

ADA News

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION

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GOVERNMENT

Dentists, dental students advocate for profession during Lobby Day

ANNUAL WASHINGTON CONFERENCE DRAWS MORE THAN 700 ATTENDEES

BY JENNIFER GARVIN
Washington

Dental insurance reform. Alleviating student debt. Improving dental Medicaid. These were some of the issues that were front and center during the seventh annual ADA Dentist and Student Lobby Day. More than 700 dentists and dental students gathered for the annual advocacy event, which was jointly hosted by the ADA and American Student Dental Association.

ADA President George R. Shepley, D.D.S., thanked the attendees for taking time to advocate for issues important to dentistry.

"Whether you're a dentist, student or leader, we're all members of

the Tooth Party, working in unison and supporting a shared cause: to be champions of health and well-being, and to shape the discourse on oral health care in America," Dr. Shepley said. "And while we're here in D.C. to shine a light on national issues, I'd also like to commend those of you who are making a difference at home in your state legislatures. As they say, politics is local. A win for dentistry anywhere is a win for dentistry everywhere."

The three-day Lobby Day took place March 5-7 and the attendees took part in 325 meetings on the Hill advocating for dentistry and better oral health for patients. During the

conference portion of the event, attendees networked and heard from political analysts, subject matter experts and other dental advocates.

"I challenge all of you to not let the momentum and enthusiasm from the event stop here," said ASDA President Shafa Nathani, a third-year dental student at the Tufts University School of Dental Medicine. "We need to take what we've learned back to our communities and inspire other colleagues to take action on these issues as well as legislation on the state level."

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These are the bills the attendees advocated for during their March 7 visits to Capitol Hill:

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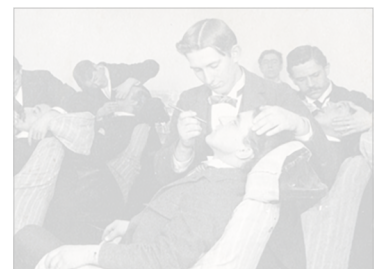
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15 April marks Oral Cancer Awareness Month

HPV-related oropharyngeal cancers on the rise



18 Temple Dental celebrates 160th anniversary

School community marks milestone with gala, lectures, awards



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ACCESS TO CARE



Photo by retired Army Col. David Yeun

Humanitarian mission: Three oral and maxillofacial surgeons from the United States traveled to the Philippines through the Metropolitan Humanitarian Foundation to provide care and assist Filipino oral surgeons with cleft palate and lip surgeries. From left in the front row are Dr. Xenia Velmonte, Manila, Philippines; Dr. Christensen Sicut Hsu, Bonsall, California; Dr. Samira Meymand, Jacksonville, Florida; and Dr. Joyce Jeffries, Albuquerque, New Mexico. Dr. Glenda de Villa, Manila, Philippines, is in the back row. Drs. Hsu, Meymand and Jeffries brought donated items to Our Lady of Peace Hospital, including a hanau articulator; suitcase full of surgical scrubs donated by individual providers and APLA Health; and patient monitor donated by Digicare Biomedical Technology. "Oral and maxillofacial surgeons have a demanding schedule," Dr. Hsu said. "So how does an oral and maxillofacial surgeon find the time to participate in humanitarian missions? It starts with making a deliberate choice of wanting to become a humanitarian. If you have a skill to provide valuable services and a passion to help those in need, then become a humanitarian by volunteering with nonprofit organizations that can support you through the journey."



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LOBBY DAY *continued from Page 1*

- Dental and Optometric Care Access Act. This bill would prohibit dental and vision plans from setting the fees network doctors may charge for services not covered by the insurers.
- Resident Education Deferred Interest Act. This bill would allow dental and medical students to defer interest accrual on their federal loans while they are in their residency programs.
- Medicaid Dental Benefit Act/Strengthening Medicaid Incentives for Licensees Enrolled in Dental Act. This legislation would improve Medicaid access to dental care by ensuring that adults on Medicaid in every state have comprehensive dental benefits and that the administrative burdens for Medicaid dentists are reduced.

Dentists were also encouraged to discuss workforce issues in their states since many dentists have indicated staffing shortages are their No. 1 concern at this time.

The event also included two awards. Gary Oyster, D.D.S., ADA 16th District trustee, received the inaugural ADPAC Lifelong Legacy Award, and Abe Abdul, D.M.D., was the 2022 recipient of the Excellence in Action for Dental Health Award from the ADA Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention. Trevor Cubra, a third-year dental student at the Ohio State University College of Dentistry, received ASDA's National Legislative Liaison of the Year Award.

The afternoon portion of the event featured a keynote address from editorial cartoonist Kevin Kallaugh and a discussion on the art of polling moderated by Nathan Gonzales, editor and publisher of Inside Elections.

For more information about ADA advocacy, visit ADA.org/Advocacy. ■

—garvinj@ada.org

Gary Oyster, D.D.S., receives inaugural ADPAC Lifelong Legacy Award

BY JENNIFER GARVIN

Gary Oyster, D.D.S., wasn't sure what to think when he was summoned to the podium during the ADA Dentist and Student Lobby Day.

His friend and colleague, Hal Fair, D.M.D., had just called him up to the stage to surprise him with the inaugural ADPAC Lifelong Legacy Award. The award was created to recognize those individuals who have contributed at least \$20,000 to the American Dental Political Action Committee over their lifetime.

"Dr. Oyster has set himself apart from the rest of us when it comes to advocating for policies that are important to the American Dental Association and to the patients that our member dentists serve," said Dr. Fair, a past 16th District trustee. "Not only does he advocate tirelessly for our policies but he also, so to speak, puts his money where his mouth is."

Tributes soon followed from Alec Parker, D.D.S., CEO of the North Carolina Dental Society, and Charles Norman, D.D.S., a past ADA president from North Carolina. There was also a surprise video tribute from the N.C. Dental Society members and a reception held in his honor. "Wow, that's all I can say," said Dr. Oyster,



Action for Dental Health: Abe Abdul, D.M.D., right, receives the 2022 Excellence in Action for Dental Health Award from James Mancini, D.D.S., chair, ADA Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention.



Cartoon times: Dental students Juochi Tsai, left, and Shinhoo Woo of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso Woody L. Hunt School of Dental Medicine enjoy trying their hand at drawing a political cartoon during Lobby Day.



Recognized: Gary Oyster, D.D.S., second from right, receives the inaugural ADPAC Lifelong Legacy Award during Lobby Day. From left are Charles Norman, D.D.S., Alec Parker, D.D.S., and Hal Fair, D.M.D., who presented Dr. Oyster with the award.

who received two standing ovations from the audience and is the current trustee of the ADA's 16th District. "I want to say to the students to keep the passion that they feel now as they go through dentistry forever. Never give up. You will not win every battle, but you want to win the war. And the war is to keep dentistry and the doctor-patient relationship as a model for health care."

Dr. Oyster has been involved in organized dentistry for more than 50 years, and according to the tributes, his tireless efforts in advocating for dentistry at the local, state and national levels are legendary. Most recently he contributed \$100,000 to the successful Massachusetts ballot initiative to establish a

medical loss ratio in dentistry.

"Gary has taught me by his actions the most important business lesson I ever learned: relationships are everything," Dr. Parker said.

"Gary Oyster is the epitome of political activism. He has spent countless hours meeting with legislators, hosting fundraisers, attending fundraisers and contributing untold financial aid to their campaigns," added Dr. Norman, a friend of Dr. Oyster for more than 40 years. "Probably the most inspiring thing about Gary's many years of service as N.C. legislative and PAC chair was that he never expected recognition for his efforts. He did what he thought was right for his practice, our profession, and the patients we serve." ■

ADA asking public, profession to report concerns with certain palatal expanders

BY DAVID BURGER

The ADA is encouraging the public and dental profession to follow the Federal Food & Drug Administration's process of promptly reporting adverse events or serious complications related to certain dental devices that are fixed (nonremovable) palatal expanders.

The palatal expanders of concern were named in a March 30 FDA announcement and include:

- Anterior Growth Guidance Appliance and Fixed Anterior Growth Guidance Appliance.
- Anterior Remodeling Appliance and Fixed Anterior Remodeling Appliance.
- Osseo-Restoration Appliance and Fixed Osseo-Restoration Appliance.
- Any other similar device types.

