



**American Orthotic &
Prosthetic Association**

AOPA in Advance

Breaking News for O&P Professionals

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Newsletter Feedback

We invite your comments and questions. Please contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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O&P NEWS

Time is Running Out to Register for the 2011 Policy Forum

O&P faces intense political and legislative challenges right now and **AOPA** has been consistently fighting for your interests. In the past month, **AOPA** has submitted comments to the IRS about the 2.3 percent Medical Device Excise Tax, submitted testimony to the House Energy and Commerce Committee regarding Medicaid and the states, and continued pushing for O&P to be included in the "essential health benefits package" by commissioning a study by the Society for Human Resource Management on the inclusion of O&P benefits in insurance plans

[Click here to read AOPA's comments submitted to the IRS regarding the 2.3% Medical Device Tax.](#)

[Click here to read AOPA's written testimony to the House Energy and Commerce Committee.](#)

[Click here to access the study that AOPA commissioned, and that was conducted independently by the Society for Human Resource Management.](#)

And for more coverage of the essential benefits negotiations [click here](#) and [here](#),

But there are aspects of these decisions and policies that you can influence by speaking to your elected representatives on behalf of O&P. You must get involved and one vital way to do it will be through attending the 2011 Policy Forum.

The 2011 **AOPA** Policy Forum will be held Monday, April 11 through Tuesday, April 12, 2011 in Washington D.C. Members will be briefed on state and national legislative activities and be prepared for face-to-face meetings with their congressional representatives. Everyone in the O&P field, regardless of specialization has a stake in how the regulations being written by Health and Human Services (on essential health benefits) and Treasury (about the 2.3 percent medical device excise tax) Departments as well as how any new laws affecting healthcare play out in this very uncertain environment.

Your Congressman or Senator will value your input as a constituent and the specific contribution you make as a member of the O&P community to the restoration of mobility and quality of life to your patients. The Forum is designed to help everyone understand the issues and the politics which pose challenges to O&P patient care and equip everyone to have face-to-face conversations with Congressional staff and Members about parity's importance to our patients; how our O&P Medicare Improvement Act improves patient care and reduces fraud and abuse; and the need for continued research on cost effectiveness of treatment programs. Last year **AOPA** secured more than 230 meetings with Representatives and Senators.

Additionally, since personal relationships are so important when trying to convince a legislator to take action, it helps **AOPA's** advocacy efforts if we can call upon **AOPA** members who personally know members of Congress. If you have met your Senator, Representative or their staff, tell us about this contact. If you have had a member of Congress or their staff in your office for an educational visit, let us know. Do you know a close friend or family member of a Senator or Member of Congress? Please tell us. Such information will help **AOPA** formulate game plans on upcoming legislation and will also keep us from duplicating contacts that you have already made. It will also allow us to coordinate our message to the members so that everyone is providing the same information. Contact Kathy Dodson at kdodson@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0810.

[Click here to see a tentative agenda for the 2011 Policy Forum.](#)

The cost of registration is \$125 per person and **AOPA** has secured a room rate of \$249 per night at

the [L'Enfant Plaza Hotel](#), a five minute metro ride to Capitol Hill.

[Click here to register for the Policy Forum.](#)

[Click here to reserve your room at the L'Enfant Plaza Hotel](#) or call the hotel at (800) 635-5065.

If you need help reserving a room, contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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Thank You to the 2011 Policy Forum Sponsors!

AOPA would like to recognize those companies that are helping make the [2011 Policy Forum](#) possible at this very important time:

[Otto Bock HealthCare](#) (*Silver Level Sponsor*)

[Willow Wood](#) (*Silver Level Sponsor*)

[Becker Orthopedic](#) (*Bronze Level Sponsor*)

[Dr. Comfort](#) (*Bronze Level Sponsor*)

[The Fillauer Companies](#) (*Bronze Level Sponsor*)

[Tamarack Habilitation Tech Inc.](#) (*Bronze Level Sponsor*)

[Townsend Design](#) (*Bronze Level Sponsor*)

[Cailor Fleming Insurance](#) (*Support Level Sponsor*)

[Restorative Care of America](#) (*Support Level Sponsor*)

[TRS, Inc.](#) (*Support Level Sponsor*)

Sponsorship opportunities are still available. Contact Kelly O'Neill at koneill@AOPAnet.org or call (571) 431-0852.

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Update on Washington State's Assessment of Merits of Specific Device Types

In the November 30 issue of **AOPA in Advance**, **AOPA** alerted members of **AOPA's** comments to the Washington State Health Technology Assessment Program in regard to the benefits of reimbursing claims for microprocessor-controlled prosthetics-lower limb and myoelectric (with processor) controlled prosthetics-upper limb. **AOPA** was alerted to the review process on whether the state would continue to reimburse patient care providers for these devices.

