

SPRING 2025

WVDANEWS



WEST VIRGINIA
DENTAL
ASSOCIATION

State's Leading Advocate of Oral Health Care



WELCOME
WVDA PRESIDENT

Dr. Nika Hettlinger

119TH ANNUAL SUMMER MEETING DETAILS INSIDE!

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1. **Fairmont, WV.** Collecting +/- \$528,000 per year on just a 3-day workweek, with above average profit margin. Real estate can be leased or also purchased.
2. **Martinsburg, WV.** In an area that has experienced rapid growth in both population and median income, which creates potential for practice growth. Collecting ~\$337,000 per year. Lease or also purchase office building.
3. **Charleston, WV.** Collecting +/- \$1 million per year. Ideal for a dentist buyer or DSO buyer. Depending on buyer's preference, seller will either leave at the time of the sale or stay and work for the buyer for up to 2-years following the sale.
4. **Huntington, WV.** Fee For Service. No in-network dental insurances. Collecting \$450,000 to \$550,000 per year range in recent years.
5. **Sutton, WV.** Suitable as primary practice or as satellite location for an existing practice. Could also be used as a location for a specialty practice satellite. Collecting in the \$480,000 to \$540,000 per year range. Lease or also purchase office building.
6. **Charleston, WV Region.** Collecting +/- \$1 million per year. Approximately a 15-16 mile drive from downtown Charleston.

CONTACT US FOR MORE DETAILS

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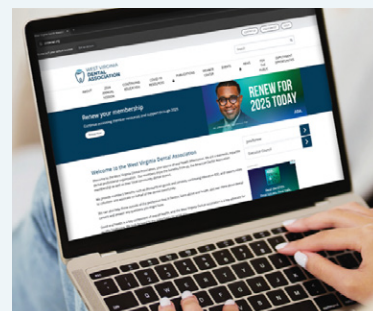
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January Winter Meeting of the WV Dental Association in Charleston



P. 14-15

119th Annual Meeting at The Greenbrier



P. 29

WVDA Offers Several Ways for Members to Pay Their Dues



**Watch your inbox
for weekly updates
from the WVDA!**

**News, events, alerts,
and updates affecting
West Virginia dentists.**

**Please update your email
address with us if you do
not receive weekly E-News.**

**2025 DENTAL MEETINGS
AND BEYOND**

March 5, 2025
WVDA Legislative Reception, 7-8:30pm
University of Charleston

March 6, 2025
Dentistry Day at the WV Capitol, 8am
Charleston, WV

March 14, 2025
WVU-SOD Signing-Day
Erickson Alumni Center
Morgantown, WV

March 30 - April 1, 2025
ADA Dentist/Student Lobby Day
Washington, DC

April 26, 2025
WVDA Executive Council Meeting
Erickson Alumni Center
Morgantown, WV

July 17 - 19, 2025
WVDA 119th Annual Meeting
The Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs

2025: Washington, DC
Walter E. Washington
Convention Center
• SmileCon: Oct. 23 - 25, 2025
• HOD: Oct. 25 - 28, 2025

July 16 - 18, 2026
WVDA 120th Annual Meeting
The Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs

2026: Indianapolis, IN
Indiana Convention Center
• SmileCon: Oct. 8 - 10, 2026
• HOD: Oct. 10 - 13, 2026



2025 WVDA Executive Council

2016 1/2 Kanawha Blvd., East
Charleston, WV 25311

(304) 344-5246 | wvdental.org

OFFICERS

- Dr. Nika A. Hettlinger, President, Huntington
- Dr. Jay S. Boyd, President Elect, Eastern Panhandle
- Dr. Michael Richardson, Vice President, Kanawha Valley
- Dr. Valerie Perrine, Secretary, Monongahela Valley
- Dr. Mitri A. Ghareeb, Treasurer, Kanawha Valley
- Dr. Hillary J. Homburg, Immediate Past President, New River

ADA DELEGATES

- Dr. Kerri Thomas Simpson, ADA Delegate Chair
- Dr. Travis J. Wills, ADA Delegate

DENTAL SOCIETY DELEGATES

- Dr. James F. Szarko, Blennerhassett
- Dr. Joshua Wright, Eastern Panhandle
- Dr. Katie L. Kilcollin, Greenbrier Valley
- Dr. W. Greg Crews, Huntington
- Dr. Carson W. Henley, Kanawha Valley
- Dr. Matthew O'Dell, Kanawha Valley
- Dr. Christen Simpson, Kanawha Valley
- Dr. Amanda Boustany, Kanawha Valley
- Dr. Anissa Anderson, MWT
- Dr. Jonathan Abraham, Monongahela Valley
- Dr. Gandee N. Barkley, Monongahela Valley
- Dr. Adam Grubler, Monongahela Valley
- Dr. Jeffrey G. Minchau, Monongahela Valley
- Dr. Kevin Heath Bailey, New River
- Dr. David A. Najjar, New River
- Dr. James W. Courier, Potomac Valley
- Dr. David Schmid, Wheeling District
- Dr. Trey Wilcox, Wheeling District

Hallie Mason

Executive Director
hallie@wvdental.org

Susan Jones

Administrative Assistant
susan@wvdental.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It has been a distinct pleasure to be a part of the Executive Committee and Council over the last several years to learn and be energized by their passion. I would like to thank Dr. Hillary Homburg for her visionary leadership this past year.

Our West Virginia State Dental Association makes it a priority to gather people from around the state to discuss what is important to the dental community, what is needed to enhance the patient experience, and break down barriers to allow patients to seek and get the proper oral health care they deserve. We have been blessed with unmatched leadership through our Executive Director Hallie Mason with the help of Executive Assistant Susan Jones. They both work tirelessly year-round and during the legislative session to inform our lawmakers and state government agencies of the importance of our profession and what we need to continue to care for and serve our patients. This year, insurance reform and increasing Medicaid dental fees are keys to help dentists stay in the state they love, and attract new talent to our country roads.

I am so grateful that I never heard from a mentor or fellow dentist that I needed or should leave the state of West Virginia to successfully practice dentistry.

On the contrary, they encouraged me to become the best dentist I could for the wonderful people who call themselves West Virginians. This happens because local dentists chose to invest in mentorship and took time to share why they are passionate about the profession of dentistry. This year I challenge for each of us to do this for someone and let them see, through you, the value of being a part of our tripartite association.

When we gather together as dentists, we learn how to listen to one another, we join together to protect and better our profession, we build meaningful relationships, and we show up to help make our community healthcare better...and who wouldn't want to be a part of something like that?

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your president this year. I am grateful to practice in the place where we all belong. Country Roads...what an honor it is to serve in West Virginia and alongside each of you.

Nika Hettlinger, DDS

WVDA President





2025 WEST VIRGINIA DENTAL ASSOCIATION

Officers



NIKA HETTLINGER, DDS
President
WVU SOD 2007
Crews, Nibert & Hettlinger
Family Dentistry
Barboursville



JAY S BOYD, DDS
President-Elect
WVU SOD 2005
Briarwood Dental Center
Martinsburg



MICHAEL RICHARDSON, DDS
Vice-President
WVU SOD 1991
South Hills Family
Dental Care
Charleston



VALERIE PERRINE, DDS
Secretary
WVU SOD 2009
Perrine Implant and
Aesthetic Dentistry/
WVU School of Dentistry
Cowen/Morgantown



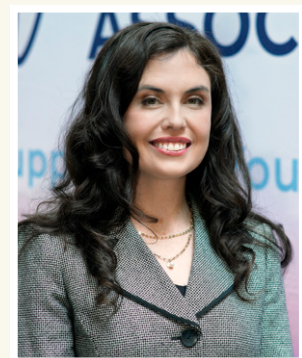
MITRI GHAREEB, DDS
Treasurer
WVU SOD 2006
Ghareeb Dental
Cross Lanes



KERRI T. SIMPSON, DDS, MS
ADA Delegate Chair
WVU SOD 2017/2020
Meridian Dental Specialists-
Dental Implants and
Periodontics
Morgantown



TRAVIS WILLS, DDS
ADA Delegate
WVU SOD 2002
Shady Spring Dental Care
Shady Spring



HILLARY HOMBURG, DDS
Immediate Past President
WVU SOD 2009
Cabin Creek
Health Systems
Charleston

JANUARY WINTER MEETING OF THE WV DENTAL ASSOCIATION IN CHARLESTON



The New 2025 WV Dental Association Officers

Your WVDA received rave reviews of the 2025 Winter Meeting content!

Dr. Hillary Homburg, WVDA's outgoing President from Charleston, presided over the program and Dr. Nika Hettlinger, of Barboursville, was installed as the new 2025 President of our Association.

Fotona hosted a laser course for dentists. Dr. Larry Lieberman, owner of Dental Arts of Palm Harbor, spoke about laser training and how it benefits patients, dental practices, and dental teams. He shared examples of both clinical and esthetic excellence through laser treatment. Fotona's regional representative, CJ DeBerg, can be reached at cjdeberg@fotona.org if you have questions or would like to follow up with Dr. Lieberman.

The featured speaker, Dr. Brian Novy, presented courses titled "Offensive Dentistry" and "Nobody Caries." Participants engaged in a lively presentation about intervening medically in the caries process, controlling patient caries risk with focused therapeutics, designing restorations to minimize recurrent decay, and applying evidence based and novel preventive therapies. The presentations were sponsored by VOCO.

Dr. Novy had not visited West Virginia prior to our meeting and was very complimentary of his experience in Charleston and of our dental association. He particularly noted the camaraderie between our members and said the meeting was "like a dental school reunion."

Our weekend was rounded out by Dr. Michelle Klenk, who presented an infection control seminar and a session on periodontal patients, as well as a risk management seminar, and a dental hygiene laser course.