"The FDA is aware of these devices being used to treat conditions such as obstructive sleep apnea and temporomandibular joint disorder of the jaw, and to remodel the jaw in adults," according to the announcement. "However, the safety and effectiveness of these devices intended for these uses have not been established, and these devices are not cleared or approved by the FDA."

The FDA asked patients, caregivers and health care providers to report any complications with those named devices to the FDA.

The ADA further is encouraging the public and dental profession to report concerns to MedWatch to ensure any pertinent information related to these devices can be thoroughly evaluated by the FDA with regard to safety and efficacy. The ADA will continue to monitor for FDA updates regarding these devices.

If someone experiences any issues with any medical device, the FDA encourages them to file a voluntary report through MedWatch or call 800-332-1088 for more information on how to mail or fax the form.

Health care personnel employed by facilities that are subject to the FDA's user facility reporting requirements should follow the reporting procedures established by their facilities.

According to the announcement, the FDA is not aware of safety concerns related to orthodontic use of palatal expanders in children and adolescents.

The safety and effectiveness of fixed (nonremovable) palatal expanders being used to treat conditions such as OSA and TMD, or to remodel the jaw in adults, have not been established and these devices have not been cleared or approved by the FDA.

For questions, email the Division of Industry and Consumer Education at DICE@fda.hhs.gov or call 800-638-2041 or 301-796-7100. ■

—burgerd@ada.org

Dr. Shepley goes to Washington

ADA president attends White House meeting on hunger, nutrition, health

BY STACIE CROZIER

ADA President George R. Shepley, D.D.S., has been adamant about his passion to address the dangers of added dietary sugars for the oral and overall health of Americans, so it was fitting that he served as the Association's representative at the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health on March 24 in Washington, D.C.

The conference was part of the initiative

launched by the Biden Administration last fall to end hunger and increase healthy eating and physical activity by 2030. One of the objectives is that fewer Americans experience diet-related diseases like diabetes, obesity and hypertension.

"It was an honor to go to the White House and hear from national leaders," Dr. Shepley said. "They challenged those in the room and attending virtually to help reduce diet-related diseases and to join the fight against hunger.

I hope this encourages our members as we champion overall health."

Earlier this year the ADA Board of Trustees established the ADA Presidential Task Force on Sugar, Nutrition, and Diet, which includes representatives from the Board, the Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention, the Council on Government Affairs, the Council on Scientific Affairs, other ADA members and subject matter experts from dentistry, dietetics and endocrinology. The task force

is charged with reviewing existing ADA policies on sugar, nutrition and diet and proposing policy changes that would expand the ADA's involvement with other health care stakeholders and facilitate dental-medical collaboration.

"I have challenged the task force to be bold," Dr. Shepley said. "The ADA should work to set the global standard for defining oral health within the profession and take a strong stance to address the harmful effects of excess dietary sugar. The role of nutrition, diet and oral health must be discussed as we collaborate with other medical organizations to educate and advocate for optimal health. We make people healthy, and now is the time to put it into action." ■



Presidential visit: George R. Shepley, D.D.S., smiles at the White House March 24.

ADA supports bill that would defer interest for dental, medical residents

BY JENNIFER GARVIN

Washington

The ADA, Organized Dentistry Coalition and other health care stakeholders are supporting the Resident Education Deferred Interest Act, or REDI Act, which would allow dental and medical students to defer interest accrual on their federal loans while they are in their residency programs.

In March 1 letters to Reps. Brian Babin, R-Texas, and Chrissy Houlahan, D-Penn., and Sens. Jacky Rosen, D-Nev., and John Boozman, R-Ark., the groups thanked the lawmakers for re-introducing the bill in the House and Senate, noting its passage is an important part of student loan repayment reform. The ADA also sent letters to the House and Senate.

"Further, those who undertake several years of residency with very low pay are often unable to begin repaying student debt immediately. As a result, they qualify to have their payments halted during residency through deferment or forbearance processes, but they continue to accrue interest that is added to their balance," wrote the coalition.

The REDI Act does not provide any loan forgiveness or reduce a borrower's original loan balance. The main goal is to prevent dentists and physicians "from being penalized during residency by precluding the government from charging them interest on their loans during a time when they are unable to afford payments on the principal," the coalition wrote.

Follow all the ADA's advocacy efforts at ADA.org/Advocacy. ■

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IN-OFFICE SOLUTION

Dental coalition urges Senate committee to address dental workforce shortages

BY JENNIFER GARVIN

A coalition of dental organizations is urging the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee to focus on four critical areas regarding the dental workforce: the dental team, student debt, diversity and underserved areas.

The coalition shared these priorities in a March 20 letter in response to the committee's request for information on the health care workforce shortages.

In the letter to Sens. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., chair, Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee; and Bill Cassidy, M.D., R-La., ranking member, the dental groups thanked the lawmakers for their interest in workforce issues and said addressing these shortages is a top priority for the organizations.

THE DENTAL TEAM

To help dentists find candidates to fill dental hygienist and assistant positions, the groups asked Congress to support increases in funding

for the Oral Health Workforce Development Program. The program helps build and train the oral health workforce and improves access to quality oral health care for those in need.

"(Dentists) are the head of a clinical team that also includes dental assistants and dental hygienists. Every member of this team plays an important role. Their work is essential to dental practice, and they also increase access to care by enabling dentists to see more patients," wrote the coalition, which noted a January ADA Health Policy Institute survey that found more than 85% of dentists found it challenging to recruit hygienists.

STUDENT DEBT

With the average new dentist graduating

with over \$300,000 in debt, the coalition urged the committee to support several student loans bills, including:

- The Protecting Our Students by Terminating Graduate Rates that Add to Debt Act, which would reinstate eligibility for graduate and professional students with financial need to receive Direct Subsidized Stafford Loans.
- The Resident Education Deferred Interest Act, which would allow dental and medical residents to defer payments on their federal student loans — and delay the point at which interest begins to accrue — until after completing a residency.
- The Student Loan Refinancing Act, which would enable borrowers to refinance their federal student loans on multiple occasions to take advantage of lower interest rates.
- The Student Loan Refinancing and Recalculation Act, which would provide the opportunity for borrowers to refinance their federal student loans when interest rates are lower.
- The Student Loan Interest Deduction Act, which would double the student loan interest deduction from \$2,500 to \$5,000 and eliminate the income limits that prevent those with higher incomes from reaping the benefit.
- The Indian Health Service Health Professions Tax Fairness Act, which would allow dentists participating in the Indian Health Service Loan Repayment Program to exclude interest and principal payments from their federal income taxes, as well as certain benefits received by those in the Indian Health Professions Scholarships Program.
- The Dental Loan Repayment Assistance Act, which would allow full-time faculty members participating in the Dental Faculty Loan Repayment Program to exclude the amount of the loan forgiveness from their federal income taxes.
- The HIV Epidemic Loan-Repayment Program Act, which would offer up to \$250,000 in educational loan repayment to dentists and other health care professionals in exchange for up to five years of service at Ryan White-funded clinical sites and in health profession shortage areas.

DIVERSITY

The groups recommended several ways to increase diversity in the dental profession, including:

- Reducing the student loan burden of dentists.
- Providing additional support for dental schools at Historically Black Colleges and Universities or those seeking to expand their curriculum to include a dental degree.
- Increasing funding for career and technical training programs at community colleges and trade schools for dental hygienists and dental assistants.
- Funding and supporting programs at elementary, middle, and high schools in underserved and diverse communities that aim to attract people to the dental profession at a young age.

UNDERSERVED AREAS

The groups asked the committee to help draw dentists to underserved areas through:

- Funding programs such as the National Health Service Corps that forgive student debt in exchange for service in underserved areas.
- Tax relief.
- Small business grants.
- Attractive loan terms for purchasing or building a new dental practice in communities of need.

The coalition also urged the lawmakers to look at the way health professional shortage areas are defined, noting the current model is "sorely outdated and inflexible."

Follow all the ADA's advocacy efforts at [ADA.org/advocacy](https://www.ada.org/advocacy). ■

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Oregon Dental Association supports bill to increase recruitment, retention of dental support staff

Legislation seeks \$20 million to support new initiatives

BY JENNIFER GARVIN

A new bill in Oregon is asking the state's legislature to designate \$20 million in funding to help alleviate the state's dental teams staffing shortage.

Oregon House Bill 2979 and its companion, Senate Bill 441, were introduced in January. If passed, the legislation would designate \$20 million to invest in education, training and incentive programs to increase recruitment and retention of dental support staff.

