The American Dental Association is America’s leading advocate for oral health.

American Dental Association members stand together as a profession to:

- represent dentistry and improve oral health through our advocacy and public education initiatives
- foster excellence in dental education programs
- promote dental research
- facilitate development of standards.

The ADA stands for public health, sound science, ethical professional behavior, and continuous improvement in oral health care. Dental students and dentists are part of it all as members of the American Dental Association!

Our Mission:

The ADA is the professional association of dentists that fosters the success of a diverse membership and advances the oral health of the public.
Organized dentistry describes the combined efforts of all the organizations that work to positively contribute to the dental profession. It encompasses the efforts of ADA members, staff and supporters at the local, state and national level, known as the tripartite. In addition, organized dentistry reflects the efforts of organizations which serve a particular group, like the American Student Dental Association. Through these organized systems, we can advance the profession and better serve the public.

**ADA Membership**

Membership in the American Dental Association is available to dentists, dental students, dental educators and researchers. Predoctoral students complete one application and submit it to ASDA to join both organizations. A portion of your dues go to the ADA.

**Student Membership**

As a member of the American Student Dental Association (ASDA) and the ADA, students are entitled to all the publications, benefits and services of both organizations. How is this possible for $75 in dues? With only $5 going to the ADA, ADA member dentists support the cost of student member benefits and services.

**Tip:** See last page for more information on the ASDA and ADA relationship.
Understanding the Tripartite

For more than 90 years, the ADA, together with state and local dental societies, has functioned as a three-tiered system called the tripartite. While retaining their autonomy as dental associations, the national, state (constituent) and local (component) organizations work together for members.

With a few exceptions (such as dental students), ADA members hold membership at all three levels.

For example, if a dentist practices in Chicago, he or she would be a member of the Chicago Dental Society, the Illinois State Dental Society, and the national ADA. Dentists usually join and renew their dues through the state dental society.

Tripartite membership is mutually supportive and helps provide a consistent voice in lobbying activities, supports uniform educational standards, promotes ethical dental practice and allows us to coordinate activities. Specific member benefits are offered at each of the three levels.

Tip: Your state society may offer an affordable student membership — and some societies don’t charge any student dues at all.

Reduced dues for new graduates

New graduates ease into membership with reduced dues from the ADA.

At the national level, you pay:
- Year 1 - $0
- Year 2 - 25% of full national dues
- Year 3 - 50% of full national dues
- Year 4 - 75% of full national dues
- Year 5 and thereafter - 100% of full national dues.

Most state and local dental societies also offer reduced dues.

Students who go into a graduate program or residency following dental school pay just $30 national dues per year and begin the reduced dues program when their graduate education is complete. Some dental societies also offer a tripartite graduate student membership option.

Tip: Join and stay a member to get the best deal! To receive the Reduced Dues Program rates, you must maintain continuous membership.

What should I expect to pay in dues five years after graduation?

Depending on your location, full tripartite member dues currently vary from $900 to $1,800. The ADA national portion of that total was $522 in 2013.
Count on the ADA throughout your career

Turn to your professional association for resources and support at every stage of your professional life. As a member, you can:

Support and protect the profession

Increased funding for research, dental care for underserved populations and public health initiatives are the result of advocacy efforts.

Keep the public informed

MouthHealthy.org provides the public with timely and credible oral health information on prevention, care and treatment in a highly engaging user experience. The public can find:

- Oral health information by life stages from pregnancy through seniors
- A–Z topics with videos
- ADA Seal of Acceptance products
- Tips and activities to make oral health care fun for kids
- ADA® Find-a-Dentist™ to help them find an ADA member dentist

Make informed decisions

The ADA Professional Product Review™ provides dental product information that is unbiased, scientifically sound, clinically relevant and user-friendly. The ADA Center for Evidence-Based Dentistry™ provides research and gives you access to systematic reviews to support your clinical decision-making. Visit ebd.ada.org.

Get the latest dental news

Members stay up-to-date with The Journal of the American Dental Association (JADA), and ADA News, and e-publications, such as Practice & Thrive and Advocacy Update. ADA members also have access to financial services, group insurance and retirement programs, ADA Annual Session, reduced rates on ADA Catalog products, Survey Center reports, Library services and more all help members stay current! Visit the ADA Member Center for details at ADA.org/membercenter.

