

**Susan C. Taylor, MD, FAAD**  
**President-Elect Candidate Speech**

Hello, my name is Susan Taylor and I am honored and humbled to seek the office of President-elect of the American Academy of Dermatology. I appreciate you spending the next five minutes with me.

I've been actively engaged in our Academy since 1999 when I served on the Committee for the Advancement of Women's Dermatologic Health. Since that time, I've learned the depth and breadth of the Academy by serving on 22 Academy Councils, Committees, Task Forces and Work Groups. I have assumed leadership roles on the Board of Directors, and most recently as your Vice President. I am well prepared to lead the Academy into the future.

But now, I want to take this opportunity to tell you a little about myself... not the professional side, but the part of my life you may not know. I have a wonderful husband of 38 years, Kemmel, and two extraordinary daughters Morgan and Madison. And I can't forget our dog Buddy.

My roots began in North Philadelphia, a neighborhood that falls well below the poverty line, facing the challenges of unemployment, housing, health care and educational disparities.

It's a place where many people struggle everyday just to survive.

The difference for me was a dedicated single mother who instilled in my sister and me the core values of: education, hard work, determination and love. I went to a public elementary school and through my mother's sacrifice I was able to attend a private Quaker school, Friends Select on a scholarship.

There, I was taught to ask why, to test assumptions, to try to understand the other person's point of view.

I was curious, hard-working and always went the extra mile...and that opened up the path to the University of Pennsylvania where I graduated magna cum laude. I went onto Harvard Medical School a very challenging experience and again with grit, determination and perseverance, I earned the honor to be a commencement speaker. I came out prepared to offer the very best care for patients. First during my three years of Internal Medicine training and then as a Dermatology resident at Columbia.

These early experiences have formed the person I am today...strong, innovative, inclusive and not afraid of doing the hard work.

For thirty years, I was in solo private practice at Society Hill Dermatology. I was the Founding Director of the Skin of Color Center at St. Luke's Hospital Center in New York. I served for ten years on the Board of Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania and

then on the Board of Overseers of the School of Medicine at Penn. Five years ago, I stepped down to join the Department of Dermatology where I am the Sandra Lazarus Professor of Dermatology. So, I understand the challenges of private practitioners as well as those in academic medicine and come to you, well prepared and with a broad background, to lead the largest professional organization of dermatologists in the world.

We are 20,000 plus members strong and as your President, I pledge I will first seek to bring us together so that we can work collectively, that our differences become our strengths, and we can make our Academy and our specialty stronger.

I will facilitate inclusion and belonging for all of our members. We are a richly diverse group of physicians: we differ in our practice models, subspecialty, career stages, genders, races, and our viewpoints. These differences are stressing and weakening the unity of our specialty.

Second, I pledge that I will listen as I have done as Vice President creating the Young Physician Forums. Let's discuss our differences and forge a common ground without vitriol. I ask, "What if instead of calling people out, we call everybody in" and listen to one another and then work together.

Third, let's think differently and better to change our narrative from one of defending our scope of practice to one of active transformation. Towards that end, let's expand our Academy's advocacy by engaging patients more fully on critical issues. And Let's explore how we can innovate and increase the scope of practice of dermatology.

I truly enjoy doing the work of the Academy and you will find that I am honest, and passionate, and hard-working and transparent. And finally, as I previously said, we as dermatologists and as members of the Academy have common ground. We share a love for our specialty. We share a commitment to excellent care on behalf of our patients. I welcome the opportunity to serve you as your Academy President.

Thank you.