



WEST COAST
DISTRICT DENTAL ASSOCIATION

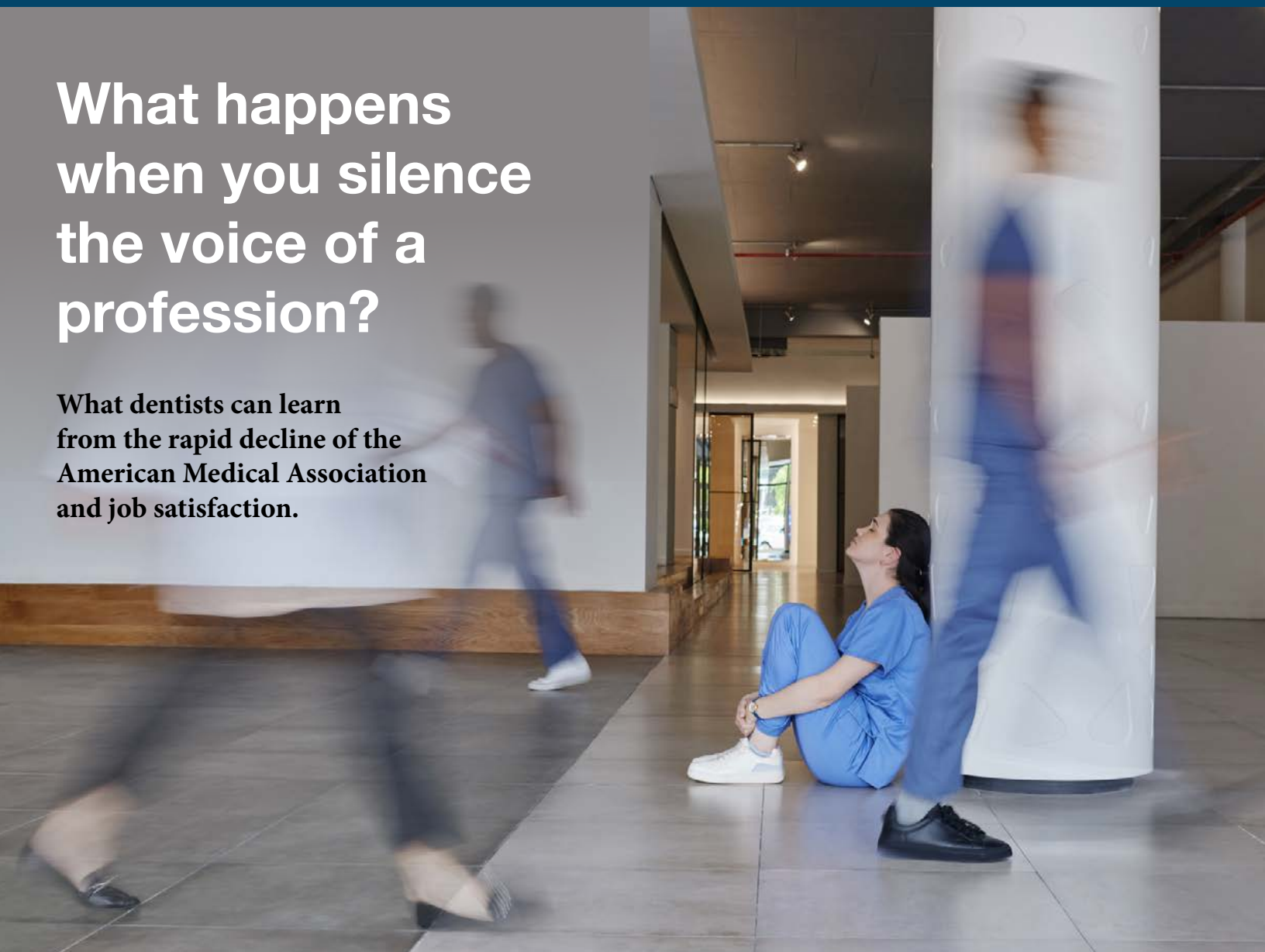
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AMERICAN & FLORIDA DENTAL ASSOCIATIONS

CHECKUP

West Coast District Dental Association News • Fall 2025

What happens when you silence the voice of a profession?

What dentists can learn
from the rapid decline of the
American Medical Association
and job satisfaction.



SERVICE

COMMITMENT

INTEGRITY

EXCELLENCE

IN THIS ISSUE: PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE • SUMMER MEETING PHOTOS • AFFILIATE MEETING SCHEDULES

Service, Connection, Leadership — and Fun with Colleagues

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT: Robin Nguyen, DDS, MS



Dear Colleagues,

It is an honor to serve as your President of the West Coast District Dental Association. As I begin this year, I am hopeful for the future of our association and profession.

These last few months have been marked by significant changes. As creatures of habits, change is hard but it allows us all the opportunity to reflect and build on the foundation we have to move us forward. My priorities for the year ahead reflect the values that define our district: service, connection, and leadership. In short, helping our members succeed.

First, **we will continue to support our affiliate chapters**, recognizing that they are the foundation of our district and vital to member engagement at the local level.

