

Happy summer, and welcome to ADTA's July 2025 newsletter! We're excited to announce the hiring of our Executive Director, our upcoming annual conference, celebrate new graduates, and share useful resources. We're also keeping an eye on efforts to ban water fluoridation, and the work to expand Dental Therapist education programs and licensed practice in more states.

*- American Dental Therapy Association*

## Familiar Face, New Role



**Kari Ann Kuntzelman**, a member of the Chickasaw Nation, stepped down earlier this year from her role as President of the ADTA. But she didn't go far! We're happy to announce her new position with ADTA, serving as its Executive Director. Kari Ann served as Board President from 2021-2022, Immediate Past President in 2023, and served a second Presidential term from January 2024-April 2025. She started her new role as Executive Director in May.

## Welcome New Board Members

The American Dental Therapy Association (ADTA) is honored to welcome its newest members to the Board of Directors as of April 27, 2025: **Amy Coplen**, Dental Therapist (3 year term) – At-Large Board Director, Oregon; **Jamie Tonie** (1 year term) – Student Representative, *dax'xayəbus* Dental Therapy Program (WA); **Victoria Contreras** (1 year term) – Student Representative, *dax'xayəbus* Dental Therapy Program (WA). The inclusion of these dedicated individuals strengthens our leadership and affirms our commitment to representing the diverse voices within the dental therapy community. In particular, the active participation of members in the governance of a membership-based organization like the ADTA is vital to our continued relevance, responsiveness, and integrity. Board members serve not only as stewards of the association's mission, but also as conduits for the needs, insights, and aspirations of the broader membership. We extend our sincere gratitude to Amy, Jamie, and Victoria for their willingness to serve. Their expertise and perspectives will play a crucial role in shaping the future of dental therapy and in advancing equitable access to oral health care across the nation.

## Save the Date!



We're excited to announce our 2025 National Dental Therapy Conference, taking place Dec. 8-10 in Sacramento, California.

Day 1 (Dec. 8) will be a pre-conference day featuring a California-specific session, as well as a session on the clinical Medical Management of Caries (this session will meet the requirements of state dental therapy license and CHAP Certification requirements).

Day 2 (Dec. 9) will be a full day with breakout sessions.

Day 3 (Dec. 10) will be a half day with a plenary session. More details to come in the weeks and months ahead.

## Explore becoming a sponsor or exhibitor.

There are many benefits to participating. We're happy to create the best package to meet your interest and needs.

Join us as a sponsor of the 2025 National Dental Therapy Conference, the premier event uniting policymakers, educators, practitioners, and advocates, in expanding access to equitable oral health care through innovative workforce solutions.

This is a unique opportunity to gain direct exposure to these key audiences and showcase your organization's commitment to improving health equity, advancing community-centered care, and aligning with a growing movement that is reshaping the future of dental care nationwide.

To learn more or discuss sponsorship opportunities, contact:

**Parrish Ravelli**  
[pravelli@communitycatalyst.org](mailto:pravelli@communitycatalyst.org)  
910-520-3286

## Congratulations to 2025's Newest Graduates!



**Skagit Valley College** and the **Swinomish Indian Tribal Community** celebrated the first graduating class of the *dəx<sup>w</sup>ʰəyəbus* (pronounced *dahf-hi-ya-buus*) SVC Dental Therapy Program on June 13, 2025. The six Native American students completed a rigorous three-year program combining academic and clinical training,



This year, the **Alaska Native Health Consortium** (ANTHC) is celebrating 20 years of Dental Health Aides working in Alaska. In June, three students graduated from the **Alaska Dental Therapy Educational Program**. Congratulations to Hilary “Mek” Apangalook of Gambell, sponsored by Southcentral Foundation,

becoming Washington's first cohort from an accredited dental therapy program. Their work addresses oral health shortages, especially in tribal and underserved communities. Many will be licensed by the Swinomish Tribe under its sovereign dental licensing system. The graduation marks a milestone in Native-led health education, with future cohorts planned to expand access to culturally competent dental care statewide.

