

MERCER DENTAL SOCIETY

Professional Dental Association of Mercer County, NJ

NOVEMBER 2024



Dr. Roena Romero
President
Mercer Dental Society

Dear MDS Members,
We hope everyone is enjoying the beautiful fall season! Our first meeting in September was a great success, featuring updates from NJDA President Dr. Elisa Vasquez and CEO Reva Brennan about the latest developments at the NJDA. The NJDA is committed to addressing the needs of our members at multiple levels. The NJDPAC plays a crucial role in advocating for various legislative issues that impact our profession. Your support as members is vital to advancing the many bills currently in legislation. Thank you to all who are already NJDPAC members; your contributions truly make a difference!

If you are interested in supporting our advocacy efforts, we encourage you to join the NJDPAC.

As we move into the new year, several executive board positions are available for those interested in actively participating in the Mercer Dental Society. We are pleased to welcome our newest board member, Dr. Keyur Modi, who will serve as a Member at Large. I would also like to extend my gratitude to our current executive board for their dedication to strengthening our organization.

Our next meeting will be held at the Americana Kitchen and Bar on November 19th. Prior to the General Meeting, we will host a New Dentist Meet-Up cocktail hour starting at 6 PM. We invite all new dentists to come and connect with fellow colleagues; this meet-up is also open to general members.

Looking forward to seeing you all there!

Warm Regards
Roena Romero, President MDS

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

Tuesday, 11/19/24
Nov. Member Meeting:
Dr. Michelle Weddle

NEW DENTIST MEET UP
Tuesday, 11/19/24
6 pm to 7 pm

Tuesday, 1/21/25
January member meeting:
Dr. Julie Spaniel

Council on Dental Benefits:
Dr. Sid Whitman

ADA House of Delegates:
Dr. Fred Babinowich

MDS PAC Committe:
Dr. Michael Scalia

MDS Sponsorship Chair:
Dr. Ruchi Batra

MDS Executive Committee
MDS Sponsors

MDS Executive Secretary:
Jolanta Matusiak Gora

Newsletter & Social Media:
Geetu Gupta



Meet

Dr. Ruchi Batra

Chair, Sponsorship Committee
Mercer Dental Society



Dr. Ruchi Batra is a dedicated General Dentist with practice locations in Monroe Twp, NJ and East Windsor, NJ. Dr. Batra earned her DDS degree from New York University (NYU) in 2001 and has been in practice since then. She started her career in a practice in Manhattan before starting her own Dental practices. Dr. Batra grew up in a family surrounded by medical doctors. Health care always fascinated her and she wanted to give back to the community one way or the other. This motivated her to pursue the dental field.

She makes every effort to stay on top on current developments in dentistry. To that end, she maintains the highest level of accreditation and participates in ongoing education. Her scope of dental expertise includes all general dentistry procedures. Dr. Batra also spends time giving back to society by participating in charity health clinics, educating kids about dental hygiene in schools and running free screening days for patients in the underprivileged areas. She has visited and served many of those areas during her years in career.

Dr. Batra has been a resident of Monroe Township, NJ since 2007 and lives with her supportive husband, three beautiful children and a loving dog. When not in the office, Dr. Batra likes spending time outdoors, traveling, participating in her kids' activities and school PTA events. She also volunteers her time in adult communities by leveraging her singing and dancing skills with her music group to raise funds for charity.

"Not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love" Mother Teresa



DR. MICHELLE WEDDLE



Tuesday, 11/19/24

6:30 PM

2 CEs

Americana Kitchen & Bar

359, US- 130 East Windsor, NJ 08520

The Dentist's Role in Adult & Pediatric Sleep-Related Breathing Disorders

Register Now



- Graduate of the NYU college of dentistry with a general practice residency certificate from Newark Beth, Israel.
- Completed mini residency in dental sleep at Tufts university.
- Diplomate of the American board of dental sleep medicine.
- Co Founded ASAP pathway helping to equip mentor and train other dentist to identify and treat pediatric sleep and airway dysfunction.
- Holds fellowships with the Academy of General dentistry and the American College of dentists.

