

Membership and Communication

One of the roles of our ASDA chapters is to recruit and engage members. This section provides membership marketing and communication strategies to build and strengthen your chapter.

Membership Drive

The first step to introducing students to ASDA is holding a successful membership drive. Recruited chapters should use this opportunity to get students to join or renew. Autobill chapters should use this event to inform members of their benefits and encourage them to sign up for volunteer opportunities. The drive should be held in the fall as soon as school starts.

The format of the drive can vary by chapter—some chapters are able to set up a table at orientation while others hold their drive at their first ASDA event. Regardless of where the event is held, it is important to have the right materials at the drive. The ASDA central office sends each chapter a box of materials for the drive, including membership applications, a list of benefits, brochures, insurance forms, and sample publications. Be sure to use these tools to educate students about ASDA.

Below are seven key steps to holding a successful drive:

STEP 1: *Have a confident and well-informed team*

Be sure your ASDA team understands the organization and is ready to answer any questions your colleagues may have (*see the next section on Five ASDA Membership Statements for sample questions*). Be a source of information to them. Take an evening to review this handbook and the guide *Getting through Dental School: ASDA's Guide for Dental Students*, which is available online and is mailed to each chapter to distribute to all first-year members. Encourage other leaders to do so as well. If they are not well informed, they will not be able to effectively educate your colleagues on the organization.

STEP 2: *Recruit incoming first-year students*

It is ideal to recruit first years over the summer, when students are eagerly looking forward to dental school. Mail them a cover letter and an application form over the summer. Then, schedule time for a presentation during their orientation. Host a lunch for the students following your presentation and invite the dean, faculty and members of your administration. If your school does not allow for this, plan your first-year recruitment campaign as early as possible in the school year. Advertise and make sure the ASDA name is highly visible. Encourage them to volunteer and get involved in chapter activities.

STEP 3: *Make class announcements*

After recruiting first-year students, focus on the other classes. Plan to have class representatives give brief presentations about ASDA during class or lunch. The message should focus on benefits and information relevant to students in that class. Inform students

where and for how long chapter leaders will be accepting dues. E-mail reminders to join and renew membership in ASDA.

STEP 4: Sign up current members for another year of membership

This requires minimal organization. Refer to your chapter's membership files and identify which students are members. Approach these students and explain that you are collecting membership dues for the next year. Explain any new membership benefits and discuss upcoming chapter activities. Most importantly, be sure to gather updated contact information so that members will receive all of their benefits.

STEP 5: Set-up an ASDA Table

Once you have made a presentation about ASDA, set up an ASDA table in a common area where students congregate to eat lunch or spend time between classes. This will give you an opportunity to answer questions, accept dues from all class levels and distribute benefit information to new members. This is also a good place to sign up volunteers for chapter activities. Your ASDA representatives should help staff this booth.

STEP 6: Engage in one-on-one recruitment

Now is the time to approach people who have not yet signed up. Your goal is to determine each person's reason for not joining and try to overcome his or her objections. Students can be approached in the pre-clinical lab, clinics or in between classes. Start with students who are current members, then concentrate on those who have never been members. For more information on how to approach prospective members, review the section on "Recruitment Techniques" on page 13.

STEP 7: Engage in one-on-one dues collection

Be prepared to accept dues during the one-on-one recruitment phase. Be sure to have an application form and an envelope or folder to accept applications and payment.

You will encounter students who agree to join, but are not able to pay dues on the spot. You can either give the student an application so they can send in their dues at their own convenience, arrange to accept payment at a later time or refer them to the online application. Keep accurate lists of unpaid members and track the payment dates.

Five ASDA Membership Statements

To make an informed decision about joining or renewing membership in ASDA, an individual must understand the benefits of being a part of the association and have any concerns addressed. As an ASDA recruiter, it is your job to understand their concerns and provide the appropriate information to reinforce the decision to join or renew membership in ASDA. The following five ASDA membership statements were developed to help you understand and respond to the basic concerns of potential members. These statements can be great tools in recruiting new members. The handbook *Getting through Dental School: ASDA's Guide for Dental Students* and the websites www.ASDAnet.org and www.ada.org/goto/student are excellent sources for membership information.

