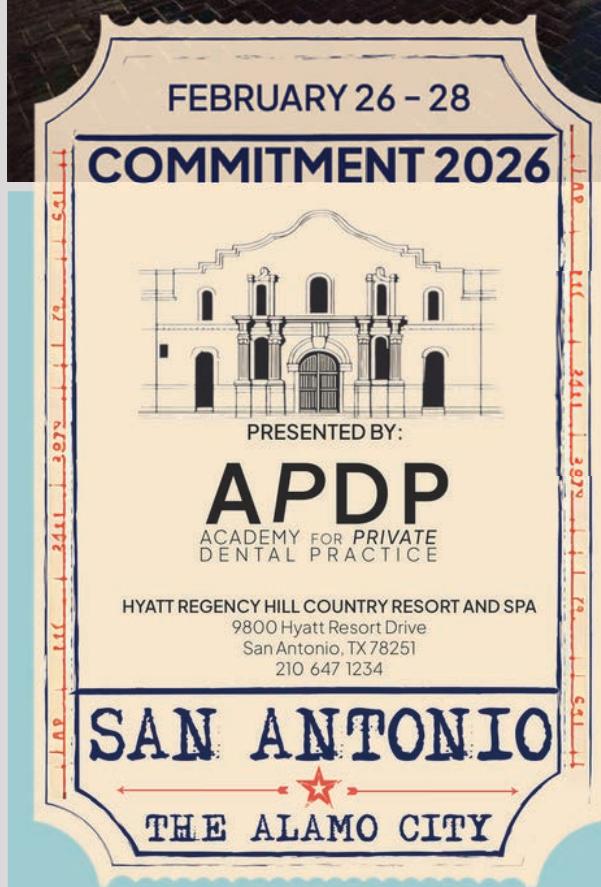


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2026

COMMUNICATOR

APDP NEWSLETTER



Register Today!
2026 Annual Meeting
Saturday Night Fever Party



APDP – Supporting Fee for Service and Private Practices for Over 70 Years.

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PUBLISHING INFORMATION

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COMMUNICATOR DEADLINES:

All stories, articles and photographs are due:

Summer/Fall 2026 July 7, 2026
Winter/Spring 2027 December 1, 2026

EDITOR'S NOTES**WHY YOU SHOULD
ATTEND IN 2026!**

Greetings, all –

I hope 2025 was good to each of you, and you are looking forward with me to the annual meeting.



As you know, the event will be held February 26-28, 2026, at the Hyatt Regency Hill Country Resort and Spa in beautiful San Antonio, Texas.

The resort is fantastic; with all the amenities you could want, so bring your spouse / significant other /staff/colleagues and enjoy a memorable, educational, and fun few days with your APDP friends. Note: I particularly enjoy the lazy river at the resort when I am not in a meeting! All good.

The organizers of our meeting have an excellent slate of speakers scheduled with seminars on a variety of timely and excellent topics. There are also fun activities and meals planned for everyone, with plenty of quality time to renew old friendships and make new ones with your APDP colleagues.

Please make your reservations now for the event if you have not already done so. You can review all the speakers, resort accommodations, and events in this issue of The Communicator. Enjoy this issue of The Communicator, along with our meeting information you will also find some interesting articles from your APDP leadership; well worth a read.

Here's to a great year in 2026, and I look forward to seeing a lot of you in February in ol' San Antone!

Jim Jenkins, DDS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dave Carpenter, DDS



I truly hope this year brings you abundant love, laughter, and prosperity. None of us escapes moments of disappointment or sadness, but my prayer is that those difficult days are eclipsed by seasons of joy, accomplishment, and prosperity.

One of the great blessings of the Academy for Private Dental Practice is the genuine community we share. APDP is a place where private practitioners lift one another up—where support, cooperation, and encouragement are givens, not exceptions. I am including a letter I am sending to colleagues throughout Southeast Texas. It may not qualify as the greatest marketing letter ever written, but it represents my sincere effort to invite as many dentists as possible to join us in San Antonio this February. Please feel free to use it as is, adapt it, or draw from it to create your own invitations. I'm sending mine the "old-school" way--

through the mail—because I know how quickly emails tend to disappear. But whatever method you choose, the goal is the same: invite your colleagues to experience this extraordinary Academy.
(see Dr. Carpenter's letter on page 04)

I also want to shine a light on the APDP Board of Directors, which has worked zealously and faithfully to help this Academy flourish. We have met monthly for the past year, and I cannot overstate the passion, wisdom, and insight that each member brings. When you see them in San Antonio, please offer a hug, a handshake, or a heartfelt word of encouragement. Your Board members are:

Dr. Randy Jungman
Dr. Julie Spaniel
Dr. Daron Praetzel
Dr. Annette Dufour
Dr. Phil Strevey
Dr. Jim Jenkins
Dr. Mark Johnson
Dr. Susan Maples
Dr. Theresa Kujala
Dr. Terry Watson
Dr. Mark Kogut
Dr. Mike Spencer

Our new Executive Director, Michael Brady, is already charting an exciting and prosperous path forward for the Academy. And our Exec. Assistant, Angelia Hudson, has truly been a godsend—steadfast, capable, and a joy to work with. Thank you, Angelia, for everything you do.

I leave you with this blessing as we begin this year:

"May the Lord bless you and keep you, and cause His face to shine upon you..."

Dave S. Carpenter, DDS, FAGD
President, APDP
2025-2026



LETTER TO DENTAL COLLEAGUES

From the Desk of: Dr. Dave S. Carpenter
APDP President

Dear Colleague,

As you know, private dental practice is facing unprecedented change. DSO and private-equity acquisition continues to accelerate nationwide, and increasing government regulation shows no signs of easing. The demands on our time, resources, and resilience grow every year—as they have throughout my 42 years in practice.