Dr. David F. Bridgeman

Named the 2025 Bridgeman Distinguished Dentist

Dr. David F. Bridgeman, of New Martinsville, received the Dr. Robert B. Bridgeman Distinguished Dentist Award at the 2025 West Virginia Dental Association's Winter Meeting at the Embassy Suites in Charleston.

Dave is 1973 graduate of Magnolia High School, a West Liberty State College Hilltopper, and a 1980 graduate of West Virginia University Dental School. He is a member of Psi Omega Fraternity and Phi Sigma Kappa Fraternity, both social-dental organizations.

He has served the WVU-School of Dentistry on both the Visiting Committee and the Board of Governors of the WVU School of Dentistry Alumni Association.

Dr. Bridgeman has a long, distinguished history of serving organized dentistry in many capacities, which culminated locally as the President of the Marshall-Wetzel-Tyler Dental Society and statewide as the President of the West Virginia Dental Association in 1983.

Dave practiced his entire career as a solo practitioner at his office in New Martinsville, West Virginia. He is part of a family dynasty of dentists who served their communities and profession with high distinction.

His honorary fellowships include The American College of Dentists, The International College of Dentists, and the Pierre Fauchard Academy. In 2004 he received the American Academy of Gold Foil Operators' Clinician of the Year Award.

Since the early 1980s, Dr. Bridgeman has consistently participated in clinical professional organizations that pushed him to pursue operative excellence. He has repeatedly served as a clinical operator, lecturer, and mentor in the Hollenback-Medina Operative Dentistry Seminar, the American Academy of Gold Foil Operators, the Richard V. Tucker Academy of Cast Gold Study Clubs, and the Academy of Operative Dentistry.

"David is one of the most clinically superior dentists I know. He has, in fact, grown up under the tutelage of his father who accepted nothing but the very best from those he came into contact with not only in dentistry but in life," remarked Dr. David G. Edwards, 2023 recipient of the Bridgeman Award.

Congratulations, Dave! You have clinically challenged yourself throughout your career by learning from the best to become the best! The WVDA appreciates your lifetime of service to dentistry, your patients and community, as well as our organization!

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings WVDA Members,

It was my honor to serve as your president in 2024 and it is now my privilege to highlight a few examples of how your West Virginia Dental Association worked for you last year.

In 2024 WVDA was able to successfully lobby for passage of the WV Medicaid Denture Bill reducing patient barriers for removable services through Medicaid. We also continue to lobby for increased reimbursement fees and more transparency from commercial dental insurers.

Our endorsed BENTO program was instituted at Fayette and Mercer Boards of Education with glowing reviews from both BOE participants and the dentists who have seen patients under the program.

The WVDA also embraced several technological advances last year including a newly designed (and much improved!) website, a new membership database system and more convenient and personalized options for our members to pay dues.

A new membership directory was also published at the end of the year. This full listing of our membership provides an invaluable resource to stay connected to professional friends and colleagues and to find WVDA endorsed professional services and partners. Those of you who attended our Mid-Winter meeting have already received a copy of the directory – others will be in the mail soon and it will also be added to the website.

Finally, our Mid-Winter meeting was moved back to Charleston and we have been thrilled with the positive response to both the location and content. Over 150 joined us in the capital city to learn from the brilliant and entertaining Dr Brian Novy, renowned WV hygiene educator Michelle Klenk and our savvy risk management experts from PAA.

None of this would have been possible without our small but mighty West Virginia Dental Association staff. Our Executive Director, Hallie Mason - who works tirelessly to advocate for the interests of our

members with insurance companies and both state and national legislators, and our executive assistant Susan Jones - who's hard work and dedication to the WVDA has kept things running smoothly for almost 40 years.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank our incredible executive committee – Nika, Jay, Mitri, Valerie, Travis, Dan, Kerri and my two favorite Mikes. They donate their Tuesday evenings every other week throughout the year to ensure the association can stay informed and quickly respond to anything affecting our members on both the state and national level. I am proud to be part of such a talented and dedicated group.

Finally, a heartfelt thanks to each of you, as none of these efforts would be possible without your continued membership and support.

The networking, continuing education, camaraderie, and advocacy efforts put forth by the WVDA are invaluable. I challenge each of you to remain involved and to encourage your colleagues to join us. Advocating with one voice for a common good allows us to be more successful in our practices and also do what's in the best interest of our patients. We are stronger together.

I am proud of all we accomplished in 2024 and excited for more progress to come in 2025 under the excellent leadership of our new president Dr. Nika Hettlinger.

Yours in Dentistry,

Hillary Homburg, DDS
WVDA Immediate Past President





WVDA Leadership Sets 2025 Legislative Priorities

Every year, the WVDA Executive Committee outlines the WVDA's legislative priorities, which are the issues that WVDA staff highlights to legislators as being the most important to our members. Over the course of this year, your WVDA staff will focus efforts and resources on advancing these priorities.

In addition to focusing on these key issues, WVDA staff also closely monitors legislative activity to identify issues that will impact dentists, along with opportunities to achieve legislative goals that may not be apparent now. Some WVDA priorities span over a few years, such as Dental Loss Ratio policy, because of the need to educate legislators about the issue, provide opportunities for our members to engage with their legislators, and to allow legislation to work through the legislative process.

In December, the WVDA Executive Committee approved an ambitious set of priorities for 2025, as we build off the momentum of our successes in the last couple of years. Here are the details:

Dental Loss Ratio

In 2023, Dental Loss Ratio (DLR) became one of the most talked-about dental insurance reform initiatives among dentists across the country, after a Massachusetts ballot initiative passed with the support of more than 70% of voters. This initiative requires dental insurers to report detailed financial information and ensure that at least 83% of patient premiums are spent on patient care. If an insurer fails to meet the 83% threshold, it is required to issue a refund to the plan purchaser for the shortfall.

Over the course of last year, the Massachusetts Department of Insurance promulgated rules to implement the new requirement, which went into effect on Jan. 1, 2024. Additionally, the National Council of Insurance Legislators (NCOIL) developed model legislation that could be used by states to implement a dental loss ratio. While several states introduced dental loss ratio legislation in 2023 and 2024, these initiatives were scaled back to some extent, as legislators wanted more information about how this requirement will impact Massachusetts after implementation.

The WVDA believes any DLR legislation should be straightforward and easy to understand. The NCOIL

model is a set of complicated calculations that don't belong in state statutes. Our legislation seeks statutory DLR percentages for small group plans (80%) and large group plans (85%).

Virtual Credit Card Payments

Periodically, dental plans will reimburse dentists with pre-loaded virtual credit cards, rather than with a check or by electronic funds transfers. This creates an administrative burden for offices, because staff need to actively track all of the virtual credit cards' balances, expiration dates, and other information needed to access the funds. However, what's most frustrating for dentists is that they become personally responsible for the full credit card processing fees associated with using the card. In effect, the reimbursement paid by a dental plan, which likely does not come close to covering the dentist's full fee, is further reduced by the processing fees. Even if a plan agrees to reissue a reimbursement in a non-virtual credit card form, this reprocessing can take several weeks to months to complete.

The WVDA has included language in Senate Bill 433 – “Dental Insurance Transparency Act” that would require insurers to provide at least one form of payment that provides the dentist with 100% of the payable amount, per the patient's plan, and does not require the dentist to incur a cost to access those funds.

Over 25 states, including neighboring Kentucky, have passed similar legislation to fight this predatory insurance company practice.

Medicaid Reimbursement

Over the last couple of years, the WVDA membership has expressed significant concern over low Medicaid dental reimbursements. Fees were set in 2020 after the Adult Medicaid Program was expanded by the Legislature. However, since that time, it has become obvious the report used to set the original fees was flawed and COVID-driven inflation has made it impossible for dentists to provide services without taking a loss on some procedures.

When surveyed, West Virginia dental Medicaid providers mention an obligation to and gratification from serving the Medicaid population. They also flag reimbursement rates as a barrier to that service.



Reimbursement rates should NOT cause providers a \$200 loss on making a set of dentures for government-beneficiaries.

It is increasingly common that Medicaid patients are unable to access essential dental care because of insufficient Medicaid reimbursements. These patients are contacting offices outside of their region to find offices that will provide the services they need. The solution to this access-to-care issue has two components: the reimbursement fee and the number of providers willing to see Medicaid patients.

WV Medicaid issued a March 2024 report, “Assessment of Medicaid Beneficiaries’ Barriers and Utilization of Dental Benefits” by the WVU Health Affairs Institute. The findings verified low reimbursement rates are “making it difficult for providers to cover the cost incurred by providing a certain service. This affects the types of services providers can offer Medicaid patients.”

In 2024, the WVDA successfully led the effort to gain flexibility with Medicaid to cover the cost of a set of dentures in one year. The compromise, proposed by the Medicaid Commissioner, allowed patients to utilize \$2000 of coverage over two years. This solution gets patients in the office to maximize their benefits in fewer visits. They can obtain a full set of dentures, and no out-of-pocket payment of \$190 per set. However, this action did nothing to adequately cover the lab cost to dentists of making dentures.

This year, the WVDA has requested Governor Morrisey’s administration “strategically increase select dental Medicaid fees to providers. The WVDA undertook a comparative analysis of both surrounding state Medicaid dental fees and those of other southern states (excluding Florida). Our state is competitive with some reimbursements but is significantly lower in others. Across-the-board increases will NOT fix the significant deficiencies in West Virginia’s Medicaid dental fee schedule.

Network Leasing

Dental insurance network leasing is when a dental insurance company lets other companies use its list of dentists (called a network) WITHOUT the dentists’ direct permission. That means that even if a dentist didn’t agree to work with a specific insurance plan,

they are listed as a provider for that plan and may be subject to billing limitations they did not directly agree to with that company.

