www.dcds.org

DCDS connection

November/December 2026
Volume 19, 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 12
TAMUCOD 13
DCDS Foundation 15
Classified Advertising 17

Evolving How We Connect

By Drew Vanderbrook, DDS,
DCDS Communications Committee Chair



The way people consume information has changed—and DCDS communications need to change with it. For years, the DCDS Connection newsletter served as a valuable record of DCDS news, member stories and upcoming events. However, today a static PDF designed primarily for print is less accessible, less mobile-friendly and harder to discover and share.

Beginning in January 2027, the publication will move away from being a standalone PDF newsletter and become a digital content experience within the DCDS Website. The stories, features, committee updates and member-focused content that have traditionally appeared in Connection will continue, but they will be published as individual, mobile-friendly web stories rather than packaged into a single PDF.

A monthly DCDS email will then serve as the new "connection point," bringing members a curated selection of those stories, important updates and upcoming events.

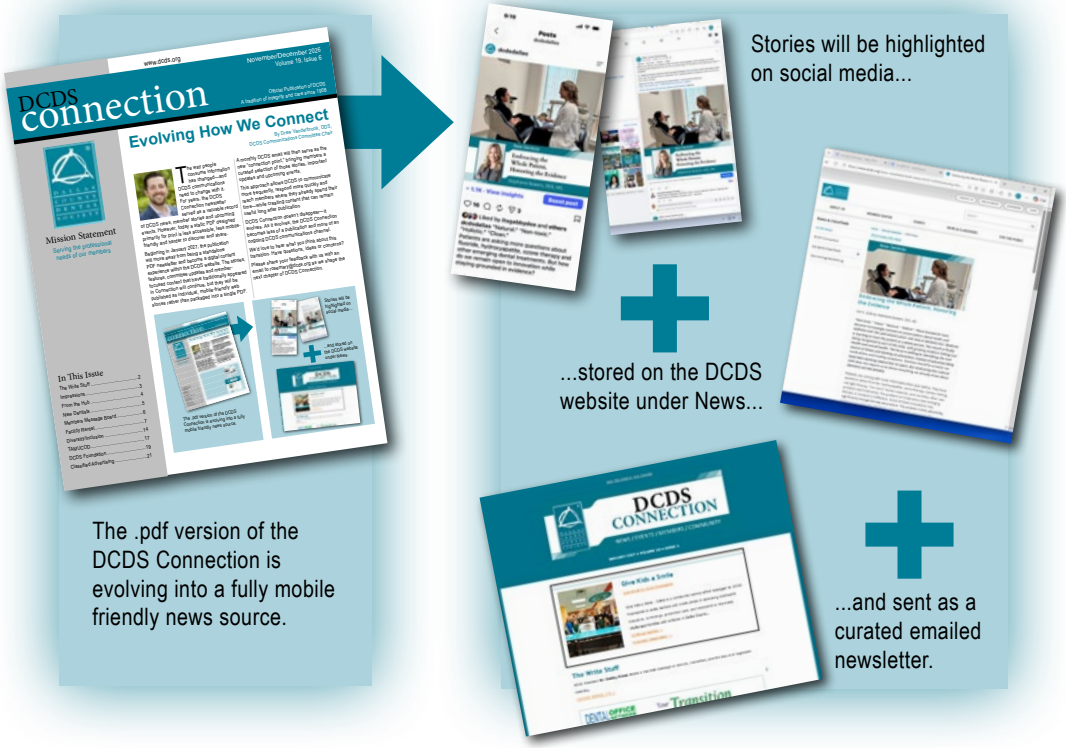
This approach allows DCDS to communicate more frequently, respond more quickly and reach members where they already spend their time—while creating content that can remain useful long after publication.

DCDS Connection doesn't disappear—it evolves.

As it evolves, the DCDS Connection becomes less of a publication and more of an ongoing DCDS communications channel.

Advertising opportunities around this new approach can be found here.

Have questions, ideas or concerns? Please share your feedback with us with an email to rosemary@dcds.org as we shape the next chapter of DCDS Connection.



The Write Stuff

Gabrielle Dizon, DDS, DCDS President

Celebrating Jane Evans' Dedicated Service to DCDS



As Jane Evans retires, we celebrate her remarkable 33 years of service to the Dallas County Dental Society and the lasting impact she has made on our organization and its members. Jane joined DCDS in 1993 as a team member with the Southwest Dental Conference and became Executive Director in 2003. Since then, she has been far more than an Executive Director—she has been a trusted advisor, a steady source of guidance and a dedicated advocate for our dental community.

Jane's institutional knowledge, unwavering commitment and genuine care for the people she serves have helped shape DCDS into the organization it is today. For generations of dental leaders, she has been a constant presence, offering wisdom, support and a deep understanding of what makes our Society special.

Over the years, I have introduced her to students and dentists new to Dallas as our very own "Toothfairy Godmother." Her contributions cannot be measured in years alone, but through the relationships she has built, the people she has supported and the legacy she leaves behind.

Jane, it has been a privilege to serve as President during this important milestone in your career. Thank you for your dedication, your friendship and the countless ways you have made a difference. You have given so much of yourself to DCDS, and you will be deeply missed. On behalf of our entire Society, I wish you a retirement filled with happiness, well-deserved relaxation and wonderful new adventures.





DCDS Connection is published bimonthly for the members of DCDS, 13633 Omega Road, Dallas, Texas 75244. First class U.S. postage is paid at Dallas, Texas. Subscriptions are free to DCDS members, and non-members may purchase copies for $10 per issue. Digital archives are available at dcds.org.

The opinions expressed herein are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily represent the viewpoint of DCDS, its Staff or its Board of Directors, unless specifically stated as such. All content is copyrighted, and reproduction or reprinting of any of the contents without written permission of DCDS is prohibited. DCDS does not warranty or endorse any products or services advertised in this publication.

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.

Editor ..... Simmi Patel, DDS

Managing Editor .....Rosemary S. Martinez

Executive Director ..... Jane D. Evans

ISSN 2576-4276 Copyright ©2026

Member Publication
AADEJ
American Association of Dental Editors & Journalists

Impressions

Editorial by Simmi Patel, DDS, Editor

Let's Get Out and Vote!



The midterm elections are coming up on November 3, 2026, and it is important for all of us to exercise our right to vote. If you have found yourself concerned about issues such as rising prices or fuel costs, voting is one way to make your voice heard.