Increasing the state's dental workforce has been a concern of the Oregon Dental Association for years— dating back to before the COVID-19 pandemic. It became a top priority after the Oregon Employment Department identified dental assisting as one of the most challenging roles to fill among vacant health care jobs, and data from the Oregon Health Authority's 2021 Health Care Workforce Report found that 9% of Oregon's dental assistant positions were vacant.

"The dental staffing crisis was clearly reaching a tipping point," said ODA President Mark Miller, D.M.D. "We knew we needed to take action to reverse the crisis and protect access to oral health care across Oregon."

"We recognized the urgency of the situation and made the dental workforce shortage a top priority," added Barry Taylor, D.M.D., ODA executive director. "The result was this legislation, which is a workforce funding package that targets recruitment, training programs and incentives to expand dental career pipeline opportunities and improve access to oral health care."

The ODA hopes the legislation, if passed, will help local businesses and create career opportunities, especially for minority and underrepresented Oregonians. The association also hopes it will improve access to oral health care, particularly for communities that were the hardest hit by health care workforce shortages.

According to ODA, Association members developed the components of the legislation through extensive committee work. ODA's Board of Trustees recognized the deep staffing concerns membership felt statewide and dedicated resources to exploring the problem and potential solutions.

ODA's Regulatory Affairs Council members discussed the workforce shortage with partners, heard suggestions and ideas, and directed the development of the package.

The \$20 million would go toward the following:

- Community college dental assisting and hygiene programs. These programs would receive \$5 million to increase enrollment, support recruitment and retention of instructors and provide scholarships for students from diverse populations.
- High school health professional programs. \$5 million would be allocated to support the expansion of K-12 health professional career and technical education in Oregon high schools, increasing the pipeline of future dental assistants and hygienists.
- Workforce development incentives. \$7 million would be allocated to the Oregon Health Authority to expand Oregon's Health Care Provider Incentive Programs to include all oral health professionals working in priority communities to increase access to care for tribal, rural, low-income and other

underserved populations. The funds would also support the recruitment and retention of critically needed dental care providers.

- Tribal dental professions education. \$1 million would be designated to establish a dental professions education program to support the administration of programs for tribal youth to learn about and become interested in dental professions.
- Dental assisting training module development. \$2 million would be allocated to help create a chairside dental assisting training tool kit to be made available to all providers across the state. Chief sponsors of the legislation included Oregon Reps. Cyrus Javadi, D.D.S., and Hai Pham, D.M.D., and Sen. Cedric Hayden, D.M.D. For more information, visit oregondental.org.

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We knew we needed to take action to reverse the crisis and protect access to oral health care across Oregon.

— ODA President Mark Miller, D.M.D.



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BY DAVID BURGER

San Antonio

A dental officer and dental assistant stand in a field, silent but with looks of determination and service in their steely eyes as they care for a patient.

Similar scenes have played out in every theater of war and peace the U.S. Army Dental Corps has served in since its formal inception in 1911, and have now been commemorated forever on the grounds of Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas.

Conceived in 2017, the U.S. Army Dentistry Monument was dedicated on March 24 at the U.S. Army Medical Department Museum, featuring three bronze figures partially surrounded by nine granite monoliths symbolizing how the Dental Corps cares for soldiers in any location, at any time.

The monument honors the Dental Corps past, supports the present and inspires the future of Army Dentistry, said Col. (ret) Ron Lambert, D.D.S., past president of the Association of Army Dentistry.

"The monument is a lasting tribute to all soldiers, civilians and spouses who have served and continue to serve in the U.S. Army Dental Care System in support of the U.S. Army, the military mission and our nation," Dr. Lambert said. "The monument recognizes and honors the selfless service of the diverse members of the Army Dental Care System."

Maj. Gen. (ret) Ted Wong, D.D.S., president and chairman of the Association of Army Dentistry, also praised the monument's vision of inclusivity.

"The Army Dentistry Monument is a beautifully designed tribute to Army Dentistry and the diverse group of people who contributed to, and helped forge, the storied legacy of this great organization," he said.

"The Association of Army Dentistry, which sponsored and created this monument, also hopes it will inspire current and future generations of Army Dentistry members to make their own contributions, however large or small, to

our rich history," Dr. Wong said.

The name plates and the likenesses of the three bronze figures honor the diversity of key personnel represented in Army Dentistry: the father of Army Dentistry, John Marshall, M.D.; the only Army Dentistry Congressional Medal of Honor recipient, Capt. Ben Salomon, D.M.D.; and Black and female pioneers, William Birch, D.D.S., and Leonie von Zansch, D.D.S., respectively.

The sculptures amid the monoliths are the culmination of years of effort by the Association of Army Dentistry to create a lasting tribute to the soldiers and civilians who have served and continue to serve in the Army Dental Care System in support of the U.S. Army and the military mission, said Col. (ret) Theresa S. Gonzales, D.M.D.

The monument is especially personal for Dr. Gonzales, who has led fundraising for the monument.

"My interest in this monument project is nuanced," she said. "My older brother served as a Cobra helicopter pilot in Vietnam, and I have always felt that we did not properly venerate the selfless service of the Vietnam-era veterans. Recognition of this cohort of patriots is long overdue, and this unique monument was designed and crafted to reflect oral health care delivered at the tip of the spear to those that history tried to ignore."

The bronze statues of the dental officer, patient and assistant, along with a backpack and supply chest, were created by sculptor Stan Watts and his assistant Tami Brooks in Kearns, Utah.

Video recordings of the narratives for each of the nine monoliths have also been completed by U.S. Army Medical Department Television. Bronze plaques with QR codes will be attached to each of the monoliths, directing visitors to the video recordings.

Bronze plaques with the various categories of donors, including In Memoriam honorees, will be placed on the back wall after the fundraising campaign for the monument has concluded.

For those who wish to support the ongoing fundraising for this project, checks should be made out to the Association of Army Dentistry

George R. Shepley, D.D.S., and Executive Director Raymond A. Cohlma, D.D.S., thanked Sen. Cardin for his leadership on oral health care.

"As the United States' largest dental organization, the ADA joins the World Federation of Dentists and dentists around the globe in celebrating World Oral Health Day," Drs. Shepley and Cohlma wrote. "This important day seeks to empower people worldwide with the knowledge, tools and confidence necessary to prevent and control oral disease."

"Oral health is essential to overall health," the letter concluded. "The ADA strongly supports efforts to ensure that all people,

regardless of their nationality, have good oral health."

Follow all the ADA's advocacy efforts at ADA.org/Advocacy. ■



Honor: The U.S. Army Dentistry Monument, depicting three bronze figures partially surrounded by nine granite monoliths, was formally dedicated in March at Fort Sam Houston in Texas.

and mailed to the association's headquarters at 914 P Street, NW in Washington, D.C., 20001.

Those wishing to contribute with a credit or debit card may go to the Association of Army Dentistry's website.

On the website, look for "Monument," then "Donations to Support the Army Dentistry Monument" and make a custom donation for the Army Dentistry Monument.

The mission of Army Dentistry is reflected by the monument, said Col. Stephen Tanner, D.D.S., chief of the Army Dental Corps.

"The Army Dental Corps is the leader in expeditionary dentistry and sustainment of force readiness. Our Corps mission is to have a ready



Legacy: The bronze sculpture depicts a dental officer, dental assistant and patient in a field setting, highlighting the primary mission of Army Dentistry: caring for soldiers in any location, at any time.

Dental Corps capable of delivering global dental services anytime, anywhere in order to sustain the readiness of the total military force." ■

— burgerd@ada.org

ADA applauds congressional resolution recognizing World Oral Health Day

BY JENNIFER GARVIN

A new congressional resolution is recognizing World Oral Health Day, which takes place every year on March 20.

The resolution, introduced by Sen. Ben Cardin, D-Md., supports the goals and ideals of World Oral Health Day. The annual observance, which was created by the FDI World Dental Federation, spreads messages about good oral hygiene practices for adults and children and illustrates the importance of oral health in maintaining general health and well-being.

In a Feb. 28 letter, ADA President



World Oral Health Day
20 March

Global Dental Relief seeking humanitarians for international service missions

OPENINGS IN 2023 INCLUDE NEPAL, CAMBODIA, MEXICO, GUATEMALA

BY DAVID BURGER

Global Dental Relief, a nonprofit organization, is soliciting volunteers to help provide first-time oral health care to children around the world in the coming months.

Global Dental Relief provides all equipment and supplies. Volunteers are responsible for airfare and a program fee.

