

CONNECTIONS

March
2023



Be a light!!

NDHA Annual Session

2023 NDHA ANNUAL SESSION

April 20-22, 2023

Omaha Marriott
Regency

The 2023 NDHA Annual Session is dedicated to providing all Nebraska dental hygienists, dentists, and dental assistants with the most up-to-date information and continuing education practices.

Through interactive lectures and sessions, participants will be able to learn the latest techniques and best practices. Networking opportunities are available to provide the opportunity for colleagues and professionals to network and exchange ideas on research, clinical practice, and products.

Take part in meaningful conversations, learn from presenters, and become part of the larger Nebraska dental hygiene community.



Register Online Here!

NDHA Annual
Session Registration

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NDHA President

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Upcoming Events

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Committee Update

MESSAGE FROM YOUR NDHA PRESIDENT

Jess Bolter, President



Letter to 2023 Graduates

Graduates, your commencement may feel like the last tiny leg of the educational journey you've been on for the last few years, but the truth is that it's only one stop along the way.

You may be just beginning to search for that dream job. Remember that what your dream job looks like today may not be what you want or need in ten years. Don't be afraid of change. Without change, we don't have an opportunity for growth.

Don't let anyone diminish your hard work and efforts to get where you are today. As dental hygienists, we are highly educated. From classes, to volunteering at dental fairs and clinics, to boards and continuing education courses, we are lifelong learners. When someone asks about your education, tell them proudly what you have learned.

As a lifelong learner, always remember that there are more opportunities for you. Some may be graduating with an Associate's degree, some with a Bachelor's and others even beyond that. With more education comes more choice. You might discover a passion for entrepreneurial skills, or maybe you want to become the educator that once influenced you so much.

Remember that sometimes you will feel stuck or even burned out. In times of doubt or frustration, reach out to others who are like you. Don't be afraid to take that vacation. Don't be afraid to ask for what you need to make your career more enjoyable. Sometimes it's as simple as attending a seminar with peers from across the country to get that spark back.

Make sure you transfer your SADHA membership to a professional ADHA membership after you graduate as well! Your colleagues at ADHA are a huge part of your support system. We are here for mentoring, friendship, and answers to everything dental hygiene.

Lastly, celebrate this moment. You deserve the recognition. You've put in the work to get here. Congratulations on this momentous occasion and best of luck on your dental hygiene endeavors.

Best wishes,
Jess Bolter, President

Congratulations!



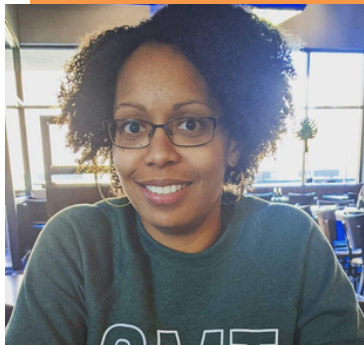
NDHA Mentorship Program



Hello, everyone! I wanted to take this time in my article to share my experience being part of the mentoring program through Iowa Western Community College. Around January 2022, during a Nebraska Dental Hygiene Association meeting, I remember Whitney Crist briefly mentioning the mentoring program. After thinking it over for a day or two, I decided to reach out to Whitney to receive more information about what it all entailed. Whitney was very responsive and informative, providing me with the details of this opportunity. She informed me that it was a great way to connect with recent dental hygiene graduates and answer any questions that they had regarding crossing over from a dental hygiene student to a dental hygiene professional. I remember being in this boat eons ago, terrified of actually having to see a patient in an hour, write chart notes, and work with a boss and co-workers that I didn't know—the whole shebang! Was I really ready for this?

Although it took several years to get into the groove, it was nice to have mentors in my life whom I could call or text to ask the questions I found the silliest, even to this day! I wanted the opportunity to be that person that someone just starting out could reach out to, no matter how big or how small the subject at hand. I feel it's important to never stop learning or growing in this profession.

March 2022 allowed for a Zoom meet and greet with the recent graduates. I explained to Whitney prior to the meeting that I welcomed the chance to work with an individual in the Black, Indigenous, People of Color, or BIPOC community if at all possible. The dental world isn't necessarily the most culturally diverse sector of life, especially in Nebraska, so whenever I see an individual who looks like me or, in any capacity, is a BIPOC individual, I get excited. Whitney was gracious and honored my wishes, pairing me with a wonderful lady from Latin America. I was excited to connect with her because I had met her at previous events put on by Iowa Western and NDHA. She was a sweetheart who was excited about starting her dental hygiene career. It has been fabulous getting to know her more and hearing about her experiences at her new job.



If you have never had the opportunity to be a part of the mentoring program, I would recommend considering it. The time commitment aspect is not as much as you would think. As cliché as it sounds, it really is rewarding. Feel free to reach out to me or Whitney Crist if you'd like more information.

