



TENNESSEE

MARCH/APRIL 2026 VOLUME 32, ISSUE 2

DENTAL

ASSOCIATION NEWS

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////// Bimonthly news and information for TDA members



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MEETING REPORT

February 21, 2026



The TDA Board of Trustees, chaired by TDA President Dr. Allen Burleson, met on February 21, 2026, via Zoom Video Conference. Below are the key actions and reports from the meeting.

Actions of the Board:

Fellowship Award: Approved a motion for the following to receive the 2026 Fellowship Award (district noted in parenthesis): Dr. Van Guthrie III (1), Dr. Matt Heaton (2), Dr. Robert Clark (3), Dr. Garrett Orr (4), Dr. Phillip Kemp (5), Dr. John Shea Jr. (5), Dr. Richard Robinette (6), Dr. Lance Culley (7), Dr. Keith Gilmore (8), Dr. Wes McCann (9), Dr. Micah Parkhurst (9)

Dr. Jack Wells Award: By confidential vote of the trustees, Dr. James Ragain, Memphis, was chosen to receive the 2026 Dr. Jack Wells Memorial Dedication to Dentistry award.

New Dentist Award: By confidential vote of the trustees, Dr. Lydia Lancaster, Nashville, was chosen to receive the 2026 New Dentist Impact Award.

Committee Appointments:

Approved appointments to committees and selected committee chairs to fill open positions beginning July 1, 2026.

Second District Name Change:

Approved a resolution from the Second District Dental Society to change their district's name to the Knoxville Area Dental Association. This resolution will be presented at the House of Delegates on May 9, 2026.

Governance Recommendations:

Approved a resolution from the Task Force on Strategic Plan 2.1 with recommendations for a framework to streamline governance, which will go to the House of Delegates May 9th for a vote.

Highlighted Reports:

Treasurer's Report:

Dr. Jay Davis, Treasurer, presented the unaudited financial report as of December 31, 2025.

Legislative Update regarding bills on anti-fluoridation, immigration, Rural Health Transformation funding, and scope of practice issues. A successful Day on the Hill, February 10th, was reported.

President-elect Report:

President-elect Kevin Bryant expressed concern about the significant wellness challenges impacting dentists and presented data showing elevated suicide rates within the dental profession. Dr. Bryant aims to increase awareness of these issues and highlight available support resources.



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LOG IN AND EXPLORE

Your New Digital TDA Member Experience

You asked, and we listened. After months of preparation, we are excited to announce that the new TDA website and member database are officially live.

Last year, the TDA Board of Trustees voted to move Tennessee off the national Salesforce/Fonteva system and onto our own Novi AMS platform. This transition is a significant step forward for our association, giving us the flexibility to create a more modern, intuitive experience specifically for Tennessee dental professionals. Our goal was to provide a streamlined system that makes it easier to manage your membership, register for events, and access the resources you need daily.

Accessing Your New Account

To access your TDA member benefits on the new site, you will need to set up new login credentials. Your previous tripartite password will not work on this platform.

- 1. Email:** Enter the email address associated with your TDA account.
- 2. Password:** Follow the prompts to create a new, secure password.
- 3. Member Compass:** Once logged in, you will be directed to your personalized "Member Compass."

Need assistance? If you have trouble accessing your account, please email Grace Czosek (grace@tndental.org) with your first and last name and ADA number.



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VOLUME 32, ISSUE 2

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The TDA is an ADA CERP provider

ADA CERP is a service of the American Dental Association to assist dental professionals in identifying quality providers of continuing education. ADA CERP does not approve or endorse individual courses or instructors, nor does it imply acceptance of credit hours by boards of dentistry. Concerns or complaints about a CE provider may be directed to the provider or to ADA CERP at ada.org/cerp.



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New Digital TDA Member Experience

Navigating Your Member Compass

The Member Compass is your central hub for all TDA activity. From this dashboard, you can:

Manage Dues: View invoices and review payment plans.

(Note: Members with existing 2026 dues plans will need to re-authorize their payment details in the new system).

Financial History: Download receipts at any time under "Account History."

Event Registrations: Review all your past and upcoming TDA event details.

News: Access the latest association news.

Update Your Profile: While you are in your Member Compass, please take a moment to upload a headshot at the bottom of your profile information. This photo will appear in the searchable Member Directory.

Managing Your CE Records

With the launch of the new site, we want to ensure you can easily manage your Continuing Education (CE) credits.

