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A Review of the Recent LLR Board of Dentistry Meeting

By Dr. Julia Mikell, SCDA President



Dr. Julia Mikell

Phil Latham, Jim Mercer, Rocky Napier and I represented the South Carolina Dental Association (SCDA) at the July 10, 2020, South Carolina Board of Dentistry (SCBOD) inaugural web-based meeting. It is standard practice for the SCDA to have three or four representatives at all SCBOD meetings. The meetings are generally held quarterly on Fridays each year beginning at 9 am. The meetings are open to the public, scheduled a year in advance, but subject to change, and an agenda is posted on the LLR website prior to each meeting. I encourage all dentists to attend a couple of these meetings. It is quite educational to see how our licensing body takes care of business.

Under normal circumstances, these meetings are held in person in a conference room at the LLR building in Columbia. In addition to the SCBOD members, the board's attorney, the SCBOD administrator, and a scribe, there are usually 10-15 people in the public seating section. The meeting usually includes approximately 4-5 dental professionals defending their request for licensure. The remainder of the meeting addresses issues that affect the scope of practice or licensure requirements for dentistry or dental hygiene. Since coronavirus-time, all meetings, until this most recent one, have taken place via phone conference. The phone conference format was challenging, but since it was well managed, it was effective. The switch to a Web-ex format in July made the meeting more interactive, and in my opinion more effective.

The topics affecting scope of practice this year have been teledentistry and return to practice during COVID-19. Teledentistry is a temporary order which the SCDA plans to address again for a permanent modification. Return to practice will hopefully stay in our rear-view mirror. The current issue with ongoing, "to be continued" debate, is licensure by mannikin examination for dentists and dental hygienists who have faced obvious challenges. The 2020 graduates have had to deal with issues such as live patient reluctance, ethics of live patients' recruitment, and complications of live patients in a pandemic were some of the topics debated during the meeting. By the conclusion of the July meeting, both board examinations were approved for use of mannikins until January 1, 2021.

In addition, at the recent SCBOD meeting, the SCDA presented a statement supporting COVID-19 testing in the dental offices and requested the SCBOD to consider this item for thorough consideration. Right now, COVID-19 testing is a hot mess due to widely varied sampling techniques, unreliable testing, and backlogged labs that sometimes release results beyond the date of recommended quarantine. Eventually the testing process should become streamlined and more systematic and standardized. I think we all know the virus is not going away any time soon, and the facts are not very reassuring that long term immunity is accomplished even if you've been infected. Since our businesses are on the frontline of this virus, and we are putting ourselves at risk in order to provide care for your patients, I believe access to these tests is justified and could prove to be a tool to help reduce risk of exposure and reduce time away from work for our employees due to illness or waiting for test results. There are several details to iron out, but I wanted you to know the ball is rolling.

The next scheduled SCBOD meetings are Friday, October 9, 2020 and January 15, 2021. Please join us to see how the process works and support the SCDA as we support our members on issues that affect our ability to practice dentistry and protect the public.

SAVE THE DATE!!!!

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Our annual continuing education seminar

The Dr. Carlos F. Salinas Dental Program for the Diagnosis and Treatment of Individuals with Special Health Care Needs



When: Friday, September 25, 2020

Where: Virtual

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Dr. Alex Thomas, of Nease & Higginbotham Orthodontics, Selected as Youngest Member of American Association of Orthodontics Board - One of Only Three Women to Serve Since 1900



Nease & Higginbotham Orthodontics is incredibly proud and excited to announce that our own Dr. Alex Thomas has been selected to join the Board of Trustees of the American Association of Orthodontists (AAO) as an At-Large Member.

This is an incredible honor, as Dr. Thomas is the youngest member to have ever been selected into service on the Board. She is also one of only three women who have served on the Board since the organization's inception in 1900!

The AAO represents 19,000 orthodontist members throughout the United States, Canada and abroad. This world-renowned association has many duties and responsibilities, including the creation and management of resources and policies to meet the current needs of orthodontists and their patients.

