

July/August 2025

the Nugget

**The Social Media
Shift in Dentistry:**
Connection, Community, and Influence

A PUBLICATION OF THE SACRAMENTO DISTRICT DENTAL SOCIETY



Get Ready For Our UPCOMING EVENTS

July 15, 2025

Dentists Do Music Circus - West Side Story

7:30pm show

August 5, 2025

Dentists Do Music Circus - In The Heights

7:30pm show

August 9, 2025

**CPR— BLS AHA Blended Learning—
Online and Skills Testing, 3 Time Sessions**

Saturday • 8–8:45am; 9–9:45am; 10–10:45am

Member Price: \$98 total; \$37 to AHA/\$61 to SDDS (ends 7/19)

\$118 total; \$37 to AHA/\$81 to SDDS (begins 7/20)

Non-Member Price: \$199 total; \$37 to AHA/\$162 to SDDS

Skills Testing, 3 Time Sessions (3 CEU, Core)

August 20, 2025

Member Event - Ice Cream Social

Wednesday • 6–7:30pm

Leatherby's Family Creamery on Arden

August 26, 2025

Dentists Do Music Circus - Hair

7:30pm show

September 9, 2025

General Membership CE Meeting

Tuesday • 5:45–9pm

Hilton Sacramento Arden West

Member Price: \$89 early (ends 8/26)

\$99 regular (begins 8/27) / \$99 late (begins 9/7)

Non-Member Price: \$218

Throwdown – Does CR Matter? (3 CEU, Core)

Presented by Paul Binon, DDS, MSD; Bryan Judd, DDS
and Peter Worth, DDS

September 12, 2025

SDDS 14th Annual Shred Day

Friday • 10am–2pm • SDDS Office

September 17, 2025

Business Forum

Wednesday • 6:30–8:30pm • SDDS Classroom

Member Price: Complimentary to SDDS Members

Staff of Member Price: \$49 | **Non-Member Price:** \$99

Navigating Year-End Planning and New Tax Regulations

Never Too Early, But Is It Too Late? (No CEU)

Presented by Brett LeMmon, CPA, MA; Earned (SDDS Vendor Member)

September 26, 2025

Continuing Education

Friday • 8:30am–3:30pm • SDDS Classroom

Member Price: \$179 early (ends 9/5) / \$199 regular (begins 9/6)

Non-Member Price: \$398

Pearls in Our Backyard (6 CEU, Core)

Presented by Tim Mickiewicz, DDS; Nisha Manila, BDS, MS, PhD, FACD;
Brandon Martin, DDS, MS; and Devan Dalla, DDS

October 2, 2025

Dentists Do Broadway - & Juliet

7:30pm show

October 14, 2025

General Membership CE Meeting

Tuesday • 5:45–9pm

Hilton Sacramento Arden West

Member Price: \$89 early (ends 9/30)

\$99 regular (begins 10/1) / \$99 late (begins 10/12)

Non-Member Price: \$218

Working Together to Improve Oral Health in California (3 CEU, Core)

Presented by Shakalpi Pendurkar, DDS, MPH, State Dental Director

October 16, 2025

SDDS Member Mixer - Zócalo Folsom

Thursday • 6–7:30pm

Sponsored by MUN CPAs and Dental & Medical Counsel PC

October 22, 2025

Continuing Education

Wednesday • 6–8:30pm • SDDS Classroom

Member Price: \$99 early (ends 10/1) / \$119 regular (begins 10/2)

Non-Member Price: \$238

DIY Study Club – Bring Your Case! (2.5 CEU, 20%)

October 29, 2025

Licensure Renewal Webinar*

Wednesday • 5:30–7:30pm • Webinar • 2 CEU, Core

Member Price: \$95 early (ends 10/8) / \$115 regular (begins 10/9)

Non-Member Price: \$230

**Responsibilities and Requirements of
Prescribing Schedule II Opioids**

Presented by Ronni Brown, DDS, MPH, FADI



**View all CE Courses & Events
online with this QR code.**

** Does not qualify for AGD credit*

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Nugget Editorial Board

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Awards

International College of Dentists (ICD)

2024 • Special Citation Award
2023 • Special Citation Award
2022 • Humanitarian Service Award
2022 • Special Citation Award
2022 • Overall Newsletter, honorable mention
2021 • Platinum Pencil, *honorable mention*
Outstanding use of graphics
2021 • Special Citation Award
2020 • Platinum Pencil
2020 • Golden Pen, *honorable mention*
Article / series of articles of interest to the profession
2020 • Special Citation Award
2019 • Special Citation Award
2019 • Golden Pen, *honorable mention*
2018 • Humanitarian Service Award
2017 • Special Citation Award

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Pearls in Our Backyard

Friday, September 26, 2025 • 8:30am–3:00pm

Presented by Tim Mickiewicz, DDS; Nisha Manila, BDS, MS, PhD, FACD;
Brandon Martin, DDS, MS; and Devan Dalla, DDS

From all aspects of dentistry, this CE course gathers together SDDS member dentists who will present pearls for the general practitioner as well as specialists. Speakers listed in order of presentation.

Tim Mickiewicz, DDS

Consilience: How Does it Relate to Medicine and Dentistry?

The power of why is the answer. Whether it's dental, systemic, metabolic and/or skeletal, the everyday patient may have manifestations or disorders that are your responsibility to co-discover with the patient. What appears to be a "common dental issue" may be masking significant problems such as TMD, sleep, pain and other physiological disorders.

Are you prepared to handle the consequences of your treatment decisions? Always aim for perfection; settle for excellence!



Brandon Martin, DDS, MS

Phase I or Phase Wait: Why would you put braces on an 8-year old?

Are you noticing more third graders with braces or clear aligners? Do these young patients who still have more than half their baby teeth actually need early orthodontic treatment? Sometimes they do, and sometimes they don't. This presentation will explore the rationale, timing and latest treatment options available for early interceptive orthodontics.



Nisha Manila, BDS, MS, PhD, FACD

Artificial Intelligence in Dentistry

Explore the application of artificial intelligence (AI) in dentistry, including fundamental concepts, potential benefits and limitations.



Devan Dalla, DDS

Develop a Practical and Predictable Workflow Using Your Digital Technologies for Fixed Implant ALL-On-X Cases

Are you tired of doing verification jigs for full mouth implant cases? How can you predictably finish these complex cases in less appointments and use digital technology? Various methods will be shown that will simplify All-on-X from planning to executing with the digital tools available today.



6 CEU, Core • \$179

Registration – 8:00am

Class held in the SDDS Classroom
2035 Hurley Way, Ste 200, Sacramento



Register online today
with this QR code.



By **Nima Aflatooni, DDS**
2025 SDDS President

SOCIAL MEDIA & YOUR PRACTICE

I remember it very clearly: the year was 2004, and I had just created an account on MySpace. It seemed like a neat way to stay in touch with friends and to share small moments of your life. Another small company called, The Facebook, was growing popularity amongst college kids and seemed fairly underdeveloped and mostly a way for college students to stay connected.

Nothing more.

Little did I know at the time that this technology would change the world as we know it—and do so permanently. The effect social media has had on society, for better or worse, cannot be overstated. From changing the way people communicate, to affecting social development in teens, to influencing elections and how news is communicated, to having a radical impact on world financial markets—social media is a force society has never experienced.

In 2005, social media was still a new phenomenon, with only around 5% of Americans actively using these platforms. Fast forward to 2019, and that figure had skyrocketed to roughly 70%.

That same year, the Pew Research Center conducted a study on social media habits among U.S. adults. The findings showed that YouTube and Facebook were the top platforms among adults, whereas teenagers gravitated more toward Snapchat and Instagram. Meanwhile, TikTok was emerging as the fastest-growing network among younger demographics.

Today, social media is nearly ubiquitous among teenagers. According to Pew, 97% of teens between the ages of 13 and 17 use at least one of seven major social platforms.

The amount of time spent online is also striking. One study revealed that teens aged 13 to 18 average about nine hours per day on social media, while tweens, aged 8 to 12, spend approximately six hours daily.

What does this mean for us dentists? The articles in this issue will explain why social media is important and how we can use it to grow our practices, to connect with patients, and to collaborate with our colleagues. Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok are powerful tools, that when utilized properly, are incredibly effective in achieving many of these goals.

I know many friends and colleagues who have leveraged social media to build their practices and build their brand. If used properly, the possibilities are endless.

On another note, I would like to welcome our new Executive Director (ED), Carroll Badgley. Carroll comes to us from the Northern California Dental Society and we are incredibly excited to have such a talented, energetic, and capable ED taking the helm and building on the wonderful legacy of SDDS! ■

Mark Your Calendars

SDDS 14th Annual Shred Day

September 12, 10am-2pm!

An opportunity for SDDS members get rid of that pesky shredding for a fraction of the cost

Visit sdds.org to register or complete the registration form included in this issue.

Cost: Up to 5 bankers boxes free to SDDS Members.
\$10 per additional box.
Payable to the SDDF.

THE FIRST 90 Days



By **Carol Badgley**
SDDS Executive Director

By now, I've had the pleasure of meeting some of you at various events since I began my role as Executive Director on April 1. It's been a warm and welcoming start, and I'm truly honored to be part of such an engaged and respected organization.