Accessing Your CE History

Your previously submitted CE credits remain securely housed within your ADA Profile. To view your history, log in to the ADA website, navigate to your member profile, and click on "All CE Credits" to see your full transcript.

How to Report New Credits

You can submit new certificates of completion to the TDA office in two ways:

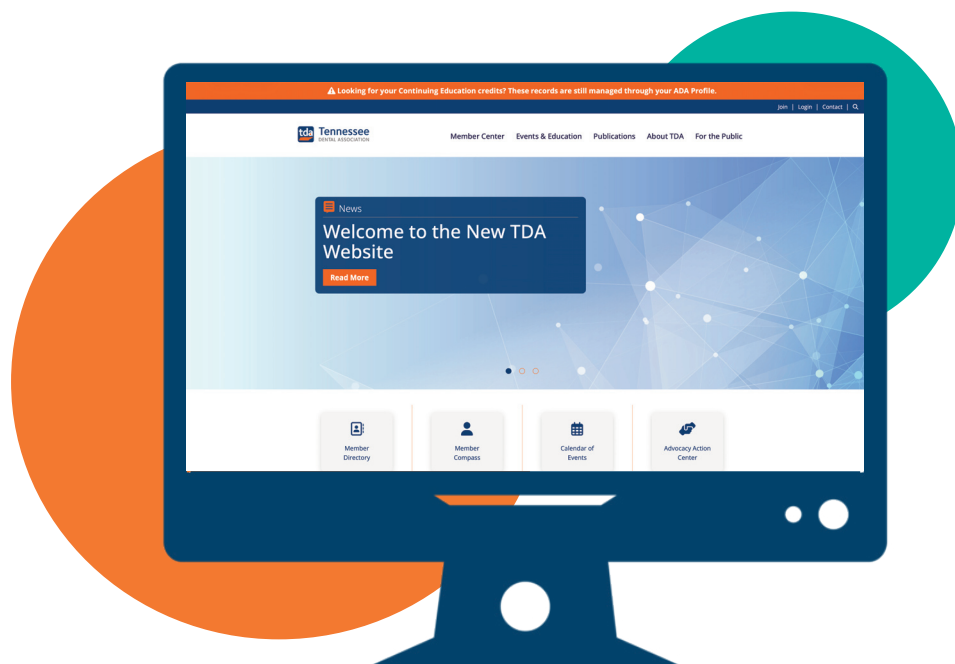
Email: Send certificates to ce@tndental.org

Fax: 615-628-0214 (Please include your full name and ADA number on the cover sheet).

Tip: Always keep the original certificate in your personal files for your own records.

Important Reminder: ADA vs. TDA Logins

Please note that you will continue to log in to your ADA account on the American Dental Association's website as you always have. The TDA now operates on a separate platform and requires its own unique login credentials. Your ADA communications and national benefits remain unaffected.



Questions? Contact us at 615-628-0208 or by email at tda@tndental.org.

2026 LEGISLATIVE RECAP

THE POWER OF PRESENCE: FROM STRATEGIC ADVOCACY TO STATEWIDE IMPACT

The 2026 legislative session proved that when Tennessee dentists show up, the trajectory of public health policy changes. These legislative victories were the result of a multi-pronged strategy that began months before the first gavel fell, combining proactive education, technical workgroups, and a massive grassroots response.

Building the Foundation: Tennessee Dentists' Day on the Hill

The foundation for this year's success was laid during the third annual Tennessee Dentists' Day on the Hill. Member dentists from across the state traveled to Nashville to ensure the profession had a seat at the table before key votes were cast.

The impact of this in-person presence was undeniable. Member dentists canvassed 132 legislative offices and held 21 formal meetings, in addition to dozens of personally scheduled sessions. Beyond public health and scope of practice, our advocates drove meaningful dialogue around strengthening dental insurance reform enforcement. There was interest among legislators in enhancing reporting measures through the Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance to ensure that the 2024 dental insurance reform bill is being properly upheld for the benefit of both providers and patients.

Defending Community Water Fluoridation

The relationships solidified during Day on the Hill provided the leverage needed to protect the state's public health infrastructure. Anticipating a return of anti-fluoridation policy, the association used Day on the Hill to proactively educate lawmakers. Members utilized evidence-based resources that detailed the safety and proven efficacy of community water fluoridation (CWF).



This early education proved vital."

This early education proved vital. Shortly after Day on the Hill, two anti-fluoridation bills—SB0162/HB2396 and HB2471/SB2304—began moving through the committee process. The TDA immediately launched a targeted grassroots response to ensure that the momentum from Day on the Hill translated into direct pressure on the Senate Energy, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Committee and the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Subcommittee.

