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DCDS connection

November/December 2025
Volume 18, Issue 6

Official Publication of DCDS
A tradition of integrity and care since 1908

DALLAS COUNTY DENTAL SOCIETY

Mission Statement

Serving the professional needs of our members

In This Issue

The Write Stuff 2
Impressions 3
From the Hub 4
New Dentists 5
Members Message Board 6
Facility Rental 7
Diversity/Inclusion 10
TAMUCOD 12
DCDS Foundation 15
Classified Advertising 17

The Power of Giving Back

Our Members Transform Lives Through Service

As the holiday season approaches, we're reminded that November and December are more than months of celebration — they are a season of gratitude and giving. For Dallas County dentists, it's a great time to reflect on the privilege of serving others through our profession. The DCDS Foundation invites you to embrace that spirit of giving by participating in three meaningful outreach programs that carry this generosity throughout the year: Dental Tree Program (November 7), Give Kids a Smile–Dallas (February 6), and Texas Mission of Mercy–Dallas (April 10–11).

The Dental Tree Program brings oral health education directly to homebound Dallas-area seniors through Meals on Wheels and to low income area children through school Tooth Talks, spreading smiles and awareness just as the holidays begin. It's also an opportunity to share your time and expertise in your own office with a patient who may otherwise go without care. Your contribution plants the seeds for a healthier community, one smile at a time.

That spirit of service continues into the new year with Give Kids a Smile–Dallas, a day dedicated to providing free dental care to underserved children. This February event builds on the momentum of the giving season by turning compassion into action. For many children, it's their first positive dental experience — one that restores confidence and comfort while setting the foundation for lifelong oral health.

In April, Texas Mission of Mercy–Dallas (TMOM) will transform an ordinary venue in Fair Park into a large-scale dental clinic where hundreds of volunteer dentists, hygienists, and assistants deliver free dental care to adults and families in need. Everything is provided — supplies, equipment, and support — so volunteers can focus entirely on what they do best: practicing dentistry and changing lives.

Giving back through these programs extends the meaning of the holidays beyond a single season. It's a way to carry that generosity into the months ahead, making lasting impacts in the communities we serve. One morning or one weekend can transform lives — and remind us all why we chose this profession: to heal, to care, and to make a difference.

Supply Drive for UGM-Dallas at General Membership Meeting

At our November 18th General Membership Meeting, we're collecting essential new items to support Union Gospel Mission Dallas, a local nonprofit serving individuals and families experiencing homelessness. UGM is in urgent need of twin-sized bedding and undergarments. A full list of all needed items (new only, please) can be found at ugmdallas.org/. Please bring donations to the meeting or drop them off earlier at the DCDS Executive office or send through their Amazon link to help make a meaningful difference in the lives of people who are struggling.



SERVE. SMILE. SHARE YOUR GIFT.

TOGETHER, WE MAKE DALLAS COUNTY STRONGER — ONE PATIENT, ONE SMILE AT A TIME.

The Write Stuff

Andrew Read-Fuller, DDS, MD, MS, DCDS President

Perspective



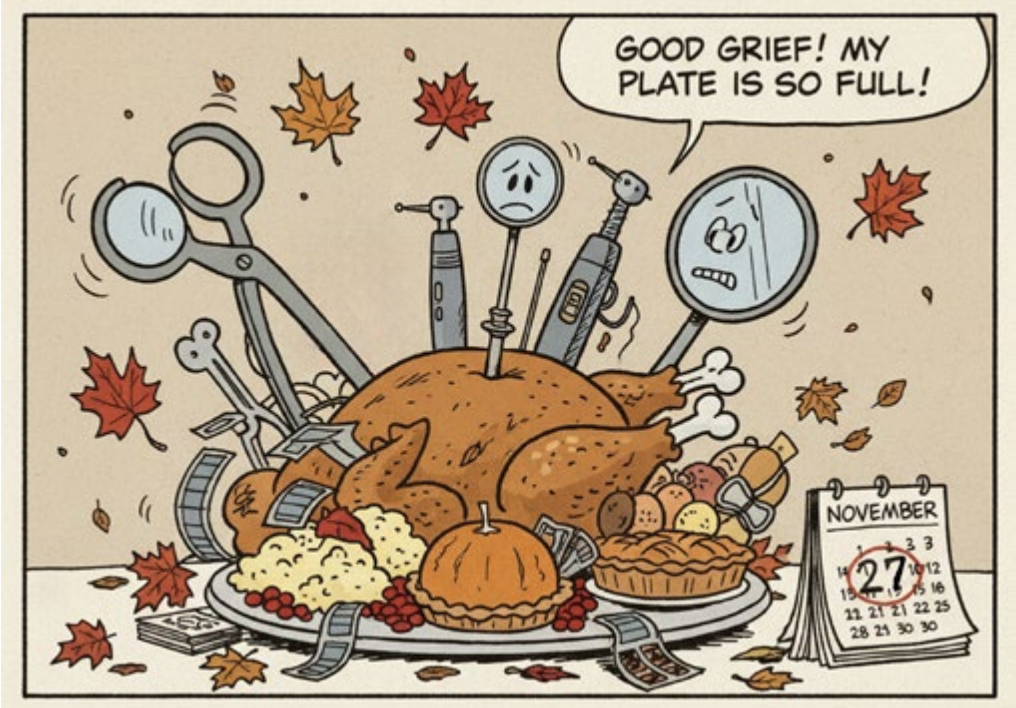
As the fall weather settles in, it always feels things begin to heat up in our day to day lives. Holidays — surrounded by social, family and school events — are constantly around the corner. As a program director for the Texas A&M Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery residency, I am entrenched in interview season, searching for a new crop of the best and brightest dental students to join our specialty. And, to top it off, our program is facing our regular CODA site visit, a high-stakes comprehensive evaluation which occurs every five years.