Returning to Sacramento for this role holds special meaning for me. My first job out of college was right here in the city, working in public relations on legislative bills tied to the Governor's office. To come back now, serving a professional community I deeply admire, feels like a full-circle moment.

Prior to SDDS, I served as Executive Director of the Northern California Dental Society, supporting dentists across Shasta, Butte, Trinity, Siskiyou, Tehama, Glenn, Plumas, and Modoc Counties. That experience provided a solid foundation in association management and gave me valuable insight into the needs and goals of dental professionals at the local level.

I want to express my appreciation to Cathy for her guidance during this transition. Her 24 years of leadership have left a lasting legacy at SDDS, and I'm grateful for her support as I step into this role. The knowledge she and the SDDS team have shared, along with the experience I have brought, has made this transition a great success.

Throughout my career, I've come to value the relationships that drive a successful dental society—whether with members, sponsors, vendors, or our colleagues at CDA and ADA. I look forward to continuing to build those relationships here and supporting the work and well-being of our members every step of the way.

As Executive Director, my focus is on making sure SDDS remains a trusted resource and professional home for you. Whether it's through continuing education, leadership development, advocacy, or everyday support, my goal is to help foster a connected and thriving dental community.

Thank you for the warm welcome. I look forward to meeting more of you in the months ahead and working together to continue advancing the mission and strategic direction of SDDS.



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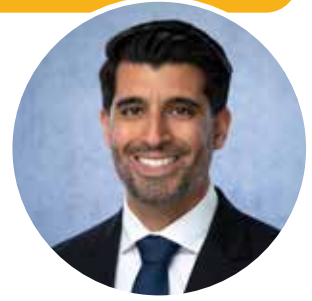
SDDS STAFF

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THE SOCIAL MEDIA SHIFT IN DENTISTRY:

CONNECTION, COMMUNITY, AND INFLUENCE



By Ramsen Warda, DDS
Associate Editor

Over the past decade, social media has fundamentally transformed how dentists connect—with one another, with patients, and with the broader dental profession. What began as a casual way to share photos and updates has evolved into a powerful platform for clinical collaboration, mentorship, patient education, and practice marketing. Whether you're just now considering starting an Instagram page or already managing a growing Facebook group, the digital space offers unprecedented opportunities for dental professionals.

In this edition of *The Nugget*, we spotlight dentists who have harnessed the power of social media to build meaningful communities, elevate clinical care, and spark conversations that wouldn't have happened otherwise.

A New Kind of Peer Connection

Gone are the days when dentists felt siloed in their private practices. Facebook groups, Instagram communities, and LinkedIn networks now allow real-time case discussions, crowdsourced clinical advice, and long-distance mentorship. These platforms have not only broken-down geographic barriers—they've fostered supportive, judgment-free environments for knowledge exchange. From first-year dental students to seasoned oral surgeons, the digital dental community has become one of the most dynamic and democratized resources in the profession.

As a periodontist myself, I've experienced this firsthand. Through my Instagram account, @warda.perio, I've shared clinical cases and connected with patients who found me online and sought care because of what they saw. More than that, I've built real professional relationships with fellow periodontists around the world—from California to Austria to New Zealand. The reach of social media is profound, and its impact is global.

Take Dr. Ramsey Amin, for example. In *Elevating Implant Dentistry*, he shares how a simple click on Facebook's "Create

Group" button sparked the Dental Implant Exchange—a trusted online community now serving over 6,000 implant dentists. What makes it unique isn't just its size, but its tone: a strict, judgment-free space dedicated to learning and collaboration, not competition.

Similarly, Dr. Bridgett Jorgensen and her family launched the Dental Practice Matchmaker group, featured in *The Dental Practice Matchmaker*. Frustrated by the inefficiencies of traditional dental transitions, they created a direct dentist-to-dentist platform for buying, selling, and hiring—all without brokers. Their movement now supports over 20,000 dentists nationwide, proving how social media can simplify complex business decisions while protecting privacy and autonomy.

From Private Reflection to Public Influence

Some clinicians have found their voice by simply sharing their personal journeys online—and in doing so, have inspired thousands. In *From Dental Student to Dental Influencer*, a fourth-year student reflects on how her Instagram account, originally created to support fellow pre-dental students, turned into a vibrant community of peers and mentors, complete with brand partnerships and conference invitations.

In *How I Started Dental Clinical Pearls*, Dr. Greg Charles recounts how a few helpful emails to GPR residents evolved into a massive Facebook group—Dental Clinical Pearls, now home to over 61,000 U.S. dentists. What began as a small effort to share clinical tips became a cornerstone of peer education and one of the most active online spaces in dentistry today.

Representation, Realness, and Reach

The influence of social media isn't limited to clinical tips or business transitions—it's also about representation and visibility. In *From*

Scalpel to Screen, Dr. Rola Rabah shares her story of starting a blog during residency, aiming to provide a relatable voice for women in oral surgery. What followed was a meteoric rise to 100,000 followers and a legacy of mentorship, empowerment, and education. Her story highlights how sharing authentic experiences can break down barriers and reshape perceptions in traditionally male-dominated specialties.

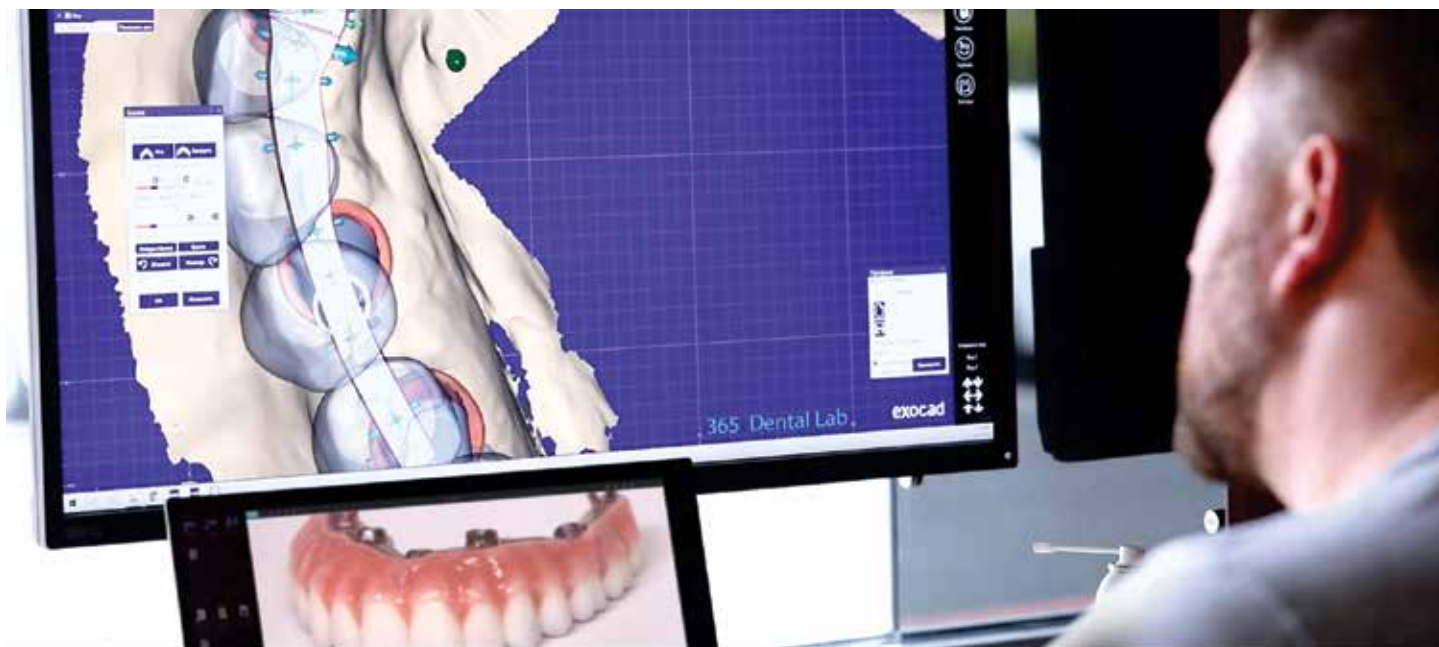
The Big Picture: Branding, Marketing, and Public Health

While social media has helped dentists connect with each other, its influence on patient communication is just as important. In *The Role of Social Media in Modern Dentistry*, Dr. Jenny Apekian outlines how platforms like Instagram and Facebook allow dentists to build brands, educate patients, and market services with far greater reach and nuance than ever before. From showcasing before-and-after cases to dispelling dental myths, social media has become a modern dentist's Swiss Army knife—blending education, marketing, and community engagement into one tool.

Conclusion: Don't Miss the Moment

Social media isn't a trend—it's a transformative force reshaping modern dentistry. Whether you're looking to grow your practice, share your expertise, or simply connect with others who understand the joys and challenges of our profession, the stories in this issue prove that digital platforms offer more than just likes and follows—they offer lasting impact.

As you read through each article, we hope you're inspired to take that first step (or next step) into the social media space. Your voice matters, and someone out there is waiting to hear it. ■



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Upcoming CONTINUING EDUCATION

OCT 22 DIY Study Club – Bring Your Case!

BRING MORE, SAVE MORE

Bring a guest, and both of you attend for a total of \$150. Bring two guests*, and all three of you attend for a total of \$200. Sign up by October 1 to secure this offer.