Question 1: *What does it mean to be a member of ASDA?*

Statement 1: Predoctoral membership dues cover membership in both ASDA and the ADA, and entitles you to the benefits of both organizations. ASDA membership represents a first step toward a lifelong involvement in organized dentistry.

Question 2: *What is the value of organized dentistry?*

Statement 2: Organized dentistry describes the combined efforts of all the organizations (such as ASDA, ADA, ADEA, etc.) that work together to positively contribute to the dental profession. Even as a student, your professional life is being shaped by forces within and outside of dentistry. One of the most important steps you can take to supplement your education and protect your career investment is to stay informed and involved in the changing landscape of your profession through participation in organized dentistry.

Question 3: *What are the benefits offered to members?*

Statement 3: ASDA offers several tangible benefits, such as health, disability and life insurance and discounts on debt management services, wireless plans and study materials. In addition, members receive our monthly and quarterly publications, our e-newsletters, and the handbook *Getting Through Dental School: ASDA's Guide for Dental Students*.

Members also receive intangible benefits, such as a voice in issues of concern to dental education through our annual session, National Dental Student Lobby Day, and grassroots advocacy efforts of our Legislative Grassroots Network (LGN); opportunities to network with dental students and dental professionals across the nation; and leadership opportunities at the local and national levels. (See Appendix D for a full listing of ASDA benefits).

As a member of ASDA, students are also members of the ADA and are entitled to all benefits of ADA's student membership, such as publications, practice management resources, hotel and travel discounts, and much more.

Question 4: *Which ADA benefits are especially useful to students?*

Statement 4: Gain knowledge to protect your future career and stay informed with resources on practice management, licensure, career planning, financial planning and more. In addition, you receive *JADA* and *ADA News*, the same publications your mentors read, and have access to the members-only area of ada.org. Learn more about your student resources at www.ada.org/goto/student.

Question 5: *How can I stay involved in organized dentistry after graduation?*

Statement 5: To help all new graduates maintain ADA membership during the transition from dental school to practice, the ADA offers a reduced dues program for the national portion of dues. When awarded a DDS or DMD degree, you are exempt from payment of member dues for the remainder of that year and the following calendar year. This applies to all students, even non-members of ASDA/ADA. New dentists pay 25% of active member dues for the second full calendar year following the year in which the degree was awarded, 50% of active member dues in the third year, 75% in the fourth year and 100% in the fifth year and thereafter. Eligibility for this benefit shall be conditioned on maintenance of continuous membership. Visit www.ada.org/goto/join for more information.

Facts about ASDA and ADA Membership

Predoctoral students enrolled in a CODA-accredited dental school in the U.S. and Puerto Rico, including foreign-trained dentists in advanced standing programs, are eligible for membership in both ASDA and the ADA. Annual membership runs from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31. National dues provide membership in both ASDA and a student membership in the ADA.

Each dental student is issued an ADA number in ADA's database at the beginning of dental school and this number remains with them throughout their entire career. When a student joins ASDA and the ADA, the membership number is activated. This number enables members to receive various benefits and discounts, and serves as their password for the members-only section of the ASDA website. Members can find their numbers on their membership cards, which are mailed after Jan. 1, or by contacting ASDA at Membership@ASDAnet.org or 312-440-2795.

In addition to predoctoral membership, ASDA offers membership categories for pre dental and international dental students. Pre dental membership is open to any high school or undergraduate student, or an individual pursuing a second career in dentistry. The international student category is open to students enrolled in an international dental school outside the U.S. that is listed in the World Directory of Dental Schools compiled by the FDI World Federation per the ADA bylaws. International dental students are eligible for ADA membership.

Membership Remittances and Receipt of Benefits

Membership remittance is the process for submitting members' information and payment from local chapters to the central office. Each chapter assigns a remit processor to manage this process and this person can be a student or staff in your school's administration. ASDA has an online system that the chapter remit processors use to transfer this information to the central office. ASDA has developed instructions to assist you in this process and these instructions are emailed to all remit processors in August.