We are all facing our own challenges and pressures, particularly around this time of year. Speaking from experience, it is easy to lose sight of what matters when stress is high. "You've got to keep things in perspective," is a piece of advice we have all received (and probably given) many times in our lives. And, like most advice, it often goes in one ear and out the other unless we stop and consider its meaning.

Perspective inherently changes depending on your point of view. I am reminded of this truth right now as I watch the dental students studying for their midterm exams, hunched over their computers, reviewing powerpoint slides over and over. Some of them are probably pushing away thoughts of how their test results may impact their residency applications or job prospects. Yet, it is easy for me, standing on the other side and having watched this scene for many years, to feel confident that everything will work out for the students, and they are likely to succeed in their exams as they have in so many other phases of their lives.

As I attempt to aim this lens of clarity back on myself, I see that my own stresses are likely to resolve favorably as well. My CODA site visit will probably go off without a hitch, and our interview process will likely attract incredible candidates to our program.

We all have different challenges we are facing during this time of year, whether it is driven by our busy practices, holiday activities, or other personal commitments. These things can overwhelm us if we let them. Yet, we are all so fortunate as dentists for being part of the best profession in the world, which allows us to help people, take care of our families, and be a part of our communities. Not everyone is able to do all that, and maybe it is a blessing to have a full plate in our lives just as it is to have a full plate at Thanksgiving dinner. Just keep it all in perspective.





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Contributions: articles, letters to the Editor, announcements, advertisements, or other materials submitted for inclusion in DCDS Connection should be submitted electronically via email to the managing editor. Submissions must be received by the second Friday of the month prior to the month of publication. Acceptance of any submission is at the discretion of the Editor, and subject to editing for brevity or content. Anonymous letters or contributions will not be considered for publication. All submitted items must be accompanied by contact information, including the author's name, mailing address, telephone and/or email address. Illustrations should be submitted as .jpeg, .pdf, .eps or .tiff files. Photographs should be high resolution (300 dpi or better) and include a copyright release or statement of permission. Display and classified advertising will be accepted from reputable firms or individuals on a space-available basis in accordance with DCDS Guidelines. For current advertising rates or more information call 972-386-5741 X 225, or email rosemary@dcds.org.

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Impressions

Editorial by Simmi Patel, DDS, Editor

Cooling Down into the Winter Months



How many of us are waking up tired these days? After a whirlwind of fall events, I'm definitely ready to slow down and embrace the calm of the winter months. I imagine many of you are feeling the same way.

Personally, I'm looking forward to my cousin's wedding (she's a dentist!) and spending quality time with family. I have a 1-year-old nephew and a 4-year-old niece — keeping up with them is a workout in itself!

One of my favorite things about this season is enjoying football games and, of course, holiday shopping. November is also when I catch up on my continuing education (CE) requirements. I usually knock out courses like human trafficking and jurisprudence in one evening. TDA Dental Concierge also offers helpful courses on opioid training, OSHA, and HIPAA — perfect for checking off those CE boxes.

This time of year is also packed with arts and crafts fairs. One of my favorites is Market in the Meadow, held November 8–9 at Forest Meadow Middle School. The handmade gifts are always a hit and bring joy to loved ones on Christmas morning.

If you're a coffee lover like me, winter is the perfect time to indulge in seasonal flavors. Try sipping a warm cup while taking a walk in the crisp air — it's a simple pleasure that does wonders for your mood and health. Staying active during the colder months is essential for maintaining blood pressure and overall wellness.

Another winter tradition I love is experimenting with new recipes. Some of my culinary experiments even make it onto our Thanksgiving or Christmas menus. This year, I might borrow a few ideas from the DCDS cookbook — our family always looks forward to a mix of savory and sweet holiday dishes.

> **At holiday gatherings, we can relax, laugh, and remember that we're all human.**

And let's not forget the holiday parties! December brings a chance to slow down and connect with colleagues. In the office, we often feel like zombies going through the motions. But at holiday gatherings, we can relax, laugh, and remember that we're all human.

November and December are truly special months. I'm grateful for the chance to recharge and spend time with wonderful friends and family.



Texas A&M College of Dentistry Campus Tour

November 10, 2025
10:30am - 11:30am

The **Retired Dentists Committee** invites you to join them for a tour of the Texas A&M College of Dentistry. See the new building and learn of the many changes that have been made since your time in dental school!

Driver's License or picture ID required to enter the building. Meet up will take place in the lobby of the new building.

REGISTRATION REQUIRED!
To register, please contact Ashley at Ashley@dcds.org or 972-386-5741. Please note if you are an alumni of Texas A&M College of Dentistry / Baylor College of Dentistry.

From The Hub

by Jane D. Evans, Executive Director

Reflecting on What is Important



Recently, I attended my sister's wedding. Honestly, I wasn't entirely on board with her getting married again. She had already endured tremendous loss—losing one husband at a young age and another to COVID during the pandemic. Understandably, I had concerns.

Since she lives out of state, I made the trip to meet her fiancé before the wedding. It only took a few minutes with them together to realize something important: they were genuinely happy. I saw the connection, the peace, and the joy they shared. My hesitation melted away, and I gave them my blessing.

They didn't make this decision lightly. They had taken time to reflect on what truly mattered—to both of them—and how they wanted to spend their remaining golden years. That reflection made all the difference.

With everything happening in the world right now, maybe it's time we all take a moment to pause and ask ourselves: What is truly important?

In a world that never stops moving, it's easy to get swept up in the chaos. We chase goals, meet deadlines, scroll endlessly, and measure success by how busy we are. But life has a way of nudging us—sometimes gently, sometimes not—to stop and reflect.

Reflection isn't a luxury. It's a necessity. It gives us the space to look inward and realign. And often, when we do, we discover that what truly matters isn't what we've been stressing over.

