



TENNESSEE

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2025 VOLUME 31, ISSUE 1

# DENTAL

ASSOCIATION NEWS

TNDENTAL.ORG

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## STATE OF THE ASSOCIATION

*see page 2*



**: FEATURE**

## CARING FOR YOUNG SMILES

*see page 11*

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

# STATE OF THE ASSOCIATION

It is truly an honor to serve as the Tennessee Dental Association (TDA) President, and I wanted to share with you that the association's state is strong. Three years ago, I was honored to serve on the TDA Board as a Trustee from the Memphis District. Together, our board, along with help from our staff and the American Dental Association (ADA), we developed a strategic plan that focused on advocacy, membership, and governance. Due to this plan, we have given the TDA the most effective and efficient voice to represent dentists and patients in Tennessee.

Our TDA staff, led by our Executive Director, Andrea Hayes, is doing an outstanding job implementing our plan daily. The TDA is financially strong. Our building is paid for, and we continue developing new forms of non-dues revenue.

I have been pleased to see an overwhelming interest from young dentists. Thanks to our increased communication efforts and personal outreach, we've seen a growing number of young dentists actively engaged and joining the TDA. I genuinely believe that the TDA's communication efforts have helped young dentists recognize the value of having organized support from lobbyists, attorneys, and scientific experts, resources that are far more

accessible collectively. Young dentists have come to understand that they can affect key issues such as legislation shaping their practice, insurance reform affecting their compensation, and student loan reform affecting their lifestyle and borrowing power by actively participating in their local component societies, the TDA, and the ADA.

In April of 2024, I attended Lobby Day in Washington, D.C. sponsored by the ADA. Our Delegation from Tennessee was pleasantly surprised with the overwhelming attendance of students from the American Student Dental Association (ASDA) who were engaged and interested in the role of government and how it can influence the way they practice in the future.



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**VOLUME 31, ISSUE 1**

Executive Editor: Andrea Hayes  
Managing Editor: Lourdes Arevalo

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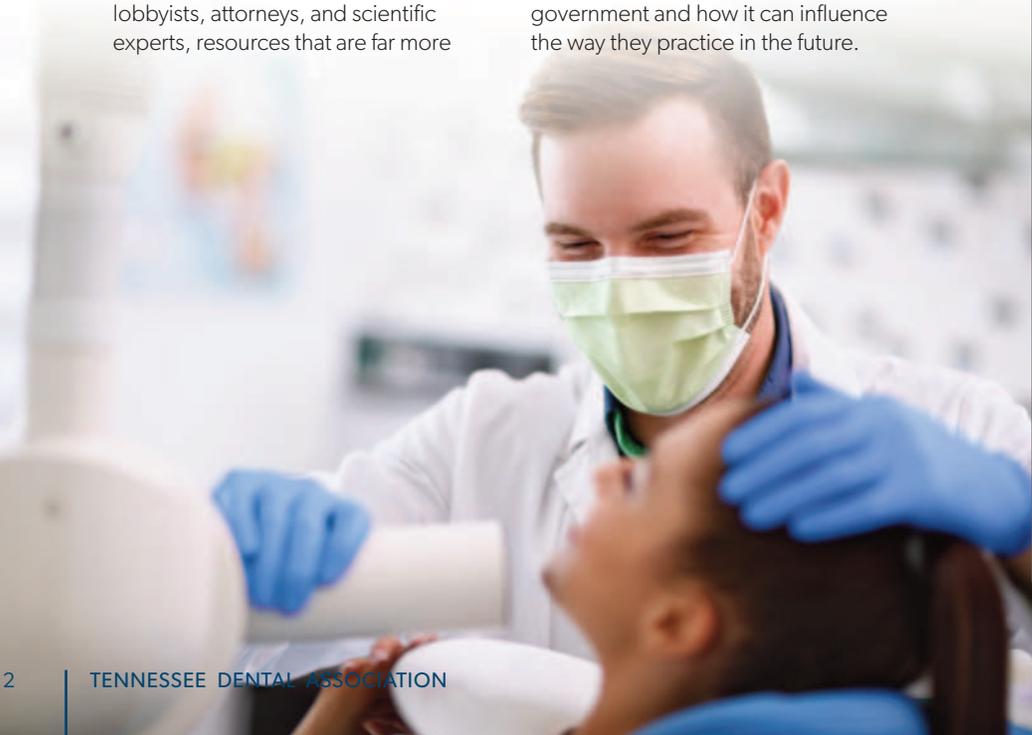
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# Thanks to our increased communication efforts and personal outreach, we've seen a growing number of young dentists actively engaged and joining the TDA.

I want every dentist in Tennessee to understand they are invaluable to the profession:

- 1) You provide care for your patients.
- 2) You are leaders in your community and are respected as an expert voice.
- 3) You have someone in your life, who encouraged you to excel as a caregiver and leader.
- 4) You have the skill and understanding to encourage those after you to follow in your traditions while empowering them to be leaders and involved members of their local societies, the TDA and ADA.

Dentistry is a fulfilling profession; it can be rewarding in various ways. You can be a sole practitioner serving your patients, you can be an employee of a group practice, a corporation, or work for a non-profit but in reality, it is your healing hands that make a difference in patients' lives. The TDA is the leading professional organization supporting your decision to practice in the setting that fits you best. Simply said, dentistry is a service industry.

Organized Dentistry ensures that both the recipient of the service and the provider of the service are treated fairly.

As your President of the TDA, I encourage you to be a leader in our profession. Our core strength is our

membership, united by shared goals and collective power. While my term as TDA President is a one-year term, I join with our legacy of TDA Presidents with the goal to be an inspiration for generations of dentists to come.