To provide clinical expertise on the record, the TDA called upon Dr. Leon Stanislav and Executive Director Andrea Hayes to provide formal testimony. Their insights, combined with over 400 member emails, led to a significant victory: SB0162 was defeated by a single-vote margin, officially ending the bill for the year. Meanwhile, SB2304 was sidelined to General Subcommittee, removing it from the legislative calendar for the remainder of the session.



Navigating Scope of Practice

Presence at the Capitol also allowed the TDA to manage two distinct legislative tracks regarding dental hygiene scope of practice. The goal was to ensure any changes prioritized the team-based care model and patient safety.

The Consensus Approach: Since last September, a dedicated TDA workgroup has been engaging with the Tennessee Dental Hygienists' Association (TDHA) on HB1991/SB1926. This early collaboration allowed the TDA to guide the issue and provide timely feedback during the bill's development. Because of the workgroup's engagement, several problematic proposals were eliminated before the formal language was ever drafted. This consensus solution maintains appropriate clinical oversight while addressing workforce needs.

The Administration's Proposal:

Simultaneously, the TDA monitored a separate push from the Governor's administration tied to the federal Rural Health Transformation (RHT) Program. This program, which provided Tennessee with nearly \$207 million for 2026, included policy commitments to pursue "unrestricted scope of practice" for dental hygienists by 2027.

The TDA moved quickly to review the Administration's proposed language

(HB 2556 / SB 2244) and provided formal testimony to the Senate Health and Welfare Committee. The association highlighted critical flaws, including a lack of collaboration with the dental community and the potential risk to patient safety. By deploying legislative contact dentists to voice these concerns, the TDA successfully advocated for the consensus-based model over the Administration's broader proposal. As a result, the Senate version of the Administration's bill was sent to General Subcommittee, effectively ending its progress for the session.

National Reach: Impacting Federal Policy in Washington, D.C.

The momentum from Nashville carried directly into our nation's capital this March. Nearly 500 dentists and dental students from across the country gathered for the 2026 ADA Dentist and Student Lobby Day, and we were proud to have a dedicated delegation of TDA members among them. Our representatives took the Tennessee perspective to Congress, advocating for federal solutions to the systemic challenges facing the profession. Key priorities included:

Insurance Reform: Closing federal dental insurance loopholes through the Improving Dental Administration Act to ensure administrative transparency and fairness.

Student Debt Relief: Championing the REDI Act to help offset the unprecedented educational debt carried by dental and medical residents.

Federal Leadership: Protecting dental leadership and ensuring oral health infrastructure is prioritized across federal agencies.

By participating in ADA Lobby Day, TDA members ensured that Tennessee's voice is heard at every level of government.

Looking Ahead: Preparing for 2027

While we celebrate these successes, the TDA remains future-focused. To that end, we will be convening specialized workgroups over the summer on issues important to the profession including:

- Workforce Development & Scope of Practice
- Fluoridation Policy
- Dental Insurance Reform

These groups will focus on developing refined messaging, gathering additional clinical and technical resources, and identifying key partnerships. By conducting these deep dives now, we will be fully prepared to launch a comprehensive advocacy campaign for our entire legislative agenda when the General Assembly reconvenes next January.

Stay Engaged

Whether it was a workgroup meeting in September, a formal meeting during Day on the Hill, or a quick email sent during a committee vote, every action contributed to a successful session. Our advocacy works because our members participate

Sign up for TDA Advocacy Action Alerts by texting TNDENTAL to 50457 or by visiting our advocacy page on tndental.org.

ADD YOUR VOICE
TO THE CONVERSATION

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SCENES FROM 2026 TDA ADVOCACY



THANK *You!*

FOR BEING A MEMBER!

The ADA, TDA, and your local society are committed to supporting your personal and professional growth at every stage of your career.

We offer a wide range of resources to help you manage your patients, practice, and personal life more effectively. Whether it's staying informed on the latest clinical guidelines or accessing financial management tools like insurance and retirement plans, we're here to provide everything you need to succeed and maintain a healthy work-life balance.

If there's anything we can do to further support your membership experience, please don't hesitate to reach out at 615.628.0208 or email us at tda@tndental.org. We'd love to hear from you!

The TDA welcomes the following dentists as our new and reinstated members.

