



## 2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION RECAP



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Bellevue	September 19 <sup>th</sup> (A Friday Event)
<b>Portland</b>	<b>September 27<sup>th</sup></b>
Anchorage	November 1 <sup>st</sup>
Spokane	December 13 <sup>th</sup>
Seattle Airport	January 17 <sup>th</sup> <b>2026</b>
Honolulu	Jan 31 <sup>st</sup> .
<b>Eugene</b>	<b>February 21<sup>st</sup></b>
Missoula	May 30 <sup>st</sup> day after annual meeting.
Boise	June 13 <sup>th</sup> day after annual meeting

“Very powerful seminar. The included handout is a helpful tool for future planning.” **Natalia Kokoreva, Milwaukie, Oregon**

“Great presentation. Very informative. This was definitely time well spent!” **Dr. Daniel Lundquist, Ilwao, Washington**



Presented by Paul Consani, President. Please call with Questions (866) 348-3811

**Cutting edge transition trends for both practice owners and future owners.**

### Topics include:

- Demographics and the future supply of dentists in the US.
- DSOs studies. What to know about them and how to negotiate with them.
- What is the future for DSOs and what is their market share shaping up to be?
- Is your practice ready for an associate? Are you? Associateship compensation.
- Avoid common mistakes and create a strong partnership that works.
- What every spouse and family estate should know about your practice.
- Banking trends. What to expect at transition time.
- Practice Evaluation and Sale. Credentialing and accounts receivable challenges.
- Prepare your practice for sale. Prepare to purchase a practice.

**First-come first-served. E-mail us to register for a valuable day of information and fun.**




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-  **Oregon Dental Association**
-  **OregonDental channel**
-  **Oregon Dental Association (private group)**
-  **@oregondental**

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*Membership Matters* is an official publication of the Oregon Dental Association in support of its core purpose to advance the dental profession and promote the highest standard of oral health and oral health care.

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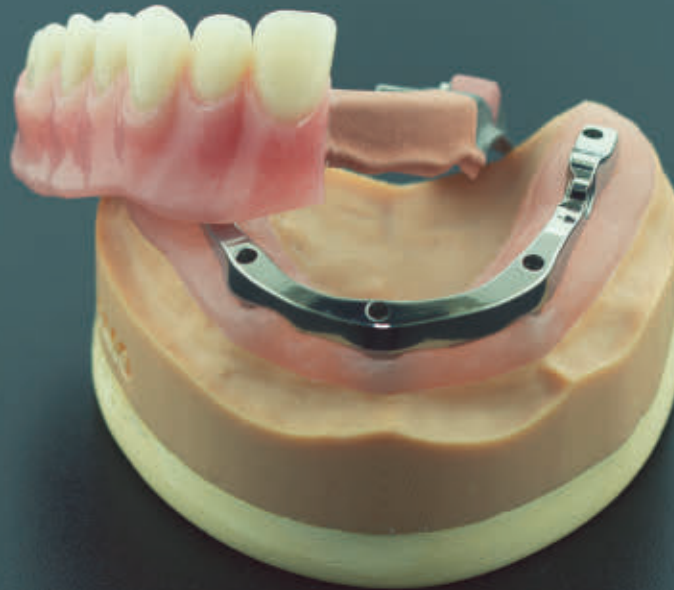
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# Bridging the Generational Gap



By Alayna Schoblaske



Amberena Fairlee

**IN JULY, DR. AMBERENA FAIRLEE, ODA'S PRESIDENT-ELECT,** and I were both in Chicago for meetings at the American Dental Association's headquarters. She was there for the annual President-Elect Conference, and I was there for a meeting of the Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention. We were both talking about the future of the ADA, and I wanted to recreate some of that conversation in this month's editorial. Dr. Fairlee will kick us off!

**Dr. Fairlee:** The subject that got the most lively discussion at the President-Elect Conference was the changing demographics of the workforce. With Millennials and Gen Z making up almost half of the U.S. workforce, how can organizations like the ADA recruit, represent, and cater to these younger members? Younger members are looking for different things from their organizations when compared to their baby boomer and Gen X counterparts. They have grown up in times of innovation, collaboration, and economic instability. If we want to increase new dentist engagement, we need to be inclusive, customizable, and flexible.

**Dr. Schoblaske:** I agree completely, and I think it's a sort of identity crisis that the ADA – and many large organizations – are going through right now. How do we honor the experience and dedication of our longest-serving members while appealing to and engaging with new dentists and dental students? I think one of the main areas where we see this split is the ADA's governance structure. In 2024, 30% of ADA members were new dentists (defined as graduating from dental school within the past 10 years), but only 10% of delegates at the House of Delegates were new dentists. There is one new

dentist on the Board of Trustees, since the chair of the New Dentist Committee is always a voting member of the Board – this still means a dismal 4% new dentist representation. (As a happy side note, 33% of the ODA's Board of Trustees are new dentists!) Nationally, the decision-making bodies of our organization do not reflect our membership. Do you have any ideas how to address that?

**Dr. Fairlee:** This is actually a discussion that I had with many of the other president-elects. A change in ADA board demographics starts at the local and state level. From what I gathered, many state associations have specific new dentist positions to get younger members more involved. My philosophy is that specific new dentist roles can be useful for states who have little to no participation from young dentists, but I don't think those positions pave the way for a more representative board. I think flexibility needs to be key with state associations. Early career dentists are often trying to find a way to balance time and financial constraints. Leadership positions should allow for flexibility for dentists with young families and offer some form of reimbursement to encourage participation from new dentists.

One thing that I learned at the President-Elect Conference was that Gen Z and Millennials don't necessarily sign up for positions because they meet all of the qualifications. They are high achievers who believe that they can learn the necessary skills if trained. In my experience, the ODA has been super encouraging to new dentists who want to volunteer. The ODA Board of Trustees has been very educational

to new trustees, and has been very encouraging to anyone who wants to do more. Overall dental experience has not held members back from leadership positions. The ODA has also been incredibly flexible for their Board of Trustees, and I think that's one reason it has such impressive new dentist representation. If more states can get new dentists in leadership positions, it will be an easier path to getting new dentists elected as district trustees to serve on the ADA Board.

**Dr. Schoblaske:** I love that perspective, Amber, and I think you are so right that we need to think about the structure of our positions and of our organizations if we want more participation from new dentists – and from dentists across the organizations. Frankly, I think every dentist benefits from flexibility and education.

One place where I have seen the specific new dentist positions be helpful is for dental students that are involved in ASDA, graduate and don't know how to get involved with the ADA. When states have a program dedicated to new leadership – like ODA's Leadership Academy – or they have a new dentist-specific position or committee, it can be easier to know where to start. Do you have any final thoughts that you want to leave members with?

**Dr. Fairlee:** My final thoughts would go out to any early career dentists in Oregon. If you have concerns about dentistry from a legislative standpoint, or if you want to learn how you can be more hands-on in protecting our profession, reach out to the ODA. We love having new voices at the table and are always open to a variety of perspectives! 🗣️



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# Events & Education

## Component CE Calendar

CONTINUING  
EDUCATION

Calendar provided by Mehdi Salari, DMD

This calendar is current as of August 18, 2025

Please visit the host dental society website for the most up-to-date information.