Because leased networks operate “silently,” the provider and patients are unable to determine coverages and discounts. There are no protections for dentists from having to comply with various terms, conditions, and fee schedules to which they had no opportunity to consider, negotiate, or accept/reject.

The Dental Insurance Transparency Act will expand transparency and provide an opportunity for dentists to accept or refuse these contracts, enforcing basic fairness while reducing occurrences of unexpected bills following a procedure.

More than 30 states have passed similar legislation, including our surrounding states of Ohio, Kentucky, and Virginia.

Updating Teledentistry Laws

The WVDA will be working closely this legislative session with the American Association of Orthodontists (AAO) and West Virginia Association of Orthodontists (WVAO) for patient health and safety through teledentistry legislation.

The bill includes added patient protections in West Virginia for potential harms through direct-to-consumer treatment models and is similar to legislation that became law last year in Florida that was supported through grassroots engagement by the Florida Dental Association members working closely with members of the AAO and Florida Association of Orthodontists. Grassroots engagement of WDA and AAO/WVAO members working to protect patients will be the key to our legislative success this year in West Virginia. Please stay tuned for more details on the bill once it is introduced and moves through the West Virginia legislative process in the weeks ahead.

Tell Legislators to Vote for Dental Insurance Transparency!

QUESTIONS?

**Call Hallie at the WVDA
or email Hallie@wvdental.org.**



WEST VIRGINIA
**DENTAL
ASSOCIATION**

119TH ANNUAL MEETING

The Greenbrier Resort | July 17-19, 2025

Dr. Howard Farran



**NAVIGATING
THE NEXT
BIG THING:
AI IN DENTAL
PRACTICE
MANAGEMENT**

As dentistry continues to evolve in the ever-changing digital landscape, maintaining strong practice management principles is more crucial than ever. Dr. Howard Farran will guide you through the essentials of effective practice management while exploring the innovative potential of artificial intelligence. Enable your practice, embrace innovation, and lead your team into an exciting new era of dentistry.

Howard Farran, DDS, MBA, the founder and owner of Dentaltown.com and *Dentaltown* magazine, has practiced dentistry at Today's Dental in the Phoenix metro area for more than 30 years. In 2017, Incisal Edge magazine ranked him among the 32 most influential people in dentistry.

Dr. Farran has lectured internationally on the business of dentistry since 1990, captivating audiences with his blunt, humorous and practical insights into the industry's most controversial subjects. His genuine passion for helping dentists provide faster, easier, higher-quality and lower-cost dentistry to their patients is what drives him to this day.

In 1999, Dr. Farran released the timeless "Your 30-Day Dental MBA" series, which is available on YouTube and iTunes. Since then, he has released massive amounts of distinguished content, including:

- His monthly "Howard Speaks" column in *Dentaltown* magazine,
- The 11-part online CE course "The Virtues of Profitable Dentistry,"
- And his world-renowned podcast series *Dentistry Uncensored with Howard Farran*, which has released more than 1,500 episodes and has been downloaded more than 8 million times. *Dentistry Uncensored's* guests include dental professionals from around the world, including top-tier specialists, dentists fresh out of school, CEOs of the world's largest dental companies, and experts in marketing, finance, practice management and more.

Dr. Farran reaches hundreds of thousands of dentists from around the world every day. His ever-expanding presence across social media platforms include 300,000 Facebook followers, 25,000 Twitter followers and 35,000 LinkedIn followers, not to mention the 250,000 registered members on Dentaltown.com.

SATURDAY

A gift from Drs. Moe and Jennifer Momen to the West Virginia University School of Dentistry will enrich the educational experience for dental students through the creation of a new endowed lecture series. The gift provides resources to recruit distinguished oral health professionals as speakers to share their expertise with the next generation of dentists.



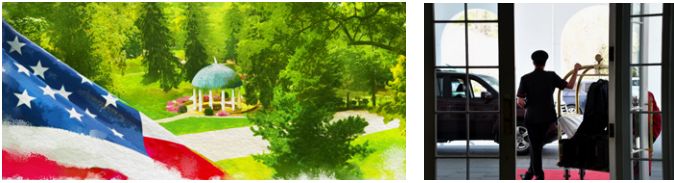
Named the Dr. Jerry Bouquot Visiting Lecture Series for Dentistry, it honors the clinical professor and world-renowned oral pathologist who has taught for more than 50 years, mostly at WVU.

"Dr. Bouquot was an incredible mentor to me during my time at the WVU School of Dentistry as well as during my pediatric residency at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh," Moe Momen said. "On behalf of his many students over the years, we want to acknowledge Dr. Bouquot's contribution to dental education and extend our heartfelt thanks."

Momen, a 1991 graduate of the School of Dentistry, and his wife were compelled to give as a tribute to the highly regarded faculty member.

"This endowed lectureship is our way of paying tribute to Dr. Bouquot, an educator who demonstrates a love of the humanities that intersects with science," Moe said. "It is our hope that faculty, alumni and students who attend the lectures will use their enhanced knowledge to improve the oral health of West Virginians."

Bouquot has been a faculty member twice at the School of Dentistry and served in an adjunct role. Bouquot has discovered and named over 40 diseases; published more than 340 papers, abstracts, books and book chapters; and peer-reviewed more than 1,500 scientific papers for over 40 journals.



Bouquot's work has been translated into numerous languages and used by state and national governments to determine oral health policy.

The inaugural lecture series will include **"When Mouth Parts Disappear: The jaws are REALLY different – An absorbing review of 22 jawbone characteristics that are NOT seen in the rest of the skeleton"** by Dr. Bouquot as well as **"Bioterrorism and the Thin Red Line,"** by Dr. Steven Whitaker, WVU-SOD Associate Professor. Dr. Whitaker's presentation will cover the history of weaponized pathogens and focus on the real or potential oral manifestations arising after exposure.



A native Arkansan, Dr. Whitaker served on the faculty of West Virginia University in 1992 and 1993. After a 25-year hiatus, he had the opportunity to return to the School of Dentistry in the Department of Diagnostic

Sciences. In addition to his time at WVU, Steven has served on the faculties of both the Medical College of Georgia and three schools in the University of Arkansas system. He is also the previous director of the Arkansas Department of Health's Office of Oral Health. As a clinician, educator and public servant, he carries some unique perspectives on the healthcare professions and how to address oral health is addressed.

Dr. Whitaker received a bachelor's degree in zoology from the University of Arkansas and a dental degree from the University of Missouri (KC). He then completed residency programs in oral and maxillofacial pathology at Emory University and endodontics at Augusta University along with a fellowship in Forensic Odontology from the University of Tennessee. Steven is a member of multiple organizations including the American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology, American Association of Endodontists, American Dental Association, American Society of Forensic Odontology, West Virginia Dental Association and the Monongalia Valley Dental Society. In addition, he is a fellow of the American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, Academy of Dentistry International, American College of Dentists, International College of Dentists and Pierre-Fauchard Academy. Dr. Whitaker is also board certified as a diplomate of the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology.

CALLING ALL DENTAL STUDENTS

POV:

*You're a WV Dental Student
About to Receive an
Opportunity that will Live
Rent Free in Your Head*

**Not to yap, but are you ready to pop off
in your dental game?**

Not only do we have a bussin' lecture on AI in Dental Practice Management planned, we need Gen Z attendees to come in clutch and help our boomers lowkey understand that this IS a major green flag in the future of dentistry! (Skill issue, fr).

If this has you tweaking, no need to crash out! We ate and left no crumbs by setting up a lit seminar titled "Young Doctors Can't afford NOT to Buy a Private Practice!" (It's giving career goals). Learn why owning your own practice is not just your Roman Empire, but a financial necessity in order to start your girlboss era. We are going to spill the tea on how to get on that grind and why it gives +100 aura points. No cap!

And don't worry, we understood the assignment: registration for our meeting is **FREE** for students! Highkey, we have a block of rooms reserved at The Schoolhouse Hotel, students only--- no opps! (Don't take an L, please call **304-546-0999** or check out the hotel at **theschoolhousehotelwv.com** to reserve a room in the WVDA Block.)



LOCAL DENTAL SOCIETIES

Membership in organized dentistry is composed of three parts - the American Dental Association, the West Virginia Dental Association, and through local dental societies.