First District Dental Society
Dr. Tina Olsson

Second District Dental Society
Dr. Wayne Cottam
Dr. Alexander Hagar
Dr. Stella Kim

Nashville Dental Society
Dr. Hyun-Joo Lim
Dr. Melissa Meier

Sixth District Dental Society
Dr. Beau Bolding

Eighth District Dental Society
Dr. Kapil Singla

Memphis Dental Society
Dr. David Pencarinha
Dr. Abbey Vinall
Dr. Craig Vinall



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Dr. J. Allen Burleson
By Dr. Robert Hopper

Dr. Robert Hopper
By Dr. James Wilson

Dr. Billy McCann
By Dr. William Parris

Dr. Irvine Rainey
By Dr. Edward Vaughan

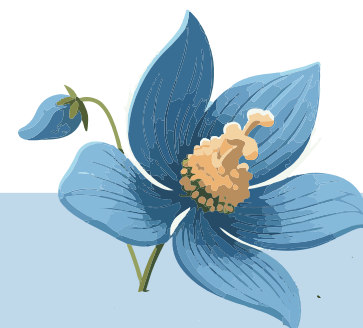
Dr. David Tiner
By Dr. Robert Hopper

In Memory Of:

Dr. W.T. "Tom" Baker, Jr.
By Dr. John E. Tillman

Dr. Earl Crumpton
By Dr. Reid Crumpton

Kathryn Hipps
By Dr. Daniel Hipps



IN MEMORIAM

The TDA honors the memory and passing of the following members:

Dr. John William Bradshaw, Jr. was a member of the American Dental Association, the Tennessee Dental Association, and the First District Dental Society.

Dr. William Glick Walker was a member of the American Dental Association, the Tennessee Dental Association, and the Chattanooga Area Dental Society.

Numbers to Know

American Dental Association

(800) 621-8099 or (312) 440-2500

Tennessee Board of Dentistry

(615) 532-5073

Tennessee Department of Health

(615) 741-3011

Tennessee Dental Association

(615) 628-0208 | Fax: (615) 628-0214
tda@tndental.org

LOCAL SOCIETIES

First District Dental Society

Executive Director: Savannah Bolick
(423) 552-0222
firstdistrictdental@gmail.com

Second District Dental Society

Executive Director: Janet Lawlor
(865) 919-6464
sddsoffice@gmail.com

Chattanooga Area Dental Society

Executive Director: Lacey Heftka
(423) 886-9191
Info@ChattAreaDent.com

Nashville Dental Society

Executive Director: Kristen Stewart
(615) 628-3300
director@nashvilledental.org

Seventh District Dental Society

Executive Secretary: Dr. Larry Chambers
(731) 217-5614
7thdistrictdental@gmail.com

Eighth District Dental Society

Executive Secretary: Ruby Batson
(931) 245-3333

Memphis Dental Society

Executive Director: Kendyl Dean
(901) 682-4928
info@memphisdentalsociety.org



EXPLORE THE TDA CAREER CENTER



The TDA Career Center is the most effective way to connect employers to qualified dental professionals across all disciplines and career stages. Powered by YM Careers, the leading provider of job websites and career centers for organizations that serve specialized members, the mobile-responsive platform of the TDA Career Center makes access effortless across all internet-enabled devices.

Resources for Job-Seeking Dental Professionals

The TDA Career Center provides great value to job-seeking dental professionals. TDA members can post multiple resumes and cover letters, or choose a career profile that leads employers directly to them. The TDA Career Center provides multiple opportunities to bring jobs directly to job seekers by

uploading public resumes and utilizing Job Alerts. When a resume is set as “public”, employers have the ability to view the candidate’s resume. When they are interested in reaching out to the candidate, the employer completes a contact request form. If the candidate is interested in the company, their contact information is released to the employer. If not, they reject the request which keeps the anonymity of the candidate. Job Alerts also assist in making job searching convenient and accommodating to dental professionals’ busy schedules. When set up, job seekers receive an email every time a job becomes available that matches their desired interests and locations. Job-seeking TDA members are also free to search the jobs database with robust filters to focus on the specific interests. Along with seamless searching for jobs, members also have access to TDA Career Center resources. They can access resume writing tips, interview tips, sample resumes, answers to experts’ frequently asked questions, and more.

Connecting Employers with Your Next Great Hire

TDA Career Center provides many benefits to employers to help them recruit the top dental professionals for their organizations. Employers can include their open positions in a semi-monthly email sent to TDA’s members and job seekers, allowing them to reach both active and passive job seekers by putting open jobs directly in the inboxes of qualified TDA members. Along with giving an avenue for members to find their perfect job, employers are also able to search the anonymous resume bank of qualified candidates. This puts the employer in control of finding quality talent as opposed to waiting for quality talent to find them.



