

Activities

A successful chapter sponsors a variety of enriching activities for their members. This section provides quick strategies to increase visibility, gain support and increase member involvement.

Activity Planning Tips

ASDA chapters can boost membership numbers and chapter participation by coordinating events for its members. ASDA's most successful chapters offer a variety of events to meet each member's needs.

Plan ahead and plan early. You cannot expect to have a great event if you begin planning only a few weeks in advance. Speakers, dental supply companies and representatives from the local dental society often need several months notice.

1. Schedule the event on the school calendar as soon as possible.
2. Clear the date with your dean of student affairs to make sure it does not conflict with other school events.
3. Assign a committee to oversee logistics.
4. Invite guests to your events.
5. Always extend a personal invitation to your dean and other faculty.

Advertise. Plan to advertise three weeks in advance for a small event and six weeks for a major event. Target your audience by using bulletin boards, class announcements, mailbox flyers, e-mail, school newsletter and website, and word of mouth.

Involve non-ASDA members, faculty and administration as much as possible. This will show non-members how much fun ASDA events can be. If your activity is open to non-members, consider charging them a higher admission and decide whether or not they are eligible for any door prizes or raffles, since chapter activities are a privilege of membership. Always provide non-members the opportunity to join during local events.

Follow up on details. Send written confirmation to speakers, vendors and sponsors.

Create an appropriate budget. Meet with your chapter treasurer to determine your budget. Consider enlisting corporate sponsorship to offset costs.

Thank the participants. Send a thank-you letter to anyone who donated time, products or money. They will be more likely to help out again in the future.

Create a paper trail. Keep detailed records of events and gatherings so that similar activities can be replicated in the future. Compile all relevant information in a binder at a common location for future ASDA leaders or store documents online through Google documents or www.dropbox.com.

Activities Checklist

- ❑ Decide the type of activity you would like to plan (fundraising, member service, career guidance, social, speaking event, outreach, etc.)
- ❑ Determine who will be invited (members, non-members, faculty, state society members, etc.)
- ❑ Determine your event budget
- ❑ Set the date and time
- ❑ Estimate the number of people who will attend
- ❑ Reserve a meeting room
- ❑ Choose your menu. (In many room rental agreements, you are required to order food from a designated caterer.)

Plan a Variety of Interesting Activities

Advocacy: Advocacy programs provide members the opportunity to have a voice in issues of concern to dental education and the dental profession.

Social: Social activities are important because they provide members with an opportunity to spend time and socialize outside of school.

Organized Dentistry: These activities increase exposure to state and local dental societies and the ADA. These events are essential for promoting lifelong involvement in organized dentistry.

Community Service: Chapters that are already well-organized and active may want to extend their influence by reaching out to the local community.

Fundraising: Many activities designed to raise funds can also function as member service, career development, educational and social events. These activities benefit members, as well as the chapter.

Recruitment/Retention Activities

These are activities specifically designed to promote ASDA and recruit members.

Freshmen Pizza Party/Recruitment Lunch

Audience: *new students*

The purpose of this activity is to educate new students about ASDA and sign them up for membership. It could be a pizza party, a barbecue or a picnic. Introduce ASDA and give the date of the first chapter meeting. Have a membership table with posters and photos of last year's events, applications and samples of ASDA publications. Keep the event social, but promote ASDA as much as possible. Display an ASDA banner, if your chapter has one.

Class Incentive Party

Audience: *class with 100% market share (at recruited chapters only)*

At the beginning of the membership drive, announce that there will be a celebration party for the class(es) that achieve(s) 100 percent market share.

Welcome Back Party

Audience: *current second, third and fourth year members*

This is a great opportunity to allow students to meet and socialize at the beginning of the year. It creates goodwill and can be a great launching pad for the chapter's calendar of activities. Give a brief presentation about membership and have leaders take shifts at a membership table to collect annual membership dues.