Blennerhassett Dental Society

President: Dr. Dean Bobbit
Secretary: Dr. Wayne Dunn, drwdunn@gmail.com

Eastern Panhandle Dental Society

President: Dr. Erica Patthoff
Secretary: Dr. Ted Leslie, tedlesiedds1@yahoo.com

Greenbrier Valley Dental Society











President: Dr. Jennifer Hamilton
Secretary: Dr. Katie Kilcollin, info@kilcollindental.com

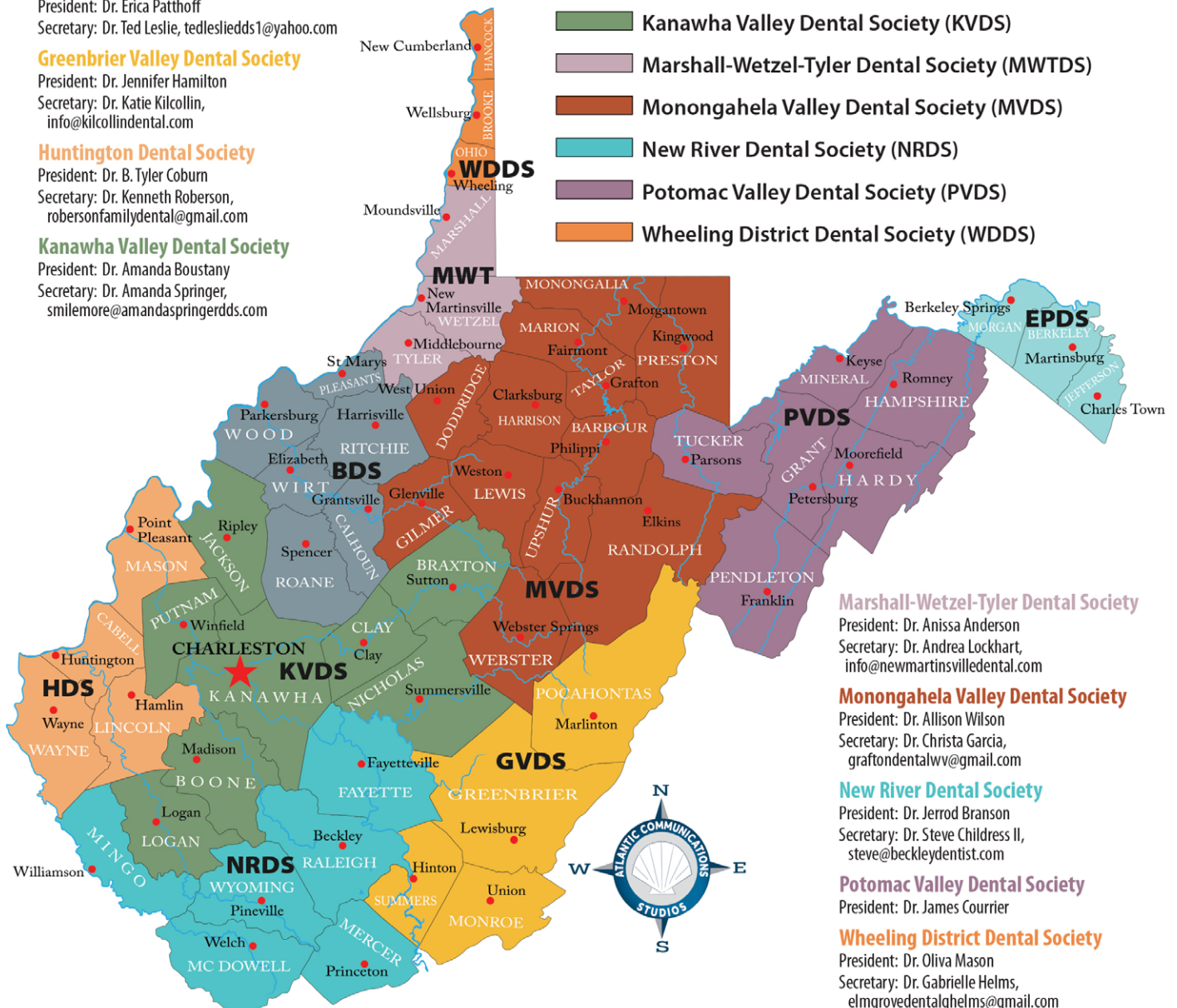
Huntington Dental Society

President: Dr. B. Tyler Coburn
Secretary: Dr. Kenneth Roberson, robersonfamilydental@gmail.com

Kanawha Valley Dental Society

President: Dr. Amanda Boustany
Secretary: Dr. Amanda Springer, smilemore@amandaspringerdds.com

-  Blennerhassett Dental Society (BDS)
-  Eastern Panhandle Dental Society (EPDS)
-  Greenbrier Valley Dental Society (GVDS)
-  Huntington Dental Society (HDS)
-  Kanawha Valley Dental Society (KVDS)
-  Marshall-Wetzel-Tyler Dental Society (MWTDS)
-  Monongahela Valley Dental Society (MVDS)
-  New River Dental Society (NRDS)
-  Potomac Valley Dental Society (PVDS)
-  Wheeling District Dental Society (WDDS)



Marshall-Wetzel-Tyler Dental Society

President: Dr. Anissa Anderson
Secretary: Dr. Andrea Lockhart, info@newmartinsvilledental.com

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President: Dr. Allison Wilson
Secretary: Dr. Christa Garcia, graftondentalwv@gmail.com

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Secretary: Dr. Steve Childress II, steve@beckleydentist.com

Potomac Valley Dental Society

President: Dr. James Courier

Wheeling District Dental Society

President: Dr. Oliva Mason
Secretary: Dr. Gabrielle Helms, elmgrovedentalghelms@gmail.com

ADA TRUSTEE GREETING



Dr. Elizabeth Shapiro, Interim Executive Director & Dr. Fred Howard, 6th District Trustee

I am Fred Howard, currently serving as your 6th District Trustee to the American Dental Association (ADA) and I look forward to representing you on the ADA Board of Trustees.

I am a general dentist who practiced dentistry in Harlan, KY for 39 years. I received my DMD degree from the University of Kentucky (UK) College of Dentistry and I have been active in professional organizations at the state and national levels, including serving as President of the Kentucky Dental Association (KDA) and as member of the ADA Council on Dental Practice and ADA Council on Governmental Affairs. For 16 years, I served as Speaker of the KDA House of Delegates and served many years on the KDA Executive Board.

I am a part-time Assistant Professor of Restorative Dentistry at the UK College of Dentistry and have served as a preceptor for dental and dental hygiene students from the University of Kentucky, the University of Louisville and Western Kentucky University. I am a Certified Dental Consultant and have served as Parliamentarian and Chair of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee of the American Association of Dental Consultants.

In 2017, I received the Outstanding Alumnus of the Year from the UK College of Dentistry, and I am a fellow of the American College of Dentists, International College of Dentists and the Pierre Fauchard Academy.

My wife, Cindy, a dental hygienist and I have two adult sons.

This is truly a new day at the ADA. Under the outstanding guidance of our previous 6th District Trustee, your own Mike Medovic, the ADA is in the process of changes that will take our association into the future and allow our profession and dentists to practice in the way that they desire, while minimizing intrusion from outside interests. A unified ADA is the group that can provide the opportunity to maintain the freedom of our profession.

Our previous ADA Executive Director, Dr. Raymond Cohlma has resigned, and the ADA Board of Trustees has named, Elizabeth Shapiro, DDS, JD as Interim Executive Director. Dr. Shapiro has been a Senior member of the ADA Executive Staff for many years and will provide stability during this transition. We look forward to working with Dr. Shapiro as the ADA moves forward in our Mission: "Help dentists succeed and support the advancement of the health of the public."

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me.

Fred Howard, DMD
howardf@ada.org • 606-273-3999

LOCAL DENTAL SOCIETY NEWS

NEW WEB PAGES for local components can be viewed at www.wvdental.org

Component officers will upload meeting information and other announcements to promote communication in your society!

Blennerhasset Dental Society meets at 6pm the 4th Wednesday each month (except November).

March 26, 2025 - Meeting

April 23, 2025 - Meeting

May - Veterans Care Seminar, 3.5 hours CE (FREE)

September - OSHA Meeting/CE

October 22, 2025 - Meeting

November 19, 2025 - Meeting

Kanawha Valley Dental Society meets at 6pm the 1st Tuesday of each month at Edgewood Country Club.

April 8, 2025 - Hallie Mason, Executive Director WVDA



WELL-BEING
index for Dentists

ACCOUNT SIGNUP & LOGIN

Participants can sign up or login to the Well-Being Index with the link, Invitation code, or QR code below.

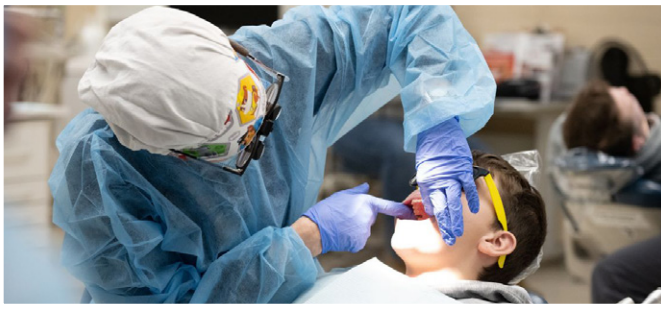


SCAN OR VISIT
mywbi.org/ada-wellness

INVITATION CODE
ADA Wellness

WVU Awarded \$12.6m for Renovations to Enhance Dental Education, Patient Care in West Virginia

by Monday, November 18, 2024



New WVU School of Dentistry patient care facilities, like the pediatric area shown here that was part of an initial phase of renovations, are planned thanks to \$12.6 million in U.S. Department of Health and Human Services funding. Construction is set to begin in the new year. (WVU Photo/Davidson Chan)

Construction is set to start in 2025 on an extensive West Virginia University School of Dentistry expansion and renovation project being supported, in part, by a \$12.6 million award from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The multiphase project encompasses approximately 50,000 square feet in the Health Sciences Center on the Morgantown Campus that has largely remained unchanged from its original footprint since the school's founding in 1957.

Working in collaboration with WVU Facilities Management and SmithGroup, an international architectural design company, the facility has been reimagined to meet 21st century needs.

The WVU Board of Governors approved the first phase of the capital improvement project during its regular meeting in September following the award appropriation, setting in motion the significant modernization and unification of facilities that will enhance oral health education and patient care to meet the current and future oral health needs of West Virginia's citizens and beyond.

In addition to the Health Resources and Services Administration Congressionally Directed Spending award, the school's capital campaign — Transforming Oral Health: The Campaign for Facilities — is an opportunity for alumni and friends to support the fundraising effort and help to advance the school and profession.

"We are incredibly grateful for those who have helped bring this project to fruition, including our generous donors and Sens. Shelley Moore Capito and Joe Manchin, President Gordon Gee and Dr. Clay Marsh," Dr. Stephen Pachuta, dean of the WVU School of Dentistry, said. "This support allows us to create a state-of-the-art environment that facilitates excellence in education, patient care and research to help meet the University's land-grant mission to improve the lives and livelihoods of those we serve."