For many of us, the essentials boil down to connection, purpose, and presence. Relationships—with family, friends, and ourselves—are the foundation of a meaningful life. Purpose gives our actions direction, and presence—the ability to be truly in the moment—can transform the ordinary into something deeply fulfilling.

Reflecting on what's important doesn't always mean making big changes. Sometimes, it just means paying attention.

Noticing when you feel most at peace.

Noticing who brings out your best self.

Noticing when you're doing something out of obligation instead of passion.

When we reflect, we recalibrate. Maybe it means stepping away from what drains us. Maybe it's reaching out to someone we've lost touch with. Maybe it's simply unplugging for an afternoon to reconnect with ourselves.

What matters most looks different for everyone. But whatever it is for you, it's worth honoring. Life moves fast—but clarity comes when we slow down long enough to truly listen.

DCDS Dental Assisting School Closure

After careful consideration, Dallas County Dental Society has made the difficult decision to graduate it's last class from the DCDS Dental Assisting School, effective October 31, 2025. Despite our efforts to recruit and support new students, enrollment has steadily declined in recent years, making it unsustainable to continue operations. DCDS is currently determining new avenues of use for the school facilities to continue serving the dental community.

We are proud of the many graduates who began their dental careers through our program and extend heartfelt thanks to our instructors, staff, and community partners for their dedication to dental education in Dallas County.



Thank you to our DCDS Members who serve in the ADA House of Delegates. Elected by their peers, these members bring their experience, insight, and dedication to representing the interests of our local dental community at the national level. They help shape the future of dentistry by sharing ideas, contributing to discussions, and ensuring that our members are well-represented in national decisions. (L-R) Drs. Drew Vanderbrook, Sarah Tevis, Jodi Danna, Jon Vogel, Carmen Smith, Corbin Alhadef, Jacque Plemons and Brad Crump.

New Dentists

News and perspective from dentists under 10 years of practice



by Macey Cartrite, DDS, MD

Building a Fulfilling Dental Career: Lessons They Don't Teach in Dental School

Starting out in dentistry is one of the most exciting chapters of your life. You've worked hard to get here, and now you're finally stepping into the role you've trained for. But the truth is, the transition from student or resident to practicing dentist is full of lessons you don't learn in school. Beyond the drills, diagnoses, and science, the heart of our profession is people — the patients who trust us and the teams who stand beside us.

Early on, I realized that one of the biggest mistakes new dentists make is overlooking their team. I can't tell you how many times I've listened to staff share frustrations about previous providers they've worked with — dentists who dismissed their ideas, ignored their concerns, or failed to show appreciation for their efforts. Hearing those stories made it clear to me just how common this mistake is and how damaging it can be for both morale and patient care. Your team is the backbone of your practice. When they feel valued, patients feel it too. A happy, cohesive staff creates the kind of welcoming environment where patients instantly feel at ease. Take time to connect with your team, ask what matters to them, celebrate the small wins, and make recognition a habit. When your staff feels appreciated, they'll go above and beyond for your patients — and for you.

Another area that often gets ignored is our own health. Dentistry is demanding work, and it takes a toll on your body more quickly than you expect. Back pain, neck strain, and hand fatigue are real, and if you don't take steps early to protect yourself, the consequences can be career-altering. Good posture, ergonomic equipment, and even simple things like stretching and strengthening your core go a long way. And don't wait to think about disability insurance — secure it while you're young and healthy. It may feel unnecessary now, but it could one day be the safety net that allows you to keep providing for your family if something unexpected happens.

Then there's the patient side. We all hope for perfect outcomes, but the reality is that complications happen, even with the best planning and execution. One of the most common frustrations I hear from patients who come to me after seeing another provider is anger over a result they weren't expecting — and often their claim is that "no one told me this was even a possibility." Those conversations are a stark reminder of how critical it is to set realistic expectations. Informed consent isn't just paperwork; it's an opportunity to build trust. By explaining risks and limitations openly from the start, you empower patients to make confident decisions about their care. That transparency builds respect, reduces stress for your team, and ensures that if something doesn't go as planned, your patient feels prepared rather than blindsided.

Something else that often gets overlooked is communication with specialists. I often tell my patients that the general dentist is like the quarterback — calling the plays and coordinating the team. Specialists bring incredible expertise, but it's the collaboration that really drives the best outcomes. Don't hesitate to pick up the phone or send an email. Sharing patient history, expectations, and long-term goals creates continuity of care that patients notice and appreciate. Open communication not only prevents mistakes but shows your patients that their providers are working together on their behalf.

And finally, let's talk about the business side of dentistry. It's probably not why you went into the field, but it's something you can't afford to ignore. Errors in billing or insurance coding can frustrate patients, cause unnecessary financial stress, and create tension in the office. The sooner you understand how the business side works, the better equipped you'll be to protect both your patients and your practice. Sometimes a simple clarification on a code can make the difference between a denied claim and a reimbursement that benefits both your patient and your office. Remember, insurance companies aren't eager to pay for treatment — you have to advocate for your patients.

At the end of the day, avoiding these little mistakes isn't about perfection — it's about creating an environment where your patients feel truly cared for and your team feels genuinely valued. That's the kind of practice that not only thrives but also brings you fulfillment. Because when dentistry is centered on people, it stops being just a job. It becomes a calling — one that changes lives, including your own.

The sooner you understand how the business side works, the better equipped you'll be to protect both your patients and your practice.