In a press release announcing their selection, the AAO stated, "The at-large trustees were to be selected based on demographic diversity or expertise and become voting Board members. Each at-large trustee will serve for a term of up to three years. The initiative is part of an ongoing effort reflecting the call for inclusivity within the AAO Strategic Plan."

Dr. Thomas was chosen among a nationwide search for applicants. Her experience in leadership, as well as her tenacity and love for improving the industry she is so passionate about were all supporting factors in her selection. After a lengthy interview process, she was deemed an honorable At-Large Member of the AAO on June 5th.

"The at-large trustees will hit the ground running," said Dr. Christopher Roberts, Board President of the AAO. "They will have high-profile committee assignments where they will be able to make a difference immediately. They will take part in every aspect of service to our members, as do all of our trustees. We are all very excited about bringing in new Board members with a broad range of ideas reflecting those of our general membership, which we believe will help us better serve our members in a rapidly changing world."

When asked what this means for the next few years, Dr. Thomas explained, "A lot of meetings and calls! But my patients won't notice much of a difference in my availability. I'll still be present and providing the attentive care they're accustomed to, but at the same time be able to give our patients a voice in policies and procedures at a national level."

As an integral part of a service-based practice focused on consistent growth in experience and advancement in technologies, it's a logical next step for Dr. Thomas to continue her involvement in orthodontics. Dr. Nease has also been involved in organized dentistry and orthodontics throughout his career. He is past president of the South Carolina Association of Orthodontics and the American Association of Orthodontists Foundation, the fundraising wing of the AAO. He currently serves as Secretary-Treasurer of the Southern Association of Orthodontists.

Dr. Nease said of Dr. Thomas' selection, "We're incredibly proud of Dr. Thomas and her dedication to making a positive impact on the future of orthodontics. Her vision and leadership abilities will serve our profession well during her tenure on the Board of Trustees."

Congratulations Dr. Thomas! And thank you for your dedication to Orthodontics!



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Insurance in a Pandemic

By Jeremy W. Withers, Endorsed Insurance Specialist

With the global pandemic and all the other unexpected challenges tossed at us in 2020, a lot of people are wanting to be reassured as to how their life and disability insurance policies will work when they need them. Life insurance policies all have a 2-year suicide clause. For example, if one were to commit suicide within the first two years of the policy, then the carrier does not have to pay out a claim. Outside of that 2-year period, the only other common exclusion is if you were to die in an act of war. A death caused by the coronavirus or any other type of sickness or disease cannot be excluded by the life insurance policy. You do want to make sure that you have an actual life insurance policy, i.e., term, whole life, universal life, etc., and not an accidental death policy. Accidental death policies only pay out if the death is caused by an accident. Most commonly would be car accident, plane, bus, or any type of non-natural death.

Disability policies all have an elimination period and depending if you have short-term or long-term disability, those periods can be anywhere as small as a few days or as long as 365 days. The elimination period states how long you must be out of work (or partially out of work depending on your riders) before the carrier will pay you a monthly benefit. If you are diagnosed with the coronavirus and not able to work beyond that elimination period, then any policy issued prior to this year should start to pay you a monthly benefit. The reason I said prior to this year is because Lloyd's of London placed a stipulation on new policies issued that would not pay a claim caused by the coronavirus.

Finally, the pandemic has made some good changes to the insurance industry. Most of the carriers have reduced some of their underwriting requirements so that most of the application is completed online and you do not have to have a nurse come to do urine and blood draw. This makes the process tend to go a lot smoother and if you are worried about serious quarantining you can complete the entire application over the phone.

If you are uncertain on which types of policies you have or what they will cover, reach out to me and I will be happy to review them for you. Additionally, if you are interested in looking at options of buying a new policy, please reach out to us. Our telephone number is 843-424-7154 and we can be reached via email at jwwithers@witherscrest.com. Visit us at www.witherscrest.com. We would be happy to answer any questions you have.