Shaun Robinson of Anchorage, sponsored by Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation, and Courtney McCay of Wrangell, sponsored by SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium.



The University of Minnesota's Division of Dental Therapy celebrated seven new graduates in May of this year, who represent the program's thirteenth class of dental therapy graduates. ADTA joins the school in offering congratulations to Ayaa Almosawi, Hannah Kartak, Natalie Kohner, Alison Murphy, Saad Shaikh, Lilly Thach and Taylor Voight on their graduation from the Dental Therapy program.



In May, nine students graduated from Minnesota State University in Mankato with their Master of Science in Advanced Dental Therapy. In the photo above, Program Director and Assistant Professor Dr. Anitha Peddireddy, PhD, MDS, BDS stands with the new grads. Congratulations to Nicole Blake, Brooke Engbarth, Kelsey Marben, Sarah Hoffmann, Payton Pendergast, Edward Terry (not pictured), Kaci Theurer, Taylor Weerts and Alyssa Wempen.

## IHS Loan Repayment and Scholarships for Dental Therapists

Speaking of dental therapy education and careers, the Indian Health Service includes dental therapists among the health professions eligible for [loan repayment](#) and [scholarships](#). The [IHS Scholarship Program](#) provides qualified American Indian and Alaska Native health professions students financial support in exchange for a minimum two-year service commitment within an Indian health program. The application cycle for scholarships is Dec. 30 to Feb. 28. [Loan repayment](#) awards payment of up to \$50,000 for education loans to clinicians who commit to an initial two-year commitment to practice in health facilities serving American Indian and Alaska Native communities. Applications for loan repayment are accepted Oct. 1 through Aug. 15.

## Listen and learn: the 30-minute podcast that earns you 0.5 CE credits

[Viva Learning](#), a dental continuing education platform, delivers free CE accredited content. In May it posted a podcast entitled "Profitable Care: Financial Benefits of Medical Management of Caries," presented by pediatric dentist Dr. John Frachella. In the episode, Dr. Frachella discusses why he believes the medical management of caries isn't widely used among practicing dentists and why doing it can actually benefit a practice's financial health. Find the podcast [here](#). (Keep scrolling for more CE options lower in the newsletter.)



Help strengthen our profession. Support providers and the patients they serve by sharing your time and talent with us.

**We're recruiting board members for positions beginning Jan. 2026.**

*"I wanted to be on the foreground of helping move dental therapy along in other states. By being on the board I stayed in tune with what was happening across the country. It's rewarding to get to see dental therapy beyond our day-to-day time in clinic, and it's important to advocate for our profession and connect with other professionals."*

- Claire Surges, ADTA board member 2021-2025

Visit the ADTA website to learn more about open roles:  
[www.americandentaltherapyassociation.org](http://www.americandentaltherapyassociation.org)

Or contact Kari Kuntzelman, ADTA executive director, at:  
[ed@americandentaltherapyassociation.org](mailto:ed@americandentaltherapyassociation.org)

## We're recruiting director positions for terms beginning in Jan. 2026!

**Joining the ADTA Board of Directors** is a great way to help shape the future of dental therapy while growing your leadership skills. We're at our best when we're fully represented by providers and students who are committed to excellence, advocacy and growth. Learn more [here](#).

Still have questions? **Contact us** and we'd be happy to talk more in-depth about ADTA board member roles and responsibilities.

## In the News

**President Trump's tax cut and spending bill:** The ADTA is closely monitoring the impact Trump's policy bill, signed into law on July 4th after it passed both the House and Senate, will have on the communities and populations our dental therapists serve. We are concerned the impacts will further strain systems of care in the already underserved communities in which many of us practice. **Funding cuts to healthcare**, including oral care, may increase demand for dental therapists. Will our current dental therapy schools be able to graduate enough dental therapists to keep up? What workplace models will develop that both meet growing patient needs and uphold the best working environments for dental therapists? As we contemplate these and other potential shifts, we remain dedicated to our mission to ensure that all Americans have access to high-quality oral health care. The work of dental therapists is meaningful and needed. Our patients and communities are valued and deserve our very best. Know that we are here in partnership with you to help our profession and patients thrive. Keep up the good work, and be well.