Date	Dental Society	Course or Event Title	Speaker	CE	Location	More Information
09/12/25	Coastal Cascades	The Esthetic & Long Term Considerations of Cementation & Material Choice	Dr. An (Sponsored by Unbreakable Bonds)	4	Eugene – Valley River Inn	Register: <a href="http://www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE">www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE</a>
09/13/25	Coastal Cascades	Oral Cancer Foundation Walk/Run	-	-	Corvallis – Willamette Park	<a href="https://ocf.donordrive.com/event/oregon">https://ocf.donordrive.com/event/oregon</a>
09/18/25	Central Oregon	The Latest Technologies of Laser, Whitening, and Fluoride	Ryan Comer, Territory Director with Ultradent	2	Bend – Riverhouse	RSVP via Evite or email week prior to event
09/18/25	Southern Oregon	Advanced Techniques for Full Arch Cases	Nobel Biocare	2	Margaritaville – Medford	<a href="mailto:sodentalsociety@gmail.com">sodentalsociety@gmail.com</a>
09/18/25	Multi-Component	Fall Kick-Off Tailgater	-	-	Wilsonville – ODA Office Parking Lot	Info/Register: <a href="http://www.multnomahdental.org">www.multnomahdental.org</a>
09/23/25	Coastal Cascades	Fall Dentist Social	Sponsored by Columbia Healthcare Banking	-	Eugene – TBD	Register: <a href="http://www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE">www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE</a>
09/25/25	Clackamas	Arcade Challenge Fall Social	-	-	Dave & Busters	
10/09/25	Coastal Cascades	Contemporary Approach to Dental Implant Maintenance for Long-term Success	Lynn Peneck RDH MS (Sponsored by Nobel Biocare)	2	Hybrid – Eugene – Lane Community College	Register: <a href="http://www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE">www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE</a>
10/11/25	Multnomah	ODA House of Delegates Component Gathering	-	-	TBD	Info/Register: <a href="http://www.multnomahdental.org">www.multnomahdental.org</a>
10/16/25	Southern Oregon	Dental Emergencies	Dr. Rajagopal	2	West Ortho Medford	<a href="mailto:sodentalsociety@gmail.com">sodentalsociety@gmail.com</a>
10/23/25	Coastal Cascades	Digital Work Flows in Implant Dentistry	Dr. An (Sponsored by Unbreakable Bonds)	2	Albany Golf and Event Center	Register: <a href="http://www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE">www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE</a>
11/13/25	Southern Oregon	Fee Schedule Evaluation 38% back	Benco Dental	2	West Ortho Medford	<a href="mailto:sodentalsociety@gmail.com">sodentalsociety@gmail.com</a>
11/13/25	Multnomah & Washington County	New Dentist Social	-	-	Grand Central Bowl	Info/Register: <a href="http://www.multnomahdental.org">www.multnomahdental.org</a>
12/04/25	Coastal Cascades	Hands-On Stain & Glaze: Chairside Techniques to Set your Practice Apart	Max Thomas (Sponsored by GC)	2	Albany Golf and Event Center	Register: <a href="http://www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE">www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE</a>
12/05/25	Coastal Cascades	Hands-On Stain & Glaze: Chairside Techniques to Set your Practice Apart	Max Thomas (sponsored by GC)	2	Eugene – Lane Community College	Register: <a href="http://www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE">www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE</a>
01/21/26	Multnomah	CE & Wine Tasting	WEO Media	2	TBD	Info/Register: <a href="http://www.multnomahdental.org">www.multnomahdental.org</a>
02/07/26	Multnomah	Give Kids a Smile	-	-	Powell Butte Elementary	Info/Register: <a href="http://www.multnomahdental.org">www.multnomahdental.org</a>
03/12/26	Multi-Component	St. Patrick's Day Pub Crawl	-	-	SE Portland	Info/Register: <a href="http://www.multnomahdental.org">www.multnomahdental.org</a>

Find this calendar online at [www.oregondental.org](http://www.oregondental.org). Click “Meetings & Events” > “Calendar of Events”.

Looking for additional ways to get CE? The American Dental Association has a large collection of webinars and on-demand video learning opportunities available, many of which are free to members. Visit [adaceonline.org](http://adaceonline.org) to catch up on the latest offerings on your own schedule. 🎧

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# Board of Trustees May 2025 Meeting Highlights

- Dr. Julie Spaniel was elected President-Elect of the ODA. Dr. Spaniel will begin her term at the 2025 ODA House of Delegates.
- Dr. Ian Dickinson was appointed to the ODA's Membership Council.
- Jessica Yoder from McDonald Jacobs presented the annual ODA financial review.
- The Board heard updates from Moda Health CEO Robert Gootee, Moda Health VP, Chief Dental Officer Dr. Teri Barichello, Chair of the Moda Health Board of Directors Dr. David Howerton, and Moda Health Senior Vice-President Scott Lofton.
- ADA 11th District Trustee Dr. John Hisel gave an ADA update. ●

## CELEBRATE WELLNESS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON WITH A WOMEN'S MEMBER ONLY YOGA EVENT

JOIN US FOR A RELAXING EVENING

December 11, 2025 6pm

ODA Office - Wilsonville or Zoom

REGISTER NOW TO SAVE YOUR SPOT



# Engage, Learn, and Connect at the ODA Regional Event at Salishan Lodge – November 7-8

## MEMBERSHIP IN THE OREGON DENTAL ASSOCIATION OFFERS

more than professional resources – it provides meaningful connection within a vibrant community of dentists and dental team members. One of the most rewarding ways to engage with this community is by attending the upcoming **ODA Regional Event at Salishan Lodge**, taking place **November 7-8, 2025**.

This two-day event offers **exceptional value**: 11.0 hours of continuing education, networking opportunities, team-building activities, and meals – all in a scenic coastal setting. Early registration rates are as follows:

- **ODA Members**: \$250
- **Dentists within 10 years of graduation**: \$200
- **Dental Team Members**: \$150

Salishan Lodge is an ideal venue for both professional development and personal enjoyment. With beach access, an indoor pool, zip-lining at the on-site aerial park, and nature

trails, it's also a great destination for families.

## Friday, November 7

The event kicks off at **2:00 p.m.** with a **two-hour leadership workshop** at Pelican Brewery, led by the dynamic **Lou Radja** and sponsored by **Norwest Contractors**. Mr. Radja, a highly rated speaker at the Oregon Dental Conference, returns with a new presentation: **“Leadership Requires No Titles – Action is Everything.”**

This session is designed to inspire and empower all members of the dental team.

Following the workshop, **Assured Dental Labs** hosts a lively evening of **trivia and a light dinner**, emceed by ODA member **Dr. Travis Baskerville** – a perfect opportunity to unwind and connect with colleagues.

## Saturday, November 8

Saturday begins with a **full breakfast** at Salishan Lodge, sponsored by

Columbia Bank, followed by a **3.5-hour CE course** with internationally recognized speaker **Dr. Brian Novy**: **“Codependent Cariology.”**

Dr. Novy combines engaging delivery with evidence-based insights into modern caries management. As he puts it:

“If you’re still telling patients to ‘Brush, floss, and use fluoride toothpaste,’ you’re going to be surprised by the myriads of treatment options available today.”

After a **sponsored lunch by The Dentists Insurance Company (TDIC)**, attendees will enjoy another **3.5-hour CE session**: **“It’s (Medically) Complicated”** with **Dr. Tom Viola**, sponsored by **Henry Schein**.

This course explores essential pharmacology for treating medically complex dental patients. Dr. Viola is a frequent and well-attended speaker at the Oregon Dental Conference, known for his clarity and expertise.

## INCLUDED WITH REGISTRATION: 4 meals & 11 hours of CE!

### Friday

- Leadership Brew with Lou Radja
- Campfire Kickoff with dinner & trivia

### Saturday

- Breakfast
- Codependent Cariology with Dr. Novy (3.5 hours of CE)
- Lunch
- It’s (Medically) Complicated with Dr. Viola (3.5 hours of CE)

Campfire Social with dinner & 2 hours of DEI CE



ODA STAFF

## Saturday Evening: Campfire Social

The weekend concludes with the **Campfire Social**, sponsored by long-time Regional Event sponsor **BnK Construction**. After dinner, attendees will enjoy a special presentation

by **Ms. Esther Stutzman** of the **Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians**, who, along with her daughter, will share Native American stories and a drumming demonstration. The evening wraps up with music, dancing, and a campfire complete with s'mores. 🍷

While online continuing education offers convenience, **in-person events like this provide unmatched value** – from engaging speakers to meaningful connections. Join us at Salishan Lodge to learn, grow, and celebrate the dental profession together.


Registration is open!

November 7 - 8, 2025

**CAMP ODA**

SALISHAN COASTAL LODGE

ODA REGIONAL EVENT



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# TRANSITION POINTER

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# 2025 Legislative Session Recap: Challenging Budgeting Year Creates Unique Legislative Environment

By Jennifer Sitton,  
President Sitton  
Strategies

## THE 2025 OREGON LEGISLATIVE SESSION OFFICIALLY ADJOURNED

on Friday, June 27, after a tumultuous six months, punctuated by some of the most significant budget woes the state has seen in nearly two decades, last-minute pushes for significant policy packages, and ongoing federal uncertainty.

