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2008

Activities for your ASDA Chapter

OFFICE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

studentaffairs@ada.org
800 621.8099 x7470

Introduction

The American Student Dental Association (ASDA) is the largest national organization solely dedicated to dental student concerns. The mission of the organization is ASDA is a national student-run organization that protects and advances the rights, interests, and welfare of students pursuing careers in dentistry. It introduces students to lifelong involvement in organized dentistry and provides services, information, education, representation and advocacy." Its headquarters are located in Chicago at 211 E. Chicago Avenue, in the American Dental Association building.

Predoctoral members of ASDA are also student members of the American Dental Association (ADA) and are eligible for ADA benefits, including all the benefits and resources developed specifically to meet the needs of a dental student. Many of the benefits are highlighted in ADA Resources for the Dental Student Member, a handy guide distributed at ADA-sponsored dental school programs or upon request. To order a free copy, send an email to studentaffairs@ada.org or call (800) 621-8099, x7470. The guide is also posted on www.ada.org/goto/student.

Dental students may also be eligible for membership in their local and state dental societies, depending upon the location of the dental school. The listing of dental societies contact information is available at www.ada.org/goto/organizations.

Chapter Basics

Every dental school has an ASDA chapter. Your ASDA chapter is only as strong as you make it! Oftentimes, the activities you host will shape the overall perception of the chapter, its students, and the dental school as a whole. So plan your activities accordingly, make your membership work for you, and get the most out of dental school while you're there. A strong foundation will help you succeed!

If you are planning ASDA chapter activities, please consider partnering with your local and state societies. As you know, networking is invaluable, especially when you're starting a new career. So take advantage of the outreach of dedicated dentists in your state who support organized dentistry and want to support you and your future endeavors!

Examples of Activities

Here are examples of events that a few ASDA chapters participate in, and some other programs you could consider.

"At the University of Alabama at Birmingham, we hold a 5K run called Miles for Smiles to raise money for our Give Kids A Smile® event. We also hold a vendor fair and golf tournament as fundraisers for our chapter. We have quarterly lunch meetings for each class to share and discuss current legislative issues facing dentistry, and every spring we host a crawfish boil for our members."

Sara Twardy
University of Alabama at Birmingham
Class of 2011

"We are a very active chapter and are constantly working on events - our biggest events include our formal on the Belle of Louisville (Ball on the Belle) steamboat, The Gong Show (annual spoof show SNL style), and tailgates for U of L home games just to name a few."

Kristen Daugherty
University of Louisville
Class of 2009

“At Michigan, we have Lunch and Learns with Oral B and other large dental companies. We also hold a Dental Prom and everyone dresses up!”

Andrea Salazar
University of Michigan
Class of 2011

Make your ASDA Chapter Thrive!

Follow the below suggestions to help make your chapter successful and productive

Develop Student Leaders

- **Elect or Appoint Officers**

Most ASDA chapters elect at least a First Delegate/President and Second Delegate/Vice President. Other positions to consider include Alternate Delegate/Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Legislative Grassroots Network Liaison, Membership Coordinator, among others.

- **Conduct Monthly Meetings**

Keep members up-to-date on chapter events.

- **Stay informed**

Develop a chapter newsletter to share with your members and include popular issues in organized dentistry such as hot topics found in publications such as *Dental Recap*, *Mouth*, etc.

Include Career Advancement Activities

- **Mentoring programs**

Ask a local dentist to come and talk to your ASDA chapter about life after dental school and organized dentistry.

Dentists enjoy sharing their experiences with students! Invite them to share stories about life after dental school on topics such as compensation and competition for new dentists in the area, employment outlook, starting out in the profession, expectations and more. Dentists can also share resources available to dental students through local and state dental societies and the ADA. And if you're interested in an ongoing one-to-one relationship with a dentist, many societies offer mentor programs that match volunteer dentists with interested students. For more information, contact your state or local dental society.

- **Field trips to state, local and national societies**

Visit your state or local society or even the ADA.

Meet the staff and get to know the members who live and work in the area that you may one day be practicing in. Sit in on meetings, or just take a tour of the office to learn more about organized dentistry and how it will affect your career.

- **Online job boards**

Start planning for your future early.

Get access to online job boards in the area through your local/state dental society's Web site, or visit ASDA's online Career Board at asdanet.org or the JADA classifieds online at ADA.org.

- **Meet & Greets**

Meet your future.

Get to know dentists and their families socially for connections that can help you for years to come!

Promote Professional Development

- **Lunch & Learns**

Choose a topic to discuss while enjoying lunch with your peers.

Have students bring their own lunch, or ask your state/local society to help you sponsor a Lunch & Learn. Pick a hot topic (dental practice challenges, licensure, and fluoridation), find a location in the dental school (conference room, cafeteria), invite a speaker (student, dental society staffer, etc.) and order lunch.

- **Lectures**

Get advice from seasoned professionals.

Create a lecture series and invite experts to speak to students on topics of interest.

Communicate with your Chapter Members

- **Student newsletter**

Communicate with your fellow students.

Want a newsletter that's specific to your needs? Create one through your ASDA chapter. Talk about the happenings in your chapter. Display a calendar that shows dates of upcoming local, state and national events in organized dentistry. Don't forget to include faculty and administrative leaders in your communications.

