, member engagement, and the advancement of strategic initiatives.

With these transformative changes underway, the Communications and Website Committee remains committed to fostering a vibrant and connected AUA community. We eagerly look forward to sharing further updates as we approach the 2025 Boston meeting!

For more information, please visit the AUA website or learn more about the Communications and Website Committee. [📖](#)



**Shahzad Shaefi,  
MD, MPH**

*Chair, Communications &  
Website Committee*  
Beth Israel Deaconess  
Medical Center  
Boston, MA


# Membership Engagement Advisory Board (MEB) Report

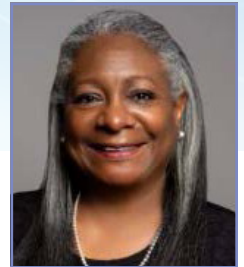
The Membership Engagement Board was thrilled to see all who attended the 70th AUA Annual Meeting from Friday, March 22 through Sunday, March 24, 2024, that was hosted by Washington University in St. Louis, MO. A well-attended and well-received pre-meeting Fundamentals of Professional Mentoring Workshop lead by Dr. Harriet Hopf, of University of Utah underscored the MEB dedication to mentoring to engage longtime AUA members with Associate and newer AUA members. The following day during a plated luncheon, along with awards to AUA members from the other AUA boards, the MEB, represented by Co-chair, Dr. Valerie Armstead, presented its inaugural awards to the following AUA members:

- **MEB Active Member of the Year Award** most deservedly went to Keith Vogt, MD, PhD from the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.
- **MEB Rising Star – Associate Member of the Year Award** was awarded to Maurice “Frankie” Joyce, MD, EdM, FASA from Tufts University School of Medicine.
- **MEB Lifetime Achievement Award** was bestowed upon Jeanine Wiener-Kronish, MD from Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard University.

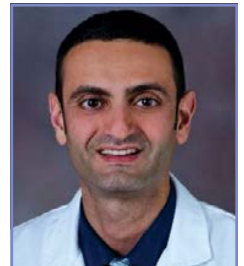
Thanks to those that made it to the late afternoon, social event on March 23, celebrating the AUA-FAER (Foundation for Anesthesia Education and Research) Partnership. Valerie Armstead, MD, MAUB gave the entry introductory speech to the event followed by George Mashour, MD, PhD, who provided welcoming remarks and an introduction of Dr. Dolores Njoku, MD who, besides being the incoming AUA president is also the Chair of the FAER Board of Directors. Dr. Njoku then introduced Matt Kelz, MD, PhD as the incoming FAER president and chief scientific officer. Dr. Kelz thanked the AUA for their donations and acknowledged the AUA-FAER partnership. The food and beverages were outstanding, and a good time was had by all.

We have made important strides in the last year: introducing new criteria for membership status, creating inaugural leadership awards, and supporting our mentorship program.

Our focus moving forward is on engagement with our associate members to support their transition to full membership. Many associate members are supported by engaged faculty at the full membership status, but others lack mentorship from the society. We’d like to connect you to our society’s leaders to foster collaboration and professional development. We’d like to hear from you. How can we best serve your needs and make the society more inviting to you and your colleagues is a challenge the MEB hopes to address in the coming years. 



**Valerie E. Armstead, MD, DABA, FASA**  
*AUA, Co-chair, Membership Engagement Advisory Board*  
Professor of Anesthesiology, Clinician Educator  
Department of Anesthesiology  
Temple University Lewis Katz School of Medicine  
Philadelphia, PA



**Michael Aziz, MD**  
*AUA, Co-chair, Membership Engagement Advisory Board*  
Professor & Vice Chair for Clinical Affairs  
Department of Anesthesiology & Perioperative Medicine  
Oregon Health & Science University  
Portland, OR



**AUA**  
**SPEAKER EXCHANGE**

# LEADERSHIP ADVISORY BOARD (LAB) REPORT:

## The Launch and Progress of the Leadership Advisory Board (LAB)

In 2020, the American University of Anesthesiologists (AUA) established the Leadership Advisory Board (LAB) to complement the existing Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) and Educational Advisory Board (EAB). The LAB was created with a clear mission: to nurture leadership capable of addressing the unmet needs in academic anesthesiology. It aims to work synergistically with the EAB and SAB to foster innovation and address challenges within the field.