DCDS Member's Message Board

Upcoming Events



November 5-7 – Dental Tree Program by DCDS Foundation

November 10 – Campus Tour of Texas A&M College of Dentistry

November 18 – General Membership Meeting: Unlocking Smiles: Exploring Maxillary Expansion Techniques PLUS TDA President PLUS Supply Drive for Union Gospel Mission

December 7 - Gumdrops and Giggles: Tree Decorating Family Event

February 6 - Give Kids a Smile

February 17 – General Membership Meeting: Oral Pathology Essentials for the Dental Clinician

April 10-11 – Texas Mission of Mercy - Dallas

April 17 – Shred-a-thon

April 21 – General Membership Meeting: Trauma, Triumph and Tough Choices: Pushing the Envelope in the Implant Era

Register at www.dcds.org/events

Welcome New Members!

General Practice
Rachel Boice
Tess A Brunstein
Fatima Chaudhry
Calvin Dang
Carlotta Fantin-Yusta
Brandon Gibson
Morgan Hughes
Ashton Monks
Ioana Piersall
Laurentiu Popa
Monica Saldino
Karan Shah
Liana Sheily
Shashvat Soni
Kasey Tea
Ruth Umoren
Kameron Wilding
Rachel Zimmerer

Endodontics
Fabricio Teixeira

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
Rachel Reid

Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics
Melanie Hebert

Periodontics
Sajjad Ashnagar

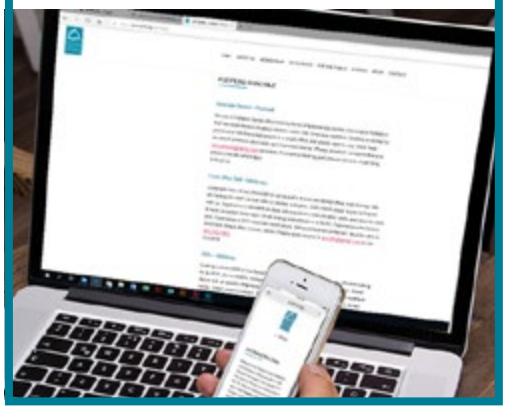
In Memoriam:
click name for obituary

Owen Dillard

Looking for a job? Have a position to fill in your office? Want to sell or buy office space and office equipment?

List it on the DCDS.org Job Bank/ Practice Sales! Members list for free ($75/ month for non-members.)

Email a brief summary (100 words or less, in paragraph format) of the post to: rosemary@dcds.org.





Watching a colleague suffer and feeling helpless is difficult and heartbreaking. Dentists Concerned for Dentists is a 24-hour confidential alcohol and drug abuse hotline you can call for assistance.

Your phone call could be the lifesaving step for someone who is hoping and waiting.

- **Founded exclusively to help dentists, hygienists, assistants and family members.**
- **No fees or charges.**
- **All contact is held in absolute confidentiality.**

The Dentists Concerned for Dentists program provides a strictly confidential peer assistance program for health care professionals who struggle with drug and alcohol abuse. Please share this confidential hotline with your colleagues.

A confidential phone call may be the greatest gift a peer dentist, staff or family member could receive.

DENTISTS CONCERNED FOR DENTISTS

24-hour Confidential Hotline

214-206-7496

HELP YOURSELF

If you're in crisis, there are options available to help you cope. You can call the above hotline at any time to speak to someone and get support. For confidential support available 24/7 for everyone in the United States, you can also call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

Need Meeting Space?

As a member of the DCDS, you can take advantage of low member rates when renting the Society's Executive Office for your next meeting.

The Dr. O.V. Cartwright Reception Hall is perfect for registration and a pre-function gathering.

The Dr. Paul P. Taylor Executive Board Room can seat 14 around a large conference table.

The Dr. D. Lamar Byrd Auditorium is 1,650 square feet of meeting space that can seat up to 125.

Audio/visual equipment is also available.

DCDS facilities include free parking,free wifi, use of small kitchenette, and ability to bring in food and non-alcoholic beverages.

For more info, contact Ashley Hawkins at 972-386-5741 or email info@dcds.org.





DCDS Membership Benefits

Being a member of the associations that work to protect your profession is important to the success of a practice...pass along the benefits to your peers!

- Free registration to DCDS's annual Southwest Dental Conference
- Peer Review mediation service to reconcile complaints between patients and doctors
- Rent DCDS meeting facilities at special member rates
- Free or discounted continuing education via seminars & General Membership Meetings
- Preprinted school excuse forms provided free of charge to dentists treating school-age children
- Confidential free notary public
- DCDS Connection, the bimonthly newsletter of Dallas County Dental Society (member advertising at reduced rates)
- Member mailing labels available for purchase
- Grassroots legislator contact program with state and national legislative representation
- License renewal reminders
- Networking/social opportunities with colleagues

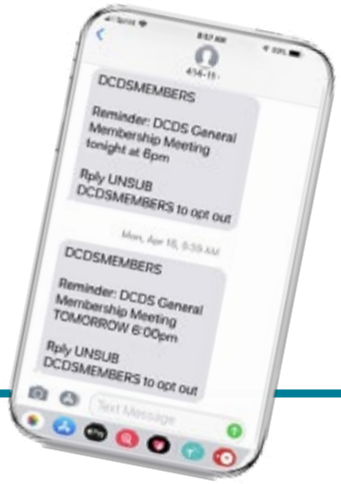
DCDS members receive ALL membership benefits offered by Texas Dental Association, including free entry to TDA TEXAS Meeting.