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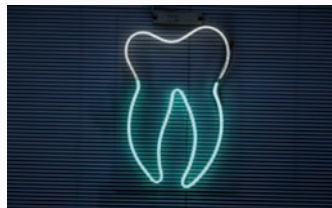


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Executive Director's Notes

By Phil Latham, Executive Director



Phil Latham

Returning to Your Dental Practice – Dealing with the New Normal – Summer - July 4th Holidays

Every dentist has been dealing with these items and numerous others in recent months. Due to those outside items, you may have missed the announcement on June 15th by the American Dental Association (ADA) of their first ever endorsement of a dental benefits administrator - Bento. The ADA is very excited about this endorsement and below is some information on why the ADA pursued this endorsement.

Bento brings automation into the traditional dental benefits administration sector.

While their platform supports self-funded PPO products marketed to employer groups with negotiated fee schedules, their award-winning technology is a significant improvement over the administrative burden created by other traditional dental carriers.

Here are some advantages Bento provides in comparison to other benefits administrators:

- Real-time eligibility & benefits verification, cost transparency and direct payments to dental offices through an administratively simplified system with no consultant reviews for "medical necessity"
- The Bento platform also supports in-office dental plans that allow dentists to easily create and set up fully customizable in-office plans that align with the needs of their practice and patients
- No setup fees for all dentists who use Bento's in-office plans, which separates Bento from other in-office dental plan administrative services
- Dentists are not required to join the Bento network when using Bento to administer in-office plans
- Because of our relationship, ADA members will save 20% off all per-patient, per-month fees for purchased in-office plans

The ADA believes that the Bento model could be a potential market disruptor and help send a clear signal to the other dental plan carriers that improvements must occur. The ADA has placed a wealth of information about Bento on their website and you can easily access that information here –

<https://www.ada.org/en/member-center/member-benefits/practice-resources/ada-endorses-bento>

Please see on the following page additional information that may be helpful.

History of the South Carolina Dental Association 150th Anniversary, 1869-2019

Dr. Gene Atkinson has announced the release of this 336-page book. He has spent eight years compiling this book including, 265 pictures of SCDA moments, and recounts the history with a special emphasis on the last 50 years.

The cost of this history book is \$25 each (Great gifts for friends and family) to maintain a copy please contact the SCDA office 803-750-2277 or scda@scda.org. First 100 year book also available for \$5.00.

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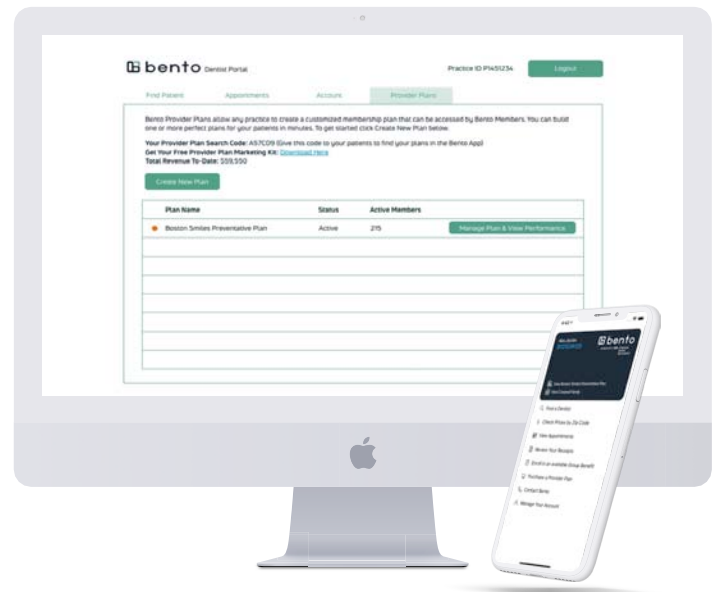
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16th District Trustee Update

Dr. Kirk Norbo

We finished our second full meeting conducted virtually and were able to make this format work in a successful manner.

