

GDASM

ACTION

Winter Edition 2024

Georgia Dental Association



Dr. Jamie Mitchell
155th President
Georgia Dental Association



Why Attend the 2024 GDA Annual Convention and Expo on Jekyll Island?

Prepare yourself for the 2024 GDA Annual Convention and Expo as we take over the shores of Jekyll Island July 3–6. More than just a professional gathering, this event promises an immersive experience that seamlessly blends learning, networking, family enjoyment, and the allure of an extended vacation. Go on, book a few more days—stay a little longer.



Forge Lasting Connections:

We provide a dynamic platform for dental professionals to converge, exchange ideas, and foster collaborations that grow our evolving community. Connect with peers and mentors that extend beyond the event, creating a network of support and shared knowledge.

Elevate Your Expertise:

The convention's expert sessions are designed not only to enrich your professional acumen but to empower you with insights that will redefine the trajectory of your practice. This includes latest trends, innovations, and advancements in dental care.



Family-Friendly Adventures:

Bring your loved ones! Jekyll Island offers an array of family-friendly activities, from beach adventures to wildlife encounters, ensuring every member of the family has the best summer experience.



Tailor Your Stay to Your Budget:

Our hotels offer a wide range of room pricing, allowing attendees to customize their experience. From \$264 to \$599, there's an accommodation option for every budget.

July 4th Party & Fireworks:

Picture yourself on the beaches of Jekyll Island, surrounded by friends and family, as the night sky erupts in fireworks and bright colors! You don't want to miss this epic celebration!

We cannot wait to see you in July on Jekyll Island!



THE FUN STUFF	
JUL 4TH 10:00 AM	Kickoff Brunch & Awards Ceremony
JUL 4TH 5:00 PM	New Dentist Reception
JUL 4TH 6:30 PM	4th of July Extravaganza & Fireworks
JUL 5TH 7:30 PM	PJ Party for the Family
JUL 6TH 8:00 AM	GDAPAC Golf Tournament

Your Guide to the GDA Convention Hotels on Jekyll Island

As anticipation builds for the 2024 GDA Annual Convention, July 3–July 6, we're thrilled to unveil a selection of hotels that promise an unforgettable stay for you and your family. Nestled within the coast of Jekyll Island, each hotel offers a unique experience tailored to meet the needs of any budget.

Helpful Tip: Hotels will sell out quickly since it's a holiday week. Register for the convention early to get your first choice of hotel.



1. The Westin Jekyll Island: Oceanfront Tranquility - \$\$\$\$

Discover a four-star luxury retreat at The Westin Jekyll Island, where oceanfront meets Southern charm. Conveniently located in Beach Village, this upscale resort is walking distance to the Jekyll Island Convention Center. Wellness-inspired amenities, including direct access to a 20-mile bike path and a 3-mile running path, cater to the health-conscious. Relax in the beachfront outdoor pool or savor a meal at The Reserve, offering indoor and outdoor seating with prime steaks and Georgia seafood. Complimentary shuttles to golf courses and the Jekyll Island Tennis Center make exploration effortless.



2. Jekyll Ocean Club: Modern Elegance - \$\$\$

Jekyll Ocean Club is the modern, all-suite addition to the historic Jekyll Island Club Resort. With 40 suites, a beachfront kitchen and bar, and a spacious outdoor pool deck, it epitomizes luxury. All rooms have a private balcony with views of the Atlantic Ocean. Located next to The Westin and walking distance to the Convention Center, it promises a new level of luxury with a boutique feel.



3. Jekyll Island Club: Historic Charm - \$\$\$

Step back in time at the Jekyll Island Club, housed in the famed clubhouse dating back to 1888. This AAA Four Diamond resort boasts late-19th Century charm, historically inspired accommodations, and direct access to the Jekyll Island Historic District. Enjoy a sun-soaked swimming pool, special events, and curated programming. A complimentary shuttle is available to the ocean shores & the Convention Center which enhances the resort experience.

4. Courtyard Jekyll Island: Coastal Comfort - \$\$\$

Situated in the heart of Jekyll Island, Courtyard offers a tranquil stay with modern amenities. With an outdoor pool, whirlpool, and a modern fitness center, it's an ideal choice for those seeking comfort. Spacious guestrooms, complimentary WiFi, and a free hotel shuttle make for a convenient and enjoyable stay.



5. Residence Inn by Marriott Jekyll Island: Extended-Stay Luxury - \$\$\$\$

For extended stays and a touch of luxury, Residence Inn by Marriott is your haven. Connected with the Courtyard hotel, it offers spacious suites with ocean views, fully equipped kitchens, and complimentary breakfast. The largest outdoor heated freshwater pool on Jekyll Island adds to the allure, making it an ideal choice for a memorable stay.

6. Home2 Suites by Hilton: Contemporary Comfort - \$\$

Experience a modern retreat at Home2 Suites by Hilton, centrally located within Jekyll Island Beach Village and walking distance to the convention center. Offering contemporary and spacious suites with a fully equipped kitchen, complimentary breakfast, and outdoor amenities including a pool and fire pit, this hotel is a standout choice for convenience and style.



As the GDA convention graces Jekyll Island in 2024, these hotels extend a warm invitation for you to indulge in the perfect blend of luxury, comfort, and coastal charm. Whichever you choose, expect an experience that transcends the ordinary, leaving you with lasting memories of your time on the island with your fellow GDA members and family.



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As a dentist, you face unique challenges every day. That's why at MedPro Group, we created an industry-leading malpractice policy that keeps you safe. Here's what else you can expect with MedPro on your side.

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DO YOUR PATIENTS SUFFER FROM ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS

EAR
Ear pain • Ringing in ears
Dizziness • Vertigo

JAW
Clicking, popping jaw joints
Pain in cheek • Limited opening

NECK
Lack of mobility/stiffness
Neck Pain • Tired/sore muscles
Arm/finger numbness

HEAD PAIN
Forehead • Temples
Migraine-type • Sinus-type

EYES
Pain behind eye • Blood-shot eyes • Sensitive to light

TEETH
Clenching/grinding at night
Looseness & soreness of back teeth

If your patients have any of these symptoms and are not responding to treatments, they may be suffering from a TMJ disorder. Problems within the jaw can produce a myriad of symptoms that, at first glance, might appear to be totally unrelated to the temporomandibular complex. Our dedicated team of professionals have years of training and are happy to assist you in the diagnosis and treatment of possible craniomandibular/temporomandibular disorders.



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UPCOMINGEVENTS

Visit gadental.org/events for the full GDA calendar.



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2024 GDA BOT and HOD Meeting Dates

BOT Meetings

- **March 15–16, 2024**
Atlanta Marriott Northwest at Galleria
- **July 3, 2024**
8am, Jekyll Island Convention Center
- **September 13, 2024**
10am, GDA Office
- **December 7, 2024**
8am, Location TBD

HOD Meetings

- **July 3, 2024**
*1pm (caucus lunches 12pm),
Jekyll Island Convention Center*
- **December 7, 2024**
1pm (caucus lunches 12pm), Location TBD

MALPRACTICE MINUTE

Inadequate Informed Consent Leads to Legal Action Against Dentist

As a dentist, obtaining proper informed consent is crucial to ensure patients are aware of all the potential risks and outcomes of undergoing treatment. In this case study, a dentist fails to inform a patient about all the possible negative outcomes associated with dental implants, and when the patient's implants eventually fail, the dentist is sued for malpractice.