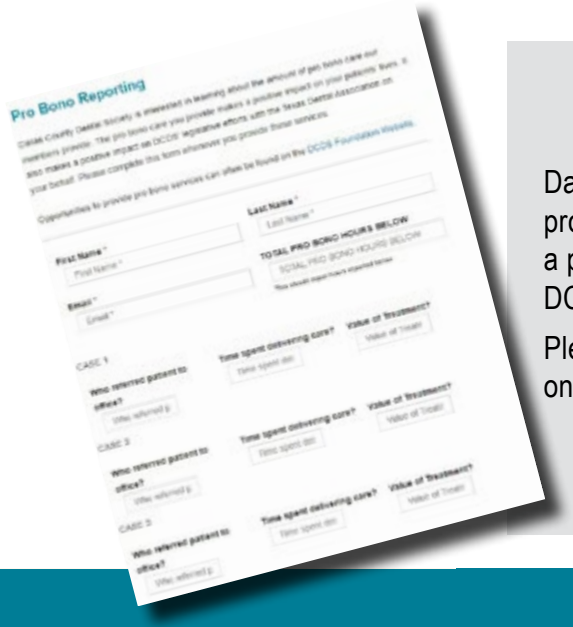
DCDS members receive ALL membership benefits offered by American Dental Association, including photo directory and public referrals through Find-a-Dentist.

www.dcds.org/membership

TEXT MESSAGE REMINDERS: Text DCDSMEMBERS to (833) 258-7645.

Have you ever wished you could receive reminders for DCDS meetings and events? Do you forget to put events/meetings on your calendar? DCDS implemented text messaging so you will not forget another meeting. Just sign up and you will be reminded of future meetings and events.





PRO BONO HOURS

Dallas County Dental Society is interested in learning about the amount of pro bono care our members provide. The pro bono care you provide makes a positive impact on your patients' lives. It also makes a positive impact on DCDS' legislative efforts with the Texas Dental Association on your behalf.

Please help our legislative efforts by completing this short Pro Bono Form on our website whenever you provide these services:

https://www.dcds.org/member-center/pro-bono

General Membership Meeting - November 2025

Unlocking Smiles: Exploring Maxillary Expansion Techniques

SHIVAM MEHTA, BDS, MDS, MDENTSC



Dr. Shivam Mehta is a clinician-scientist working as a full-time Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Orthodontics at the Texas A&M School of Dentistry. He is a dental graduate from India. He also obtained his master' degree and certificate in orthodontics form India in 2015. Following his graduation, he worked in private practice for 2 years. In 2018, he completed a 1 year fellowship program on Recent Advances in Orthodontics at University of Illinois, Chicago. Following his fellowship, he was invited to join the University of Connecticut where he received a dual degree/certificate program (Master of Dental Science and Certificate in orthodontics) in 2021. He loves to teach and share his diverse clinical experiences in orthodontics with the orthodontic residents — the next generation of orthodontists.

Examine the different types of expanders and their applications, with a detailed focus on the long-term effects of maxillary expansion, specifically mini-screw assisted rapid palatal expansion (MARPE). Explore the effects of both conventional rapid palatal expansion (RPE) and MARPE on dental, skeletal, soft-tissue structures, and the airway in comparison to controls. The presentation will highlight a cutting-edge technique—voxel-based superimposition of serial CBCT scans—to analyze changes resulting from conventional and mini-screw assisted rapid palatal expansion. Short-term and long-term outcomes of expansion appliances will be presented using color-coded maps.

Audience: Dentists
AGD Code: 370
CE Hours: 2 technical and/or scientific
CE Verification provided
Conflict of Interest: None reported
Sponsored by American Anesthesia Partners

Learning Objectives:

- Investigate the long-term outcomes with RPE, MARPE and controls and recognize the biomechanical and biological rationale for the outcomes
- Become familiar with clinical tips, pearls and techniques and avoid the common pitfalls for insertion of MARPE appliances
- Learn how to design MARPE appliances according to the clinical need such as (i) two mini-screws vs four mini-screw design; (ii) mini-screw first approach versus appliance first approach and (iii) bone-anchored MARPE versus hybrid MARPE

ALSO JOINING US:

TDA President Dr. Glen Hall provides a brief update regarding the recent news, actions and changes at the Texas Dental Association.



REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL ACCESS. REGISTER TODAY AT WWW.DCDS.ORG/EVENTS.

DCDS Members	Free	Non-member dentist	$95
DCDS Member staff	Free	Non-member staff	$95
Dental Students	Free		

Cancellation Policy: The cancellation/refund deadline is November 11, 2025. A 20% administrative fee will be assessed for all cancellation requests on or prior to this date. Since this is a limited attendance course, "no shows" will forfeit the full course fee. No refunds will be granted after November 11, 2025.

DALLAS COUNTY DENTAL SOCIETY

NOVEMBER 18

6:00 PM IN-PERSON • 6:30 PM VIRTUAL • REGISTER TODAY AT DCDS.ORG/EVENTS

DALLAS COUNTY DENTAL SOCIETY • DALLAS, TEXAS 75244 • 972-386-5741 • INFO@DCDS.ORG

Dallas County Dental Society
is an ADA CERP recognized provider.

ADA CERP is a service of the American Dental Association to assist dental professionals in identifying quality providers of continuing dental education. ADA CERP does not approve or endorse individual courses or instructors, nor does it imply acceptance of credit hours by boards of dentistry. Dallas County Dental Society designates one (1) credit per hour for CE activities, unless otherwise noted.

Concerns or complaints about a CE provider may be directed to the provider or to ADA CERP at www.ada.org/goto/cerp.

ADA C·E·R·P® | Continuing Education Recognition Program

Diversity + Inclusivity

by Carmen P. Smith, DDS
Diversity and Inclusivity Committee Member

Let's Talk About Diversity and Inclusion in Dentistry



As I watch or listen to the news daily, I am saddened and disappointed that our current political leadership has decided that diversity and equity initiatives are no longer necessary. Large and small corporations, as well as, institutions of higher learning are doing away with programs that once recognized and supported underrepresented populations. It is so hard to fathom that in the year of 2025, in a country made up of individuals from every walk of life imaginable, we are being told not to support, educate, promote, nor celebrate our unique individual qualities. As dental professionals and members of organized dentistry, this is our opportunity to take the lead and show that it is because of diversity and equity, not despite it, that our profession exists, is essential, and thrives.