Second, we will **foster meaningful connections** by offering opportunities for continuing education, networking, and collaboration — reminding us all that membership is about belonging, not just participation.

Finally, we will **cultivate emerging leaders**, mentoring the next generation to ensure that our association remains strong, innovative, and prepared for the future. Together,

these priorities form a vision of growth, connection, and service.

A Wake Up Call

I'd like to draw attention to the important article on page 3 about membership decline. It's a wake up call for dentists. As members, we know the value of membership. It's important we share this mission with colleagues who may not be members. Invite them to an affiliate meeting and encourage them to join. Not sure if a colleague is a member? No worry — a simple email or text asking if they are going to a dental association event opens the door to the conversation about membership.

Set Sail Aboard Utopia

If you have not already done so, please take a moment to explore the Destination Learning Adventure we have planned for President's weekend, February 13–16, 2026. My husband (also a dentist!) and I will be traveling with our family and trust that we will be able to do it all — learn and earn some CE, spend time with friends in the dental community and enjoy family time, too! See the ad on the newsletter back cover for details.

I look forward to working with each of you as we build upon our district's proud tradition of excellence.



WCDDA President Dr. Robin Nguyen is an endodontist, practicing in Hillsborough County. Her husband, Dr. Christopher Chuong, is a pedodontist, practicing in Pinellas County. They are pictured here with their children, Emery (age 10) and Ethan (age 6). This family is excited to cruise with the dental community in 2026.

SAVE THE DATE

WEST COAST

SUMMER MEETING

AUGUST 21-23, 2026

West Coast District
Dental Association at
The Ritz-Carlton, Naples





2025-26 WCDDA Officers from left to right:

Dr. Stephanie Mazariegos, President-Elect; Dr. Bill Truax, Secretary; Dr. Robin Nguyen, President; Dr. Kristie Johnson, Immediate Past President; Dr. Sanjie Jackson, First Vice President, Dr. James Wilson, Editor.

Step into Leadership: Nominate Yourself or a Colleague for WCDDA Secretary

NOMINATIONS DUE JAN 6, 2026

Are you ready to make an impact in the West Coast District Dental Association? Here's your chance to serve in a key leadership role! We are currently accepting nominations, including self-nominations—for the position of WCDDA Secretary. This position is the first step in an exciting path that includes advancing through leadership roles to become WCDDA President in four years, and then serving an additional year as Immediate Past President.

This is a unique opportunity to shape the future of our association, advocate for our members, and support the dental profession on a meaningful level. As Secretary, you'll work closely with an outstanding team of leaders and colleagues, contribute to the strategic direction of the WCDDA, and help guide initiatives that strengthen our association.

To submit a nomination, simply scan the QR code and complete the nomination form by **January 6, 2026**. For questions or to learn more about the role, please reach out to Lissette Zuknick at (813) 654-2500 or email lissette@wcdental.org. Elections will be held at the Executive Cabinet Meeting on February 27, 2026, at the WCDDA central office in Brandon.



Volunteers Needed: WC Foundation Task Group

We're seeking enthusiastic volunteers to join a virtual Foundation Task Group to help shape the future of our association's fund. This group will brainstorm ideas to rebrand the Foundation, explore ways to refresh fundraising events, and enhance support for the dental community. Your input will play a key role in ensuring that the Foundation continues to make a meaningful impact. If you're interested in serving, please email lissette@wcdental.org by November 14, 2025.

Foundation Update & Call for Support

The WCDDA Fund has provided resources for members and the dental community within the district. Funding from the Foundation has enabled various initiatives, such as:

- Supporting charitable and educational oral health programs locally
- Providing hurricane and disaster relief to members
- Awarding dental career scholarships
- Facilitating access-to-care initiatives within the district

To date, the West Coast Fund has distributed \$32,900 in grants for hurricane relief to members, supported local programs with \$55,163.76, raised \$106,656.75, and currently holds \$37,000 in available funds for WCDDA community programs.



All funds previously allocated to member support have now been used. Ongoing financial contributions are needed to maintain the ability to provide timely assistance when disasters occur or when members require support. Please use the QR code to donate today!

A Call to Arms for Dentists: A Wake-up Call from the Future

What dentists can learn from the rapid decline of the American Medical Association and job satisfaction. Can it happen to us?

BY DR. CHRIS BULNES & DR. JAMES WILSON

In 2017, U.S. News & World Report ranked dentistry as the #1 “Best Job” in America. That ranking wasn’t arbitrary—it reflected dentistry’s strong salary potential, job demand and future prospects, low unemployment rate, and enviable balance of stress levels with quality of life.

Since then, dentistry has only grown in popularity. Dental schools have never been more competitive to enter, attracting some of the nation’s brightest students who dream of a career that blends science, artistry, independence, and service. The profession enjoys a reputation as one of the most rewarding careers in healthcare.

Consider the numbers: In 1990, there were 5,123 applicants and 4,001 first-year enrollees, a 72.4% acceptance rate. By 2007, demand had skyrocketed, with 13,742 applicants competing for just 4,770 first-year seats, an acceptance rate of only 33.6%. Even in 2023, though applications dipped to 11,198, the expansion of dental schools still made for stiff competition. That year, 6,708 first-year students enrolled, with an acceptance rate of 58.6%. Meanwhile, the academic bar keeps rising: the average GPA of incoming dental students has climbed from 3.20 in 2000 to 3.66 in 2024.