Dentists are needed for volunteer trips in the spring and early summer, which include:

- Nepal: April 28-May 10.
- Mexico: May 27-June 4.
- Guatemala: June 2-11.
- Cambodia: June 6-18.

Peter Vanicek, D.D.S., Global Dental Relief's dental director, said, "Join us on a Global Dental Relief trip to utilize your dental skills to help those in need of dental care and experience the world in a meaningful way."

Former Director of Colorado State Parks Laurie Mathews and Andrew Holecek, D.D.S., founded Global Dental Relief in 2001 after the two were deeply moved by the desperate need for dental care, particularly for children.



Hello: Children wait in line to receive care in Global Dental Relief's field clinic in Siem Reap, Cambodia, in June 2022.

Clinics began at the Shree Mangal Dvip School in Kathmandu, Nepal, and Global Dental Relief

See RELIEF, Page 9

RELIEF *continued from Page 8*

have grown from 27 volunteers in 2002 to 380 dentists, hygienists and general volunteers donating their time annually.

Global Dental Relief volunteers now serve 22,000 children each year with \$4.5 million in donated dental care provided since its inception.

Visit globaldentalrelief.org to register or learn more about the clinics and see the full roster of volunteer opportunities in seven countries.

To learn more about other international volunteer opportunities, visit internationalvolunteer.ada.org. ■
— burgerd@ada.org



All together now: Gina Hansen, D.M.D., right, stands with her mother, Cindy, a general volunteer, with patients outside Global Dental Relief's clinic in Guatemala. Global Dental Relief volunteers now serve 22,000 children each year with \$4.5 million in donated dental care provided since its inception.

Photo courtesy of Global Dental Relief

National Children's Dental Health Month receives congressional recognition

BY JENNIFER GARVIN

National Children's Dental Health Month may have ended but the celebration continues in Congress.

On Feb. 28, the Oral Health Caucus — led by Reps. Mike Simpson, D.M.D., R-Idaho; Brian Babin, D.D.S., R-Texas; Drew Ferguson, D.M.D., R-Ga.; and Jeff Van Drew, D.M.D., R-N.J. — sent a "Dear Colleagues" letter to every member of Congress. The letter encouraged their fellow lawmakers to make children's dental health a priority.

National Children's Dental Health Month, or NCDHM, is a month-long national health observance that brings together thousands of professionals, health care providers and educators to promote the benefits of good oral health to children, caregivers, teachers and many others.

"This is such an important cause, and we are glad to bring awareness to promote good oral health for children," Reps. Simpson, Babin, Ferguson and Van Drew wrote. "Tooth decay is the number one chronic infectious disease among children in the U.S. The impact of not treating decay can lead to other bad outcomes beyond just oral health."

The letter also thanked ADA volunteers for their continued support of the annual Give Kids A Smile program, which has now provided assistance and resources to more than 6,000 dentists and 20,000 dental team members.

"Since this program began, volunteers have graciously provided services to over 7 million underserved children across the country, and to all 50 states as well," they wrote. "They have truly made a huge impact in their communities and improved the oral health of so many children."

This year's NCDHM theme was "Brush. Floss. Smile." Throughout the month, dentists and dental team members across the country provided oral health education to children. To date, nearly 120,000 posters celebrating the month have been mailed out to dentists and other oral health stakeholders. ■

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1. Based on an analysis of global SureSmile® cases conducted between Jan. 2019–Dec. 2021. Data on File.
2. Independent third-party survey among 295 U.S. Clear Aligner Clinicians, 2020. Data on file.
3. SureSmile® VPro™ and SureSmile™ Whitening Kit are not available in all markets.



ADASRI researchers find differences in zirconia strength among dental laboratories

Some labs provided weaker specimens for posterior applications than is generally used

BY MARY BETH VERSACI

Zirconia ordered from different dental laboratories varied widely in strength when evaluated by scientists from the American Dental Association Science & Research Institute.

In "Survey of the Mechanical and Physical Behaviors of Yttria-Stabilized Zirconia From

Multiple Dental Laboratories" — a study published earlier this year in JADA Foundational Science — the ADASRI researchers tested the mechanical and physical properties of 32 zirconia specimens intended for either high-strength posterior or high-translucency anterior applications. The specimens came from nine laboratories.

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exhibited by the specimens, the scientists analyzed their composition, finding a mixed use of 3 mol% and 5 mol% yttria, which is a common oxide stabilizer used in dental zirconia. Typically, 3 mol% yttria is added to stabilize zirconia at room temperature, resulting in high strength and toughness.

Increasing yttria increases translucency but decreases strength.



Dr. Megremis

"In general, high-strength applications require zirconia with 3 mol% yttria," said Spiro Megremis, Ph.D., director of dental materials and devices research at ADASRI and corresponding author of the study. "By increasing the yttria content to 5 mol% to

increase the translucency of the material, the average strength is typically reduced by over 40%. This means that the zirconia materials marketed as 'high-translucency' materials are on average 40% weaker than the 'high-strength' zirconia materials that many dentists have used in the past."

“

... it is important that dentists have good communication with their dental laboratory to make sure that they are using the right type of dental zirconia for the intended application.

Some laboratories provided zirconia with 5 mol% yttria for posterior applications, although this material is generally used for anterior applications, except for single-unit posterior prostheses.

"I think the paper exemplifies the fact that all zirconia is not the same, and it is important that dentists have good communication with their dental laboratory to make sure that they are using the right type of dental zirconia for the intended application," Dr. Megremis said.

To read this and other studies published by JADA Foundational Science, go to jadafs.ADA.org. To learn more about ADASRI and its research, visit ADA.org/sri.

—versacim@ada.org

April JADA finds periodontal treatment may reduce health care costs for patients with diabetes

MEDICAID ENROLLEES SEE LARGER DIFFERENCE

BY MARY BETH VERSACI

Periodontal treatment is associated with decreased health care costs for people with diabetes, according to a study published in the April issue of The Journal of the American Dental Association.

insurance enrollees or drug costs for Medicaid beneficiaries.

“A healthy mouth can play a key role in [diabetes mellitus] management,” the authors said in the study.

“Expanding Medicaid benefits to include comprehensive periodontal treatment has the potential to reduce health care costs for

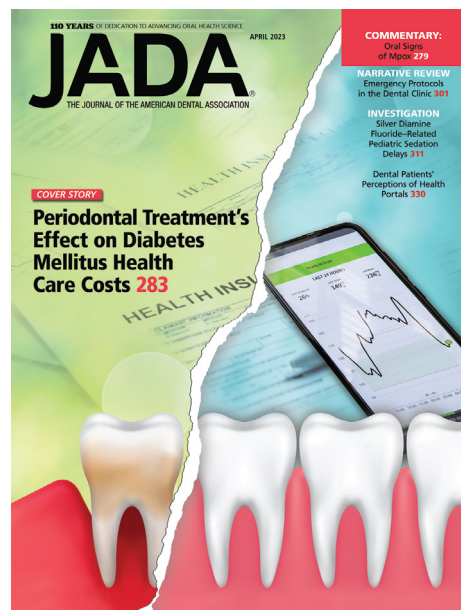
patients with DM.”

To read the full JADA article online, visit JADA.ADA.org.

Other articles in the April issue of JADA discuss emergency protocols in the dental clinic, silver diamine fluoride-related pediatric sedation delays and dental patients’ perceptions of health portals.

Every month, JADA articles are published online at JADA.ADA.org in advance of the print publication. ADA members can access JADA content with their ADA username and password. ■

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The cover story, “Periodontal Treatment Associated With Decreased Diabetes Mellitus-Related Treatment Costs: An Analysis of Dental and Medical Claims Data,” looked at outpatient, inpatient and drug costs in 2019 for patients with diabetes who received periodontal services between 2017 and 2018. The analysis used commercial insurance and Medicaid databases.

For patients with commercial insurance, the study found periodontal treatment was associated with reduced overall health care costs of 12% compared with patients who did not receive treatment.

For patients with Medicaid, the decrease in overall costs was 14%.