Dentistry is more than teeth and treatment plans — it's about people. Every patient who walks through our doors brings their own story, shaped by culture, race, ethnicity, language, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, abilities, religion, and life experiences. Diversity is not just about race or ethnicity — it's the broad spectrum of human differences that influence how we live, work, and experience care. And yet, for all its variety, the dental profession still has room to grow in creating a truly inclusive environment for both patients and providers.

Why Diversity Matters

Diversity in dentistry enriches our profession. Studies consistently show that in healthcare, and more specifically, dentistry, patients are more likely to trust and follow treatment recommendations when they feel understood and represented. A diverse dental workforce helps bridge cultural gaps, reduces barriers to care, and builds stronger patient relationships. In Dallas County — one of the most culturally diverse regions in the nation — our practices can reflect the communities we serve.

Inclusion: The Next Step

Diversity is about representation; inclusion is about belonging. An inclusive dental environment means that every patient feels respected, every team member feels valued, and opportunities are equitable at every level — from dental school admissions to leadership roles in professional organizations. Inclusion requires active listening, cultural humility, and policies that recognize and address bias.

The Challenges We Face

Barriers to diversity and inclusion in dentistry can include limited access to education for underrepresented groups, lack of mentorship, language barriers, accessibility issues, and unconscious bias in patient care. These challenges are real, but they are also opportunities to innovate, to collaborate, and to lead change.



Steps We Can Take Together

- Recruit and Mentor: Support pipeline programs that encourage students from diverse backgrounds — in every sense — to pursue dentistry.
- Cultural Competency Training: Stay informed on best practices for serving patients from various cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds, and with varying abilities.
- Review Office Practices: From patient forms to hiring practices, ensure language and policies are inclusive of all differences.
- Celebrate and Learn: Recognize heritage months, accessibility milestones, and diverse community traditions; engage in outreach; and learn from colleagues' experiences.

A Call to Action

Diversity and inclusion are not checkboxes; they are commitments we renew daily. Let's use our collective voice as dental professionals to continue to foster equity, representation, and respect in every classroom, operatory, and boardroom.



GUMDROPS AND GIGGLES

FAMILY HOLIDAY TREE DECORATING

Get ready for holiday cheer, sparkle, and lots of giggles when you bring your kids and/or grandkids to our family-friendly holiday event! Each child can decorate their very own mini holiday tree to take home and enjoy throughout the season. Enjoy sweet treats, a holiday-themed movie and connect with DCDS friends while making lasting memories together!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7

2:00 – 4:00 PM AT THE DCDS EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Register by November 15 to reserve your kits
so we have enough for all of the kids that will be attending.

Hosted by the DCDS Membership Development Committee

REGISTER AT DCDS.ORG/EVENTS

DISCOVER CE AT TEXAS A&M COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY

LASERS: FROM THE SCIENCE TO CLINICAL APPLICATIONS

Friday, November 14, 2025
8 a.m.–5 p.m.

Optional Hands-On Session:
Saturday, November 15
Morning: 8 a.m.–12 p.m. or Afternoon: 1–5 p.m.

Texas A&M College of Dentistry |
Administration and Education Building,
6th Floor | 3302 Gaston Avenue, Dallas, TX 75246



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Texas A&M University College of Dentistry

Texas A&M University College of Dentistry names two leaders

Drs. Erica and Fabricio Teixeira joined Texas A&M University College of Dentistry in July in leadership roles. Erica Teixeira takes the leadership reins of comprehensive dentistry and Fabricio Teixeira is the dental college's new head of endodontics.

Previously, they served as department executive officers of operative dentistry and endodontics, respectively, at the University of Iowa College of Dentistry and Dental Clinics in Iowa City.

"We are fortunate to recruit two outstanding faculty to lead distinct departments at A&M Dentistry," Dr. Lily T. García, Dean, said. "It is especially true that the timing of having two executive leadership searches for two different department heads — the departments of Comprehensive Dentistry and Endodontics — created a unique opportunity for both highly-respected faculty leaders."

Erica Teixeira is a third-generation dentist. In her new role, she oversees the education of more than 400 dental students who care for patients under the supervision of licensed faculty. The Department of Comprehensive Dentistry also includes 10 residents in the three-year advanced education program in prosthodontics and three in the advanced education in general dentistry program.

Erica Teixeira plans to collaborate with faculty and staff to strengthen our educational programs, implementing evidence-based practice approaches and innovation. "I look forward to serving at Texas A&M University, where so much growth is happening."

The program welcomed 21 new part-time and full-time faculty members, including recent Texas A&M graduates in prosthodontics. Erica Teixeira replaces Dr. Bernard J. Hennessy, who retired in July.

"We are here to serve the community," she said. "I would like the public to see us and know we are the place for top dental care."

Comprehensive dentistry focuses on the overall health of a patient, rather than problems as they arise. It includes an examination of the entire mouth, including teeth, gums and supporting structures, to avoid future dental problems and promote long-term oral health.

In addition to her role as department executive



officer at Iowa, Erica Teixeira served as an associate professor and was named a professor in 2024. Prior to that, she was an assistant professor at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio for six years.

A fellow of the International College of Dentists, she's an alumna of the Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine program. Erica Teixeira also serves on the American Dental Association Council of Scientific Affairs and is vice chair of the ADA Seal committee. She's president-elect of the Women in Science Network of the International Association for Dental Research, and a CODA site visitor.

Fabricio Teixeira was recruited after an 11-year tenure at Iowa, where he chaired the endodontics department and held the Richard E. Walton Endowed Professorship. He also served as director of the advanced program for more than four years.

Fabricio Teixeira was invited to speak in 2024 at Texas A&M's Dean's Distinguished Lecturer Series in Dallas and visited with García, a colleague from both the UTHSCSA and the University of Iowa. Before his tenure at Iowa, he was an associate professor and residency program director at UTHSCSA, the same school where Fabricio Teixeira earned his endodontic certificate.