Feel at home no matter your area of expertise

ADA membership is available to dentists in private practice, community health centers, academia, research, dental manufacturing, military and Public Health Service, among others. ADA Affiliate membership is available to dentists outside the U.S., and a small number of non-practicing dentists and non-dentists hold membership, as well.
The ADA — Putting the Pieces Together

The ADA is more than 157,000 members strong. And every member has a voice — and a way to make that voice heard. Here’s how:

The ADA is made up of 547 component (local) and 53 constituent (state) dental societies. Those constituent societies are grouped into trustee districts — there are 17 trustee districts in total.

The Board of Trustees includes one trustee from each of the 17 districts, along with the ADA president, president-elect, two vice presidents, the-treasurer, and the executive director. The speaker of the House of Delegates serves as parliamentarian to the Board. The Board of Trustees is the managing body of the ADA.

The legislative and governing body, the supreme authority is the ADA House of Delegates, which meets once each year during the ADA Annual Session. The 473 members of the House of Delegates are chosen by the 53 constituent societies, the five federal dental services and the American Student Dental Association.

And finally, there are 11 Councils, two Commissions, and two Committees all described in this publication. Volunteer leaders serving in this capacity focus on specific subjects, such as scientific affairs or the concerns of new dentists.

Formulating ADA Policy — The Resolution Process

The ADA is a member-driven organization, meaning that members can — and do — formulate the policies of the Association. Similar to the federal government, ADA leaders voice the concerns of their constituents in the form of resolutions.

Resolutions can be initiated by:

• The ADA Board of Trustees
• Delegates to the ADA House of Delegates
• Constituent (state) dental societies
• Trustee Districts
• Other groups (such as specialty organizations or philanthropic groups — subject to review and approval by the Speaker and the House of Delegates)
Your first step is to find someone to put forth the resolution.

While members may contact anyone in leadership, it’s often easier to work with those who share your goals. ASDA brings resolutions to the ADA House of Delegates, so working through ASDA is one option. The constituent society where your dental school is located is another option, or bringing the issue to the attention of an appropriate ADA Council is a third. Some resolutions take more effort than others.

Resolutions go to the ADA Board of Trustees for review — so the Board will have an opportunity to comment and make a recommendation (sometimes for and sometimes against) on your resolution. No matter what the level of Board support, the resolution will go to the ADA House of Delegates for consideration. There, it is assigned to a reference committee for further discussion during ADA Annual Session. Reference committee meetings are free and open to all members, so you may attend and speak on behalf of a resolution if you wish and may encourage others to do so, as well.

Reference committees address specific topic areas (for example, there is a reference committee on Education, Science and Related Matters), assess the assigned resolutions and provide guidance to the House of Delegates who then vote — congratulations, the resolution was approved unanimously!

For instance, say you support a policy that all U.S. dental schools be encouraged to give each graduating student a cheeseburger.
Working together, we make a difference in dentistry
Councils and Commissions

New Dentist Committee
The New Dentist Committee (NDC) serves as the voice of the new dentist within the ADA, representing new dentists’ views to the ADA Board of Trustees and other agencies. The NDC monitors and anticipates new dentist needs and advocates for the development of member benefits, services, and resources to facilitate professional and practice success. The NDC fosters the next generation of leadership within organized dentistry by building community and facilitating new dentist leadership development at all three levels of the tripartite.

Commission on Dental Accreditation
The Commission on Dental Accreditation serves the public by establishing, maintaining and applying standards that ensure the quality and continuous improvement of dental and dental-related education and reflect the evolving practice of dentistry. The scope of the Commission on Dental Accreditation encompasses dental, advanced dental and allied dental education programs.