In addition to overall costs, periodontal

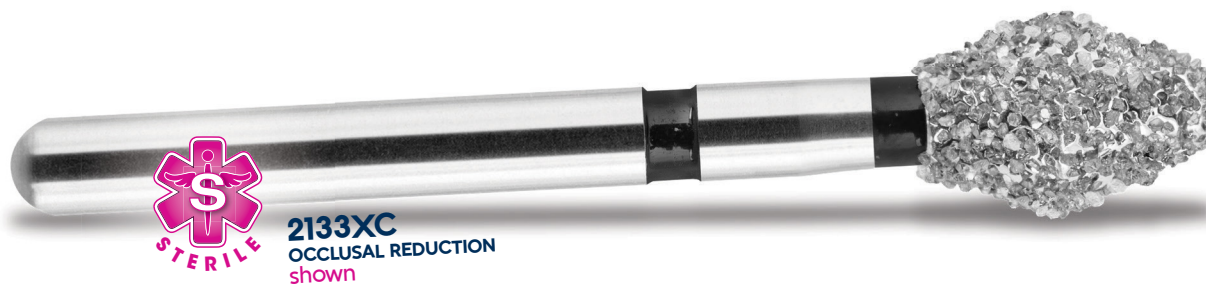
“

Expanding Medicaid benefits to include comprehensive periodontal treatment has the potential to reduce health care costs for patients with [diabetes mellitus].

treatment was associated with decreases in outpatient health care costs for both patients with commercial insurance and patients with Medicaid. However, there were no significant differences in inpatient costs for commercial



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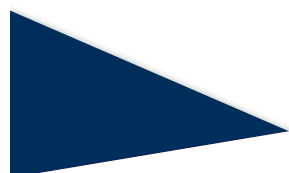
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NIDCR celebrates 75 years

BY JENNIFER GARVIN

The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research is turning 75 this year.

To help celebrate the milestone anniversary, NIDCR will be hosting a series of activities to commemorate its many scientific achievements and will also be sharing a vision for the future.

The first event was a symposium at the 2023 AADOCR/CADR annual meeting in Portland, Oregon, on March 17. During the symposium, past and present NIDCR leaders recounted historical accomplishments and charted a path for NIDCR's future. A video recording of the event will be available online.

Additionally, there will be other anniversary events in the coming months, including a symposium to celebrate 25 years of research on fibrous dysplasia/McCune-Albright syndrome and a virtual trainee symposium and poster session.

For a full listing of all events and monthly vignettes showcasing NIDCR contributions to scientific areas, visit the NIDCR 75th Anniversary webpage at [NIDCR.nih.gov/about-us/75years](https://nidcr.nih.gov/about-us/75years). ■

—garvinj@ada.org



ADA seeks volunteers to develop standard on gathering patient data to determine benefits eligibility

BY MARY BETH VERSACI

The ADA Standards Committee on Dental Informatics is seeking volunteers to develop a new standard that would help with determining patients' dental plan benefits prior to care.

To appropriately inform patients covered by a dental plan about their estimated treatment costs, dental offices need an eligibility and benefit response at the procedure level that goes beyond the current information available.

To meet this need, Proposed ADA Standard No. 1113 for Complete Contents for Dental Procedure-Level Data Required for Eligibility and Benefit Responses will specify the complete information necessary for providers to communicate to payers to determine benefits fully.

Procedure-level data for benefits will be provided in this standard as a sub-set of the ADA CDT codes that are most frequently used for communication with third-party benefit administrators.

Those interested in joining the working group that is developing the standard should email standards@ada.org. ■

—versacim@ada.org



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Fellow: Spiro Megremis, Ph.D., director of dental materials and devices research at the ADA Science & Research Institute, discusses his research during the 52nd Annual Meeting and Exhibition of the American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research. The AADOCR recognized Dr. Megremis as a member of its 2023 class of fellows during the meeting, which took place in March in Portland, Oregon.

American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research names ADA materials scientist as fellow

BY MARY BETH VERSACI

The American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research has selected the director of dental materials and devices research at the ADA Science & Research Institute to be part of its 2023 class of fellows.

Spiro Megremis, Ph.D., was honored in

March during the 52nd Annual Meeting and Exhibition of the AADOCR in Portland, Oregon. The AADOCR Fellows Program recognizes leaders who have achieved research excellence and served AADOCR throughout their careers.

"It is a great honor to be recognized by a group of your peers," Dr. Megremis said. "However, I could not have achieved most of the accomplishments cited in the recognition without the numerous contributions from my fellow researchers and team at the ADA, along with the many collaborators that I have had the fortune to work with over the years. I am truly grateful to all of them."

At the ADASRI, Dr. Megremis leads research on dental materials and instruments, including the development of new testing equipment and methods and the translation of data for clinical practice.

He also participates in several working groups for the ADA Standards Committee on Dental Products and the International Organization for Standardization Technical Committee 106 on Dentistry. His research has informed many national and international dental standards.

“

It is a great honor to be recognized by a group of your peers. However, I could not have achieved most of the accomplishments cited in the recognition without the numerous contributions from my fellow researchers and team at the ADA.

– Spiro Megremis, Ph.D.

"With such a high level of productivity, recognized research excellence, and long-standing worthy contributions to the Chicago Section and national AADOCR, I'm surprised that Dr. Megremis hasn't already become a Fellow," said Carla Evans, D.D.S., clinical professor of orthodontics at the Boston University Henry M. Goldman School of Dental Medicine, in a letter nominating Dr. Megremis to be named a fellow.

"I have great confidence that Dr. Megremis will continue to have a very successful career as a researcher, mentor and administrator."

The responsibilities of AADOCR fellows include nominating new fellows; serving as ambassadors of excellence in dental, oral and craniofacial research; advising the AADOCR board and council on matters when requested; and mentoring other AADOCR members. ■

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Code Maintenance Committee approves 4 new CDT codes for sleep apnea

CDT Code changes go into effect Jan. 1, 2024

BY DAVID BURGER

The Code Maintenance Committee at its March meeting approved four new codes that reflect ADA policy on the role of dentistry in the treatment of sleep apnea, along with 10 other additions and two revisions to the CDT Code that will go into effect on Jan. 1, 2024.

Dentists can and do play an essential role in the care of patients with sleep-related breathing disorders and are well-positioned

to identify and treat patients at greater risk of those disorders, said Jessica Stillely-Mallah, D.M.D., committee chair and chair of the ADA Council on Dental Benefit Programs.

"As of January 1, 2024, there will be codes for sleep apnea procedures such as screenings and home sleep apnea tests, as well as fabrication, delivery and titration of oral appliance therapy devices," Dr. Stillely-Mallah said. "These codes expand upon the current CDT codes for custom sleep apnea appliance delivery, adjustment and repair procedures."



Dr. Stillely-Mallah

This procedure may be reported for any type of vaccine, and also includes a discussion of

The CMC also approved a code for immunization counseling, which is described as a review of a patient's vaccine and medical history and discussion of the vaccine benefits, risks and consequences of not obtaining it.

questions and concerns the patient, family or caregiver may have and suggestions on where the patient can obtain the vaccine.

The council established the Code Maintenance Committee to ensure that all stakeholders have an active role in evaluating and voting on CDT Code changes. The CMC, which meets annually, is expected to arrive at decisions that are in the best interests of the profession, patients, and third-party payers/administrators.

Other code additions approved at the March meeting concern the following procedures:

- 3D printing of a 3D dental surface scan.
- Band stabilization — per tooth.
- Excavation of a tooth resulting in the determination of nonrestorability.
- Application of hydroxyapatite regeneration medicament — per tooth.
- Accessing and retorquing loose implant screw — per screw.
- Excisional biopsy of minor salivary glands.
- Indexing for osteotomy using dynamic robotic assisted or dynamic navigation.
- Fabrication and placement of a custom removable clear plastic temporary aesthetic appliance.

The CMC also approved clarifying revisions of two existing codes:

- D2335 resin-based composite restoration — four or more surfaces (anterior). The revision deleted mention of the incisal angle, which is not a tooth surface and caused coding confusion as well as claim preparation delays when dentists or practice staff contacted the ADA for clarification.
- D5876 add metal substructure to acrylic, full denture — per arch. The revision added a descriptor stating that this procedure involves addition of a metal substructure to strengthen the prosthesis.

Educational and reference information on CDT Code use is available at [ADA.org/en/publications/cdt/coding-education](https://ada.org/en/publications/cdt/coding-education). ■

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Webinar: Educating on the need for HPV immunization to help prevent oral cancer

BY DAVID BURGER

The ADA is presenting an April 27 webinar that stresses the importance of increasing awareness of human papillomavirus and educating the public on the need for HPV immunization to help prevent oral cancer.

Promoting HPV Vaccination: On Time & At Age 9 live streams from noon-1 p.m. Central time.