Endodontics is a dental specialty dedicated to diagnosing, preventing, and treating diseases of the dental pulp and surrounding tissues. Root canal specialists aim to preserve natural teeth and maintain oral health.

"At this stage in my academic career, I seek to work with someone I know and trust," he said. "I am confident in Dean García's leadership and her ability to advance the school. Having worked with her at two respected institutions, I can attest to her professionalism. I am committed to serving my peers in endodontics and the broader college community."

García became A&M's 17th dental college dean in October 2022. In addition to hiring the Teixeiras, she recruited new leaders for public health sciences and biomedical sciences over the past year.

Dr. Deborah Foyle has served as interim department head of endodontics since September 2022 and continues in the same role for the periodontics department.

"I appreciate Dr. Foyle's dedication and her efforts in supporting the department and providing valuable insights into its operations," Fabricio Teixeira said.

The 27-month endodontics certificate program includes eight graduate students. The program is recognized for its research achievements, and Fabricio Teixeira highlighted the strong leadership of Drs. Poorya Jalali, clinical associate professor and program director, and Jordan Schweitzer, clinical associate professor and predoctoral program director.

"I am committed to supporting the department and advancing A&M's presence at national and international forums," he said. "We will achieve this together."

Fabricio Teixeira has held several positions with the American Association of Endodontists and serves as secretary of the International Association of Dental Traumatology, also sitting on its board of directors. He's also a CODA Commissioner and chairs the Endodontics Review Committee.

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
College of Dentistry

Texas A&M College of Dentistry (formerly Baylor College of Dentistry) in Dallas is a part of Texas A&M University and Texas A&M Health Science Center.

Founded in 1905, the College of Dentistry is a nationally recognized center for oral health sciences education, research, specialized patient care and continuing dental education. Learn more at dentistryinsider.tamhsc.edu or follow @TAMUdental.

13 Years of Impact

by Dr. Michael Rainwater, DCDS Foundation Member

Park Cities Rotary's Dentistry with a Heart

Dentistry with a Heart (DWAH), hosted by Park Cities Rotary, celebrated its 13th year on October 18, 2025. We welcomed 26 patients from the Salvation Army Adult Rehabilitation Center and Agape Clinic for basic dental services including extractions, fillings and cleanings. The Salvation Army has been a partner with DWAH since our first year in 2010. In addition to providing patients, the Salvation Army hosted our prescreening at the Adult Rehabilitation Center on Oct. 15. There we examined patient needs, reviewed dental and medical histories, improved time and patient flow, and allowed patients to go directly to their dental chairs on event day.

Thank you to Jayvance Johnson, Blake Condra, Captain Bernadette Correira, and Major Stephen Correira with the Salvation Army for hosting. Screening exams were done by Dr. Michael Rainwater, with much-appreciated help from Ayerim Montero and Daphne Stidham, who assisted and took vitals.

This was the eighth DWAH event at the Agape Clinic, an amazing organization treating both dental and medical needs of Dallas-area residents. The partnership of private practice dentists, hygienists, Agape staff, and Park Cities Rotary, who organize the event each year, provides the opportunity to make a big impact for the patients seen.

Our dentist volunteers were Drs. Sarah Kong, Patrick Wharry, and Michael Rainwater. Dental students Youngju Oh, Jacob Ramos, Dawn Miller McElroy, Soheil Haftbaradaran, and oral surgery resident Shiv Patel made a big impact on our treatment day.

Thank you to our amazing hygienists: Melissa Gruenwald, Dina Moncada, and Wendi Gray. As always, nothing happens without assistants making the day happen. Our lead for the day was Kiara Ransom, along with Petra van Beveren, Shiela Vandenburg, Sri Akshaya Keerthi Vadivel, Poornima Gorur Sheshadrivasan, Anayeli Espinoza, Marisela Martinez, and Veronica De La Rosa.

The Park Cities Rotary DWAH started in 2010, providing 621 patients with over $430,000 of dental services to low-income residents of Dallas County. Thank you to Fred Brown for leading our dental day and to fellow Rotarians who participated: Mark Kashar, Pat Martin, Ayerim Montero, Richard Stanford, Rene Santana, Van Oliver, Jeff McNaughton, Herb Ziev, Jodie Ray, Karren Farris (supervising patient exit), and Ley Waggoner (greeting and organizing our guests). Park Cities Rotary has made improving health and wellness a priority, and Dentistry with a Heart is one of many examples of the club's success.





Above: Dentistry with a Heart dental providers

Right: Dentistry with a Heart Park Cities Rotarians

Working with Agape Clinic is always such a blessing. Thank you to Executive Director Paul Hoffmann, Dr. Barbara Baxter (founder of Agape), Dental Director Dr. Karl Veasey, and Dr. Renicke Moss, who treated patients. We were so lucky to have Beatriz Calixto and Dora Gonzalez at the front desk, making our day go smoothly. Truly a great team at Agape!

$34,172 of dental services were accomplished this day, improving the lives of our patients and providing an opportunity for all volunteers to make a difference.

Great way to spend a Saturday!

Your DCDS Foundation at Work!

by Dr. Preston Colven, DCDS Foundation President

The Dallas County Dental Society Foundation's mission is to enhance oral health in our community. Through programs like Give Kids A Smile, Senior Smiles, and the Dental Tree Program, we connect local dentists with opportunities to provide care, education, and resources to those who need it most.

This fall, we're preparing once again for the Dental Tree Program, taking place November 5–7. This annual initiative invites DCDS members to donate dental services to patients in need already within their own practices. By doing so, you help remove barriers to care and directly improve the oral health of individuals right here in Dallas County. If those dates don't fit your schedule, we encourage you to participate at any time that works best for you. Every contribution counts.