For decades, dentistry has been one of the most respected professions in America. The work is rewarding, the hours are reasonable, and the financial stability enviable. That reputation wasn’t an accident. It was built brick by brick by dentists who stood together, through the ADA and state dental associations, shaping laws, protecting independence, and ensuring patients had access to care.

But what happens if everything we cherish about dentistry gradually disappears?

What happens when a profession lives off yesterday’s victories but forgets to protect tomorrow’s?

How many times have you heard a colleague say, or maybe even thought to yourself, “Why should I join the ADA? What do they really do for me?” It’s a fair question, but here’s the truth: organized dentistry is the reason we can still ask it.

- Without the ADA’s federal and state victories on insurance reform, carriers would operate with near-total impunity. Network leasing would let your patients’ plans be sold and resold

without your knowledge, slashing reimbursement rates without recourse. “Non-covered services” laws, which today prevent insurers from dictating fees on procedures they don’t even pay for, wouldn’t exist. Dentists would have no shield from balance-billing nightmares or predatory insurer practices. Antitrust exemptions for dental insurers would remain untouched, allowing companies to collude openly and drive our fees into the ground.

- During the height of COVID-19, the ADA and FDA worked tirelessly to ensure dentists were classified as essential health providers. Without that advocacy, many of us could have been forced to close indefinitely while our patients’ needs went unmet.
- A colleague in private practice recently battled a large insurance carrier over unfair reimbursement policies. Only with the backing of organized dentistry, armed with legal resources and lobbying power, were those policies reversed.
- Years ago, a member faced legislation that would have sharply limited the



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procedures general dentists could perform. It was his state association, in partnership with the ADA, that stopped the bill. Without that intervention, his career would have been altered overnight.

These aren't abstract victories, they are tangible protections for our practices, our patients, and our livelihoods.

These wins weren't free. They were earned through decades of dues, lobbying, grassroots organizing, and countless hours of dentists volunteering. And, fact is, no individual dentist could achieve these outcomes alone.

Many see the benefits of organized dentistry's advocacy as background noise, rights that "just exist." They don't realize those rights only exist because organized

dentistry fought for them. Without an organized voice representing us, dentists would be voiceless in the halls of power. Legislators would only hear from insurance lobbyists, corporate chains, or well-funded activist groups.

Dentistry would be regulated, funded, and legislated by everyone except dentists.

But here's the problem: membership is shrinking and our profession is silently eroding its own future. Each year fewer dentists join organized dentistry, leaving the burden of advocacy to a smaller and smaller group. Some become disengaged, focusing only on frustrations while overlooking the victories. Others expect protection without contributing, and when organized dentistry loses a fight, or takes a stance they disagree with, they walk away entirely.

When our collective voice grows weaker, policymakers and corporations step in to fill the vacuum.

Foreshadowing from Medicine

If this sounds alarmist, just look at medicine. In the 1960s, nearly 75% of US physicians were members of the American Medical Association. Over the past several decades, the AMA saw its membership plummet. As a result, physicians lost much of their influence over healthcare policy. Today, many doctors work in environments where insurance companies, government agencies, and corporate interests dictate how medicine is practiced.

As AMA membership fell below 15%, Medicare physician payments dropped 33% (adjusted for inflation since 2001). Those numbers aren't just statistics, they



Physicians are still respected, but their ability to shape their own destiny has been gutted.

Dentistry is not immune.

If we follow the same path, we risk losing control over our profession.

represent lost opportunities, rising burnout, overregulation, and the steady erosion of a once-independent profession. Many physicians were driven out of private practice, taking with them a profound loss of autonomy. This isn't science fiction, it's exactly what happens when a profession stops standing together.

Physicians are still respected, but their ability to shape their own destiny has been gutted. Dentistry is not immune. If we follow the same path, we risk losing control over our profession. Decisions about how we practice, how we are reimbursed, and how patients view our role in healthcare could soon be made for us, not with us.

A Warning from the Future

Imagine opening your practice in 2040. You're no longer in control of your fees; insurance companies dictate them. Your autonomy in patient care is diminished; government regulations and corporate dental chains set the parameters. Patients see you not as an independent professional, but as a cog in a system that values volume over relationships.

The future of dentistry will not be decided by the loudest lobbyist in Washington or the biggest corporations. It will be decided by whether dentists themselves believe the profession is worth protecting.

A Call to Arms

The future of our profession depends on what we do now. Our prosperity was

earned, not granted. Organized dentistry is our shield and our voice. Without strong membership, our ability to influence policy, protect patient relationships, and preserve professional autonomy will slip away.

Some of you may already feel disenfranchised; trapped by debt, overwhelmed by corporate pressures, or worn down by bureaucracy. But if you think it's difficult now, imagine a future of even higher burnout, financial strain, and loss of control.

So the real question isn't, "What does the ADA do for me?" The real question is: **What happens if I don't join?** The hard truth is that if too many dentists choose to free ride on yesterday's victories, tomorrow's dentists will not inherit the same profession.