The presenter is Kristin Oliver, M.D., associate professor, departments of pediatrics and environmental medicine & public health at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. She will address increasing vaccination coverage and alleviating vaccine hesitancy.

Register for the webinar at https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_yEdswN5nRq6aXl-g9EkY1w. ■

April marks Oral Cancer Awareness Month as HPV-related oropharyngeal cancers on the rise

BY DAVID BURGER

April is Oral Cancer Awareness Month, an annual observation that underscores the fact that early detection of oral cancer can decrease morbidity and increase long-term survival.

The observance also emphasizes the importance of making oral cancer screening part of the dental exam routine.

“
The administration of the HPV vaccine is a safe and effective way to reduce the risk of HPV-related cancers, including certain head and neck cancers.
 – James Mancini, D.M.D.

This is especially true given that due to human papillomavirus infection, head and neck cancers are occurring in those in whom the typical risk factors of cigarette smoking and alcohol consumption may not be present.

HPV-related oropharyngeal cancer has risen over the past two decades, while oral cancer linked to tobacco and alcohol use has declined over the same time period, said James Mancini, D.M.D., ADA Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention chair.

“The administration of the HPV vaccine is a safe and effective way to reduce the risk of HPV-related cancers, including certain head and neck cancers,” Dr. Mancini said. “Recent evidence shows that giving a strong recommendation for HPV vaccination at age 9 will increase vaccine completion success, increase on-time vaccination coverage and may help prevent more cancers.”

Over the past half-dozen years, the ADA has engaged in ever-increasing research and advocacy to protect the public’s health by its efforts supporting HPV vaccination and head and neck cancer screening.

In 2017, a panel of experts convened by the ADA Council on Scientific Affairs presented a clinical practice guideline, published in The Journal of the American Dental Association, to inform clinicians about the evaluation of lesions, including potentially malignant disorders, in the oral cavity.

In 2018, the ADA House of Delegates adopted the position that HPV vaccination, as recommended by the CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, is a safe and effective intervention to decrease the burden of oral and oropharyngeal HPV infection, and resolved that the ADA urges dentists, as well as local and state dental societies, to support the use and administration of the HPV vaccine.

Resolution 65H-2019, passed by the ADA House of Delegates in 2019, amended the ADA policy on early detection and prevention

of oral cancer to include oropharyngeal cancer and cover all patients, not just those previously thought to be at an increased risk.

In 2020, an umbrella review was published in JADA and co-authored by Marcelo Araujo, D.D.S., Ph.D., chief science officer and chief executive officer of the ADA Science & Research Institute; Cameron Estrich, Ph.D.; and Ruth Lipman, Ph.D.

The authors concluded that systematic reviews demonstrate the available HPV vaccines are safe and effective against vaccine-type HPV infection and HPV-associated cellular changes, including precancerous and benign lesions.

The National Institute for Dental and Craniofacial Research provides a protocol for dental

practitioners for an oral cancer examination based on the standardized oral examination method recommended by the World Health Organization.

The NIDCR also provides the examination protocol in poster form and has a pamphlet on oral cancer for patients as well as a patient education resource for oral cancer and the oral cancer exam. These items are not copyrighted and can be reproduced freely.

For more information on oral cancer and ADA guidelines, visit ADA.org/resources/research/science-and-research-institute/evidence-based-dental-research/oral-cancer-guideline. ■

— burgerd@ada.org





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HPI: 1 in 6 dentists report dropping out of some insurance networks

BY MARY BETH VERSACI

Since Jan. 1, about 16% of dentists reported they have dropped out of some dental insurance networks, according to insights from the ADA Health Policy Institute's February Economic Outlook and Emerging Issues in Dentistry Poll.

On average, the dropped networks covered 17.5% of the dentists' patient bases.

Other poll results included:
 • Dentists' confidence in the dental care sector dropped in February, while rising slightly for the general U.S. economy. Confidence levels remain below a high point in 2021.

- Dentists reported their appointment schedules were 85% full, slightly below a high point of 88% in March 2022.
- About 8 in 10 dentists selected short-notice cancellations as a reason why their practice schedules are not full.
- One-third of dentists continued to report they are actively recruiting dental hygienists and assistants. Hygienist recruitment is still particularly challenging for dentists. Each month, HPI conducts a poll of U.S.

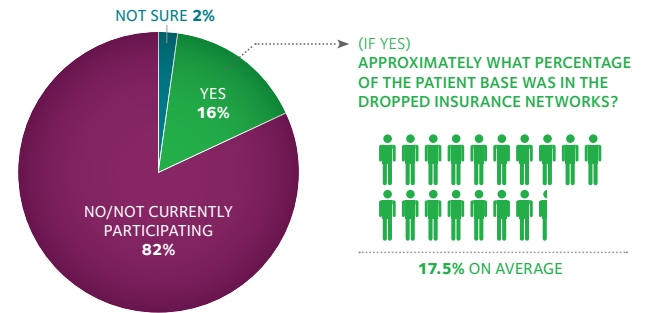
dentists to measure the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and gather their opinions on other current and emerging issues impacting their practices.

To join the panel and read the full monthly reports, visit ADA.org/HPIpoll. ■

—versacim@ada.org

DENTAL INSURANCE DROPOUTS

SINCE JANUARY 1, 2023, HAS YOUR PRACTICE DROPPED OUT OF ANY DENTAL INSURANCE NETWORKS?



Source: ADA Health Policy Institute's Economic Outlook and Emerging Issues in Dentistry Poll, February 2023.

The Employee Retention Credit: What to know

BY JENNIFER GARVIN

The Employee Retention Credit is a refundable tax credit for businesses that continued to pay employees while shut down due to COVID-19 or had significant declines in gross receipts from March 13, 2020, to Dec. 31, 2021.

The credit has been the subject of recent fraud, according to the Internal Revenue Service, and the agency is warning employers to be wary of third parties advising them to claim the credit when they may not qualify.

To help clear up confusion, ADA News spoke with Allen Schiff, president, Academy of Dental CPAs.

Q: What is the Employee Retention Credit?

A: The Employee Retention Credit, or ERC, is a payroll tax credit provided by Congress to eligible employers — including dental practices — that were financially impacted by the pandemic. The payroll tax credit was established as part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, or CARES Act. It is designed to encourage eligible dental practices to retain their employees on the payroll in 2020 and 2021 by providing a tax credit of up to \$5,000 per employee for the period of March 13–Dec. 31, 2020, and \$7,000 per quarter and per employee between the period of Jan. 1–Sept. 30, 2021. Eligible dental practices can claim the credit on their federal employment tax returns, Form 941X.

To read the full Q&A with Mr. Schiff, who addresses key takeaways regarding this credit and what concerns dentists should take into consideration when filing, visit the online version of this story at ADA.org/publications/ada-news/2021/march/should-dentists-take-the-employee-retention-tax-credit. ■

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Temple University dental school celebrates 160 years of educating students in service

SCHOOL COMMUNITY MARKS MILESTONE WITH GALA, LECTURES, AWARDS

BY MARY BETH VERSACI

Amid the backdrop of the Civil War, Philadelphia Dental College was founded in 1863 with 11 students. Now part of Temple University, the dental school is celebrating 160 years of educating thousands of dentists who have gone on to practice all over the globe.

The Temple University Maurice H. Kornberg School of Dentistry will mark this milestone with special courses for students and alumni, an alumni association awards luncheon, a gala reception and dinner, and the white coat ceremony for the class of 2025.

"The Kornberg School of Dentistry has played an important role in developing dental education, community service and dental care for the underserved from the Civil War to today," Dean Amid Ismail said. "As we celebrate this important anniversary, I feel the grit and perseverance of the school's founder, Dr. John H. McQuillen, who was able to open a school during a challenging time in this country and accept the first class during the Civil War."

During its long history, the school has demonstrated a commitment to providing dental care to underserved residents in the Philadelphia area, regardless of their age, income level and needs.

"Temple Dental has a heart that cares for patients and underserved communities," Dr. Ismail said. "That is what makes Temple Dental education unique and experientially valuable to students."

The Kornberg School of Dentistry houses one of the largest dental clinics in the region, where more than 30,000 patients are treated annually. The school's passion to care for the surrounding community also stretches beyond its walls, with satellite clinics in Philadelphia at the William D. Kelley School, a public elementary and middle school, and the KleinLife Clinic for Elderly Patients and Community Members, which is part of a Jewish community center.

The dental school also promotes the ever-expanding practice of digital dentistry and aims to place its students on the cutting edge of dental technology, including by adding a digital simulation laboratory with haptic units as part of its students' educational experience.