Key Concepts

- Obtaining informed consent
- How proper informed consent can mitigate malpractice risk
- Recording/documenting patient interactions

Background Facts

W, a retired 68-year-old woman, had been fully edentulous in her maxilla for over a decade, and she functioned adequately with a complete denture, which had been changed once and modified several times. She wore a lower removable partial denture which replaced five missing teeth and was very satisfied with every aspect of it. After seeing many recent television commercials talking about the great benefits of implants and implant-supported prostheses, she met with and discussed with her general dentist of many years, Dr. C, the potential for having upper implants (only), to be followed with a fixed bridge.

After examining W, clinically and radiographically, Dr. C determined that W had adequate bone anteriorly for implant placement, but placing posterior implants would require bilateral sinus lifts and grafting, which were procedures that W was unwilling to undergo. So, they both



agreed that four upper anterior implants would be placed by Dr. C such that a semi-precision removable partial would later be fabricated and placed after implant osseointegration.

Dr. C had taken many courses regarding both the surgical and restorative aspects of implants and had incorporated that into his practice. Dr. C was very technically oriented, which was reflected in his dentistry and in his office infrastructure: among the systems installed in each of his operating suites was a camera/audio set-up, about which he advised his patients, and which was legally permissible—according to his business attorneys—in his state of practice. In this regard, the consultation visits with W were recorded, as were informed consent discussions and

the dental procedures. Based upon this system, Dr. C did not employ “consent forms,” but instead conducted what he believed were casual, thorough, back-and-forth spoken interactions, very specific to each patient, to address what he believed were the important pieces of information to make his patients informed consumers.

On the day of surgery, Dr. C placed four maxillary implants without any apparent complications. He instructed W as to his usual post-operative protocols, and she followed all of them precisely. Two weeks after surgery, while wearing her existing denture, as modified by Dr. C for that purpose, she presented to the office with inflamed tissues around all the surgical sites, but no signs of infection; no

antibiotics were prescribed, but the need for excellent hygiene was reiterated. At a month after surgery, the patient appeared similarly from a clinical standpoint, stating that she was cleaning the areas and rinsing as instructed. Dr. C took a panoramic radiograph and saw what he feared were the beginning stages of implant loss, with some loss of bone at the coronal aspects of all the implants. That situation worsened still, as demonstrated on another panoramic several weeks later.

Dr. C reached the conclusion that the implants were failing and that they should be removed. After explaining this to W, who agreed, he proceeded to remove them, which was an easy process, given their mobility upon flap elevation. Dr. C relined the denture and replaced it, telling W that he would place a new set of implants after the area fully healed. W said that she did not want more implant surgery but would rather just keep her denture and receive a refund for the fees she paid for the implants. Dr. C was unwilling to give a refund, explaining to W that he performed every step of the procedures properly, so he did not understand why he should be returning what was a significant fee. Despite W's repeated request, Dr. C remained unwilling.

Legal Action

Upset about what she viewed as Dr. C's inappropriate stance, she contacted an attorney. As a first step, the attorney requested W's full set of records from Dr. C, who immediately provided copies of his chart and radiographs. When the attorney looked through what was provided, she asked W if she had signed a "consent form," to which W responded that she had not; but she told her attorney that there was a discussion before the procedure, which she believed was recorded. So, the attorney then requested a copy of all visual and audio records involving W, which were provided.

The attorney consulted with a dental expert who examined the records, but no errors in technique were found by that expert. However, the expert advised the attorney that there was no evidence in

any of the recordings that W had been advised of the possibility of implant failure, which was, according to the expert, a foreseeable and routinely advised risk. On behalf of W, her attorney instituted a malpractice lawsuit in which the sole claim was the failure to have obtained informed consent prior to the placement of implants.

Dr. C was provided with legal counsel by his malpractice carrier. Dr. C's attorney raised the issue with Dr. C of not having advised W of the potential risk of implant loss, to which Dr. C responded that he "always does that." Not until Dr. C viewed and listened to all recordings involving W did he acknowledge that he had apparently forgotten to advise W of that risk. With Dr. C's agreement, the matter was settled before any further legal steps were taken.

Takeaways

While the various states might differ as to whether conversations may lawfully be recorded, and under what conditions that may occur, Dr. C's jurisdiction did allow for exactly what he did (local attorneys are the best sources to learn whether recordings are permissible, and if so, the conditions under which they are). But dentists who choose to avail themselves of laws which allow for recording patient conversations should be aware that, in the event of litigation, those recordings might become available to other parties to the litigation and their attorneys. It is quite common for dentists who are sued to testify as to their usual course of conduct in practice, whether clinically or in communication; here, had a recording not been available, Dr. C would have likely—and seemingly in good faith—testified that, as he told his attorney, he "always" advises patients of the risk at issue, and that would have resulted in differing testimony by the opposing litigants, to be determined by a jury. But in this case, there was no dispute because of the tangible evidence that existed.

Dentists may have varying reasons for wanting to record their interactions with their patients, from memorializing conversations, to documenting their

clinical techniques and results, to wanting to do periodic self-reviews to make sure that their practice methods are working. Regardless of their intended use, recordings are clear and unwavering evidence of all actual events at hand, whether intended or not. So, as valuable as they might be, they can make their way back to surface in a litigation situation, whether that litigation involves a patient, business associate, or staff member.

Addressing the clinical picture discussed in this case study, it is a simple fact that implants do, at times, fail, despite all having been properly performed. The same goes for a variety of other dental procedures. But as the plaintiff's expert in this case appropriately noted, the fact that a result was undesired, alone, does not mean that there was actionable malpractice; for a malpractice case to succeed, there must not only be an injury, but that injury must have been caused by negligent treatment.

Next, we address the issue of informed consent. Although the specifics will differ between states, the concepts are generally constant: prior to a patient undergoing a procedure, they are entitled to be advised of the information necessary for them to become an educated consumer, to be able to make an intelligent choice as to what they might opt to undergo, or not. Here, even though the procedure was properly performed, the fact that W was not made an educated consumer in advance, and the procedure she agreed to without adequate knowledge led to an undesired result, led to a valid and viable lawsuit.

Finally, we note, without comment, that Dr. C opted against providing W with the fee refund she requested, and that was presumably a factor which led her to retain an attorney and institute suit. It is an entirely open question as to what actions W would have taken, if any, in the face of failed implants, if she had been given the refund she sought.

Malpractice Minute Contest:

<https://medprodental.com/claims/malpractice-minute>. 🗳️

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Atlanta, GA

Dr. J. Sedgie Newsom, General Chair & Dr. Troy H. Schulman, President

Schedule some time to visit our vast Exhibit Hall for a world of learning outside the classroom. Take a deep dive on the hottest topics in dentistry, taught by our world-class speakers and experts in the industry.