This is our call to arms. Join. Renew. Attend affiliate meetings and develop relationships with fellow dentists. Most importantly, share your experience and encourage your colleagues to join, renew and become involved. When one of them asks, "What does the ADA do for me?," Speak up!

Share this article, and show them the ad on page 14 which lists many benefits. Remind them that organized dentistry doesn't exist just for one of us, but for all of us. The future of your profession depends on you being an advocate for organized dentistry to those who chose to denigrate its importance to all of us.

Our profession that we worked so hard to become a part of is changing rapidly, not always for the better; but it will be exponentially worse if we lose our collective voice. By investing in organized dentistry, we preserve not only our careers, but the very identity of our profession.

The strength of dentistry tomorrow depends on the choices we make today.

Your membership shows your commitment

Dental associations rely on membership dues to continue monitoring and informing you about new tech, clinical advances, and laws and regulations. When we need to influence laws, *strength in numbers is critical.*

✓ **Auto Pay affirms your continuous membership commitment and gives you one less thing to think about.**

✓ **Thank you for renewing!**

We thank you in advance for renewing your membership. Statements are sent out in the fall, or scan the QR code to renew online or set up auto pay.

New members can also join the ADA, FDA & WCDDA tripartite by scanning the QR code.





Members of the WCDDA at the 2025 Dentists' Day on the Hill. During the event, dentists attend meetings with Florida senators and legislators to share our association's position on important topics such as funding for dental care for the underserved.

The Dan Bertoch Memorial Grant: Available to cover costs for attending 2026 Dentists' Day on the Hill

Are you interested in learning more about advocating for the dental profession and your patients? Consider attending the 2026 Dentists' Day on the Hill (DDOH) in Tallahassee. This is a great way to get involved, as the Florida Dental Association's Government Affairs Office hosts a dinner and briefing the evening before to learn about current issues. During the event, you can work alongside more seasoned dentists who will show you the ropes and encourage you.

First time attendees can apply for a grant to help cover travel and hotel expenses. Dr. Dan Bertoch devoted much time to advocacy for the dental profession. It is in his spirit that a Memorial Fund in Dan's name was established in 2011. Through this grant, we've been able to provide \$8,500 in travel support to our members over the years. Use the QR codes below to apply for a grant, or help us keep this opportunity available for the future by contributing to the fund.

Dan Bertoch Memorial Grant for DDOH

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APPLY FOR
2026 >>>



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THE FUND
>>>



Dentists' Day on the Hill

**Tuesday,
January 27, 2026**



REGISTRATION OPEN!

Dentists' Day on The Hill
January 27, 2026
Tallahassee, Florida

REGISTER NOW!



ROOM BLOCK AVAILABLE

Hotel Duval
415 North Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

BOOK YOUR ROOM



For more information:
Phone: 850.224.1089 • Email: gao@floridadental.org

PHOTOS & FUN FROM THE 2025 SUMMER MEETING



Thank you to everyone that came to the meeting to learn from our CE speakers, and socialize with exhibitors and colleagues!

Our 2025 Summer Meeting at The Ritz-Carlton, Naples in August 2025 was filled with quality Continuing Education, camaraderie, and fun. In addition to a WCDDA officer planning session, presidents of our county-level Affiliate organizations met to share plans and ideas for the coming membership year. Mark your calendars and plan on attending our Summer Meeting next year, August 21-23, 2026. Stay tuned for updates and registration details in our e-newsletter on the meeting plus more ways to connect with colleagues, learn, laugh, and make cherished memories!



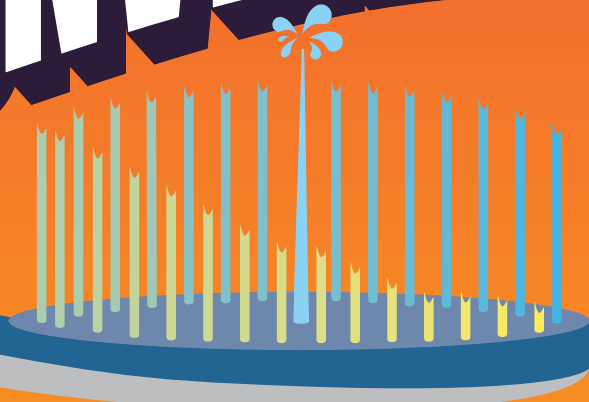
LECTURES, EXHIBITS, MEETINGS & RELAXATION

Mark your calendar for the 2026 Summer Meeting: Aug 21-23, 2026 at The Ritz-Carlton Naples



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Mission of Mercy*

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Save the Date
May 15-16, 2026

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Dr. Sanjie Jackson: Growing, Thriving, and Making History

Dr. Sanjie Jackson has done more than just bloom where she's been planted — she's thrived. Dr. Jackson arrived in Dunedin from the U.S. Virgin Islands when she was 12 years old. After graduating from dental school at the University of Florida, she put down dental roots in her Pinellas County hometown. Seventeen years later, she's still growing.

"I opened a Tampa office almost a year ago," she says calmly, even while continuing to practice at her Dunedin office and serving as President of the Upper Pinellas County Dental Association (UPCDA) and as First Vice President of the West Coast District Dental Association.