Stuart L. Hudsmith, DDS



# THANK *You!* FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

The ADA, TDA, and your local component 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](mailto:tda@tndental.org). We'd love to hear from you!

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

**Second District Dental Society**  
Dr. Morgan Capwell  
Dr. Chad Waltz

**Chattanooga Area Dental Society**  
Dr. Ilse Longrich

**Nashville Dental Society**  
Dr. James Chitty  
Dr. Ali Assaad  
Dr. Milad Owji

**Fourth District Dental Society**  
Dr. Jaden Danos

**Sixth District Dental Society**  
Dr. D. Carl Jackson

**Eighth District Dental Society**  
Dr. Lee Mai



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In 2024, the Tennessee Dental PAC was supported by 238 individuals who joined the Capitol Club. With a Tennessee Dental PAC contribution of \$150 or more, you can add your name to the growing list of dentists making a difference on legislative and regulatory issues in Tennessee. Following are 2024 Capitol Club members as of December 31, 2024.

**PLATINUM \$550+**

- Dr. Jeannie Beauchamp
- Dr. Robert Caldwell
- Dr. Joshua Campbell
- Dr. George Clayton
- Dr. Mitchel S. Godat
- Dr. Stueart Hudsmith
- Dr. Rhett Raum
- Dr. Warren K. Stinson
- Dr. J. Newsom Baker

**GOLD \$300 - \$549**

- Dr. Donnie Adkins
- Dr. Damon Barbieri
- Dr. Edsel Bates
- Dr. Jeffrey Bell
- Dr. Janet Black
- Dr. Bonnie Boudreaux
- Dr. JoKeidre Butler
- Dr. Anthony Carroccia
- Dr. Jennifer Cole
- Dr. Alan Crisman
- Dr. Steven Daniel
- Dr. Gerard DiFusco
- Dr. Freeman Doster
- Dr. Scott Edwards
- Dr. Joseph C. Elkins
- Dr. Marie Farrar
- Dr. Thomas Flanagan
- Dr. McKinnon Forbes
- Dr. Amir Francis
- Dr. Joanne Gaydos-Daniel
- Dr. Keith Gilmore
- Dr. Cynthia Green

- Dr. James Hawkins
- Dr. Thomas Heeren
- Dr. Donald Henson
- Dr. Hugh Holliday
- Dr. Brad S. Johnson
- Dr. Michael Johnson
- Dr. Robert Kelso
- Dr. Kevin Kennedy
- Dr. John Kinard
- Dr. Michael King
- Dr. Bennett Kizer
- Dr. Rajan Kshatri
- Dr. Branimir Lackovic
- Dr. Mike Lamb
- Dr. Shawn Lehman-Grimes
- Dr. Andrew Lunn
- Dr. Jackie S. McClain
- Dr. J. Peter McLemore, III
- Dr. Richard Moore
- Dr. Lyle Muller
- Dr. Nicholas Odum
- Dr. Mandy Olson
- Dr. Garrett Orr
- Dr. Susan Orwick-Barnes
- Dr. Tena Phillips
- Dr. William Powell
- Dr. John Rader
- Dr. Marcus Randall
- Dr. Ruth Ross Edmonds
- Dr. Thomas Rumph
- Dr. Robert Shearer
- Dr. Wesley Singer
- Dr. Larry Smith
- Dr. Anuj Soni
- Dr. Lauren Teachout

- Dr. Robert Tuma
- Dr. William Wall
- Dr. James Walmsley
- Dr. Timothy Warise
- Dr. Hope Watson
- Dr. Benjamin Webber
- Dr. John R. Werther
- Dr. Brian West
- Dr. Kent White
- Dr. Darren Williams
- Dr. Nathan Wooten
- Dr. Artmas L. Worthy
- Dr. Matthew Yezerksi

**SILVER - \$150-299**

- Dr. John Acosta
- Dr. Jimmy E. Albright
- Dr. Christopher Arnold
- Dr. Robyn Atkinson
- Dr. Vincent Atkinson
- Dr. David Bailey
- Dr. Laurel Bateman
- Dr. Ashley Boling
- Dr. Gregory Boucek
- Dr. Brit Bowers
- Dr. Richard Bowles
- Dr. James Bragg
- Dr. George Brock
- Dr. James Burton
- Dr. James Cade
- Dr. Angela Cameron
- Dr. Robert Carney
- Dr. Sarah Clayton
- Dr. Marc Cohen

Dr. Vincent Copeland  
Dr. Jay Davis  
Dr. Eben DeArmond  
Dr. Matthew DeFelice  
Dr. Nathaniel Denson  
Dr. Gregory Denton  
Dr. John Diddle  
Dr. John Dinsmore  
Dr. Justin Dinsmore  
Dr. Drake Dudley  
Dr. Dale Dunn  
Dr. Chad Edwards  
Dr. Taylor Enochs Engler  
Dr. Robert Fields  
Dr. Alexandra Fili  
Dr. Jeff Fletcher  
Dr. Andrew R. Flipse  
Dr. Mike Glasmeier  
Dr. Brenton Glassell  
Dr. Clay Goins  
Dr. Jack E. Gotcher, Sr.  
Dr. Todd Gruen  
Dr. Vicki Guffey  
Dr. Andrew Hagan  
Dr. Robert Hale  
Dr. Katherine Hall  
Dr. Mark Hardison  
Dr. Megan Harris  
Dr. Matthew Hart  
Dr. Johnna Hayman  
Dr. P. Jan Henley  
Dr. Fred Heros  
Dr. Marsha Hickey  
Dr. Jeffery Higgs  
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Dr. Brandon Hodge  
Dr. Paul Holliday  
Dr. Christina Honey  
Dr. Lee Ann Hovious  
Dr. Donald Hughart  
Dr. Elizabeth Jackson  
Dr. William Johnson  
Dr. Alan Jones  
Dr. Deborah Jones  
Dr. Derek Jones  
Dr. Nadim Jubran  
Dr. Goodloe Keltner  
Dr. Caleb King  
Dr. David Kizer