The remittance for the 2012 membership year opened on Sept. 12. ASDA accepts membership remittances on an ongoing basis throughout the membership year (Jan. 1- Dec. 31). All memberships that are collected in the fall must be sent to the central office by **Nov. 23** in order for members to begin receiving their January publications. We offer our chapters a \$100 incentive if we receive your remittance including payment by Nov. 23. An additional \$50 incentive is awarded to all chapters who include email addresses for all their members with the remittance.

First-year members who join ASDA in the fall will begin receiving ASDA publications the month after the remittance is processed by the central office membership staff. First-year members will begin receiving *JADA, Journal of the American Dental Association* and *ADA News* in January, when the membership year officially begins.

Tangible Benefits

As mentioned earlier, ASDA offers numerous tangible benefits to all of our members. Below is a quick reference of the benefits and which category of members is eligible for each.

| Benefit | Predoctoral | Predental | International Student |
|--|--------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| Publications (<i>ASDA News, Mouth, Word of Mouth, The Legislative Ledger</i>) | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Discount on board exam review materials | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Free \$50,000 life insurance policy | Yes | No | No |
| Free disability insurance | Yes | No | No |
| Group health insurance | Yes | No | No |
| Debt management services and free personalized assessment | Yes | No | No |
| The Next DDS online resources | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Automobile, renters, and homeowners insurance | Yes* | Yes* | No |
| ASDA credit card with rewards program | Yes* | Yes* | No |
| Kaplan test preparation materials | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| T-Mobile wireless monthly plan and device discounts | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Attendance at ASDA national meetings | Yes | Yes | Yes |

*Available to those who qualify

Intangible Benefits

More important than the tangible benefits of membership are the intangible benefits of advocacy and representation. Below are common questions that potential members may ask and the response that you can provide emphasizing the intangible benefits of belonging to ASDA.

What do you gain from being an ASDA member?

ASDA is the voice for dental students on many important issues. Your membership strengthens this voice and supports the nationwide network of dental students working to protect your rights and further your interests in the legislative, academic and professional arenas.

What are the advantages of belonging to ASDA?

Advocacy

ASDA's Legislative Grassroots Network (LGN) directs and coordinates grassroots lobbying efforts and works to increase dental student understanding and involvement in legislative issues. The LGN works to inform members of Congress about how proposed legislation will affect dental students, dentists and patients, and provides ASDA chapters with guidelines for letter-writing campaigns, advice on when and how to contact legislators, and ideas for effective verbal communication with policymakers. The LGN sends out a monthly e-newsletter *The Legislative Ledger* to keep members up-to-date on issues affecting dental education and the field of dentistry. ASDA coordinates an annual National Dental Student Lobby Day in Washington, DC in conjunction with ADEA where students have the opportunity to lobby members of Congress on important issues affecting the dental profession. To view all of ASDA's policies, go to www.ASDAnet.org/adoptedresolutions.aspx.

Leadership Development

ASDA introduces students to organized dentistry and provides opportunities to develop leadership skills. ASDA offers leadership positions at the national and local levels with varying responsibilities and time commitments so there is something for everyone. ASDA also provides leadership training and skill development at our national events to prepare you to be a future leader – whether you hold positions in the ADA or a state society, your community or in your own dental practice.

ADA Student Membership

The ADA is America's leading advocate for oral health. It helps dentists succeed and advances the oral health of the public. ADA is dedicated to helping you protect and maximize the investment you are making in your career. ADA offers resources to help you throughout dental school, such a financial planning guide, the Success programs and the dental examinations and licensure guide. ADA can also assist you as you transition to practice or a post-graduate program with listings of post-graduate programs and jobs, practice tips and loan repayment information.

Recruitment Techniques

Use the Central Office to Help Recruit

If you feel that you are not promoting membership convincingly to a prospect, you may want to turn to the central office for assistance. To do this, ask the student if he or she would like to receive more information about ASDA via email. This is a way to exit the conversation while allowing the prospect to keep his or her options open. Keep a list of these and other non-members' names and email addresses and send it to the central office. The membership staff will follow up by sending membership and benefit information.