**Fluoride in drinking water:** Two states -- Utah and Florida -- have banned fluoride in drinking water. Utah's ban took effect May 7. Florida's ban takes effect July 1. The New York Times wrote about Florida's changed public water law in an **article published May 15**. The bans are the first in a national movement in which opponents of fluoridated water cite health concerns and government overreach as reasons to end the decades-long public health practice. Louisiana, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, and several local governments are contemplating fluoride restrictions and bans. Proponents of water fluoridation support its use as a safe, proven method for the prevention of dental decay in both children and adults.

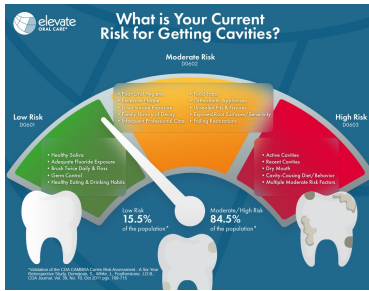
**Dental Therapy in the News:** The online magazine **Dentistry**, based in the UK, has an interesting article exploring how far Dental Therapy as a profession has come, and why it still has further to go. Dental Therapist, clinical educator and speaker Cat Edney writes that while "dental therapy becoming visible, viable and vocally valued," those milestones are not the same as equality within dental practices and professions. There remains room to improve education and mentoring, and respect and understanding among colleagues, Edney says. Read the full article [here](#).

The digital magazine **83-degrees**, based out of Tampa, Florida, has an article looking at the ongoing effort by **Floridians for Dental Access** to get Dental therapy licensed there. The Florida House passed a bill in the 2025 session allowing Dental Therapists to practice in the state, but the measure died in committee in the Florida Senate. Access to dental care is a statewide crisis in Florida, where six million Floridians have limited or no access to local dental care. Florida's statewide ban on fluoride in drinking water, which begins July 1, may further

compound the issue, as children will be at greater risk to develop cavities. Writer Phillip Morgan looks at the financial impact barriers to care have on dental-related emergency room visits, and some of the solutions (like mobile clinics) communities are using to reach people who are most in need. Read the full article [here](#).

The U.S. Coast Guard wants to incorporate dental therapists into its health care delivery team, and it has teamed up with the University of Minnesota's Division of Dental Therapy to make it happen. As of Fall 2024, each dental therapy class at the university will include up to two guardsmen. Guardsmen Jasmine Chapman and Javier Carrasquillo Marrero are the first two learners to join the program. Read more [here](#).

## Don't Miss



### [elevateoralcare.com](http://elevateoralcare.com)

Elevate Oral Care has two great info graphics with an easy-to-follow visual assessment for determining your risk of getting cavities, and strategies for reducing risk. The second of the two graphics helps patients identify oral health goals and steps they can take in the dental office and at home to achieve them. Find a printable version of these educational materials [here](#).



### [verywellhealth.com](http://verywellhealth.com)

Verywell Health has a useful article (and this info. graphic) explaining the benefits, recommendations and risks of fluoride in toothpaste. It's a good guide for having conversations with patients who may have questions and concerns about fluoride's safety. The article addresses how fluoride works, its benefits and risks in toothpaste, and alternatives. Read the full article [here](#).



### [ilikemyteeth.org](http://ilikemyteeth.org)

The Campaign for Dental Health, a program of the American Academy of Pediatrics, is dedicated to providing the public and policy makers with the evidence-based information and tools they need to promote and protect [community water fluoridation](#) as an important public health measure. The easy-to-navigate and aptly named website, [ilikemyteeth.org](http://ilikemyteeth.org), has facts about oral health and [preventive strategies like fluoride](#).



