

From: Dave Rudzin, UOAA President
Subject: A Message from the UOAA
Date: October 20, 2010

Dear Friends,

Last year at this time, I was elected to the Office of UOAA President-Elect, a position that would have found me assuming the Office of President on January 1st, 2012. However in early October, UOAA's Managing Board of Directors received a message from Kristin Knipp advising us that for personal reasons she found it necessary to resign as UOAA's President.

Kristin had served as our President for only a short time, but had been active in our organization for a number of years. During her term she made substantial contributions to our public image by bringing us into the electronic social networking world of today. She was responsible for communicating our Mission Statement, in overseeing the development of our modernized logo, coordinating the re-design of our website and instituting Ostomy Awareness Day.

While we did not request her resignation, we certainly respect her decision and agree that her family must come first. We wish her well in all her future endeavors.

So here we are having our first official dialog. I live in Vernon Hills, Illinois, am married to Barbara and together we have 5 sons. I have had an ileostomy for 38 years and have been an active leader in both UOA for 15 years and in UOAA since its formation in 2005.

I believe in the mission of the UOAA, and am excited to have the opportunity to further the outreach programs we have in place and to complete those currently under development.

It has become clear to me over the last few years that we in the ostomy community are being made to feel inadequate or embarrassed by how the media portrays us on TV or discusses, and yes, even jokes about our conditions on radio or in print.

Let me assure you all right now, that I am committed to bringing the REAL facts of how ostomates LIVE to the rest of the world. In a world where, years ago, subjects like breast cancer or autism could not be discussed, we have evolved into a world where these issues are now dinner conversation. We too, because of the fact that ostomy surgery saves lives, MUST bring our positive message to the public. We should be proud of who we are and need to let others in our situation know that by becoming involved with us, together WE can reach out to those who would rather have cancer or an inflammatory bowel disease than face ostomy surgery.

I know I can count on you to join me and all of our other tremendously talented UOAA volunteers in our journey to educate, inform and change the world's perception of WHO we are. We are your neighbors, your clergy, your co-workers and your friends.

I look forward to continuous input from all of you, as my door, phone and e-mail are always open to comments. I encourage your participation and involvement along with your passion, and know that we can break the stigma that the term “ostomy” still carries.

Sincerely,

[Dave Rudzin](#)

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