



Nebraska

Dental Hygienists' Association

NDHA NEWSLETTER - January 2021

NDHA believes in helping dental hygienists achieve their full potential as they seek to improve the public's oral health. We support your goals by helping to ensure access to quality oral health care; promoting dental hygiene education, licensure, practice and research; and representing your legislative interests at the local, state and federal levels.



A Message from Your President

**Heather Hessheimer, RDH
2020-21 President**

Happy 2021 everyone!

If you have been following my series of newsletter articles, you are aware that I share a fun-fact about me in each message and this quarter's "getting to know me" fact is that I love children's movies.

One of my family's favorites is *The Lion King* and there is a scene where three of the characters are pondering what the bright speckles of light are in the night sky. You may recall that Timón thought they were "fireflies stuck up on that big bluish-black thing", Simba was always told that they were kings of the past looking over us, and Pumbaa was correct with stating they are big balls of gas. As I reflect on the past year, I concluded that these three theories are analogous to personal life-phases we go through. Sometimes we have a hard time and are like the fireflies caught in a trap struggling along, while other times we feel like king of the world and distance ourselves, but being who we truly are is when we shine our brightest. 2020 really brought out the extremes of a lot of these struggles and triumphs.

With the major hurdles of 2020 faced by dental hygienists (in all stages of our careers!), ADHA and NDHA were given the opportunity to more visibly advocate for our profession. We thank all our members for supporting the on-going missions of the association. Without you, nothing is possible! By being a member, you have made our profession stronger. We celebrate the triumph of our growth in membership during these tough times.

Trust me when I say that the association leadership is always at work, even when it is not as obvious. Your NDHA leadership has continued to work hard this past fall to persevere as a profession. Since our last newsletter, we have testified with concerns regarding rules and regulations. We advocated to the Governor for early access to COVID-19 vaccinations and worked with NDA and NDAA to ensure dental professionals are a priority. All the while, we continue to work on planning a fabulous (and hopefully in-person) Annual Session to bring dental hygienists exciting CE in April. Our Strategic Plan is designed to meet the mission, vision, and values of the association and we have been working on numerous tasks for that as well.

I am blessed with an incredible team of volunteers that make this association function. Be sure to thank our Executive Board members and Committee volunteers often! We are hopeful that 2021 may bring us back together in-person for events and on behalf of your Executive Board, we look forward to seeing you this calendar year. Keep reaching for your stars!



Legislative Committee Update

2020-21 Co-Chairs:

Deb Schardt, RDH, PHRDH
Joey Enright, RDH

Practicing outside the scope of one's license is a leading cause for disciplinary action from the Board of Dentistry. Rules and Regulations, along with our Practice Act, aim to regulate care Dentists can deliver and define what is and is not delegable to Licensed Dental Assistants and Licensed Dental Hygienists. Title 172 NAC 53 Unlicensed Dental Assistants and the Licensure of Dental Assistants (LDAs) and Title 172 NAC 57 Licensure of Dental Hygienists have recently been passed into law by the Attorney General, without consideration of the numerous written and verbal testimonies given by members of the Nebraska Dental Hygienists' Association (NDHA). As it stands, the educational requirements for coronal polishing certification are absent from the statute as are specific education and proof of competency requirements for expanded function procedures, which is of great concern to us. In addition, the degree of supervision for expanded function procedures have not been identified for inclusion in the rules and regulations.

We would like to thank all dental hygienists who provided verbal and written testimony regarding these Rules and Regulation changes. We are extremely disappointed to know our concerns were not addressed by the DHHS and Attorney General's Office. At this juncture, we do not have further recourse unless harm can be shown to the general public. We encourage all dental hygienists to keep NDHA's legislative committee informed of any challenges they encounter in the field, as these Rules and Regulations are being implemented.