Voting is an essential part of our democracy. Many people have fought to protect our freedoms, and participating in elections is one way we can fulfill our civic responsibility. There are many high-profile races on the ballot this year, and many political observers believe that voter turnout could play a significant role in determining the outcomes.

Texas is expected to be one of the most closely watched states in this election cycle. To prepare before heading to the polls, voters are encouraged to review a sample ballot for their local precinct. Information about voting locations, voter registration, and sample ballots can be found through local election offices or at VoteTexas.gov.

In addition to statewide races, voters will also have the opportunity to weigh in on judicial elections, including seats on the Texas Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals. Dallas County residents may also be asked to consider local measures related to funding programs and resources for individuals experiencing homelessness.

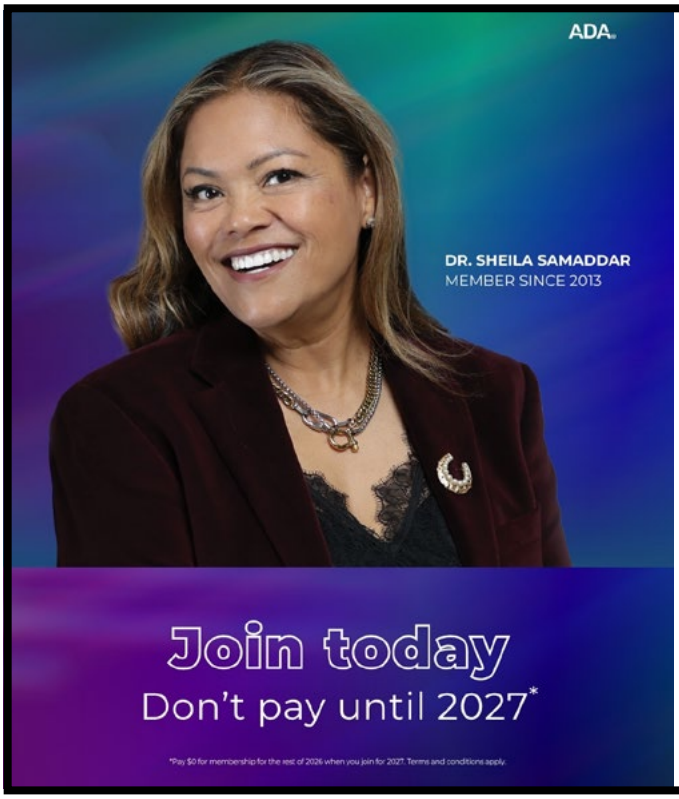
To avoid long lines on Election Day, voters may choose to take advantage of early voting. Early voting is scheduled to begin on October 19 and continue through October 30.

Every election provides an opportunity for citizens to participate in the democratic process. Whatever your views may be, make a plan, learn about the issues and candidates, and remember to cast your ballot.

Find voting information, polling locations and sample ballots at VoteTexas.gov.

"Texas is expected to be one of the most closely watched states in this election cycle.





Know a dentist who keeps saying they'll join the tripartite "next year"? Tell them there's no reason to wait.

They can join the ADA now, pay $0 for the rest of 2026, and start benefiting from the advocacy, resources, support and professional community that will carry into 2027 and beyond.

ADA membership connect you to resources and support that can help you enhance your skills, grow your career and stay informed – all while giving dentistry a stronger collective voice.

Explore these and other benefits designed to help dentists thrive:

- Personalized answers to your dental insurance questions
- Hundreds of on-demand and live CE courses at the best price
- Legislative action to advance oral health nationwide
- Financial resources to help secure your future.
- Access to wellness support for the unique pressures dentists face

Know a dentist who should be part of the ADA? Send them this post.

Join ADA: https://www.ada.org/join-the-ada/15-for-12

From The Hub

by Jane D. Evans, Executive Director

33 Wonderful Years — A Journey of Gratitude



As I prepare to retire as Executive Director, I find myself reflecting on what has been one of the most rewarding and meaningful chapters of my life. Thirty-three years ago, I began my journey with DCDS, responsible for membership. At the time, I could not have imagined all the experiences, relationships, opportunities, and memories that would unfold over the years.

My career evolved from Membership Services to Conference Director and ultimately to Executive Director. Each role brought new responsibilities, new challenges, and new opportunities to learn and grow. Looking back, I realize that each position helped prepare me for the next, while deepening my appreciation for the society, its members, and the important work we did together.

One of the greatest privileges of my career has been the opportunity to work with so many dedicated dental professionals, volunteer leaders, colleagues, and friends. I have witnessed firsthand the commitment and passion that make DCDS and the association so special. The relationships built along the way have been among the most rewarding gifts of these 33 years, and I will treasure them long after my retirement.

Serving as Executive Director has been an honor I have never taken lightly. Leadership is about more than managing day to day responsibilities or planning meetings and Conferences. It is about listening, building trust, navigating challenges, celebrating successes, and working together toward a common purpose. I am grateful to everyone who shared in that work and helped make our society what it is today.

Of course, a journey of 33 years brings countless memories — exciting conferences, important milestones, unexpected challenges, wonderful accomplishments, and moments of laughter and friendship. Not every day was easy, but every experience contributed to the journey, and each one taught me something valuable. Through it all, I have been reminded that an organization's greatest strength lies in its people and the shared commitment that brings them together.

As I close this chapter, my heart is full of gratitude. Thank you to the volunteer leaders who placed their trust in me, to the members who supported our work, to my colleagues who stood beside me, and to everyone who played a part in making these years so special. Whatever success I have enjoyed has been made possible, in large part, by everyone with whom I have had the privilege to work with.

Although I am retiring from my role as Executive Director, I will always feel connected to DCDS and the dental community that have been such an important part of my life. I leave with tremendous pride in the journey we have shared, confidence in the future, and sincere appreciation for the opportunity to have served.

Thirty-three years ago, I began with a responsibility to serve our membership. Today, I conclude this remarkable journey with so much more than a career behind me. I carry friendships, cherished memories, invaluable lessons, and a deep sense of gratitude for all that these years have given me.