This CE course includes and invites any SDDS member to attend! Bring a case you would like to present for discussion... or even two! All attendees will have a chance to give input, discuss, troubleshoot and solve perplexing cases brought in for discussion.

Bring a case or two on a jump drive, we'll have a projector for you.

This 2.5-hour CE course will bring specialists and general practitioners together to create a DIY Study Club. Who knows? Maybe you'll find some colleagues that you will want to continue the conversation with!

Please note: for the past few years, SDDS members have asked SDDS to start a study club for them. THIS IS YOUR CHANCE to be part of something really special. Our hope is that this will be the first of several offshoot study clubs.

**Guest(s) must be SDDS members*

2.5 CEU, 20% • \$99

5:30pm: Registration

6:00–8:30pm: Class

SDDS Classroom:

2035 Hurley Way, Suite 200
Sacramento



Register online today with this QR code.

YOU SHOULD KNOW

THE NUGGET RECEIVES RECOGNITION - INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE OF DENTISTS (ICD) JOURNALISM COMPETITION

We are so please to share that two of the 2024 *Nuggets* received recognition in the 2025 ICD Journalism Competition. Well done to *the Nugget* Committee and Jessica!



Special Citation Award
March/April 2024 *Nugget* | Pseudoscience As Seen in Dentistry
Associate Editor: Dr. Brian Ralli

The Special Citation Award is presented to the editor of a publication that demonstrates an unusual concept, presentation or other distinctive quality.



Humanitarian Service Award – Honorable Mention
May/June 2024 *Nugget* | SDDS Foundation
Content gathered by the SDDS team

The Humanitarian Service Award is presented to the editor of a publication that had the best article or series of articles highlighting dental humanitarian service.

MEMBER BENEFIT - HR HOTLINE AVAILABLE FOR SDDS MEMBERS

The SDDS HR Hotline is an exclusive benefit to SDDS Members. It's powered by the California Employers Association and they are ready for your call.

SDDS HR HOTLINE
FREE TO SDDS MEMBERS!
888.784.4031

**2024 SALARY SURVEY
AVAILABLE - VISIT SDDS.ORG
OR EMAIL SDDS@SDDS.ORG
TO ORDER YOURS**

PAST WEBINARS AVAILABLE AS RECORDINGS

Email sdds@sdds.org to find out which courses are available as recordings.

SFK SCREENERS NEEDED

Smiles for Kids (SFK) is looking for volunteers to screen kids at the schools in the Fall. Please contact the SDDS office at (916) 446-1227 or email smilesforkids@sdds.org if you are interested in volunteering.

BROADWAY SHOWS ANNOUNCED FOR 2025-26

& Juliet
October 2, 2025

Disney's The Lion King
January 22, 2026

Moulin Rouge! The Musical
February 4, 2026

Michael Jackson
April 8, 2026

Back to the Future
May 13, 2026

Hell's Kitchen
July 29, 2026

Visit sdds.org to purchase tickets or complete the inclosed form.



2025 Calendar of Events

Get your CE units
THROUGH SDDS!
VISIT SDDS.ORG FOR FULL PROGRAM



By Ramsey Amin, DDS

Dr. Ramsey Amin is a Diplomate of the American Board of Oral Implantology/Implant Dentistry and an Honored Fellow of the American Academy of Implant Dentistry. With over 25 years of experience, he maintains a thriving implant-focused practice in Burbank, California, specializing in advanced procedures such as zygomatic implants, custom subperiosteals, and complex prosthetic reconstructions.

Dr. Amin is the founder of “The Dental Implant Exchange,” an online educational group where 6,000 US dentists benefit from his leadership and collaborative efforts. As a speaker for a leading international dental implant manufacturer, he regularly conducts lectures and hands-on cadaver courses, sharing his expertise in full arch same-day implants and digital reconstruction. His commitment to elevating the specialty and addressing the practical aspects of running an implant-focused practice makes him a sought-after speaker and mentor in the field.

ELEVATING IMPLANT DENTISTRY:

HOW A FACEBOOK GROUP TRANSFORMED OUR PROFESSION

In 2018, during a quiet afternoon at my in laws’ home in Pennsylvania, I stumbled upon a Facebook button labeled “Create Group.” Little did I know that one click would ignite a movement reshaping implant dentistry. What began as a small forum for 25 dentists has grown into the Dental Implant Exchange—a 6,000-member community fostering collaboration, elevating clinical standards and pushing back against the growing “race to the bottom” in our field.

A Digital Lifeline for Solo Practitioners

As a solo implant dentist in Burbank, I craved peer connections—someone to discuss complex cases with, troubleshoot complications, or simply share clinical wins. Existing online forums felt transactional, dominated by ads or silent lurkers. The Dental Implant Exchange was designed differently: a verified, judgment-free space where dentists could post cases, ask questions and grow together.

My brother-in-law, a non-dentist, came up with the name to emphasize our core value—exchanging knowledge, not showcasing egos. Membership requires license verification, ensuring that every voice belongs to a trusted colleague. Strict rules prohibit personal attacks or promotions, fostering a culture where even “basic” questions receive thoughtful, respectful responses.

The Rising Tide Effect

When clinicians share openly, everyone benefits. Discussions range from managing peri-implantitis to navigating lab communication breakdowns. These

exchanges empower members to refine techniques, adopt evidence-based protocols, and avoid pitfalls that can derail outcomes. The group has become a living textbook—updated daily with real-world insights.

Still, I remind colleagues: this is a supplement, not a substitute for continuing education. It’s where theory meets reality—a place to unpack why a textbook-perfect surgery failed or how to salvage a compromised site.

Fighting the “Race to the Bottom”

For over 25 years, I’ve witnessed a troubling shift: practices chasing profits over precision, especially in full-arch cases. These shortcuts ripple through our profession—patients endure avoidable complications, and dentists inherit the emotional and ethical weight of revision cases. The group amplifies these cautionary stories, urging dentists to resist pricing wars that erode both trust and care quality.

We regularly highlight the long-term costs of discount dentistry—not just in dollars, but in patient health and professional integrity.

The Lab Connection: Quality as a Team Sport

Our conversations wouldn’t shine without the contributions of lab technicians. They bring attention to material science, communication clarity, and the importance of pushing back against labs that prioritize price over precision. A mantra we share often: “Never let a lab tell you what the patient needs.”

This hits home in an era of mass-produced, cookie-cutter restorations.



Beyond the Screen: Lasting Bonds

But the group's true magic lies beyond the clinical pearls. Members often transition from online collaborators to real-world colleagues—co-managing complex cases, offering support during burnout, or lending encouragement during sleepless nights.

Privately, colleagues confide in me about malpractice fears or self-doubt, knowing they're not alone. One message I'll never forget: "Your group reminded me why I chose this profession."

A Future Built on Collaboration

The challenges we face—corporate encroachment, fleeting trends, pressure to prioritize volume over value—are not new. But neither are the solutions. Communities like ours prove that growth thrives in shared purpose.

Post your messy cases. Celebrate others' wins. Question everything—even the latest "miracle" implant system. And when chains dangle bargain prices, remember:

Patients rarely thank you for saving them money, but they'll always remember how you made them feel—and whether their implants last.

Let's build a profession where excellence is not optional. Where mentorship bridges experience gaps. Where community outshines competition. We are part of something bigger. ■



PRACTICE TRANSITION PLANNING | SALES & VALUATIONS | BUYER REPRESENTATION

CITRUS HEIGHTS: \$1.28M Collections in 2024 at this Sacramento Area GP, offering Seller Workback, 6 Ops & Hygiene Dept. with Room to Grow! #CA4477

DIXON: 5 Ops+RE, 3.5 days/wk. Hygiene, Eaglesoft PMS, 2,100 Sq. Ft., 2023 GR \$915K #CA4222

GREATER SACRAMENTO METRO/ELK GROVE AREA: High-end GP Practice+RE, 14 Ops, 12 Hygiene Days, 65 New Patients per Month, Denticon PMS, Large Patient Base! 2023 GR \$2.35M. #CA4248

MODESTO: GP, 5 Ops, 14+ Yrs. Goodwill, 1,950 Sq. Ft., 1.25 days/wk. Hygiene, Dentrix PMS. 2023 GR \$405K. #CA4340

REDDING/RED BLUFF AREA: GP, 4 Ops, 22+ Yrs. Goodwill, Dentrix PMS, 2,100 Sq. Ft., Paperless, Desirable Location! 2023 GR \$649K. #CA4266

REDDING/RED BLUFF/SHASTA COUNTY AREA: \$1.73M 2024 Collections GP Practice with Real Estate available, 6 Ops, Hi Tech (Dentrix, CEREC, 3D Conebeam), Seller to work back 3 to 5 years. #CA3790

SACRAMENTO: \$1.1M Collections GP in perfect Sacramento Metro Location for High Traffic. 5 Ops (could be 8 total Ops) on 7 days/week Hygiene, with Seller multi-year Workback offered. #CA4459

VALLEY SPRINGS/SAN ANDREAS/SONORA AREA: 4 Ops, GP, Paperless, Digital, 5 days/wk. Hygiene, 20+ Yrs. Goodwill, 2023 GR \$805K. #CA4335

SACRAMENTO/CARMICHAEL/FAIR OAKS AREA: 4 Ops, 19+ Yrs. Goodwill, 1,310 Sq. Ft., Open Dental PMS, Paperless, Digital, 55% Delta Premier. 2024 GR \$516K. #CA4300

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By **Bridgett Jorgensen, DMD**

Dr. Bridgett Jorgensen began her journey in dentistry in 1984 as an orthodontic assistant. She eventually worked in every role possible within a dental office - dental assistant, receptionist, patient coordinator and hygienist - before earning her Doctor of Dental Medicine degree from Southern Illinois University School of Dental Medicine in 1992. She lives in the Atlanta area with her husband. They are parents to four children and have four grandchildren.