The Nebraska Dental Assistant Association (NDAA) in partnership with Senator Ben Hanson will be sponsoring a bill to remove one seat from a member of the public from the Nebraska Board of Dentistry (NBOD) and replace the member of the public with a Licensed Dental Assistant. The executive board of NDHA supports the addition of an LDA, but feels the current makeup of the NBOD should be revised. The current makeup of the NBOD is as follows: six dentists, two of which are dental faculty, two hygienists, and two members of the public. Our association feels it is in the best interest of our profession and of the public to balance the NBOD seats based on the ratio of licensed professionals in the state in order for each profession to have a voice and be empowered regarding matters that influence scope of practice.

Currently there are 1702 licensed dentists, 1571 licensed dental hygienists, and 113 licensed dental assistants in the state. NDHA has requested that Kent Rogert, our lobbyist, present our position to the sponsoring Senator. Our association will move to oppose the NDAA's bill if a negotiation cannot be had. Please stay current via our website: <https://nedha.org/> to find the latest information regarding our position and actions as this bill is introduced. It will be important for you to stay in contact with your local Senator and keep them informed of our position. 2020 was a challenging year for fundraising for many organizations. With COVID-19 still impacting the country, we will not have the opportunity to host our Senator's Reception, as we have done previously, however we will still be making contact with them by sending them oral hygiene gift bags. In 2020, NE-HYPAC, a political action committee, raised over \$800 through their fundraising campaign and online donations and contributed to four senators. As we enter a new calendar year and continue to advocate for the protection of our scope of practice, please consider becoming a member of NE-HYPAC and getting involved in the political scene.

Opportunities to financially support NE-HYPAC are year round and the committee hosts fun and creative fundraising events that are imperative to advancing our agenda. For more information on NE-HYPAC, visit the NDHA Website at <https://nedha.org/ne-hypac/>

Iowa Western CC Update Regina LeMense



Dental Hygiene school has changed significantly for my class of 2021 since we began the program in 2019. 2020 brought us online learning, extra PPE, and learning to embrace change

Clinic looks a little different due to the new safety protective measures, and we are so thankful to be back in clinic due to these measures. Due to lecture being

online, my class doesn't get to see each other as often as we used to prior to COVID-19. I personally have always enjoyed clinic, but I enjoy it even more now since it allows me to see my classmates in person.

The ending of this past semester was exciting, as we were able to get back to going to offsite clinics for additional learning experiences. Our SADHA chapter was able to raise quite a bit of money from a fall fundraiser to give back to our surrounding community. We were able to donate \$400 to one offsite clinic, Heart Ministry Center. We were also able to donate \$800 to support five Iowa Western students in need this holiday season. I am very proud to be apart of a program that wants to make a difference in peoples lives, and values giving back to the community we are apart of. We are so excited to see what 2021 brings!

Iowa Western Dental Hygiene program now has a Facebook that shares exciting news and updates. Please give this page a follow if you are interested in seeing updates and exciting news going on within our program!



Whitney Crist, RDH Membership Chair

Greetings!

Welcome all new and seasoned NDHA members. I wanted to share some of the things I am currently working on as Membership Chair.

One of my most passionate projects is getting a Mentor Program up and running - matching NDHA members with current dental hygiene students.

This will be a great opportunity for students to make a connection with an experienced hygienist, ask questions, and have support while transitioning to the workforce. I am still working out some of the details and hoping to officially announce the program soon!

This past year, I have been participating in Zoom Membership Committee meetings. The membership chairs from District VIII all come together to brainstorm, share ideas, and socialize. It has been fun getting to know other hygienists in the Midwest area and see what other state associations have been up to.

A goal of mine for 2021 is to reach out and have more correspondence with members. I want to continue the sense of community and connection that NDHA has established.

Another goal is to increase membership. Anything you can do to help would be appreciated - even talking with your fellow co-workers or hygiene friends that are potential members about why being a part of NDHA is important to you.

As always, thank you for you membership! I look forward to a successful and uplifting 2021 for NDHA.

Carrie Graves ADHA 1st Delegate

The question I see and hear most often about ADHA and joining the association is "Is it really worth it?" As your delegate for NDHA I can wholeheartedly say "YES!!!"

Last year was my first year as a delegate, and I had no idea what to expect. I also did not realize that the Covid pandemic would challenge so many of us in so many different ways.