Council on Dental Education and Licensure
The Council on Dental Education and Licensure (CDEL) is the ADA agency dedicated to promoting high quality and effective processes of dental education, dental licensure and credentialing in the United States. The CDEL, through its tripartite representative structure (ADA, ADEA, AADB), fulfills its mission by:

- Monitoring and disseminating information on dental education and licensure issues
- Conducting studies and providing recommendations to the ADA’s policy-making bodies on these matters
- Serving as liaison to related organizations which also serve dental education and licensure
- Implementing the directions of the Board of Trustees and the House of Delegates of the ADA
Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations

The purposes of the Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations are:

- To provide and conduct written examinations, exclusive of clinical demonstrations, for the purpose of assisting state boards in determining qualifications of dentists who seek licensure to practice in any state, district or dependency of the United States, which recognizes the National Board Examinations, here and after referred to as National Board Dental Examinations

- To provide and conduct written examinations, exclusive of clinical demonstrations, for the purpose of assisting state boards in determining qualifications of dental hygienists who seek licensure to practice in any state, district or dependency of the United States, which recognizes the National Board Examinations, here and after referred to as National Board Dental Hygiene Examinations

- To make rules and regulations for the conduct of National Board Dental and Dental Hygiene Examinations and for the issuance of National Board Dental and Dental Hygiene Certificates

- To serve as a resource for the dental profession in the development of written examinations.

Committee on International Programs and Development

The Committee on International Programs and Development conceptualizes, monitors, and advocates for involvement in global programs, opportunities and collaborations to improve oral health and position the ADA as an active partner in the global environment.
Council on Access, Prevention and Interprofessional Relations

The Council on Access, Prevention and Interprofessional Relations is the primary agency dedicated to providing leadership, vision and coordination of the ADA’s activities to advance oral health care within the health delivery system, promote prevention as the cornerstone of oral health, and improve access to oral health services for underserved populations. This is accomplished by:

• Recommending policies
• Developing resources and programs
• Providing technical assistance
• Maintaining liaison and collaborating with a wide variety of partners

Council on ADA Sessions

The Council on ADA Sessions holds the primary responsibility to create and continuously improve every aspect of the ADA Annual Session and to attain and maintain the stature of being the premier meeting in the worldwide dental community.

Council on Communications

The Council on Communications is the primary ADA agency responsible for advising on reputation management, providing strategic oversight and advising the Association on the image and brand implications of Association plans, programs, services and activities. Further, this Council shall advise the Association regarding integrated and strategic communications plans and policies between itself, the public, members and the profession.

Council on Dental Benefit Programs

The Council on Dental Benefit Programs is the ADA agency dedicated to promoting quality dental care through the development, promotion and monitoring of the dental benefit programs for the public, and by development and maintenance of dental coding systems and quality assessment and improvement tools and methodologies.
The Council on Dental Practice recommends policies and provides resources to empower our members to continue development of the dental practice, and to enhance their personal and professional lives for the betterment of the dental team and the patients they serve.

**Council on Ethics, Bylaws and Judicial Affairs**

The Council on Ethics, Bylaws and Judicial Affairs (CEBJA) is the ADA agency dedicated to enhancing the ethical conscience of dentists by promoting the highest moral, ethical and professional standards in the provision of dental care to the public.

**Council on Government Affairs**

The Council on Government Affairs (CGA) recommends policies related to legislative and regulatory issues, including the formulation of proposed federal legislation. The CGA also disseminates information to assist constituent and component societies on state legislative and regulatory matters. The CGA is the Association’s liaison with agencies of the federal government, especially those agencies that employ dental personnel.
Council on Members Insurance and Retirement Programs

The Council on Members Insurance and Retirement Programs is an agency of the ADA whose purpose is to enhance the value of Association membership by overseeing Insurance and Retirement Programs through sponsored and endorsed insurance and retirement programs and aiding dentists in the management of their personal and professional risks through educational activities and informational programs and services.

Council on Membership

The Council on Membership is the ADA agency whose responsibility is to monitor membership trends; to collect information to assess members’ needs in order to facilitate the analysis and transfer of this information throughout the Association; to encourage the development and promotion of member benefits in order to maintain high levels of membership; and, to increase membership, preserving the ADA’s place as the unified voice of dentistry.

Council on Scientific Affairs

The ADA Council on Scientific Affairs (CSA) serves the public, the dental profession and other health professions as the primary source of timely, relevant and emerging information on the science of dentistry and promotion of oral health.

The CSA provides recommendations to the ADA’s policymaking bodies on scientific issues. The CSA also promotes, reviews, evaluates, and conducts studies on scientific matters.
Other National Associations

The American Dental Association is the broad-based professional association for dentists and represents the many diverse occupations and perspectives of the profession.