Dr. Alexander Knoell  
Dr. Kenneth Lamb  
Dr. Edward Lane  
Dr. John Law  
Dr. Jonathan Long  
Dr. William Ludden  
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Dr. John Martin  
Dr. David McNeely  
Dr. Charles McBryer  
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Dr. David McNutt  
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Dr. David Miranda  
Dr. Randall Montgomery  
Dr. Robert Moore  
Dr. Jane Moore  
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Dr. David Netherton  
Dr. Daniel Newton  
Dr. Kristi Newton  
Dr. Martha Nicholson  
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Dr. John Osborn  
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Dr. Adam Pitts  
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Dr. Jason Primm  
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Dr. Samuel Rickman  
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Dr. Leon Stanislav  
Dr. David Stanley  
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Dr. Jason Strever  
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Dr. Hugh Thompson  
Dr. Christopher Torti  
Dr. Robert Trim  
Dr. Amy Trim  
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Dr. Michael Vaughan  
Dr. Ryan Vick  
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Dr. Dennis Watts  
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Dr. Tommy Whited  
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Dr. Robert Whitfield  
Dr. David Wickness  
Dr. John Williams  
Dr. Qi Wang

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Dr. Ryan Dagen  
Dr. Zachary Hutchens  
Dr. Muriel Law  
Dr. Ivo Miller  
Dr. Kristy Stanislav-Doughman

# 24 Wins IN 2024

Together, we achieved so much at the Tennessee Dental Association this year, from **ADVANCING KEY LEGISLATION** to **PROVIDING NEW RESOURCES** that help you and your patients succeed. Renew today and help us score more wins in 2025!

**1** Secured passage of dental insurance reform legislation tackling issues including bundling, downcoding, non-covered services, and virtual credit cards.

**2** Launched **TDA CE Live**, giving members free access to live webinars.



**3** Welcomed attendees from 21 states and 3 Canadian provinces to the growing Music City Dental Conference.



**4** Kept members informed with 6 *TDA News* digital newsletters and 50 weekly e-News bulletins.

**5** Expanded **TDA Services** with more exclusive deals and discounts for TDA members.



**6** Offered continued support to local societies by hosting annual training sessions.

**7** Visited Tennessee dental schools to connect with students and share the benefits of TDA membership



**8** Welcomed over 80 new members to the TDA community.

**9** Successfully brought back **Tennessee Dentists' Day on the Hill**—amplifying our voice at the Tennessee Legislature.



**10** The **TDA Relief Fund** provided financial support to member dentists affected by Hurricane Helene, helping them recover and rebuild.

**11** Mobilized a grassroots network of dentists, resulting in over 500 emails and hundreds of calls to legislators.

**12** Hosted our first regional **New Dentist event**, creating opportunities for connection in local communities.



**13** Protected hundreds of TDA members with **MedPro Malpractice Insurance**, including the first year free for new dental graduates practicing in Tennessee.

**14** **TDA Foundation** awarded \$27,000 in grants to improve oral health initiatives.



**15** Expanded the **TDA staff team** to deliver even greater support and service to our members.

**16** Took action for dentistry's future as Tennessee dentists and students teamed up in D.C. to advocate for the profession.



**17** Grew the **TDA Insurance Agency's BCBST health plan** allowing members to offer team health insurance.

**18** Contributed \$66,000 to dental-friendly state candidates through the bipartisan Tennessee Dental PAC.



**19** Conducted a **TennCare survey** to examine key issues facing providers and drive change in 2025.

**20** Released the second edition of the **Member Benefits Guide**—your resource for maximizing your membership.

**21** Advanced license portability as one of the first 7 states in the **DDH Compact**, allowing dentists and hygienists to practice across state lines.

**22** Launched **TDA CE On-Demand**: a growing library of online CE courses.



**23** Expanded the **TDA Career Center**, connecting more employers and job seekers in the dental industry.

**24** Volunteered alongside the **Memphis Dental Society** at the annual **Mid-South Mission of Mercy**, supporting their charitable dental clinic.





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# TDA LEADERSHIP POSITIONS FOR 2025-2026

## HOUSE ELECTED POSITIONS FOR TDA OFFICER

Deadline February 28, 2025

TDA members interested in being nominated for one of the following officer positions must submit the following documents to the TDA by February 28, 2025 (required for new nominees only):

1. Letter of Interest
2. CV
3. Conflict of Interest Statement

Positions for election:

### **PRESIDENT-ELECT**

- Active or life member of the TDA for at least five years
- One-year term which automatically succeeds to the office of President for one-year and Immediate Past President for one-year.
- Board policy suggests candidates be from Chattanooga Area, Fourth District, and Sixth District.
- Duties found in TDA Bylaws, Chapter VII, Section 80.B.

PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 12

## IN MEMORIAM

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

### **Dr. John Winfred**

Dr. John Winfred Talley was a member of the American Dental Association, the Tennessee Dental Association, and the Seventh District Dental Society.