The Oral Systemic Connection | Digital Dentistry | Sleep Apnea | Restorative | Cosmetic Implants | Pharmacology | Pathology | Endodontics | Oral Surgery | Pankey Essentials 1 | Botox | OSHA | Opioids | Ethics | Hiring & Retaining Staff | Practice Ownership | Retirement Planning



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INMEMORIAM



Dr. Louis Sheldon Belinfante | 2/15/1937–10/1/2023

Dr. Belinfante was born in Winthrop, MA in 1937 and graduated from Boston College and the University of Pennsylvania School of Dentistry. He served in the U.S. Army and achieved the rank of Captain. His family included five children and his wife, Janice Barrett.

He moved to Georgia in 1969 and became a fan of the Braves and the Boston Red Sox. While maintaining his practice in oral and maxillofacial surgery until 2020, he helped found Smyrna Hospital and served as the President of the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons.



Dr. Lawson Kelly Broadrick | 8/5/1929–8/29/2023

Dr. Broadrick was born in Dalton, GA and graduated from Florida State University and Emory School of Dentistry. He served in the U.S. Air Force then met his wife of 60 years, Kathryn. They had four children.

Opening his practice in Atlanta in 1962, his celebrated career included co-founding and serving as president of The Georgia Academy of Dental Practice. He served as president of the L.D. Pankey Alumni Association, the Atlanta Dental Study Group, and the Emory University Dental School Alumni Association. He was honored with a fellowship from the American College of Dentists and awarded Honorable Fellow and the Discovery Award by the GDA.



Dr. Todd E. Bruno | 6/7/1957–8/10/2023

Dr. Todd E. Bruno of Jonesboro, tragically passed away as the result of an airplane accident on August 10. He was 66 years old. He is survived by his wife, Tassie and daughter, Jennie.

Dr. Bruno earned his DDS from the Emory School of Medicine in 1985, and he participated in hospital-based General Practice Residency through the VA Hospital and Grady Memorial. He was appointed to the National Dental Honor Society, OKU, and received the prosthodontic award. Dr. Todd was a Lifetime Member of the ADA, GDA, and the Northern District Dental Society.



Dr. George Revis Butler, Jr. | 10/16/1933–8/1/2023

Dr. Butler was a respected Periodontist who graduated from Emory University in 1953, and Emory University Dental School in 1957. He was also known as a motorcycle, train, and plane enthusiast. He is survived by his devoted wife of 66 years, Mary Kathryn, and two sons.

He served active duty in the U.S. Naval Dental Corps for four years, followed by 16 years in Reserve Duty, earning the rank of Commander. Throughout his career, he was a member of The Southern Academy of Periodontology; Georgia Society of Periodontists; International College of Dentists; Hinman Dental Society of Atlanta. He was a member of the ADA and GDA for 65 years.



Dr. Jay Newman Cranford | 6/6/1946–7/1/2023

Dr. Cranford was born in Moultrie, GA on June 6, 1946, and was married to Marie Colgan Cranford for 53 years. The couple had three children.

Dr. Cranford earned his DMD degree from the University of Kentucky College of Dentistry. For over 40 years, he provided dental care in Moultrie. He served as president of GDA's Southwestern District, the Georgia Academy of Dental Practice, and the Moultrie Rotary Club. He was a member of the ADA for 52 years, and the GDA for 49. He played in the 1963 South Georgia Championship football game and supported the Packers throughout his life.



Dr. Bennie Dean Fitts | 2/4/1936–8/5/2023

Dr. Fitts was born in Moorhead, MS and was a veteran of the U.S. Army. He was married to Betty Sue Gibson Fitts for 66 years, and they had three children.

He graduated from Delta State University and the University of TN College of Dentistry. He opened his practice in Belzoni, MS in 1962 and later joined the V.A. Medical Center in Huntington, WV, then Marion, IL. He was Chief of Dentistry at the Carl Vinson VA Medical Center in Dublin, GA from 1977–1996. After retirement, he enjoyed working the family blueberry farm, watching documentaries, and spending time with family.



Dr. William B. James | 3/14/1929–7/31/2023

Dr. James was born on March 14, 1929, and earned his DDS degree from Loma Linda University School of Dentistry in Loma Linda, CA in 1957. He was married to Irma Jane James, and they had three daughters.

Dr. James arrived in Dalton, GA shortly after graduation in 1957. He joined the GDA, ADA, and Northwestern District Dental Society in 1958, and remained a member for 65 years. He dedicated 61 years of his life to practicing Dentistry and was known as a gentle and compassionate dentist. Dr. James was deeply committed to his faith and to his family.



Dr. Thomas Allison Pickron | 9/29/1939–6/15/2023

Dr. Pickron was born in Tampa, FL and earned his DDS from Emory University in 1963. He served in the U.S. Air Force for two years, honorably discharging as a Captain.

He returned to Georgia and practiced dentistry for 53 years. He was a member of the GDA for 59 years as part of the Northern then Northwestern District Dental Societies. In 2016, he retired to Florida's Gulf shore where he enjoyed cooking homemade meals, working in the garden, and relaxing with friends and family. He is survived by his wife, Linda M. Pickron, and daughter, Dr. Allison Lindsey Robbins.



Dr. James Nicholas Powell | 09/16/1941–10/31/2023

Dr. Powell was born in Chicago, IL on Sept. 16, 1941. He was married to Betty Mayton Powell for 49 years, and the couple had three daughters.

Dr. Powell earned his DDS degree from the University of Tennessee, and his MS in Periodontics from the University of Nebraska. He served in the U.S. Navy Dental Corps, joined the Medical College of Georgia School of Dentistry faculty in Augusta, where he then opened a private practice. He practiced for 30 years before returning to MCG as a faculty member, retiring in 2012. He was named Honorable Fellow by the GDA, was a Fellow of American College of Dentists and co-author of Clinical Dentistry—Periodontal Instrumentation.



Dr. Sterling Cale Whitworth | 11/21/1983–11/14/2023

Dr. Whitworth grew up in Covington, GA with two sisters and a twin brother. He was known for his love of sports, playing basketball, football, and baseball at Eastside high school and baseball at Samford University.

He earned his DMD at Medical College of Georgia, and married his high school sweetheart, Callie Carter, in 2015. They were blessed with a daughter in 2018. He opened his practice in his home community of Covington and was honored with the Covington News *40 Under 40*. Dr. Whitworth passed away in November at age 39.

W

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New Members!