### Inaugural LAB Leadership and its Contribution to Academic Anesthesiology

The inaugural LAB chair, Maya Jalbout Hastie, MD, EdD, the Vice Chair for Education, and a Professor of Anesthesiology at Columbia University, has been at the forefront of significant LAB advancements. LAB prioritized Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) as the central theme. LAB's advocacy for appropriate terminological usage in professional publications has set new standards. The efforts include initiating a letter to the editor in *Anesthesia and Analgesia* in 2021, advocating for the use of "Black" over "African American" in scientific contexts, a change aimed at aligning with broader, more inclusive terminological standards.<sup>1</sup>

LAB's commitment to addressing the gender disparities in anesthesiology has led to the performance of a national survey on sexual harassment in academic anesthesia. A recent AAMC report found that 1 in 2 women and 1 in 5 men in anesthesiology have experienced a form of sexual harassment (gender harassment, unwanted sexual attention, or sexual coercion), of which gender harassment is the most common.<sup>2</sup> The LAB survey builds on those findings to explore sources of harassment in the workplace, its impact on the targets, and the influence of other demographic and professional factors. The article has currently been under review for publication.

Additionally, recognizing the need for a structured mentorship program for the members of AUA, LAB subcommittee members were instrumental in creating the AUA Mentorship Program, which has attracted more than 100 AUA senior members willing to serve as mentors. This initiative, now led by the new leadership of the Membership Engagement Board (MEB), would ensure that the next generation of academic anesthesiologists receives the guidance and support necessary to thrive in their careers.<sup>3</sup>

### The Future Direction of LAB

As we progress, LAB will be strengthened by a dynamic and dedicated team of AUA members from leading academic institutions nationwide. Given the cumulated expertise of the LAB members, we will tackle two themes to advance the mission of AUA. These initiatives are as follows.

First, the EDI initiative will be held up high as one of the core activities of LAB. Dr. Hastie, the Immediate Past Chair of LAB, continues her vital role in advancing the EDI efforts. Given the survey findings of the continuing existence of sexual harassment in academic anesthesia, we advocate education and explore mitigation systems to reduce and eliminate sexual harassment in our work environment. Empowering women and minorities in academic anesthesia is crucial for the sound growth of our specialty. As one of the efforts, LAB continues to organize the Women's Breakfast at the AUA meetings.

**Second**, recognizing the critical need for AUA members' professional growth in academic anesthesiology, LAB is committed to expanding and enhancing faculty development initiatives. These programs are intricately designed to address the

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**Tetsuro Sakai, MD,  
PhD, MHA, FASA**  
Chair of LAB  
Professor and Chair,  
Department of  
Anesthesiology,  
University of North  
Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Chapel Hill, NC

multifaceted roles that faculty members play, from educators and researchers to clinical practitioners and administrative leaders.

To address the diverse needs and career stages of faculty members, LAB will implement tailored development tracks that focus on specific areas of professional growth:

- **Early Career Development:** For the AUA Associate Members, programs will focus on building foundational skills in research, teaching, and clinical practice. These will include workshops on grant writing, effective teaching strategies, and the basics of academic publishing.
- **Mid-Career Enhancement:** For established faculty members with AUA full membership looking to expand their influence, mid-career programs will emphasize leadership training, advanced research methodologies, and mentorship skills. This track aims to prepare anesthesiologists for senior roles within their departments and the broader academic community.
- **Senior Leadership Development:** For senior AUA members, the focus will shift towards strategic leadership and legacy building, including succession planning, institutional governance, and international collaboration. This track is designed to refine the skills needed to shape the future of academic departments and influence policy at higher levels.


LAB aims to cultivate a culture of excellence and continuous growth in academic anesthesiology through these expanded and enriched faculty development initiatives. By equipping faculty with the skills, knowledge, and networks needed to excel in their multifaceted roles, LAB enhances individual careers and advances the field, ensuring it remains at the cutting edge of medical education and patient care.

To achieve the above goals, LAB will embrace emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI) and generative AI, which have been applied in various human resource management industries. Possible applications of AI technologies in LAB-related initiatives could be included as follows:

- **Leadership Development Through Personalized AI Coaching:** The use of AI in leadership development is transformative, offering personalized learning experiences tailored to everyone's unique needs. AI's capability to provide real-time feedback and strategic coaching can significantly enhance the leadership skills

of faculty members, preparing them for higher roles and responsibilities.

- **Predictive Analytics for Talent Management:** LAB aims to identify potential leadership gaps and provide targeted development interventions by employing predictive analytics. This proactive approach ensures that the faculty is always ahead of the curve and equipped with the skills necessary to lead in an ever-changing academic landscape.
- **Virtual Coaching and Real-Time Feedback:** Implementing AI-powered virtual coaches will offer continuous support to faculty members, allowing them to receive guidance and feedback at their convenience. This constant access to expert advice and support is crucial for rapid skill development and performance improvement.
- **Job Crafting and AI Integration:** Recognizing the importance of adapting to technological advancements, LAB promotes job crafting techniques that integrate AI tools into daily responsibilities. This approach enhances efficiency and allows faculty members to focus on higher-level tasks and creative problem-solving, thereby enriching their professional roles and contributions.