DENTAL PRACTICE MATCHMAKER: A FAMILY-DRIVEN SOLUTION TO SIMPLIFYING PRACTICE TRANSITIONS

The inspiration for the revolutionary Dental Practice Matchmaker group emerged from personal experience within a dental family. Dr. Bridgett Jorgensen sold her practice in 2018, and about two years later, her daughter sought to purchase one in a different state. Both found the process of connecting with suitable buyers and sellers to be complicated and time-consuming.

Dr. Jorgensen observed that traditional dental brokers often prioritized closing deals over ensuring smooth and satisfying transitions for all parties. When she sold her practice without a broker in 2018, the transition was so seamless that she still works there a couple of times a month—nearly seven years later.

When her daughter, Dr. Delaney Spaulding, was laid off during COVID, she realized the only way to take control of her future was to own a practice. However, she didn't want to openly advertise her search in case her employer intended to bring her back. Fortunately, she had something most dentists don't—a mom who was also a dentist. Dr. Jorgensen posted on dental Facebook groups in her daughter's state, claiming she was moving and looking to purchase a practice. While this was a ruse, it led to a real opportunity. Dr. Spaulding ended up purchasing one of the practices that contacted Dr. Jorgensen.

A Platform Rooted in Anonymity and Connection

Most dentists seeking to buy, sell, or find alternate work prefer to keep the process private, creating a space where brokers and recruiters have long dominated the

transition world. Dr. Jorgensen realized that if she could create a platform where dentists could post practices and job opportunities anonymously, she could help more dentists stay in private practice—and reduce the need for corporate dentistry.

The Dental Practice Matchmaker Facebook group was founded in 2021 to do just that: connect dentists directly without brokers. The group also functions as a job board for private practices looking to hire associates. Membership is strictly vetted and limited to:

- Dentists who own five or fewer practices (to avoid DSO dominance)
- Dental students
- Immediate family members of dentists involved in practice operations.

Corporate owners and third-party recruiters are explicitly excluded. The initiative quickly resonated with the dental community.

Growth Beyond Facebook

Building on the group's success, the Matchmaker team launched a state-specific member website and mobile app in February 2024. These platforms feature real-time, state-organized listings, instant notifications for new opportunities, and curated resources like videos, courses, and key documents.

Through PracticeMatchmaker.com, dentists can also access services including:

- Customized employment agreements
- Contract reviews
- Due diligence assistance for practice purchases

A Family-Powered Mission

The Jorgensen family brings a wealth of dental and business experience to the venture. Dr. Jorgensen's husband, Allen Jorgensen, co-founded Lighthouse 360 in 2000 (now a Henry Schein One company) and currently serves on the boards of three dental technology firms. Their son Eric, an Atlanta-based attorney, assists with contracts and employment agreements, while his wife Chandler helps oversee daily operations of the group, app, and website. Their youngest son Tanner, with a degree in marketing, serves as Chief Operations Officer and is considered the backbone of the company.

Their collaborative efforts reflect a shared mission: to keep dentists in private practice by offering practical, affordable alternatives to traditional brokers.

A Mission-Driven Model

Dental Practice Matchmaker now boasts over 20,000 members on Facebook and has helped facilitate more than 10,000 listings across the U.S.—entirely free of charge. The mobile app, which currently has over 3,500 members, charges a nominal fee of \$30–\$40/month and can be canceled at any time. The company also connects users with trusted attorneys, accountants, and bankers—all in one place.

The Jorgensens have created a streamlined, dentist-to-dentist platform for practice transitions and hiring—without the complications, costs, and pressures of third-party brokers and recruiters. Their innovative approach prioritizes the needs and satisfaction of dentists over sales-driven intermediaries.

Even with one son serving as a forensic psychiatrist in the U.S. Air Force, the rest of the Jorgensen family is fully immersed in supporting the dental community. Dr. Jorgensen's passion for giving back after a fulfilling career is evident in the continued growth and impact of Dental Practice Matchmaker—a platform that's transforming how dentists connect, transition, and thrive in private practice. ■

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By Behnaz Almasi, DMD
SDDS Member

I recently graduated in May 2025 from California Northstate University (CNU) and an incoming AEGD resident at the University of Pennsylvania. When I began my dental journey, I never imagined it would lead to building a social media presence. But here I am—sharing my story, connecting with others, and growing alongside an incredible community.

FROM DENTAL STUDENT TO DENTAL INFLUENCER:

A JOURNEY OF SHARING, GROWING, AND INSPIRING

The Beginning: Sharing My Immigration and Pre-Dental Journey

It all started with a simple desire to connect. As an immigrant, my path to dental school wasn't easy. I knew others were facing similar challenges, and I wanted to show them that with persistence and passion, anything is possible.

I started my social media accounts to share my experiences and hopefully inspire others navigating the pre-dental path. What I did not expect was just how many people would resonate with my story. Soon, I found myself building a community of fellow pre-dental students and international dentists who were just as motivated and passionate about dentistry as I was.

As I continued to share, I received messages from people seeking advice—whether about applications, study tips, or how to stay resilient during difficult times. These interactions brought me so much joy and further motivated me to continue giving back however I could.

Collaborating with Dental Brands and Exploring the Business Side

As my platform grew, I was fortunate to collaborate with dental brands that aligned with my values. I promoted products I truly believed in, earned some income while still in dental school, and gained insight into the business side of dentistry. These opportunities also highlighted the power of social media—not just as a learning tool but as a platform for professional growth.

Through these collaborations, I was invited to attend dental conferences and events where I met industry leaders and gained invaluable mentorship. These experiences taught me that growth in dentistry isn't just about grades; it's also about networking and embracing opportunities beyond the classroom.

Encouraging Others to Get Involved

One of the most fulfilling parts of this journey has been encouraging fellow dental students to get involved—whether by attending conferences, joining dental organizations, or leveraging social media to connect. I love helping others realize how enriching these experiences can be.

Dentistry is so much more than what we learn in school. When you invest in your personal and professional development, the journey becomes even more rewarding.

Looking Ahead: Education, Awareness, and Impact

As I transition into residency and eventually into practice, I'm excited to continue using my platform to raise awareness about oral health. Whether I'm debunking myths, sharing oral hygiene tips, or offering a glimpse into the life of a dental student, I want to continue the conversation and make dentistry more accessible.

Social media has proven to be a powerful tool that has allowed me to connect with patients and peers alike. I plan to use it not only to educate, but to advocate and support others in their dental journeys.

The Next Chapter

Reflecting on how far I've come, I'm proud—not only of what I've accomplished academically, but of the community I've built along the way. Dentistry is about more than clinical excellence; it's about relationships, advocacy, and uplifting others.

Through this journey, I've made meaningful connections, discovered new passions, and learned a great deal about myself. And while this chapter may be ending, the story is far from over—I'm excited to see where it goes next. ■

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HOW I STARTED DENTAL CLINICAL PEARLS:

A MISSION TO SUPPORT DENTISTS EVERYWHERE

By Greg Charles, DDS

I'm often asked how and why I started Dental Clinical Pearls (DCP) and my free email list. Today, DCP is a thriving online learning community of more than 61,000 U.S. dentists, where general dentists and specialists share weekly clinical tips, discuss cases, and support one another in practice.

The Origin: Helping GPR Residents

Back in 2015–2016, I was volunteering at a GPR program. I loved the experience, though I could only participate a few days a year. To stay involved, I began writing real-world clinical tips and emailing them to the residents.

The problem was the GPR program required residents: the residency required residents to use their institutional email system—which, at the time, was not very robust. I would spend 2–3 hours writing detailed tips, complete with clinical photos, only to have the email bounce back because the file size was too large.

While chatting with another attending, he suggested I try Facebook. At first, I was reluctant—but I eventually came around when I realized Facebook would allow me to upload images without file size issues.

From Seven Residents to Thousands of Dentists

So, I started Dental Clinical Pearls with just seven members—the seven residents. I knew nothing about Facebook groups or that dentists could even add other dentists to them.

But one of the residents was a social butterfly and she knew everybody. One morning, I woke up to find she'd added 20 or 30 new

grad dentists to the group. I kept writing tips, and the group slowly kept growing. I thought it was pretty neat when we hit 100 members.

That's when I said to myself, "What would happen if I wrote one dental tip a day for a year?"

What would happen if
I wrote one dental tip a
day for a year?

The Motivation Behind It

I didn't set out with a grand plan. I just knew dentistry was a tough gig, and I wanted to help young dentists have a better career than I did. I'm a big believer that there's no substitute for residency training and one-on-one mentorship—but I also believe online learning has a role. It can help fill in some of the gaps.