Career Day

Audience: *high school and college students*

This activity is designed to promote careers in dentistry and increase predoctoral membership. The more predoctoral recruitment done by chapters, the more students who enter dental school with knowledge of ASDA. Predoctoral membership information and applications are available from the central office. This event can be held at a local high school, college or at the dental school.

Career Development/Educational Activities

Career development or educational events will help members refine career plans, explore postdoctoral opportunities, provide information on subjects not normally covered in dental school or address current topics of concern to the profession. Activities of this nature should also serve members in every phase of dental education, from predoctoral to postdoctoral.

Guest Speakers/Lunch and Learns

Audience: *can be targeted to a variety of groups depending on the topic.*

Chapters have had speakers present a variety of topics such as practice management, federal regulations and guidelines, forensic dentistry, oral hygiene, health care reform, medical emergencies in the dental chair, financial planning and others. Invite current members, potential members and faculty. Some chapters have pharmaceutical companies or other manufacturers' representatives sponsor luncheon lecture programs.

Mock Malpractice

Audience: *students and faculty*

Dental students and law students can collaborate for a mock trial. The event can take place in a courtroom at the school's law facility. In the mock trial, a dentist (role played by a dental student) can be sued by a patient for a lingual nerve paresthesia following a third molar extraction. Dental and law students can look on as faculty members from both disciplines serve as judges and expert witnesses in the case. The event exposes students to the proceedings of courtroom hearings and the legal side of operating a private practice.

"Life after Dental School" Evening

Audience: *current and potential members (especially fourth years)*

Invite your local dental supply company, bank loan officers, insurance and accounting representatives and recent graduates representing a variety of experiences (starting a practice from scratch, associateships, buyouts, etc.). The recent graduates should talk about their experiences. The financial representative can provide information on how they can

help new graduates get started in practice. Allow time after the event for a question-and-answer session.

Student Debt Seminar

Audience: *first and fourth-year members*

Plan an activity to inform freshmen about how to manage their student debt, provide information on available financial aid resources, and educate members on loan consolidation, potential tax deduction on interest and other items of concern regarding student loans.

At the end of the school year, chapters can hold a special session for graduating fourth years. Invite speakers from financial institutions or other agencies to provide information to help graduates calculate critical data from each of their loans, as well as develop various payback scenarios. Have ADA membership applications and benefits flyers to distribute.

Series Seminar on Postdoctoral Education

Audience: *current members*

Invite program directors from specialty programs, General Practice Residency (GPR) and Advanced Education in General Dentistry (AEGD) programs, as well as recruiters from Indian Health Service and various branches of the Armed Services to educate members about various postdoctoral opportunities available after graduation. Invite recent graduates to speak about their experiences in a particular type of program, provide information about their current lifestyle and offer tips on obtaining admission to their programs. They can suggest extracurricular activities that would help prepare for any such program.

“How to Get Into a Residency” Night

Audience: *third-year students*

This activity is designed to educate third-year students on the deadlines for the Postdoctoral Application Support Service (PASS), the Postdoctoral Dental Matching Program (the Match) and about what to expect during postgraduate program interviews. After returning from program interviews, have fourth-year students meet with third years to talk about their experiences, CV preparation and other helpful information.

ADA Success Dental Student Programs

Schedule one of the four Success programs by e-mailing success@ada.org:

- *Success Smart Start for Freshmen:* This two hour program addresses financial issues, dental career options, and tips for success in dental school.
- *Success Professional Preview for Sophomores:* A two-hour program covering communication skills in clinic, technology assessment and ergonomics.
- *Success Career Strategies for Juniors:* This two-hour program addresses career philosophies, associateships, CV writing and interviewing for professional positions.
- *Success Practice Management for Seniors:* This full-day program addresses practice management from multiple angles, with lots of real-world examples.

Member Service Activities

These are activities that promote goodwill, demonstrate appreciation for members and/or provide a needed service.

National Boards Breakfast

Audience: *Second and fourth years*

Serve complimentary breakfast. This function not only increases awareness of ASDA, but it is a sign of appreciation for members. Be sure to display an ASDA banner or sign so students know you are sponsoring this event.