Yet if you still believe, as I do, in the value, viability, and future of private practice, there is an organization designed specifically for you. The Academy for Private Dental Practice (APDP) is dedicated to preserving, promoting, and protecting the privately owned dental office. We do this through our seven pillars of excellence: Business, Finance, Culture, Clinical, Patient Experience, Leadership, and Mentorship.

As the 2025–2026 President of APDP, I am proud to share that our upcoming annual meeting will feature world-class speakers who you simply will not hear anywhere else. This event brings together passionate, like-minded private practitioners committed to elevating both their practices and their profession. The exceptional continuing education, genuine camaraderie, and support for independent dentistry are why I have been an APDP member for over 17 years.

I invite you to experience this organization for yourself. The meeting is just weeks away, I encourage you to secure your spot early and make plans to join us. You may learn more and register at APDP.net.

I sincerely hope to see you in San Antonio, Texas, February 26–28, 2026 for what promises to be an outstanding and memorable meeting. I'm confident you'll find it well worth your time.

Warm regards,

Dave S. Carpenter
DDS, FAGD

70th
Anniversary



2026 EXHIBITORS & SPONSORS

Each year, APDP is supported by an incredible group of Exhibitors and Sponsors who are truly present and engaged at our meetings. We encourage you to continue showing your appreciation and support throughout the year. When connecting with them, please let them know you are an APDP member or guest so they continue to see the value of supporting our annual meetings.

In addition to their participation, many outstanding companies generously donated products, equipment, and services to our auction. Their contributions helped make the auction a lively and memorable event, filled with exceptional bargains for members and guests alike. We also extend our sincere thanks to the many APDP members who graciously donated items in support of the auction.

Without the strong support of our Exhibitors and Sponsors, we would not be able to deliver the incredible meetings our members have come to expect year after year. We are truly grateful for their continued partnership. Without your help, our APDP Annual Meeting would not be the tremendous success it is.

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PAST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Julie Spaniel, DDS, FICD, FACD



Growing Into Private Practice Mastery: Learning From Mentors, Embracing Connection, and Building a Life You Love

After a few years as a practicing dentist, many clinicians begin to recognize a shift. The clinical confidence is there, the hand skills are strong, and patient rapport comes naturally. But running a private dental practice—a true, relationship-centered, independently owned business—is a different kind of mastery, one that requires more than textbooks, CE credits, or isolated experience.

It requires mentorship, connection, and access to people who have walked the path for decades.

Learning From Those Who've Done It For Years - There is something uniquely powerful about sitting across from a dentist who has spent a lifetime building and refining a thriving private practice. These seasoned practitioners—some with 20, 30, even 40 years of experience

—carry wisdom you simply cannot get from a course or a consultant's website.

They have lived the challenges of staffing, leadership, overhead, patient management, and clinical decision-making. They have weathered recessions, shifting insurance landscapes, and changes in technology. They have also lived the joy: the long-term patient relationships, the generational families, the pride of ownership, and the freedom that comes from not being tethered to someone else's corporate metrics.

As an early career dentist stepping into (or dreaming of) practice ownership, learning from these mentors is transformative. Their guidance doesn't just teach you how to run a dental practice—it teaches you how to build a healthy, sustainable, relationship-based business that reflects your values.

Relationship-Based Care as the Foundation - One of the most profound lessons passed down by experienced mentors is the irreplaceable value of relationship-based care.

Private practice dentistry thrives on trust, connection, and continuity. Patients choose you—not because you are the cheapest or the fastest, but because they know you, they feel cared for, and they trust the quality of your work.

Through conversations with long-time

mentors, it becomes clear:

Relationship-based care is not an add-on. It's the engine of a thriving private practice. It elevates the quality of dentistry, stabilizes the business, and deeply enriches the practitioner's experience of daily practice.

The Academy for Private Dental Practice: A Pathway to Wise Guidance and Community

For many early-career dentists, the challenge isn't willingness—it's access. Where do you find these mentors? How do you learn what you don't even know to ask?

This is where the Academy for Private Dental Practice (APDP) becomes invaluable.

Through APDP, dentists gain access to:

- Personal connections with seasoned practice owners who openly share their journeys
- Consultants with decades of experience in business systems, leadership, communication, and operational excellence
- Meetings, workshops, and retreats specifically designed for private-practice success
- A supportive environment where questions are encouraged and wisdom is generously shared

What makes APDP truly special is not simply the education—it's the human connection. Sitting at dinner with mentors, talking through real challenges, sharing stories, and gain-

PAST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (continued from page 06)

ing insight from those who genuinely want to lift you up changes everything. These interactions shape your life, your confidence, and your path forward in ways that no online course ever could.

Building a Better-Run Business Than Your Competitors - With access to the best minds in private-practice dentistry, you learn how to build a practice that is:

- More efficient
- More relationship-centered
- More profitable
- More aligned with your personal values

You start to understand systems, scheduling efficiencies, team culture, financial management, leadership styles, and patient experience at a level most dentists never reach.

This is the competitive advantage of APDP—and the reason so many of its members thrive.

You are not building just any dental business.

You are building one supported by the highest level of mentorship and expertise in the profession.

The Result: Joy in Dentistry, Freedom in Life - When your practice runs well, something beautiful happens:

- You enjoy going to work again.
- You feel confident and supported.
- You have more time for your family.
- You reclaim your evenings, weekends, and energy.
- You grow into the kind of dentist—and leader—you always wanted to be.

Private practice ownership is not merely a career choice. It is a path to autonomy, fulfillment, and joy. The better your business runs, the more freedom you gain to balance your life, nurture your family, and build your future on your terms.

A Final Reflection - Becoming a great dentist takes time. Becoming a great dental practice owner takes a community.

With mentorship from seasoned practitioners and connection through the Academy for Private Dental Practice, dentists with just five years of experience can gain the insight, confidence, and practical wisdom needed to build a thriving relationship-based practice.

This journey doesn't just strengthen your business—it strengthens your identity, your joy in dentistry, and the quality of your life beyond the operatory.