In 2021, an initial \$1.5 million renovation project upgraded the Urgent Care Clinic, including radiology services and the patient reception and waiting area, created office space for the Clinical Affairs team, and relocated oral medicine, oral and maxillofacial pathology and forensic odontology faculty experts for better clinic access. The remaining renovations are planned in two large phases.

The first phase will focus on modernizing and integrating the Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics clinics, Faculty Group Practice and Dr. W. Robert Biddington Center for Dental Innovation back into the Health Sciences Center from their current location at Suncrest Towne Centre. Phase one also includes significant upgrades to sanitary, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, mechanical and electrical systems. This work is expected to be completed prior to the start of the Fall 2026 semester."

I am incredibly excited about the upcoming renovation project at the School of Dentistry," Caroline Cartwright, a Class of 2027 Doctor of Dental Surgery student from Huntington, said. "It will create a more cohesive and well-rounded learning environment.

"Working in these new facilities during my final year will significantly enhance my practical skills and clinical experience, as well as promote a more dynamic and supportive educational environment by fostering better interactions with faculty, peers and patients. I am excited to take advantage of the improvements and believe they will greatly benefit my overall learning experience."

Phase two will focus on areas that include a surgical suite, specialty clinics and administrative and academic offices.

The state's only dental school, WVU offers a Doctor of Dental Surgery, a Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene and advanced education programs that help address workforce shortages in West Virginia and across the country. It is fully integrated with WVU Dental, a comprehensive oral health care system offering general and specialized dentistry care performed by faculty, resident and student providers."

We are driven by our commitment to our students and to the patients entrusted to our care," Dr. Pachuta said. "This renovation project will ultimately enhance student education to the benefit of patients statewide. It is essential for meeting the needs of today and well beyond."

Individuals and businesses interested in supporting the WVU School of Dentistry's capital campaign should contact Director of Development Karen Coombs at 304-216-3784 or kcoombs@wvuf.org. Gifts to the WVU School of Dentistry Facilities Fund

(2W686) can also be made online at give.wvu.edu/dentistry. Naming opportunities are available for those who wish to honor a loved one's legacy or explore other options.

All gifts to support the WVU School of Dentistry are made through the WVU Foundation, the nonprofit organization that receives and administers private donations on behalf of the University.



MEDIA CONTACT: Jessica Wilmoth

Director of Marketing and Communications
WVU School of Dentistry, WVU Dental
304-293-6133

Jessica.Wilmoth@hsc.wvu.edu

Call 1-855-WVU-NEWS

for the latest West Virginia University news and information from WVUToday.



DR. MOE MOMEN
PRESIDENT

CLASS OF 1991
WVU DENTAL SCHOOL
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Message from the WVU Dental School Alumni Association

Dear Members of the West Virginia Dental Association,

As President of the WVU Dental School Alumni Association, I want to express my gratitude for the work you do to advance dentistry and improve oral health throughout our state. Your dedication not only reflects our shared commitment to excellence but also strengthens the foundation of oral health care for the communities we serve.

Our alumni association is eager to collaborate with the WVDA and its members to support professional growth, mentorship, and advocacy efforts that benefit our profession and our patients. Together, we can continue to build a strong, united dental community in West Virginia.

Thank you for your partnership and commitment. I look forward to all we can accomplish together.

Sincerely,

Moe Momen, DDS

President, WVU Dental School
Alumni Association



Notes FROM MORGANTOWN

Well, well, well, as I am writing this latest edition of **NOTES FROM MORGANTOWN**, last night (February 6, 2025) we had a **GRAND** celebration at the **NUMBER ONE DENTAL SCHOOL** and **ALUMNI ASSOCIATION** in the World.

Each year, the WVU SOD ALUMNI ASSOCIATION holds a very special program where all the students at the school get the opportunity to meet, and hear their Board members speak. A wonderful reception follows the presentations, and the students get to win a Mountaineer statue, and other gifts from the Association.



300 DENTAL & DENTAL HYGIENE STUDENTS ENJOYING A GREAT BUFFET

Our new president is Dr. Moe Momen, a pediatric dentist in Bridgeport, WV. His lovely daughter Sarah is a fourth- year dental student at the school, and this summer will be entering the Orthodontic Residency program at the WVU SOD. Our incoming Vice-President is Dr. Valerie Perrine. Valerie comes from a very big dental family as her dad Chip and her brother, Paul and sister-in-law, Ashton are all dental graduates of WVU. She is currently the Executive Dean for Education & Student Affairs and Chief Academic Officer at the School.

Both Moe and Valerie have been incredible supporters of the school and Alumni Association. We all need to give them and all the board members a special thanks for everything they do for all of us.

DENTIST MEMBERS OF THE BOARD



MOE MOMEN



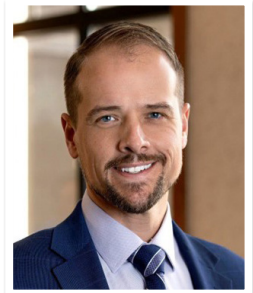
VALERIE PERRINE



ASHLEIGH PARKER



MIKE GEORGE



DAN CARRIER



MATT STUMP



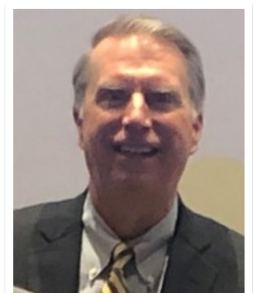
CRISTEN RAYNES



LINDSEY GEORGE



MARK LILLY



BRYAN SCOTT

CLINICAL NOTES:

These cases were seen by the Diagnostic Sciences Department of the WVU School of Dentistry.



WVU-SOD ALUMNI BOARD MEMBERS



CATHY BOYCE
Executive Director



MARILYN POWLEY
Secretary / Treasurer

DENTAL HYGIENE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD



GINA SHARPS



LYNDSEY GRAY



MADYLIN HINKLE

Following the presentation there was a board meeting and I will share some great news that occurred during the meeting. This fall we will be back having a fall alumni weekend in conjunction with a CE course and tailgate at the Erickson Alumni Center.

This will be a combined program of the WVU SOD Alumni Association and WV Dental Association. As soon as all the details are worked out, I will be sending an e-mail to everyone so PLEASE JOIN US. With Coach ROD back in the helm it should be a very exciting year!



Look forward to seeing everyone at spring alumni weekend and The Greenbrier and as always.

GOD BLESS YOU ALL AND LET'S GO MOUNTAINEERS - COACH WANKER

WVDA WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Kanawha Valley Dental Society

Dr. Shawn Ballard, Charleston WV
Dr. Lisa Haddox-Heston, Logan, WV
Dr. Lindsey Young, Charleston, WV


Monongahela Valley Dental Society

Dr. Meghan Bastin, Morgantown, WV
Dr. Seyedeh Maryam Razmi, Morgantown, WV

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@American Dental Association

STAY CONNECTED FOR OUR LATEST NEWS & UPDATES

ODD LESIONS FROM MORGANTOWN - A When You Bite Too Hard, Cementum Tears Off (A J-Shaped Radiolucency Can Form)

S. Bryan Whitaker, Associate Professor, Department of Endodontics, School of Dentistry, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia

Sam Dorn, Professor & Chair, Department of Endodontics, School of Dentistry, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia

Dr. J. E. Bouquot, Department of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, School of Dentistry, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia

First Impression: Just another endo/perio lesion

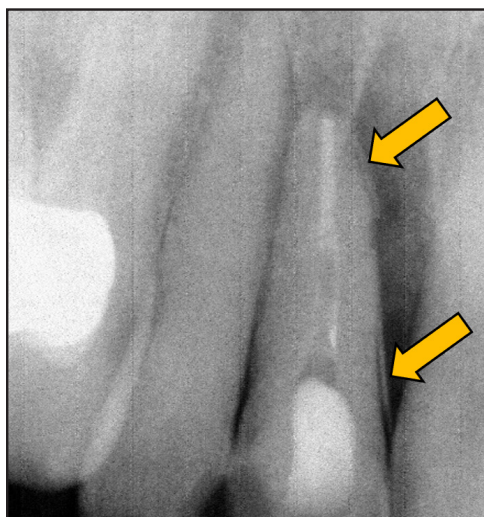


Figure 1. J-shaped radiolucency from apex to crestal bone area, with 2 linear radiopaque strips (arrows)

What came before. This 45-year-old woman presented with a tender maxillary left first premolar. The tenderness had become slowly more severe over a six-month period. A similar episode 3 years earlier resulted in endodontic treatment for a small apical radiolucency, even though the pulp tested vital/viable at that time via both thermal and electric pulp testing.

What it looks like now. At examination there was a J-shaped radiolucency extending up the lateral root surface from the apex (Figure 1). Near the apex and the crestal area were two linear radiopacities along the root surface (arrows in Figure 1). Pressing the mucosa firmly near the apex elicited more pain than near the crestal area. No periodontal pocket could be detected with a probe, but after consultation with a periodontist a working diagnosis of endo/perio lesion was made.

What it looks like microscopically. The linear opaque structures proved to both be full-thickness fragment of cementum, one with a small amount of attached dentin (arrow in Figure 2). The fragments were embedded within relatively uninfamed but dense and avascular fibrous tissue, essentially fibrous scar tissue.