The comments argued that refusing to reimburse the devices would be a disproportionately harmful action affecting a very small amputee population in the state; that there are devices that are available that meet the treatment needs of the patient and the fiscal concerns of the agency; as well as explaining the benefits-relative-to-cost present when patients are provided with devices that can restore lost mobility, and by extension, lost productivity.

[Click here to read the entire document submitted by AOPA.](#)

The Washington State Health Care Authority released its technology assessment priorities for 2011. [Click here to read the document.](#) The good news was that Myoelectric (with microprocessor) controlled Prosthetics - Upper limb was a category that will not be assessed in 2011. The bad news is that Microprocessor controlled Prosthetics - Lower limb remained on the list for review. **AOPA** will continue to work to assist policy makers in Washington state understand the benefit to patients provided by prosthetic and custom orthotic devices.

Questions? Contact Kathy Dodson at kdodson@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0810.

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HIPAA 5010: CMS Provider Education Call

Beginning January 1, 2012, all HIPAA covered entities (suppliers, health plans, clearinghouses, billing services, etc.) will be required to use the new HIPAA 5010 format for all HIPAA covered electronic transactions (claims submissions, remittance notices, claim status requests, etc.). If you do not make the switch to the HIPAA 5010 format before January 1, 2012, you will experience delays in processing your claims with both Medicare and private payers, as the current 4010 format will not be accepted after January 1, 2012. Don't wait or hesitate, the deadline is closer than you think.

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will be conducting an educational call geared towards Medicare Fee for Service Providers and what they must do to make the switch to the new HIPAA 5010 format. The call will take place on March 30, 2011 at 2:00 pm EST. If you wish to attend the call you must register by 2:00 pm EST on March 29.

[Click here in order to register for the call.](#)

Questions? Contact Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0854, or Joe McTernan at jmcternan@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0811.

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O&P PAC Corner: The O&P PAC Makes Several Contributions

The O&P PAC Corner provides updates on the activities of the O&P PAC, including the names of individuals who have made recent donations to the O&P PAC and the names of candidates the O&P PAC has supported.

The O&P PAC would like to acknowledge and thank the following **AOPA** member for his recent contribution to and support of the O&P PAC:

- Michael Allen, CPO, FAAOP
- Tom Rankin

The purpose of the O&P PAC is to advocate for legislative or political interests at the federal level, which have an impact on the orthotic and prosthetic community. The O&P PAC achieves this goal by working closely with members of the House and Senate to educate them about the issues, and help elect those individuals who support the orthotic and prosthetic community.

In order to participate in and receive information about the O&P PAC, federal law mandates that you must first sign an authorization form. [Click here to view and sign an O&P PAC authorization form.](#)

Questions? Contact Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0854, or Joe McTernan at jmcternan@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0811.

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AOPA and COPL Announce RFPs for 2011

The American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association (**AOPA**) and the Center for Orthotic and Prosthetic Learning and Outcomes/Evidence-Based Practice (COPL) announced the release of the two following RFPs:

Request for Proposal 1 - **AOPA** is interested in promoting research focused on improving the

knowledge about, and quality of prosthetic modalities available to Medicare-aged amputee patients requiring prosthetic knees, and comparing outcomes and effectiveness of various types of devices, to newer microprocessor prosthetic knees, as compared to conventional non-microprocessor controlled prosthetic knees. This **AOPA** RFP solicits, and will consider high-quality proposals for a single project with a one-time award in an amount projected to be \$250,000. The funding for this project is jointly provided by AOPA, Endolite, Freedom Innovations, LLC, *Össur Americas, Inc.*, and *Otto Bock*.

[Click here to read the entire RFP.](#)

The deadline for proposals is May 23, 2011. Successful applicants will be notified by July 1, 2011, with availability of this support to begin August 1, 2011. Reasonable efforts must be made to obtain Institutional Review Board ("IRB") approval in compliance with this time line. **AOPA** reserves the right to consider timeline extensions related to IRB review. The study should be completed within two years of the date of the award.

Applications should be sent to:

Research Committee
American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association
330 John Carlyle Street
Suite 200
Alexandria, VA 22314

Questions should be directed to: Thomas Fise, at the address above, or tfise@AOPAnet.org. Applicants **should not** contact individual microprocessor prosthetic knee manufacturers with questions regarding this **AOPA** RFP.