The pandemic is also affecting finances and we began our discussions about that topic as well. ADA finances have been under pressure for several years, and we have been spending from our reserves. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these issues due to revenue declines from membership and non-dues sources. At this meeting, we began discussions about our 2020 budget reforecasting. We will continue to monitor ADA financial situation for the rest of the year.

Marko Vujicic updated us on the economic impact on dentistry from the pandemic. Fortunately, we are slowly seeing signs of an economic rebound. Current data shows that 90% of practices have reopened, fully or partially. Patient volume is now just a bit higher than 50% of past levels, although that is showing progress every week. Dental practices are rehiring staff, but employed dentists are lagging behind other staff. We are also seeing significant improvement in availability of PPE. Very few practices are indicating an intent to never reopen and that is good news. The economic rebound in dentistry continues and is not showing any indication so far of reaching a plateau. HPI and Science are also collaborating on a study of infection rates within the profession. We will not see results for several weeks at least.

Not only did the Board meet electronically, its committees did so as well, over the last several weeks. Our use of committees allows the Board to accomplish far more than it could without them. At this meeting, each committee provided the Board with full reports. Among the committee reports discussed by the Board was the report from Diversity and Inclusion. Given the recent and upsetting developments in our country, discussions about diversity and inclusion were especially timely. We all look forward to a Board discussion to be facilitated by this committee in August.

As is our custom, Mike Graham updated us on government affairs matters. The Provider Relief Fund has been opened to dentists who participate in Medicaid and CHIP and we expect it to open up to all dentists in the future. We are expecting the next COVID relief bill to come in mid to late July. We are also hopeful that McCarron Ferguson will move forward this term. Work is also still underway to allow 501(c) entities to participate in PPE funds. Mike briefed us on how contentious this issue is.

We are fortunate to have the chair of the New Dentist Committee with us for each meeting. Dr. Mattingly briefed us on the latest work of that committee. The committee is working to coordinate activities with ASDA. Dr. Mattingly encouraged applications for the 10 Under 10 award. Applications will be welcomed through the end of the year. The New Dentist Committee meets next week and we look forward to hearing about that meeting in August.

One of our four strategic plan goals is titled Organizational Capacity. Organizational capacity is essential for us to accomplish the other goals of the plan. Ms. April Kates-Ellison briefed us on our efforts under this goal. The briefing focused, in particular, on our work to bolster the capacity of our state societies. This is essential for us to maintain membership levels. Part of this work was a reassessment of state capacity in light of changes brought about as a result of the pandemic. This has allowed us to focus our work on those states with the greatest membership losses and those at the greatest financial risk.

We also reviewed our dental school strategy. Filling the membership pipeline begins, of course, at the dental schools. ADEA, ASDA and the ADA have all been coordinating their efforts in light of the pandemic. Online delivery of education curriculum seems like a change which is here to stay. This could have ripple effects ranging from shorter time in dental school to a decreased need for faculty. These sorts of changes also pose financial challenges to schools. Licensure processes and requirements have also changed. We will monitor closely how these changes continue to evolve. We have been concerned how all of these changes would impact our conversion rates. To help in this area, we instituted virtual signing days, virtual Success Programs and other outreach efforts. Our applications-collected rate for the class of 2020 is still behind earlier years but those efforts are not done yet and we hope for continued improvement.

Dr. Araujo addressed us on work underway in ADASRI. The ADASRI subsidiary has now developed its own strategic plan which we reviewed at our meeting. The plan focuses on creating science to benefit

members and the public. This, in turn, supports the ADA's own public goal. Our foundation, of course, continues to exist and Dr. Araujo and Dr. Armstrong, as foundation chair, briefed us on developments there. The foundation is in the process of spending down existing funds for research and philanthropy. The philanthropy funds are supporting ADA efforts such as Give Kids a Smile. In August, we will hold a Meeting of the Member and will receive a more in depth report on foundation activities.