### **Dr. Philip J. Nunnally**

Dr. Philip J. Nunnally 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

## STAFFED COMPONENT 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

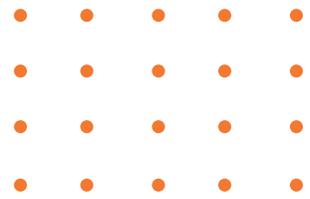
**Nashville Dental Society**  
Executive Director: Kristen Stewart  
(615) 628-3300  
director@nashvilledental.org

**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: Katie Nelson  
(901) 682-4928  
info@memphisdentalsociety.org





# TDA LEADERSHIP POSITIONS FOR 2025-2026

## SPEAKER OF THE TDA HOUSE OF DELEGATES

(Speaker Ken Randall is eligible for re-election)

- Active or life member of the TDA for at least five years
- One-year term and limited to six terms
- Duties found in TDA Bylaws, Chapter VII, Section 80.D.

## SECRETARY

(Robert Carney III is eligible for re-election)

- Active or life member of the TDA for at least five years
- One-year term and limited to six terms
- Duties found in TDA Bylaws, Chapter VII, Section 80.E.

## TREASURER

(Jay Davis is eligible for re-election)

- Active or life member of the TDA for at least five years
- One-year term and limited to six terms
- Duties found in TDA Bylaws, Chapter VII, Section 80.F.

## EAST TENNESSEE VICE PRESIDENT

- Active or Life member of the Association
- Two-year term on the TDA Board of Trustees
- Bylaws require candidates to be from the East Tennessee Grand Division. Trustee agreement suggests candidates be from the Second District.
- Duties found in TDA Bylaws, Chapter VII, Section 80.C.

## TRUSTEE POSITIONS ELECTION BY COMPONENTS / DEADLINE ONE WEEK PRIOR TO ELECTION

Eligibility for trustee positions must be confirmed by the TDA Executive Office **before election** by their component society. Send Conflict of Interest Statement to the TDA Executive Office at least one week prior to component election meeting.

Trustee Positions for election or re-election for term beginning May 3, 2025:

- Trustee / Second District (Hope Watson is not eligible for re-election.)
- Trustee / Chattanooga Area (Kevin Bryant is eligible for re-election.)
- Trustee / Fourth District (Bob Tuma is eligible for re-election)

## BASIC INFORMATION:

**Eligibility:** Must an active or life member, in good standing of the TDA for at least five years and a fully privileged member of his/her component society for at least three years.

**Term:** Three-year term and limited to two terms.

**Duties:** Found in TDA Bylaws, Chapter IV, Section 70.

### PLEASE SUBMIT DOCUMENTS TO:

Andrea Hayes, Executive Director  
andrea@tndental.org



# CARING FOR YOUNG SMILES

**Personal Journeys, Professional Wisdom,  
and the Magic of Pediatric Dentistry**

In this Q&A, we'll hear from Dr. Robert & Mirna Caldwell, and Dr. Daniel Holsinger, who share their personal and professional journeys in the field of pediatric dentistry. From the inspiration behind choosing dentistry as a career to the unique challenges and rewards of working with young patients, these dentists provide valuable insights into the world of pediatric dental care. Whether it's making dental visits a positive experience or offering advice to aspiring dentists, our featured pediatric dentists will offer a glimpse into the lighter, more personal moments of their practices – those unexpected and heartwarming interactions that make this specialty so special. Let's dive in and learn from their experiences, passion, and dedication to providing care to the youngest of patients.



“ THE BEAUTY OF WORKING WITH KIDS IS THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE A FILTER. THEY CRACK ME UP ALL THE TIME.”



**PERSONAL BACKGROUND**

**What inspired you to pursue a career in dentistry, and how did you decide on specializing in pediatrics?**

**Dr. Robert Caldwell (RC):** My father encouraged me to become a dentist because he felt the work schedule would be much more favorable than his schedule as a medical doctor. He also recognized that dentistry provided a chance to run a business in several capacities which he felt suited my career aspirations. Of course, he was right! I chose to pursue pediatric dentistry during my second year of dental school when a first-year pediatric dentistry resident encouraged me to be his assistant during his year-end clinical exam. I was instantly hooked.

**Dr. Mirna Caldwell (MC):** I really liked working with people (especially children) and I also have always enjoyed working with my hands, so I knew a career as a surgeon or dentist would be fun.

**Dr. Daniel Holsinger (DH):** I was inspired to attend dental school after a career fair in High School. A local dentist spent time showing me different procedures in dentistry. During dental school I had no intention on specializing. After practicing general dentistry for a few years, I discovered that I really enjoyed working with the younger population of patients.

**Can you share your educational and career journey that led you to where you are today?**

**RC:** I attended college at UT Martin in west Tennessee, then Tufts University School of Dental Medicine in Boston for dental school and pediatric dental residency. My future wife was a year behind me in dental school and pediatric dental residency, so I worked for a few pediatric dentists in Boston and some of the surrounding towns. There were no opportunities for practice ownership in Boston, so we bought a practice in Nashville after a few years of associateship in the Boston area.

**MC:** I attended Tufts University as an undergraduate and continued my education at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine. I realized quickly that my dental skills with children came naturally and that minimizing their fears brought me so much joy. After four years of dental school, it was a big decision on whether or not to go to school for three more years! I was excited to start my life and my career as a dentist. However, I thought that if I am to work with children, I would want to be the utmost expert in pediatrics, which requires doing residency. So, I did! I earned my specialty certificate in Pediatric Dentistry at Tufts University/New England Medical Center, an intense three-year program focused on the growth and development of children and their unique needs.

**DH:** I received a Bachelor of Science degree in biology with a minor in chemistry from Union University. Completed my Doctor of Dental Surgery from the University of Tennessee Memphis College of Dentistry. After spending three years working as a general dentist, I returned to the University of Tennessee Memphis College of Dentistry, where I completed a Master of Dental Science degree and certificate in pediatric dentistry.