While negotiations on both a sizable transportation package and proposals for widespread wildfire funding came down to the final few days of the session, many policy proposals faced significant challenges as legislators grappled with how to navigate a difficult budgeting year amid federal policy changes impacting nearly every sector in Oregon. Ultimately, the legislature was able to secure funding for wildfire response

but was unable to pass a transportation package. As a result, the governor has called a special session, focused on transportation, to convene on August 29.

The May 2025 revenue forecast was the first since the post-2008 financial crisis to show a negative forecast for the state, notwithstanding minor, pandemic-related dips in 2020. This created an incredibly challenging landscape for legislators faced with billions of dollars in funding requests, exacerbated by then-anticipated decreases in federal funding. Few bills that had a fiscal impact successfully advanced outside of leadership's priority bills, and much of the attention of legislators was focused on how to mitigate the most significant impacts of budget cuts on Oregonians across the state.



Even with this incredibly challenging landscape, the Oregon Dental Association's advocacy team in Salem worked tirelessly on behalf of our members to both proactively advocate for dental legislation and to fight back against harmful bills that had the potential to impact our members and their patients significantly.

### *Defeating Harmful Legislation*

One of the most important things our lobby team in Salem can do for our members in a session as challenging as this one is to push back against bad bills and amendments that have the potential to harm dentists and their patients. Below are just a few examples of some of the bad bills ODA stopped this legislative session:

- **Adding Dental to Noncompete Bans (Senate Bill 957)** – Senate Bill 957 would have banned noncompetes for licensees of the Oregon Medical Board. An amendment to the bill was introduced to extend the noncompete ban to apply to licensees of the Oregon Board of Dentistry. The House Health Committee agreed not to move the dental amendment into the bill following advocacy by ODA's lobby team.
- **Corporate Practice of Medicine (Senate Bill 951)** – Senate Bill 951 restricts individuals who are not licensed medical providers from owning or controlling medical practices. ODA's lobby team led several conversations with legislators to ensure dental would not be included in this bill without additional conversations.
- **Exemptions for Dental Labs (HB 2594)** – ODA's lobby team led a discussion with stakeholders about a bad amendment that would have removed exemptions for dental, ensuring the amendment didn't advance.

- **Statute of Ultimate Repose (SB 233)** – The Statute of Ultimate Repose (SOUR) is five years for medical malpractice in Oregon. This bill would have doubled the time limit to 10 years. ODA's lobby team organized a coalition opposed to the bill and, as a result, the amended result was extremely narrow and excludes dental. Below are summaries on some of the most relevant bills that ODA's lobby team proactively worked to move forward this legislative session.

### *Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact (House Bill 2676)*

One of ODA's priority bills this session was House Bill 2676, the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact, which would have helped address workforce issues in dental offices by increasing mobility and multistate practice for licensed dentists and dental hygienists.

The compact, which had already been approved by 10 states including Washington, preserves state sovereignty as it relates to licensure and quality of patient care, while allowing licensed dentists and dental hygienists to practice in all states participating in the compact, rather than get an individual license in every state in which they want to practice.

The legislature introduced six licensure compact bills this session. Knowing that Governor Kotek had expressed concerns with licensure compacts, ODA's team worked hard to differentiate the dental compact from the others, ensuring that the Board of Dentistry remained neutral on the bill and addressing legislators' concerns. Unfortunately, all compact bills received a hearing on the same day, leading to significant confusion about the different proposals.

The House Behavioral Health and Health Care Committee Chair intended to move all six compact bills to the Ways & Means Committee and

let leadership decide which ones to move forward. However, following the news of a New York-based doctor facing action from Texas for providing reproductive healthcare via telehealth, the chair decided to kill all compact bills ahead of the first chamber deadline, including the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact – despite the concept receiving no opposition from legislators.

### *Dental Insurance Reform (SB 532)*

The ODA worked with legislators to introduce a dental insurance reform bill this session, which would have offered more reliability and predictability for patients and dentists by aligning dental insurance laws with medical insurance. SB 532 sought to reform three dental insurance issues: prompt pay, retroactive denials, and assignment of benefits.

Specifically, the bill would have limited the time frame within which an insurer may demand a refund on a claim it has paid, adjusting the timeline to 18 months to align with medical insurance. Second, it would have required insurers pay or deny claims no later than 30 days after the date on which the insurer receives a clean claim. Finally, it would have allowed patients to direct their insurance to send payments directly to their provider instead of paying the patient directly.

The bill received a very positive hearing in early April and saw no opposition from legislators. ODA helped prepare three members to testify in front of the committee in support of the bill and others to submit written testimony.

Unfortunately, some insurers expressed concerns with the proposal's prompt pay timeline requirements, and a \$500,000 fiscal impact statement was attached to the bill, forcing it to move to the Ways & Means Committee. This last-minute



reroute and significant fiscal impact made the bill nearly impossible to move given the broader budgeting outlook this session.

Even though the bill passed out of the Senate Health Care Policy Committee unanimously, the bill was unable to overcome the fiscal impact and died in the Ways & Means Committee. Due to the widespread support for the bill, ODA anticipates bringing this concept back to the legislature in future legislative sessions.

### ***Dental Reimbursement Rates***

The ODA recognizes the challenges that Oregon's low dental insurance rates have on dentists' ability to accept Medicaid patients. These low reimbursement rates often make it impossible for dentists to recoup the costs of serving this patient base. House Bill 2597 would have required the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) to reimburse dental providers at a minimum of 59.8% of the average rate paid by insurers in Oregon.

The bill passed out of committee on April 8 with only one "no" vote, but due to the large fiscal impact statement of nearly \$90 million and the challenging budgeting environment this session, the ODA sought to shift this proposal to a budget note instead of an independent bill. Unsurprisingly given the fiscal impact of the proposal, the budget note failed to be included in one of the final budget bills this legislative session.

### ***Dental Sealants (Senate Bill 597)***

Senate Bill 597, a bill co-sponsored by ODA member Rep. Javadi and supported by the ODA, would have directed the Oregon Health Authority to establish a grant program to provide financial support to certified dental sealant programs that promote and engage in oral health care coordination activities. Dr. Noel Larsen submitted written testimony in support of the bill on behalf of the ODA. It passed out of the Senate Health Care Committee on March 27, but given the proposal's budget

implications, later died in the Ways and Means Committee.

### ***Dental Care for Seniors (Senate Bill 3326)***

Senate Bill 3326, a bill sponsored by Reps. Pham and Javadi, both dentists and members of the ODA, and supported by the ODA, would have required the Oregon Health Authority to study barriers to accessing dental care for seniors. Dr. Caroline Zeller submitted written testimony in support of the bill on behalf of the ODA for the March 13 hearing. The bill passed unanimously out of the House Health Care Committee on April 8, but given its fiscal impact, it later died in the Ways and Means Committee.

### ***Indian Health Scholarships (Senate Bill 772)***

Senate Bill 772 would have established the Indian Health Scholarship Program to provide free tuition and fees to qualifying Indian health profession students in exchange for the student's commitment to work at a tribal service site after graduation. Dr. Caroline Zeller submitted written testimony on behalf of the ODA in support of the bill, which passed out of the Senate Health Care Committee on April 8 and was then moved to the Ways and Means Committee due to its fiscal impact, where it failed to advance.

### ***Oregon Wellness Program (Senate Bill 531)***

Senate Bill 531 would have provided \$1.6 million in funding for the Oregon Wellness Program, which supports the well-being of health care professionals through counseling, education, and research. ODA Executive Director Barry Taylor, DMD, testified in support of the bill during its Feb. 11 hearing. The bill passed out of the Senate Health Care Committee on Feb. 27 but succumbed to the

challenging budget environment and failed to move forward.

### **Flavored Tobacco Ban (Senate Bill 702)**

Senate Bill 702 would have banned the distribution, sale, attempt to sell, or offer to sell flavored tobacco products in Oregon. Dr. Elizabeth Tomczyk, ODA member from OHSU's School of Dentistry, testified in support of the bill during a public hearing on March 4, alongside many others who spoke in support of the concept. The bill was later amended to limit the sale of flavored tobacco products to only OLCC-licensed locations, a significant reduction of where these products are currently available for sale. Unfortunately, the bill failed to advance out of the Finance and Revenue Committee.

Like many bills this session, some of ODA's policy priorities fell victim to budget cuts, but the ODA is confident that many of these policy priorities



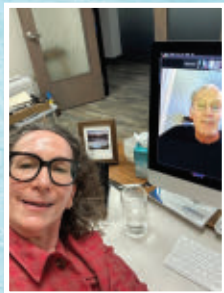
will find more success and are more likely to advance in future legislative sessions under a more hospitable budget environment.

