



To advance the orthopaedic profession
by supporting meritorious graduate medical education
without conflicts or bias

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Dear Musculoskeletal Healthcare Leader,

For decades, the relationship between industry and orthopaedic surgeons has been cooperative and constructive. We have strived to promote our mutual goals of education and innovation, and ultimately define, enhance, and sustain quality, cost effective surgical care to patients around the world.

The orthopaedic surgery teaching community focuses on providing the best education for residents and fellows that includes a robust clinical experience as well as opportunities for academic productivity. While the most dire stages of the Covid-19 pandemic have thankfully passed, it has brought about longer-term changes that require continued flexibility. Institutional funding which generally accounts for about 50% of the funding for a fellow has been reduced for many programs, affecting fellow and academic faculty compensation and learning experiences.^{1,2} In addition, ACGME requirements and governmental oversight and regulation have not decreased. Reporting requirements and increasing downward budgetary pressures continue to have the unintended consequence of jeopardizing or decreasing the ability to educate the next generation of orthopaedic surgeons. **Clearly, our collaboration is more crucial than ever.**

Established in 2008 to ameliorate the effects of these reforms, OMeGA Medical Grants Association (OMeGA) is recognized as an important third-party grants administrator for orthopaedic graduate medical education (GME) across all subspecialties. OMeGA's goals are to:

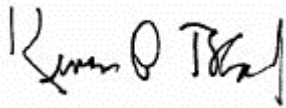
- promote innovation and sustain high quality orthopaedic GME,
- award graduate medical education grants through an accessible, merit-based process,
- safeguard against conflicts of interest, maintain regulatory compliance, and ensure transparency in the allocation of resources, and
- ensure a consistent funding application that can be customized to align with subspecialty priorities, to provide a simple solution for both orthopaedic programs and donors.

The goal of educating the very best orthopaedic surgeons for the future remains paramount. Unfortunately, this pandemic crisis may require teaching programs to incur increased costs--including additional equipment and new procedures to keep medical staff and patients safe. Institutional budgets that were already dwindling may be shifted from orthopaedics to deal with regional Covid-19 surges. Additional funding is greatly needed to support every worthy orthopaedic GME program in the United States.

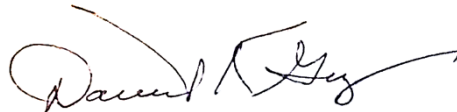
We must properly train enough specialists to provide the care that is needed, no matter what happens on a short-term, political basis in Washington. The cost of healthcare made up 17.7% of US GDP in 2019 and is predicted to increase in the coming years³—while the number of uninsured Americans has also risen. This behooves the orthopaedic community, including providers, industry, and professional associations, to efficiently work together to ensure that the needs of musculoskeletal patients are met and that the correct number of properly trained orthopaedic surgeons are educated. Please join us in reinforcing the viability of the best orthopaedic educational system in the world by supporting OMeGA and orthopaedic GME. If your company already supports education with OMeGA, thank you.

OMeGA continues to receive many meritorious grant requests that go unfunded; please carefully consider your contribution to ensure that the number of surgeons trained in the future and the quality of this training is maintained. This is critically important given the uncertainty in the US healthcare system, increasingly fractured payment and provision systems, and the growing number of patients with musculoskeletal problems.

Our best regards,



Kevin P. Black, MD, President
OMeGA Medical Grants Association



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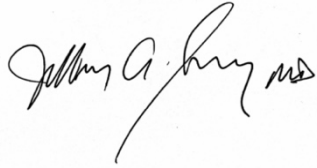
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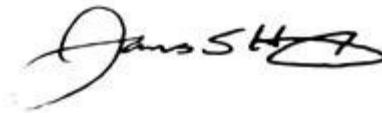
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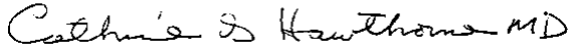
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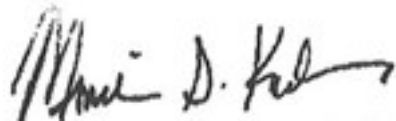
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¹ “Fellowship funding survey 2020,” OMeGA Medical Grants Association, July 2020.

² “OMeGA Benchmarking data for Fellowship directors webinar survey,” OMeGA Medical Grants Association, February 2021.

³ “NHE Fact Sheet,” Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, <https://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/NationalHealthExpendData/NHE-Fact-Sheet>, March 24, 2020.