## What has been the most fulfilling part of your journey to where you are today?

**RC:** There are three fulfilling parts to this journey – becoming board certified in Pediatric Dentistry, marrying my wife and partner in practice, and starting our own practice together.

**MC:** Having a pediatric private practice that sees children from all over the world and engaging with parents of these different cultures has been very fulfilling. Not to mention helping kids not have dental pain and guide them on a more preventive path.

**DH:** Interacting with patients, parents and the team I work with in the office.

### INSIGHTS INTO PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

## What do you find most rewarding about working with children as patients?

**RC:** The impact we have on their lives, not only as clinicians, but also as role models. When a child tells me he or she wants to be a dentist, gives me a picture they colored, tells me a five-minute story about anything without me asking, says um five times in one sentence, or runs to me to give me a hug – these are the things that make me excited to go to work!

**MC:** I love and appreciate their honesty and their willingness to sometimes try an experience that they think will be scary.

**DH:** The opportunity of creating a positive dental experience, where the children are excited for their dental appointment. Being able to witness kids grow up and the relationships with the families.

## What are some unique challenges pediatric dentists face, and how do you address them?

**RC:** Children do not hold back their feelings – good or bad. We have to deal with a roller coaster of emotions with patients and parents. Access to care is an over-used cliché these days, but it truly is a problem in our profession with dwindling OR access, low reimbursement, and shrinking networks.

**MC:** Parenting has changed a lot in the past 19+ years that I have been practicing. Adjusting to every parent's style and comfort level in how they would want me to engage with their child can be very challenging. You cannot apply the same techniques or use the same words on every child in the chair.

**DH:** Insurance reimbursement. The costs of running a practice are increasing every year but insurance reimbursement doesn't mirror the rise in costs.

## How do you approach making dental visits a positive experience for children and their families?

**RC:** We have the best assistants and hygienists who make the visit fun for the patients.

**MC:** I usually start out with a sincere compliment about their outfit or ask about the stuffed animal they have brought with them. I ask about school, sports and all things they enjoy talking about. I truly love seeing my patients and interacting with them in a way that makes them have a positive experience is my favorite part of the job!

**DH:** Try to make it fun. I meet many parents who had negative memories as a kid in the dental office and that can rub off on the kids.



**What advice would you give to dental students or new graduates considering a career in pediatric dentistry?**

**RC:** Get as much hands-on experience as you can. Spend as much free time in the pediatric dental clinic at your dental school as possible and get to know the faculty.

**DH:** Get as much exposure to the different specialties. It's ok to graduate and practice dentistry before making a decision to pursue a graduate program.

**LIGHTHEARTED MOMENTS & LESSONS FROM THE CHAIR**

**What's the funniest or most unexpected thing a young patient has ever said or done during a visit?**

**RC:** A three-year-old boy started snickering in the chair when I was doing his checkup. I leaned over to ask him what was happening, and I made a sour face. He lost it and exclaimed as loud as he could that he farted, all in front of his mom!

**MC:** So many funny stories to share, honestly. The beauty of working with kids is that they do not have a filter. They crack me up all the time. One time, after examining a little boy, he turned to me with a look of concern and asked: "Did you know that you have hair up in my nose?" Hilarious!

**DH:** I was entering a treatment room when the six year old patient shouts "Dr. Daniel! Do what you need to do! I am serious about getting this tooth fixed!"

**What's your go-to way to calm a nervous or reluctant young patient? Any "magic tricks" or secrets?**

**RC:** I make the patient participate in the procedure. Anything to win their trust.

**DH:** I like to tell jokes. I have many dad jokes. Anything to distract the patient from thinking about getting their tooth worked on. Kids apparel and shoes are of what they like. If a kid is wearing a Paw Patrol shirt, I will ask them who their favorite Paw Patrol pup is.

**What's the most memorable piece of artwork or thank-you note you've received from a young patient?**

**RC:** One patient gave us a collage with two dental houses representing Mr. Dentist and Miss Dentist.

**MC:** My patients and their families are some of the most thoughtful people. I have received countless drawings, artwork, hand-made jewelry, food, flowers, and plants. They all touch my heart and are truly special.

**DH:** There are some sweet notes from patients that I treasure.



## If you could give your younger self one piece of advice when starting dental school, what would it be?

**RC:** Take business courses.

**MC:** Follow your passion, not what people tell you is the best dental specialty or practice to have. People told me not to waste three more years of my life specializing in pediatrics because dentists see children in family practices all the time, without the extra years of school and training. I followed my heart, and I can tell you those people were all wrong. If you love a certain procedure or a specific patient population, put the extra time in and be the expert in your field. No shortcuts! It's worth your time to invest in your skills and expertise.

**DH:** Become involved with organized dentistry early with ASDA.



**DR. ROBERT  
CALDWELL**



**DR. MIRNA  
CALDWELL**



**DR. DANIEL  
HOLSINGER**

**Dr. Robert Caldwell and Dr. Mirna Caldwell** own *Caldwell Pediatric Dentistry* in Nashville. Dr. Mirna Caldwell is a native of Wakefield, Massachusetts, earned her undergraduate degree in Biology-Psychology from Tufts University in Medford, MA. Dr. Robert Caldwell is a Nashville native, received his undergraduate degree in Biology from the University of Tennessee, Martin. Dr. Robert and Mirna Caldwell both earned their DMD degree from Tufts University School of Dental Medicine and completed a three-year pediatric dentistry residency at Tufts/New England Medical Center. Together, they are dedicated to creating healthy smiles and positive dental experiences for the youngest of patients.