Cherelle Rogers
NDHA Secretary



Whitney Crist, RDH, CPT, CNC
President-Elect, Delegate Chair



Alert, Alert: Changes ahead, opportunities for growth, and a call to action for NDHA

The decline in membership, volunteers, and registrations at Annual and Fall Sessions over the last several years is a hard reality for our NDHA. I want to be transparent with the challenges ahead. If this trend continues, we may be forced to make tough choices in order to continue functioning as a state association.

One current example is the proposed bylaws change to dissolve the components. This will be voted on at the upcoming general membership meeting at the Annual Session on April 21st. The justification is the lack of active leadership for components. The NDHA board was struggling to make a quorum – the minimum amount of board members needed to be present during a meeting in order to vote. Transitioning to a smaller board would allow for easier decision-making. While this proposed change may come as a shock for some, I am hopeful that we will be able to continue moving forward while making positive changes for NDHA.

Despite the negativity regarding downward trends, I sincerely feel it is an opportunity for constructive change for NDHA. During Annual Session, we are holding a Mega Issues forum. This allows the opportunity for members to come together and discuss important topics – a big brainstorming session. We want to hear from you, our members! How can we, as members, better serve NDHA? What changes can we make? What do we want out of membership? What do we want out of our profession?

We are the association - each and every member makes up NDHA. Be a part of this change – I invite you to join us for this pivotal point for NDHA at Annual Session. While being mindful of the realities of our situation, we can take advantage of its opportunity. We have the ability to adapt and conquer our challenges for a better future for NDHA.

Sponsor Highlight

Summit Dental Health is proud to be a part of the Crown Council and participate in the Smiles for Life fundraising campaign annually, which kicked off March 1 and runs through June 30. The Crown Council is an alliance of dedicated, leading-edge dental teams who have committed to sharing ideas and best practices to improve dental care. Through its charity arm, the Smiles for Life Foundation, the Crown Council partners with dental practices across the country to raise money for children's charities by donating all proceeds from whitening services.

2023 NDHA Diamond Sponsor



This year, Summit Dental Health's Service Organization, Mortenson Dental Partners (MDP), was recognized with numerous awards at the Crown Council annual gathering in Salt Lake City, Utah. Among the many honors MDP received was the Smiles for Life Hall of Fame Award, given for partner practices raising over \$2.5 million in 25 years through the annual Smiles for Life fundraising campaign. In addition to the company as a whole, several team members were recognized. Regional Director of Operations Dawn Brutscher was honored with the Frances Hammond Humanitarian Award, while Dr. Heather Walker was awarded "Best Doctor to Work For."

Summit Dental Health's mission is to improve the lives of others by living our values every day. We define our core values as caring for everyone, sharing abundantly, building relationships, and expressing gratitude. Our team members are honored to be Mortenson Dental Partners and participate in Smiles for Life each year, with all proceeds going to local children's charities in the Omaha and Sioux City metropolitan areas. Stop by our booth at Annual Session on April 20-22nd and enter to win a whitening kit while donating to the cause!

LEARN MORE AT: WWW.SUMMITDENTALHEALTH.NET/



DEFEAT PERIODONTAL DISEASE IN 30 SECONDS

Presenter:

Suzanne Kump CDA, LDA, MBA
Director of Marketing and Sales, EPIEN Medical Inc.

MARCH 30, 2023 - 7:00 PM | EARN 1 CE CREDIT

Space for 40 individuals to take the course In-Person,
or you can sign up for the Virtual Course and learn from home!

Patterson Dental Technology Center

12008 Portal Rd #102
LaVista, NE



Free for NDHA Members / \$25 for Non-Members

NDHA Contact Info:

📞 402-761-2216
🌐 director@nedha.org

REGISTER



March 28th

IWCC presents the New Product CE course on Tuesday March 28th from 6:00-8:00 pm at Looft Hall located at:

Iowa Western Community College
2700 College Rd.
Council Bluffs, IA 51503 for 2 CEUs.



Students will be presenting on new and exciting products and technologies in the dental field.

The American Dental Hygienist's Association was founded 100 years ago this year. It is incredible to me that a century ago...let that sink in-a century... a few women got together to create the association of our profession. Just think of all the things that have transpired since the inception of this organization. It amazes me that the majority of the association is volunteer-driven on the state and district level. There are over 226,000 members of ADHA. Could there be more? Could we grow together as professionals? Can we rise by lifting others up? I SAY YES!!!

I have gotten to mentor a few students over the years. I wish we had had this when I graduated. There were pitfalls and bumpy roads when I first started over 30 years ago. I had a couple of instructors that mentored me later on in my career, but only after I had been through the pitfalls. I had a student come visit me from one of the local dental colleges. She shadowed me for an afternoon. I believe by the time she left; she had a clearer expectation of what would happen after graduation. I think we have all lived by the motto, "fake it til you make it!" I encouraged this student that I am a member of our professional association, and I believe it is our duty to help those newbies get acclimated to the crazy world of dentistry. We all know there are unicorn offices, regular ones, and some really crappy ones. Isn't fair to ask us all as members to help nurture the next generation of hygienists?