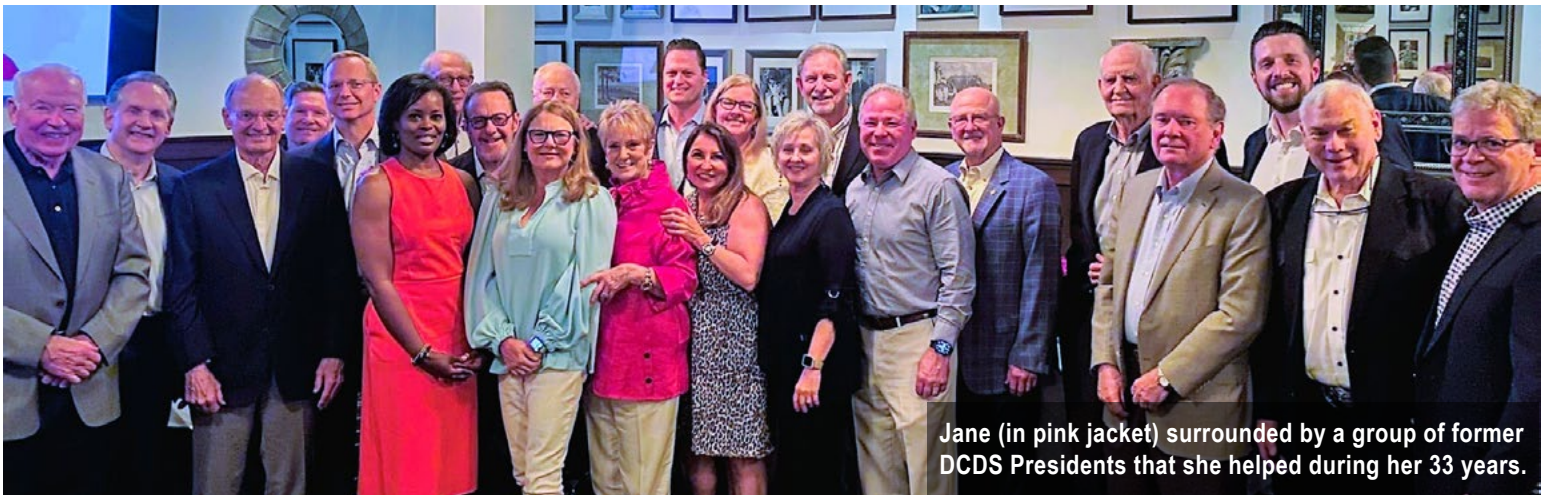
Thank you for making these 33 years so wonderful. It has truly been a privilege, and I will always look back on this chapter with pride, affection, and a grateful heart.

Everyone has said you will know when it is time to retire and I am still waiting on that to happen. My heart does say it is time to focus on my wonderful spouse, Rex, who made it possible for me to devote all these years to DCDS.

Last but certainly not least, I will miss my wonderful DCDS Team. They are the best and I could not have asked for a better team to work side by side with every day.

DCDS will be in wonderful hands as Dr. Carmen Smith took the role of Executive Director on October 16, 2026. I have worked with Carmen as a Board Member, Treasurer, Conference Chairman and President and she definitely has the pulse of DCDS.

Wishing everyone at DCDS all the best...you are truly the greatest component society of ADA and TDA!



Jane (in pink jacket) surrounded by a group of former DCDS Presidents that she helped during her 33 years.

New Dentists

News and perspective from dentists under 10 years of practice



Stephanie Bowers, DDS, MS

Embracing the Whole Patient, Honoring the Evidence

"Non-toxic." "Clean." "Natural." "Holistic". These buzzwords have become increasingly common in conversations about health and wellness over the past several years, and now in dentistry too. Medicine is learning to treat the patient as a whole person. The mouth is finally being recognized as part of the body, with growing evidence linking oral health and overall health. The focus is shifting to identifying the root source of illness and working on prevention, instead of just prescribing medications and treating symptoms. Dentists should be ecstatic; we have been working toward this for years. But embracing this cultural shift does not require us to throw everything we already know about dentistry out the window.

Patients are coming with more information than ever before. They have questions about fluoride, hydroxyapatite, ozone therapy, salivary testing, red-light therapy, "non-toxic" dental materials, and countless other new products and treatments. The problem isn't that every new emerging therapy or product is ineffective. Some of these innovations may significantly change the way we practice. The problem is that plausibility, testimonials, laboratory findings, and early studies can easily get translated into clinical claims, that the evidence simply does not justify yet.

Social media has accelerated this shift dramatically. A podcast or an influencer makes a bold and emotional statement like "your toothpaste contains a neurotoxin" or "your root canal is giving you cancer" and suddenly patients are coming in with rampant caries or asking for their perfectly healthy teeth with root canals to be extracted. The term "toxic" is often being used incorrectly. In toxicology, essentially anything can become toxic at a sufficient dose. The dose, route, duration, and level of exposure matter.

> **Being open-minded and being evidence-based aren't opposites. Combining these mindsets is how we better care for our patients.**

Perhaps the most important example: Fluoride. The 2024 National Toxicology Program review found an association between fluoride exposure above 1.5 mg/L and lower IQ in children. That's more than double the recommended level of 0.7 mg/L in community water[1]. At the doses we use in practice, there is strong evidence showing no negative effect on cognitive development and no significant harm[2,3]. Mild dental fluorosis can result from swallowing too much as teeth are forming, which is why we teach children to use only a "pea-sized" amount of toothpaste. Many Hydroxyapatite toothpastes have come to the market with claims to be better than fluoride, or a "safer" alternative. Available research has relatively short follow up periods, heterogeneity in particle size, and high risk of bias due to product manufacturer funding. While there is promising initial data on remineralization and hypersensitivity, Hydroxyapatite is not a proven replacement for fluoride, especially in high caries risk patients[4,5,6]. There is also no credible scientific evidence that a properly performed root canal causes cancer or systemic disease. There is, however, a plethora of evidence that chronic oral inflammation is linked to systemic disease, such as untreated periodontal disease, caries or a chronic apical abscess.

Another example is Ozone therapy. Ozone is O_3. This molecule is unstable and will release one oxygen that acts as an antioxidant and can damage the cell wall of microbes. It can be used in gas, water, gel and oil forms. But it is not selective, so it can also damage our body's cells that are necessary for healing. While the gas form is the most potent, there is a significant risk for lung damage if it is inhaled. Some clinicians claim that its' use in extraction sites or in treatment of periodontal disease yields "better" results or quicker healing. Much of the available evidence is in vitro (in a lab) and the results in patients are inconsistent[7,8,9]. Although a meta-analysis showed a statistically significant decrease periodontal pockets when using ozone, versus traditional non-surgical instrumentation, this difference was only about 0.25 mm[7].