Julie Spaniel, DDS
APDP Past President

COMMITMENT 2026 - February 26-28, 2026 - San Antonio, Texas

JUST WONDERING ... Would you like to take home or even donate something **EXTRA**-ordinary?



Auctions and donations help us keep our dues reasonable and support our program costs. The funds we raise for the Academy help ensure our future and our ability to mentor newer dentists in our profession. These auctions help us continue to GROW our influence in private practice dentistry!

We have auctioned some excellent collectibles, trips, game and concert tickets, gift baskets, and assorted tchotchkes (Google it) in the past and are very excited about this year's event! We hope you'll join in on the fun!

If you have something **EXTRA** you might like to donate please call, text or email: Ted Thompson 361-946-0500 or tedito@aol.com

2026 PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Theresa Kujala, DMD



COMMITMENT 2026

COMMITMENT TO YOUR PRACTICE, OTHERS AND YOURSELF



The Academy for Private Dental Practice (APDP) proudly announces its upcoming Annual Meeting, marking a significant milestone as we celebrate 70 years of leadership, integrity, and dedication within private dental practice. This year's theme, "Commitment," honors the enduring principles that have guided our profession for seven decades—commitment to clinical excellence, ethical standards, professional growth, and the patients and communities we serve.

The Annual Meeting will bring together practitioners, educators, and industry partners for a comprehensive program of advanced educational sessions, strategic discussions, and opportunities for meaningful professional engagement. Attendees will gain valuable insights into the evolving landscape of private practice and explore tools and strategies that support long-term success and sustainability.

As we commemorate this milestone year, APDP remains steadfast in its mission to uphold and strengthen the values that define independent dental practice.

In honor of our 70th anniversary, we invite all attendees to join us for a festive **Saturday Night Fever Dance Party**—an evening of music, camaraderie, and celebration. It promises to be a memorable highlight of the meeting and an opportunity to reflect on our shared history while looking ahead to the future. Remember to dress in your best 70's outfit - GoGo boots, Leisure suits, polyester and sequins!! On Friday night - we have the **Live Auction**. Come ready to bid on your favorite adventures. We will have small packages and trips of a lifetime. Sign up for Golf, Pickleball, and enjoy a trip to the Alamo too!

We encourage all members and colleagues in private dental practice to register and participate in this landmark event. Your involvement reinforces our collective commitment and helps shape the next era of excellence in our profession.



2026 KULA AWARDS

In 2015, the Academy for Private Dental Practice established the Kathleen Uebel Leadership Award (KULA). Kathy Uebel served as Executive Director from 1988 to 2020 and was an extraordinary and indispensable part of the Academy's success. From her very first year, she exemplified grace, professionalism, and elegance while guiding the Academy and its leadership to levels beyond imagination. Her exceptional organizational and financial expertise benefited the Academy in countless ways.

The mission of the KULA is twofold. First, it recognizes members who have performed "above and beyond" in their volunteer service to the Academy, including committee chairs, outgoing presidents, officers, and board members. Second, it establishes scholarship funds to support guest attendance at future APDP meetings.

To allow members the opportunity to sponsor a guest dentist, the Board of Directors offers the ability to donate to the KULA. Donations help provide financial assistance to guest dentists who may not have the resources to cover tuition, lodging, meals, and/or travel expenses. We encourage you to consider making a donation to help provide a dentist with the opportunity to experience an APDP meeting.

When making a donation, members are invited to suggest a preferred recipient profile for their funds, such as dentists from a specific state, specialty, or alma mater dental school. The Board of Directors will review scholarship applications and award funds accordingly.

Additionally, if you are aware of a dentist or consultant who would benefit from the APDP experience but may face financial challenges in attending, please submit his or her name to Contact@APDP.net.

2026 KULA SCHOLARSHIPS



Congratulations

Dr. Baylee Teafatiller

Wright Naeger Dentistry
College Station, TX

and

Dr. Emily Tarr

Summerwood Family Dental
Portland, OR



KULA LEADERSHIP AWARDS

2026 - **TO BE ANNOUNCED in San Antonio!!**

- 2025 - Michael (Mike) Spencer, DDS
- 2024 - Philip E. Strevey, DDS
- 2023 - LeeAnn Podruch, DDS, JD, PLC
- 2022 - Fred A. Riddle, DDS
- 2021 - Dale Kennedy, DDS
- 2020 - Marc W. Herman, DDS, FAGD, MSHCE
- 2019 - Michael T. Robichaux, DDS
- 2018 - Robert T. Ragan, DDS
- 2017 - Thomas M. McDougal, DDS
- 2016 - Richard H. Klein, DDS
- 2015 - Robert L. Frazer, Jr., DDS

Scholarship Donations made payable to "KULA" can be mailed to:

APDP, 9450 SW Gemini Drive, PMB 85716, Beaverton, OR 97008-7105

Call Angelia Hudson @ (503) 389-0428 for additional payment options.

PRESIDENT-ELECT'S REPORT

Wm. Randy Jungman, DDS

As we move into 2026, our annual meeting is just around the corner. We hope you have already signed up and arranged for your hotel rooms. If you have any challenges with rooms or reservations, please contact Angelia Hudson. We have an incredible collection of wonderful presenters and sponsors for our San Antonio meeting. Our meeting the last week of February is a bit ahead of our usual first weekend in March schedule.

As we have asked our members before: We owe it to our profession...our future dentists, our friends and colleagues the opportunity to see and understand how wonderful private practice is. Therefore, we are again asking you to reach out to any potential dentists and consultants you might know. A personal connection you have - either directly or through dental supply contacts, can make all the difference in their life. We know you believe this -because all of our members have shared how much APDP has meant to them. You likely have mid-practice colleagues that could use some encouragement and motivation as offered by APDP-yet, they may not know it. Newer or less experienced dentists or consultants are desperate for our academy. They just have to be asked to join us.



Dentists working in corporate, employment or military may want to learn more about and explore private practice. We are perfect for them.