She says that, for a time, she tried to stop accepting new responsibilities, but soon changed course. "I realized that I had a gift for leadership and taking care of things, so I stopped pushing opportunities away."

Now she's embracing the opportunity to do more for the dentists she serves. "I really want to increase engagement, and for dentists to realize they're not alone."

She especially wants UPCDA members to feel like they can "let their hair down" and be encouraged by others who understand what being a dentist is all about. "Dentistry is hard — everyone is looking to the dentist; your back hurts, your body hurts." Organized dentistry "is where we can come together with no judgment, because we don't have to put on a happy face."

That's not to say that her UPCDA meetings lack positive energy. "I want them to be fun!" she says. She's trying to vary events for members, recently hosting a build-your-own-bouquet event at her house, and considering pickleball events and other social gatherings.

She also wants to do more to support doctors, like additional sponsorships, on top of already offering easy license renewal and no-stress access to CE courses.

Dr. Jackson adds that UPCDA's forward-thinking approach is also reflected in its board, "This is the first time there is an all-female board, just as there have been times we've had an all-male board. We are progressive as an organization and are really dialed in to make the organization great...to build on previous successes and make it even better."

Dr. Jackson is also a part of history as UPCDA's first Black President and West Coast's first Black Line Officer at a time when Black dentists make up 3.8% of the dental profession. "I hope to inspire everyone," she says about her historic roles, "whoever they are, so that no one feels ostracized."

Growing diversity is also evident in the West Coast leadership team she serves with. West Coast President Dr. Robin Nguyen immigrated with her parents to the U.S. in 1990. Her mother, a dentist in Vietnam, had to retrain to practice here. Dr. Nguyen sees in Dr. Jackson the same determination her mother possessed. "Dr. Jackson is amazing and is passionate about what she does. Beyond the clinical work, she has a passion to impact others positively and improve the profession."

Dr. Stephanie Mazariegos, West Coast's President-Elect, also immigrated to America with her parents. "I saw firsthand how my parents created successful careers in medicine and practice ownership, despite having to learn a new language, repeat higher-level education, and start a family."



She believes this diversity of experience that she, Dr. Nguyen, and Dr. Jackson embody makes the profession stronger. It "helps us develop creative solutions to existing problems. By using our diversity as a tool and a strength, we can continue to unite for issues that are common to every dentist... and protect the profession." And that through it, "every dentist can find a place in the organization or colleagues to connect with."

Dr. Jackson encourages that connection for all dentists, "Join! Come to a meeting! It's where foundational relationships are made," she says. "It's for people having a tough day — a place where dentists who are feeling overwhelmed can find relief."

And as Dr. Jackson continues to grow in her own professional life, she wants the same for the members of organized dentistry she serves: "My goal is for them to thrive."

KEY DATES:

FDA House of Delegates

Orlando, FL – January 17, 2026

FDA Dentists' Day on the Hill

Tallahassee, FL – January 27, 2026

WCDDA President's Trip Cruise

February 13-16, 2026

Florida Mission of Mercy

Jacksonville, FL – May 15-16, 2026

Florida Dental Convention

Gaylord Palms, Orlando, FL –
June 25-27, 2026

WCDDA 2025 Summer Meeting

The Ritz-Carlton, Naples, FL –
August 21-23, 2026

In Memoriam

We are deeply saddened by the loss
of our beloved colleagues.

Michael McIlwain, DMD of Tampa, FL,
passed away on June 6, 2025

Thomas Francis Yoho, DDS of Tampa, FL,
passed away on July 9, 2025

Larry E. Kingsley, DDS of St. Petersburg, FL,
passed away July 15, 2025

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Dr. Janice Luke
Palm Beach County



Dr. Tony Hodge
Treasure & Space Coast



Dr. Carlton Schwartz
FL Panhandle



Dr. Jerry Pyser
Southwest, FL



Mary Ann Serkin
Northeast, FL



Joe Booksh
Miami-Dade & Broward County



Kyle Pace
FL Panhandle



Samantha Jones
Accounting Director



Scott Davis
Administrative Manager



Dental Practice
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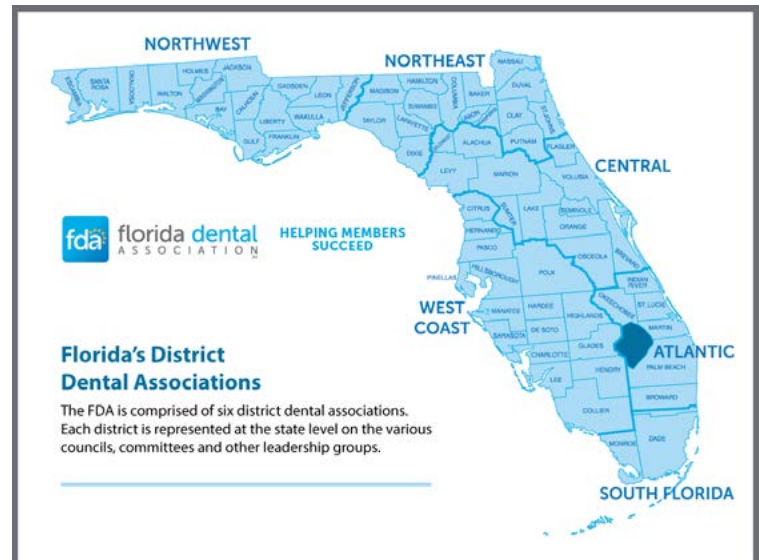
Get Together with your Affiliate Organization

Throughout the 13 counties in the WCDDA District, there are 11 Affiliates that meet regularly. Each of the county organizations are considered an Affiliate of the West Coast District Dental Association (WCDDA), the Florida Dental Association (FDA) and the American Dental Association (ADA).

