



member profile

Will Kirby, DO  
Beverly Hills, California  
Dermatology  
Member Since 1996

**T**he iLEARN mentor program connects experienced DOs with ready-to-learn osteopathic medical students, interns, residents and young physicians. While the benefits of the program for the mentees may be more obvious—support, guidance, greater exposure to the osteopathic approach—the benefits for mentors are just as strong, even for physicians who have already established flourishing practices and built rewarding careers. One such physician went from TV star to mentor—and treasured the experience.

Will Kirby, DO, decided to join iLEARN in 2009. Unsure at first if he even wanted to participate, Dr. Kirby is now a passionate advocate of the program. “A few osteopathic medical students requested that I participate in the iLEARN program,” said Dr. Kirby, “and candidly, I was very reluctant to be a part of it at first. I was afraid that I wouldn’t have the time and that the students would be a distraction to my patients. The opposite has been true, however: I’m actually a much more efficient physician when I’m teaching, and my patients and staff absolutely love the student presence!”

Through the iLEARN Mentor Exchange, mentees can find mentors who match their areas of interest and how they would like to be mentored. Mentors can choose how they’d like to interact with their mentees: over the phone, through email or face-to-face. Dr. Kirby decided to mentor students in person, with each mentee visiting his dermatology practice in Beverly Hills for 30 days and participating in both clinical and didactic lessons, as well as the business aspects of a successful medical practice. The mentees grew as physicians in this immersive learning environment, while Dr. Kirby discovered a new calling.

“Being a mentor was never something I thought I would enjoy, but I have found that I now have a true passion for teaching,” said Dr. Kirby. “It’s a great feeling to know that I serve as a role model for America’s future physicians.”

To Dr. Kirby, the iLEARN program is just one example of how the AOA supports and sustains its members. “Our profession depends

on a strong support system, and the AOA is an integral part of ensuring that our livelihood is, and our collective interests are, protected.” From appearing on television shows like *The Doctors* and *Dr. 90210* to co-authoring medical textbooks and serving as the associate clinical professor at two universities, Dr. Kirby credits the

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AOA for providing him with the support he needs to balance these varied roles and responsibilities. Dr. Kirby adds that he’s also able to balance everything because of his “solid osteopathic education and the passion that the student interaction provides.”

With the iLEARN mentor program, Dr. Kirby hopes that he is doing his part to create these same kinds of opportunities for the next generation of osteopathic physicians. “Medicine is the last noble profession,” said Dr. Kirby. “It feels good to take an active role in the education of our future physicians and pay it forward.”

**MORE WAYS TO CONNECT WITH YOUR OSTEOPATHIC FAMILY:**

- **iLEARN Mentor Program**  
Mentoring program for the osteopathic medical profession
- **Online Social Networking**  
AOA pages on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn
- **AOA President’s Blog**  
Direct access to the AOA president
- **The Daily Report Blog**  
Daily news updates from the AOA executive director
- **Directory of the Osteopathic Medical Profession**  
Contact information for former classmates and colleagues