In other news: Our affiliation with the American Dental Association is moving forward. This will create greater awareness of our Academy, and will result in more opportunities - for the ADA and for APDP. The bylaws committee has presented several changes to the Board of Directors. The objective is to bring our Bylaws into compliance with what we have been doing, and moving forward - with how we plan our Academy to be. The biggest change is interested dentists and consultants can become a member right away. These Bylaws will be sent out to all the members shortly, and it is critical that you review them right away, and if there are any questions or issues, please reach out to me. Every change has been discussed in

great detail with the committee and board but every concern or issue for every member is so important. We will vote on these changes at the Annual Meeting in February.

Our 2027 Program Chair, Dana Watson is working hard to create the best slate of speakers possible. As we have asked in the past - if you have any ideas of speakers or topics you would like to have in 2027 - please reach out to me in the next few weeks. Looking forward to seeing you in San Antonio.

Wm. Randy Jungman, DDS
APDP President Elect



BIG ANNOUNCEMENT

Our 2027 Annual Meeting location, Speakers, and many more exciting plans will be announced SOON!



Dana R. Watson
2027 Program Chair

VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Daron C. Praetzel, DMD, FAACS, Col, USAFR



The atmosphere you cultivate becomes the environment you inhabit. Most of us struggle to perform at our highest level while simultaneously creating a space others enjoy entering. Yet whether we realize it or not, our presence radiates outward. Your aura is contagious—every shade of it. The kind, the impatient, the inspired, the irritable, the joyful, the sharp-edged. All of it speaks louder than you imagine.

When you know you're giving off negative energy, it's tempting to rationalize: "I'm just not in a good mood. It's fine." But the truth is, the silent fallout of those moments can linger long after your mood lifts. Hours. Days. Sometimes much longer.

Your brief negative moments compound over time for the people around you. And for most of us in private practice, the people who absorb this energy most frequently are our team members—the individuals who stand beside us during our highest-stress moments and our heaviest emotional loads.

They know you. They know when you're at your best... and they feel when you're not approachable. You may assume they simply accept

because you are, in general, a kind and caring leader. But pause for a moment: are they uplifted during your good moods because you truly elevate them, or simply relieved they're not enduring one of your bad ones?

You may believe you know the answer. You may be wrong.

The next time you feel yourself spiraling into one of "those moods," resist the internal justification. Instead, interrupt the pattern. Shift your state. Humble yourself back to the version of you that inspires growth rather than tension. And without saying a word, lift the invisible weight that settles over your environment—because your team lives in that atmosphere just as much as you do.

Daron C. Praetzel, DMD
APDP Vice President

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT NOTES

Angelia Dean Hudson

COMMITMENT 2026 is just around the corner! Everyone has been working hard to bring you an amazing program, location, and experience. If you need help with registration or ever have a question, let me know. We have something EXTRA special planned just for our members—more details to be announced in Texas! In the meantime, please take a moment to update your membership information and upload a current photo. Let me know how I can help! I'm always here for YOU!

contact@APDP.net



SECRETARY'S REPORT

Annette Dufour, DDS

PROPOSED BYLAWS AMENDMENTS

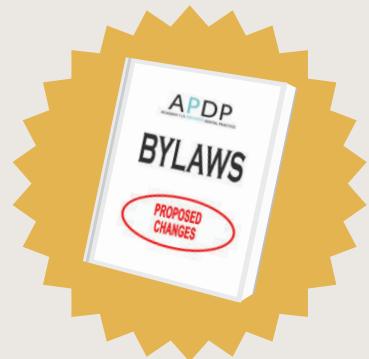
IMPORTANT - Please view the "PROPOSED AMENDMENTS" link below to review changes to be voted on at the Annual Business Meeting on February 26, 2026, in San Antonio, Texas.

[PROPOSED AMENDMENTS](#)

The 2025-2026 APDP year has been another busy one for the Board of Directors. One of the tasks on our agenda this year was the project of getting our Bylaws updated to more accurately represent us and help us achieve our future goals. Along with that, a lot of work was put in to bring you a fabulous **COMMITMENT 2026** Meeting. You will not want to miss it! I look forward to seeing each and every one of you for some Texan FUN!



NOTICE: The link provides access to the proposed Bylaws amendments for internal review by APDP members. While the document is not legally confidential, it is intended solely for member use in connection with the upcoming vote. Members are requested not to circulate or post the document outside the Association.



TREASURER'S REPORT

Phil Strevey, DDS



Our 2026 Annual Meeting in San Antonio is going to be an unforgettable event! We have some exciting plans in the works for this year's Auction, and your continued support is what helps us keep Program Costs and Dues reasonable for everyone.

Thanks to your generosity and dedication, we're proud to announce that two KULA Scholarships were awarded this year to Dr. Baylee Teafatiller and Dr. Emily Tarr — both of whom are eager to join us in San Antonio! Your contributions make these scholarships — and so much more — possible.

Together, we're mentoring and growing the next generation of leaders in private practice dentistry. Let's keep that momentum going!

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

2026-27 NOMINATING COMMITTEE SELECTIONS

The Nominating Committee is pleased to present the following APDP nominations for the 2026-27 candidates for President-Elect, Vice President and Board of Directors:

- President-Elect - Dr. Daron Praetzel
- Vice President - Lois Banta
- Board of Directors - Dr. Evan Mitchell
Dr. Emily Tarr
Dr. Shannon Toler
- Emme Sanders
Dr. Ted Thompson
Dana Watson

Please contact djs1@gmail.com if you have any nominations or if you would like to self nominate. Nominations from the floor will be accepted at the 2026 Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas.

Submitted by Dr. Julie Spaniel



Daron Praetzel, DMD
Arkansas Oral &
Maxillofacial Surgeons



Lois Banta, CEO
Healthcare Enterprises, Inc.