Have a Membership Table at every ASDA Event and Meeting

Have a list of members and non-members available at every event. To obtain a current list of your members, go to the membership directory online under the Member Resources tab or contact the membership staff. If you are charging admission fees, acknowledge your members by thanking them for their membership and reminding them that their admission fee is discounted. When non-members approach the table, give them the opportunity to pay membership dues and receive the discounted admission price.

Maintain a High Level of Member Service

Give prompt and factual responses to questions. Solicit feedback on a regular basis. Consider having a sign-in sheet at your membership table for members who are not receiving publications, then email the sheet to the central office to research the issue. Be sure the sheet contains names, addresses, e-mail addresses and ADA numbers. Think of common complaints from members and try to address them in advance. Use the central office as a resource.

Conversational Recruitment Techniques

Personal contact is the best method to recruit members because it addresses the basic need for recognition by one's peers. Having a recruitment conversation with a fellow student should be just like having a conversation about any topic. There is no need to be pushy or aggressive or follow a script. All that is required is having enough knowledge about ASDA to talk about it comfortably. You should be able to describe the association as if you were describing to a friend all the reasons you like your favorite restaurant. Be in control of the conversation so that you get the desired result: recruit the member (and collect dues for members at recruited chapters). Here are a few ideas:

Establish a rapport with the person.

For example, start the conversation by talking about a recent exam or what the person did over the weekend. Take a genuine interest in the person. This is not just a great way to recruit members, but you will also get to know your classmates better.

Casually direct the discussion to ASDA membership.

You could say, "I noticed you have not yet renewed your membership dues," or "ASDA is having a lunch speaker on practice management and I thought you might be interested in attending."

Be prepared to overcome any objections to membership.

Students' beliefs about ASDA may range from indifferent to extremely supportive. As a student leader, your job is to recognize an objection when you hear it, fill in any information gaps, clear up any misunderstandings and provide information on how the association meets their particular needs. Listen to issues that students have and describe how your chapter is addressing it locally or nationally.

Ask for the sale.

Your job is not complete until you discuss local and national dues. Either collect dues on the spot or arrange to collect them at a later date. For tips on collecting dues from reluctant prospects, continue reading the next section on "Coding Your Prospect List."

Coding Your Prospect List

You will also encounter students who are still hesitant about joining ASDA at this stage. You will need to occasionally follow up with these students. In order to have an educated follow-up approach, it is important to keep a list of why a student declined membership. This will tell you who to approach and how to approach them. For example, I can't join now because:

I am waiting for my loan check.

Code: "loan"

Be sure to approach this student immediately after loan checks are distributed.

I do not have my checkbook with me.

Code: "checkbook"

Make the student aware that they can pay dues with a credit card using the membership application form or by signing up online. If this approach does not work, it may indicate that there is another objection to membership. Determine what this is. Be sure to follow up with students who take the membership application.

I cannot afford membership.

Code: "\$\$"

Explain how a small membership investment can provide many financial rewards. For example, if the person is married or has children, they may be interested in receiving free life insurance. Or this person may be interested in ASDA's credit card. Explain that membership is also a way of investing in the future of dentistry. Follow up with this student by saying, "Would it be all right if I touch base with you in a couple weeks?"

I did not receive any of my benefits when I paid for membership last year.

Code: "no benefits"

Listen to this student's complaint. It is important that you show concern for this student's needs. Assure the student that you will work with them to guarantee receipt of their benefits. Stress the fact that ASDA has continued to work on their behalf. Explain to them that if they would like to receive free back issues of the publications, they can contact the central office at 800-621-8099, ext. 2795 or Membership@ASDAnet.org to request them.

Leave me alone. I am not joining and never will (this response is infrequent).

Code: "NO"

This student will probably not join. You may try to mention ASDA casually from time to time, but avoid "hard sell" approaches. Invite this person to an ASDA event or two and see if you notice a difference in their impression of ASDA. Do not be discouraged. Focus your energy on other prospects.