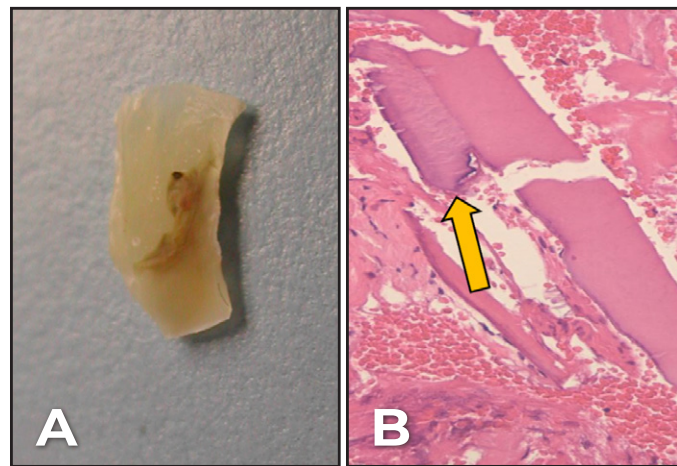


Figure 2 . The more fragments of cementum. A) Gross view of the more coronal fragment, with little attached soft tissue; B) Apical fragment was partially surrounded by fibrous scar tissue, with arrow pointing to a small attached fragment of dentin.

Diagnosis and comments. This piece of cementum, torn away from the underlying dentin is called a cemental tear. Cemental tears have probably been around forever, but the first case was not reported until 1989, and when two of the present authors (JEB, SAD) reported 17 new cases in 2018, it more than doubled the total number in the literature. We have seen many, possibly hundreds, of extracted teeth with cementum fragments either completely missing or still partially attached (Figure 3), and so we assume this occurs more frequently than reported, i.e. there are probably many subclinical cases without symptoms or large radiolucencies.

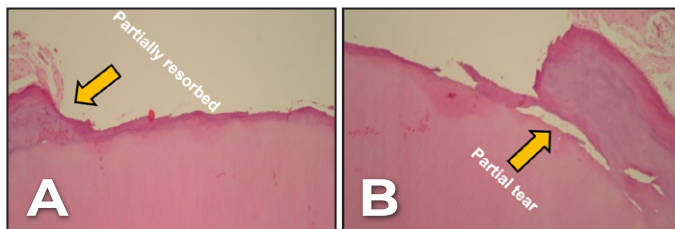


Figure 3. Two surface areas of root of a different tooth in areas where cementum has been torn off; A) Old tear shows rounding and partially resorbed residual edge (arrow); B) Second tear is more fresh, with no resorption or rounding and with a dentinocementum tear of adjacent tooth structure (arrow).

This type of lesion can certainly be confusing, but it does provide one explanation for those tender teeth which prove viable or vital with pulp testing and the lesion's similarity to the results of a necrosing pulp gives yet another reason to pulp test prior to endodontic treatment. Moreover, it can explain radiographically visible periodontal pockets without probing depth. This case had a visible linear radiopacity, but most cases do not, making diagnosis even more difficult and suggesting additional imaging with CBCT. It should be mentioned that few nonendodontic lesions tend to produce a vertical radiolucency along the root surface; most of us would likely consider a vertical root fractured high one of differential diagnosis, but the pulp would not test normal in that case.

We don't know for sure but it seems most likely that cemental tears are caused by one or more episodes of abrupt, strong occlusal biting, ripping off cementum at the point of weakest attachment: the dentinocementum junction. Once torn off, the cementum fragment remains in the periodontal ligament, with slight movement as the ligament responds to biting forces, thereby serving as a low-grade irritant to the area. This irritant, surprisingly, has the potential to destroy adjacent lamina dura, extending into the surrounding marrow as intraosseous scar tissue or localized low-grade chronic osteomyelitis. The destruction of the lamina dura appears to be a strong diagnostic clue to the proper diagnosis: almost all radiographically visible cases show these phenomena.



Please note: Send us your interesting cases for publication in this section

References available upon request: bouquot@aol.com

SMILECON®
WASHINGTON, D.C. 2025
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Have A National Ball at Smilecon in D.C.!

The biggest dental event of the year is coming to the nation's capital. Make your plans to attend **SmileCon® 2025, Oct. 23–25** in Washington, D.C. Explore the latest innovations in dentistry, reconnect with colleagues, soak up CE and experience all the vibrant culture D.C. has to offer.

SmileCon 2025 will also feature the **DC Dental Society Symposium for Licensure on Saturday, Oct. 25!** With this partnership, you can knock out even more CE to ensure you meet your relicensure requirements. These courses cover the vital topics of infection control, opioid-free pain management, making you and your team more well-rounded professionals. Registration for SmileCon opens late spring, so keep an eye on SmileCon.org for all the latest updates.



PAYMENTS IN THE PRACTICE

What Trends are Affecting Your Bottom Line?

By Phil Nieto, President of Best Card

Dentistry can be an isolated profession and it's often difficult to know how your practice compares to your peers. While no two practices are identical, how would you know if the trends in your office are being seen by other dental practices? There are some questions that can be embarrassing to ask another practitioner about: practice volume, profitability, etc. The landscape of the payments your practice accepts has probably changed drastically in the last few years but those changes often can slip under the radar even when it is significantly affecting your bottom line.

Best Card, the endorsed payment processor of the WVDA and ADA Member Advantage has been working with thousands of dental offices nationwide for over 15 years, and we want to pull back the curtain on the uncomfortable questions you may not want to ask your fellow practitioners:

- How much does the average dental office collect in credit card payments?
- Have dentists raised their prices to keep up with inflation?
- What are other dentists paying to accept credit card payments?
- How much SHOULD you be paying?

Using our data from thousands of dental offices over the past 15 years, here's a little peek into what the average dental practice has experienced!

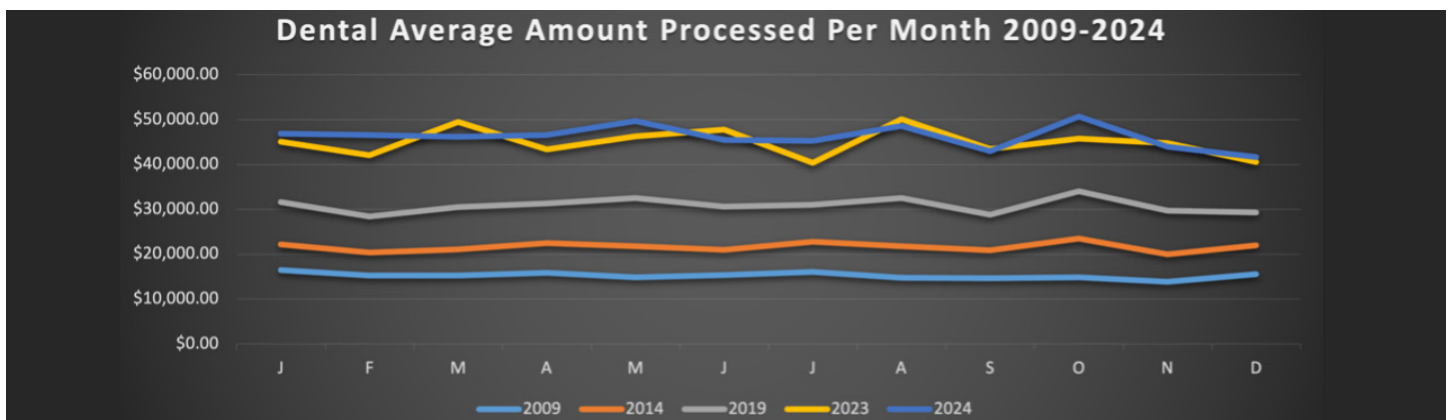
How much does the average dental office collect in credit cards?

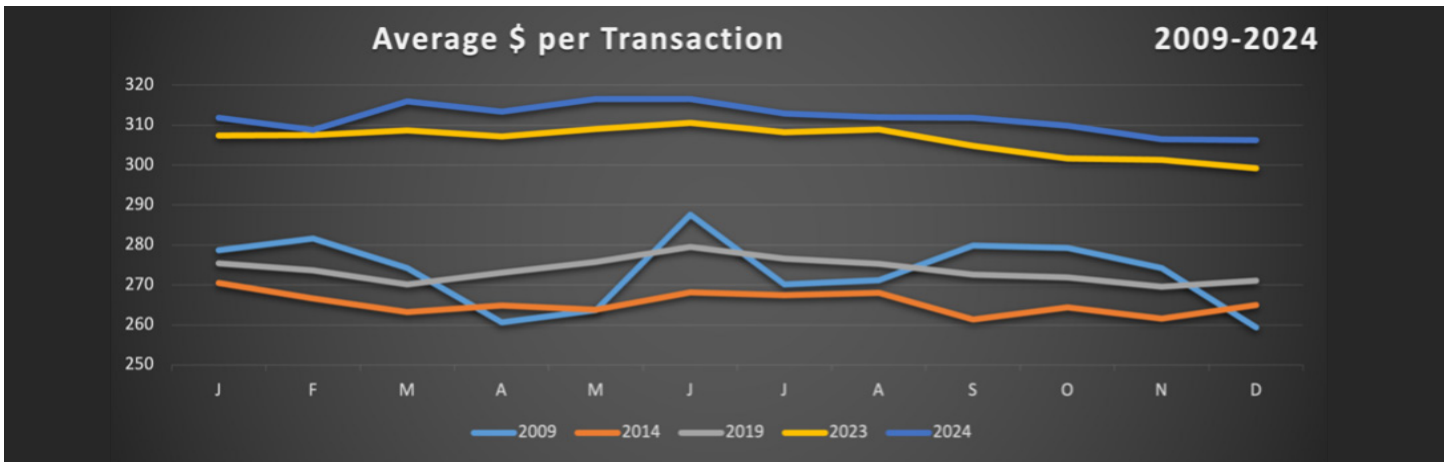
Dental offices have seen a large increase in the total amount of credit card payments collected over the past 10+ years and Covid accelerated that trend considerably, as patients moved towards payment methods that were more convenient and involved less physical contact. Furthermore, many insurance providers started issuing virtual credit cards as payment for their remittances, which also increased the amount of card payments dental practices are accepting.