Just because there have been some studies completed on a new method or product, that alone is not good enough to make a recommendation. We have to examine study design, sample size, comparators, duration, outcome measures, funding and conflict of interest. How we say things to patients matter as much as what we say. Use calibrated language like "promising", "an add-on, not a replacement", and "may help". Steer clear of absolutes like "proven", "no risk", and "cures". Our patients trust us to distinguish what is promising from what is proven, and most importantly, to be honest when we do not yet know the difference. Patient autonomy matters, but informed autonomy requires complete information. Our job is to avoid presenting these options as miracle workers or as replacements for proven care when the research just isn't there yet. Being open-minded and being evidence-based aren't opposites. Combining these mindsets is how we better care for our patients.

Click here to view citations for this article.

DCDS Member's Message Board

Upcoming Events



November 6 – Dental Tree Program
November 10 – JFK, Then and Now
November 17 – General Membership Meeting
December 6 – Gumdrops and Giggles: Family Holiday Stocking Decorati
February 5 – Give Kids a Smile
February 16 – February General Membership Meeting
February 17 – TDA Legislative Day

Register at www.dcds.org/events

Welcome New Members!

GENERAL PRACTICE
Fadia Bakhsh
William Chakar
Yu-Hsin Chen
Tim Cho
Nicole Martes Fernandez
Idris Hassuji
Gabriela Torres Huckabee
Emily Vu
Timothy Ye

Endodontics
Keishu Tachibana
Todd Remmers

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
Mouhamadou Seydi

Pediatric Dentistry
Crystal Smith

In Memoriam:
click name for obituary

Robert H. Levy





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
- 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 monthly newsletter curating local thought leadership and Society news
- Member mailing labels available for purchase
- Grassroots legislator contact program with state and national legislative representation
- License renewal reminders
- Networking/social opportunities with colleagues

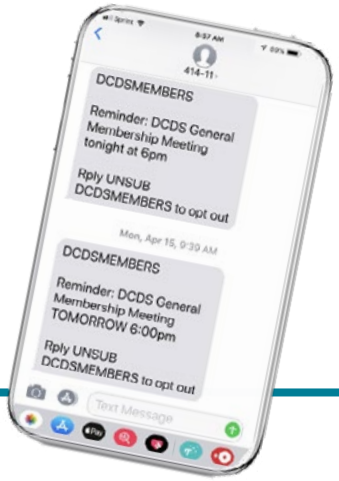
DCDS members receive ALL membership benefits offered by Texas Dental Association, including free entry to TDA TEXAS Meeting.

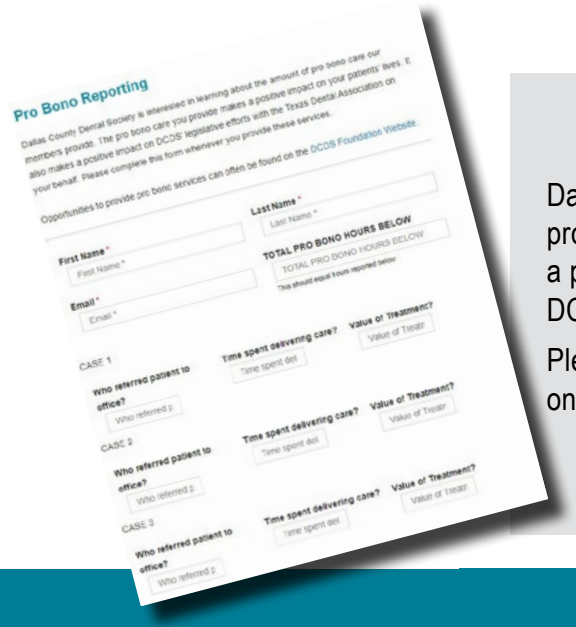
DCDS members receive ALL membership benefits offered by American Dental Association, including photo directory and public referrals through Find-a-Dentist.

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

Applause, Applause!



Jacqueline M. Plemons, DDS, MS, has been named the 2026 Texas Dentist of the Year™ by the Texas Academy of General Dentistry (Texas AGD), recognizing her outstanding contributions to dentistry, leadership, mentorship, and patient care. Selected from a field of 16 distinguished dentists nominated for the statewide honor, she was recognized at the Texas Academy Awards on September 18, 2026. The Texas Dentist of the Year award celebrates a Texas dentist whose work demonstrates a commitment to clinical excellence while making a meaningful impact on the profession and the community. Dr. Plemons' recognition highlights the important role Dallas-area dentists play in advancing the profession through leadership, education, mentorship, and service.

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.



Dental Concierge

Through TDA

CONFUSED BY TSBDE CE REQUIREMENTS?

Track Your CE
Store CE certificates in the cloud, track completed courses, and view a personalized dashboard showing the hours and course types you still need for TSBDE license renewal.

Browse Courses
Find affordable, high-quality CE courses, including self-study and in-person options, to meet your clinical, scientific and risk management requirements.

Set Reminders
Customize app or email reminders for CE deadlines and other practice requirements, such as X-ray equipment checks.

Submit to TSBDE
Keep your CE records organized and accessible, making it easier to verify compliance and respond to TSBDE audits.

CLICK HERE: YOUR LICENSE RENEWAL WILL GET MUCH EASIER!

General Membership Meeting - November 2026
Prescribing Controlled Substances: Drugs, Monitoring and Standards of Care

JACQUELINE PLEMONS, DDS, MS



Dr. Jacqueline Plemons is a board certified periodontist in Dallas who currently serves as Editor for the Texas Dental Association. Dr. Plemons attended Texas A&M University for her undergraduate training before graduating from Baylor College of Dentistry in 1986. She completed her periodontal residency in 1988 earning a Master of Science in Oral Biology and a Certificate in Periodontics. She also completed a Fellowship in Oral Medicine and has advanced training in dental implants and dental anesthesiology. Dr. Plemons is a Professor in the Department of Periodontics at Texas A&M University College of Dentistry where she serves as the Director of the Stomatology Center, a nationally recognized center for patients suffering from unique medical conditions affecting the oral cavity. Dr. Plemons lectures across the United States and has published numerous article in periodontics, oral medicine and dental implants.

The abuse of prescription narcotics has reached epidemic proportions across the nation. Both national and state-wide efforts to combat the problem affect the practice of dentistry in Texas and across the nation. This course will review safe and ethical ways to prescribe and monitor the use of controlled substances as they relate to dental care and how to manage dental pain.

Learning Objectives:

- Discover the nature and magnitude of the opioid epidemic in the US/Texas
- Review safe and effective pain management techniques
- Learn approved procedures of prescribing and monitoring controlled substances

Audience: Dentists
AGD Code: 134/340
CE Hours: 2 technical and/or scientific
CE Verification provided

SPONSORED BY Wingspan Transitions

WINGSPAN TRANSITIONS

ALSO JOINING US:

TDA President Dr. Elizabeth Goldman 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. IF YOU DECIDE TO CHANGE YOUR VIEWING PREFERENCE AFTER REGISTRATION, PLEASE CALL THE DCDS OFFICE AT 972-386-5741.