I was so excited to see New Orleans and getting to attend my first ADHA annual session EVER! My social butterfly self was ecstatic to meet with other hygienists from across the United States and share our love of Dental Hygiene. We had several zoom meetings prior to the session in June 2020. We had many new PBYS and PR's to analyze. A PBY is a proposed bylaw amendment and PR is a proposed resolution. Last year we had one PBY and 22 PR's. In these zoom meetings we hashed out wording, intent of sentences, etc of these proposed PBY's and PR's. Then the big news dropped-no meetings in person. (Insert crying emoji!) We met online for our House of Delegates session early one Saturday morning so that all time zones could participate.

We all had to be certified that we were who we said we are and voting from our confirmed location. It surprised me how fast the proceedings moved. If the first reading was not accepted, within seconds a different wording was submitted, and so on. Eventually we would come to an agreement and would pass or reject said items. Delegates from previous HOD's said that this moved at a slower pace, and as a new delegate I thought it was very fast. It would've been cool to see in person. Massive kudos to ADHA for creating this new environment and maintaining structure during the proceedings. Note to myself: my computer chair is very uncomfortable for an 8 hour session of sitting. I'll be bringing my saddle stool home from work this year.

Some of the PR's that were adopted included: advocating for hygienists to be included in local, state, and national crisis response policies, for every dental hygienist to obtain a National Provider Identification (NPI) number. Advocating means that the association will spend monies on trying to make these come to fruition. Other PR's that received adoption: supporting the inclusion and utilization of dental hygienists in response to local, state, national, and global crises; interprofessional education in the dental hygiene curriculum; the development and implementation of innovations educational delivery systems only when clinical, didactic and laboratory education is provided through an accredited dental hygiene program; the federal government's Fair Labor Standards Act in which dental hygienists' must, as employees, be issued a W2 by their permanent or temporary employers with appropriate government withholding made from their wages, appropriate to this statute; adopting the glossary term of Orofacial Myofunctional Therapy (OMT); adopting policy to acknowledge and support RDH's who are trained in OMT and who have also taken proficiency boards to become a Certified Orofacial Myologist (COM), and can provide to all patients OMT treatment without the supervision of another licensed healthcare professional. Those last two statements came directly from our own District 8 and specifically Patricia Brinkman, COM, NDHA member and past president. There were others, but I thought I would touch on the "meaty" stuff. If you would like to know more, go to ADHA.org and sign in to your membership. The final actions of the House of Delegates is under the tab labeled resources

What I learnedis a ton! The inner workings of our association are of hard work and determination. I am excited to see what our members come up with this year? Do you have any ideas that should be brought forth? I am here to serve you as members of NDHA, open to listening and helping to change the face of our profession for our futures.

Lincoln Component Update Leslie Kraus, RDH, BSDH



Happy New Year! Cheers to a better 2021!

I am Leslie Kraus, your Lincoln component chair. I have been a hygienist and member of ADHA for 28 years. I was a scholarship recipient to the inaugural Nebraska Unleash Your Potential (YUP) conference this past year.

This experience led me to get actively involved with NDHA. It was an amazing experience that I would highly encourage anyone to apply for the next event. The Pandemic has made it challenging to bring live CE and networking with my fellow hygienists. I am hopeful 2021 will be a better year. We were fortunate to have had a live and streamed CE November 5 from Ryan Rutar. He presented on "Anxiety thru the Roof" at the Turbine Flats. The in person attendees received free full size samples of Colgate's Anytime Anywhere, a tour of the building and enjoyed wine, desserts and networking. We were excited to have had hygienists from 5 other states stream the event, as well.

The nominations for the component and state awards are being reviewed and will be announced in the spring. I am working on a line up of CE speakers for 2021. Currently, Patricia Brinkman-Falter, BSDH, MS, PHRDH, COM will be presenting "TMJ Pain Management: the dental hygienists role" March 4, 2021. When the details are finalized it will be posted on the website and emails sent out. I am looking for speaker recommendations and topics of interest. Please contact me if you have ideas. Also I would like to invite you to join myself and Sadie Montgomery, our social media chair, in being a chair of a committee. Many hands make the load light.

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