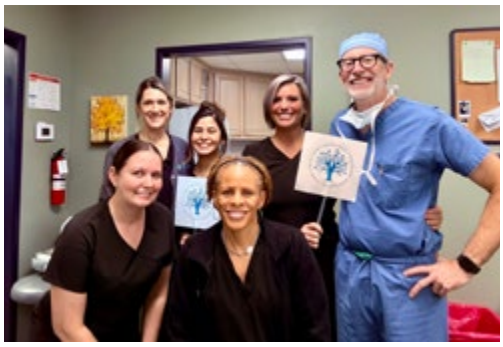
As dentists, we have the incredible opportunity to get to know our patients, their families, and their lives over years of semiannual visits. Sometimes, the most meaningful act of service isn't across town at a large event, but right in our own operatories by offering care to someone we already know needs it most.

Participating is simple:

1. Identify someone in your practice who has unmet dental needs and financial hardship.
2. Provide the necessary treatment pro bono or at a reduced cost.
3. Report the type and value of care provided to the DCDS Foundation so we can measure and share our community's collective impact.

Every dollar of donated care helps demonstrate our profession's compassion and commitment to service. Together, we can make a lasting difference in the lives of our neighbors while advancing the Foundation's mission to enhance oral health across Dallas County.

To learn more or report your participation, visit www.dcdsfoundation.org.









DALLAS COUNTY DENTAL SOCIETY FOUNDATION • DENTAL TREE PROGRAM •

The Dental Tree Program is a three-part cooperative service event organized by the DCDS Foundation and open to all Dallas dentists and dental teams for participation.

1) The Dental Tree Program encourages dentists and their teams to unite during the early days of November each year to serve our community in our own practices on Wednesday through Friday. Offices that participate can report their pro-bono services here.
2) DCDS Foundation works in conjunction with Visiting Nurse Association to deliver meals, oral health kits and oral health education to home-bound individuals in Dallas County on Friday, Nov. 7th. Click here to join in!
3) Visits to Title I schools in Dallas County are done to provide oral health kits and oral health education (ToothTalks) to students in grades K-3. At this time, all volunteer spots are taken. Elementary school nurses are encouraged to contact info@dcdsfoundation.org to have volunteers visit their school.

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Click here to check out Job Bank/Classified ads on the DCDS Website for more opportunities!





Connection and Learning with the Retired Dentists

Thank you to everyone who joined the Retired Dentists Committee for an insightful presentation with attorney and board-certified estate planner, Mark Sutherland. Attendees gained valuable knowledge on how to protect their assets, plan for the future, and ensure their legacies are preserved. Our retired members continue to engage in lifelong learning and professional connection through DCDS, and invite all retirees to join them for their next experience: a tour of the new Texas A&M University College of Dentistry on November 10, 2025. More information is available at https://www.dcds.org/events

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Follow DCDS and SWDC on social media!

It is my honor and privilege to welcome you to the 2026 Southwest Dental Conference (SWDC). Every year, this event brings together thousands of dentists, team members, and industry partners from across the country — an inspiring reminder that dentistry is strongest when we learn and grow together. As Chair of the 99th SWDC, I am thrilled to invite you to join us for a meeting that promises to be as enriching as it is inspiring.

The theme for 2026 is "Bridging Gaps, Breaking Boundaries: Collaboration in Oral Health." This theme reflects our belief that the future of dentistry lies not only in scientific innovation and clinical mastery, but also in our ability to work across specialties, across disciplines, and across communities. Our profession is evolving quickly, and the needs of our patients are more complex than ever. By fostering collaboration — between clinicians, researchers, educators, team members, and industry — we can break through the traditional boundaries of practice and create a stronger, healthier future for those we serve.

The SWDC is a shining example of what organized dentistry makes possible. It is through gatherings like this that we connect, collaborate, and renew our shared commitment to the profession. None of us can meet the challenges of dentistry in isolation. The clinical, business, and technological demands of our practices are best met when we stand together, learn together, and advocate together.

By participating in this Conference, you are making a powerful investment — not only in your own professional growth, but also in the advancement of dentistry as a whole. The insights you gain here, the conversations you have, and the relationships you build extend far beyond these few days. They ripple outward to your practice, your patients, your community, and our profession at large.

The educational lineup for 2026 is exceptional, carefully curated to embody the spirit of collaboration. Whether you are seeking advanced training in a specialty area, looking to enhance team communication, or exploring new technologies, this year's program has something to offer every member of the dental community.

Beyond clinical excellence, we have built a program that emphasizes working together: dentists with staff, specialists with general practitioners, and clinicians with industry experts. This spirit of collaboration is what makes dentistry stronger and our care more impactful.

Dentistry is experiencing a revolution in technology — from 3D printing and AI-supported diagnostics to regenerative therapies and expanded digital workflows. But innovation alone is not enough. For these tools to truly transform patient care, they must be shared, discussed, and integrated across disciplines.

No single person delivers care alone. Dentistry happens in teams, and the Southwest Dental Conference celebrates this truth by offering robust programming for hygienists, assistants, administrative staff, and laboratory technicians. By attending together, entire practices can return home aligned, energized, and equipped to provide even better care to their patients.

The theme of "Bridging Gaps, Breaking Boundaries" is more than a tagline. It is a call to action. Dentistry's future depends on our willingness to connect across divides, embrace innovation, and prioritize collaboration over competition. Whether we are bridging the gap between specialties, breaking through barriers in access to care, or fostering stronger bonds within our own teams, each of us plays a vital role in shaping the profession.

On behalf of the SWDC planning committee, I thank you for your commitment to dentistry and for joining us this year. It is your participation,



your curiosity, and your collaboration that make this Conference extraordinary. Together, let us bridge gaps, break boundaries, and build a stronger future for our patients, our practices, and our profession.



Thomas Schlieve DDS, MD
2026 Southwest Dental Conference Chairman