Growing the Community

In time, more general dentists and specialists began contributing their own tips. The first two regular contributors were an endodontist from New York and an implant dentist from British Columbia. Eventually, we built a team of about 40 different specialists, each writing a weekly tip on different days.

One of my main goals with the platform has always been to foster community. I never want a single dentist to feel like they practice "alone." That's very important to me.

Cataloging the Best Tips

Something I'm especially proud of is how we've started indexing and categorizing the best tips and posts. Facebook can be difficult to search, so I created a comprehensive index. It got so big—around 35–40 MB of text links—that it became too large to post directly on Facebook.

So I made it available 100% free at www.HelpfulDentist.com, where dentists can access step-by-step guidance on topics like bone grafting and porcelain repair.

How It's Changed My Practice

Personally, the community has helped me refine my own techniques. Dozens of small tips have added up to meaningful improvements, and 2–3 of them were truly game-changers for my practice. I call it "fine-tuning"—those little changes that make a big difference over time.

Moving Forward

My goal remains the same: to keep Dental Clinical Pearls a free service that supports dentists across the country. I want to make sure that no dentist ever feels alone in practice—and that we all have access to a positive, collaborative network of colleagues willing to help. ■

Dr. Greg Charles is a general dentist who created the popular dental forum Dental Clinical Pearls on Facebook and a free email list of tips and dental job listings at www.HelpfulDentist.com

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By Rola Rabah, DDS, MD
SDDS Member

Dr. Rola Rabah began her social media presence as @Fifteenblades in August of 2017, when she started her Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery training in Boston. She continued sharing her journey through medical school, general surgery, oral surgery and now private practice at Sacramento Oral Surgery. Since then, she has organically grown her following to over 120,000 on Instagram and over 100,000 on YouTube. From surgery to lifestyle, Dr. Rabah has shared what it is like to be in the field of oral surgery with a wide audience internationally.

FROM SCALPEL TO SCREEN: HOW SOCIAL MEDIA SHAPED MY JOURNEY IN ORAL SURGERY

Since the first social media platform launched in 1997, society hasn't looked back. Whether you're an active user or prefer to stay offline, the reality remains: with more than half of the global population using at least one social platform, social media has become an undeniable part of daily life.

Across all backgrounds, social media influencers have become voices of a generation, holding immense sway over their audiences. One of its greatest benefits is the ability to open powerful doors—especially for vulnerable populations who may otherwise be left in the dark. For healthcare, this presents an incredible opportunity to deliver public health initiatives, increase awareness, and improve access to trustworthy information. But it also carries risks, particularly the rapid spread of misinformation.

In 2025, a growing responsibility for dentists and doctors is to establish an online footprint—not just to market their practice, but to protect the digital space. If we, as healthcare providers, take the lead on these platforms, we can be a reliable source of factual, evidence-based content, countering dangerous trends, TikTok myths, and viral health misinformation.

Why I Started: Representation, Mentorship, and a Digital Community

I launched my social media journey as @Fifteenblades in 2017. At the time, it wasn't common—or even encouraged—for doctors to have a public online presence. I recognized a lack of female mentors in the field of oral surgery, and I wanted to be part of the change.

Yes, I initially faced pushback. I was told, repeatedly, that being “so public” might one day risk my career. But I didn't listen. Even with just

a few thousand followers, I felt like I was carving out a space in an entirely new world.

As a young oral surgery resident in medical school, I wanted to blog about life in my niche specialty—a journey very few understood, especially from a woman's perspective. Looking back, I wish I had seen someone like me navigating this path. Someone real. Someone relatable.

Honestly, I didn't expect much traction, especially compared to fashion bloggers with their beautiful, curated content. But I had nothing to lose, so I kept sharing: from study strategies to my limited social life in Boston (which mostly involved walking my dogs through brownstone-lined streets). To my surprise, my platform grew quickly—thousands of followers eager to learn about dentistry, medicine, and life as a woman in surgery.

I received messages like: “Finally, a real woman online sharing her experience.”

I was shocked at how often people called me their “motivation.” Me? Why? I realized it wasn't because I was extraordinary—it was because I was visible. One of the very few young doctors online, sharing the journey authentically.

Within two years, I had 100,000 followers. Yes, it required hard work, consistency, and time—but the rewards were endless. I built a huge network of colleagues, mentees, and mentors. I was invited to speak on panels,

attend conferences, and contribute to a rapidly growing online medical community. Financially, it even helped me during residency, a time when my income was extremely limited.

Today: A New Chapter

Fast forward eight years, and though I've taken a step back from daily blogging to focus on private practice and motherhood, my online presence continues to evolve. Now joined by hundreds of healthcare professionals—many of whom have far surpassed my following—I'm proud to see how far the space has come.

These creators have made medical education go viral, turned health into a trending topic, and even built full-time careers online. Some have left clinical practice entirely to pursue

digital health entrepreneurship. While I may not post as actively as before, I still see the immense value of social media, especially for networking, patient education, and marketing.

The Data Doesn't Lie

If nothing else, social media is a powerful marketing tool—and this isn't just anecdotal. According to Alalwan et al.'s systematic review of 144 studies, social media significantly increases the reach and influence of word-of-mouth marketing, outperforming traditional advertising tools.

This has major implications for dentists. For specialists who rely on referrals, it's even more critical. A 2018 Healthcare Consumer Insight survey of 1,000 respondents revealed:

- 41% still check online reviews even after a referral.
- 95% consider physician ratings and reviews to be somewhat or very reliable.
- 70% of patients say online reviews influenced their choice of doctor.

Final Thoughts: Don't Miss the Moment

Social media is bigger than ever—and it's not slowing down. If you're not yet online, I highly recommend joining. Whether your goal is networking, education, patient engagement, marketing, or simply having fun, the opportunity is there.

Hurry—if you blink, you might miss your chance. ■



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By Jenny Apekian, DDS
SDDS Member

Dr. Jenny Apekian is a strong proponent of utilizing the latest technologies in dentistry to improve the patient experience. She utilizes the latest in CAD/CAM technologies, 3D Imaging, 3D printing and treatment delivery systems. Through digital integration, she has grown her practice 500% in the last ten years. As an accomplished artist, she brings the same attention to detail into her restorations, full arch, and full-mouth rehabilitation cases.

Dr. Apekian is a key opinion leader for Kuraray Noritake, Datum Dental, and various DENTSPLY Sirona technologies. She also serves as a mentor and trainer for CEREC CAD/CAM technology and implantology. She also speaks nationwide on how to maximize efficiency through office design and digital workflows. Dr. Apekian recently accepted the Smart Integration Award honoring innovative women in digital dentistry.

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN MODERN DENTISTRY

In today's digitally connected world, social media has become an indispensable tool for professionals across all fields—including dentistry. When used thoughtfully, it can enhance patient education, promote services, and create meaningful professional connections. This article explores the diverse roles social media plays in a dental professional's journey and how to harness its full potential.

1. Building a Brand and Professional Identity

Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn allow dental professionals to craft a compelling online presence. By sharing educational content, showcasing clinical expertise, and communicating core values, dentists can establish a clear and recognizable brand identity. In a competitive landscape, this helps a practice stand out and instills confidence in prospective patients.

2. Patient Education and Awareness

Social media is an excellent medium for educating patients. Through posts, infographics, and videos, dentists can simplify complex procedures, emphasize the importance of oral hygiene, and explain the value of regular check-ups. This not only empowers patients but also reinforces your credibility as a trusted source of information.

3. Enhancing Patient Engagement

Social media enables real-time communication between dental professionals and their patients. Whether through comments, private messages, polls, or interactive stories, these platforms allow for meaningful engagement. Responding to patient questions or feedback fosters trust and strengthens the dentist-patient relationship—ultimately encouraging better compliance and loyalty.

4. Showcasing Success Stories and Results

Before-and-after photos, patient testimonials, and transformation stories are powerful tools. They provide “social proof” of your work and humanize your practice. Authentic success stories create emotional connections, which are key to attracting and retaining patients who are seeking reassurance and inspiration.

5. Promoting Services and Special Offers

Social media is an efficient channel for announcing new services, seasonal promotions, or limited-time discounts. These announcements can reach a wide audience quickly and, with the use of targeted ads, be directed to potential patients most likely to benefit. This can translate into increased bookings and broader visibility for the practice.

6. Professional Networking and Collaboration

Perhaps one of the most rewarding aspects of social media for me has been the ability to connect with colleagues across the globe. Platforms like LinkedIn and Facebook groups foster professional collaboration, referrals, and ongoing education. By sharing cases, workflows, and clinical tips, I've built a community of like-minded professionals who are passionate about digital dentistry.

These connections laid the foundation for my own course, *Treating the Worn Dentition with a Digital Approach*, through which I help other clinicians successfully integrate digital workflows into their practices.