Tackle Box Assessment

Audience: *first-year/new members*

Invite the freshmen to come and find out what is in their tackle boxes and how each instrument works. This is a great way to mention ASDA benefits while providing new students with a helpful service. Be sure to answer questions and conduct demonstrations.

Mouth Mirror Clinic

Audience: *first-year members*

This is a nice service for students about to enter clinic. The chapter simply has to reserve time in the clinic and ask a professor to provide instruction on the proper use of a mouth mirror. Planning and event time is minimal.

Equipment Co-op

Audience: *current members*

The equipment co-op is a perfect example of how organized dentistry can benefit students. The program is an alternative method for students to obtain dental equipment and supplies. A student purchases and sells dental supplies through a co-op system. The co-op system is based on a working relationship between the school's governing body and a national dental supply house. The school appoints dental students to order and inventory the merchandise, construct the price schedule and package and sell supply kits to the student body. The dental supply company pays the student workers for their services and a representative of each class participates on the team.

Most of the ordering is done during the summer, and inventory and packaging of kits for the next quarter is accomplished during the vacation period between each term. Since the items are purchased in quantity, the students receive substantial savings. Goods are usually billed at cost plus 20 percent. Be sure and get your school's approval before initiating this activity.

ASDA Big Sibling Match

Audience: *first years*

Freshmen are matched with sophomores to receive general help and support during their first year in dental school.

Lab and More Lab

Audience: *first years*

This workshop orients freshmen students to dental school laboratory classes.

Transition to Clinic

Audience: *second years*

This program educates and orients second-year students about what to expect in clinic.

Advocacy

These are activities that position ASDA as an advocate for its members.

Legislative Letter-Writing Campaigns

Audience: *current members*

Work with your chapter's legislative liaison to plan a luncheon to inform students of current legislative issues and have students write letters to their members of Congress on issues of concern to them. To find contact information for your representative, go to www.capwiz.com/dental/home.

ADPAC Drives and Lunch and Learns

Audience: *students, faculty and staff*

Invite a congressional representative to the school to discuss dental related issues under current legislation. You should have ADPAC membership applications on hand to distribute. ADPAC will reimburse up to \$250 for your lunch. Contact Brian Sodergren from the ADPAC office at sodergrenb@ada.org or 202.898.2424 at least two weeks before your event. ADPAC will send you pins, sign-up forms, brochures, an ADPAC FAQ, example publicity fliers, the ADPAC lunch and learn presentation, and much more!

State Lobby Day

Audience: *current members*

Work with your state or local dental society to get students involved in their lobby day. Organize a bus to transport the students to the capitol and ask the state or local dental society leaders to provide training on how to lobby and what issues are of importance. More information on organizing a state lobby day is available on ASDA's website at www.ASDAnet.org/legislationlgn.aspx.

Social Activities

These activities build camaraderie and allow students to get to know each other and faculty and staff.

ASDA Olympic Games

Audience: *students and faculty*

Different sporting events are held during the two weeks of competition. Each class is represented in every event. Possible sporting events include basketball, volleyball, softball, tennis, etc. Publicize with posters, class announcements and flyers.

Tailgating Activities

Audience: *all students*

Planning a tailgate/sports activity is easy. Several weeks before the game, announce that the chapter is signing people up for the event. Determine a price for the game and tailgate admission. Collect this fee in advance. Consider charging non-members a slightly higher price. The event is self-supportive.

Faculty and Staff Appreciation

Audience: *members and faculty*

To gain visibility among students and faculty, chapters can host an appreciation luncheon recognizing members of the faculty and staff. Consider holding this event in the spring in conjunction with the presentation of your chapter's Faculty and Advocate Awards. Information on Faculty and Advocate Awards is distributed to delegates each spring; contact the central office for further information. As an additional touch, you can feature faculty/staff interviews in your chapter newsletter.

ASDA Formal/Awards Banquet

Audience: *all students*

Consider combining a graduation appreciation theme with this event. Charge a reduced admission for members or keep the event open to ASDA members only. Invite your dean and faculty to show off the accomplishments of your chapter and its members. It is important to advertise early via flyers, e-mail, chapter newsletter and class announcements.