Evan Mitchell, DDS
Mitchell Dental Studio



Emme Sanders
SandersRDH



Emily Tarr, DMD
Summerwood Family Dental



Ted Thompson, DDS



Shannon Toler, DDS
Origin Dental Wellness



Dana Watson
Speaker/Trainer/Consultant

**Lead with Authenticity
Inspire with Purpose
Build Your Legacy**

MEET OUR *new!!* MEMBERS



Lisa Alvarado
Empower Choice



***Elyse Barron, DDS
12 Oaks Dental



Tamara Berg, DDS
Berg Dentistry



Chris Brady, DDS
Dental Health and Wellness



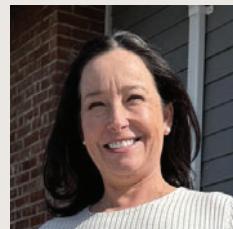
Tracey Epley, DMD
Total Health Dentistry



Christopher Freyermuth, DDS
***Smilecenter



Tija Hunter
Clinical Assistant
Dynamics



*** Kelly Kalmar, DDS
Kalmar Family
Dentistry LLP



Randy Lundy
Practice CFO



Birkin Owart, DDS
Birkin Owart DDS PLLC



*** Billy Reynolds, DDS
Rider & Reynolds LLC



Emme Sanders
SandersRDH



Emily Tarr, DMD
Summerwood Family Dental



Marc Worob, DDS
12 Oaks Dental



Lisa Young, DDS
Lisa Young, DDS



HIRE UP! STRATEGIES FOR RECRUITING AND RETAINING TOP TALENT IN DENTISTRY

Susan Maples, DDS, MSBA, FAAOSH

Patients and colleagues alike marvel at the longevity of my team members and their fervent commitment to our unique mission. Amidst a culture where job-hopping is prevalent and the scarcity of qualified applicants in clinical dentistry continues to grow, our stable team environment stands out as enviable. Before sharing some key strategies for nurturing this undeniably positive team culture, I want to acknowledge that 95% of what I am revealing comes from the invaluable lessons I learned at the Academy for Private Dental Practice over my 30 years of membership. Thank you to my mentors and friends at APDP!

Strategies for Longevity:

1 Hire Slowly: In our drive to fill positions quickly, we often overlook critical aspects of hiring. While our productivity—and, consequently, our profitability—begs swift action, it's essential to resist the urge to rush. Hiring based solely on qualifications from a resume and a pleasant conversation often results in disappointment. It pays to take your time to uncover candidates' core values before making an offer. Reflecting on

past work (and personal) relationships, we most often find that the decisions to sever ties stem from a clash in fundamental values. Conversely, long-term committed team members, while they display varied personalities, they share a foundational set of core values.



2 Clarify Your Own Values: To find congruent values match in prospective team members, you must first articulate your own values clearly. Gather your steward team members—those who exemplify the dedication and commitment you seek—to discuss and identify a shortlist of five to six core values. Core values, by definition, are the fundamental beliefs that remain unchanged, despite any other changes in your practice over time. Start with an expansive master list of core values (google these), and create flashcards for discussion. Dedicate a two hour team meeting to collaboratively pare the list down to the five or six top core values. Challenge these by looking again at the definition. Make sure that any changes to the practice will not foresee-

ably impact each of the core values. Once identified, you can effectively guide your hiring process.

3 Establish Open-Ended Questions: For each of your identified core values, develop five or more open-ended questions that prompt candidates to express their stance on those values. For instance, for a value emphasizing continual learning, ask candidates to share what initiatives they've taken for personal or professional growth in the past year. For another example, If integrity is a core value, prompt them to define it in their own words or to recount an instance when their integrity was challenged. All of these questions are designed to elicit profound insights to their personal values, which are not reflected

HIRE UP! STRATEGIES FOR RECRUITING... (continued from page 15)

in resumes or employment histories.

4 Engage Your Team in the Interview Process: Involve every team member in face-to-face interviews with candidates. They can each meet with the candidate (or pair them up) to ask questions from your established list and foster discussion. Emphasize that there are no right or wrong answers, and no right or wrong values. Our goal is to find values alignment. Record observations and impressions during discussions to share in a subsequent team meeting, allowing for diverse perspectives on candidates' values. The bonus in team involvement is that it reinforces your team values among each team member involved in the process. The process itself will foster pride in the culture you have created.

5 Achieve Consensus: While a unanimous decision is ideal, disagreements can surface. If consensus isn't reached, continue exploring potential questions or move on to explore the responses of other candidates. While this approach may seem time-consuming, remember that hiring the wrong candidate

incurs tremendous costs—both emotionally and financially. The satisfaction of reaching consensus will foster a welcoming environment for your new team member, who will join a team that knows, supports, and champions their success.

6 Create a Success Committee for New Team Members: Assign one or more team members to serve as liaisons for the onboarding process. They will help new members establish competence and belonging. Equip this committee with a detailed checklist of onboarding elements to guide the new hire over the coming year. This list should encompass essential logistics (like where to store personal items) and more nuanced aspects (such as vision, clinical education, patient communication styles, and even marketing strategies). Highlight which elements need to be tackled in what order and who among you will be the best person to help fulfill each one. If the list is extensive it will take at least a year to fulfil and take several resources and a variety of people to help with training. Make sure at least one person on the team will be accountable to the entire

onboarding list.

7 Be a Benevolent and Engaged Leader: Your role is to cultivate a culture that fosters engagement and emotional ownership among team members. Remember, perfection is impossible. Being an engaged leader means continually learning and modeling positive behavior. A culture that focuses on growing emotional intelligence will absolutely help retain committed team members. It's vital that everyone feels appreciated, heard, challenged, and valued. Achieving this requires ongoing personal leadership growth and a commitment to your development as a leader.

If this article resonates with you and you seek support in creating a thriving private practice, I invite you to join us at APDP. Together, we can transform your practice into the jewel you've envisioned.