Dr. R. Matthew Dunford
Northern District

Dr. Doug Hiser
Northwestern District

Dr. Vincent Lloyd
Northwestern District

Dr. Michael Whirt
Southeastern District

Dr. Alfred Mott
Southwestern District

Dr. Ashlee Turner-Lee
Western District



Dr. Adkins, 2023 GDA President, attends annual Gala of Georgia Indian Dental Association

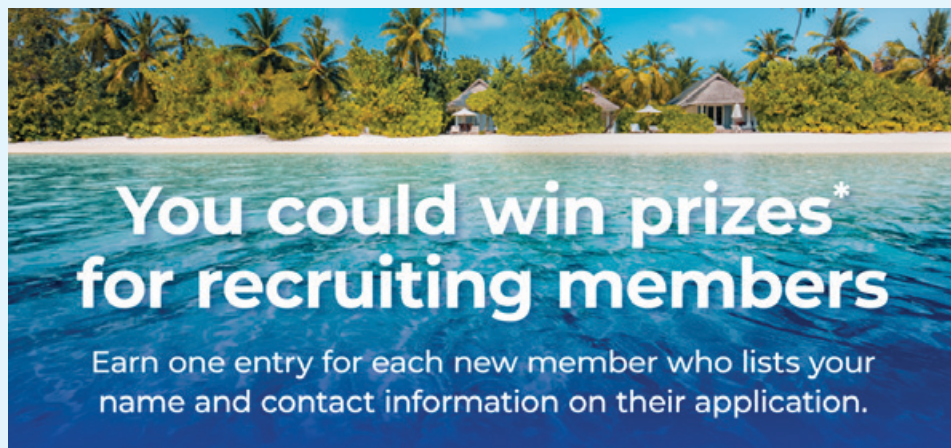
Dr. Adkins, GDA President, attended the annual Gala of the Georgia Indian Dental Association on December 2, 2023. This is a gathering of 120 members that showcase the diverse talent of Georgia dentists with Indian roots.

Adding a modern touch to the event, Dr. Adkins shared insights about the collective voice and strength of dental professionals. His address delved into the remarkable journey of GDA, highlighting its agenda and accomplishments.

**Cheers to a memorable evening
celebrating excellence and collaboration!**

ADA Launches “Recruit for Rewards” Program

Launching January 1, 2024, “Recruit for Rewards” is a membership referral program designed to encourage current ADA members to recruit new members. Participating members who refer their friends and colleagues will be entered for a chance to win the grand prize of a seven day Hawaiian cruise for two, among other quarterly prizes. A toolkit with ready-to-use marketing materials is available to help your society promote “Recruit for Rewards.” Visit ADA for Dental Societies and navigate to “Recruitment and Retention Toolkits” to find the “Recruit for Rewards” toolkit.



GDA Seeks Volunteers for Summer and Fall Special Olympics Games

Please consider volunteering
Summer games are May 25
at Emory and Fall games are
October 19 at Freedom Park
in Valdosta.

Interested volunteers may
contact Special Smiles Clinical
Director, Dr. Jonathan Dubin
at jsdubin@gmail.com.

A graphic for "Special Smiles" seeking volunteers. It features a large group photo of volunteers in blue shirts. Below the photo, the text reads: "VOLUNTEERS NEEDED". Underneath that, it says: "We are looking for volunteers! Let's lend a hand for others." To the right of the text are two smaller photos: one showing volunteers at a table with a large blue toothbrush prop, and another showing a group of volunteers posing with a banner. At the bottom right, the URL rebrand.ly/SpecialSmiles is displayed.

SEEN&HEARD

Interim Executive Director, Kristen Morgan, addressed House of Delegates and Board of Trustees on December 9, 2023





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GDA Kicks off Children's Dental Health Month

The GDA Foundation kicked off Children's Dental Health Month on February 1, 2024.

Each year, the GDA Foundation provides over 10,000 smile kits to GDA members who travel to schools and communities across the state teaching kids about the importance of oral health.

Follow along on the GDA's social media channels to view photos, videos, testimonials and more from 2024 Children's Dental Health Month!



2024 District Presidents



“As I look forward to my upcoming presidency, my goals include leading effective district meetings that focus on boosting GDA membership through social events.”

Supriti Balyan

Northwestern



Tell Us About Yourself

I am the proud parent of three wonderful children: a son named Vishal, and two daughters, Vaani and Somya. Currently, Vishal and Vaani have started their first year of dental school, while Somya is a sophomore in undergraduate studies. I moved to this country when I was just 18 years old, and put myself through school because I knew I wanted to be a dentist. I earned my degree from UNC Adams School of Dentistry. A few years into my career, I took a significant step and acquired my current practice, Great Smiles Dental, located in Marietta, GA.

Outside of my professional life, I find joy in activities such as gardening, yoga, hiking, exploring the outdoors, and traveling.



Organized Dentistry

Around two decades ago, I became a member of the GDA, recognizing it as an invaluable resource for staying informed about developments in our profession.

The association has provided a platform for networking, sharing ideas, and exchanging knowledge with fellow dentists. Over the years, I've taken on various roles within the profession, including serving on the Finance Committee for Hinman in 2021. My involvement with GDA Leadership commenced in 2018–2019, where I held the position of NWDDS treasurer, and contributed to the Recruitment and Retention Committee, as well as the Convention Committee. I currently serve as district president-elect and am actively engaged in the CE committee.



Current Challenges in Dentistry

From my perspective, the prevailing challenges in dentistry involve articulating the issues at hand. Likewise, a key challenge for the GDA is enhancing the value it provides to its members to foster an increase in membership.



The Year Ahead

As I look forward to my upcoming presidency, my goals include leading effective district meetings that focus on boosting GDA membership through social events. These gatherings will offer opportunities for networking among peers while emphasizing the significance of GDA in our careers. Additionally, I aim to initiate a mentorship program, aspiring to identify, nurture, and establish a pipeline of leaders for the future of dentistry. 🦷

DISTRICT PRESIDENTS

Continued from page 19



Charles Spicer
Eastern District



Tell Us About Yourself

My name is Charles Spicer. I got my undergraduate degree from the University of Georgia and am an avid dawg fan! I graduated from the Dental College of Georgia in 2015. I have practiced in Thomson, Georgia for over six years. I have been married for nearly 15 years to my beautiful wife Quynh, who is also a dentist. I have four kids, two of them girls and two of them boys. Their names are Mila (12), Riley (9), Samuel (8), and our youngest Benjamin. My hobbies include spending time with my kids and getting them involved in extracurricular activities. I love to run and normally run 20 miles per week. I also love to get out on the course and play some golf.



Organized Dentistry

I joined the GDA right out of dental school and have been an active member ever since. I wanted to always be a member because of the importance of having membership with our association and wanted to support and give back. I have served as an alternate delegate for three years and am looking forward to 2024.



Current Challenges in Dentistry

The largest current challenge to dentistry I believe is the rising cost of dental care, which also contributes to a challenge in access to care. Dentistry is getting more expensive due to higher dental school obligations and debt, inflation, along with changes and modifications to the workforce.

The largest challenge to the GDA is membership and getting younger people more involved early and for the long term.