District Mixer

Audience: *students at all chapters in your district*

This activity increases ASDA awareness and develops relations with other schools in the district. Work with your district trustee to coordinate the event and invite other schools.

Organized Dentistry Activities

These activities demonstrate the importance of a lifelong commitment to organized dentistry.

ASDA National Meetings

Audience: *current members*

Early in the school year, hold an event to inform members about ASDA's national meetings and generate interest in attending. Download ASDA's national meetings video from the website to promote the meetings. After each meeting, be sure to hold a follow up meeting to inform students of important issues and events that occurred at the meeting.

Partners Program/Mentorship Program

Audience: *current members*

This program matches dental students with practicing dentists. The program is a great way to promote the value of organized dentistry, make professional contacts and educate members about dentistry in a variety of practice settings. Third-year students can be matched with a local dentist and fourth-year students can be matched with a dentist whose field of practice is of interest. The chapter can sponsor a kickoff party to allow the

student/dentist pair to become acquainted and arrange future activities, such as observing at the dentist's office, lunch, etc. Participating dentists can be invited to chapter parties, receptions and activities. Work with your state or local society to find mentors.

Dental Office Tours

Audience: *current members*

A successful practice management event can help your state or local society gain new members and increase visibility and credibility among graduating students. If planned carefully, the society can show off its resources and recruit graduates to join the ADA. The goal is to provide a learning experience for senior dental students planning to open a practice after graduation. Students visit three different dental offices.

Each visit consists of the following:

- Tour of the practice
- Introduction on how the practice functions (i.e., number of employees, training, patient capacity per day, type of equipment, service provided, insurance, billing procedures, etc.)
- Advice on financial matters (i.e., investing, loans, contract negotiations, personal debt, etc.)
- Information on the administrative responsibilities of running a practice
- Look at marketing issues and how to calculate patient growth potential

Invite all students and dentists who participated in the program to a reception following the tour. Here are some ideas for setting up your own event:

- Work with the state or local dental society to schedule a day for the event. Discuss funding, participating dentists or specialists and all other logistics.
- Send letters to dentists inviting each to participate. Include an agenda with your letter.
- Publicize the event via bulletin-board flyers, class announcements, posters and meetings. Have a sign-up table available at an ASDA event.

Community Awareness Activities

Activities in this category promote goodwill and provide a chance for students to contribute to their community. For additional tips and ideas on community service events, download our Community Service How-To Guide at www.ASDAnet.org/leadership_toolbox.aspx.

Halloween Party

Audience: *local community*

Contact a local children's hospital, Boys and Girls Club, or other afterschool group such as the YMCA to organize a sugar-free Halloween party. Provide healthy snacks and sugar-free candy for the children and talk about the importance of oral health. Recruit members of your chapter and even predentals to volunteer at the party. Ask local businesses for donations for food, candy, napkins and decorations.

Thanksgiving Food Drive

Audience: *local community*

Beginning in late fall, the chapter can begin publicizing the food drive. Students are asked to bring canned goods and drop them off in boxes placed in a specific location in the dental school. Be sure to place ASDA's name on them for visibility. Establish a cut-off date and donate the food to a local charity.

Blood Drive

Audience: *local community*

A blood drive is an excellent community service event. You can contact your local Red Cross, blood bank or area hospital to coordinate arrangements. The chapter simply has to publicize the blood drive two to three weeks beforehand among students, faculty and staff.

Secret Santa

Audience: *local community*

This project involves calling a local service agency to get a list of needy families to which your chapter can send holiday presents. Begin collecting the week before Thanksgiving. Invite ASDA members to help with the shopping and have a gift-wrapping party. Deliver gifts to families or the service agency that you have chosen to work with. Afterwards, develop a newsletter article, bulletin-board announcement and a press release for the local newspaper on how much money was raised and what gifts were sent.