NEW DENTIST MEET UP



We're excited to invite you to our upcoming New Dentist Meet-Up, where you can connect, share experiences, and network with fellow colleagues. The event will be a cocktail hour preceding our November General Mercer Dental Society Meeting.

Date: November 19, 2024

Time: 6-7pm

Location: American Kitchen and Bar, 359 US- 130, East Windsor, NJ 08520

RSVP: Please reply by through this link www.njda.org/meetup

This informal gathering is a great opportunity to network with fellow new dentists, exchange ideas, and enjoy some refreshments. Whether you're just starting your career or looking to expand your professional circle, we'd love to see you there! Feel free to bring along any colleagues who might be interested. Let's make this a fun and informative evening!



ADA House of Delegates meeting in New Orleans Dr. Fred Babinowich

The ADA House met for four days and over 32 hours of meetings the two major topics that were discussed involved membership and workforce. The ADA is having a major problem with membership. Ten or so years ago the ADA's market share was roughly 70% of all dentist. It is now around 50% and by 2035 if the trends continue (losing 2% market share a year) we will be around 25% market share. Part of this problem has to do with the large number of dentists who are 60 years or older and are on the cusp (no pun intended) of retiring. Another part to this problem is the lack of value young dentists perceive the ADA offers them.

The ADA has been trying through various approaches to try to demonstrate to these new dentist the value in joining the ADA. Fighting government regulations that can adversely effect are profession is one such approach. Unfortunately this does not show up in the wallet of a new dentist. Providing alternate pathways for paying dues by new dentist is another way to entice new dentist to join. Also helping to minimize the pain in paying off student loans can go a long way to assisting dental students.

A third approach is to try to improve on the number of dental auxiliaries and hygienists and to increase their duties to help mitigate the present work shortages. In light of this the council on Dental Education and Related Matters presented several resolutions attempting to address the work shortage problem. One of he resolutions would have supported alternate pathways for Dental Hygiene Education using the Dental Hygiene training program in Alabama as a potential model to address workforce shortages and access to care. After some discussion at the reference committee meeting it was decided to weaken the resolution by changing the word supports to acknowledges. Note: I am not familiar with the Alabama model but going to the ADA web site you should be able to find out more information on this model.

Another resolution would have amended the comprehensive policy on dental licensure. The some of the general principles to this policy would provide freedom of movement between state lines, to strongly oppose federal licensure and federal intervention in the state licensure system, to continue to support the elimination of patients in the clinical licensure examination, to reaffirm the state boards of dentistry in each state as the sole licensure and regulating authority. I was opposed to this resolution because of the removal of the patient from the examination process. I felt that we have taken the patient out of the educational process of dentistry. I was told that the reason for removing the patients from the examination process was that it created too much stress on the person being examined. Instead the examination has been replaced with an objective structured clinical examination that is a valid and reliable non patient based examination requiring a candidate to use critical thinking and their clinical knowledge and skills to successfully complete dental procedures. This resolution did not pass and it was referred back to the committee.

Another resolution would allow dental students and residents to work as dental hygienist after completion of their required hygiene competencies to practice dental hygiene or to practice as other dental-supervised allied dental team members subject to state licensure requirements. This resolution was passed by the House.

Going along with this idea there was another resolution to have internationally trained dentist be allowed to work as a dental hygienist. This would have encouraged states to adopt policies allowing dentists ineligible to practice dentistry in the United States who have completed a dental education program outside the US, subject to state licensing board requirements to obtain a license to practice dental hygiene. The House approved this resolution.

Lastly there was a resolution to support expediting United State residency status for non resident, United States trained dentist, dental hygienist and dental assistants who commit to practicing in under served areas for a period of at least two years. This resolution also passed the House.

 **CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**

Council on Dental Benefits Dr. Sid Whitman

Ward Sanders from the NJ Association of Health Plans gave a presentation. He discussed trends in dental insurance, the good, bad and ugly.

The ADA presented a Medicaid Town Hall Meeting on 8/28/24. There were 8 speakers and 114 people attended via Zoom. It focused on advocacy and efficiency. The ADA is working on a Medicaid Toolkit to help practitioners. There will be a 90 minute CE course on Medicaid at Smile Con. There are 5 HMOs in NJ that cover NJFC. The state is requiring a 52% child utilization. An HMO is penalized if under 52%. In 2023 the percentage required was 50%. Only UHC reached the goal.