Recruiting and Retaining Foreign-Trained Students

Many dental schools have special programs for foreign-trained dental students that allow them to enter dental school at an advanced level. Foreign students are often seeking further training in the U.S. and plan to return to their home countries to practice dentistry. These students may require a different approach in order to understand the benefits available to them. It is essential when recruiting these students to establish a trust and to take time to thoroughly explain to them the benefits of belonging to ASDA. Some students may not want to hear anything about ASDA and their request should be respected.

Past surveys have shown that advanced standing students have joined ASDA for the following reasons:

- Access to information
- Discounts on National Board Examination review materials
- Subscriptions to publications
- Discounts on insurance

With this insight, a delegate can target those advanced standing students who are not members. As with other non-members, delegates must increase awareness of ASDA and ensure that this group is well-informed of the value of membership.

You may want to organize a special meeting for foreign-trained students and invite a trusted faculty member who is supportive of organized dentistry to discuss its importance. The meeting should be informal and open to questions. By presenting the organization as a benefit provider, students will be less skeptical about investing in ASDA.

Retention Strategies

Establish a local leadership position for advanced standing students. This will help identify their concerns.

Have the leader send out welcome letters to advanced standing students. In the letter, make them aware of the representation they have within the organization's leadership. The letters should be sent to foreign-trained students whether or not they are members. This will establish trust and begin the start of a relationship with these students.

These action plans can be implemented with minimal cost and effort. The key to these recommendations is establishing relationships with different student groups.

Promoting Predental Membership

ASDA is focused on recruitment of new predental members through local and national efforts. Predental membership in ASDA can be a valuable resource for high school and college students interested in dentistry as a career or those individuals who are pursuing dentistry as a second career. Local ASDA chapters can benefit from having predental members involved in their chapter by developing future leaders and increasing the number of volunteers for their activities. Local chapters can provide the following to predentals:

- An introduction to careers in the dental health professions, including dentistry, dental assisting, dental hygiene and dental laboratory technology.
- Advice to follow when applying to dental school, including the application process, studying for the DAT, interview tips, and specific information on schools that they are interested in.
- Suggestions on managing student debt to prospective students prior to applying for dental school.
- The benefits of joining ASDA as a predental, including networking opportunities with dental students, discounts on DAT preparation materials and the free handbook *Getting Into Dental School: ASDA's Guide for Predental Students*.

Predental Student Recruitment

Many ASDA chapters have a predental student liaison and this position is responsible for the promotion and management of predental membership (*see Appendix E for full position description*). Predental liaisons should arrange a meeting with the pre-health advisor at their school to discuss and coordinate activities that will serve the needs of predentals in your area and recruit predental members. A list of the pre-health career advisors in the local geographic area can be obtained from the school's career guidance faculty or the National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions (NAAHP) website at www.naahp.org. Use this list to make contacts for presentations. Many schools have an organized predental club that you can contact via email or Facebook to promote ASDA.

Predental liaisons should prepare a plan that includes the number of dental student volunteers needed for the predental recruitment effort, the schools targeted for presentations, projections of the number of presentations to be made, participation in career fairs and other relevant activities. A draft of the plan should be shared with the dean and the career development faculty for review and comment.

The ASDA central office can provide materials, such as a presentation on the ASDA predental membership, predental brochures and applications, a list of benefits, sample publications, and more to dental students interested in reaching out to predentals.

Predental Recruitment Incentive

We offer an incentive to our chapters for efforts to recruit predental members to ASDA. Predental membership is an area that we are trying to grow to get more students involved in organized dentistry early. We are asking our chapters to help us with this effort and in return, we will award the top three chapters who recruit the most. First place earns \$250; second place earns \$150; and third place earns \$100.

This incentive program begins in September with the 2012 membership year and the award will be presented at Annual Session 2012 in Minneapolis during the awards ceremony. In order for chapters to earn credit for their recruitment efforts, the predental students will need to select their chapter when completing the online application or write in the chapter on paper applications.

Chapter Communications

An important component in member retention is regular and reliable communication. Use bulletin boards, social media, class announcements, newsletters, in-person meetings, e-mail and a chapter website to share local and national ASDA news and initiatives. Regular communication with members keeps ASDA at the forefront and helps members understand that they are part of a vital, dynamic organization.