Special Athletes, Special Smiles

Audience: *local community*

Your chapter can take part in this Special Olympics program by providing oral screenings and educational programs to persons with disabilities. Special Athletes, Special Smiles is a national program that is held throughout the year in various locations. To find out more about the program, visit the Special Olympics website at www.specialolympics.org.

5K Walks/Runs for Charity

Your chapter can organize a team to participate in a local walk/run for charity. You could offer to set up a table to hand out information on proper oral health, along with toothpaste and toothbrushes.

Fundraising Activities

These activities bring money into the chapter to fund additional activities and programs. For additional tips and ideas on fundraising events, download our Fundraising How-To Guide at www.ASDAnet.org/leadership_toolbox.aspx.

Pizza Sales

Audience: *entire student body, faculty and staff*

Sell pizza from a local vendor each week at the school. Make arrangements to buy a quantity of pizzas and arrange to sell them in the school cafeteria on a per-slice basis. Be sure to obtain approval from your school before scheduling this activity.

ASDA Apparel Sale

Audience: *current members, alumni and faculty*

Apparel sales will raise money for the chapter and increase awareness of ASDA. You could also make event-specific T-shirts, for example, for an ASDA golf tournament. Consider contacting dental supply companies to obtain sponsorship for the purchase of the apparel. In return, offer to place the company's logo on the garment. Begin selling the apparel early in the school year. Collect payment before your order is made and order extras if possible.

Golf Tournament

Audience: *current members, alumni and faculty*

A committee can be organized to find one corporate sponsor for each hole of golf. A prize is awarded to the student who wins each hole's specific event (for example, the longest drive, closest to the designated landmark, longest putt, etc.). This tournament can be played as an individual game or as a scramble.

International Fest

Audience: *entire student body, faculty and staff*

Contact plenty of volunteers to cook their favorite ethnic dishes and serve them at the event. Try to arrange a donation of "filler" foods, such as potato salad and coleslaw. Make arrangements well in advance for time, location and table setup. Advertise early and often. When setting up the room, be sure to allow plenty of space for people to walk about easily. Sell tickets at the entrance so food servers do not have to handle money.

Dental Supplies Auction

Audience: *current and potential members, faculty and staff*

The purpose is to raise money and increase awareness of ASDA. Host an auction for your classmates by asking dental companies to donate items. Here are a few tips to plan an auction:

- Contact dental supply companies and ask if they would donate items.
- Ask a prominent faculty member to be the auctioneer.
- Plan refreshments for the pre-auction reception.
- Advertise! Post the list of items and beginning bids, and display the items before the event if possible.

On the day of the event, set up your display early so that people can check it out throughout the day. Kick off the event with a reception and then hold a silent auction for the less expensive merchandise. Save the more expensive items for a called auction. Dental items can be anything from hand pieces and files to impression material. You can also solicit donations from the local community, including rounds of golf, free dinners, gift certificates, and more. Afterwards, send thank-you letters to all companies who donated products. Be sure to start planning early, and publish and distribute the list of available prizes to your local dental society and all faculty and students.

Research Day/Vendor Fair/Dental Expo

Audience: *current and potential members, faculty and staff*

Many chapters refer to this activity as ASDA Day. A vendor fair serves many valuable purposes: raising money, educating members and providing an opportunity to network and socialize. The event is usually held at the school and may be a full day or just a few hours. Companies are invited to display their products and services for a fee.

Some schools combine their vendor fair with other activities, such as student research day, table clinics, speaker series or alumni day. This not only provides an opportunity for students and faculty to gain a better understanding of their colleagues' research, but also to sample the dental products of different manufacturers. In addition, a successful event can merit the chapter many accolades from faculty and administration.

If your chapter has never hosted an exhibit, start small by inviting a few manufacturers to set up small displays at a high-traffic area in the dental school. In subsequent years, you can increase the size and scope of the event.

For more specifics on organizing a vendor fair or dental expo, download our Vendor Fair and Dental Conference How-To Guide at www.ASDAnet.org/leadership_toolbox.aspx.