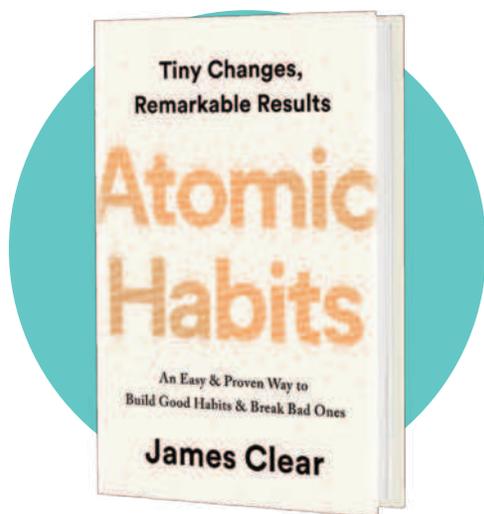
**Dr. Daniel Holsinger** earned his Bachelor of Science in Biology with a minor in Chemistry from Union University before completing his Doctorate of Dental Surgery at the University of Tennessee Memphis College of Dentistry in 2010. After three years as a general dentist, he returned to his alma mater to complete a Master of Dental Science and pediatric dentistry residency in 2015. Following his training, Dr. Holsinger practiced pediatric dentistry in Nashville for three years before settling in Chattanooga, where he now provides expert care to his young patients.

## BOOKS TO KICKSTART YOUR YEAR

# BUILDING BETTER HABITS

by **LOURDES AREVALO**

Each new year brings a desire to improve, learn from the past year, and set goals and resolutions for the year ahead. If you're anything like me, a type A personality – I'm sure your wheels are turning, and you have an idea of what you'd like to focus on for the year ahead. If not, I've read my fair share of books throughout the years, and these are some of my favorite books on goal-setting and personal development. I hope they can spark some interest and encourage you in your goal-setting journey this year.



### **ATOMIC HABITS BY JAMES CLEAR**

The core idea behind James Clear's *Atomic Habits* is that you can be 1% better daily. The small habits, repeated consistently, will lead to significant and lasting change. James Clear writes, "If you can get 1% better each day for one year, you'll end up 37 times better by the time you're done." It's a practical framework for building better habits and moving away from negative ones. Clear explains every habit involves a cue, craving, response, and reward and follows that with an introduction to the four laws of behavior change.

Understanding this concept can help us shift focus from outcomes to processes.

While you may not see an immediate result, long-term consistency will help you achieve goals more effectively. As Clear says, "Habits are the compound interest of self-improvement." There is no need to go from 0 to 100 in the new year; simply being 1% better in your focus of choice will result in a desirable outcome.

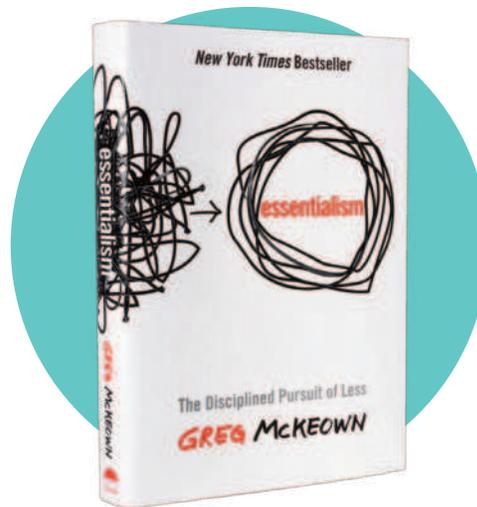
## ESSENTIALISM: THE DISCIPLINED PURSUIT OF LESS BY GREG MCKEOWN

In short, Greg McKeown's *Essentialism* advocates for quality over quantity in work and life. McKeown writes, "The way of the Essentialist means living by design, not by default. Instead of making choices reactively, the Essentialist deliberately distinguishes the vital few from the trivial many, eliminates the non-essentials, and then removes obstacles so the essential things have clear, smooth passage."

This book is timely – it makes you pause and reflect on your life. Society's obsession with doing more tasks, having more commitments, and staying busy for busyness' sake can detract us from leaning in and creating space for the essential (meaningful goals) that truly matter. With a focus on what's most important to you, *Essentialism* offers a roadmap for achieving results without the overwhelm of unnecessary commitments.

McKeown's work encourages us to hone in on the "vital few" by saying "no" to everything else. He writes, "It is a discipline you apply each and every time you are faced with a decision about whether to say yes or whether to politely decline. It's a method for making the tough trade-off between lots of good things and a few really great things. It's about learning how to do less but better so you can achieve the highest possible return on every precious moment of your life."

In essence, our selectivity can give us the clarity, freedom, and space to focus on the things that truly matter. Sometimes, less truly is more.



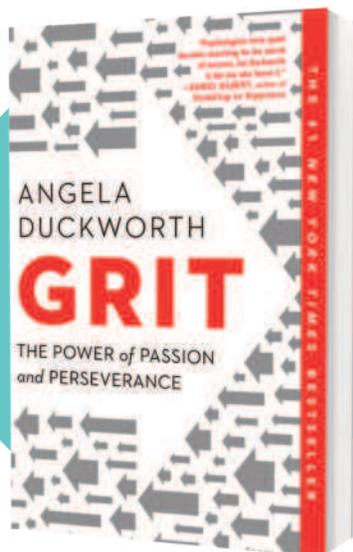
## GRIT: THE POWER OF PASSION AND PERSEVERANCE BY ANGELA DUCKWORTH

Angela Duckworth is a renowned psychologist, professor, and author. She is most known for her research on grit, perseverance, and resilience. Her book explores why passion and determination are more fundamental to success than talent alone. Drawing on research and personal anecdotes, Duckworth explains how grit combines sustained interest and consistent effort. "Grit," she writes, "is about doing the hard work, day in and day out, without immediate reward." Her book is an inspiring guide for anyone seeking to achieve their goals despite the inevitable challenges that come along the way.