Thank you to our advocacy team and the dozens of ODA members who engaged with the legislature

this year by testifying in front of committees, meeting with legislators, submitting testimony in support or opposition of bills, and providing our advocacy team with guidance on policies that will most impact our members. 🌟

# SAVE THE DATE FOR THE 2025

ODA House of Delegates!



The 2025 ODA House of Delegates will take place virtually on October 11th, 2025. All ODA members are welcomed and encouraged to attend - mark your calendars and plan to serve as a delegate for your local component society. We look forward to "seeing" you there!

To register for the  
2025 ODA House of Delegates.



# From AI to GentleWave, Students Hone Research Skills through OHSU CaseCAT Program

By Melody Finnemore

## THE CASECAT PROGRAM AT THE

Oregon Health & Science University School of Dentistry provides students with an opportunity to review research literature with a focused clinical question and present a CAT (Critically-Appraised Topic) in poster form to students and faculty in a competition. They then present their posters at different conferences, such as the Oregon Dental Conference.

With advancements in science and technology, new evidence is being published at an ever-accelerating rate and makes it difficult for dental professionals to stay current. Skills to perform effective literature searches and the ability to review relevant articles critically to address questions faced in clinical practices is the foundation of a successful dental practitioner.

Through their participation in the CaseCAT program, students learn about evidence-based dentistry and develop research skills that contribute to the dental community. This year's competing teams shared why they chose their research topic, how the research project enhanced their dental education, and how the mentorship experience benefited both the students and the professors who provided guidance.



PHOTO CREDIT TO JORDAN SLEETH OHSU

## ODC Best in Show Poster

### AI Diagnosis: The Future of Analyzing Bitewings Radiographs

Students: **Andie Jamison, Diyar Dezay, Hussain Awadh, Kellen Olsen and Daniel Stratte (Class of 2028)**

Mentor: **Samyia Chaudhry, DMD**

The team chose this research topic because artificial intelligence has become such a prominent aspect of people's everyday lives. They wanted to explore not only how this emergence will impact their careers, but how they can utilize it to their advantage to provide the best possible care for their future patients.

"The use of artificial intelligence in diagnostics shows great promise, but it was surprising to us how much more development and research is necessary. As accurate as AI was in detecting carious lesions, it was less effective in several circumstances,

including early-stage lesions," they said.

The team's research question changed to narrow the focus to use of AI in diagnostics of carious lesions, specifically on bitewings. They decided to simplify their research to examine how effective this can be in such a common, day-to-day task for dentists, as opposed to diving into some of the more complex possibilities the use of AI offers. However, in the future they hope to explore AI's capabilities in more complicated clinical scenarios.

Their research had several findings. First, the overall capability

of AI detection of carious lesions on bitewing radiographs is impressive, with studies showing sensitivity ranging from about 0.8-0.95 and specificity ranging from about 0.7-0.95. However, more model training and experimentation is needed to make AI diagnostics more reliable.

Second, a higher sensitivity of carious lesion detection tends to lead to more treatment, edging on overtreatment, meaning a higher need for excellent dentist training in radiology and AI. Lastly, there are a plethora of different AI models for detecting carious lesions on bitewing

radiographs, and naturally, some models are better than others. This research represents the general trend.

“In our individual dental practices, we anticipate using AI routinely as a supplemental tool, either as another opinion or a first pass for a bitewing radiograph. This would be after testing the model rigorously to ensure high quality of care,” they said.

The team noted that this research enhanced their dental education by allowing for a student-directed investigation into a topic that will likely not be covered, especially in this depth, in the typical dental school curriculum. It also exemplified the tools they can use later in their careers to seek and improve their knowledge.

“We plan to stay actively engaged with research by continually reviewing current literature and applying new findings to enhance patient care. As

AI and digital tools evolve, we are especially interested in contributing to practice-based research or collaborative studies to validate their real-world effectiveness,” they said.

Dr. Samyia Chaudhry said she wanted to mentor the team because she believes mentoring is about cultivating curiosity, instilling confidence, and empowering the next generation of thinkers, while sharing the insights and wisdom passed down from her own mentors.

“It’s a dynamic exchange where guiding students through thought-provoking conversations also challenges and expands my own perspective. By fostering fresh ideas and embracing diverse viewpoints, both mentor and mentee grow together,” she said.

“AI is rapidly becoming a cornerstone of modern dentistry,

reshaping everything from diagnostics to patient engagement. Its growing role in radiographic analysis is setting the stage for transformative change. Looking ahead, integrating AI into dental education is essential, not only to embrace innovative technologies but also to ensure students stay current with the evolving practices of modern dental care,” Dr. Chaudhry said.

She added that research enhances dental practice by turning everyday care into evidence-driven excellence. “Engaging with research hones my ability to evaluate new technologies and make informed decisions. I intend to stay actively involved in dental research by regularly reviewing scientific literature, attending conferences, participating in continuing education courses and mentoring students along the way.”

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### **CaseCAT Poster 1st Place Winner Coronectomy: A Safer Alternative to Complete Extraction for High-Risk Mandibular Third Molars Student: Jack Klar (Class of 2026) Mentor: Erik Richmond, DMD**

Jack Klar said he selected his research topic because he is interested in oral and maxillofacial surgery and wanted to learn more about the field. He also has had multiple patients that he has referred for third molar extractions, and he wanted to learn more about the possible procedures they may undergo.

“I was surprised to learn how long coronectomies have been around, but a CDT code for them wasn’t introduced until 2011 and they remain somewhat controversial at this time,” he said.

Compared to complete extraction, coronectomy lowers the risk of injury to the inferior alveolar nerve while having similar results with regard to post-operative pain and infection. The most common complication

of coronectomy is root migration, typically away from the nerve. In Klar’s future practice, this procedure would offer a good alternative for patients who are at high risk for IAN injury or those who may be more sensitive to IAN injury such as instrument players, he explained.

“Researching this topic helped me learn more about third molar extractions and the techniques involved with them,” Klar said. “This research also improved my ability to critically evaluate the significance of research articles and how to interpret their results, a skill that will be important to maintain throughout a career of evidence-based practice.”

Dr. Erik Richmond said he chose to mentor Klar for the project because, now in the latter phase of his career, he gets the most



professional satisfaction from helping others learn and become successful dentists.

“Also, after a certain amount of time in practice, one can get complacent. It is true that one learns from many sources, but one learns

the most from their students. Student learners can ask some of the hardest questions. Finding the answers to these questions helps me stay current and intellectually curious,” he said.

Dr. Richmond credited Klar with presenting a well-developed idea for his research, which Dr. Richmond was able to enhance with his clinical

experience to broaden his thinking on the topic of coronectomy.

“Also, I laugh, but I’m old enough in this case to have experienced the publication of what at the time was a novel technique. I pointed Jack to Dr. MA Pogrel’s original publication on this technique. Reviewing this together as well as showing him recent cases I had done with our

residents, Jack told me made his presentation more relevant and interesting,” he said.

Dr. Richmond noted that dental research forces him to keep current and try new things, which keeps dentistry interesting to him. “Helping others learn is its own reward, and their excitement and joy in the process is something special to participate in.”

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### CaseCAT Poster 2nd Place Winner

#### Advancing Root Canal Treatment: Evaluating Multisonic Irrigation for Enhanced Disinfecting, Debridement & Patient Outcomes

Student: Hunter Rothfus (Class of 2027)

Mentor: Adam Lloyd, BDS, MS

Hunter Rothfus is passionate about endodontics and has seen how the GentleWave system has generated a lot of interest as a potential game changer in root canal therapy. However, he noticed a gap between its growing popularity and the amount of high-quality, clinical research supporting its use.

“I wanted to explore whether the GentleWave system actually offers meaningful advantages over conventional irrigation techniques,” he said. “I was surprised by how few randomized controlled trials directly compared GentleWave with traditional irrigation methods on clinical outcomes. While in vitro studies consistently demonstrated better cleaning and disinfection, the clinical significance of these findings such as healing rates and long-term outcomes still requires more evidence.”

Rothfus said he originally considered a broader look at irrigation methods in endodontics. As he reviewed the literature, though, he noticed GentleWave was a frequent focus of comparison and debate. This led him to

refine the question to focus specifically on GentleWave versus standard needle irrigation or passive ultrasonic irrigation, allowing for a more impactful and clinically relevant analysis.