- In 2024, the average dental office ran \$46,224.57 in credit card payments per month.
- That's a 45.5% increase over the 2019 average of \$30,876.
- It's a 195% increase over the 2009 average of \$15,221. The average practice is now running almost 3 times as much in credit cards as in 2009!

While accepting credit cards ensures that offices can quickly and easily collect payments, with more patients and insurance providers choosing to pay with cards, it is a much more substantial factor in the practice's total profitability than in the past.

(SEE CHART BELOW)





Have practices raised their costs to keep up with inflation?

Every dentist knows that Covid and the resulting supply chain and inflation issues increased the costs of many items used regularly in the practice. As a result, many dentists have had to raise their prices over the last several years in response to those increased business costs. We can see this trend clearly by looking at the size of the average payment across all practices.

- The average credit card payment accepted by dental offices in 2024 was \$311.84 compared to \$273 in 2019 – an increase of 11.87% in just four years.
- From 2009 to 2019, the average payment only increased 0.12% over a 10-year period.
- 2023 saw a slight decrease in the average payment compared to 2022: from \$307 to \$306, indicating that increases due to inflation may be slowing.

The Consumer Price Index shows that inflation in the U.S. from 2019 to 2023 was 19.2%, so even though the increase in average dental transaction size from 2019 onward marked a substantial difference compared to 2009-2019, the 11.87% increase hasn't kept up with the economy-wide price hike.

(SEE CHART ABOVE)

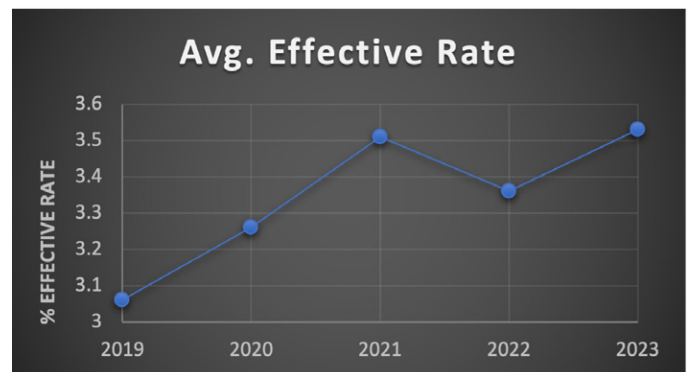
What does the average practice pay to run cards?

At the same time that the average dental office's payment volume has increased, the costs incurred to run those payments has also increased, and often these fees can be hard to understand. What's easy to discern, however, is the impact on the bottom line of the practice – to figure this out, you should calculate your effective rate with some simple math:

Total Fees Paid for the month ÷ Total Run in Card Sales during the month = Your Effective Rate

In 2024, the average dental office in the U.S. paid 3.56% compared to 3.06% in 2019. These rates are already too high, but to put it in perspective, back in 2014, the average dental office paid 2.84%.

So, the average practice is paying more as a percentage per payment while also accepting 45% more card payments than they did back before the pandemic. That makes a big difference.



Put in real numbers:

- The average office in 2019 ran \$30,876 at a rate of 3.06% for a total of \$944 per month in fees.
- The average office in 2024 ran \$46k in card payments, and is now paying 3.56%, for a total of \$1,585 per month in fees.
- For the average practice, that's an increase of \$7,692 per year in costs over just 4 years.

While the average office paid more than 3.56% in 2024, Best Card's average dental office on the exclusive rates offered to WVDA Members paid 2.27% in 2024 for an average savings of \$6,671 per year.

Summary

Dental practice owners are busy and sometimes it is easy to overlook small increases in the costs of services you are using, but often those small increases are frequent enough to have a big impact. Any part of your business that increases substantially over time should be analyzed periodically to make sure that it's meeting the needs of your bottom line.

If you see that you're paying more to accept credit cards while also taking more payments, it might be time to look for a better option.

To find out what Best Card might be able to save your practice, send us a recent monthly statement and we can do a complimentary cost analysis to show you exactly what your practice could be saving.

- Phone: 877.739.3952
- Email: Compare@bestcardteam.com
- Fax: (866) 717-7247

Phil Nieto is the President of Best Card, the endorsed credit card processor of WVDA and ADA Member Advantage. He enjoys working with thousands of dental offices to help minimize the headaches of accepting card payments by focusing on providing what the merchant services industry often lacks: innovation and integrity. On the rare opportunities for a quiet moment, he loves spending time with his wife and kids.

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1. Author, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, (December 2019 – December 2023). CPI Inflation Calculator. Retrieved from [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics].
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NOTICE FROM



PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AGENCY, INC.
— a subsidiary of West Virginia Dental Association —

INTRODUCING DENTISTS' CHOICE

Effective April 1, 2025, your current Professional Protector Plan policy will have a new name. Dentists' Choice will be the same policy with the same coverage and underwritten by Aspen American Insurance Company, an AM Best "A" rated global insurance company.

We are dedicated to serving you with exceptional care and expertise. If you have any questions, please contact me at 304-344-5320 or lona@wvdental.org

Lona T. Ross,
WV State Administrator





Retirement Plan Update

The WVDA's Endorsed Retirement Plan is off to a good start in 2025, having opened 2 new plans already this year in addition to the ones opened in 2024. Merrit received several inquiries at the WVDA Winter Meeting, so they will be following up on those requests. Every review/comparison and proposal thus far shows fee savings compared to dentists' existing plans, usually showing a savings of thousands of dollars annually. Please contact me soon for a free review.

-Les O'Connor, Merrill Lynch

RETIREMENT PLAN SUMMARY

The West Virginia Dental Association is committed to providing members with the right solutions for your practice — solutions that bring you economy of scale, show clear value for money spent, save time, and help reduce risk, and help you show your employees that you value what matters to them.



As a reminder, our partnership with Merrill Lynch, Jackson Kelly, and Lincoln Financial Group to deliver our endorsed 401(k) program, is available exclusively to members of the WV Dental Association.

HERE'S WHAT YOU'LL EXPERIENCE WITH THE NEW 401(K) PROGRAM:

- ✓ Access to pricing and service efficiencies — economies of scale
- ✓ Less administrative work, as you hand off many of the responsibilities that come with running a 401(k), including filing Form 5500 and employee loans
- ✓ Relief from many fiduciary obligations, while maintaining your current plan design — or changing to a plan design that works for you

ARE YOU IN?

- **Already have a retirement plan?** Now's a perfect opportunity to reach out to Les O'Connor, who will review and benchmark your plan and assess whether it's meeting your goals — or if transitioning to the West Virginia Dental Association 401(k) program could better meet your needs.
- **Considering a retirement plan?** A 401(k) program can be a powerful tool for keeping the quality people you have on board and bringing new talent into the fold. Joining the West Virginia Dental Association 401(k) program could be the most cost-efficient solution.

Schedule time with Les O'Connor to talk through next steps

Les O'Connor, Jr., CPFA®
Senior Financial Advisor
Retirement Accredited Financial Advisor
NMLS ID 1281966
les.oconnor@ml.com

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O'Connor & Associates
Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Inc.
500 Lee Street East, Suite 1100 • Charleston, WV 25301
T 304.347.2682 F 304.885.4275 Toll Free 800.937.0237

MEDICAID UPDATE

WEST VIRGINIA SMOKING CESSATION



As of November 1, 2024, a prior authorization for Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) and other smoking cessation agents, will no longer be required for West Virginia Medicaid members. Healthcare providers are still encouraged to recommend enrollment in the Quit Line which provides coaching sessions and other types of support to members who are trying to stop the use of nicotine products. **Please note: Nicotine nasal spray will still require prior authorization.**

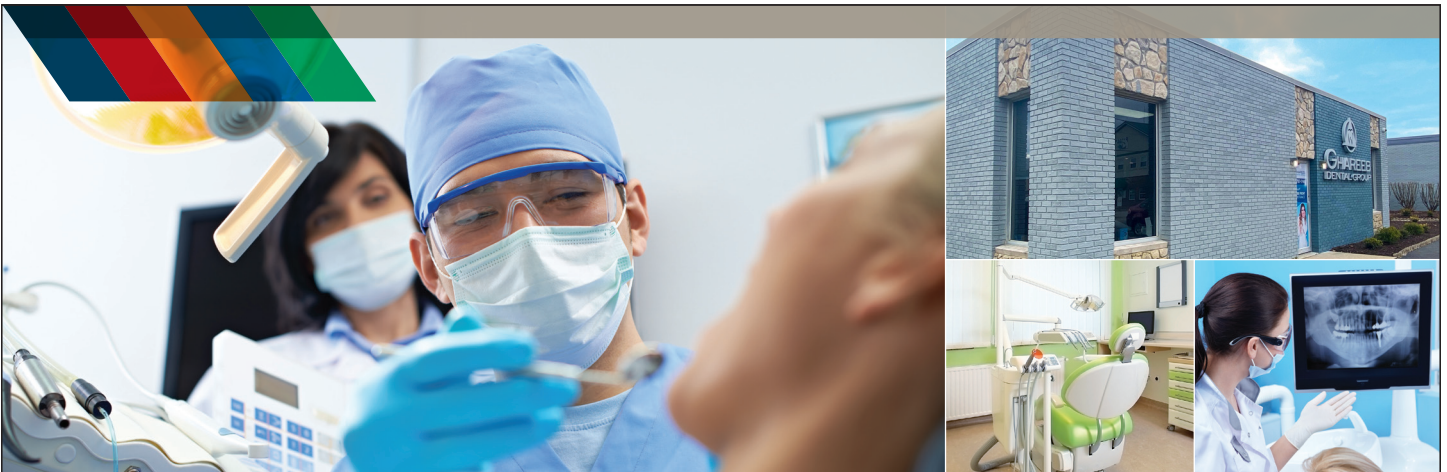
West Virginia Medicaid members can call 1-800-Quit-Now to enroll. As of November, 1, 2024, members will be connected to the new Quit Line Vendor, RVO Health.