As we step into this new year, my hope is these books guide your journey toward meaningful growth. You can build better habits with *Atomic Habits*, focus on what truly matters with *Essentialism*, or cultivate resilience and perseverance with *Grit*. They each offer actionable wisdom that we can practice in the year ahead.

The path to achieving your goals isn't about perfection; it's about progress, consistency, and aligning your actions with your values. May we master the small habits, focus on the vital, and persevere through the challenges that may come along the way.

Here's to a new year full of intentional growth!



# PLAN YOUR PLATE

## SHIFTING TO A HEALTHY EATING STYLE



# W

hat's the eating style that's best for health? Is it a Mediterranean eating plan? Vegetarian? Low carb? With all the eating styles out there, it's hard to know which one to follow.

Healthy eating is one of the best ways to prevent or delay health problems. Eating well, along with getting enough physical activity, can help you lower your risk of health problems like heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and more. To reach your goals, experts advise making small, gradual changes.

"The best diet to follow is one that is science based, that allows you to meet your nutritional requirements, and that you can stick to in the long run," says Dr. Holly Nicastro, an NIH nutrition research expert. "It's not going to do you any good to follow a diet that has you eating things that you don't like."

The main source of science-based nutrition advice is the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. These guidelines describe which nutrients you need and how much. They also point out which

ones to limit or avoid.

"Every five years, an expert panel reviews all available scientific evidence regarding nutrition and health and uses that to develop the dietary guidelines," Nicastro explains.

The guidelines are regularly updated, because our scientific understanding of what's healthy is continuously evolving. These changes can be confusing, but the key recommendations have been consistent over time. In general, healthy eating means getting a variety of foods, limiting certain kinds of carbs and fats, watching out for salt, and being aware of your portion sizes.

### Limit Added Sugars

Added sugar is the extra sugar added to foods and drinks during preparation. Corn syrup, high-fructose corn syrup, brown sugar, and honey are examples of sweeteners added to foods and drinks, especially regular sodas.

"The sugars present normally in milk and fruit are not considered added sugar," explains Dr. Kimber Stanhope, a nutrition researcher at the University of California, Davis.

Stanhope's research focuses on the effects of added sugar on the development of disease. Her studies have shown that consuming too much high-fructose corn syrup may increase the risk of weight gain and heart disease.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans suggest a daily limit on added sugar of no more than 10% of calories. That's about the amount in 16 ounces of regular soda (190 calories). You can find information about added sugars on most Nutrition Facts labels now.

"Anybody can improve their diet by substituting fruits and vegetables for sugar as their snacks, as part of their dessert, and as part of their meals," says Stanhope. "There are no advantages of consuming added sugar."

“Anybody can improve their diet by substituting fruits and vegetables for sugar as their snacks, as part of their dessert, and as part of their meals.”

# WISE CHOICES

Make Healthy Choices



## Consider Your Fats

Fat is high in calories. Getting too many calories can contribute to obesity, which raises your risk for heart disease and other health problems. But there are different kinds of fats.

Fats that are liquid at room temperature, or oils, are generally healthier than those that are solid. Solid fats are found in high amounts in beef, chicken, pork, cheese, butter, and whole milk. Solid fats have more saturated fats than liquid oils. Liquid oils—such as canola, corn, olive, or peanut oil—have mostly unsaturated or polyunsaturated fats.

The dietary guidelines encourage consuming liquid oils rather than solid fats. Nicasastro advises that you examine the fat content on the Nutrition Facts label. The label shows how much saturated fat a product contains. Experts suggest that you aim for getting less than 10% of your calories from saturated fats.

“For the average person, that’s going to be less than 20 grams of saturated fat per day,” Nicasastro says.

For example, a small cheeseburger may have 5 grams of saturated fat, a typical cheeseburger may have 13, and a double cheeseburger with bacon may have 24!

## Check Labels for Salt

The Nutrition Facts label also shows salt, or sodium. Experts advise you to limit salt, which tends to be very high in processed foods.

If you eat salty, highly processed food, you can quickly go over the daily limit of one teaspoon of salt (2,300 milligrams, or mg, of sodium). Two hot dogs might have 900 mg of sodium. A can of ravioli might have 1400 mg. Other examples of salty, highly processed foods are bacon, frozen pizzas, and salad dressings.

Along with a lot of added salt, processed foods might have preservatives, sweeteners, and other substances added during preparation.

“Stuff that comes in a box or a bag that has a whole lot of different ingredients—many of which you can’t read and understand or pronounce—those things are highly processed and generally bad for your health,” explains Dr. David C. Goff, Jr., a public health expert at NIH.

Eat a variety of foods—vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, nuts, seeds, lean meat, seafood, eggs, milk, yogurt, and cheese.

Limit foods that are low in vitamins and minerals.

Avoid foods with added sugar.

Replace foods containing saturated fats (like butter or lard) with healthier unsaturated fat options.

Watch out for foods high in salt.



## Make a Meal Plan

“Figuring out what to eat is less than half the battle,” Nicastro says. “Sticking to your plan is a bigger challenge. So that’s why it helps to be really prepared and plan ahead.”

You’re much more likely to stick to your meal plan if you have healthy food that is ready to go. Some people find it helpful to prepare meals for the week in advance so that healthy food is within reach.