In addition to the ADA, FDA and WCDDA, the Affiliates are a great way to meet other dental professionals in your immediate area.

Benefits of Being Part of Your Affiliate:

- Access to a valuable source of new patient referrals.
- Foster camaraderie and professional connections with fellow colleagues.
- Advocate at the grassroots level.
- Attend continuing education dinner meetings, and connect with dental industry suppliers.
- Participate in exclusive special events and expand your networking opportunities.
- Stay informed about the latest developments and trends impacting the dental profession.



Details on each Affiliate and their upcoming meeting dates appear below and continue on page 15. There is always something going on ... and many ways to get involved!

Upcoming Affiliate Meeting Dates and Contact Information

Collier County Dental Association

www.collierdentists.com

President: Dr. Jake Hester

Upcoming Meetings:

- November 20: Michael DeLuke "Air way"
- January 15: Steven Handel "Dental Photography"
- February 19: Dr. Sharon Kelley "Safe and effective prescribing of controlled substances"
- March 19: Michael Kroll "CAD/CAM"
- April 16: Pat Ricale "Cleft lip/palate"
- May 1: Collier / Lee Annual Spring Seminar at Crowne Plaza Fort Myers

Hernando County Dental Association

www.hernandocountysmiles.org

President: Dr. Nicholas Ressel

HCDS Central Office: 813-654-2500

Upcoming Meetings:

- January 8: Dr. Orthman Rezki "Oral Surgery"
- March 12: Membership Meeting
- May 14: Membership Meeting

Hillsborough County Dental Association

www.hcdafla.com

President: Dr. Nicholas Britten

HCDA Central Office: 813-447-3452

Upcoming Meetings:

- November 18: Dr. Cody Bertoch "An Endodontic Approach to Dental Trauma"
- January: HCDA Gala
- March 21: Dr. Annita Gohel "AI in Dentistry"

Lee County Dental Society

www.leecountydentalsociety.com

President: Dr. Lilyann Cubero

LCDS Central Office: 239-936-9240

Upcoming Meetings:

- November 20: Patti Ellis, The Doctors Company "Medical Errors – Prevention of Dental Errors"
- December 11: Holiday Social
- January 15: Dr. Walter Flesner "Opioids and Controlled Substances"
- February 19: Dr. Jennifer Eisenhuth "Nano-Hydroxyapatite Unmasked..."

Debunking Myths & Harnessing Science"

- March 26: Dr. Sharon Kelley "Treatment of Medical Emergencies in the Dental Office"
- April 16: Dr. Elizabeth R. Dy "Does My Patient Have a Tongue-Tie? Ramifications of Oral Ties Throughout the Ages"
- May 1: Collier / Lee Annual Spring Seminar at Crowne Plaza Fort Myers

Manatee Dental Society

www.manateedentalsociety.org

President: Dr. Margaret Kirkland

MDS Central Office: 941-794-2422

Upcoming Meetings:

- January 20: Mrs. Dotti Groover-Skipper "Human Trafficking: Overview and Pipeline Process"
- March 17: Dr. Thomas Yoon "Guided Implant Placement"
- April 14: Dr. Terry Buckenheimer "Practice Evaluations: Buying and Selling a Dental Practice"

More on page 15...



Your membership. Your benefits.

Thanks to the partnership of the ADA, state and local dental societies, we're watching our dentists excel, our profession advance, and our communities benefit.

And it all starts with you. Discover the ways your membership can empower you to thrive.

Your Profession, Your Voice.

ADA Member App

Explore career paths. Chat. Store CE transcripts. Connect. Mentor.

Advocacy and State Public Affairs (SPA) Program

Educate federal lawmakers to protect our profession. The SPA program supports Dental Insurance Reform with grants to state dental societies to help them advocate for laws that help our dentists and patients.

ADA Third Party Payer Concierge™

Questions? Navigating insurance claims? Get support.

Legal Support

Assistance with contract analysis, litigation and employment best practices.

ADA Career Services

Career guidance and resources for each step of your journey.

Licensure

Working to expand interstate operability via the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact.

Dental Sound Bites™ Podcast

Created for dentists, by dentists, with real talk about dentistry's daily wins and sticky situations.

Continuing Education and SmileCon®

Cutting-edge, unique courses and the ultimate national event to improve care, grow your practice and more.

ADA Standards and Seal

The ADA sets standards for dentistry tools and products to ensure safety, reliability and efficacy for dentists and the public.

Career Center

Job alerts and current opportunities.