The future of the ADA will certainly be a digital one and the transformation of the ADA into a fully capable digital entity is well underway and the subject of a presentation to the Board. In addition to an evolving digital member experience, the transformation encompasses how we operate and do business. Our Chief Technology Officer, Jordan Baugh, demonstrated how our members will experience some of these changes. Members will be able to update communications preferences and perform other functions directly from an ADA app. The app is almost ready for release and we all look forward to seeing it. Our Chief Communications Officer, Stephanie Moritz explained how digital member transformation efforts have resulted in refining content to highlight what members want. It has also improved the experience prospective members have in joining the ADA. Digital transformation remains a priority strategy of the ADA and it will affect virtually every area of the ADA.

This concluded the business of our June BOT meeting. Have a nice summer and best wishes for a smooth return to practice.



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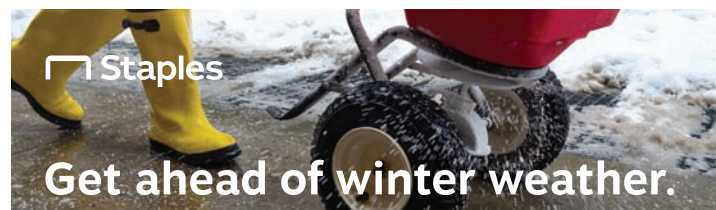
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SCDA Member Spotlight

Dr. Ronnetta Sartor

- 1. How long have you been a dentist and a member of SCDA?** I have been a dentist since 2017 and a member of SCDA since I began dental school in 2013.
- 2. What dental school did you attend?** I attended the James B. Edward College of Dental Medicine at the Medical University of South Carolina.
- 3. How did you discover your love and interest in dentistry?** I discovered my love of dentistry while volunteering at a free extraction clinic at Miracle Hill Ministries in Spartanburg, SC, when I was a student at the University of South Carolina Upstate. While volunteering, I met one of my first mentors and did an internship at his dental office and fell in love with the profession.
- 4. What are you doing in your practice that other members of SCDA should know about?** I am an associate at a group practice. I love the group practice model as it allows for multiple specialties in the same facility, peer learning and overall professional development. We also are involved with 3D printing, CEREC, implant dentistry, IV conscious sedation, third molar extractions as well as most other dental procedures.
- 5. What advances in the field of dentistry are you most excited about?** I am most excited about technological advances in dentistry such as 3D printing, scanning, and new milling systems.
- 6. What advice would you give students who might be considering dental school?** Some advice that I would give students who might be interested in dental school is: shadow and volunteer at dental offices as much as possible, find mentors who are doing the type of dentistry that may peak your interest, and work hard and remain focused on your goals; all of the sacrifices are worth it as dentistry is one of the most rewarding professions.
- 7. What would you say to those who are considering joining SCDA?** I highly recommend membership to all dentists in the state of South Carolina. The SCDA has been a wealth of knowledge and an amazing resource for networking and they have been outstanding at advocating for our profession.



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General Dentist needed around **Denmark SC**. We are looking for a full time or part time Dentist. We offer a guarantee of 35% production whichever is greater. If you are interested, then please email me at jobs29003@gmail.com for more information.

Positions Available- Staff

Seeking FT **Dental Assistant** minimum 3 yrs experience. 401K, paid holidays, vacations and health insurance stipend. Open M-TH 8-5. Sherryrauchdds@gmail.com.

Full or Part time experienced **Hygienist**. Anesthesia cert and nomad exp a plus. Easy schedule, Mon-Thurs 8-5 or Wed & Thurs 8-5. cdcsmiles@live.com.

Rock Hill SC- The Dental Hygienist at Apex Dental works with the general dentist in direct patient care as an important part of the healthcare team promoting better oral health for patients. We provide excellent benefits to staff and care about staff's career path and mutual benefits. Apex_dental@outlook.com.