Request for Proposal 2 - For 2011-2012, **AOPA** is seeking proposals for one-time grants in amounts up to \$7,500 for one year. The leadership of **AOPA**, working in conjunction with the Center for Orthotic and Prosthetic Learning and Outcomes/Evidence-Based Practice (COPL) and its Board of Directors comprised of representatives from eight leading O&P organizations recognizes that there is a modest amount of original evidence based or outcomes research in orthotics and prosthetics. Consequently, AOPA is interested in funding original pilot research that will lead to larger trials that may qualify for government or other research funding support in the following six areas:

- a. Microprocessor Knee - Stumble Recovery Benefit for Non-Variable Cadence Ambulators, and Does Restricted Access for K-1 and K-2 to Hydraulic Controls Adversely Impact Patient Safety?
- b. Validity of Energy Storing Feet - AK/BK , Clinical Appropriateness and Efficacy of Dynamic Response Feet for K-3 Patients, and Defining Appropriate Levels of Variable Cadence
- c. TLSO, Reduction of Fall and/or Injury Related to Different Types of Spinal Devices Post Surgery
- d. Socket Interface: Methods for Measuring Proper Socket Fit and Alignment.
- e. Vacuum-Assisted Socket Suspension Systems
- f. Open Topics - Beyond the Above Priorities, Top Quality Clinical O&P Research Topics Considered

[Click here to read the entire RFP.](#)

AOPA and COPL will give preference to grants that address evidence-based clinical application in orthotics and prosthetics. To learn more about eligibility requirements for this RFP, please see the announcement attached to this document. Please post this RFP and share it with your colleagues.

The deadline for proposals under the Request for Pilot Grant Proposals is April 30, 2011.

Successful applicants will be notified by June 15, 2011, with availability of this support to take place as shortly thereafter as feasible.

The study must be completed within 1 year of the date of the award.

Inquires should be sent in writing to:

Thomas F. Fise, Executive Director
RFP Number EBP- 043011
American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association
330 John Carlyle Street, Suite 200, Alexandria, VA 22314
P: 571-431-0802 F: 571-431-0899
tfise@AOPAnet.org

Questions should be directed to: Thomas Fise, at the address above, or tfise@AOPAnet.org.

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Aid for Japan after Devastating Earthquake and Tsunami

Last week, Japan was affected by a massive 9.0 earthquake and a tsunami that followed from that terrifying seismic event. As the people of Japan recover and the country attempts to provide supplies and restore services to its citizens, rescue people who continue to be stranded amid the debris, and battle the problems at their nuclear reactors damaged by the tsunami, there are charities that are able to provide assistance. If you would like to contribute to any of these groups, please [click here to see more information about each aid group](#).

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First AOPA Advanced Coding and Billing Seminar of 2011: May 19-20 in Las Vegas

Don't miss the opportunity to experience two days of valuable O&P coding and billing information from **AOPA** experts. The Advanced Coding and Billing Seminars include breakout sessions for practitioners and administrators that will focus on each group's specific interests and educational needs.

The first **AOPA** Advanced Coding and Billing Seminar of 2011 will be held at the Mirage Resort and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada on May 19-20, 2011 Early bird registration for the Las Vegas seminar is now open and attendees who register prior to April 20, 2011 will receive a \$25 discount off the regular tuition price. **AOPA** has secured a very attractive room rate of \$125 per night at the Mirage.

What You Will Learn

- How to use Medical Policies to improve your reimbursement
- Hints on what, when, and how to document your interaction with patients
- How to develop and execute a successful compliance plan
- How to properly perform self audits of your charts and what to do when you discover problems

In the breakout session Practitioners will cover:

- General Coding Principles
- "Hands on" coding of specific devices
- Proper coding for repairs and adjustments
- Reimbursement for unlisted codes
- Codes that are mutually exclusive and should not be billed together

In the breakout session Administrators will cover:

- Updated Quality and Supplier Standards
- Strategies for handling appeals and denials
- How to handle unique billing situations
- Documentation Requirements

-Medicare as Secondary Payer

[Click here to register for the May 19-20 AOPA Advanced Coding and Billing Seminar.](#)

Questions? Contact Ann Davis at adavis@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0876.

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Join AOPA for the April 13 Audio Conference, "Improving Your Clinical Documentation"

Do you ever wonder if there is such a thing as too much documentation? The simple answer is no, but just as important as what you document is how you document. Join **AOPA** for the April 13, 2011 **AOPA**versity Audio Conference entitled, "Improving Your Clinical Documentation". An **AOPA** expert will guide you through the Ins and Outs of proper O&P clinical documentation. Topics for discussion will include:

- Different documentation methods and their advantages
- When to document patient encounters
- How to properly write addenda to your documentation
- How to work with other members of the rehab team to achieve consistent documentation

Don't miss this valuable educational opportunity. As audit activity increases, proper documentation techniques become increasingly important in ensuring the success of your business.