Hint: Many online services have a newsletter option or use a template through Microsoft Word or Publisher.

- **Subscriptions to local and state journals and newsletters**

Find out about what's going on around you in organized dentistry.

Ask your local/state society to give your ASDA chapter a subscription to their monthly or quarterly newsletter.

- **Create an online group**

Make updates fun and relevant

Use online mechanisms either through your school or another venue, such as Facebook to allow students to stay current.

- **Integrate!**

Use multiple channels to send your message

If you have a big event or other valuable information to share, promote it in your newsletter, on the campus bulletin board, via e-mail and in your online group. This method will help to reach students no matter their schedules

Share Advocacy Goals

- **Activities for State Lobby Day**

Your voice counts.

Plan an activity surrounding some of the issues being presented to legislators, or take a trip to the state or national capitol to view some of the processes associated with law-making. Prepare ahead of time to discuss your perspective on key issues with your state legislators – visiting with them and their staff in their office can have a real impact!

- **Letter writing campaigns for change in licensure, promoting water fluoridation, etc.**

Band together for a good cause.

There's power in numbers. There's nothing like gathering a group together with the same ideas on important issues. Make a statement and take a stance on topics important to oral health and dentistry.

Have fun at Social Events

- **Sporting, comedy events, festivals, barbecues**

Have some fun OUTSIDE of dental school.

Many state/local societies sponsor picnics and gatherings or outings to social and sporting events for the purpose of networking and camaraderie. Host a budget-friendly outing with your chapter. Activities can promote good health, like a walking club or promote relaxation like a comedy movie night in the student center. Be creative – the idea is to de-stress and have fun!

Give Back!

- **Community Service Activities**

Reach out to your future patients

Events such as Give Kids a Smile Day, food drives, or simply handing out tooth brushes at a local health fair can be a great way to get involved in your community. Contact your local or state society for additional volunteer opportunities.

Provide Recognition

- **Awards, luncheons, receptions**

Hard work and dedication deserves recognition

Recognize the achievements of your fellow students, faculty members and student leaders. Host a small reception or event to honor accomplishments and to show appreciation for the hard work of your peers. Showcase your talents by highlighting ASDA leaders.

Involve Faculty and School Leadership

- **Include Faculty and Administration**

Your school leaders can lend support and knowledge

Many ASDA Chapter events and activities could benefit from the experience of a trusted faculty adviser or administrative leader. In many cases, faculty and staff at your school are connected to many other leaders in the profession – in the school and beyond. Don't be afraid to ask to involve your school leaders in your events and planning. They can lend experience, leadership and support that can help to build a stronger chapter today and for future classes!

Get involved with ADA-Sponsored Programs

The following activities, which are sponsored by the American Dental Association, are **free** to dental students and available on-site at your school. Most likely, your school administrators are working closely with ADA staff to facilitate these programs, but if not, take it upon yourself to call the ADA Office of Student Affairs to see if one of its programs has been scheduled for your school. To check the schedule of programs, call the ADA Office of Student Affairs at (800) 621-8099, x7470, or email studentaffairs@ada.org.

- **Pizza & Politics for all students**

A 60-minute lunchtime presentation (length, time and format may be tailored to specific needs), which informs students about the impact of government policy and politics for both dental students and those in a dental practice. The program also motivates them to be active participants in the political process both now and upon completion of their education. Pizza is provided courtesy of the ADA. A limited number of these programs are presented each academic year. To schedule a program, contact holtzeej@ada.org

- **ADA Success Dental Student Programs**

Success Smart Start for Freshmen

This two-hour program addresses financial issues, dental career options, and tips for Success in dental school. The agenda includes:

- Career opportunities and income information
- Postdoctoral training and specialty opportunities
- Student loans, level of debt, and interest rates
- Budgeting and managing finances
- Stress and time management

Success Professional Preview for Sophomores

This two-hour program acquaints sophomore dental students with skills for the high-tech and high touch dental practice of the future. The presentation includes:

- Communication and listening skills in clinic
- Critical thinking when assessing technology
- Ergonomics and dentistry

Success Career Strategies for Juniors

This two-hour program addresses the skills necessary for professional success post-graduation. Topics include:

- Assessing your career philosophy
- Associateships and other employment opportunities
- CV-writing
- Interviewing for professional positions and specialty programs

Success Practice Management for Seniors

This full-day program addresses practice management aspects of dentistry and ethical aspects of dental practice. It also features useful information on ADA resources that are available to ADA members. The agenda includes:

- Recruiting and leading a successful dental team
- Production, collection and expense management
- Dental reimbursement and benefit plans
- Locating, financing and marketing the dental practice
- Patient expectations and dentist responsibilities

- Ethics—real life situations new dentists face

For more information on any of the ADA-sponsored programs mentioned above, call the ADA Office of Student Affairs at 800.621.8099 x7470.

Resources

Need more ideas? Here's a few more resources:

American Dental Association Office of Student Affairs

studentaffairs@ada.org

800.621.8099 x 7470

American Student Dental Association

Membership@ASDAnet.org

800.621.8099, ext. 2795

Other ASDA Leaders

Reach out to other ASDA leaders to learn about their chapter events

<http://www.asdanet.org/leadership.aspx>

State and Local Dental Societies

www.ada.org/goto/organizations