TDA members can post multiple resumes and cover letters, or choose a career profile that leads employers directly to them.”





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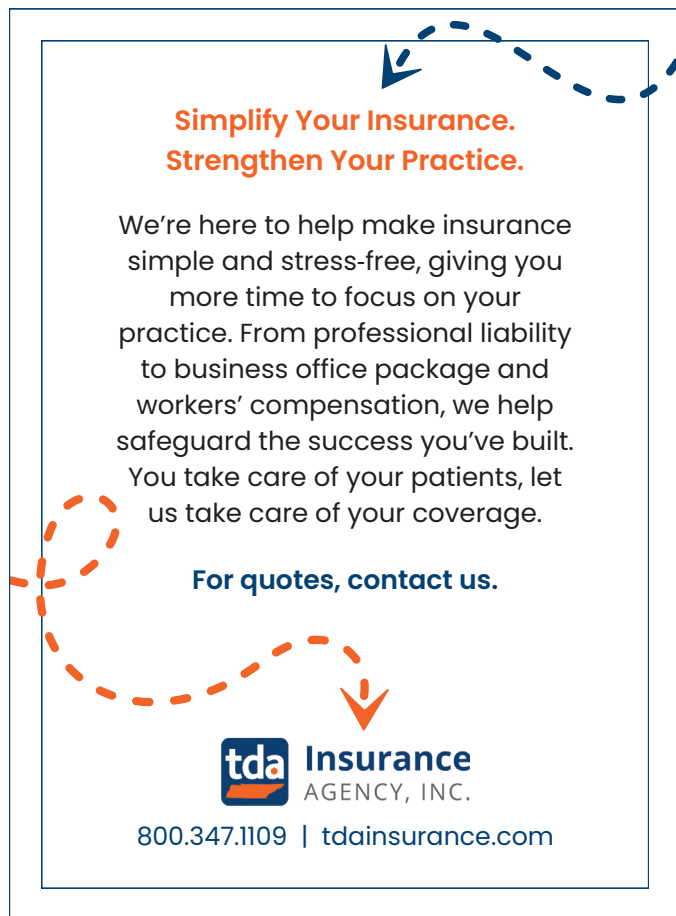
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Mail checks made payable to the TDA, along with your typed or clearly printed classified ad, by the 1st of the month prior to the month of publication to: TDA Newsletter, 660 Bakers Bridge Avenue, Suite 300, Franklin, TN 37067.

TDA reserves the right to reject any advertising. Call the TDA Executive Office at 615-628-0208 or email tda@tndental.org if you have any questions.

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Rutherford County Clinic (210 Robert Rose Drive, Murfreesboro)

- Dr. Jeffrey Bell, Dr. John Bellerjeau, Dr. Pam Chamberland, Dr. Walter Chitwood, Dr. Jay Davis, Dr. Grant Dillingham, Dr. Todd Fisher, Dr. Jared Giatras, Dr. Jennifer Gordon-Maloney, Dr. Ben Jamison, Dr. Anne Larrah Johnson, Dr. Rachel Johnson, Dr. Ted Johnson III, Dr. Beth Keen-Saunders, Dr. Rachel King, Dr. Jim Ed Lane, Dr. Daniel Hipps, Dr. Alex Hollis, Dr. Brad Lewallen, Dr. Charles Major, Dr. Kimberly Pitts, Dr. Taylor Reeves, Dr. Jess Sinquefield, Dr. David Spivey, Dr. Kaitlyn Starbody, Dr. Michael Starbody, Dr. Buffy Storm, Dr. Roy Thompson, Dr. Kaci Turner, Dr. Ron Wright, Dr. Sean Young

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Bento – A modern alternative to dental benefits. Learn more, email smile@bento.net or call 800.734.8484



Best Card – Credit card merchant processing services. Learn more or call 877-739-3952.



CareCredit – Patient Payment Plans. Learn more or call 1-800-300-3046, ext. 4519 (new) or 800-859-9975 (existing).



Cyracom – Interpretation and translation services. Learn more, call 1-844-737-0781 or email getstarted@cyracom.com.



D-MMEX Easyrefine – Scrap metal recovery program. Learn more or call 1-800-741-3174.



iCoreConnect - Secure cloud-based software for increased revenue & improved workflow. Learn more or book your demo today by calling 888.810.7706.



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