Susan Maples, DDS, MSBA, FAAOSH

2025 MEMBERS ONLY RETREAT MEMORIES

These photos and MANY more are available to view and download FREE at

www.AngeliaHudsonPhotography.com





COMMITMENT 2026

26 -28 FEB | SAN ANTONIO
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2026 ANNUAL MEETING

February 26 - 28
CONFERENCE SPEAKERS



CHRIS RUDEN
KEYNOTE

- 1) Gaining the Upper Hand: Leveraging Limitations to Turn Adversity into Advantage.
- 2) Change is Strength.



SANDY ZIMMERMAN
KEYNOTE

- 1) From Welfare to Warrior: How collaboration and connection empowers others to achieve big dreams and goals.
- 2) From Welfare to Warrior: How simple mindset shifts can transform your life.



CARRIE WEBBER

- 1) Conversations that Count
- 2) Move the Needle



DR. JIM JENKINS

Methamphetamine & Fentanyl Update 2026 | Effects on Our Patients & Communities.



SEAN HAMEL

The Chosen Approach.



ADRIAN LEFLER

5 AI Technologies that Improve Practice Profitability.



DR. DEVINN GEESON

Chart a Course that is Anchored in Purpose.



CHRIS BRADY

- 1) Lessons Learned: What Works, What Doesn't.
- 2) 3 Myths We've Been Taught But Should Never Believe.



DR. JOHN COMISI

Sleep | Why is it Important in Dentistry?



DR. LEN TAU

Turn Reviews into Revenue | Boost Your Dental Practice with Winning Online.



NEO POSITIVITY

Brain Algorithms | Commitment and Confidence Consistently (Part I & II)



DAWN SCOTT

The Power of Our Words



DR. MARTIN MENDELSON

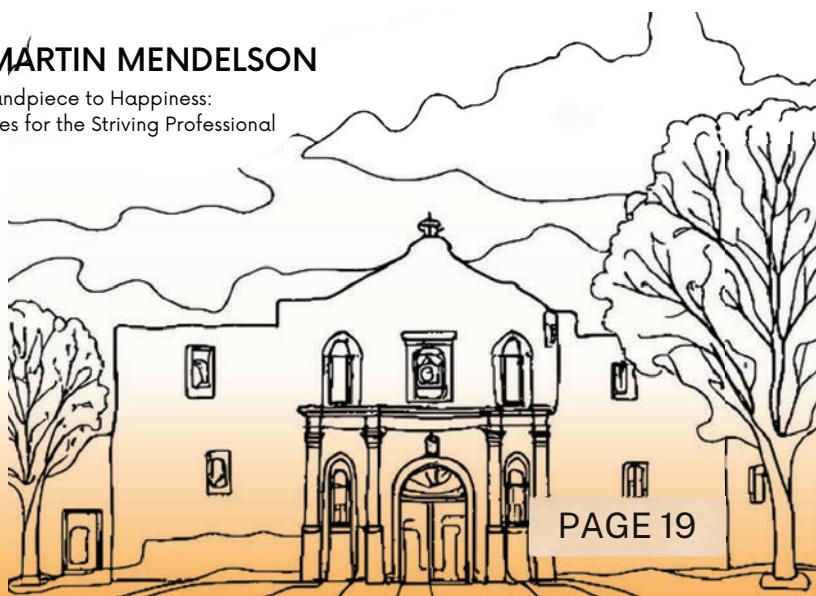
From Handpiece to Happiness: Strategies for the Striving Professional



2026 FLYER



WEBSITE



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2026 ANNUAL MEETING

THURSDAY | FEBRUARY 26

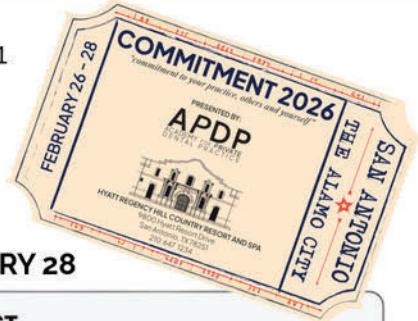
9:00 AM 11:00 AM	MORNING ACTIVITIES Golf (9a - 2p) Local Sightseeing (10a - 2p) Pickleball (11a - 1p)
4:00 PM	MEMBERS BUSINESS MEETING
5:30 PM	OPENING KEYNOTE Chris Ruden Gaining the Upper Hand: Leveraging Limitations to Turn Adversity into Advantage
7:00 PM	WELCOME DINNER

FRIDAY | FEBRUARY 27

7:00 AM 8:00 AM	BREAKFAST & REGISTRATION
8:15 AM	KEYNOTE: MORNING Sandy Zimmerman From Welfare to Warrior: How Collaboration and Connection Empowers Others to Achieve Big Dreams and Goals
9:00 AM	GENERAL SESSION Dr. Len Tau Turn Reviews into Revenue: Boost Your Dental Practice with Winning Online
10:45 AM	BREAKOUTS Dr. Jim Jenkins Methamphetamine and Fentanyl Update 2026 - Effects on our Patients and Communities Dr. John Comisi Sleep - Why is it Important in Dentistry? Dr. Chris Brady 3 Myths We've Been Taught But Should Never Believe
12:00 PM	LUNCH
1:00 PM	BREAKOUTS Dr. Martin Mendelson From Handpiece to Happiness: Strategies for the Striving Professional Dawn Scott The Power of Our Words
1:45 PM	WORKSHOP Chris Ruden Change is Strength
3:15 PM	GENERAL SESSION Adrian Lefler 5 AI Technologies that Improve Practice Profitability
4:15 PM	KEYNOTE: MID-AFTERNOON Carrie Webber Conversations that Count
5:15 PM	COCKTAIL HOUR Open Bar and Light Hors D'oeuvres
6:00 PM	LIVE AUCTION: WINE PULL
7:00 PM	DINNER ON YOUR OWN