The DASH eating plan is a good start. DASH was developed by NIH-supported researchers to help people lower blood pressure without medicine, but it’s for

anyone. Studies have shown that it reduces the risk of many diseases.

“The DASH diet is very flexible because you can follow DASH without going to a specialty grocery store. You can follow it with items that are very familiar to most people in this country,” Nicastro says.

The DASH eating plan is rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, seeds, nuts, and fish. Compared to the typical American diet, it’s lower in salt, added sugars, fats, and red meat. It’s also higher in fiber, potassium, magnesium, and calcium than the typical American diet.

“Anybody can follow it, despite specific

preferences or culture,” Nicastro says. It even works for people who are vegetarian or only eat Kosher foods.

## Get Expert Advice

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans are designed to help people avoid developing obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. But everyone is different. You may have needs and risks that aren’t like the average American. Talk to your health care provider about your unique nutritional needs.

“A great resource for someone to help you with your diet is a registered dietitian nutritionist, or DN,” Nicastro says.

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Source: NIH News in Health. For the latest news from the National Institute of Health, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, visit [newsinhealth.nih.gov](http://newsinhealth.nih.gov)



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# NEW DENTIST CORNER



## Overcoming imposter syndrome: Empowering dentists to reach their full potential

**IN THE COMPETITIVE WORLD OF DENTISTRY, THE PRESSURE TO EXCEL CAN OFTEN LEAD TO FEELINGS OF INADEQUACY AND SELF-DOUBT.**

Imposter syndrome, characterized by persistent feelings of being a fraud despite evidence of success, is a common hurdle that many dentists face on their professional journey. Unfortunately, these feelings can hold back talented individuals from reaching their full potential, hindering both personal growth and professional advancement.

In today's society, where diversity and inclusion are championed, it's disheartening that factors such as race, sexual orientation and religion can still influence people's perceptions of themselves within the dental profession. Despite efforts to create an equal playing field, the reality is that biases and stereotypes persist, contributing to the prevalence of imposter syndrome among

dentists.

For many, the fear of not measuring up to societal expectations or industry standards can be overwhelming, leading to a persistent sense of fraudulence. This mindset not only undermines individual confidence but can also impact patient care and overall job satisfaction.

However, it's essential to recognize that imposter syndrome is a common experience and does not reflect one's true capabilities or qualifications. Overcoming imposter syndrome requires a proactive approach and a commitment to self-reflection and personal growth. Here are some strategies that dentists can employ to overcome imposter syndrome and thrive in their careers:

### **1. SEEK SUPPORT**

Building a strong support network of colleagues, mentors and peers can provide valuable perspective and encouragement. Sharing experiences and challenges with others who understand can help normalize feelings of self-doubt and foster a sense of belonging within the dental community.

### **2. PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION**

Instead of dwelling on perceived shortcomings or mistakes, practice self-compassion and kindness toward yourself.

Recognize that everyone makes mistakes and failure is a natural part of the learning process. Treat yourself with the same empathy and understanding you would offer to a patient or colleague facing a similar situation.

### **3. SET REALISTIC GOALS**

Break down larger goals into smaller, more manageable tasks and celebrate achievements along the way. Setting realistic expectations for yourself can help alleviate feelings of inadequacy and maintain a sense of progress and accomplishment.

### **4. CHALLENGE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS**

Learn to recognize and challenge negative thought patterns that contribute to imposter syndrome. Replace self-critical thoughts with positive affirmations and focus on your strengths and achievements. Remember that your worth as a dentist is not determined by external validation or comparison to others.

### **5. INVEST IN CONTINUED LEARNING**

Embrace a growth mindset and prioritize lifelong learning and professional development. Stay abreast of the latest advancements in dentistry through continuing education courses, workshops and conferences.

“For many, the fear of not measuring up to **societal expectations** or industry standards can be overwhelming, leading to a persistent sense of fraudulence.”

Building expertise and confidence in your field can help counteract feelings of imposter syndrome and enhance your credibility as a dental professional.

**6. JOIN ORGANIZED DENTISTRY**

Engaging with organized dentistry associations and societies can provide valuable resources, networking opportunities and support for dentists at all

stages of their careers. Connecting with peers who share similar experiences and challenges can foster a sense of community and belonging, helping to combat feelings of isolation and imposter syndrome.

By implementing these strategies and fostering a supportive environment within the dental community, dentists can overcome imposter syndrome and unlock

their full potential. Remember that your unique perspective, skills and experiences have value, and you deserve to thrive in your chosen profession. Together, we can create a culture of empowerment and inclusivity where every dentist feels confident and capable of making a meaningful impact in the field of dentistry.

*This article originally appeared October 3, 2024, in the ADA New Dentist Blog, [newdentistblog.ada.org](http://newdentistblog.ada.org).*

Blogger Jordan A. Pierre, D.D.S., has been practicing dentistry since 2020. He is a graduate of the Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry, where he earned his dental degree, and Xavier University of Louisiana, where he completed his undergraduate studies in biology. Dr. Pierre is an active member of several associations, including the American Dental Association — where he is a wellness ambassador, Tennessee Dental Association, National Dental Association, Academy of General Dentistry and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. He has earned accolades such as the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Center of Excellence Scholar Award and the Gold Foil Award from the Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry and the 2024 10 Under 10 Prestigious Alumni Award from Meharry Medical College.



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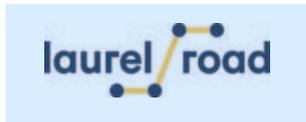
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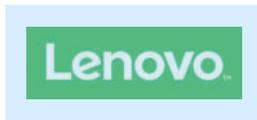
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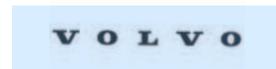
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