The Year Ahead

I would like to get newer graduates more involved in becoming members of not only the ADA and GDA, but the EDDS as well. Membership is very important and it's something that I will focus on as president. 🦷





David Marion

Northern District



Tell Us About Yourself

I'm a restorative and esthetic dentist in Duluth. Graduating in the last dental class of Emory Dental School, one of my favorite professors was periodontist Mike McDevitt, who taught me the art of occlusal equilibration my senior year. Because of him and a few others, I embarked on the L.D. Pankey philosophy of patient treatment and never looked back. I still work solo but am ready for a shift in the next few years.

My wife, Paula, is a Georgia Tech grad and Environmental Engineer, specializing in water infrastructure, creating Master Plans for water use across Georgia. We have a 26 year old son and live in Berkeley Lake when we're not hiking, cycling, or RV'ing.



Organized Dentistry

As a member of the ASDA at Emory, I saw the importance of organized dentistry and immediately joined the GDA upon graduation. I must have called the GDA hundreds of times my first few years out, with questions about business, legal issues, buying a practice, insurance questions, the gamut of newbie issues as a solo dentist. They were always there for me (if a little exasperated) and I swore I'd get involved "one day."

I've been a delegate to the GDA for many years, and seeing how this worked inspired me to become even more involved. Politics surrounds us whether we want it or not, and legislation from other entities that threatens our profession is always at the door, sticking a nose into the tent. It's crucial we stand up together as one to defend ourselves and the GDA helps make this happen as no other entity can.

In other dental organizations, I'm a member of the Hinman Dental Society and the International College of Dentists.



Current Challenges in Dentistry

It's important we encourage younger dentists to become involved in the GDA, not just as members, but as participants and leaders. Covid set us back a bit, moving to Zoom meetings and less "in-person" interactions. For some, this may have appeared as normal, but direct, collegial, discussions and problem solving is far more powerful, meaningful, and effective.

One of the most glaring issues facing us is the workforce shortfall for hygienists and qualified assistants. Even in my Study Club, this is a constant subject that weighs on us, and everyone else I speak with. Time will help, to be sure, but a concerted effort to promote dentistry as both a profession and calling is crucial.



The Year Ahead

I will be working on a plan for older dentists to bring younger ones to District and GDA events, to witness, enjoy and recall the camaraderie and friendship the GDA has always embodied and encourage all members to promote the GDA to their friends and colleagues. 🦷

DISTRICT PRESIDENTS

Continued from page 21



Kyle Garrett

Central District

“The goal is to increase quality interactions amongst our dental community so that as a group we can grow stronger and serve our community better.”



Tell Us About Yourself

I am a periodontist in my hometown of Macon, GA. I have two wonderful children, Stella (6) and Asher (4), and being their dad is by far my greatest achievement in life. I enjoy spending time with my family, hunting, fishing, and traveling. I graduated from Georgia College in 2009 where I earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology with a minor in Ceramic Art and the Dental College of Augusta University for pre-doc and residency in 2016 and 2019, respectively.



Organized Dentistry

I joined the GDA in 2016 during residency and got involved in the central district as soon as I finished my residency in 2019. I currently serve as the president as well as governmental affairs for the central district dental society.



Current Challenges in Dentistry

I see challenges in getting younger dentists involved in organized dentistry. I think getting involved young is important to have a firm understanding of what is happening behind the scenes so that you can have a true understanding of what the benefits of a tripartite are and how it can work for you.



The Year Ahead

During my presidency I would love to see an increase in attendance at our meetings. The goal is to increase quality interactions amongst our dental community so that as a group we can grow stronger and serve our community better. 🦷



Ray Wallace

Southeastern District

“The GDA has done an amazing job at navigating our profession and implementing strategies that help all dentists in our state, no matter the practice type or size.”



Tell Us About Yourself

My wife, Anna, and I have been married for 13 years. We have two children, seven year old Nora and five year old Ray, and a dog named Nitro. After graduating from the University of Georgia, we moved to Augusta where I completed dental school. Both Anna and I being from Savannah, we decided to move back home where I purchased a practice in Richmond Hill GA in 2018. In my free time I like to stay outside and spend time with family and friends. My passion is being out on the water fishing, boating, diving, or beachcombing.



Organized Dentistry

I have been a member of the ADA and the GDA since coming out of dental school in 2015. I knew early on the power of organized dentistry and the need to stay a part of that. As a small business owner juggling life's challenges, the peace of mind knowing that there is an organization looking out daily for the best interests of your profession, livelihood, and patients is priceless. Beginning in 2019, I began moving through the Southeastern district chairs and very thankful to be a part of organized dentistry directly.



Current Challenges in Dentistry

I believe one of the biggest challenges facing dentistry today is the profession staying cohesive. Part of that problem is inflamed by student debt burden, continued involvement among members, the blending of young and seasoned dentists, insurance companies invading the landscape, and the list goes on. Today, there are many practice modalities which all fulfill different needs in our communities. The GDA has done an amazing job at navigating our profession and implementing strategies that help all dentists in our state, no matter the practice type or size.



The Year Ahead

I would like to see more involvement at the local level during the next year. Our officers have been working hard to create great opportunities for our members to not only get continuing education but also to socialize and reconnect with colleagues. My hope is that we are able to build new and strengthen old relationships professionally and in our community. 🦷

DISTRICT PRESIDENTS

Continued from page 23



Rebekah Hancock

Southwestern District

“I have been given the opportunity to see the continuous commitment of our GDA staff and the work that they do to protect our interests and provide numerous resources to help us be better every day.”



Tell Us About Yourself

I grew up in Valdosta, Georgia, where I met my husband, Joseph, in high school. We have been married for 10 years and have two children, Chaney (4), and Atticus (2). We have two Boston Terriers, Bilbo Waggins and Taylor Sniff.

I attended Valdosta State University and then graduated from Dental College of Georgia in 2018.

I joined Advanced Dental Care in Valdosta, Georgia in 2021. We love to travel, cook together, and spend time with our friends and family.



Organized Dentistry

Organized Dentistry has given me the opportunity to connect with many new dentists, some who have mentored me through this process. I have been given the opportunity to see the continuous commitment of our GDA staff and the work that they do to protect our interests and provide numerous resources to help us be better every day.

I see the importance of advocating for our profession and our patients.



Current Challenges in Dentistry

Currently, our profession is seeing a few issues including a large workforce shortage of hygienists, experienced assistants, and team members, Insurance companies and their reimbursements, student debt, expanding presence of DSOs.

All of these things are shifting the way that dentists and dentistry has been seen in the past. We have to navigate the waters in this new era of dentistry. The GDA is helping dentists around the state deal with these issues and more. We are grateful to have such a wonderful organization help us work toward a solution.



