

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

April 23, 2024

Dear Distinguished Colleagues,

Wherever you find yourself at this moment, whether in your clinic, hospital, office, or simply quietly reading this at home, know that you and I share a connection steeped in history dating back to 1955. It's our College that binds us together in this moment.

As President of our esteemed College, I'm deeply honored to lead in a role shaped by legacy and the footsteps of revered legal medicine scholars. With humble resolve, I aim to drive academic scholarship and advocacy in legal medicine, while fostering the professional growth of our members. Through close collaboration with our Officers and Board of Governors, we guide ACLM towards its noble mission of excellence in legal medicine.

Below are some updates:

New Leadership Elected at 2024 Annual Fellows Meeting

At the recent Annual Fellows Meeting in San Diego, the following esteemed Fellows were elected:

Officers:

President-Elect: Jennifer Unis Sullivan, DMD, JD, FCLM

Treasurer: Richard Kelly, MD, JD, MPH, FASA, FCLM

Secretary: Josanne (Jan) O'Dell, DDS, MFS, JD, FCLM

Board of Governors with terms ending in 2027:

Michael Lee Brooks, MD, JD, FCLM

Stanley W. Fronczak, MD, JD, FAANS[L], FACS, FCLM

Amirala Pasha, DO, JD, FACP, FCLM

AMA Delegates (2025-2027):

Ellia Ciammaichella, DO, JD, FCLM

Elizabeth Valencia, MD, JD, FCLM (*alternate*)

Congratulations to all the newly elected Officers, Governors, and AMA Delegates! I am honored to serve ACLM alongside them, together with our other members of the Board of Governors, as well as our committee chairs and members.

For information about our distinguished board, please visit the ACLM [website](#).

Elected to the Board - Mert N. Aksu, DDS, JD, MHSA, Cert. DPH, FCLM

Dr. Mert Aksu, Dean of the University of Detroit Mercy School of Dentistry since 2008, has also recently been elected by the ACLM Board of Governors to fill the vacancy left by Dr. Jan O'Dell following her election as College Secretary. Dr. Aksu holds the distinction of being the longest-serving dean in the School's history. His commitment to the American College of Legal Medicine has been steadfast since he became a Fellow in 1998, demonstrated by his unwavering engagement, including delivering ACLM annual conference lectures consistently for almost two decades. Dr. Aksu's contributions extend beyond lectures; he has played a vital role in each of the ACLM dental conferences and currently serves as a member of the ACLM Bylaws and Resolutions Committee. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Aksu on this well-deserved honor and look forward to the continued impact of his leadership within the College.

AMA Delegate (2025-2027) - Ellia Ciammaichella, DO, JD, FCLM

Allow me to also introduce Dr. Ciammaichella, a physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist in spinal cord and brain injury. [Dr. Ciammaichella](#) was elected as the ACLM AMA Delegate (2025-2027). She is a dedicated health advocate within the disability community and has successfully championed various initiatives to improve independence and quality of life for individuals with disabilities. Notably, she has played key roles in creating impactful AMA policies, enhancing Medicare coverage, and shaping healthcare policies at both state and national levels. Her commitment to advocacy is evident through her extensive efforts, including white coat visits to legislative bodies and her instrumental role in crafting AMA policy H-330.871 to improve Medicare coverage for individuals with severe neurological disabilities. She is poised to bring her expertise and dedication to further represent ACLM at the AMA House of Delegates beginning in January 2025.

Immediate Past President – Eli N. Avila, MD, JD, MPH, FCLM, DABLM

As I step into my new role, I want to take a moment to commend the outstanding work of my predecessor, [Dr. Eli Avila](#). Under his leadership, we have achieved significant milestones, and I am truly grateful for his contributions. It's reassuring to know that Dr. Avila will continue to lend his invaluable guidance to the Board for another year as our Immediate Past President.

52nd President - Past President Tony S. Quang, MD, JD, FCLM

I'd also like to extend a heartfelt note of gratitude to [Dr. Tony Quang](#). While listing his accomplishments during his term would make this letter excessively long, it's fitting to acknowledge that his exceptional work has propelled ACLM forward with remarkable momentum.

2024 64th Annual Conference - San Diego, California

Our recent Annual Conference in San Diego was an outstanding success. I extend again my heartfelt gratitude to our conference chairs, Dr. Richard Kelly and Dr. Jennifer Unis Sullivan, and Dental Conference Chair, Dr. Jan O'Dell, for their exceptional leadership. I would also like to extend special thanks to Mary Kelly, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC for her exceptional dedication in making the recent annual conference a big success.

Additionally, I want to express my appreciation to our 60+ distinguished speakers who delivered cutting-edge and enlightening presentations on the latest issues in healthcare and legal medicine. Their contributions were instrumental in making our conference a resounding success. And many thanks to Past President [Jack Snyder](#), MD, JD, PhD, MFS, MPH, MBA, MSIS, FCLM for providing a pre-conference seminar on scientific evidence in litigation, part 2. His expertise added great value to our event.