The future direction of LAB is characterized by a forward-thinking approach that blends traditional academic values with innovative practices. LAB is setting the stage for a new era in academic anesthesiology by fostering a culture of continuous learning and adaptation and empowering faculty through advanced leadership development programs. Our commitment to these initiatives will ensure that the field of anesthesiology not only adapts to the challenges of the 21st century but also thrives, producing leaders who are well-equipped to contribute to the evolution of healthcare and medical education. 

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# FROM THE LEADERSHIP ADVISORY BOARD (LAB)

## Professional Meaning

*Man's main concern is not to gain pleasure or avoid pain, but rather to see a meaning in his life.*<sup>1</sup>

Viktor E. Frankl.

Psychologists, sociologists, and behavioral economists have contemplated the concept of “meaningful work” for more than a half-century. William Osler touched on its nature, reflecting on the work of a physician as “a calling, one in which your heart will be exercised equally as your head.”<sup>2</sup> Organizational literature argues that meaning is tied to one’s sense of purpose, a method of self-expression whereby we derive personal significance by connecting with our values, our potential and our community.<sup>3-5</sup>

Work meaning continues to draw attention, particularly as medicine explores the consequences of two simultaneous healthcare crises: COVID-19 and physician burnout.<sup>6</sup> Today, the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) outlines meaning and purpose as one of the fundamental strategies required of healthcare leadership.<sup>7</sup> The American Medical Society’s *Wellness-Centered Leadership Playbook* highlights “meaning in medicine.”<sup>8</sup> Healthcare is not alone in stressing the importance of occupational meaning; Harvard Business Review and Sloan MIT Management Review feature recent articles asserting “work meaning may be more important to employees than any other aspect of our job.”<sup>9,10</sup>

Why does the concept of meaningful work capture the interest of healthcare leaders, wellness authors, and business executives? Relevant social and psychological research demonstrates that meaning positively influences our sense of intrinsic motivation, engagement, personal fulfillment, and empowerment.<sup>5,11-14</sup> At the organizational level, workplace meaning is linked to positive employee outcomes including performance, creativity and commitment.<sup>5</sup>

To which end, we find ourselves asking the same questions asked by workplace scholars: What are the sources of work meaning? And, perhaps more importantly, when does work becomes meaningful?

Meaning is construed both individually based on values, perceptions and experiences, and socially, derived from norms and shared belief-systems.<sup>15</sup> Meaningful work does not reflect a continuous psychological state but instead an episodic experience.<sup>16</sup> Workplace science proposes that certain encounters allow us to integrate our efforts with self-worth; the worker conducts actions that align with their values and fulfill esteem needs, while additionally achieving a positive emotional response linked to one’s sense of significance (inspiration, pride, self-transcendence).<sup>17</sup> Meaningful experiences in this way, are individualized based on a complex affective and cognitive evaluation of existential goals. A constituent element of work meaning often extends beyond a focus on oneself, it arises when work contributes to the greater good.<sup>12</sup>

While a given workplace experience is individually construed to be meaningful (or meaningless), organizational science has long-researched workplace factors that increase the potential to experience meaning at work. When job characteristics and tasks align with one’s individual values and esteem needs, workers are more likely to experience work meaning. There is an overlap between work meaning and life meaning; an association that when strengthened, fosters a sense of personal and professional growth.<sup>17</sup> Job conditions demonstrated to increase work meaning are listed in Table 1, including associated



**Elizabeth A. Duggan, MD**

*Associate Professor of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine*  
University of Alabama at Birmingham  
Birmingham, AL

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workplace climate dynamics and individualized practices.

**TABLE 1:** Job Conditions that Increase the Potential to Experience Meaningful Work

JOB CONDITIONS	ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES
<b>Job Design (Job Crafting)<sup>19</sup></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skill variety</li> <li>• Task significance (the degree to which one’s job positively impacts others’ lives)</li> <li>• Task identity (a worker’s involvement in a task from start to finish)</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership Style<sup>20</sup></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transformational Leadership</li> <li>• Leader-Member Exchange</li> <li>• Participative management</li> </ul>
<b>Work Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning-Focused</li> <li>• Socio-moral climate (the organization values, promotes and encourages contributions to the greater good)<sup>21</sup></li> <li>• Self-transcendent orientation (“other-directed” work actions)<sup>18</sup></li> <li>• Work-life fit (Work-life balance)</li> </ul>
<b>Workplace Relationships<sup>20</sup></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Co-worker recognition</li> <li>• Serving with others</li> </ul>
<b>Eudaimonic Experiences<sup>17</sup></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth/Development oriented opportunities</li> <li>• “Self-realization” (the fulfillment of personal potential)</li> </ul>

Recent meta-analyses and empirical reviews examine the outcomes of meaningful work, the results defined below in four categories:<sup>5,20</sup>

**Work-related attitudes:** Increasing work meaning is positively associated with engagement, job satisfaction, and intrinsic motivation.