The Year Ahead

During my presidency I would love to see an increase in attendance at our district events and create more opportunities to attract dentists and staff members. Encouraging relationships between current members and increasing connections will be a main focus. I hope that through these events we can help share the importance of GDA and the roles of leadership in dentistry. The Southwest GDA is a strong district, especially with the leadership we have had in the past few years, and I hope to continue our momentum and growth. 🦷



Michael J. Cox, DMD

Western District



Tell Us About Yourself

My name is Mike Cox and I'm a 2014 graduate of MCG School of Dentistry. While in dental school, I met my wife, who happened to be in the same class, Christina (Tina) Mayberry Cox. I used to check her out from the back row, and eventually shot my shot. Fortunately, it worked out and she complied! We are blessed with three beautiful children: Evie (6), Lydia (4), and James (2). We have two practices—one in West Point, GA, and another in Columbus. Tina and I both practice at each location and rotate schedules. We also have a new associate in Columbus—Dr. Virginia Cole Peek, who graduated last year and she is doing fantastic. When I'm not busy being a dad or doing dentistry, I enjoy being outside. I'm an avid bow hunter and turkey hunter and thoroughly enjoy managing our family property in southwest Georgia near Bainbridge during my free time.



Organized Dentistry

If I remember correctly, I joined the GDA the year I graduated. Generally, I have shied away from organized dentistry and leadership positions due to having a young family as well as two practices to keep rolling. When the opportunity arose to start serving and moving up the chain of the Western District, I felt an obligation to give back to a profession that has been very good to me and my family. So here we are!



Current Challenges in Dentistry

This is a tough question, because as with any profession there are bound to be challenges and obstacles that arise. From a business perspective, I'll say rising costs of everything from payroll to supplies to everything in between. Fortunately, our practices aren't in-network with very many insurance companies, but the lack of increase in reimbursements on their end with the increase in costs is an area of great frustration and concern as well. From the GDA standpoint, I believe the challenges faced will be somewhat related to the increase in costs of the above-mentioned items. Docs may be more reluctant to stroke that membership check with the cost increase of doing business. It will be paramount for us as a group to stress the importance and benefits of organized dentistry and all the GDA offers and does for us a profession in the state.



The Year Ahead

In the Western District, it's our goal to engage more involvement of our current members and hopefully grow our membership by reaching out and contacting the new younger dentists in our area. Also, most of our participation is from dentists in the Columbus area, which is great, but we plan on being more proactive in engaging the Newnan and LaGrange dentists to help boost the membership and contribution to our district. 🦷

MEET GDA'S 2024 PRESIDENT

PRESIDENTIAL THEME:

**Thriving Together Through
Balance and Growth**

FOCUS AREAS:

**Membership, Intentional
Contact, Advocacy**



Dr. Jamie Mitchell



Dr. Mitchell, wife Suzy, daughter Laura, son-in-law Cameron, daughter-in-law Kelly, son Matthew.



The Mitchells' with their dog by the river.

Tell Me Something Good

Tell me something good. That's the title of a one hit wonder by an artist named Rufus that was written by Stevie Wonder in 1974. I think it's an appropriate title to the beginning of my upcoming year as your GDA President.

First let me introduce myself. I was born in New Jersey in 1964, moved to North Carolina when I was 12, and then my family settled in North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina four years later. I graduated from NMB High School and then went on to Presbyterian College, where I not only graduated with a BS in biology, but I met the girl of my dreams. Following graduation from PC, I was accepted into dental school at the Medical University of South Carolina Class of 1990. Halfway through dental school the girl of my dreams, Suzy, and I got married and began trying to discern where God wanted us to go after graduation. The path was crystal clear, and we bought a practice in Monticello right out of school.

Four years later we were blessed with our first child, Matthew, and in 1997 were blessed again with our baby girl, Laura.

Life has been anything but dull during the last 34 years in running a solo practice, raising children, participating in church, and of course being involved in organized dentistry.

Let me tell you something good! As you all know, dentistry has always had a rich and interesting history in the state of Georgia, and I believe that we can look to our past in order to pave the way to our future. Occasionally we need to bask in the glow of the accomplishments of our predecessors who provided the massively large shoulders on which we stand. The Georgia Dental Association has advocated for dentists and patients for nearly 165 years and our purpose remains the same, which is helping all Georgia dentists succeed and reach their full potential! Here are a few notable moments in our illustrious history.

- The first dental school in Georgia was established in 1887 in Atlanta which would eventually become Emory University School of Dentistry in 1944. Then in 1969 the Medical College of Georgia School of Dentistry opened its

doors and graduated its first class in 1973.

- Notable persons in our glorious history have included the likes of Dr. Thomas P. Hinman—Past President of the ADA (1915–1916), GDA and of course father of The Hinman Society.
- Also, Dr. Howard Jones, Past President of ADA (1993) and GDA! In addition we had two other Georgia dentists ascend to ADA President, Dr. Sheppard Foster (1925–26) and Dr. William Garrett (1966).

So, who will be the next Georgia dentist to head our national organization? It could very well be you!

- Numerous brave African American dentists broke down barriers: Dr. Gary Gordon was the first to graduate from Emory University Dental School in 1973, Dr. Benjamin Blackburn III was the first GDA district President, which was the Northern District. Dr. Ed Green became the first African American president of the GDA in July of 2004 and to quote part of his acceptance speech, "Yes, there is a historical aspect to



my becoming the first African American president of the GDA. Think about it though. What brings us here to this place, to this moment, to this time? Is it not dentistry? Dentistry is the magnet that has drawn us together! As a result of this, many of us have become the closest of friends. We have shared the ups and downs and ins and outs of life as we work together. Perhaps this is because we understand each other and our mutual challenges.” And of course, in July of 2020, Dr. Annette Rainge became the first African American female President of the GDA!

- Over the years we have formed companies in order to not only serve our member dentists, but to create non-dues revenue. They include: 1. Georgia Dental Holding Company (GHC) July 1997; 2. Georgia Dental Insurance Services (GDIS) July 1997; 3. Professional Debt Recovery Services (PDRS) September 2006, unfortunately no longer in service; and 4. Integrity Dental Buyers Group (IDBG) July 2016. There's not only room to grow these entities, but begs the question, what's next?

So...What's Next?

My first initiative is to continue to grow our existing companies. We need to stay competitive in both the insurance company and buyers' group! IDBG is at the forefront of where we need to expand. As expenses continue to go up, we HAVE to maintain a healthy source of non-dues revenue and provide quality supplies at discounted rates. Every member office should be buying at least five supply items from our company. We have to face the fact that if we don't support our revenue generating companies, our dues will increase beyond what any of us wants to pay. The staff and volunteer leaders can only do so much. We need you to help us help you! If offices are feeling uncertain as to how to go about getting started, we are working on a short powerpoint that will walk anyone through the process.

If any of y'all know me, you're aware that I enjoy conversation and making new connections. Another goal is to grow membership and membership participation by creating a "contact tree" in which the Vice President of the GDA will be responsible for contacting the Vice Presidents of each district who will in turn recruit five district members to contact at least three district members periodically to remind them about meetings, or wish them a happy birthday for at least a year. My hope is that this grass roots initiative will spark member participation, which is key to our success.

Our dental community is very small compared to the population of Georgia and is basically divided up into three main leadership entities—the Georgia Dental Association, the Dental College of Georgia and the Hinman Dental Society. These three groups have enjoyed a good relationship, for the most part, but my intention is to strengthen those bonds in order to elevate our profession to the highest level possible. If we are able to harness our efforts and pull together in the same direction, there's no telling what we can accomplish!