Orville Morales was introduced as the new NJDA Director of Advocacy and Health Affairs. He is replacing Jim Schulz who recently accepted the position of Senior Lobbyist for the ADA. The Central Dental Society requested there be a point person at NJDA for dental insurance questions. Presently, many questions are referred to the ADA. There is a concern that the ADA is not providing much success with insurance issues. Reva Brennan, NJDA Executive Director stated that the goal of NJDA is to have a point person field the questions. She clarified that it is not the role of the NJDA staff to call insurance companies on behalf of the members or offices. The ADA has been able to answer the majority of the questions that are referred to them. Our members may not know the laws and wish to have someone to guide them. However, a list of fax numbers for insurance companies, how to coordinate benefits, who best to contact at certain companies, frequently asked questions would be helpful. It was suggested that a resource list be given to the components so they know what resources NJDA does have.

ADA House of Delegates meeting in New Orleans Dr. Fred Babinowich

In total the House discussed a total of 60 resolutions. One of these resolutions involved the loss of Smilecon. It appears that the annual dental convention is losing money. This years convention was poorly attended and vendors such as Henry Schein and Patterson did not attend. There seemed to be some back room discussion on eliminating the convention or restructuring in an effort to cut costs but increase participation. Rumor had it that next years convention in DC would be the last one. A last minute resolution was put forth to have the Board of Trustees investigate under what avenue we could continue to have an ADA national continuing education event. Unfortunately this was the last resolution of the meeting and I believe fatigue had set in so the resolution was tabled till next years House of Delegates meeting.

The last resolution I want to discuss involved a Comprehensive Statement on Oral Health during pregnancy. In the resolution it states that the ADA encourages all pregnant persons and persons of child bearing age to have a regular dental examination. There was some resistance to this wording. Some members of the ADA felt that females should be substituted for person. They argued that females is the scientific way to address this group of people. Other members felt this wording would exclude transgender individuals and in order to be inclusive the ADA needed to retain the original wording of the resolution. This argument won out and the wording using person was retained.

MDS LINE OFFICERS		2024-2025	PHONE NUMBER
President		*Roena Romero	609-759-0019
Past President		*Cathy Hung	609-860-6369
Vice President		*Sara Siddiqui	301-466-4216
Secretary		*Bhumi Patel	201-873-9620
Treasurer		*Michael Scalia	319-594-1599
*Has Executive voting rights			



**Shoutout to MDS Sponsors!!
Thank you so much for your support!!**



Adam Wazeter



Joseph Stith



Nicholas Malvasi



Mike Massotto





TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2025

DR. JULIE SPANIEL

**OREGON DENTAL SOCIETY
CHAIR OF WELLNESS COMMITTEE**

6:30 PM

DENTAL MISSION
SUBSTANCE ABUSE

2 CEs

Dr. Spaniel serves on the Board of Trustees for the Oregon Dental Association and is actively involved with the ADA. Chairing the Dental Wellness committee for the state of Oregon

NJDA PAC Match Program

I hope that everyone is well and enjoying the Autumn weather.

I am excited to announce our NJDA PAC Match Program — ANY PAC contributions of ANY amount made by MDS members from now through our November member meeting (November 19th, Americana Restaurant in East Windsor, NJ) WILL BE MATCHED by the MDS Executive Board through personal donations!!!! This will be up to a certain limit based on EB donations made through November 1, 2024 - amount TBD. That said we already have \$1,000 pledged by EB members to date.

Please scan the QR code below, which will bring you directly to the NJDA PAC donation page. You can make a PAC donation in just a few minutes and then feel amazing knowing that you have helped support our wonderful profession :)

Remember, the NJDA PAC:

- **Supports our profession, not a political party**
- **Builds relationships that drive NJDA's advocacy**
- **Supports candidates who support dentistry**
- **** Contributions are not a part of NJDA dues**

THANK YOU for your time and donations.

**See you in November,
Michael Scalia**



**Dr. Michael Scalia
Treasurer
Mercer Dental Society**



CONTRIBUTE TODAY