### [Oral Health Learning Café](#)

The [Oral Health Learning Café](#), part of the National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center, is a group of stakeholders working on medical-dental integration. An informal, supportive space where professionals can engage with others and learn. the café includes a discussion list and monthly webinars that provide information about oral health programs and services (e.g., integrating oral health care and primary care) throughout the country and share strategies, challenges, lessons learned, and resources.

## Opportunity

### Job Opportunity in Vermont!


Join a team focused on Minimally Invasive Dentistry/Medical Management of Caries located in Vermont.

Vermont requires Dental Therapists to be dually licensed regardless of current licensure or certification status, however, language states a pathway through "license by endorsement".

Click below to visit the Vermont online Statutes webpage.

<https://tr.ee/IT2aayQuob>

**Now Hiring for Dental Therapist Position!**



### Join a National Leader in Minimally Invasive Pediatric Dentistry

Providing high-quality, compassionate dental care to every child is a collaborative effort, and at Montshire Pediatric Dentistry, we've embraced this philosophy wholeheartedly. Our emphasis on prevention and minimally invasive treatments allows us to enhance patient outcomes, expand access to care for Medicaid and special needs patients, and cultivate a more rewarding experience for our entire team.

**Interested?**  
Where: **Brattleboro, Vermont**  
Email: [newmarkets@montshirepd.com](mailto:newmarkets@montshirepd.com)

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## Voices of Dental Therapy - Call for Submissions

*\* Our feature publication by dental therapists for dental therapists \**

Share your expertise and experiences with our vibrant community by contributing to ADTA's Voices of Dental Therapy publication. This special feature gives you a glimpse into the lives of your colleagues from around the nation. Use our [article submission form](#) to send an entry to us. Dental therapists may submit an article, interview, photo, innovations in dental therapy, dental therapist stories, research, global or education program updates, upcoming events, and more. (Note: please complete the form in its entirety.) Still have questions? Please [email us](#). We're happy to help.

## On Demand Webinars



ADTA Learning Management System - ADTA Members and Education Subscribers receive

access to On Demand Webinars with CE credit as part of their membership benefits, excluding specialty webinars and online workshops.

If you are a current ADTA member or education subscriber, [click here](#) to login to your member account. Once you have logged in, click on the Learning Management System button to gain access to online programs.

Non-Members can purchase individual webinars using the registration form below. Interested in saving money? Join the ADTA as a member or Education subscriber. [Click here](#) to review pricing and benefits.

**To access on demand webinars, click here.**

## More Resources

[CareQuest Institute for Oral Health](#) has a series of upcoming live webinars featuring leading experts and researchers as they explore the most pressing topics facing oral and overall health today. On Thursday, July 10th, 2025, 7:00 p.m. ET, CareQuest presents [From Long-Term Care to At-Home Caregiving: How to Support Older Adults' Oral Health Needs](#). Explore the importance of routine oral health care in supporting aging and medically complex patients. Click [here](#) for a schedule of more upcoming webinars and to access past webinars.

[Arcora Foundation](#) is an ADA CERP recognized provider, and another great resource for continuing education. Click [here](#) to access their library of courses, which includes the 1.5- CDE course (Oct. 2024) on [Minimally Invasive Dentistry: What It Is and Why it Works](#), the 1 CDE course (Sept. 2024) [Dental Care is Prenatal Care](#), and the 3 CDE credit course (February 2024) [Optimize Dental Teams with Dental Therapists](#).

The National Coalition Of Dentists for Health Equity has developed a [webinar series on the most accurate information on Dental Therapists](#). Knowledgeable and experienced researchers, practitioners and program administrators share findings regarding the education, supervision and quality of patient care provided by dental therapists. They also delineate financial information that dental practices need to use to determine whether dental therapists would be an asset to their clinical operations. [Access the webinar series here](#).

Elevate Oral Care's products provide valuable tools for implementing preventive measures and managing caries, which align with the principles of minimally invasive dentistry. [Sign up here](#) to schedule a staff meeting to learn more about what they offer.

## Our Partners



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