7. Staying Current with Industry Trends

Social media makes it easier than ever to stay up to date with new materials, clinical techniques, technologies, and evolving patient expectations. Following dental thought leaders, professional associations, and trending hashtags allows practitioners to stay informed and continuously refine their approach to care. ■



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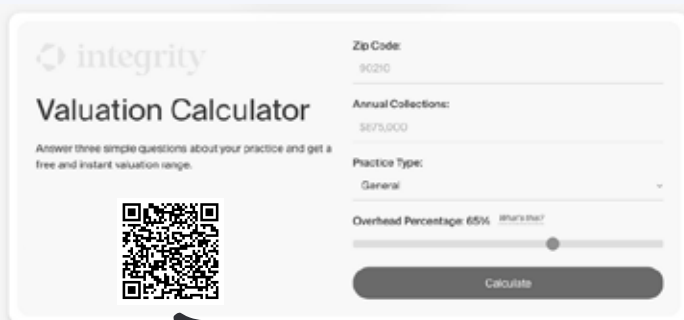
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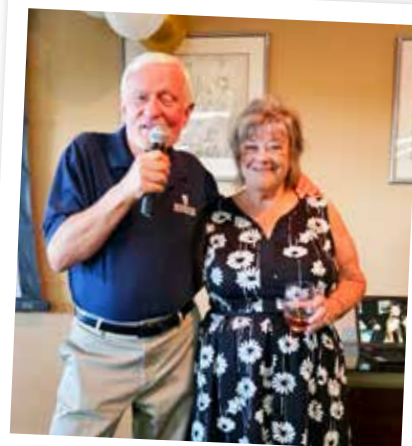
By **Carl Hillendahl, DDS**
SDDS Foundation President

Cathy's quarter century tenure as Executive Director of both the Sacramento District Dental Society (SDDS) and the SDDS Foundation has been an outstanding success for both organizations. She displayed exceptional skills at managing HR, event management, grant writing, financial management, and motivating our members to assume leadership roles.

When Cathy took the role in 2001, SDDS was a \$750,000 organization with 1,112 members, representing 64% of local dentists. The Foundation had assets totaling \$260,000. Today, SDDS has grown into a \$2.5 million organization with 1,734 members, representing approximately 82% of the dentists at large, and the Foundation is a \$3.8 million Foundation. Kudos to the year 2000-01 Executive Director Search Committee and SDDS Board for selecting

Cathy for the position, and thank you, Cathy, for accepting it.

To honor Cathy's legacy, the Foundation Board is establishing the "Cathy Levering



Leadership Scholarship Fund" to provide scholarships to dental students that demonstrate exceptional leadership qualities. The Board of Directors of SDDS and the Foundation have made donations to the Foundation for the Cathy Levering Leadership Scholarship Fund. Anyone wanting to honor Cathy with a donation to the Foundation, please enter "Honoring Cathy Levering" on your checks. So far, over \$70,000 has been donated to the Cathy Levering Leadership Scholarship Fund!

Cathy, we wish you the best in your retirement and many years of good health. It has truly been fun and a pleasure to be a member of SDDS during your leadership. ■

Carl Hillendahl

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YOU

THE DENTIST, THE EMPLOYER

How to Spot a Bully (and What to Do About It)

By California Employers Association (SDDS Vendor Member)

Chances are, most of us have encountered difficult personalities in the workplace. However, when the behavior rises to the level of “bullying” this often presents a major challenge for managers and HR professionals as they navigate the best approach. One problem is that workplace bullies are often more sophisticated than your average schoolyard bully. Workplace bullies may leave you feeling “gaslit” – causing you to question whether they have done anything wrong in the first place. Moreover, rude, subtly disrespectful, and unprofessional behavior does not always fit neatly into a formal “policy violation” leaving managers feeling stuck.

What are the Signs of a Workplace Bully?

1. They publicly shame or embarrass others.

Bullies often find ways to belittle others, particularly in public. Sometimes they do this in a “subtle” or passive aggressive manner and then suggest that they are “only joking” or that the other person needs to “lighten up.” This is different from an employee with good intentions who accidentally says something offensive or makes someone feel bad. One characteristic of a bully is the inability to acknowledge their mistakes nor see the other person’s perspective.

2. They take all the credit or fail to give credit.

What lies at the heart of bullying is often underlying insecurity. Bullies typically feel the need to take all of the credit for others’ accomplishments, or they may fail to acknowledge another coworker’s hard work, or give credence to their ideas. This is an even bigger problem if the bully is in a supervisory role, leading to employee disengagement and burnout.

3. They project their behavior onto others.

Oftentimes when a bully is confronted about their alleged behavior they suggest that everyone else is also engaging in the same conduct they have been accused of. This can leave managers feeling “stuck” in a “he said, she said” situation. It is important to pay close attention to whether they can actually provide specific examples involving others, and how they reflect on their own role in the workplace conflict.

4. They try to turn others against you.

When a bully has decided to target someone – sometimes for no good reason at all – they will make attempts to turn others against that person. They may lie about the individual, take things out of context, or attempt to sabotage their work. Unfortunately, this can create a “rumor circle” that is difficult to overcome when allowed to spread.

5. They create an intimidating, threatening, or hostile work environment.

Sometimes bullies are bold enough to venture into illegal conduct, such as by making threats of workplace violence or targeting someone based on a protected class. This is often when bullying becomes “harassment” and it is critical that management investigates and corrects the issue promptly, to mitigate liability and protect other employees.

How to Address Workplace Bullies

If you are dealing with an individual who checks any or all of these boxes, the first question managers should ask include:

- Is this the first issue we have had with this person, or is it repeated behavior?
- Does it appear they are acting intentionally or are they “tone deaf”?

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- When confronted, does this person take accountability and show an intention to change?
- Or, do they deflect or appear to only pay “lip service” to doing better next time?

The answers to these questions are important when assessing whether you will attempt to “coach this person to success”, or if you have reached the end of the road. The worst situation occurs when a manager is unsure of how to approach a bully and fails to confront the issue for a while. This is never a good idea because just one problematic employee can vastly change your work culture, and lead to employee dissatisfaction and retention issues. Unfortunately, many employees begin to assume that the bully is “protected” and begin to distrust management and Human Resources. Once trust is lost amongst staff, it is very difficult to gain it back.

Managers need to remember that they do not have to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that an employee is engaged in bullying. Rather, managers just need to assess whether it is “more likely than not” taking into account all employee reports and other evidence, that bullying occurred and a policy was violated. Rude, unprofessional, or disrespectful behavior is often a violation of an employer’s code of conduct and/or harassment and discrimination policies. Make sure to document each incident, as it may become clear that the bullying behavior is “adding up.” ■



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By Mariah Sharp, D3
CNU Dental Student

I'm a third-year dental student at California Northstate University. In July, I began seeing my own patients—an exciting milestone in my dental journey! Before dental school, I graduated from UC Irvine with a double major in Anthropology and Biological Sciences. Currently, I stay involved as the California Dental Association student representative, TDIC student liaison, DEIB representative, and academic chair for my class.

If you'd like a behind-the-scenes look at life as a dental student, follow along on my Instagram page: @smile-sharpwithme. Outside of school, you'll often find me exploring Sacramento's café scene in search of the perfect matcha latte! Did you know matcha contains fluoride?

Fluoride or Fear: The Current Turbulence Among Fluoridation

Misinformation often spreads faster than fact, and fluoride is no exception. As dental professionals, we have a responsibility to utilize evidence-based dentistry. It's essential that we listen to our patients' concerns and offer science-backed explanations that build trust.

Community water fluoridation remains one of the most impactful and cost-effective public health initiatives in dentistry. It plays a vital role in reducing dental caries particularly, among children and underserved communities. According to the American Dental Association (ADA), water fluoridation can reduce tooth decay by approximately 25% in children and adults (ADA, 2023a). This represents fewer cavities, less dental pain, fewer fillings and extractions, and ultimately, fewer missed days from school and work. These benefits extend well beyond the dental chair, supporting individual and community health.

In addition to health outcomes, the economic benefits of water fluoridation are substantial. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that for every dollar invested in water fluoridation, approximately \$20 is saved in dental treatment costs (CDC, 2023).

This return on investment is especially significant for low-income families who may face barriers to regular dental care. Water fluoridation helps bridge that gap by providing a form of prevention reaching people regardless of access to dental services.

Despite the decades of research supporting its safety and efficacy, fluoride remains subject of misinformation and public concern. One misunderstanding is a link between fluoride exposure and autism. These studies were conducted in areas of China, India, and Iran where natural fluoride levels in groundwater can be extremely high, sometimes exceeding 10 mg/L. These concentrations are far beyond the recommended levels in the United States and do not reflect the controlled nature of our fluoridation programs (Peckham & Awofeso, 2014).

In the United States, the ADA and CDC recommend a fluoride concentration of 0.7 mg/L in water. This level has been determined to provide protection against dental caries while minimizing any risk of dental fluorosis which is a mild, cosmetic condition that can cause white spots on the teeth during development (ADA, 2023b). At 0.7 mg/L, fluoride is safe, effective, and essential to promoting long-term oral health.

Fluoride is a naturally occurring element found in many water sources. Kip Duchon, a retired CDC national fluoridation engineer, highlights the variability in fluoride levels across water sources. Rivers, lakes, and rainwater generally contain fluoride levels between 0.1 and 0.2 mg/L. Groundwater can have fluoride levels ranging anywhere from 0.1 mg/L to greater than 10 mg/L, depending on the surrounding geology and mineral content. Seawater typically has a concentration of around 1.2 mg/L but can vary (Duchon, 2023).

These variations demonstrate why water fluoridation is not simply about adding fluoride to drinking water. It's about adjusting and maintaining safe, consistent levels. In some cases, that means supplementing low-fluoride water sources; in others, it involves reducing naturally high levels to ensure public safety. The goal is always the same: to achieve the most effective level for cavity prevention while avoiding overexposure.