N. Myrtle Beach Perio practice needs an experienced, full time front desk assistant. Duties include: patient scheduling and insurance posting with excellent phone skills. Excellent salary and benefits. periothree@sc.rr.com.

Practices/Office Space Available

Satellite dental office; 52 foot trailer. One operatory fully equipped white coastal chair. One operatory plumbed and ready. Lab, reception, business office, 1 full bathroom and HVAC included. Ready to move to your location. \$25,000 OBO call 803-617-8701.

General practice for sale in **Pee Dee Region**. Attractive, renovated facility, 3,500 sf with 8 ops (3 used for hygiene). Excellent streetside visibility. Steady new patient flow even with limited marketing. 2019 income projected to be \$1M+. Contact McGill & Hill transitions@mccgillhillgroup.com.

Lexington Opportunity: established practice collecting \$730K with a large FFS patient base of 2,400+. Facility includes 6 treatment rooms, digital x-ray & PAN and utilizes EgelSoft software. Several procedures are referred out that could stay in office, leaving plenty of room for growth. SC-6296 Contact: AFTCO 800.232.3826

Highly successful **\$2.9M advanced practice** SC-6319. Well established practice collecting \$2.9M on a 4-day work week with a 2,000+ active patient base that is 100% FFS. Modern facility with 8 ops, digital x-rays, cone beam, Cerec and Detricx software. The owner is flexible with their transition plans. Contact: AFTCO 800.232.3826

Near Charlotte: poised for continued growth in a rapidly expanding community with \$700K in collections. Modern, stand-alone office has 5 ops with room to expand. The real estate is available to purchase or lease. SC-6314 Contact: AFTCO 800.232.3826

Greenwood dental office for sale or lease. The free standing building has 6 to 8 operatories with a city owned children's park beside it. 864-229-6719.

Dental office retirement sale: Modular office near **Laurens County** Hospital, can be moved or rented; great for satellite office. Dental EZ chairs, recently recovered (like new), new compressor (2020)- Air Star 22, sterilizer- Midmark MII Ultrasonic Cleaner (2020), Patterson Dental, Dental EZ and Pelton and crane lights, office furniture/filing cabinets. 864-682-8029 or 864-871-0041, crowgaryfdmd@bellsouth.net.

17 year old general dentistry practice in an excellent facility in rapidly growing **Lexington**. All patients are fee for service. Ideal for a start-up practice or to add patients to your existing patient base. May purchase as a whole or separately- I am open to any creative ideas. Interested please: Text (803)226-4473 alyssa.umbel@yahoo.com

Turn key Dental space for lease in **Seneca**. The space is 2,500 SF and includes 6 exam rooms, lab, x-ray room, break room, office, reception/file storage and waiting area. Contact Grayson Burgess, CCIM 864-770-3288 or grayson@tbccre.com.

Charleston-area GP for sale. 2019 collections were over \$814k with the doctor seeing patients 4d/wk. There are 6 operatories in 2150 square feet in an attractive facility with updated equipment and technology. transitions@mccgillhillgroup.com

Columbia SC practice for sale. Well established dental practice with a loyal patient base. Gross receipts of \$711,000 in 2019. Located on the northeast side of Columbia with 4 trx rooms and digital technology. Mixture of FFS and PPO. Great practice! mary@jpatransitions.com.

For Sale

For Sale: Dental equipment chairs, units, lights, cabinetry, x-ray, vacuum, compressor, sterilizers and handpieces. Any and all things dental call 843-697-7567.

For Sale: **I-CAT- 2008 Gendex GX-CB500**. This unit is in good working condition and was recently pulled from service and professionally de-installed. \$35,000 contact charles@mstxs.com or 843-697-7567.

For sale: Dental equipment, chairs, lights, cabinetry, x-ray. Call 803-783-2686.

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