UniCare is becoming Wellpoint in 2025



Coverage provided by Wellpoint West Virginia, Inc.
1077080WVMENWLP 10/24



Dental loans available for eligible borrowers

Our available loans include facility construction/renovations, equipment and technology purchases, business acquisition/buy-ins and other capital improvements.

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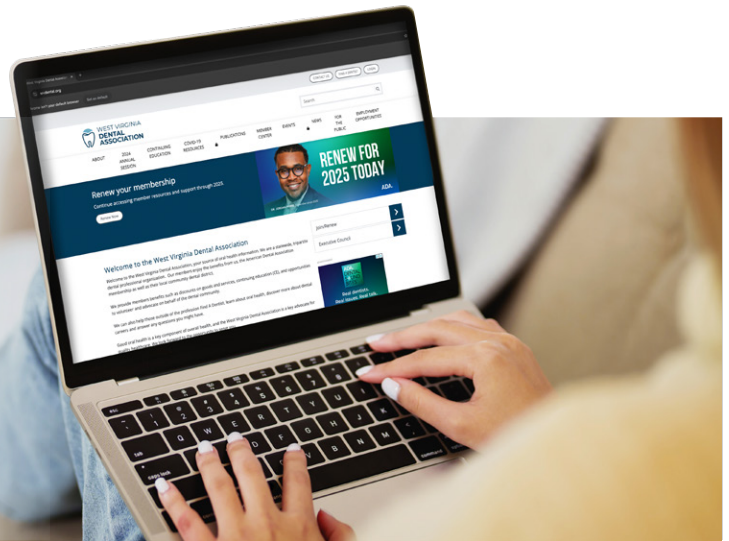
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A PROGRAM OF



WVDA Offers Several Ways for Members to Pay Their Dues



Membership dues statements and electronic renewal notices were recently sent out to WVDA members.

Renew Your Membership

Members can renew online at www.wvdental.org, by mail to WV Dental Association, 2016 ½ Kanawha Blvd., East, Charleston, WV 25311 or by phone at (304) 344-5246

Pay Your Dues Using the Installment Payment Program

The WVDA offers an installment payment program, where dentists can pay their 2025 membership dues over the course of several months. You can log into the website and will be given an option of payment (yearly, quarterly, monthly) or you can call Susan and she can help.

Recently Retired? Update Your Membership Status

WVDA members who have retired from the practice of dentistry can receive WVDA benefits at a fraction of the cost of active membership. WVDA members with Retired Membership status pay 25% of WVDA active dues but receive 100% of the benefits. To qualify for Retired Membership, dentists must no longer earn an income of any kind by means of their dental license. Dentists must also submit an Affidavit for Retired Membership, which is then reviewed by the dentist's local component society, the WVDA, and the American Dental Association.

Dentists who are interested in obtaining Retired Membership status should contact Susan at (304) 344-5246

Update Your Contact Information

Any members who have moved, changed their email address, or changed any other contact information should contact the WVDA by calling (304)344-5246 or emailing Susan@wvdental.org to ensure they receive statements and other valuable information.

How do I Log onto the New WVDA/ADA Website?


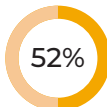


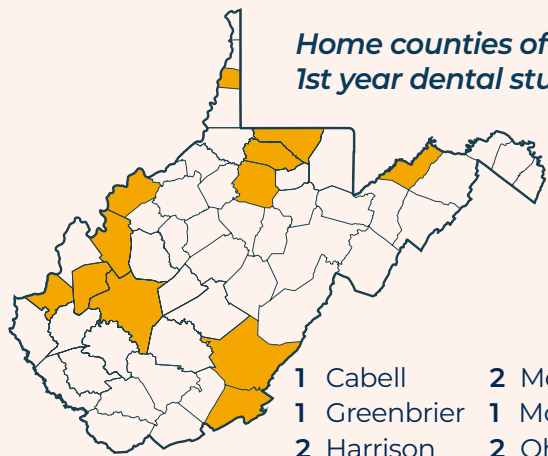





Last September, the ADA launched a new member database. If you haven't updated your password since early then, you'll need to do that first. Members now use their email address to log in instead of their ADA number. If you are not sure what email is on file, you can select "Forgot Username" on the website and you'll receive an email that will include a username reminder. Otherwise, you can select "Forget Password" to receive a password reset email. The email will come from noreply@salesforce.com with the subject line "Your new My ADA password." Click on the link in the email and set a password that includes eight characters, one letter, and one number. If those steps don't work, please call the ADA Member Service Center at 800-621-8099. They are staffed from 8am-5pm EST Monday – Friday.

WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY

Dental school graduates from rural areas are 3 times more likely to end up settling in a rural area compared with dental school graduates who are from urban areas.

(September 2016 study by the Health Policy Institute, American Dental Association)

Class of 2028 Demographic Profile

<p>Total Applicants</p> <p>754</p>	<p>Class Size</p> <p>48</p>	<p>  52%</p> <p>25 Female Students</p>	<p>  48%</p> <p>23 Male Students</p>														
<p><i>Home counties of our 1st year dental students</i></p>  <table data-bbox="479 1207 868 1449"> <tr> <td>1 Cabell</td> <td>2 Monongalia</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 Greenbrier</td> <td>1 Monroe</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 Harrison</td> <td>2 Ohio</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 Jackson</td> <td>1 Putnam</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 Kanawha</td> <td>3 Wood</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 Marion</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 Mineral</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		1 Cabell	2 Monongalia	1 Greenbrier	1 Monroe	2 Harrison	2 Ohio	1 Jackson	1 Putnam	3 Kanawha	3 Wood	1 Marion		1 Mineral		<p> 3.81</p> <p>Average Incoming Total GPA</p> <p> 3.77</p> <p>Average Incoming Science GPA</p> <p> 20</p> <p>DAT Average Total Science</p> <p> 20</p> <p>DAT Average Academic Average</p>	<p>19</p> <p>In - State Students</p> <p>29</p> <p>Out-of-State Students</p>
1 Cabell	2 Monongalia																
1 Greenbrier	1 Monroe																
2 Harrison	2 Ohio																
1 Jackson	1 Putnam																
3 Kanawha	3 Wood																
1 Marion																	
1 Mineral																	
 <p>Stephen Pachuta <i>DDS, MS, MABe</i> Dean <i>West Virginia University School of Dentistry</i></p>		<p>WVU-SOD Fast Facts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Began educating dental health care professionals in 1957 • 96% first-time pass rate on clinical board exams • 100% job placement rate • Supports 20+ outreach programs • DDS and DH students complete rural rotations in 90+ offices statewide 															



11 CE CREDITS AVAILABLE!

FRIDAY | JULY 18

8:30 am - 4:30 pm



FEATURED SPEAKER

NAVIGATING THE NEXT BIG THING:

AI IN DENTAL PRACTICE MANAGEMENT - 7 HOURS CE

As dentistry continues to evolve in the ever-changing digital landscape, maintaining strong practice management principles is more crucial than ever. Dr. Howard Farran will guide you through the essentials of effective practice management while exploring the innovative potential of artificial intelligence. Enable your practice, embrace innovation, and lead your team into an exciting new era of dentistry.

Howard Farran, DDS, MBA - the founder and owner of Dentaltown.com and Dentaltown magazine, has practiced dentistry at Today's Dental in the Phoenix metro area for more than 30 years. In 2017, Incisal Edge magazine ranked him among the 32 most influential people in dentistry.

Lunch included

1 CE AVAILABLE FOR VISITING WITH OUR CLINICAL VENDORS

5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

RECEPTION HONORING PAST WVDA PRESIDENTS

6:00 pm - 7:30 pm



#TOOTHPARTY (HEAVY HORS DEVOURS RECEPTION)

special guest invited

SATURDAY | JULY 19

8:30 am - 12:00pm



ALL COURSES

THE INAUGURAL "DR. JERRY BOUQUOT

VISITING LECTURE SERIES FOR DENTISTRY" - 3 HOURS CE

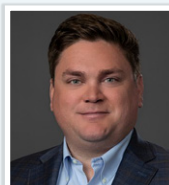
"When Mouth Parts Disappear: The jaws are REALLY different – An absorbing review of 22 jawbone characteristics that are NOT seen in the rest of the skeleton" by Dr. Jerry Bouquot, a clinical dental professor and world-renowned oral pathologist who has taught for 50 years, a majority of time at West Virginia University – School of Dentistry; and,

"Bioterrorism and the Thin Red Line" by Dr. Steven Whitaker, WVU-SOD Associate Professor will cover the history of weaponized pathogens and focus on the real or potential oral manifestations arising after exposure.

OR

YOUNG DOCTORS CAN'T AFFORD

NOT TO BUY A PRIVATE PRACTICE! - 3 HOURS CE



Mr. Wade Coleman, McGill & Hill Group - Young doctors are increasingly desiring private practice opportunities, driven by unfavorable terms in DSO associate contracts, their need for higher incomes, and a desire to control they way they practice.

Register for
the meeting



You will receive a confirmation email giving you a code needed to make your reservations at The Greenbrier.



REMEMBER TO
RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Save Postage

PAY YOUR 2025 WVDA DUES ONLINE!



Scan QR Code:

LOG IN

by providing your
EMAIL ADDRESS
and your PASSWORD

Having Trouble?

Call Susan Jones: 304.344.5246
or email her at: susan@wvdental.org