The ADA works closely with ASDA, the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) and the American Association of Dental Boards (AADB). Ethnic dental associations, such as the National Dental Association (NDA), the Hispanic Dental Association (HDA), Society for American Indian Dentists (SAID) and others, as well as the American Association of Women Dentists (AAWD) also play a key role in organized dentistry. Additionally, the Academy of General Dentistry along with many specialty organizations works on behalf of dentists and the profession.

Tip:
Visit ADA.org/societydirectories for a list of national organizations.
The ADA Office of Student Affairs (OSA) is here for you during school and as you transition to dental practice.

**Visit ADA.org/student to:**

- Keep your finances on track. Access resources including a list of loan repayment programs by state and scholarship information. The Success Dental Student Programs also help students manage their money.

- Get in-depth knowledge on issues that matter. Find information on topics like associateships, advanced dental education, practice management, ergonomics and more.

- Understand boards and licensure. Prepare with the publication *Understanding Licensure*. Licensure candidates can communicate exam information to patients by using the companion piece, *A Patient’s Guide to the Clinical Licensure Exam*.

**Safeguard your future with ADA group insurance**

Dental student members can get $50,000 of group term life and $2,000 per month of disability insurance at no cost during school – guaranteed issue (if you’re under 40). Premiums are fully subsidized by the ADA Member Insurance Plans through graduation or residency; coverage continues after dental school and can be renewed throughout your career as a practicing dentist at competitive rates. Additional coverage is available to you once you begin practice. Your access to quality group insurance underwritten by Great-West Life and Annuity Insurance Company is a valuable benefit of ADA membership!

To enroll, go to [insurance.ada.org](http://insurance.ada.org) or call 888.463.4545 for more information.

Access these complimentary resources and more at ADA.org/student.

Want more information? Contact us! ADA Office of Student Affairs 800.621.8099 ext 7470 studentaffairs@ada.org
Resources available at your school or in your neighborhood!

SUCCESS
Dental Student Programs

The ADA offers programs for dental students on-site at the dental school! The ADA’s goal is to provide enrichment to the dental education experience with programs that address student needs and interests during each year of dental school. Programs include:

- Success: Smart Start for Freshmen
- Success: Professional Preview for Sophomores
- Success: Career Strategies for Juniors
- Success: Practice Management for Seniors

Every program is available to every school every year. For more information call, 800.621.8099 ext. 7470 or email studentaffairs@ada.org.

Programs at the State and Local Level

Many state and local dental societies offer valuable programs for dental students including: mentor programs, tours of local dental offices, guides to establishing a practice in that state, malpractice insurance for board exams, free registration to the annual meeting and more! Contact your state society for information on student programs in your area by visiting ADA.org/stateorganizations.aspx.
ASDA to ADA: A Progressive Relationship

The American Student Dental Association (ASDA) is the largest, independent national student-run organization for students pursuing a career in dentistry. As ASDA’s mission is closely aligned with the goals of the ADA, the associations work together to provide students with the resources and support they need. Students get the best of both worlds! You can lead, learn and advocate locally and nationally with your student organization, ASDA, and have access to the resources and support from the #1 organization representing all dentists, the ADA.

Working Together

ASDA and the ADA work together on issues important to dental students, including licensure, ethics, and financial planning, and they advocate for these issues in Washington. The ADA gains invaluable insight from a student’s perspective and the students learn first-hand how ADA members work on behalf of the profession and the public. ASDA offers students the opportunity to work in their headquarters, as well as the ADA’s Washington D.C. office through their externship program.

Find student benefits and resources at ADA.org/student and ASDAnet.org.
Stay in touch!

Moving? Not getting your ADA resources or member benefits?

Be sure to update your contact information with the ADA regularly, including your email (we never sell your email address, but do distribute ADA resources via email).

Feel free to email or call us to update your information.

ADA Office of Student Affairs
312.440.7470
studentaffairs@ada.org

This resource of the American Dental Association is offered as information only and not as, practice, financial, accounting, legal or other professional advice. Services and benefits are subject to change at the discretion of the ADA.

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“The continued, enthusiastic participation of young professionals is paramount to the future of our profession. I am especially impressed by the abundant energy and optimism exhibited by new dentists who welcome the opportunity to contribute to, and benefit from, the ADA. These are exciting times and the passion of student dentists will serve the healthy stewardship of our great organization — and the profession — for many years to come.”

Dr. Robert A. Faiella, D.M.D., M.M.Sc. 2012–2013 ADA President

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