Leadership Opportunities

Get involved through community outreach, or serve on ADA Councils, Committees and Task Forces

Your Mind, Your Body.

Mental Health Support

Resource directories, tools to manage stress and access to crisis support.

Family Planning

Important considerations for practicing during pregnancy. FMLA standards. Workplace support.

Ergonomics

Techniques and tips for pain-free practice.

Your Life, Your Money.

Member Discounts

Save time and money with top-quality products and services for your practice and personal life.

Member Insurance Options

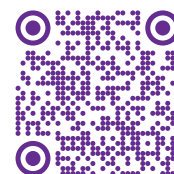
Access or get competitive rates, high-quality coverage for ADA tripartite members.



DR. CATHERINE MURPHY
member since 2007

DR. JAMES LEE
member since 2015

Learn more about benefits:
[ADA.org/membervalue](https://ada.org/membervalue)



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Upcoming Affiliate Meeting Dates and Contact Info

Pasco County Dental Association

www.thepcda.com

President: Dr. Michael Caputo

Upcoming Meetings:

- November 18: Dr. Bhattacharyya "Oral Lesions"
- January 15: Dr. Rick Ferguson "3D Printing and Digital Dentistry"
- February 17: Dr. Pikos and Dr. Philip Hedger "Full Arch Immediate Reconstruction"

Pinellas County Dental Association

www.smilepinellas.com

President: Dr. Jesse Jakubowski

PCDA Central Office: 727-342-0374

Upcoming Meetings:

- November 12: Joint meeting with UPCDA Dr. Sharon Kelley "Responsible Opioid Prescribing for Dental Practices" at Hilton St. Petersburg Carillon Par
- January 7: Mrs. Dotti Groover-Skipper "Human Trafficking: Overview & Pipeline Process"
- March 4: WEO Media "Reputation Management, With a Digital-Age Perspective"

- April 1: Hot topics in Pediatrics: A Panel Discussion

Polk County Dental Association

www.polkcountydental.com

President: Dr. Geoffrey Rintel

PCDA Central Office: 863-236-7610

Upcoming Meetings:

- November 18: Dr. Nicholas Grimaudo, "Medical Errors" Zoom webinar.

Sarasota County Dental Association

www.scdonline.com

President: Dr. Jerry Cherry

SCDA Central Office: 941-713-0961

Upcoming Meetings:

- November 13: Dr. Joel Rose "Safe and Effective Prescribing of Controlled Substances" (CE requirement for licensure)
- December 12: Holiday Social at TBD
- January 15: Dr. Uche Odiatu "Patient Lifestyle Habits that Sabotage Your Treatment Plans (or another topic: Navigating Health in a Post-Pandemic World: More Than Just Surviving, It's Thriving)"
- March 12: Dr. Eliane Barboza "Successful



HCDA Kick Off Party

Ridge Preservation for Implant Placement" at LECOM School of Dental Medicine

- April 9: Dr. Joshua Howard "Restorative Treatment Options Using 3D -Printing Techniques"
- April 24: SCDA Spring Social at TBD

Upper Pinellas County Dental Association

www.upcda.org

President: Dr. Sanjie Jackson

UPCDA Central Office: 727-449-1254

Upcoming Meetings:

- November 12: Dr. Sharon Kelley "Opioids" (Joint meeting with PCDA) at Hilton St. Pete Carillon Park
- December TBD
- January 21: Dr. Nicholas Grimaudo "Medical Errors" at Bon Appetit
- April 8: TBD/Countryside Country Club

Call for WCDDA Award Nominations: Due February 1, 2026

Do you know someone who goes above and beyond for the dental profession or our association? Now is the time to recognize those individuals who help make the West Coast the Best Coast! We are currently accepting nominations for our Annual WCDDA Awards and we need your help identifying the outstanding members of our community.

Distinguished Service Award

Honoring a tenured dentist who has demonstrated exceptional service to both the profession and the WCDDA. Their enduring commitment makes a lasting impact.

Dan Bertoch Leadership Award

Celebrating a young dentist (within 10 years of graduation) who has taken initiative in leadership roles, shown dedication to service, and is passionate about shaping the future of the WCDDA.

Kintsugi Award

Named after the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery with gold, this award recognizes a member who exemplifies professional volunteerism and service in dentistry — bringing strength, beauty, and purpose to the profession through service.

Affiliate of the Year

Presented to the affiliate that has contributed the most to advancing the mission of the WCDDA through member engagement, volunteerism, and support of WCDDA initiatives and events.

Help us honor those who elevate our profession and make a meaningful difference. Nominate someone today by scanning the QR code below!



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The Structure and Impact of Organized Dentistry in Florida: Empowering Member Participation

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE WCDDA DELEGATION TO THE FDA HOUSE OF DELEGATES:

Glori Enzor, DDS and Patricia Primero, DDS

In today's changing landscape of dental practice, it's important to understand the systems which govern us all, and to understand our part in it. After all, as they say, "if you're not at the table, you're on the menu."