REGISTER TODAY AT WWW.DCDS.ORG/EVENTS

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

Cancellation Policy: The cancellation/refund deadline is November 10, 2026. 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 10, 2026.

DALLAS COUNTY DENTAL SOCIETY

NOVEMBER 17

REGISTER TODAY AT WWW.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



GUMDROPS AND GIGGLES

FAMILY HOLIDAY STOCKING DECORATING

Bring the kids, bring the grandkids, bring the holiday spirit!

Join your DCDS friends for a festive afternoon of stocking decorating, sweet treats, a holiday-themed movie and plenty of family fun.
Each child will create a holiday stocking to take home and enjoy all season long.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6
2:00 – 4:00 PM AT THE DCDS EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Register by November 30 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

Diversity + Inclusivity

by Brad Crump, DDS, MS
Diversity and Inclusivity Committee Chairman

One Profession, Many Perspectives



Dentistry is one profession, but it is shaped by countless personal and professional experiences, backgrounds, career paths and life perspectives. The DCDS Diversity and Inclusion Committee has had the opportunity to highlight the many ways those perspectives contribute to a stronger dental community for all.

As the DCDS looks toward the future, the principles of connection, respect, belonging and learning from one another remain a part of the DCDS's broader vision. These principles are not limited to a single program, event or committee. They are reflected in the way our members come together — to learn, mentor, volunteer, lead and support one another.

A new dentist brings a different perspective than someone who has practiced for 30 years. A specialist may approach a challenge differently than a general dentist. A practice owner may see an issue differently than an associate. A student entering the profession may ask questions that cause experienced dentists to reconsider long-held assumptions.

Those differences make our profession stronger.

Throughout its work, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee has encouraged members to recognize the value of our memberships differences and has worked to create opportunities for connection. Whether through professional education, mentorship, community service, leadership or simply getting to know a colleague whose path looks different from your own, there are many ways to broaden our perspectives of each other.

The opportunity to learn from one another doesn't belong to any one committee. It happens every day through each of you our members — in study clubs, general membership meetings, at continuing education programs, through mentorship, during volunteer activities and in conversations between colleagues.

DCDS is at its best when those connections happen. Because while our experiences may be different, our profession is shared.



Texas A&M University College of Dentistry

Texas A&M's Plemons named 2026 Texas Dentist of the Year

Sometimes a small act of generosity can make a tremendous impression, especially on a 7-year-old. For Dr. Jacqueline Plemons, it's what led her to become a dentist.

"My mother had a toothache and, as a single mother with two children, had no means of getting help," she said. "After visiting a few offices with no success, a kind dentist agreed to treat her at no charge. I was incredibly grateful and grew up wanting to be just like him – being able to care for people who sometimes desperately need our help."

Plemons accomplished her goal. Not only is she Texas A&M University College of Dentistry's new director of external affairs, but she's also approaching 40 years in dentistry. Plemons also is a full-time clinical professor in periodontics and director of the Stomatology Center, where she helps diagnose and manage complex oral medicine conditions while educating future generations of dental professionals.

If that's not enough, Plemons owned a private dental practice in Dallas for decades and is a former president of both the Texas Dental Association and the Dallas County Dental Society.

Plemons' distinguished career received the spotlight Sept. 18 when Texas Academy of General Dentistry named her 2026 Texas Dentist of the Year at its annual awards ceremony in Austin. She was one of 16 nominees statewide.

It's considered among the most prestigious honors a Texas dentist can earn.

"Dr. Plemons represents the very best of our profession," said Dr. Jon Dossett, president of Texas AGD, in a written statement. "Her extraordinary career as a clinician, educator, mentor, and leader has touched countless patients and dental professionals across Texas and beyond. Her dedication to advancing dentistry and serving others makes her truly deserving of this recognition."

There were 16,761 professionally active dentists practicing in Texas last year, according to recently released preliminary data from the American Dental Association Health Policy Institute.

"Dentistry has taught me that caring for patients is a privilege, that good communication is incredibly important and that lifelong learning is essential for good patient care," Plemons said. "There's value in being both a mentor and a mentee, and dentists are stronger as a group in shaping the future of our profession."

She graduated from the dental school in 1986 (then-Baylor College of Dentistry) and later earned a master's from Baylor University in Waco. Plemons earned a periodontics certificate from the dental school in 1988.

Plemons has taught at A&M Dentistry part-time or full-time throughout her career and has held leadership roles within the American Dental Association, where she chaired the Council on Dental Education and Licensure. Plemons served as a delegate to the ADA House of Delegates and contributed to many councils, committees and accreditation initiatives.

She's an advocate for the profession and provided testimony before the Texas Legislature and the Texas State Board of Dental Examiners on issues affecting dentists and patients across Texas.

A nationally recognized educator, researcher and lecturer, Plemons has spent nearly four decades teaching at her alma mater. In addition, she authored more than 30 peer-reviewed scientific publications, delivered more than 200 professional lectures nationally and internationally and contributed to research in periodontics, oral medicine, oral cancer detection and patient care.

"Being named Texas Dentist of the Year is a tremendous honor and a well-deserved recognition of Dr. Plemons' exceptional contributions to the dental profession," said Dr. Lily T. García, College of Dentistry dean. "We are incredibly proud to have a faculty member whose leadership, expertise and commitment to advancing oral health continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of patients, students and the profession. This recognition reflects not only Dr. Plemons accomplishments, but also the positive impact of her work throughout Texas."

Plemons mentors dental students, specialty residents, graduate students, researchers, and junior faculty members.

Dr. Deborah M. Foyle, clinical professor in periodontics and A&M Dentistry's new associate



dean of student affairs, said she met Plemons in 1995 when helping her gather clinical data for a study of mucositis in patients undergoing chemotherapy at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas. Foyle had recently moved to Dallas from London, England, so Dr. John Regan, her husband, could attend A&M Dentistry's endodontics graduate program.

"The first time I was introduced to her, I was with my 3-month-old premature baby, and she just lit up during her interaction with him," Foyle said. "She loves children, (and) I was struck by how natural, genuine, caring and giving she was; that is how she still is with patients and students alike."