Patient conversations around fluoride can be challenging. Many people form opinions based on social media or headlines that lack context. It's essential that we approach these conversations with empathy and understanding. Patients are often trying to make the best health decisions with the information available to them. As dental professionals, our job is to fill in the gaps, address misconceptions, and explain the evidence. ■

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YOU THE DENTIST, THE BUSINESS OWNER

YOU ARE A DENTIST. You've been to school, taken your Boards and settled into practice. End of story?

Not quite. Are you up to speed on tax laws, potential deductions and other important business issues?

In this monthly column, we will offer information pertinent to you, the dentist as the business owner.

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The Business of Being Real: Social Media That Builds Trust

Submitted by **Sara Penrod Baker, MBA, CEO/Founder; SD Dental Solutions** (SDDS Vendor Member)

Social media can feel daunting—especially for those of us more comfortable working aging reports and sending statements than posting Instagram reels and performing TikTok trends. However, no doubt about it: it's become one of the most powerful tools for connection in dentistry.

At SD Dental Solutions, we use Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook to engage viewers and start conversations. I'll admit—I resisted posting personally at first. It felt uncomfortable and vulnerable. But now, I really enjoy it! Seeing impressions grow and getting authentic responses makes it both exciting and rewarding. And I think it's honestly helped practice owners ask themselves important questions like, "How IS my AR doing? Could I be managing my collections better?" Which is great!

It's also become a way to connect. It's wild to say, but some of my most valuable professional relationships have come from simply showing up online. Who would have guessed?

Here's some of what we've learned:

DO post regularly.

This was (eh, still is!) the hardest part for me, but consistency leads to better engagement.

DO stay on brand.

We use humor, a consistent color palette and style that reflects who we are.

DO be real.

Posts about travel, running, or our team often do better than business content. People relate to people.

DON'T overthink it.

Some of our best posts were quick and simple.

DON'T be afraid to connect.

Send the message! Make the comment! Reach out to someone you admire. And be yourself—authenticity stands out more than flowery words.

Social media isn't just a marketing platform—it can be a mirror of our values. When done right, it invites others into our world, encourages reflection, and builds authentic relationships. ■

Looking for a colleague or need to make a referral?

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By **Jasraj Sandhu, DMD**
SDDS Member

Strengthening Our Digital Presence

In today's digital age, a strong social media presence is no longer optional—it's essential. This is true not only for individual dental professionals, but also for organizations like the Sacramento District Dental Society (SDDS). Our Society has always stood at the forefront of promoting oral health, supporting professional development, and advocating for the dental profession. Now, it's time for us to expand that leadership into the digital space.

As a new generation of dentists joins our community, it's crucial that we evolve how we communicate and connect. Social media has transformed the way individuals and organizations interact. It's no longer a one-way broadcast of information—it's a two-way dialogue. Our members want to engage, share, and be heard. SDDS is ready to meet that need.

To enhance our outreach and better serve our community, we're excited to announce the creation of a Social Media Task Force. This new committee will focus on improving our online engagement and ensuring that our members receive timely, trustworthy, and valuable information.

Our goals are simple yet impactful. We aim to deliver timely updates on SDDS events, webinars, continuing education

opportunities, and policy changes to keep our members well-informed. We're committed to spotlighting our members by recognizing their professional achievements, research contributions, and community service. In an era of misinformation, we strive to serve as a trusted, accessible source of accurate dental information for both our members and the public. Through social media, we hope to foster a stronger sense of community by encouraging meaningful dialogue and professional connections. Additionally, we want to support our vendor members and partners by offering expanded outreach opportunities that enhance their visibility within the dental community.

By revamping our digital presence, we aim to make SDDS not just a professional

Society, but a thriving online community. This initiative is also a fantastic leadership opportunity—an invitation to bring new energy and ideas to the table.

If you're passionate about communication, community-building, and shaping the future of dentistry, we invite you to join the Social Media Task Force. Be a part of something impactful—because together, we can make great things happen. ■

Social Media Task Force coming 2026 - Interested in joining? More information and an opportunity to sign up for committees will be available towards the end of the year!

2025 SDDS Committees Schedule

Standing Committees

Membership/Engagement
Jan 21 • Mar 24 • Sept 24 • Nov 18

CPR Committee
Jan 8

Nominating/Leadership Development
Jan 27

Advisory Committees

CSUS Pre-Dental Advisory
Jan 28 • May 27

Continuing Education Advisory
Feb 3 • May 6 • June 4 • Sept 15

Nugget Editorial Advisory
Jan 27 • Sept 15

Strategic Plan Advisory
TBA

Budget and Finance Advisory
TBA

Bylaws Advisory
TBA

Legislative Advisory
TBA

Other
SacPAC
Sept TBD

CDA House of Delegates
Nov 21-22

Leadership

Board of Directors
Jan 7 • Mar 4 • May 6 • Sept 2 • Nov 4

Executive Committee
Feb 14 • Apr 11 • Aug 1 • Oct 17 • Dec 5

Foundation

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Jan 21 • Sept 23

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By **Craig Alpha, DDS**
2025 Secretary

May 6, 2025

Highlights of the Board Meeting

Call to Order and President's Welcome

Dr. Nima Aflatooni, President, welcomed Caroll Badgley, our new Executive Director, and shared that the search process was both timely and smooth. He acknowledged Cathy Levering for her exceptional contributions to SDDS and SDDF, expressing deep gratitude on behalf of the Board. He noted she will be greatly missed but remains a valued connection.

Dr. Aflatooni reported the CDA leadership visit was rescheduled due to a special Board meeting and ADA call regarding Fonteva. He also shared updates on CDA's advocacy efforts for Bill 371 (Network Adequacy) and is eager to learn more about their goals and support strategies.

Dr. Aflatooni proposed a Future Leaders / LDC Training Meeting for September, aiming to spark interest among potential committee members and chairs for 2026. He encouraged full Board attendance to support leadership development.

Secretary's Report

Dr. Craig Alpha reported our membership market share is at 78%, primarily due to non-renewals for nonpayment. While drops are concerning, we are currently tracking at the same point as last year. He noted strong event attendance and member engagement for 2025.

Treasurer's Report

Dr. Jeff Sue summarized the April 16 Budget & Finance Committee Meeting (joint with the Foundation). Key points:

- The Board approved revisions to the Finance Policy and continuation of the Investment Policy (conservative approach; ladder CD's).

- MidWinter Meeting netted \$204,000, attributed to 100 additional attendees and tight budget adherence—thank you, Della!
- The Board approved Caroll Badgley as a signer on bank accounts and credit cards for both the Society and the Foundation.

Old Business

- **Host Updates:** Thanks to Board members serving as course/webinar hosts; host duties were reviewed.
- **CDA Leadership Conference Recap:** Dr. Rosemary Wu shared a very positive experience. Thank you to Drs. Wu and Felahy for representing SDDS.
- **FQHCs:** In-depth discussion on involvement in organized dentistry and SDDS's support for Medi-Cal dental reform and FQHC providers in Sacramento County.

Committee Reports

- All Mid-Year Committee Reports and meeting minutes were reviewed.
- **Guest of the Board Update:** Raj Sandhu provided updates on CNU's new clinic and upcoming graduation. SDDS is sponsoring the CNU Gala photo booth (\$1,000 donation).
- **Social Media Task Force Proposal:** Raj proposed a task force to enhance leadership visibility and member engagement on social media.

New Business... New Ideas...

Fonteva Transition:

- Caroll shared insights from her Fonteva implementation at NCDS.

- Explained the system's role in unifying membership, registration, and CE tracking across CDA/ADA/components. Issues regarding event registration were discussed.
- Cathy highlighted current system issues and staff workarounds due to missing CDA telecom updates since January 16 (manual processing takes ~30 mins/day).
- Caroll and Cathy will compile action items for Dr. Felahy to present at BCR.

Executive Directors' Reports

- **ED Transition:** Cathy and Caroll reported strong collaboration and steady progress on transition checklists and training.
- **Organizational Audit:** Updated manuals, policies, and procedures are now stored in accessible binders in the ED office.
- **Emergency Manuals** distributed to Drs. Aflatooni, Sue, and Alpha.
- **Vendor Member Review:** Board members asked to submit VM candidate companies by Monday, May 12.

Official Statement:

SDDS will be forever indebted to Cathy for her love, care, and dedication. Thank you, Cathy!

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.

Next Board meeting:
September 2, 2025

"It is the mission of the Sacramento District Dental Society to be the recognized source for serving its members and for enhancing the oral health of the community."