Among his research findings, in vitro studies examining GentleWave demonstrated significantly better removal of biofilm and debris, especially in complex canal anatomies. Notably, this enhanced cleaning was achieved with minimal instrumentation, helping preserve structural integrity. Although some data suggested reduced postoperative pain, results were not statistically significant compared to conventional methods.

“Additionally, current studies do not thoroughly assess key healing indicators, such as the resolution of radiolucencies and regeneration of the periodontal ligament,” he said. “In my future practice, I’ll consider integrating emerging technologies like GentleWave when supported by evidence, while continuing to prioritize individualized, evidence-based treatment planning for each patient.”



Rothfus said research has taught him how to critically assess literature, ask meaningful clinical questions, and think beyond anecdotal experience. “It’s deepened my understanding of evidence-based care and helped me become a more thoughtful clinician. I plan to stay involved with endodontic research throughout my career by staying current with emerging studies, contributing to case reports, and staying active in professional organizations,” he said.

## CaseCAT Poster 3rd Place Winner

### Optimizing Endodontic Disinfection: Comparing Multisonic and Passive Ultrasonic Irrigation

Students: Taylor Dobbeck and Luke George (Class of 2026)

Mentor: Eun Park, PhD, DDS

With their interest in endodontics, Taylor Dobbeck and Luke George wanted to study innovative technology in the field that may provide better outcomes than traditional methods. They anticipated that both GentleWave multisonic irrigation and passive ultrasonic irrigation are valid methods for root canal debridement, though they may differ in clinical efficacy.

“Initially, our clinical question varied as we searched for a suitable comparison to GentleWave. With GentleWave being a newer system with limited research, we saw passive ultrasonic irrigation as the best current comparison. This irrigation method uses similar techniques but at a lower cost, making it a meaningful comparison in terms of clinical effectiveness versus practical economic value,” they explained.

The articles they reviewed suggested that GentleWave may be a superior irrigation system compared to passive ultrasonic irrigation. However, more clinical studies are needed to fully evaluate GentleWave, especially since most research is currently *ex vivo*.

“We are excited to continue monitoring GentleWave system findings to see if its clinical efficacy ultimately outweighs its expensive cost. As students pursuing endodontics, we also hope to have

the opportunity to use these systems ourselves so we can form our own clinical opinion on them,” they said.

Dobbeck and George noted that dental research at OHSU has given them ample practice in evidence-based dentistry. They routinely have opportunities to extend their learning outside of coursework, allowing them to dive deeper into their own topics of interest and share their findings with the school.

“While learning how to critically appraise research is important in all health care fields, it is especially critical in dentistry where our materials and instruments of choice heavily dictate our clinical approach and outcomes. Appreciating this, we both will engage with dental research throughout our careers to ensure our care is effective, current, and economically reasonable,” they said.

Dr. Eun Park said she wanted to mentor Dobbeck and George because she believes that guiding students through the research process is one of the most meaningful ways to support their growth as critical thinkers and future clinicians.

“I see mentorship not only as a way to give back, but also as an opportunity to help students connect classroom learning to real-world clinical questions,” she said. “Working with Luke and Taylor reminded me of the value of



curiosity and fresh perspectives. Their dedication, thoughtful questions, and ability to synthesize complex information were inspiring. Through the process, I was also reminded of the importance of translating evidence into clinical decision-making, a skill that becomes even more refined when seen through the eyes of our students.”

Dr. Park said research allows her to approach patient care with a stronger evidence-based framework, adding she plans to remain engaged through collaborative projects, mentoring student researchers, and contributing to the advancement of clinical guidelines in endodontics.

“It keeps me updated, curious, and humble, constantly reevaluating what we know and how we can improve outcomes,” she said.

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## Research Poster 1st and 2nd Place Winner

**First-Place Poster: Mechanistic Study of the Antibiofilm Effect of QAM-Based Materials**

**Second-Place Poster: Inhibition of Dentinal Collagen Degradation by Matrix Metalloproteinases Using Quaternary Ammonium Methacrylates**

**Student: Peter Nguyen, BS (Class of 2027)**

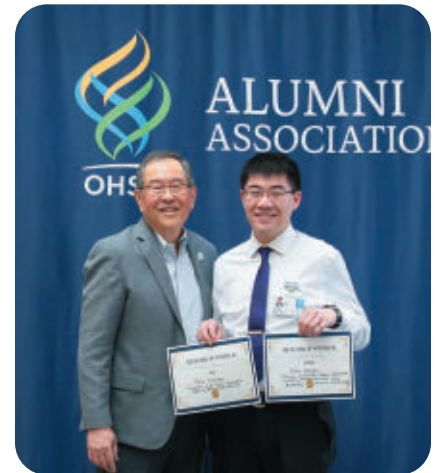
**Mentors: Tiana Pham, BS; Jade Wong, BS; Fernanda Sandes De Lucena, DDS, MSc, PhD; Matthew Logan, BS, MS; Steven Lewis, BS, MS; and Carmem Pfeifer, DDS, PhD**

Peter Nguyen won for both the first- and second-place winning posters this year and used the opportunity to showcase quaternary ammonium compounds as proven antimicrobials that have potential applications in dentistry, where microbes often contribute to restoration failure.

The first-place poster shows that the results suggest that charge is responsible for the antimicrobial effect, but side chain length also plays

a significant role. The second-place poster shows that the results suggest that a QAM-based adhesive more effectively inhibited MMPs, biofilm formation, and strengthened dentin.

“Presenting research is a great way to network with other like-minded individuals in the dental field,” Nguyen said, adding that understanding how dental materials are developed and tested improves understanding of literature and improves clinical judgment.



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## Research Poster 3rd Place Winner

**Dental Students' Attitudes and Beliefs about Caring for People Living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)**

**Student: Celyna Becerra (Class of 2028)**

**Mentor: Lyndie Foster Page, BDS, MComDent, PhD**

Celyna Becerra said her project was already in development when she joined as a pre-matriculation student in the summer of 2024. The research question originated from her mentor, Dr. Lyndie Foster Page, and recent graduate Dr. Bilal Manzer based on their clinical experiences at OHSU's Russell Street Dental Clinic and their interactions with patients.

“I was drawn to the project because of its relevance and potential impact on public health within dentistry,” she said. “During the initial literature review, I was surprised to find that while there are studies exploring HIV-related stigma among nurses, medical providers, and pharmacy students, there was a noticeable lack of research specifically focused on dental students. This gap in the literature emphasized the importance of our study.”

Becerra discovered that dental students' attitudes and beliefs toward treating HIV-positive patients were influenced by sex, race, age, and DS year. The fourth-year dental students had a significantly lower overall stigma, discrimination, and prejudice compared to first-, second-, and third-year students. This research reinforced the importance of using universal precautions with all patients, regardless of their HIV status or sociodemographic background. It also highlighted the need for continued education to reduce stigma in dental settings, she said.

“Engaging in research during dental school has greatly enriched my educational experience. I've had the privilege of learning from outstanding mentors who have supported me not only in research, but also in my broader professional development,”



Becerra said. “This experience has inspired me to continue integrating evidence-based practices into patient care and to remain involved in research throughout my career.”

Dr. Foster Page said being a mentor for a summer student like Becerra helps the student be engaged in

an area of dentistry they may not know much about. She learned from working with Becerra that seasoned professionals sometimes take for granted the knowledge they have gained from years of working in the profession, and how important it is to share that with students and new dentists.

She said it was essential for Becerra to be immersed in the Russell Street Dental Clinic to talk with and understand what the dental students and faculty thought about

being and working with HIV-positive patients.

“I learned how enthusiastic and passionate learners are to be part of the solutions. I learned that some learners do not have a good statistical knowledge, and I need to help them with the data so they can fully question the data and the research question can be answered. I try to get the learner to understand the research question and continually remember this is what will drive the research process,” she said.

Dr. Foster Page said she is driven by evidence and data to answer clinical and non-clinical questions and drive change in dentistry. She plans to continue to engage with research and, hopefully, learners for the duration of her career.

“It is always a pleasure to engage with learners and see how excited they become as they learn, develop new skills, and surprise themselves with the research process. I enjoy seeing them grow in confidence and feel ownership on a small project,” she said. ●

## Alumni Day Judges Share Thoughts About Experience

Several ODA members volunteered their time and expertise to help judge the student posters submitted for the CaseCATs competition this year. A few of them shared their thoughts about why they chose to participate and what they gained from the experience.