Plemons' career accomplishments include the Texas Dental Association Gold Medal Award for Distinguished Service, the American Dental Association President's Award, the Dallas County Dental Society Lifetime Achievement Award, the Texas A&M College of Dentistry Distinguished Alumnus Award and the American Academy of Periodontology Educator Award.

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
College of Dentistry

At Texas A&M University College of Dentistry, we stand for better care. Since 1905, the college has served patients and educated future oral health professionals. Today, it continues to transform lives through nationally recognized education, groundbreaking research, specialized patient care and continuing dental education — building healthier communities and brighter futures. Learn more at dentistry.tamu.edu and follow @TAMUdental.

A Smile Can Be Part of a Second Chance

Helping the Men of Nehemiah

For years, DCDS dentists volunteered with Attitudes & Attire's Hopeful Smiles program, providing dental care to women working toward self-sufficiency. When the organization closed in 2024, that opportunity came to an end. Today, DCDS is looking for dentists who are willing to bring that same spirit of service to another group working toward a new beginning: The Men of Nehemiah.

The Men of Nehemiah is a Christian recovery organization that helps men rebuild their lives after the effects of drug and alcohol addiction. During the nine-month program, men move through three phases focused on stabilization, developing tools for recovery and ultimately returning to employment, family and community life.

For many of these men, oral health is part of that journey.

Years of substance use, homelessness and limited access to preventive care can leave men with significant dental needs, including tooth decay, gum disease, missing teeth and infections. Without insurance, stable income or transportation, treatment can seem impossible to obtain.

"Many individuals in our program need dental treatment to restore not only their oral health, but also their confidence, dignity and overall quality of life," explains Denise Waters, Medical Services Manager for Men of Nehemiah.

That impact was evident when men from the program received care at the Texas Mission of Mercy (TMOM). James, 40, had not been to a dentist since childhood. Six fillings and a cleaning addressed problems that had made eating difficult—and gave him a renewed sense of confidence.

"When I went to a job interview, I had a boost of confidence," James said. "It felt good to get the love and generosity."

Nathan had grown up with regular dental appointments but stopped going once his addiction began. At TMOM, he received a cleaning, examination and X-rays, with a crown scheduled for follow-up care. "It's a good way for the men to see that the community cares for them outside of Men of Nehemiah," Nathan said.

That message may be just as important as the treatment itself.



Pictured, at this year's Texas Mission of Mercy event in Dallas, 50 men from Men of Nehemiah arrived at 5:00 a.m. and patiently endured a 12-hour wait, hopeful for the chance to receive dental care. Their kindness and resilience made a lasting impression on DCDS representatives. When the men learned that a security guard at the event was 34 years sober, they spontaneously broke into song for her — a moving reminder of the hope and camaraderie that define their journey. When time did not allow 13 men to receive treatment that day, DCDS Foundation helped ensure those 13 received care through the Grace Center-Dallas.



ONE PATIENT. ONE YEAR. ONE LIFE CHANGED.

Could you take one pro bono patient under your care?

DCDS Foundation is asking volunteer dentists to consider taking on one Men of Nehemiah patient per year, pro bono, and seeing him through the dental treatment he needs.

For a man rebuilding his life after addiction, access to a dentist can mean more than treating a tooth. It can mean relief from pain, improved oral health, greater confidence and one less barrier as he works toward employment, stable housing and a restored life.

Choose to make a difference. We'll help connect you with a man who needs your care. Just email info@dcdsfoundation.org or call 972-386-5741 to learn more about becoming a volunteer dentist.

One patient. One year.
One dentist who says yes.

As these men work toward employment and independent living, a healthy, functional smile can remove one more barrier standing between them and the future they are working to build. Needed services range from basic preventive care and periodontal treatment to fillings, extractions, crowns and functional appliances.

DCDS is seeking volunteer dentists willing to help Men of Nehemiah clients receive the dental care they need. Your time and expertise can do more than relieve pain or repair a tooth. It can help a man walk into a job interview with greater confidence, reconnect with his community and take another step toward a restored life.

A second chance can begin in many ways. For some, it may just begin with a smile.

Your DCDS Foundation at Work!

by Preston Colven, DDS
DCDS Foundation President

Strengthening Our Mission: New Board Leadership and Community Momentum

As the cooler months approach, the Dallas County Dental Society Foundation is energizing its commitment to oral health access across North Texas. From fresh leadership to successful fundraising and expanding educational partnerships, our team is positioned to make a measurable impact in our local neighborhoods. Thank you to every member, donor, and volunteer who makes this work possible.

North Texas Giving Day: $1,500 Raised in 24 Hours

Thanks to the generosity of our community during North Texas Giving Day, we successfully raised $1,500 in a single day!

These funds directly support the distribution of essential oral health kits and educational fliers as we ramp up our outreach efforts. As seasonal community programming increases, these resources will supply our upcoming Tooth Talks and Community Health Fairs, putting critical tools for preventive health directly into the hands of children and families.

Expanding Our Reach: Dallas ISD Partnership

We are currently in active discussions with the Dallas Independent School District (DISD) to establish direct programming across their 152 Title I elementary schools, beyond our existing partnership that happens each February through Give Kids a Smile.

Expanding our clinical and educational footprint into these high-need schools is a vital priority, and long overdue. We look forward to sharing formal rollout updates soon—stay tuned as this partnership develops!



Right: Foundation volunteers have provided oral health education at over 28 community events so far this year.

Welcoming Our New Board Members

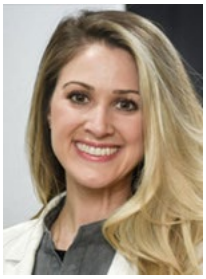
We are thrilled to welcome four distinguished dental leaders to the DCDS Foundation Board of Directors. Their clinical expertise, academic backgrounds, and dedication to service will be instrumental in guiding our vision forward.



Dr. Beau Deaver was raised in University Park. He completed his dental training at UT Health San Antonio and Prosthodontics residency at Texas A&M, specializing in dental implants and complex reconstructive dentistry. Outside of caring for his patients, he enjoys golfing, playing piano, and spending time with family and friends.



Dr. Akshay A. Chhana is a Texas native and Baylor graduate. He completed his Periodontology residency at UNC and is a Board-Certified Periodontist specializing in advanced surgical, regenerative, and implant procedures. In his free time, he enjoys playing pickleball, cheering on local Dallas sports teams, and exploring the local food scene.



Dr. Jordana Contrucci Ruiz is an SMU alumna who earned her doctorate from Nova Southeastern University. She now practices general dentistry in Dallas where she brings a strong passion for preventive health and community engagement. When she isn't in the office, she loves cooking, traveling, and going for long runs.