Retired Maj. Gen. Ronald Silverman, who graduated from the Kornberg School of Dentistry in 1972 before becoming an Army dentist and starting a private dental practice, said he

appreciates the changes he has witnessed to the school, including its increased use of technology and the growing diversity of its student body.

"This diversity adds to the students' education and gives them an opportunity to live and work with individuals who are probably different from where they grew up," said Dr. Silverman, who is the president of the Kornberg School of Dentistry Alumni Association. "This will make them better leaders in their community as well as dental providers."

In his role as alumni president, Dr. Silverman's goal is to energize other alumni to get involved with the school, including by organizing alumni clubs in cities that are located outside the Philadelphia area.

"I would like to see alumni become involved with the students of the school, even if it means just being available to answer questions about dental practice," he said.

Abigail Goldstein, a second-year dental student, is a current student leader at the school, serving as the vice president of her class.

A highlight of her dental school experience has been the support she regularly receives from faculty members and upperclassman dental students.

"While I have not started my clinical education yet, every day I step foot through the doors, I know I will learn something that will allow me to become a better clinician," Ms. Goldstein said. "Among the countless hours I have spent in our preclinical lab, there are always several faculty members awaiting students who request advice."

While the dental school and its leaders, students and alumni are enjoying its 160th anniversary celebrations, Dr. Ismail is also looking ahead to the next 160 years.

"Some of our goals are expanding patient care coverage in the region and addressing access to dental care in rural and urban areas, developing continuous collaboration and integration of general and oral health care, and continuing to develop pragmatic and outcome-focused research," he said.

Learn more about the Kornberg School of Dentistry at dentistry.temple.edu.

Editor's note: This is the first installment in an ADA News series highlighting dental schools. ■
—versacim@ada.org



Looking back: Students at Philadelphia Dental College — now the Temple University Maurice H. Kornberg School of Dentistry — get hands-on experience during a class in 1896.

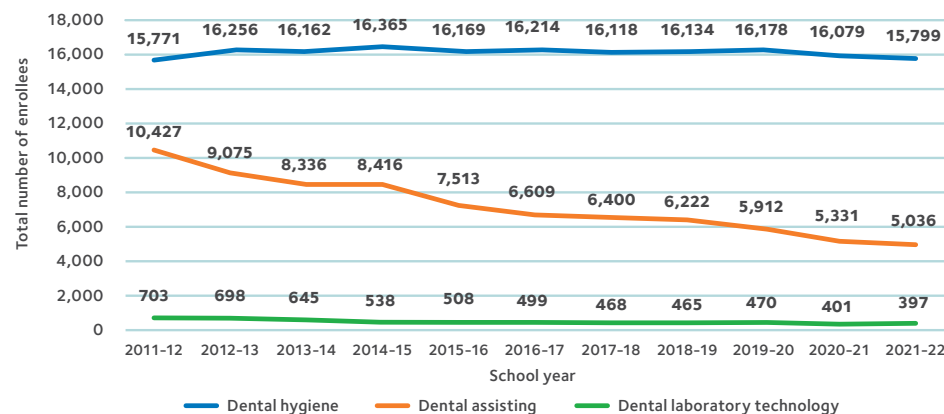
Photo courtesy of Kornberg School of Dentistry



HPI CORNER

ALLIED DENTAL EDUCATION TOTAL ENROLLMENT

Enrollment in certain accredited U.S. allied dental education programs has decreased considerably over the past decade. There were 5,036 total enrollees in dental assisting programs for the 2021-22 school year compared to 10,427 in 2011-12, a 51.7% decrease. Dental laboratory technology programs saw a 43.5% decline in the same period. Dental hygiene programs have experienced a less dramatic decline in enrollment; 2021-22 enrollment is slightly below a high point in 2014-15.



Source: ADA Health Policy Institute. Commission on Dental Accreditation 2021-22 Surveys of Allied Dental Education. Available from: ADA.org/resources/research/health-policy-institute/dental-education.

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Dental Central to offer hubs for learning, fun at SmileCon

Registration opens June 7 for meeting in Orlando

BY MARY BETH VERSACI

Filled with hubs where dentists and team members can meet, play and learn, Dental Central will be the buzz-filled heart of SmileCon when the meeting heads to Orlando, Florida, in October.

New this year to the re-imagined exhibit hall is the Oral Medicine Hub, where dentists can earn an hour of continuing education credit by completing a dental-themed escape room with teammates.

“The hub will be interactive, giving participants the opportunity to answer questions and learn about pathology and oral-systemic connections in an escape room format. We discovered attendees craved more CE in Dental Central, and the Oral Medicine Hub is going to be an exciting new addition,” said Victor Rodriguez, D.D.S., a member of the ADA Advisory Committee on Annual Meetings, who is helping to plan the Oral Medicine Hub.

Another new area will be the Wellness Hub, where attendees can find support for their physical, mental and financial wellness — from learning best ergonomic practices for addressing the neck, back, hand and other pain that often plagues dentists to shutting out the noisiness of the day by unplugging in a quiet area.

Returning this year is the Dental Team Hub, which last year brought together thousands of dentists and their team members for CE and networking opportunities designed specifically for teams.

The Podcast and Influencer Hub is also back, bringing dentistry’s top podcasters to the SmileCon stage, where dentists can catch a behind-the-scenes glimpse at how podcast magic is made and interact with influential dental thought leaders.

Dental Central will also highlight the latest in dental technology in the Tech Hub, including

augmented intelligence. Attendees can learn how to use AI in their own practices and get excited about future technological breakthroughs. Dentists can also learn about other cutting-edge products from exhibitors in Dental Central.

SmileCon will take place Oct. 5-7. To learn more or register, visit SmileCon.org. Registration and housing open June 7. ■



Dance party: SmileCon attendees show off their best dance moves during a line-dancing activity in the Dental Team Hub at SmileCon 2022 in Houston.



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Court amends schedule in ADA class action suit against Delta Dental

BY DAVID BURGER

In 2019, the ADA filed a class action lawsuit against the Delta Dental Plans and the Delta Dental Plans Association, and in January, the federal district court for the Northern District of Illinois amended its scheduling order to allow the parties additional time to conduct discovery.

The earliest this case potentially could proceed to trial is now sometime in late 2025.

The case has now been pending for more than three years, but is still in its relatively early stages, said the ADA’s Division of Legal Affairs.

This extended timing is not unusual, said the division, as class action lawsuits typically take years to be resolved,

See DELTA, Page 23



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ADA 10 Under 10 Awards honor new dentists for making a difference



BY MARY BETH VERSACI

The co-founder of an organization that aims to improve the oral health of the LGBTQ+ community, the youngest president-elect of the Maryland State Dental Association and an advocate for the Massachusetts Question 2 ballot initiative are among this year's winners of the ADA 10 Under 10 Awards.

The awards recognize 10 early-career dentists who demonstrate excellence in the profession. The ADA New Dentist Committee chose the recipients for making a difference in science, research and education; practice excellence; philanthropy; leadership; and advocacy. All the winners are ADA members who graduated dental school less than 10 years ago. They will receive a \$1,000 cash award and

a plaque.

Below are the 10 Under 10 Award winners. To learn more, visit [ADA.org/10under10](https://ada.org/10under10).

MUHALAB AL SAMMARRAIE, D.D.S., EL CAJON, CALIFORNIA

Universidad De La Salle Bajio in Mexico — 2019

Dr. Al Sammarraie is a site dental director at AltaMed Health Services, one of the nation's largest federally qualified health centers; a subject matter expert in law and ethics for the Dental Board of California; and an international lecturer at the Universidad de la Sale Bajio, where he teaches practice management.

ALEX BARRERA, D.D.S., HOUSTON

University of Texas School of Dentistry at Houston — 2017

Dr. Barrera is the president and co-founder

of the Houston Equality Dental Network, an organization that aims to improve the oral health of the LGBTQ+ community through awareness, education, advocacy and service, and a general dentist who practices at Legacy Community Health Center in Houston.

AARON BUMANN, D.D.S., GLADSTONE, MISSOURI

University of Minnesota School of Dentistry — 2013

Dr. Bumann is a public policy advocate for Missouri with the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, a pediatric dentist in Kansas City, Missouri, and a speaker at the University of Missouri, Kansas City on pediatric dentistry, personal finance and advocacy.

