Andrew Taylor Still, MD, DO, dissatisfied with the lack of efficacy of the orthodox medicine of his day, sought a better approach to treat disease and essentially maintain wellness. And, based on his efforts and formulation of a philosophy with an emphasis on the relation between structure and function and on principles of the unity of the body and the body’s ability to be self-regulatory and self-healing, osteopathic medicine had its genesis.

Yes, our profession’s founder was an MD, and this year for the first time in the 14 years since its inception, JAOA’s Annual George W. Northup, DO, Medical Writing Award is being given to an MD lead author. Furthermore, the byline carries another MD in addition to a DO and a PhD.

The JAOA editors and Editorial Advisory Board have voted to award the JAOA George W. Northup, DO, Medical Writing Award for an article published in 2003 to Timothy S. Carey, MD, MPH; Thomas M. Motyka, DO; Joanne M. Garrett, PhD; and Robert B. Keller, MD. The winning article, “Do Osteopathic Physicians Differ in Patient Interaction from Allopathic Physicians? An Empirically Derived Approach,” appeared in the July 2003 issue of the JAOA.

This landmark study, supported by funding from the American Osteopathic Association, compared primary care osteopathic physicians’ and allopathic physicians’ interactions with their patients and assessed whether osteopathic primary care physicians’ interactions with patients reflect the principles of osteopathic medicine.

The George W. Northup, DO, Medical Writing Award, is an annual award created in 1990 to honor George W. Northup, DO, who served as AOA editor in chief for 27 years. Thomas Wesley Allen, DO, who succeeded Dr Northup as editor in chief, proposed the award to recognize excellence in writing and scholarship in articles published in The Journal. Each year, the AOA editor in chief and associate editors nominate the articles to be considered. The JAOA Editorial Advisory Board then selects the winner from the nominees on the basis of clinical significance, scientific validity, and osteopathic content. Selection is also based on an article’s contribution to changing the way one practices, thinks, or does research.

In past years, The Journal has been remiss in announcing the recipients of the Northup Award within its own pages, having left such announcements up to The DO magazine. To compensate for this omission from JAOA, we are publishing the abstracts of the previous winners following this editorial. It is hoped that some of the research topics covered in these award-winning research articles will stimulate readers, especially those devoted to osteopathic medical research, to pursue further research that will support and substantiate the findings of these earlier investigations and help to further validate our profession’s distinctiveness. And, of course, we hope such a review of these abstracts will prompt interest in writing and considering the JAOA as the primary medium for publication and dissemination. And, as the list shows, not all winning lead authors have been DOs.

In this year’s Northup Award–winning article, we have a team of investigators that includes two MDs looking at us osteopathic physicians and, in essence, giving us the “giftie to see oursels as ithers see us” through our communication style during audiotaped office visits with patients.

Gilbert E. D’Alonzo, Jr, DO
Editor in Chief

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O wad some Power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as ithers see us!

Robert Burns, 1786