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Lisa L. Lattanza, MD, FAOA, FAAOS, Receives American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons' Diversity Award

SAN DIEGO, Calif. (September 2, 2021)—The [American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons](#) (AAOS) presented its 2021 Diversity Award to Lisa L. Lattanza, MD, FAOA, FAAOS. The Diversity Award recognizes members of the Academy who have distinguished themselves through their outstanding commitment to making orthopaedics more representative of, and accessible to, diverse patient populations.

“It is an honor and privilege to receive this award and be recognized for doing work that I am completely committed to and passionate about,” said Dr. Lattanza.

Dr. Lattanza has dedicated her career to expanding diversity and inclusion in orthopaedic surgery and to caring for diverse and underserved populations, explained Amy L. Ladd, MD, FAAOS, an associate of Dr. Lattanza’s from Stanford University Medical Center. She has committed her career to improving the quality of life of her patients and her mentoring of the current and next generation of orthopaedic surgeons will be amplified by many for years to come.

One of Dr. Lattanza’s most prolific contributions to diversifying the next generation of orthopaedic surgeons has been through the co-founding of The Perry Initiative. Named for Dr. Lattanza’s mentor Dr. Jacquelin Perry, [The Perry Initiative](#) has three components: the Perry Outreach Program (POP) a one-day career exploration for young women who may be interested in careers in orthopaedic surgery, engineering, or both; the Medical Student Outreach Program (MSOP), which is a hands-on experience for first- and second-year women medical students; and Orthopaedics in Action (OiA) teaching science through the lens of orthopaedic surgery in junior high and high school classrooms. More than 40% of participants in the POP and MSOP programs are under-represented minorities.

“The Perry Initiative with its breadth of workshops introduces and inspires high school, college, and medical students to pursue STEM-oriented careers, with the ultimate goal of changing the face of orthopaedics and bioengineering to one that is more diverse in gender, ethnic, and racial representation,” said Dr. Ladd. “With guidance from Dr. Lattanza, these highly effective pipeline programs – exposing young women to successful surgeons and engineers – have a track record that broadcasts the enthusiasm of the young lives that are forever changed from the experience.”

The Perry Programs are held at least yearly in 38 states and have reached more than 14,000 young women. Whereas about 1% of women medical students overall match into orthopaedics, nearly 25% of medical students who are Perry alumni ultimately choose and match into orthopaedics.

Currently serving as President of The Perry Initiative, Dr. Lattanza is also chair of the Department of Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation at the Yale School of Medicine and professor of orthopaedic surgery.

Prior to becoming chair at Yale in 2019, Dr. Lattanza was a member of the faculty at the University of California San Francisco (UCSF) for 20 years where she was the vice chair of diversity, chief of hand and upper extremity surgery and hand fellowship director. Over the years she has partnered with Nth Dimensions, J. Robert Gladden Society, American Association of Latino Orthopaedic Surgeons (AALOS) and has led diversity efforts and programs through the American Orthopaedic Association (AOA), including serving as diversity liaison to the Critical Issues Committee.

In addition to her pioneering work in orthopaedic surgery, including leading a team to perform the first elbow-to-elbow transplant in 2016, Dr. Lattanza has committed herself to embracing diversity, whether it be socioeconomic, gender, race, or other potentially differing situations.

“I became chair, in part, to have more of an impact on the culture of orthopaedic surgery and to make it more welcoming and equitable for everyone,” said Dr. Lattanza.

Dr. Lattanza participates annually in the National Caucus on Healthcare Disparities in Musculoskeletal Care and has served on its steering committee. She is past president of the Ruth Jackson Orthopaedic Society (RJOS), has served as a member of the AAOS Diversity Advisory Board, and has extensive involvement with volunteer and outreach in domestic and international venues. She is also a member of the International Orthopaedic Diversity Association (IODA) and the newly formed Women in Orthopaedics Worldwide (WOW).

“Dr. Lattanza is an exceptional leader and champion of diversity,” added Dr. Lattanza’s colleague, Thomas Parker Vail, MD, of UCSF. “Her commitment to the profession, her colleagues, and her patients shines through each and every day.”

Dr. Lattanza received her medical degree from the Medical College of Ohio (now the University of Toledo College of Medicine and Life Sciences) and completed an internship at the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. Upon completing her residency in orthopaedic surgery at the University of Missouri Kansas City, she completed fellowships in hand surgery at Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons/Roosevelt Hospital and in pediatric hand and upper extremity at Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children in Dallas.

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About the AAOS

With more than 39,000 members, the [American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons](#) is the world’s largest medical association of musculoskeletal specialists. The AAOS is the trusted leader in advancing musculoskeletal health. It provides the highest quality, most comprehensive education to help orthopaedic surgeons and allied health professionals at every career level best treat patients in their daily practices. The AAOS is the source for information on bone and joint conditions, treatments and related musculoskeletal health care issues and it leads the health care discussion on advancing quality.

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