Dr. Angela Masters was born and raised in DFW. She earned her degree from Texas A&M College of Dentistry. She is passionate about leveraging modern digital dentistry to deliver precise, predictable patient care. Dr. Masters lives in Mansfield with her husband and their dogs, and spends her free time exploring local nature trails, reading, trying new restaurants, and serving the community.

TO VOLUNTEER **WWW.DCDSFOUNDATION.ORG** TO GIVE

Connections That Can Last a Career

Career Connections: Speed Mentorship Match Night brought early-career dentists and students together with experienced practitioners for meaningful conversations about clinical success, practice ownership, finances, leadership and what comes next. Thank you to the mentors who shared their experience and to the future leaders of dentistry who came ready to ask questions, learn and make connections...the best career advice often comes from someone who's already been there.







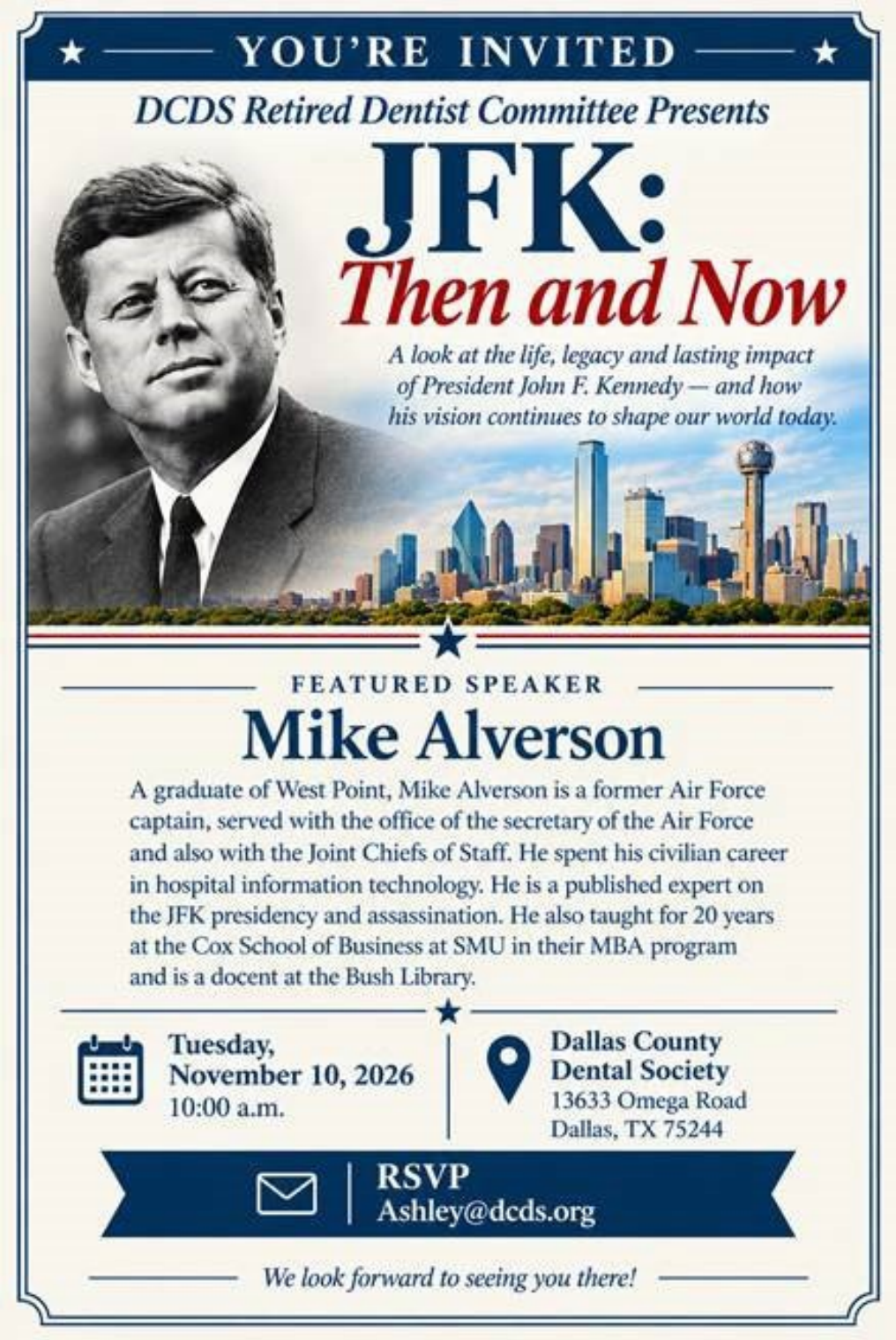












The ADA has released new advocacy resources to help dentists and dental students engage directly with their elected officials through in-district advocacy. Hosting a member of Congress at your dental school, practice or community event is an opportunity to tell your story firsthand, showcase the care you provide and demonstrate how government policies directly affect patients and the dental profession. The ADA provides tools, guidance and support to help make these visits successful.

CLICK HERE TO LEARN HOW TO GET INVOLVED IN IN-DISTRICT ADVOCACY.

ADA
American Dental Association®

Dental Concierge
Through TDA

Track Your CE • Browse Courses • Set Reminders • Submit to TSBDE

CLICK HERE! Your License Renewal WILL Get Much Easier!

DENTAL OFFICE NETWORK

Your Transition is closer than you think!

Is your practice ready?

Go with a Guide that knows the territory!

Hoping one day to get top dollar for your practice?
Considering adding a dentist to your practice?
Wondering how to coordinate the real estate and practice sale?

"Seek advice now... while your practice is at its peak!"

DALLAS OFFICE 214.893.0410
Serving the Central U.S.
Info@OfficeNetworkUSA.com
#1 TRANSITION AUTHORITY

Practice of the Month: Carrollton

GP practice. 4 ops., 1900 sq. ft., high visibility shopping center, state-of-the-art all digital practice run on Dentrix. 20 NP's per month. Extremely well run satellite practice with 100% collections. Doc generates 300K on ONLY one day per week! Build this awesome practice further on your own with your own staff.

Email Info@OfficeNetworkUSA.com

Reference Code: BCH8

ACTION SHRED OF TEXAS

Certified Shredding Promotion for Dallas County Dental Society Members

✓ Members only preferred pricing
✓ Facility-based destruction for paper, hard drives and proprietary items
✓ Certificate of Destruction provide for all services

$25 flat fee per container.
Minimum charge per service of $75.