**Individual outcomes:** Those experiencing meaningful work are more likely to report positive life measures including work-life enrichment, feelings of happiness and life meaning. Additionally, they report better psychological adjustment (being more adaptive to both the job and work environment).

**Performance-related outcomes:** Meaningful work is strongly associated with perceived organizational reputation, knowledge-sharing, creativity and performance.

**Organizational outcomes:** Employees express higher levels of organizational commitment and decreased turnover intentions.

The best fitting model of work meaning demonstrates that the most proximal outcome, work-related attitudes, subsequently predicts downstream results: individual work-life enrichment, job performance, and organizational results.

The concept of self cannot be separated from one’s sense of meaning. How an individual sees themselves and the work they perform plays a crucial role in one’s sense of meaningfulness. The key for organizations is thus two-fold: constructing environments rich in experiences that offer potential for work meaning and, to consider the individual as a unique contributor. The power of small work groups—teams, divisions and even departments – can emphasize the importance of individual-level experiences through a method labeled job crafting, a process by which employees proactively change their roles to better align with their personal values, goals, skill set and growth needs.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, for individuals who seek enriching work, assessing work meaning beyond a single item (“my work is meaningful to me”) is recommended. The Work as Meaning Inventory (WAMI) evaluates three subscales: positive meaning, meaning making through work, and greater good motivations, allowing job components to be specifically enhanced where most needed.<sup>12</sup>

Re-investing in the individual anesthesiologist to create work meaning, while also promoting leadership styles, work patterns, social support systems, and workplace cultures is a daunting task. Yet, it offers a much-needed opportunity to combat the pervasive impact of burnout and lack of professional fulfillment currently impacting academic anesthesiology.<sup>22,23</sup> Development-minded leaders can deploy work meaning research to influence local environments, and to equally, work with individuals to connect work with their values, align intrinsic appeal with job tasks, form supportive collaborations, and live the positive impact of their work. 

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2024

## FROM THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD (SAB)

The AUA Scientific Advisory Board is delighted to report on its events at the 2024 Annual Meeting hosted by Washington University at St. Louis. The return to the university based, smaller meeting format gave excellent scope for attendees to interact related to their scientific interests both during organized and informal sessions. The SAB kicked off with the second iteration of the annual Mock Study section as a pre-meeting event on Friday. A group of six junior faculty and postdoctoral fellows reviewed two R01 grants, one in basic science and the other a clinical project. The study sections were conducted in NIH format and overseen by Drs. Vesna Todorovic and David Mintz and were attended by other experienced grant reviewers. Based on good feedback from attendees, the SAB plans to make this an ongoing feature of the annual meeting offerings. The next event was a Panel Discussion on the future of research in our subspecialty, entitled “Building and Sustaining Anesthesiology Research”. The panelists included Drs. Jiapeng Huang, Danny Muehlschlegel, and Dolores Njoku, who collectively discussed successful elements of strategy across large and small research programs with an emphasis on how to grow and support individuals and programs. As in past years, the SAB hosted a poster session in which participants who ranged from residents aspiring to research careers to senior faculty with long experience presented their work to one another and had the opportunity to network and establish new connections. The SAB presented a suite of awards for excellence in specific areas of research based on its annual abstract competition. Awards included: Junior Faculty Pediatric Anesthesia Research Award (Dr. Benjamin Sanofsky), Junior Faculty Perioperative Medicine Research Award (Dr. Hannah Lonsdale), Junior Faculty Research Award for Clinical Science (Dr. Yiyang Zhang), Junior Faculty Research Award for Laboratory Science (Dr. Jacob Basak), Lisa Wise-Faberowski Resident Prize for Research Excellence Award (Dr. Megan Rolfzen), Margaret Wood Resident Research Award (Dr. Brittany Ervin-Sikhondze), and Resident Travel Award (Dr. Danika Doralien). Finally, at the conclusion of the meeting Dr. Christina Pabelick, who has served previously as a member, was announced as the next Chair of the SAB. Dr. Pabelick and the SAB are poised to review the feedback from this year’s successful and productive meeting and are already looking forward to planning next year’s event. 



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**MENTORING PROGRAM**  
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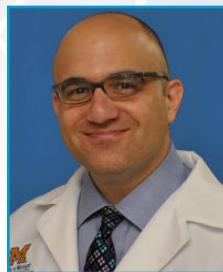
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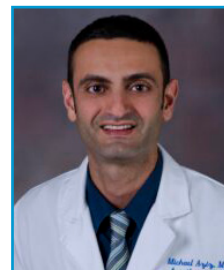
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Please review [AUA's Submission Guidelines](#) prior to submitting your proposed article.

Contact the AUA office with questions at [info@auahq.org](mailto:info@auahq.org).



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