For those who were unable to attend ACLM's Annual Awards Banquet, I am pleased to announce the honorees: Dr. Richard Wilbur was recognized for his remarkable legacy as the ACLM Delegate to the AMA, Dr. Bob Buckman for his exceptional dedication to the College and its students and his service as Chair of the ACLM Education Fund, and Dr. Bruce Seidberg for his visionary leadership in establishing the ACLM Dental Conferences. Additionally, Dr. Eli Avila, Immediate Past President, presented President's Awards to Dr. Jack Snyder, Dr. Monique Anawis, and Dr. Bob Buckman.

To all who joined us in San Diego, thank you for dedicating your time away from your work and family. We hope you had a fantastic time. As I mentioned at the close of the conference, I trust that the knowledge gained and relationships formed during our time together will continue to inspire and empower us in our respective endeavors, wherever they may lead us.

ACLM 2025 65th Annual Conference - Houston, Texas

Mark your calendars for February 28 to March 2, 2025, as we gather at the vibrant University of Houston for an intellectually stimulating exploration of the latest issues in legal medicine and health law. Co-sponsored by the University of Houston School Law Center and College of Medicine, this [conference](#) promises in-depth scholarly analysis of the latest legal medicine issues, unparalleled networking opportunities, and the chance to earn CME, dental CE, and CLE credits - all in one comprehensive event.

Co-Chairs of the 2025 Annual Conference Planning Committee – Elizabeth Valencia, MD, JD, FCLM and Dr. Ellia Ciammaichella, DO, JD, FCLM

I am delighted to announce that two of our distinguished Fellows have begun working on our next Annual Conference. Dr. Liz Valencia, a distinguished member of the Board of Governors, and Dr. Ellia Ciammaichella, ACLM AMA Delegate (2025-2027), are serving as co-chairs for this dynamic event. [Dr. Valencia](#) is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Radiology and Division of Breast Imaging and Intervention at Mayo Clinic and she serves in the AMA Minority Section as Chair of Engagement. Please stay tuned for announcements coming from them.

ACLM Honorary Fellowship Award - The Honorable Justice Noma Gurich

I'm delighted to share that The Honorable Justice Noma Gurich has been honored with and graciously accepted the ACLM Honorary Fellowship Award. Justice Gurich, a distinguished member of the Supreme Court of Oklahoma, notably served as Chief Justice in 2019 and 2020. Over the past 12 years, she has collaborated with ACLM Past President Dr. Sandy Sanbar in co-chairing the ACLM/ABLM's "A Day with the Judges" conferences, focusing on pertinent legal medicine issues that have attracted thousands of participants.

In her response, Justice Gurich expressed profound enthusiasm and gratitude for the recognition bestowed upon her by the College. We look forward to [Justice Gurich](#) accepting this prestigious honor in Houston during ACLM's 2025 65th Annual Conference.

ACLM AMA Resolution - H.R. 7225, the bipartisan, Administrative Law Judges Competitive Service Restoration Act

ACLM, through Past President and [AMA](#) Delegate Richard Wilbur, MD, JD, FCLM, and AMA Alternate Delegate [Rey Gonzalez, Jr.](#), MD, JD, FCLM, and with the initiative and efforts of [David Mullens](#), DPM, JD, FCLM, is continuing to advocate for AMA to support [H.R. 7225](#), the bipartisan, Administrative Law Judges Competitive Service Restoration Act. This bipartisan Act was introduced on February 4, 2024, by Congressman Gerry Connolly (D-VA-11) and is co-sponsored by Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-1) and Congressman Michael Lawler (R-NY-17) and is endorsed by the American College of Legal Medicine, the Association of Administrative Law Judges, and the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers.

AMA Scope Creep Advocacy Efforts

As the medical society at the interface of law and medicine, the issue of scope creep falls within the domain of legal medicine and carries significant implications for healthcare practice. Given the importance of the issue and the potential impact on healthcare professionals and patients, I have asked the ACLM's Ethics Committee, chaired by distinguished BOG member [Michael Brooks](#), MD, JD, FCLM, to thoroughly discuss the implications, potential benefits, and any concerns associated with ACLM's endorsement of AMA scope creep advocacy efforts. Dr. Brooks is a neuroradiologist and an attorney, and he teaches medical topics and ethics to attorneys.

The Ethics Committee will assess whether ACLM's involvement aligns with its mission, values, and objectives. Considerations may include how the proposed scope of practice laws align with ethical principles, patient safety, quality of care, and the professional autonomy of healthcare practitioners.

American Academy of Pediatrics - Letter to ACLM Regarding Gun Violence

On March 26, 2024, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) invited ACLM to join them and other organizations in a letter to Congress supporting CDC/NIH funding for gun violence prevention research for FY25. The devastating impact of firearm-related violence, including suicides, violent crimes, and accidental shootings, affects individuals, families, and communities nationwide. While the effects of gun violence are abhorrent,

this letter did not secure the required number of votes from the Board of Governors for approval. Concerns were raised about the need to find meaningful changes from the first four rounds of yearly funding. There's also a call for local public health departments to take a more active role in mitigating gun violence. I conveyed to AAP an eagerness for more opportunities for ACLM to collaborate with AAP and other medical societies to make a comprehensive and significant scholarly contribution on this issue. In response, AAP extended an invitation to ACLM to join them and the American College of Emergency Physicians in the Gun Violence Prevention Research Roundtable.