[Click here to register.](#)

For content questions, contact Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0854. For registration questions, contact Ann Davis at adavis@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0876.

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2011 AOPA National Assembly News: Registration Now Open! Rooms are \$135 Per Night!

Mark your calendars now for the American Orthotic and Prosthetic Association's 94th National Assembly September 19-22, 2011! If you are involved in O&P research or the delivery of O&P care and services-don't miss this chance to join your colleagues in Las Vegas, Nevada, at the country's largest and most prestigious O&P meeting. Registration is now open for the September 19-22 meeting.

[Click here to register now!](#)

The comprehensive programming and energized atmosphere of the Scientific Sessions provides cutting-edge education and information for all members of the O&P community-orthotists, prosthetists, pedorthists, physicians, scientists, researchers, technicians, managers, business owners, office staff, nurses, nurse practitioners, podiatrists, and other health care professionals. And you won't want to miss the business management sessions headlined by the Same E. Hamontree, CP, Award-winning lecture.

AOPA has secured a room rate of \$135 per night for the 2011 National Assembly. That's right, \$135: it's not an optical illusion - it's the Mirage room rate for this year's assembly. Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy AAA Four Diamond luxury for the fantastic room rate of only \$135 per night.

Science, Business, Fantastic Networking Opportunities and an incredible \$135 per night room rate at the Mirage Resort, September 19-22, 2011. To reserve your room today call (800) 627-6667 or (702)

791-7111 and mention the **AOPA** registration code "AOPMB." You can also register online by [clicking here](#).

Questions? Contact Ann Davis at adavis@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0876.

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O&P RESOURCES FROM AOPA

2011 AOPA Coding Products Now Available

Don't get caught with out of date coding references. Update your **AOPA** coding products today. The 2011 **AOPA** coding products are now available through the **AOPA** bookstore and may be ordered by calling the AOPA Bookstore at (571) 431-0876, or by [downloading the 2011 Product Catalogue](#) and faxing your order to (571) 431-0899.

The 2011 *Illustrated Guide*, *Quick Coder* and *Coding Pro* include all of the newly released HCPCS codes that describe O&P items. **In addition, the 2011 Coding Pro contains a new, interactive glossary that allows you to click on selected terms within a code descriptor and immediately view the O&P based definition of the selected term.**

As an added bonus, if you purchase all three **AOPA** coding products at the same time, you will receive a bundled discount of \$50 off the regular retail price of the three items as sold separately.

AOPA's Coding products have long been considered the definitive coding resources for the O&P industry. Make sure yours are current and up to date!

Questions? Contact Ann Davis at adavis@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0876.

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Visit AOPA's New Education Web Pages

Explore **AOPA's** newest membership web page to find **AOPA** educational products, services, programs and events in a variety of formats, designed for orthotic, prosthetic and pedorthic professionals at all career levels. **AOPA** is recognized as the leader in the orthotic, prosthetic and pedorthic profession for providing high quality education, innovative resources, and networking opportunities designed to help build relationships that are critical to your success. Discover the tools and resources you need to learn, connect, and grow!

www.AOPAnetonline.org/education

AOPAiversity is your one-stop resource for quality O&P education developed explicitly for orthotics, prosthetics and pedorthic professionals. Most education has been approved for continuing education (CE) credits.

Questions? Contact Ann Davis at adavis@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0876.

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Check Out the AOPA Job Board for New Opportunities in O&P

If you need a position filled at your business or are interested in looking at other job possibilities within the O&P field, check out the [AOPA Online Job Board](#). The online job board sports a freshly updated look and an easy-to-navigate profile creation system.

In the past month the Job Board has been viewed over 8,000 times by more than 1,500 unique users. If you want people to find out about a job opening at your facility or are interested in posting your resume for employers to view for potential openings, visit the [AOPA Online Job Board](#) today.

resume for employers to view for potential openings, visit the [AOPA Online Job Board](#) today.

And remember: if you advertise on the Online Job Board and decide to also advertise in the *O&P Almanac*, then you'll receive a 5 percent discount on the cost of advertising in the *Almanac* and on the Job Board.

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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The 2011 Audio Conference Series from AOPA

Numerous offices have benefited from their participation in **AOPA's** Medicare Audio Conferences. These one hour sessions come to you in the comfort of your office on the second Wednesday of each month at 1:00 pm Eastern. This series provides an outstanding opportunity for you and your staff to stay abreast of the latest hot topics in O&P, as well as gain clarification and ask questions on topics that you may not understand as fully as you would like to.