Contact 214-352-0113, option #2 for details about preferred member rates

Your Trusted Source for
Document • Media • Product Destruction
Secured> Destroyed> Certified



Classified Advertising

Classified Advertising for DCDS Connection is accepted on a space-available basis and must meet the advertising guidelines of the DCDS. Rates and information are posted on-line at https://www.dcds.org/news-media/sponsoring-advertising or call 972-386-5741.

For Sale/Lease - Offices

OFFICE TO SHARE

Rent space in our new fully digital and equipped dental office located in Richardson near 75 & Campbell Rd; available 2-3 days per week on a daily fee basis. Take a video tour at DrJackBodie.com.

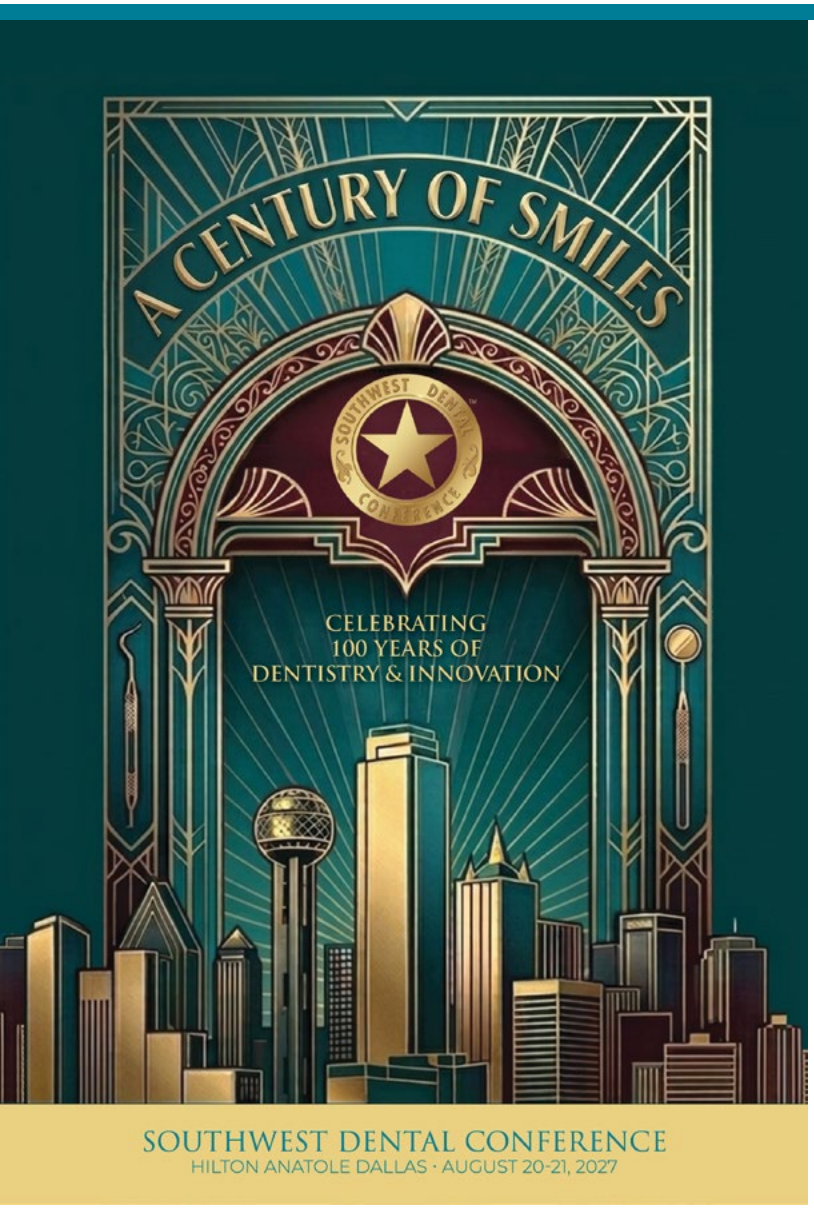
Call 214-212-9413 or email Jack@DrJackBodie.com for details.



Thank you to our Members who represented DCDS during four long days of discussions at the ADA House of Delegates in Indianapolis! (l-r) Drs. Carmen Smith, Jon Vogel, Drew Vanderbrook, Jacque Plemons and Brad Crump.

DCDS
13633 Omega Road
Dallas, TX 75244
Phone: 972-386-5741
Fax: 972-233-8636
www.dcds.org
info@dcds.org

Follow DCDS and SWDC on social media!



Welcome to the 2027 Southwest Dental Conference! It is my honor to introduce this year's theme: **A Century of Smiles: Celebrating 100 Years of Dentistry & Innovation.**

For a century, this Conference has brought dental professionals together to learn, share ideas and strengthen the connections that help our profession move forward. Reaching this milestone is a remarkable achievement—and a wonderful reason to celebrate. We honor the people, discoveries and dedication that have shaped the Conference, while looking ahead to the possibilities still to come.

Dentistry has changed in extraordinary ways over the past 100 years. New technologies, materials and techniques continue to transform how we care for patients, while the heart of our work remains the same: helping people enjoy healthier lives and more confident smiles. Today's innovations—from 3D printing and AI diagnostics to new approaches to prevention and patient comfort—give dental teams fresh ways to deliver thoughtful, effective care. The future is full of promise, and it is being shaped every day by the curiosity and commitment of people like you.

This year's Conference brings that spirit of progress to life. We are delighted to welcome both familiar faces and new voices to our speaker lineup. Their varied experiences and perspectives will offer opportunities to learn from one another, explore emerging ideas and bring fresh inspiration back to our practices and communities. Whether you are here to discover a new technique, reconnect with colleagues or find a new direction for your work, there is something meaningful waiting for you.

Most of all, this anniversary is a celebration of the people who make the Southwest Dental Conference what it is. Each year, a dedicated team works behind the scenes to plan the Conference, bringing together the speakers, ideas and experiences that make it special. We are fortunate to have such a talented and committed team guiding this work year after year. And we are grateful to you—the dental professionals who travel from across Texas and beyond to learn, share and celebrate with us. Your commitment to caring for patients and advancing dentistry is at the heart of this conference.

I hope you will join us in celebrating all that this Conference has meant over the past century—and all that we can accomplish together in the years ahead. May the conversations, learning, and friendships you find here remind you why you chose this profession and renew your excitement for what comes next.

Thank you for being part of this milestone year. We look forward to celebrating a century of smiles with you.



Wendy Steger, DDS
2027 Southwest Dental Conference Chairman