HYATT REGENCY HILL COUNTRY RESORT & SPA

9800 Hyatt Resort dr.
San Antonio, TX 78251



SATURDAY | FEBRUARY 28

7:00 AM 8:00 AM	BREAKFAST & REGISTRATION
8:15 AM	KEYNOTE: MORNING Carrie Webber Move the Needle
9:15 AM	WORKSHOP Sandy Zimmerman From Welfare to Warrior: How simple mindset shifts can transform your life
10:30 AM	GENERAL SESSION Sean Hamel The Chosen Approach
11:30 AM	KEYNOTE: LATE-MORNING Neo Positivity Brain Algorithms: Commitment and Confidence Consistently - Part 1
12:30 PM	LUNCHEON
2:00 PM	KEYNOTE: AFTERNOON Neo Positivity Brain Algorithms: Commitment and Confidence Consistently - Part 2
3:15 PM	KEYNOTE: MID-AFTERNOON Dr. Chris Brady Lessons Learned: What works, what doesn't
4:00 PM	KEYNOTE: CLOSING Dr. Devinn Geeson Chart a Course that is Anchored In Purpose
6:30 PM	DANCE PARTY & DINNER Come Dressed in Your Shiny Suits & Platform Boots! Get Your Dance on During Our 70's Theme Dinner Party.



Speakers Highlight

COMMITMENT 2026

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS



SANDY ZIMMERMAN

Sandy was a teacher for 23 years. She is a mother of 3, an inspirational speaker, author of 'Get Out of the Car', 9-time competitor on NBC's hit show American Ninja Warrior and became the 1st mom in the show's history to finish the course and hit the buzzer. Sandy is a 2-time FINA World Champion, 2-time UNAA World Champion, and World Cup Champion. She has appeared on The Kelly Clarkson Show, CNN Entertainment, E! News, The Huffington Post, and Women's Health. In 2022 Sandy was inducted into the National Teacher Hall of Fame. She is a TEDX speaker, national judo champion and played basketball at Gonzaga University. Sandy continues to coach basketball today with the Warriors and travels the country speaking and sharing her story.

DR. LEN TAU

Recognized for eight consecutive years as one of the top leaders in dental consulting by Dentistry Today, Leonard F. Tau, DMD-known to many as Len-has devoted his career to revolutionizing dentistry for both patients and practitioners.



The celebrated author of Raving Patients (2020) and 100+ Tips to 100 5-Star Reviews in 100 Days (2022), Len transitioned from clinical practice in December 2022 after more than two decades to focus entirely on helping practices unlock their revenue potential. During his distinguished career, Len owned and operated the Pennsylvania Center for Dental Excellence in Philadelphia, transforming it into a premier destination for outstanding patient care and innovative dental solutions after purchasing it in 2007. Even while practicing, he made waves as a part-time consultant, empowering thousands of dentists with impactful reputation marketing strategies. As the leader of the dental division at BirdEye, a reputation marketing platform trusted by over 10,000 dentists, Len has been at the forefront of helping practices amplify their online presence and credibility.

From hosting the widely popular Raving Patients podcast to delivering actionable insights through his books and lectures, Len has cemented his status as a thought leader in reputation marketing. His electrifying talks captivate audiences worldwide, focusing on reputation marketing, internet marketing, social media, sales techniques, and case acceptance to elevate dental practices' visibility, profitability, and patient satisfaction.

Len also hosts the annual Supercharge Your Dental Practice conference in South Florida, a can't-miss event combining business mastery with marketing brilliance to help dentists achieve unparalleled success.

DAWN SCOTT

Driven by a deep love for people and a passion for patient well-being, Dawn Scott dedicates herself to enhancing the dental experience. Her motto, "We don't treat teeth in isolation, they are attached to a human being, let's focus on treating the whole person," guides her approach. She excels in all areas of dentistry, from corporate strategy to clinical practice and patient education, with a focus on developing patient care protocols and communication techniques for optimal outcomes.



A member of the Speaking Consulting Network, National Speakers Association, and a published children's book author, she is also a passionate advocate for children's mental health.



CHRIS RUDEN

After 17 years of hiding his disability and then being diagnosed with an invisible disability, Chris uses his transformative expertise around change, resilience, and inclusion to help people and organizations alike innovate forward and together.

SEAN HAMEL

Sean Hamel is a seasoned dental marketing professional and Founder & CEO at Art of Dental Marketing. Art of Dental Marketing (ADM) is dentistry's premier story-based marketing agency. Sean and his team specialize in crafting captivating narratives that help dental practices attract, engage, and retain patients. His team of skilled storytellers and marketers collaborates closely with each practice to uncover their unique stories and create emotional connections within their local community.



With a comprehensive suite of services, including web design, organic and local SEO, AdWords, video marketing, and creative direction and ground marketing strategies, ADM has helped hundreds of dental practices achieve unprecedented growth.



ADRIAN LEFLER

Adrian Lefler, CEO of My Social Practice, is a seasoned expert in the dental marketing industry with 14 years of experience. He is widely recognized for his engaging and informative presentations. Based in Suncrest, Utah, Adrian shares his life with his wife, four children, and a lively mix of pets. My Social Practice is a leading dental marketing company, and Adrian is passionate about helping dental professionals succeed in this dynamic field.

DR. CHRIS BRADY

As the nationally recognized 'The Rich & Happy Dentist Coach & Case Acceptance Expert', Chris loves helping dentists have or produce large amounts of whatever it is they want—in dentistry and in life. Being 'rich' is not just about income. Whether it's personal happiness, more time off to do what's most important—family, golf, travel, etc.—wealth or less stress at the office.



Dr. Chris has developed one of the most effective case acceptance systems that will have patients asking for treatment. No pressure. Not pushy. Just happier patients accepting bigger cases, resulting in fewer days at the office and a happier, better-compensated team. Since 1994, Dr. Chris has taught principles and concepts that have changed the lives of literally thousands of people in the dental profession. In fact, Dr. Chris has taught more Case Acceptance seminars than any other dentist on the planet. Dr. Brady's teaching approach is motivating and entertaining. You'll find yourself laughing and even feeling a bit embarrassed at some of the crazy things we naively do and say to patients. He tells it like it is in a humorous, no-nonsense fashion by making fun of himself with real life stories that teach the proper communication principles for building exceptional relationships with the patients of the practice.