8th Edition Legal Medicine Textbook

Past President Sandy Sanbar, MD, PhD, JD, FCLM, DABLM and I are working with our publisher Elsevier to complete the final touches of the upcoming 8th Edition of the preeminent textbook *Legal Medicine*. Authored by ACLM and the American Board of Legal Medicine, this premier treatise in legal medicine has 82 chapters in legal medicine, health care law, and medical ethics. It is now available for pre-order through the ACLM [website](#).

On behalf of the College, I extend our heartfelt thanks to Dr. Sanbar for his unparalleled dedication as the Editor of all editions of this preeminent book. His tireless work has played a pivotal role in shaping and maintaining the high standards of this invaluable resource.

The Journal of Legal Medicine

In 2023, JLM had more than 17,000 downloads and had generated income for the College. I would like to thank Past President Joe Piorkowski, Jr., DO, JD, MPH, FCLM and distinguished BOG member [Amir Pasha](#), DO, JD, FACP, FCLM, who served as Editors-in-Chief in the recent edition. Moving forward, Dr. Pasha will take the helm as the Editor-in-Chief. He is an Assistant Professor of Medicine at Mayo Clinic, an attorney, and has published the book "Laws of Medicine: Core Legal Aspects for the Healthcare Professional" in 2022.

2024 Writing Competition Winners

I am recognizing below the outstanding winners of our recent Annual Conference writing competitions.

Orr (Postdoctoral) Writing Competition:

1st place: Maya Alexandri, MD, JD (Augusta University Medical Center) - "Law and Medical School Admissions in the Aftermath of *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard*"

2nd place: Edna Besic, PharmD (SLU Law) - "Lessons from Fen-Phen: 'Miracle Weight Loss Drugs' and the Disasters that Follow"

3rd place: Nichole Davis, DHA, MPH, BCPA (Virginia University of Lynchburg School of Business and Professional Studies) - "Analyzing the Impact of Cultural Competence on Legal Medicine and its Ramifications on Patient Physical and Psychological Safety"

Hirsh (Student) Writing Competition:

1st place: Justine Newman (SIU Law) - "Undependable Data Prolonging the Overdose Crisis"

2nd place: Rachel Reeder (SLU Law) - "Getting Opill Over-The-Counter and Beyond: Improving the FDA's Over-The-Counter Pathway"

3rd place: Eli Avila II (William & Mary Law) - "Cyberthreats & National Health Security: How Cyberattacks Impact the Pharmaceutical Supply Chain"

Basanta Poster Competition:

Catherine "CeeCee" Cascavita (UCLA School of Medicine/School of Law) - "The Association Between Glaucoma and Substance Use in the NIH All of Us Program"

Congratulations to all the winners for their remarkable papers!

A heartfelt thank you to the co-chairs of our Student Awards Committee, esteemed BOG members [JD Daniels](#), JD, DO, MBA, MPH, MT (ASCP), FCAP, FCLM, and [Adam McLaughlin](#), MD, JD, FRCSC, FCLM. Their dedicated efforts as co-chairs have been indispensable in bringing this competition to fruition.

Additionally, we extend our gratitude to Dr. Bob Buckman, whose name ACLM honored for the Student Writing Competition Winners, for his unwavering support to students and future leaders of our College.

Australasian College of Legal Medicine – 2024 Annual Scientific Meeting

Our colleagues from the Australasian College of Legal Medicine will hold their 2024 Annual Scientific Meeting and Awards Dinner on September 7 and 8, 2024 at QT Queenstown in New Zealand and online. Their topic is "*In my opinion* - Expert evidence and the law." Past President Dr. Jack Snyder will represent ACLM and provide a virtual presentation related to the seminars he conducted during ACLM's 2023 and 2024 Annual Conferences on "Scientific Evidence in Litigation." For more information please visit their [website](#).

Behind-the-Scenes: CMS Management Team

I want to extend my appreciation to our management team at CMS, which includes Executive Director Mr. Ted Kanellakes, Ms. Megan Whalen, and Mr. Patrick Derse. They handle much of the essential work in the background, ensuring the smooth functioning of ACLM.

2024 Annual Dues

Finally, none of these activities and advocacies above, and others that are not listed, will be possible without your continued support. On behalf of ACLM's Board of Governors, I want to thank you for your ongoing commitment. If you have not renewed your membership, please go to our [website](#). Our College needs your help to accomplish these activities that will have lasting impacts not only in our respective fields but on our society in general. For Fellows of the College, renewing our annual membership allows us to continue using "FCLM" after our names. Remember, ACLM is a not-for-profit organization, and our College depends on our annual dues to advance legal medicine in our society.

While this update may seem lengthy, I value ensuring the College remains thoroughly informed. I trust my next letters will be more succinct.

With regards as spring blossoms,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Vinluan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael Vinluan, MD, JD, FCLM