Seminars are still priced at just \$99 per line for members (\$199 for non-members). Buy the series and get two free; members pay just \$990 and non-members pay \$1990. If you purchase all the conferences, all conferences from months prior to your purchase of the set will be sent to you as CDs.

These convenient one hour telephone seminars are designed to fit easily into your busy schedule. Any practitioners needing credit can get 1.5 per audio conference by returning the provided quiz within 30 days and scoring at least 80%. Billing staff and others who don't need credit can nonetheless gain information they will use right away. The topics for 2011 are:

- January 12: How to Meet the New Medicare Supplier Standards (Available on CD)
- Feb. 9: Using the Lower Limb Medical Policy to Your Advantage (Available on CD)
- March 9: Enhance Your Claims Success, Two Letters at a Time (Available on CD)
- April 13: Improving Clinical Documentation
- May 11: Which Box to Check? The Negative Effect of the 855S on Reimbursement
- June 8: Preventing Audit Disasters
- July 13: Don't Rile the OSHA Police
- August 10: How to Get Paid for Miscellaneous and Repair Codes
- September 14: Don't Run Afoul of the KO Rules
- October 12: Developing Your Medicare Billing Compliance Plan
- November 9: Happy Holidays: Kickbacks and Gifts in O&P
- December 14: Are You Ready for the New Year? 2012 New Codes and Policies

[Click here to register for any 2011 Audio Conference.](#)

If you miss an audio conference, it will be available on CD after the fact. Cost is the same as if you participate live (\$99/\$199). We hope you'll be able to join us for this year's series.

Questions? Contact Ann Davis at adavis@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0876.

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O&P INSIDER'S TRACK

The Only Up-to-the Minute O&P Newsline

People In the News

[Hanger Orthopedic Group](#) and its nonprofit organization the [Hanger Ivan R. Sabel Foundation](#) recognized prosthetists **Jay Tew** from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, **Anna Avakian** from Alpharetta, Georgia, and **Vern Hostetler** from Zanesville, Ohio for their work in restoring mobility and independence to hundreds of Haitian amputees at the Hanger Clinic in Deschapelles, Haiti.

Hanger Orthopedic Group announced the promotions of **Amy Schaumburg** and **Thomas Bourgeois** to regional sales manager positions. They will take on responsibility for expanded business development teams at Hanger; Schaumburg will cover Missouri, Wisconsin, and Illinois, and Bourgeois will cover Texas, Oklahoma, and Colorado.

Bianca Kajlich, star of the CBS hit show "Rules of Engagement" is holding a Twitter campaign this week to raise funds for the Knoxville-based **Amputee Coalition's** Paddy Rossbach Youth Camp. In honor of her birthday on March 26, 2011, Bianca is asking her extensive list of fans and friends to send contributions that will send 100 children with limb loss to the camp this summer.

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Businesses in the News

The **Amputee Coalition** announced that during the month of April across the United States, amputee support groups, veterans, prosthetists, rehabilitation centers and those with limb loss will be participating in a number of activities in their local areas to raise awareness. The **Amputee Coalition** has submitted a proclamation to all 50 state governors urging April to be designated as Limb Loss Awareness Month. This is important to the limb loss community because it helps raise awareness, provide additional support and information, reach out to the broader community, and talk about measures to reduce and prevent limb loss. Taking action is simple: [click here](#), click on your state, and then fill in your name and information (be sure to fill in all of the blanks). Additionally, the **Amputee Coalition** is now accepting applications for Bridge to Ability Scholarships to attend its national conference, June 1-4, in Kansas City, Missouri. Created by the Amputee Coalition's Board of Directors in 2010, the Bridge to Ability Fund is designed to give new amputees the ability to enjoy all the benefits of the national conference and connect with others.

The **Amputee Coalition** announced that **Hanger Orthopedic Group** has pledged \$45,000 to the Amputee Coalition's Bridge to Ability Fund over the next 3 years. Through this fund, scholarships will be provided to new amputees to attend the national conference, June 1-4, in Kansas City, Missouri. Full conference registration - covering health and wellness education, technology sessions, special clinics, lodging and social events - is included.

Ohio Willow Wood announced that it has changed its name to **Willow Wood**.

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Send Us Your News!

The next **AOPA in Advance** will arrive in your inbox on April 5. So if you have a new employee or a new office, tell us! Share your news with the over 15,000 readers of the *O&P Almanac* and *AOPA In Advance* newsletter. Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org

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