ALEXANDRA FITZGERALD, D.D.S., FREDERICK, MARYLAND

University of Maryland School of Dentistry — 2018

Dr. Fitzgerald is the youngest president-elect of the Maryland State Dental Association and has served in numerous other positions and committee assignments at the local and state levels of organized dentistry.

STEPHANIE GANTER, D.D.S., DALLAS

Texas A&M University College of Dentistry — 2016

Dr. Ganter is the co-creator of the YouTube channel Between Two Teeth and the co-owner of the first-of-its-kind combined periodontics and oral and maxillofacial surgery practice in Garland, Texas.

SAPNA LOHIYA, D.D.S., HERMOSA BEACH, CALIFORNIA

University of California, Los Angeles School of Dentistry — 2013

Dr. Lohiya is an oral and maxillofacial surgeon

in Los Angeles, a clinical instructor for the UCLA School of Dentistry and the president-elect of the Western Los Angeles Dental Society.

SABLE ANNE-MARIE MUNTEAN, D.M.D., ST. LOUIS

Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine School of Dental Medicine — 2018

Dr. Muntean is the co-founder of ignitePre-Dent, a mentorship organization that assists pre-dental students through their journey into dental school, and the first full-time female staff dentist at the St. Louis VA Medical Center.

ADAM E. SALTZ, D.M.D., SOUTH PORTLAND, MAINE

Nova Southeastern University — 2017

Dr. Saltz is the vice president of the Maine Dental Association, an assistant clinical professor at the University of New England and a faculty consultant at Kansas City University.

SANIYA SETIA, D.D.S., MECHANICSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

University of Colorado School of Dental Medicine — 2016

Dr. Setia is one of the youngest recipients of an honorary fellowship in the Pierre Fauchard Academy and practices at Marysville Family Dentistry in Marysville, Pennsylvania.

ANDREW TONELLI, D.M.D., NORTH READING, MASSACHUSETTS

Tufts University School of Dental Medicine — 2014

Dr. Tonelli served as the primary spokesperson for the Massachusetts Dental Care Providers for Better Dental Benefits campaign committee, which supported the state's Question 2 ballot measure in the November 2022 election, and he is the immediate past chair of the Boston District Dental Society. ■

New season of Dental Sound Bites podcast launched April 4

Episodes will dig into sticky situations, clinical conundrums and more

BY STACIE CROZIER

The new season of the ADA's Dental Sound Bites podcast launched April 4 with returning co-host ArNelle Wright, D.M.D., and new co-host Effie Ioannidou, D.D.S., discussing topics that include sticky situations, clinical conundrums, wellness, preparing for big life transitions and community service and philanthropy.

Dr. Wright, a general dentist in Orlando,



Dr. Ioannidou

Dr. Wright



of submissions concerning their own sticky situations that we could discuss in the near future."

Dr. Ioannidou, a dentist, researcher, educator and mentor, will join Dr. Wright at the microphone for Season 2. As a new host, she says she would like members — and especially new dentists — to be well informed about the ADA and the opportunities that come from involvement with organized dentistry. "Through their involvement with the ADA, their voices can be heard," she said.

"I am a podcast lover," Dr. Ioannidou said. "I feel that Dental Sound Bites will give me the opportunity to share some of my own experiences with academic dentistry, research and practice. I think it is important for the ADA members to have this perspective, too."

Dr. Ioannidou said she is looking forward to discussing the topics that the podcast will cover in the new season. "Advocacy and wellness are both very relevant to all dentists but more importantly the new dentists who are very aware of their work environment and know what they want and how they want to live," she said. "We will also cover topics like big life transitions, clinical conundrums and community service opportunities. In other words, this will be a super-exciting season. I am looking forward to having these conversations."

Tune in to the new season of Dental Sound Bites every other Tuesday to join the conversation. Listen on your preferred streaming service, including Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, iHeart and Amazon Music. Or tune in via the ADA Member App and enjoy exclusive bonus content. ■

—croziers@ada.org

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Florida, and a speaker, consultant and corporate trainer, says she is excited to return for Season 2 and is happy to see the growth of the podcast since it launched last fall. The eight episodes of Season 1 have been downloaded more than 50,000 times, and Dr. Wright said she received a lot of feedback from listeners about the inaugural season.

"I think our listeners are thrilled that the ADA is doing something like this," Dr. Wright said. "I believe the episodes last season had loads of information for listeners in small bites and that they were able to take the advice of our guests and apply it to their lives and practice of dentistry as they saw fit." She said listeners also told her they want the podcast to be fun, "and I'm sure we can make that happen."

Dr. Wright said she is ready to dig into another "sticky situations" episode this season. "I am really looking forward to the sticky situations episode, because it's real life," said Dr. Wright. "I'm interested in what resonates with our listeners and hope it will kick-start a chain

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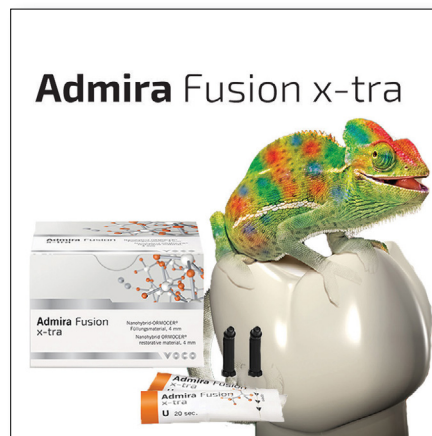
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Applications available for ADA Institute for Diversity in Leadership

BY MARY BETH VERSACI

The American Dental Association Institute for Diversity in Leadership is accepting applications for its 2023-24 class.

The institute provides education and leadership training to dentists who are members of groups who have traditionally been underrepresented in leadership roles within the dental profession and their communities.

The ADA will select 25 applicants for the free program, which includes three leadership training sessions at ADA Headquarters in Chicago from Nov. 30-Dec. 1, 2023; Aug. 22-23, 2024; and Dec. 5-6, 2024.

As part of the institute, class members will put the leadership principles and training they receive to practical use by selecting an issue or challenge in their community, organization or the dental profession and developing and executing a plan to address it.

The most recent institute class graduated in December 2022. A few of their projects

included establishing a study club for new dentists, providing mentorship to minority students applying to dental school and increasing awareness of the dangers of vaping.

Eligibility and application information is available at ADA.org. Applications are due by April 28, and the ADA will notify applicants of their acceptance status by July 1.

For more information, email Susana Galvan at galvans@ada.org or IDL@ada.org. The institute is supported in part by Henry Schein Inc. and Crest + Oral-B. ■



Congrats, grads: Recent graduates from the ADA Institute for Diversity in Leadership gather at ADA Headquarters in Chicago. Applications are available to be part of the institute's next class, which will meet from November 2023 to December 2024.

DELTA continued from Page 19

especially complex antitrust cases. There are motions, extensive document productions, fact depositions, expert witnesses, a class certification hearing, and then additional discovery and various pre-trial motions — all before you even get to a trial, and potentially an appeal after the trial. The COVID-19 pandemic also impacted the timing of most court proceedings.

The ADA's lawsuit alleges that Delta violated federal antitrust laws by allocating territories of operation and dividing the national market in order to restrict competition and reduce reimbursement amounts. The complaint goes on to allege that Delta's allegedly anticompetitive acts hurt both dentists and their patients by limiting the choices of dental care available to patients and making it more difficult for dentists to deliver the care that patients need and want.

Numerous individual dentists also filed class action complaints against Delta, and the allegations in the various complaints have since been combined into a single consolidated complaint. Judge Elaine Bucklo, in the federal district court, is presiding over the consolidated pretrial proceedings in the litigation.

The Delta defendants filed a motion to dismiss the consolidated complaint, but Judge Bucklo issued an opinion denying Delta's motion in September 2020.

With the discovery process ongoing, the parties are exchanging and reviewing voluminous amounts of documents as well as taking depositions relevant to the issue of class certification.

The court's scheduling order allows the parties to take up to 190 fact depositions, followed by briefing and a hearing for the court to decide whether the case should proceed as a class action — which is an important milestone in any class action lawsuit, according to the ADA's legal division.

The plaintiffs are asking the court to certify a class of all dental providers in the United States who were reimbursed by a Delta Dental defendant, so that all dentists who have been injured by Delta's allegedly anticompetitive conduct will be able to obtain appropriate money damages and benefit from an injunction making Delta change its practices.

Under the court's revised scheduling order, the court will hold a hearing on the issue of class certification in late 2024 or early 2025.

ADA News will continue to update members when there are developments in the case. ■



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