### *Connie Lei Masuoka, DMD, FACD, FICD*

“I was asked to participate by Mark Kemball, and I thought it would be fun to check out the research projects as that is what I did in my life prior to dentistry. It was good to interact with the students, and I was pleased that I could still remember techniques and procedures.”

### *J. Ryan Thrower, DMD, MS, MPA*

“I have a moral commitment to give back the time that was once given to me as a student. It is only right and how we lift as we climb, in my humble opinion. Having the ability to volunteer for the betterment of those individuals who decided to add a ‘thing’ to their already-busy student schedules was the least that I could do to hopefully contribute to a small piece of their lifelong learning.

“It was a very rewarding experience for me! As a specialist, it can sometimes feel like I am removed from our beloved world of dentistry. Being able to witness the interests and the research being completed by the future of our profession was reassuring. It felt good to know that we have future leaders that will protect our shared interests and be diligent about providing the best evidence-based care possible.”

### *Jennifer O’Connor, DMD*

“I thought it would be exciting to be a judge because of the opportunity to connect with students and learn about the advances in science and research they have taken a special interest in.

“I was very impressed with everyone’s dedication to the research, clarity in their presentations, and enthusiasm for new knowledge and scientific advances. Students were engaging and professional; I felt privileged to hear from everyone and see students showing off their hard work!”

### *Cynthia A. Layport, DMD*

“I enjoyed my judging experience. It made me feel closer to what the students experience at the school. We didn’t have such extensive opportunities for research when I was there, and I could appreciate the students’ passion for their projects.”

### *Sue Chadwick Walker, DMD, FAGD (pending MAGD this year)*

“I was asked, and I like to be involved with students when possible. I have been out of the loop for a few years, so it was nice to be a part of the experience. It was wonderful to meet everyone who organized the event as well as chat with the students who presented with such enthusiasm and focus. It is exciting for the future of dentistry and OHSU.”

### *Martha E. Rich, DMD, FAGD, Fellow of the American Academy of Craniofacial Pain*

“I thought being a judge would be fun, and it was. I enjoyed interacting with the students and finding out about their projects. And I was so impressed. I did find the categories and the awards a bit confusing. I thought the students I worked with should have won something!”

### *Ronda Trotman, DMD, FAGD*

“I always look forward to interacting with the dental students. I am continually amazed at how many students find time to go above and beyond the day-to-day rigors of their curriculum. The subjects were smart, well-presented, and very interesting.

“The students all did a great job presenting their research and seemed to understand their subjects well. I very much enjoyed being a judge. Although I must admit, I have been out of school a long time, and the material presented was challenging for me! Overall, I loved the experience.”

# Join the ODA's Legislative Action Team!

In these uncertain times, organized dentistry has never been more important. The ODA is building its team of dental advocates and looking for members interested in getting involved in the legislative process!

The ODA has assembled an experienced, professional lobby team that represents the interests and needs of the dental industry in Salem and Washington D.C., but there is no substitute for the voices of those working with patients and running dental offices every day and who can advocate for patients' rights. Legislators want to hear from those with firsthand experience in dentistry, which is why we need YOU to sign up and get involved with our Legislative Action Team!

## What does it mean to join the ODA Legislative Action Team?

Signing up does not mean we're going to ask you to give up your day job and spend every day lobbying for dentistry in Salem. It simply means you'll be added to our list of advocates that we can call upon when we need dentists to speak on behalf of the industry.

## What might I be asked to do as a member of the ODA Legislative Action Team?

Advocacy can take many forms, depending on your comfort level, experience and expertise. As a member of the ODA Legislative Action Team, you may be invited to:

- Write a letter to your legislators
- Call your legislator's office to urge them to vote on a bill
- Write an op-ed for a local publication
- Attend a meeting with a legislator
- Attend Dental Day at the Capitol in Salem
- Testify in a legislative committee
- Attend a fundraiser on behalf of ODA's political action committee: DOPAC
- Fly to Washington, D.C. with dental advocates from across the country to advocate for dental priorities with your members of Congress

## How do I sign up?

Go to [oregondental.org/government-affairs/advocacy/legislative-action-team](http://oregondental.org/government-affairs/advocacy/legislative-action-team) and let us know which activities you are interested in. You can also email ODA's Director of Government and Regulatory Affairs Brett Hamilton at [bhamilton@oregondental.org](mailto:bhamilton@oregondental.org) and express your interest directly.



# Dr. Ronald Sakaguchi Takes Student-Centric Approach in Developing the Next Generation of Dentists

**WITH SEVERAL YEARS OF PRIVATE PRACTICE AND** 40 years of research and teaching under his belt, OHSU School of Dentistry Dean Ronald Sakaguchi is deeply passionate about continued learning and has brought that passion for helping others to learn to his work in educating the next generation of dentists.

“About 15 years ago, when I completed my MBA, I realized I didn’t want to lose any of my learning from that program or from my years of research, and I decided that the best way to continue the learning and to retain it was to teach it,” said Dr. Sakaguchi.

After being appointed Dean in October 2020, Dr. Sakaguchi has brought that same innovative, forward-thinking, and student-centric

approach to his work with the School of Dentistry. Without hesitation, he says his favorite thing about his role at OHSU is getting to work with students.

“They’re energetic, enthusiastic, and they have a huge desire to help our communities,” said Dr. Sakaguchi. “The number one question that comes up during orientation is, ‘How can I volunteer?’”

One way that OHSU helps meet students’ desire to help their communities is through supporting the Bridges Collaborative Care Clinic, a volunteer student clinic that is founded, governed, and operated entirely by students. Approximately 25% of all OHSU dental students volunteer for the clinic on top of their already very busy dental school schedules and educational demands.

Having started his new position in the thick of the pandemic, Dr. Sakaguchi has had a front row seat to seeing the changing needs, interests, and priorities of students in the post-pandemic era, and has taken great care to actively listen to students and follow their lead when it comes to building out programs, resources, and tools to support their education and career development.

“It’s amazing the number of students who do research, take classes outside of the curriculum, and are involved in other ways,” said Dr. Sakaguchi. “We have students who have started an innovation club and have supported them by providing 3D printers. We have conducted hackathons, through which a group of students



DR. SAKAGUCHI





worked on projects to develop an environmentally green clinic, and others are looking at hacking the curriculum. We also have provided management and leadership content for students who are interested in business management. Students are eager for these things – they have a thirst for opportunities to be creative and innovative – and want to be exposed to things in addition to dental school while they’re here.”

In addition to the desire for creative, innovative, and research-focused outlets, Dr. Sakaguchi sees a change in the trajectory of students’ dental careers after graduating. While many dental school graduates used to go into private practice, today they are seeing more students decide to enter community clinics where they may be able to access loan repayment programs. He is also seeing students seek out opportunities to work in larger group settings where they have access to mentors and other dentists to bounce ideas off, instead of the more traditional solo private practice.

“Student debt is very limiting in terms of what they can and want to do after graduation,” said Dr. Sakaguchi. “They have a different perspective on their career not only because of the debt, but also because they want to think about the services they can provide to the community.”

Dr. Sakaguchi also encourages students to seek out opportunities to volunteer, advocate, and engage with organizations in the community to help build that sense of community, mentorship, and leadership within the dental profession.

“I believe it’s important for dentists in general to think about the profession and how they provide input and advocacy – generally, that’s through organized dentistry,” said Dr. Sakaguchi. “I encourage them to join organizations not only so they can support the profession and their continuing education, but also so they can create a network of people who can serve as mentors as they advance through their career.”

One way that OHSU helps students connect with mentors and other leaders in Oregon’s dental community is through partnerships with the Oregon Dental Association, exposing students early on to opportunities to have their voice heard when it comes to policies being developed in Salem and Washington, D.C. Many OHSU students are involved with the American Student Dental Association and actively advocate for new dental laws alongside the ODA and other Oregon dentists. This advocacy work goes hand in hand with the commitment Dr. Sakaguchi is seeing in students today to support those with the most need in their communities.

“One of the biggest pieces of advice I would have for a new graduate is to ensure and promote access to care, particularly for community members who have difficulty in accessing care for whatever reason,” said Dr. Sakaguchi. “We’re working together to create an environment where there’s more equity in health.”