My final initiative is an oldie but a goodie...Advocacy! I plan to advocate for all the usual issues, Medicaid, Teledentistry and money for loan repayment for rural dentists, but will add to the list ways of alleviating staff shortages by advocating for the entire dental team. I would like to see a program for partial loan repayment for hygienists that decide to practice in rural communities, to investigate pathways for high school students to introduce them to careers in the dental profession similar to CNA programs and increases in loan forgiveness for dentists that practice in rural areas. We need to convince our legislators that tax incentives could be key in attracting dental professionals to our underserved counties. We also need to be active in support of OUR dental school, DCG (MCG). The nation is in a faculty deficit situation, meaning there are too few qualified dental instructors for the number of available spots and Georgia is

not immune to this issue. We have to help OUR dental school! Regardless of where you matriculated, it's imperative that we find ways of attracting and retaining quality faculty! The unfortunate reality is that nothing moves the needle like money. We have to figure out a way to increase salaries and bonuses in order to be more competitive in attaining the personnel required to get us back to a top 10 school in the nation. This will allow us to better prepare our graduates to be able to thrive in the rigors of a small town where the luxury of specialty practices is not locally available. The graduates deserve an education that will ensure they have the necessary skills to provide full comprehensive general dentistry. I would be willing to bet that if we were talking about Georgia football, we would have plenty of interest and money!

Speaking of football, coach Deion "Prime Time" Sanders has emerged as a premier coach of our time. He has brought energy, enthusiasm, positivity, and a winning attitude to both Jackson State University and the University of Colorado based on the statement, "I believe!" We have a duty and responsibility to both the GDA and our profession and...**I believe!** I believe we can continue to grow membership! I believe that we can advance our advocacy! I believe that we can successfully expand our non-dues revenue companies! I believe we can strengthen the bonds of GDA, Hinman and DCG! I believe by looking to our historical successes we'll find that the future for Georgia dentists is bright and limitless! I believe that there's only one way for this to happen and that's to nurture a grass roots initiatives and engage all dentists regardless of location, background, or practice model!

I'm honored and humbled to serve as your GDA president in the upcoming year and look forward to working with each and every member for the betterment of our profession.

Cheers. 🍷

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We are pleased to announce



Meet us at the
Hinman Dental Meeting!
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Dr. Rochelle Asher
has acquired the practice of
Dr. Charles Chung
Marietta, Georgia
(Pictured left.)



Practices for Sale

West of Atlanta: All FFS practice collecting \$450K per year. 7 ops, lots of potential. Seller retiring.

North Atlanta Ortho: 100% FFS. 5 chairs in 2100 sq/ft. Open 1 day/week. Priced to sell.

Greater Atlanta Prostho: Spacious 6 op practice. Well established. Collecting \$650K+. All FFS patient base.

East Cobb: Grossing \$650K. Digital, paperless. PPO/FFS. Low overhead.

Atlanta: Large rooms with windows. 4 ops, room to expand. Mainly FFS. Collects \$500K. Digital with CBCT.

Gwinnett: Brand new practice. 6,000 sq/ft. 6 ops. High-end equipment. Digital with CBCT. Real estate avail.

N. Atlanta: Prostho. Collecting over \$2M. 6 ops. Recently renovated. Seller will stay on as needed.

Gwinnett: 6 ops collecting \$600K. CBCT. Digital and paperless. PPO patient base. Great visibility.

West of Atlanta: Grossing \$800K. PPO/FFS. 4 ops. RE for sale.

NE GA Pedo: Collecting \$375K. All FFS. Real estate for sale or lease. Seller will help with transition.

S. GA: 6 ops, room to expand. Mainly FFS patient base. \$600K in revenue. Very profitable.

North Atlanta: 10 operatory practice collecting \$900K. On-site lab. Digital, paperless, CBCT. Lots of windows.

Buckhead: Collecting \$450K. FFS/PPO patients. Refers out many procedures. Seller wishes to retire.

Marietta Pedo: 4 open bay chairs, 2 private ops. Room to add more. Part-time practice.

West of Atlanta: 4 ops. 2000 sq/ft. Grossing \$800K. All FFS. RE for sale.

Gwinnett: Shell practice. 5 equipped ops, recently renovated. Shopping center with lots of traffic. All digital.

N. Atlanta: 4 ops, highly profitable practice. FFS/PPO patients. Collecting \$700K/year. Digital, paperless.

DeKalb Co Perio: 5 treatment rooms. Grossing \$830K. FFS/PPO. Great area.

Near Augusta: 100% FFS. 5 ops, CBCT, recently remodeled. Collects \$825K+. Strong cashflow. Stand alone building.

East of Atlanta: Grossing \$550K. PPO/FFS. 5 ops. Digital and paperless.

Associate opportunities available all over the state of Georgia! Call to learn more about our associate placement program!

A photograph of several business professionals in dark suits and ties, with their hands stacked in a circle in the center of the frame. The image is overlaid with a dark blue banner at the top and green geometric shapes on the sides.

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GDA DISTRICT MAP AND COUNTY LIST

District Dental Societies

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Barrow, Clayton, Dekalb, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Morgan, Newton, Rockdale, and Walton.

NORTHWESTERN ■

Bartow, Carroll, Catoosa, Chatooga, Cherokee, Cobb, Dade, Dawson, Douglas, Fannin, Floyd, Forsyth, Gilmer, Gordon, Haralson, Murray, Paulding, Pickens, Polk, Walker, and Whitfield.

EASTERN ■

Banks, Burke, Clarke, Columbia, Elbert, Franklin, Glascock, Greene, Habersham, Hancock, Hart, Jackson, Jefferson, Lincoln, Lumpkin, Madison, McDuffie, Oconee, Oglethorpe, Rabun, Richmond, Stephens, Taliaferro, Towns, Union, Washington, Warren, White, and Wilkes.