As Founder and President of Brady Group LLC, Dr. Chris propels dental offices to achieve their greatest revenue potential through growth strategies. He teaches the essential skills of selling, leadership, management, and communication that enables dentists to build their dream dental practice. In addition to providing dentistry in his dental practice in Colorado Springs, Dr. Chris is also an author, practice transitions expert, and motivational speaker. He has spoken to groups (AADPA featured speaker. Keynote speaker at the AACD.) all across the United States. Dr. Chris' numerous articles can be found in various publications such as Dental Economics, Mentor and Contemporary Dental Aesthetics. He was also an Editorial Board member at Dentist's Money Digest. Most of all, Dr. Brady is a genuine, generous person eager to share his message with those of his profession with the desire of creating happiness.



CARRIE WEBBER

Carrie Webber is president and owner of The Jameson Group, a dental management coaching & marketing firm that works with dental practices nationwide to help dentists and teams become more productive, more profitable and ultimately more fulfilled in their practicing lives. Carrie is a contributing author to several publications and blogs on the topics of dental management, leadership, marketing, customer service and business development as well as a popular speaker at dental meetings nationwide. She is a member of the Speaking Consulting Network and has been named a Leader in CE by Dentistry Today for the past five years. For more information on Webber and her company, The Jameson Group, visit www.jmsn.com.

DR. DEVINN GEESON

Dr. Devinn Geeson is a dentist turned coach and consultant who built and sold three practices in under five years at an 8.5x multiple. Her success stems from her journey and the incredible people she surrounded herself with—her team. Having worked as a dental assistant, hygienist, and office manager, Dr. Geeson connects deeply with every member of a dental practice.



Now the CEO and Chief Evolutions Officer of Smiles at Sea and The Dental Festival, Dr. Geeson champions destination dental continuing education. She is passionate about advancing education, nurturing community, fostering creativity, and hosting transformative experiences—all with the goal of raising the bar for the dental industry.



DR. MARTIN MENDELSON

Transforming adversity into opportunity, Dr. Martin R. Mendelson, FIADFE, CPC, redirected a devastating medical disablement from his clinical career into a passion for helping leaders through the science of mindset and positivity. For over twenty years, he has empowered dental professionals internationally to lighten the leadership load, enhance decision-making, and nurture cultures where transparency leads to team excellence.

Dr. Mendelson holds certifications in executive coaching, team coaching/facilitation, emotional intelligence, and happiness studies. He served as Adjunct Clinical Faculty at Nova Southeastern University College of Dental Medicine and was a Resident Faculty member at Spear Education for over a decade. A recognized thought leader, Dr. Mendelson is an Executive Contributor for Brainz Magazine, and his first book, *One Move Makes All the Difference*, will be published by Morgan James Publishing in 2025.

DR. JAMES JENKINS

Dr. James Jenkins is a Lincoln, Nebraska native and graduated from the UNMC College of Dentistry in 1984 (the Class of Rocks, yes, there is a story behind that). He had a private dental practice in Lincoln until November of 2002 when he accepted a full-time position at the UNMC College of Dentistry to teach clinical dentistry and practice part time. He currently teaches adult restorative dentistry on the clinic floor at the UNMC College of Dentistry three days a week. Dr. Jenkins and his wife Kathy have been married 38 years and have three adult children and eight grandchildren, with one more on the way due in April of 2025.



Dr. Jenkins has always enjoyed helping with charitable efforts such as the Nebraska Mission of Mercy and now the Nebraska Veterans Mission of Mercy. He also loves to participate in the charitable events sponsored by the UNMC College of Dentistry which include Children's Dental Days, VetSmiles, and Clinic With A Heart. When he is not at the college or a charity clinic, you can find him on the golf course or playing with the Raw Nerve band, still rocking after 35 years!



NEO POSITIVITY

Neo Positivity is a powerhouse keynote speaker, dynamic mindset coach, and the visionary behind the transformative Thoughts Become Things movement. Trained by Hall of Fame Speaker Dr. Delatorro McNeal, who's shaped legends like Les Brown, Neo brings electrifying energy and life-changing insight to every stage he steps on.

Crowned the 2024 Dentistry's Got Talent Champion, Neo has commanded the spotlight at premier events including the Greater New York Dental Meeting and the Chicago Dental Society, and has been featured in *Incisal Edge* magazine for his influence in dental education.

From delivering impactful CE courses for *Elevate Oral Care* and *Dental Whale* to inspiring global audiences through over 200 podcast appearances and 13 successful virtual summits, Neo helps professionals rewire their thinking, break through limitations, and turn vision into reality. His mission? To help you master your mindset and manifest success.

Starting now!

DR. JOHN COMISI



Dr. John C. Comisi is a respected dental professional with over 40 years of experience. He practiced general dentistry in Ithaca, NY for 35 years before joining the Medical University of South Carolina in 2017 as Associate Professor of Restorative Dentistry, where he served until 2024. At MUSC, he directed courses in Operative and Sleep Dentistry, chaired the Dental Materials Committee, and acted as Infection Control Officer during the COVID-19 pandemic.

He is now a Professor in the Department of General Dentistry at the Dental College of Georgia at Augusta University and serves as President of the South Carolina Dental Association.

A 1983 graduate of Northwestern University Dental School, Dr. Comisi earned his B.S. in Biology from Fordham University. He is a Master and Emeritus Member of the Academy of General Dentistry and a Diplomate of the American Sleep and Breathing Academy. He also holds fellowships in several prestigious dental organizations.

Dr. Comisi's extensive experience, leadership, and dedication to professional development have made a lasting impact on the dental field.