Whether he is supporting students in their work to expand access to care, creating new, innovative outlets for student creativity, or working closely with OHSU’s world class faculty to deliver a modern curriculum, Dr. Sakaguchi is committed to creating curriculum and programs to train the next generation of dentists that reflect what students are asking for.

“Organizations are living organisms because they’re comprised of people, and we need to support our students, staff, and faculty. We look at our dental students, and we’re always amazed when they graduate from all the things they’ve achieved while they were here, despite a very full curriculum. By knowing these things earlier, we can support and grow those interests,” said Dr. Sakaguchi.

That commitment to continued learning, not only through formal education, but through truly listening to this new generation of students, will undoubtedly be the lasting legacy of OHSU’s 10th Dean of the School of Dentistry. ●



## 2025 Tom Tucker Humanitarian Award

Established at the 2017 House of Delegates, the Tom Tucker Humanitarian award is the highest humanitarian and service award for the dentists of Oregon.

**Award criteria include:**

- A significant number of years as an ODA member.
- Active in leadership roles within the ODA and their local component society.
- Demonstrated commitment to being an active member in their local communities.
- Demonstrated to their communities and the ODA a unique attitude and a willingness to serve.
- Mirror the image of Dr. Tom Tucker with a can-do attitude and a genuine desire to serve the common good.

Submit your nominations to  
[leadership@oregondental.org](mailto:leadership@oregondental.org) by December 1, 2025.



## SAVE THE DATE

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**EXHIBIT HALL**  
April 9–10, 2026

**LOCATION**  
Oregon Convention Center  
Portland, Oregon

# Beep, Beep, Here Comes the Tooth Taxi!

**IT'S BACK TO SCHOOL TIME FOR THE TOOTH TAXI,** The Dental Foundation of Oregon's state-of-the-art mobile dental clinic!

The need for oral care and education is as great as ever, says Tooth Taxi Manager Carrie Peterson, and requests for the mobile clinic for 2025 are filling fast. This fall, the taxi is scheduled to hit schools for children ages 4 through 18 in Halfway, Redmond, Myrtle Creek, and a handful in southeast and northeast Portland.

"Dentists wishing to volunteer on the Tooth Taxi who live in the areas in which we are headed are encouraged to reach out," said Peterson. "We love volunteers, and we can use help on any day of the week. Seeing firsthand the needs of children in the community and providing support to make a difference in their lives is very rewarding."

Peterson said more than 64% of the children and young people screened

on the Tooth Taxi in 2024 had some form of decay (see chart, Levels of Decay), with 14% having urgent needs.

"In rural areas of Oregon, especially, it's not uncommon to see serious decay in all of the primary teeth of children as young as age six," she said. "The hope is that we can educate the children and that habits can be changed so better care is taken of their permanent teeth."

Peterson said there has been a decrease in the last four years of children missing school because of tooth pain, and/or parents missing work to take their child to the dentist for emergency care, as well as a decrease in the percentage of students going to the emergency room for tooth pain, which is all good news.

"Caring for children on their home turf, with the continuity of care from our superb dental team, gets young



A recent young visitor to the Tooth Taxi from Marion County had visible signs of severe decay in his baby teeth, not uncommon among children screened on the Tooth Taxi, said Tooth Taxi Manager Carrie Peterson. (Photo: Carrie Peterson)

people off to a healthier start," she said. "Children don't need to miss school to see the dentist, and parents don't have to take time off from work, so it's a win for everyone."

To volunteer on the Tooth Taxi, email [carrie@dentalfoundationoforegon.org](mailto:carrie@dentalfoundationoforegon.org). To request that the Tooth Taxi visit a school or neighborhood center, go to: <https://www.smileonoregon.org/tooth-taxi-visit>. 📍

## Levels of Decay\*



\*Reflects the 757 children/young people seen on the Tooth Taxi in 2024, totaling \$375,509 in care.

## Help the Tooth Taxi at the Pump!



# = \$320

To power the Tooth Taxi for 560 miles!

The Tooth Taxi travels thousands of miles annually to care for children's teeth throughout Oregon! Your gift to The Dental Foundation of Oregon can help offset gasoline costs. Give today at <https://www.smileonoregon.org/donate/>

# Present at the 2026 Oregon Dental Conference as part of Trailblazer Talks, ODA's Emerging Speaker Series!

**SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE!** The Oregon Dental Association's Annual Meeting Council (AMC) invites you to submit a speaker proposal to be part of Trailblazer Talks at the 2026 Oregon Dental Conference (ODC), April 9-11.

## What are Trailblazer Talks?

Trailblazer Talks provide a platform for ODA members to share their knowledge and expertise with thousands of ODC attendees.

Trailblazer Talks are 90 minutes in length and are planned to be held at the Oregon Convention Center as part of the ODC.

## Who is eligible to submit a proposal to present?

All ODA members are welcome and encouraged to submit a proposal for consideration by the Annual Meeting Council. This opportunity is open to seasoned speakers and those new to presenting!

## How do I submit a proposal?

Proposals will only be accepted electronically by completing the application on the ODA website. The proposal deadline is Friday, October 7, 2025.

## Selection Process:

All proposals submitted by the October 7 deadline will be reviewed by the Annual Meeting Council. Invitations will be extended to presenters by the end of October.

## Trailblazer Talk Benefits:

Trailblazer Talk presenters will receive complimentary Oregon Dental Conference registration to attend three days of continuing education and visit the Exhibit Hall. Speaker and course information will be directly marketed to over 12,000 dental professionals, with a larger audience exposed to online and social media marketing. This is great exposure for new speakers and a wonderful addition to any dentists' curriculum vitae.

## Any Questions?

Please contact Alisha Santoyo, Director of Education & Events  
Email: [asantoyo@oregondental.org](mailto:asantoyo@oregondental.org)  
Phone: 503.218.2010 x2004

**Trailblazer Talks**  
*Emerging Speaker Series*

**Share your knowledge & expertise at ODC**

*Proposals now being accepted*

oregon dental CONFERENCE  
April 9-11, 2026

OregonDentalConference.org

The graphic features a woman with blonde hair, wearing a tan blazer and a blue and white scarf, speaking into a microphone. The background is a light blue gradient with a silhouette of a city skyline at the bottom.



# ODA Supports Student Wellness at ASDA Summer Picnic

WELLNESS

By Melissa Juenger, ODA Director of Membership and Communications

**ON SATURDAY, JULY 12, THE OREGON DENTAL ASSOCIATION (ODA)** membership team joined representatives from TDIC, Columbia Healthcare Banking, and Fluence at Sellwood Park for the ASDA Wellness Picnic – a lively and well-attended event focused on promoting well-being among dental students.

Despite the warm summer sun, the event benefited from ample shade under a large tree, creating a comfortable setting for attendees to enjoy a relaxed afternoon of connection and camaraderie.

Students and vendor partners gathered to share Hawaiian-style cuisine and unwind with games such as cornhole and lawn darts.

Throughout the afternoon, ODA staff engaged with students to discuss the association's ongoing wellness initiatives, offering support and encouragement as they navigate their dental school journey. It was also a welcome opportunity to reconnect with several members of the Class of 2025, who shared exciting updates about their new practice locations and upcoming start dates.

The event concluded with a peaceful sound bowl meditation session, an ideal way to wind down and recharge. Many participants embraced the moment of mindfulness, with some even drifting off into a well-deserved nap.

Special thanks to ASDA Health and Wellness Co-Chairs Andrea Velasquez and Natali Denning for organizing a thoughtful and meaningful event that underscored the importance of wellness in the dental profession. 🌿



PICTURES – ASDA REPRESENTATIVES

# Dr. Fred Bremner Celebrates Robust Periodontics Career, Organized Dentistry Leadership

MEMBERSHIP  
CORNER

By Melody Finnemore

**DR. FRED BREMNER'S CAREER IN DENTISTRY BEGAN** in a dental lab in downtown Portland where he worked as a delivery boy during high school. He sometimes was able to help out in the lab, where he learned to make dentures and found he liked casting gold.

The experience also gave him an opportunity to meet several dentists, which only added to the positive encounters he'd had with the profession. His uncle was a dentist and cared for his teeth while he was growing up.

Dr. Bremner earned his bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Oregon in 1961 and his DMD from its dental school in 1964. He then served as a captain in the U.S. Air Force Dental Corps at Clark Air Base in the Philippines for the following two years.