Florida, fortunately, has a very strong system of organized dentistry. It starts at your local grassroots affiliate level — think your county and its surroundings (for example, the Sarasota County Dental Association). Next, there is the component level; for instance, the West Coast District Dental Association. The WCDDA is the largest of the six component organizations and includes sixteen counties. The umbrella organization for Florida dentists is the Florida Dental Association. The FDA has offices in Tallahassee and we have our own lobbyists and staff to respond very quickly to anything having to do with the practice of dentistry and its effects on the health of the citizens of Florida as they happen. Finally, our national organization is the American Dental Association, comprising all state organizations. The ADA includes seventeen trustee districts, with Florida being the seventeenth. The ADA, the FDA, and the WCDDA comprise what you may have heard referred to as the tripartite.

The FDA and the ADA have similar governance structures, consisting of

a House of Delegates (HOD) which is the representative and legislative body, a Board of Trustees (BOT) as the management and leadership body, and ten councils at the ADA level serving as the policy-making bodies.

The FDA House of Delegates meets twice a year to review, interpret, and possibly adopt those measures which will protect our practices and the dental health of the citizens of our state. Within the HOD there are task groups, councils and committees which analyze issues, make recommendations and carry out specific tasks. The HOD is composed of delegates and alternate delegates from each component, plus one student delegate and alternate from each Florida dental school, for a total of 100 delegates. WCDDA, as the largest component, has 30 of these delegates.

In addition to creating and approving policy, the HOD also communicates and advises the Board of Trustees and participates in the election of the trustees and delegates who will represent Florida in the ADA, as well as the election of its own FDA officers.

The HOD is a key body through which our grassroots members influence the association's direction, its positions on legislative or regulatory issues, leadership, and



Dr. Glori Enzor



Dr. Patricia Primero

representation at ADA level, as well as those issues which impact our practices daily.

One of the FDA House's most critical functions is to consider resolutions submitted by its members. This is how to get your voice heard and your ideas implemented. Some of the goals that the WCDDA has projected for the coming year and beyond are to support our organization and to advance our mission of "Helping Members Succeed" through open communication. We want to:

Support Our Affiliates

- Increase and maintain membership to better serve our colleagues
- Express and create value in organized dentistry
- Increase grassroots expression and connection with one another and with our delegation
- Grow participation through
 - Mentorship
 - Encouragement and education in resolution drafting

Support Our Delegation

- Foster open communication
- Facilitate meaningful communication among the



Above: Members of the WCDDA Delegation at the June, 2025 Meeting of the House of Delegates during the Florida Dental Convention.

delegation throughout the year, not just right before the House of Delegates meetings

- Increase training opportunities, especially for new delegates
- Improve communication among other component delegations

If you want to participate meaningfully in the organization of your chosen profession, here are some ways to get involved:

- Engage locally with your affiliate association and with your component.
- Seek nomination or election as a delegate or alternate. Your component may appoint you or you may run for election.
- Prepare or submit resolutions on issues you care about, or just share your ideas with your local delegate or trustee.
- Volunteer to serve on task forces, committees or councils

that interest you. This is a good way to become known, meet others, understand how policy is shaped and position yourself for leadership roles.

- You may attend the HOD meetings even if you're not a voting delegate. As a guest you can observe, understand the issues, network and meet other component delegates.
- Get involved! Florida is the 17th delegation to the ADA and there you can represent Florida dentists at the national level.

Our association's mission statement is to "Help Our Members Succeed" — we are here to support your efforts!

Glori Enzor, DDS
Patricia Primero, DDS
Co-Chairs, WCDDA

Take the Lead: FDA House of Delegates

Available Positions:

Two At-Large Delegate Seats, two-year term

Upcoming 2026 Meeting Dates:

- FDA House of Delegates Meeting, Orlando, June 26-27
- WCDDA Zoom Caucus Conference Call – June 16

To Apply or Nominate:

Scan QR code and submit your application or nominate a colleague who exemplifies dedication and leadership by February 1, 2026.





WEST COAST
DISTRICT DENTAL ASSOCIATION

A COMPONENT OF THE
AMERICAN & FLORIDA DENTAL ASSOCIATIONS

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Helping Members Succeed

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Service, Commitment, Integrity,
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The Reliable Resource for Dentists

The WCDDA Newsletter is published two times a year, in the Fall and the Spring. The Editor of the association and staff organize, print and mail to membership. The position of the editor is elected by the Executive Cabinet and does not have a specified term. The editorial staff holds the right to deny ads submitted for publishing. The newsletter may publish signed articles relating to all phases of dentistry, but assumes no responsibility for opinions expressed by the contributors. Publication in this newsletter does not imply the West Coast District Dental Association endorses any products or services that are advertised. Views, editorials, news columns and/or articles are those of the author's and not necessarily of the editor, staff, or members of the West Coast District Dental Association.

WCDDA PRESIDENT'S TRIP

February 13-16, 2026

Utopia of the Seas

Cruise for Dentists & Families

Reservations available!

Contact Sara Toerner:

sara@wishuponastarwithus.com

If you book your own reservation and would like to be added to our group, the cruise line requires the following:

- The reservation cannot already be paid in full.
- It must be booked through us or directly with RCCL.
- Notifying **Wish Upon a Star With Us** immediately after booking so we can ensure your reservation is added to the group.