CORE VALUES: Community, Integrity, Service, Engagement

OCT
29

Responsibilities and Requirements of Prescribing Schedule II Opioids

Presented by Ronni Brown, DDS, MPH, FADI

Opioid misuse and overdose are at an epidemic level in the state and the country, driven by a myriad of factors including COVID, poverty, homelessness, mental illness, and professional overprescribing of opioids. This course aims to address the complex issues associated with substance use disorders and the role of dental professionals in addressing the opioid crisis by screening for substance use disorders, referring patients for sobriety and recovery support, and providing evidence-based pain management. **This course satisfies the biennial mandatory course requirement of opioid training for California dental licensees and 2 of the 8 hour one time DEA MATE requirement for registrant renewal.**

Learning objectives:

- To identify patients at risk or with a substance use disorder
- The requirements as a prescriber and dispenser of Schedule II opioids
- Evidence-based strategies for dental pain management patients with opioid addiction
- Current trends in substance use that may be seen in dental practice

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5:30–7:30pm: Webinar

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I highly recommend Roy Fruehauf at DDSmatch to represent any dentist whose goal is to sell their dental practice in a timely and stress-free manner.
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(as of 6/10/25)

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MARKET
SHARE:
80.6%

RETENTION RATE: 94%
ENGAGEMENT RATE:
79% active / 58% retired

New Members

CHANEL GEORGE, DDS General Practice

Dr. George earned her dental degree from an International College in 2023. Her current practice location is pending.

ATZIRI HERNANDEZ, DMD General Practice

Dr. Hernandez earned her dental degree from Tufts University School of Dentistry in 2024. Her current practice location is pending.

KENNETH JONES, DDS General Practice

Dr. Jones earned his dental degree from UOP Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry in 2023. His current practice location is pending.

SABRINA SALAH, DDS General Practice

Transferred!

Dr. Salah earned her dental degree from UCLA in 2005. She is currently retired.

SHEREIF YASSA, DDS General Practice

Dr. Yassa earned his dental degree from Universidad De La Salle in Mexico in 2017. He currently practices at Western Dental in Sacramento.

Congratulations
to Our New Retired Members!
Lauren Hanschu, DDS

TOTAL ACTIVE MEMBERS:
1,339

TOTAL RETIRED
MEMBERS: 361

TOTAL DUAL
MEMBERS: 10

TOTAL AFFILIATE
MEMBERS: 1

TOTAL STUDENT
MEMBERS: 203

TOTAL CURRENT
APPLICANTS: 0

TOTAL DHP
MEMBERS: 57

TOTAL NEW
MEMBERS FOR 2025: 33

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Member MIXERS

Join your fellow SDDS Members for a fantastic evening of networking, laughter, and great company at SDDS' Member Mixer! Whether you're looking to make new connections or catch up with familiar faces, this is the perfect opportunity to relax and enjoy a casual NON-CE atmosphere. Don't miss out!

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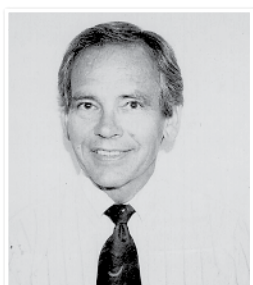


In Memoriam



Dr. Bobby Boozer

Dr. Bobby Boozer passed away peacefully on May 4, 2025 at his home in Sacramento. He graduated from UCSF School of Dentistry in 1955. Dr. Boozer was a member for 68 years and had a successful dental practice in Sacramento for many years.



Dr. Stephen Christensen

Dr. Stephen Christensen passed away on September 22, 2024. He graduated from Oregon Health Science University in 1962 and he then went on to earn his Specialty of Orthodontics from Loma Linda University in 1966. Dr. Christensen was a member for 58 years.



Dr. Walter Griffin

Dr. Walter Griffin passed away February 10, 2025. He graduated from dental school in 1963 from Oregon Health Science University. He was a member for 62 years.

We're Blowing your horn!



Congratulations to...

Ray Irving; Professional Practice Sales (SDDS Vendor Member) on celebrating 50 years in business. His philosophy has always been selling business “dentist to dentist”.

Dr. Cherag Sarkari on starting a new position at LIBERTY Dental Plan as Chief Dental Officer.

Dr. Kevin Chen on his hole in one while out golfing! (1)

Drs. Jasraj Sandhu and Ranna Alrabadi (recent CNU grads) were some of the first dental students to volunteer their time with SDDS. Dr. Sandhu was the 2025 CNU Student Representative invited to join the SDDS Board of Directors and Dr. Alrabadi gathered content for the Student Corner while serving on *the Nugget* Editorial Committee. Pictured with Dr. Kevin Keating, CNU Dental School Dean. (2)

Dr. Jasraj Sandhu on being recognized by the CDA for outstanding achievement as the Student Representative of CNU's Class of 2025. Award presented by SDDS Executive Director, Caroll Badgley. (3)

Dr. Jennifer Goss for being honored with the Excellence in Teaching and Mentoring Award in Periodontology by the American Academy of Periodontology. Congratulations Dr. Goss! (4)

SDDS graphic designer, **Jessica Luther** for a decade of dedication to SDDS! (5)



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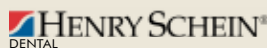
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The SDDS Job Bank is a service offered only to SDDS Members. It is for job seekers to reach other Society members who are looking for dentists to round out their practice, and vice versa. If you are a job seeker or associate seeker contact SDDS at (916) 446-1227 or by email at sdds@sdds.org, we can also provide contact information for the members listed below.

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 Shiva Salehi, DDS • Fair Oaks • PT • GP
 Harkeet Sappal, DDS • Sacramento • PT • Endo
 Mugunth Nandagopal, DDS • Sacramento • FT/PT • GP
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 Sean Roth, DDS • Folsom • FT • GP
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 Arash Aghakhani, DDS • Sacramento • FT/PT • GP
 Darryl Azouz, DDS • Lake Tahoe • FT/PT • GP
 Oleg Oliferuk, DDS • Folsom • PT • GP
 Siamak Okhovat, DDS • Roseville • PT/FT • GP
 Monica Tavallaei, DDS • Sacramento • PT/FT • GP/PEDO
 Sabrina Jang, DDS • Sacramento • PT/FT • GP
 Albert Lee, DDS • Sacramento • PT • GP
 Amandeep Behniwal, DDS • Roseville • PT/FT • GP
 Elizabeth Johnson, DDS • WellSpace - various locations • FT/PT/Fill-In • GP
 Amy Woo, DDS • Sacramento • PT 1 Day • Endo
 David Park, DDS • several/multiple positions • FT/PT • GP

DOCS SEEKING EMPLOYMENT

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 Harshini Paruchuru (graduated UOP May 2025) • FT/PT • GP
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Classified Ads

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Guidelines for Online Classified Advertising:

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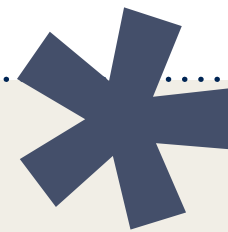
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

SDDS CALENDAR OF EVENTS



JULY

- 15 Dentists Do Music Circus
West Side Story

AUGUST

- 5 Dentists Do Music Circus
In the Heights
- 9 CPR – BLS AHA Blended Learning
Skills Testing, 3 Time Sessions
Saturday • 8–8:45am,
9–9:45am, 10–10:45am
SDDS Classroom • 3 CEU, Core
- 20 Member Event
Ice Cream Social
Leatherby's Family Creamery
Arden Way • 6–7:30pm
- 26 Dentists Do Music Circus
Hair

SEPTEMBER

- 9 General Membership CE Meeting
Throwdown - Does CR Matter?
*Paul Binon, DDS, MSD; Bryan Judd, DDS
and Peter Worth, DDS*
- 12 SDDS 14th Annual Shred Day
SDDS Office • 10am-2pm
- 17 Navigating Year-End Planning
and New Tax Regulations
*Brett LeMmon, CPA, MA; Eamed
Wednesday • 6:30–8:30pm
SDDS Classroom • No CEU*
- 26 Pearls in Our Backyard
*Tim Mickiewicz, DDS; Nisha Manila,
BDS, MS, PhD, FACD; Brandon Martin,
DDS, MS; and Devan Dalla, DDS
Friday • 8:30am–3pm
SDDS Classroom • 6 CEU, Core*

OCTOBER

- 2 Dentists Do Broadway
& Juliet
- 14 General Membership CE Meeting
Working Together to Improve
Oral Health in California
*Shakalpi Pendurkar, DDS, MPH,
State Dental Director*
- 16 Member Mixer
Zócalo - Folsom
Thursday • 6–7:30pm
*Sponsored by MUN CPA and
Dental & Medical Counsel PC*
- 22 DIY Study Club – Bring Your Case!
Wednesday • 6–8:30pm
SDDS Classroom • 2.5 CEU, 20%
- 29 Licensure Renewal Webinar
Responsibilities and Requirements of
Prescribing Schedule II Opioids
*Ronni Brown, DDS, MPH, FADI
Wednesday • 5:30–7:30pm • 2 CEU, Core*

For full details and to sign up for courses online, visit: www.sdds.org



Upcoming GENERAL MEETINGS

SEP
9

Throwdown – Does CR Matter?

Tuesday • 3 CEU, Core • \$89 early price thru 8/29
Presented by Paul Binon, DDS, MSD; Bryan Judd, DDS
and Peter Worth, DDS

Nothing is more important than knowing where to restore the bite, yet this topic has been debated at length for years. In this discussion, we will explore the philosophies and techniques associated with finding the bite—or does it really matter? Does CR change in time? With Joint Pathology?

OCT
14

Working Together to Improve Oral Health in California

Tuesday • 3 CEU, Core • \$89 early price thru 9/30
Presented by Shakalpi Pendurkar, DDS, MPH,
State Dental Director

5:45–9:00pm: Hilton Sacramento Arden West (2200 Harvard Street, Sac)