"When you get out of dental school, you are just beginning, so you take a little time to develop confidence and speed. I was ready to start in the business of dentistry when I got out of the military, and it really helped me prepare for private practice," he said.

Dr. Bremner credits his mentor Dr. Harold Grupe, the head of the UO Dental School's Periodontics Department, for encouraging his

interest in the specialty by asking him to help with surgeries and allowing him to shadow him during his junior and senior years. After Dr. Bremner completed his military service, Dr. Grupe asked him to teach part-time as an assistant professor at the dental school while starting a part-time general dental practice in downtown Portland.

Dr. Bremner began his private periodontics specialty practice in 1971. He said his greatest reward was interacting with patients and helping diseased mouths become healthy mouths.

"You make great friends when you help them overcome disease. You make friends for life," he said. "I've had a great profession in periodontics, and I don't think I could have been as happy doing anything else."

He noted that when he worked in the dental lab, the assumption was that people lost their teeth as they got older and would need dentures, so he naturally assumed he would become a denturist. Over time, as the concept of prevention developed, he witnessed how the importance of teaching children about daily dental care at a young age led to people maintaining healthy gums and preventing decay throughout their lives.

Other major changes that occurred during his career include the rise of dental insurance's impact on the doctor-patient relationship and its influence on the treatment decision-making process. Dental student loan debt has increased significantly over the years as well, and Dr. Bremner often talked with new dentists about how their debt influenced the practice model they chose.

## Educator, Leader, and Advocate

Dr. Bremner dedicated much of his career to being an educator, both for his patients and for dental students. In addition to his role as an assistant professor at the UO Dental School, which changed names to the Oregon Health & Science University School of Dentistry in 1981, he was a clinical instructor in the Dental Hygiene Department at Clark Junior College from 1972 to 1977. He was an affiliate faculty member in the Oregon Health & Science University's Department of Community Dentistry from 2012 to 2022 and was a clinician for a trio of study clubs from 1972 through 2015.

"As a teacher, I was personally impacted, and my objective was to help people, whether they were students or dentists, be better than

DR. FRED BREMNER



I was. I wanted to see them exceed my ability,” he said. “That was very gratifying, especially when I saw the dentists in my study clubs advance from a very basic level to a very skilled level.”

Throughout his career, Dr. Bremner has contributed his time, expertise, and leadership to organized dentistry. He views his commitment as carrying on an invaluable tradition that benefits dentists as individuals and the profession as a whole.

“I saw the men who were involved with organized dentistry and what they did to create opportunities for me when I graduated. It was a really great opportunity after graduation to become the person I was as a dentist,” he said.

“Organized dentistry also helps protect the profession from outside influences and allows the development of these understandings so members can be preventive in their approach and keep patients’ mouths healthy,” he added.

Dr. Bremner has served the ODA in myriad ways, including 12 years on its Executive Committee and nearly a decade as editor. He recently retired from his position as executive director and editor for the Clackamas County Dental Society, a role he filled since 2009. He served as president of the Oregon Society of Periodontists in 1979, and president of the American Association of Dental Editors in 2010.

A Fellow in the American College of Dentistry and the American International College of Dentistry, Dr. Bremner has received several awards for his work as an editor and dental journalist, including the International College of Dentists’ 2009 Silver Scroll Journalism Award. In 2008, he received the American Dental Association and American Association of Dental Editors Distinguished Dental Editor Award.

The ODA honored him with Presidential Citations in 2015 and 2017, and the Tom Tucker Humanitarian

Award in 2010. The Clackamas County Dental Society presented him with its Lifetime Humanitarian Award in 2019 and its Lifetime Service Award this year. The OHSU School of Dentistry Alumni Association recognized Dr. Bremner with its 2019 John C. Peterson Distinguished Alumnus of the Year Award.

Now enjoying his retirement, Dr. Bremner serves on the board of the B-17 Alliance Foundation, which presented him with an Aviation Community Excellence Award in 2019 and its Dr. Fred Scott Memorial Award. The foundation’s mission, in part, is to restore the Lacey Lady World War II B-17G Flying Fortress to flying condition.

The plane, also known as the “Milwaukie Gas Station Bomber,” holds a special place in Dr. Bremner’s heart. “As a boy I would climb up that ladder and pretend to fly the plane over Germany, so I got emotionally involved in this project,” he said. 🌐



**ODA**  
**LEADERSHIP**  
**ACADEMY**

The Leadership Academy was a worthwhile way to learn more about the Oregon Dental Association. **I made so many meaningful connections with dental leaders who inspired me to push myself further with my leadership goals.** I was also able to explore the different opportunities to lead in the Association and found my own passion. I would highly encourage new dentists and experienced dentists alike to apply for the Academy. A great program and a member benefit, for sure! Dr. Rachel Meek



**Nominate yourself or a Peer until December 1 at [oregondental.org](http://oregondental.org)**



COMPONENT  
HIGHLIGHT

# May 1st Dental Social Fun Recap

## THE MULTNOMAH DENTAL SOCIETY AND THE WASHINGTON COUNTY DENTAL SOCIETY,

along with our friends from the ODA, gathered to bring dentists together from large group practices for an evening of fun, food, drinks, and engagement.

The event was held at Rogue Eastside Brew Pub on May 1, and it was a beautiful evening. The weather was perfect, and dentists from various large group dental practices throughout the three counties came

together to engage with board members and staff from the ODA, as well as connecting with each other.

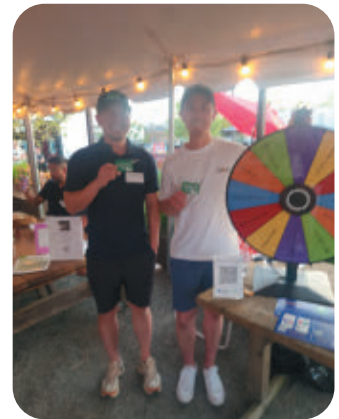
There were several dentists in attendance who are currently not tripartite members. We had an opportunity to chat with them and answer questions about what organized dentistry can offer in addition to their large group practice benefits. Many of these dentists working within their corporate networks don't know that we want to encourage them to receive all the

benefits and values that the tripartite has to offer.

We are looking forward to more of these smaller focus group gatherings to have the opportunity to engage with dentists throughout our community directly in a fun and social setting.

A HUGE thank you to our sponsors for their support as well as the ADA ARC Grant program. We couldn't do these events without you! **Artisan Dental Lab, Heritage Bank, O'Brien Dental Lab and Umpqua Bank.**

LORA MATTSÉN, MDS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



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# ODA Welcomes Incoming OHSU Residents at Advanced Education Orientation



**ON THE MORNING OF JUNE 30, 2025**, the Oregon Dental Association (ODA) proudly participated in the advanced education orientation for incoming residents at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU).

Dr. Barry Taylor, Executive Director of the ODA, extended a warm welcome to the new residents, highlighting the vital role organized dentistry plays

in Oregon’s dental community. He emphasized the many advantages of the residents’ complimentary tripartite membership, particularly the value of professional community and networking opportunities available through local dental components.

As part of their welcome, each resident received a thoughtfully prepared tote bag from the ODA, featuring

branded items and informational materials, including a guide from Travel Oregon showcasing the state’s many attractions and destinations.

The ODA is pleased to welcome this new class of OHSU residents and extends best wishes for a successful and fulfilling journey in their professional and educational endeavors.

## Oregon Health and Science University Residents

### Endodontics

Lais Lodin, DDS  
Byron Ruiz, DDS  
Victor Tran, DMD

### General Practice

Neusha Javad, DDS  
Irene Lee, DDS  
Anjali Mistry, DDS  
Hanna Nguyen, DDS  
Neekita Saudagar, DDS  
Minh Vu, DMD

### Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

Gabriel Crocker, DDS  
Jamie Huh, DDS  
Sydnee Vaughan, DMD

### Orthodontics

Nour Hilal, DDS  
Maya Humeda, DMD  
Mathew Lipkin, DMD  
Samah Malik, DMD

### Pediatric Dentistry

Raleigh Allen, DDS  
Nathaniel Kruse, DMD  
Tiffany Tep, DMD  
Natalie Wickline, DDS

### Periodontics

Michael Badaoui, DMD  
Marjan Ghaffarinia, DMD  
Pooja Patel, DDS

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