I'm not sure if many of you know, but several states have launched legislation to allow dental assistants with essentially a "weekend warrior" training session to be able to scale supragingivally on persons 19 years of age and younger (some cases are state-insured individuals). In some states, this has passed. While the pandemic drove up dental hygiene demand and salaries, the downside is that a large portion of our membership retired or is no longer working in the profession. With the rising demand for hygienists and not enough students graduating to fill the gaps, this is what is being brought to the forefront of dentistry. I'm not sure about you, but my inner blunt self screams, "HECK NO!!!" In my opinion, scaling assistants do not have enough training to do their job, even if they take a weekend warrior course. I worked too hard to get where I am today, and it is not okay that this is on the horizon. We owe it to the public to fight these battles on the legislative front for their safety. Are you ready for a battle if it comes to Nebraska?

I follow several Facebook groups that contain a lot of dentists. Many are opting for hiring an associate dentist or a scaling assistant instead of a hygienist to perform our work. These dentists are up against a wall of sorts. The insurance industry is not paying dentists at an appropriate level. In fact, some surmise that they are paying lower payouts now than they were 10 years ago. The ADA is currently suing Delta Dental to force them to use 85% of patient premiums to pay out for their benefits. Have we all not seen how ridiculous the overhead pricing has become in our field? I can tell you that the ceiling for the outrageous salaries that I've seen here lately is not going to hold out in the real world. Dentists will not be able to sustain our salaries at the pace they are going. For instance, if you are wanting \$50+/hour, then you should be making at least \$150/hr out of your chair for production each day for your employer to break even. Do you know the numbers in your practice?

I feel like this is a message not to be just heard by association members. This needs to be shared with ALL the hygienists in the state of Nebraska. We need support across our nation to defeat these drastic measures. I do hope that in the future, we can start to have better dialogue with dentists about how we can help to bridge the gaps of access to care, how to communicate better as team members, and to be KIND to each other!

*Together We
RISE!!*



Carrie Graves
ADHA Delegate

NDHA Legislative Committee Update

The healthcare workforce shortage has impacted healthcare systems across disciplines since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. In January, Nebraska Dental Association (NDA) emailed a letter to Nebraska educational institutions' Dental Hygiene Programs at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC), Iowa Western Community College, and Central Community College regarding the current severe shortage of dental hygienists and assistants. The letter cited many sources, including the American Dental Association's (ADA) "Economic Outlook and Emerging Issues in Dentistry" report, a 2020 workforce study by the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA), UNMC's updated 2022 study, "Status of the Nebraska Healthcare Workforce" as well as a collaborative study conducted by the ADA, ADHA, and Dental Assisting National Board (DANB), in October of 2022.

The NDA's letter stated, "Considering other efforts to increase the workforce, the most effective would seem to be increasing the capacity of your institutions to graduate more hygienists. Are your institutions considering increasing the class size for your hygiene programs? If not, why not? If so, how can the NDA help in your effort?" The letter closed with "Hopefully, this letter will begin a dialogue..." and was signed by Dr. Liz Papineau, President. According to the NDA first quarter newsletter, "To date, we have not received a response from anyone listed in the letter." Workforce issues have been heard during the first session of the 108th Nebraska Legislature, and it has been a very busy one!

On February 16th, the Health and Human Services committee held a hearing on LB358, sponsored by Senator Lynne Walz, which proposed State intent to increase dental services reimbursement under the Medical Assistance Act. Thank you to Kerri Dittrich, who testified in favor of the Bill on behalf of NDHA. There was no immediate action taken by the committee at the close of the hearing.

To follow the current Legislative Session, log on to <https://nebraskalegislature.gov/>. Nebraska Dental Hygienists' Association (NDHA) would like to thank all the Senators, especially the Speaker of the Legislature, Senator John Arch, and all those who attended the 2023 NDHA Senator's Reception in Lincoln. This annual event serves as an important networking opportunity for dental hygienists to build relationships with those who make decisions about the future of our profession. Join us at NDHA's Annual Session in April for a live legislative update from our Lobbyist, Kent Rogert of Jensen Rogert Associates, and a save-the-date announcement for next year's reception.

Legislative Co-Chairs
Deb Schardt, RDH, PHRDH, EMT
Joey Enright, RDH



Six Top Traits of a Successful Dental Leader

1. Willingness to put in the hard work
2. Demonstrate consistency
3. Be your authentic self
4. Be positive and enthusiastic
5. You can't improve what you don't measure
6. Encourage teamwork