CENTRAL ■

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WESTERN ■

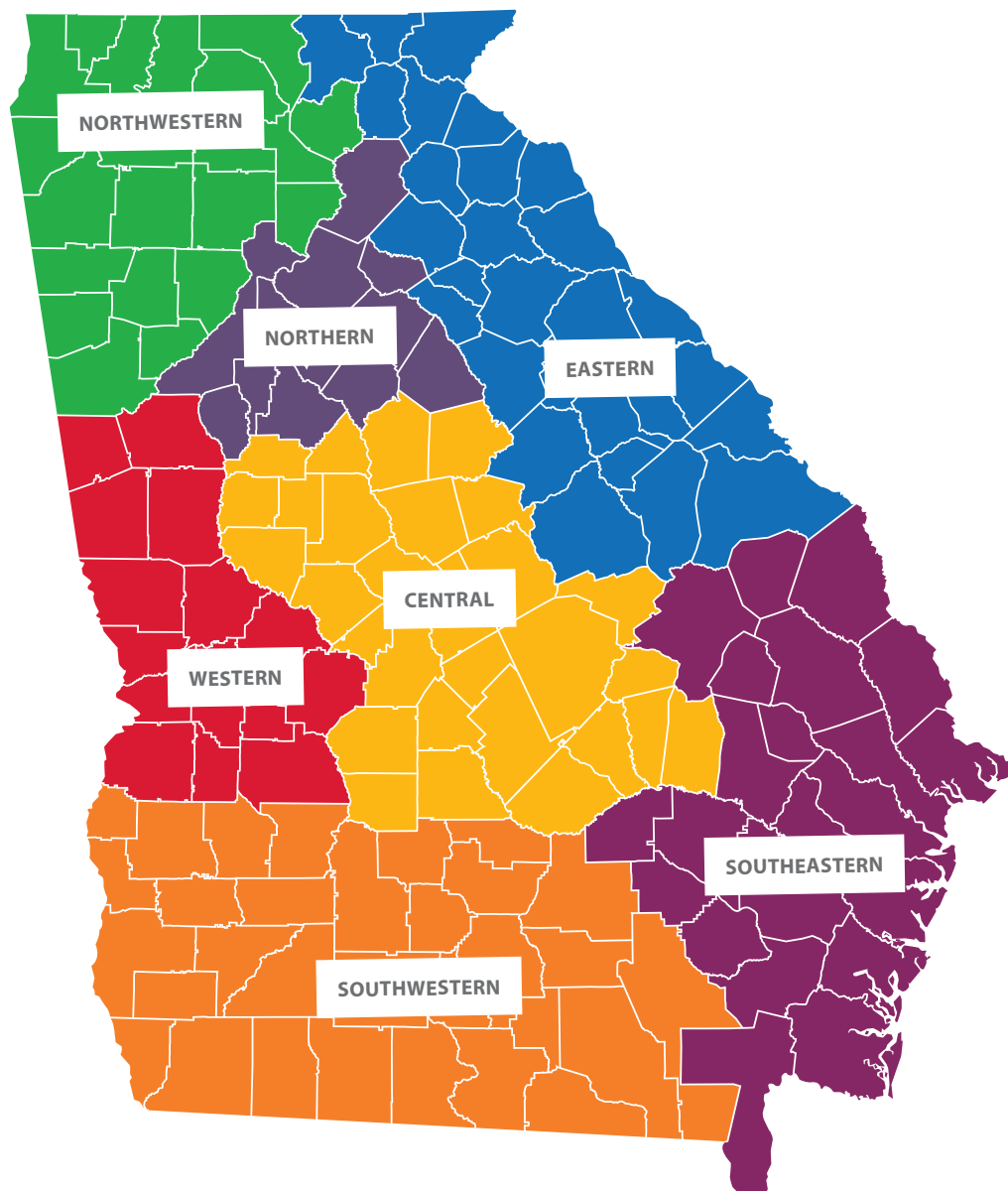
Chattahoochee, Coweta, Harris, Heard, Macon, Marion, Meriwether, Muscogee, Schley, Stewart, Sumter, Talbot, Taylor, Troup, and Webster.

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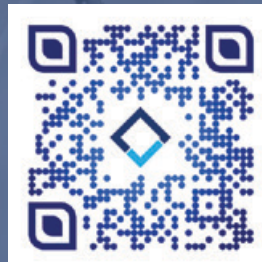
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GDA**MEMBER**PROFILE



Dr. Monique O. Johnson

This column highlights GDA members talking about their path to dentistry and the value they find in GDA membership. This month we hear from North District Dental Society, Dr. Monique O. Johnson, who practices General Dentistry at Great Expressions (Midtown), Atlanta, GA.

What inspired you to become a dentist?

Growing up, my aunt, who is a dental hygienist, played a pivotal role in my life with dentistry. She stressed the importance of oral health from a young age. It was this influence, in addition to routine dental visits and shadowing various dental practices that piqued my interest. During my teenage years, I had the opportunity to participate in a Mission trip to Jamaica where I worked closely with the founder of the organization who was also a dentist. I found myself very intrigued with various dental procedures and often envisioned myself becoming a dentist who would create healthy smiles in my community. Through guidance and mentorship, I soon developed an interest in the field of dentistry, and I am currently practicing my dream job.

What did you want to be when you were growing up?

Growing up, I was lucky to have a great pediatrician who was very meticulous, caring, and personable. I admired her as a role model. Since the age of 5, my dream was to be a pediatrician.

When and how did you become a GDA member?

I became a GDA member after completing residency in New York and returning to Georgia in 2017.

What is the single most important thing, in your opinion, the GDA does to help members?

GDA provides a relaxed family oriented environment that ensures dentists have the necessities to provide optimal oral health care within the local community and the state of Georgia. The GDA is a resourceful organization providing critical continuing education (CE) opportunities needed for dentists to maintain their dental licensure. I am grateful for the opportunity to be a lifelong learner with other GDA members. The GDA serves as an advocate to its members and opportunities for continuous growth.

What is your most memorable GDA experience?

My most memorable GDA experience is participating in this Q & A in addition to attending the Bridging the Gap CE Summit. This event was very informative, involved excellent speakers, and provided the required courses needed for licensure renewal. I appreciated networking with other GDA members. I look forward to attending future GDA events such as the GDA Annual Convention.

What advice would you give to an aspiring dental student?

My advice would be to strive for excellence in everything you do. Remember to pay attention to detail, always have integrity, treat everyone with respect, invest in yourself, and implement self-care.

What was your first job?

My first job was working in the OB/GYN department for the Georgia Region as an administrative assistant for Kaiser Permanente.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I enjoy traveling, spending time with family and friends, exercising, trying new restaurants, gardening, singing, playing the piano, and creating event decor with my balloon decor / event planning business.

Without saying "I am a dentist," what would you say if someone asked what you do?

I am an artist who creates beautiful and healthy smiles.



What is your all-time dream vacation?

My all-time dream vacation involves travelling to Bali, Thailand, and Maldives. Honestly my list is more extensive, lol, but

anywhere with a beautiful beach is always a win for me. Ultimately I would like to visit every continent; there's so much to see in the world. 🌍



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Practice owners should always have an up-to-date Practice Valuation, meaning a professional appraisal that has been completed or updated in the past 12 months.

Besides helping you set a listing price when you are ready to sell your practice, Practice Valuations are needed to:

- Evaluate what factors are affecting the value of your practice
- Write a Letter of Instruction (LOI)
- Apply for financing
- Form merger/partnership agreements



A Henry Schein Dental Practice Transitions valuation considers both tangible and intangible assets of the practice and can provide the many key factors that influence the practice's value.

Scott Owen, Transition Sales Consultant
Scott.Owen@henryschein.com
678-523-1474

To get started on your practice valuation, give us a call at:

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or scan the QR code to schedule a complimentary consultation.



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Classic Elite Prophy Angles	Young Dental	13%	Prophy Magic	61%

*Direct from manufacturer brands shown represent the most similar products to the distributor brand name products. For the correct item name/description please refer to the chart on gdaplus.com/directbrands.

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