Mr. Speaker, fellow officers, past presidents, members of the House of Delegates, honored guests and friends: Welcome to Washington, DC and the 97th Annual Meeting, Scientific Sessions and Exhibition of the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons.

It is a privilege to stand before you this morning and report on the activities of your association during the past year. When we last met just 12 months ago, our association was pursuing a number of new and important initiatives that required a concentrated infusion of time, attention and resources to bring them to fruition. At that time, I pledged to dedicate my year as president to solidifying and growing these programs to ensure they continued to benefit our membership, their practices and their patients. This morning I am pleased to report that we have not only advanced and nurtured these new endeavors, we have also preserved and, in many instances, enhanced our core programs and activities. This has been accomplished while maintaining the financial and programmatic parameters established by the board and this House. Allow me to recap some of the highlights of this past year.

The AAOMS Informational Campaign was introduced in late 2013 as a means of educating our dental colleagues and select public audiences about the oral and maxillofacial surgeon’s expertise and scope of practice. This year we expanded the Campaign’s focus to include oral cancer, sleep apnea and corrective jaw surgery, in addition to third molars, dental implants and anesthesia, the procedures targeted in year one. These OMS procedures were promoted in print and digital advertising for professional dental publications and consumer Web sites, and in procedure-specific videos and patient-focused information capsules for MyOMS.org, AAOMS’s public Web site. Over the next few days, you can view the patient-specific videos, advertisements and public service announcements developed for the 2015 Campaign on the signage and video monitors outside this room and throughout the Convention Center.

We also used the Campaign’s resources to produce two oral cancer Public Service Announcements as part of the association’s Oral Cancer Month activities. They informed the public about the HPV-oral cancer link and demonstrated the correct way to perform an oral self-examination. Viewers were directed to visit an oral and maxillofacial surgeon if they saw a suspicious sore or lesion. These PSAs have been shown more than 4300 times on over 100 television stations around the country. Furthermore, they generated an additional 50 print and digital articles; all of which referenced AAOMS and the role of oral and maxillofacial surgeons in diagnosing oral cancer. You may view both PSAs on the MyOMS.org site and on the video monitors outside the House. Additionally, AAOMS fellows and members may link to or download all the PSAs, videos or prepared information capsules developed through the campaign and place them on their own practice Web sites.

Since its inception, an underlying goal for the Informational Campaign has been to drive those seeking oral and maxillofacial surgery care to our public Web site, myOMS.org, and view us as the “Experts” who are the best trained and most qualified to provide their care.
During the Reference Committee hearings later this morning, John Athorn and George Clark, the principals of Athorn Clark & Partners, and Matthew Braun, vice president of Loyalty Research, the company that conducted this year’s outcome surveys, will present an overview of the Campaign’s activities and market penetration. I encourage you to attend this important presentation.

This spring, we launched the new AAOMS.org, our member Web site. The re-envisioned site was developed to meet the current and future needs of our fellows and members, residents and professional allied staff, as well as the dental students and other healthcare colleagues who routinely visit the site. The redesigned site provides better navigation, new and easier to access features, and a modern design that can be easily accessed and clearly viewed on your computer and mobile devices.

During Wednesday evening’s Awards Ceremony, AAOMS will confer honorary fellowship on Dr. David Hoyt, executive director of the American College of Surgeons. Working with Dr. Hoyt and the ACS leadership, our two organizations developed a pathway by which single-degree OMSs who meet the eligibility criteria set forth by the ACS can apply for full fellowship in the College. This significant development signals the College’s recognition of, and respect for, OMS training and our scope of practice. Our collaboration with the powerful American College of Surgeons greatly enhances our advocacy efforts, educational opportunities and leadership development.

This year we have undertaken a number of initiatives to enhance and advance our position in pre-doctoral education. Recognizing that today’s dental student is tomorrow’s referring doctor, we have increased our efforts to reinforce our position as the surgical specialists of dentistry.

In today’s evolving healthcare environment, the growing influence of “corporate” healthcare is changing the traditional OMS practice business model. The board has empaneled the Special Committee on Evolving Practice Models to review this situation and provide guidance to the membership. We look forward to their report.

The specialty of oral and maxillofacial surgery and, by extension the AAOMS, are becoming increasingly diverse as more women join our ranks. This summer, we convened the first Women in OMS Summit. This very productive program led the board to appoint a Special Committee on Women in OMS.

The board has also recognized the need to encourage and develop our specialty’s next generation of leaders. On December 3, just prior to this year’s Dental Implant Conference, AAOMS will convene its first Emerging Surgeons Leadership Program in Chicago.

I would like to express my appreciation and admiration for the members of the 2014-2015 AAOMS Board of Trustees. Their commitment to our association and the specialty was evident in every item discussed and decision rendered. Whether deliberating the subject of an educational program or a design for an informational campaign ad, their primary concern was always the potential benefit for the membership, the specialty and our patients. Their dedication extended beyond the boardroom and was evident in our efforts to establish a clear, concise and unequivocal message to other health care entities, educators, students, patients and the public that oral and maxillofacial surgeons are “The Experts in Face, Mouth, and Jaw Surgery.”

On a daily basis, our specialty faces many challenges that, in my opinion, the AAOMS handles with great acumen. To be most effective, a governing board must be able to view things from a perspective of 30,000 feet, anticipate key events and lay the groundwork for the future. This board has been effective in this regard. From my 30,000 foot perspective, the future of our specialty is very bright.

This past year I personally responded to every member who contacted me by phone, email, or USPS, and those who approached me in person. Too often the conversation or dialogue began with a question… “What is AAOMS or the board doing about this or that…?” My opening response has been to return the question … “What have you done about this or that?” I was disappointed by the number of times my question went unanswered, or was met with a response that no action had been taken. If AAOMS is to be effective, our members must be actively involved. You cannot simply look to the “mother ship,” or expect a limited few to carry the water.

We all need to be grateful to our competent and committed staff at the AAOMS under the direction of our Executive Director Dr. Bob Rinaldi. Those of us who have had the honor of being on the “inside” realize the contributions to our specialty of this incredible group of people.

As I conclude this year as president, I would like to thank the AAOMS Board of Trustees and the members of this House for their unwavering support, not only during this past year, but throughout my years of service. Time will be the judge of our efforts and actions. I firmly believe the 2014-2015 Board and this House will get a thumbs up when our chapter is written.

Thank you for the opportunity and honor to serve our great specialty.