Newsletters

Newsletters should provide more in-depth information on a variety of topics of local and national interest. Chapters are encouraged to produce a newsletter at least three times a year. Appoint a newsletter editor to delegate writing assignments, develop a production schedule, proofread and edit the articles, and lay out the stories. Your chapter can distribute its newsletter to members either electronically or as hard copies.

Newsletter Content

News: Factual coverage of recent events important to members at your school. Local, district or national association news, chapter or school events, and dental profession and organized dentistry news are appropriate.

Feature: Stories with a human-interest appeal, using quotes or peoples' reactions. Profiles of people with unique interests or hobbies (outside of school) are also options.

Editorial and opinion: Article in which an individual gives his or her perspective on a certain issue. Label editorials with appropriate title, so readers can distinguish between opinion and a true news story.

Generating Article Ideas

Article ideas can be generated by reviewing ASDA and ADA communications: ASDA News, Mouth, Word of Mouth, The Legislative Ledger, Mouting Off blog, The Leader, ADA News and JADA.

Copyright Issues

If you use anything previously published, get permission from the original source and give credit. When using photos, be sure to give credit to the photographer.

Author and Topic Ideas:

- Task each leader in ASDA with writing an update/article for each issue
- Ask state dental society to write an article for a “State Dental Issues” section in each issue of publication
- Contact other student groups (SNDA, dental fraternity, etc.)
- Promote volunteer opportunities
- Dean/administrator and faculty spotlights
- Request that each committee chair write a summary of any events or meeting that they have attended
- Restaurant reviews, crossword puzzles, Sudoku and cartoons
- Tips from faculty members
- Articles from your student government association
- Ads from sponsors
- Consider themes for each issue
- “Mini” features such as parts of ASDA’s history (available on the ASDA website)
- Legislative updates such as student aid, dental education, healthcare reform and OSHA
- “Help Wanted” section
- Announcements and calendar of upcoming events
- ASDA benefits (available on the ASDA website)
- An “FYI” or “Did you know?” column containing an interesting fact about ASDA, your chapter or school or dentistry
- Coupons for local restaurants or stores

Accuracy

Check the facts in articles submitted by contributors by contacting the source (the individual or organization that provided the information) to ensure that all information is correct. For stories related to ASDA, contact the central office for verification of facts (unless the information was taken from an ASDA publication).

Double-check the spelling of all names, titles and organizations that appear in your newsletter. It is a good idea to verify quotations with the quoted speaker to avoid any misunderstanding about what appears in your newsletter.

Proofreading and Editing

- Check the pagination. Are page numbers on the same area of each page of your publication (for example, in the bottom-center or the upper-outside corners)?
- Check the table of contents. Are the page numbers correct? Do the article titles match?
- Read all headlines. Chances are that these have only been skimmed along the way and may contain errors.
- Read the first paragraph following headlines. Errors are often overlooked here.

- Read page transitions. Look carefully for dropped or duplicated copy when a story is continued on a new page. In addition, make sure that the “continued on page XX” and “continued from XX” page numbers are correct.
- Check the order of numerical listings. If the text says that there are five steps to a process, make sure that five steps are actually given and that they are numbered consecutively.
- Check all endnotes and footnotes. Are they mentioned in the text? Are they numbered consecutively?
- Look for pairs. Parentheses, brackets and double and single quotation marks must come in pairs.

The central office can provide a template for you to get started if your chapter wants to create a newsletter. The website has samples of chapter newsletters that have won our Journalism Awards. These winning newsletters are outstanding examples for your chapter to follow and can be found at www.asdanet.org/chaptercommunications.aspx.

Chapter Websites

A website demonstrates that a chapter is progressive and concerned with meeting the needs of its members. It can also be a chapter's best source of information.

The first step is finding someone to serve as your website administrator. Petition your class to see if there is someone with web experience. If not, consider using an easy program such as iWeb, www.freewebsitetemplates.com or www.wix.com. It is important to keep continuity of the website design team and keep your content up-to-date so students don't get turned off when seeing outdated information on your site.

Some ideas for content on your site include:

- Event calendars with links
- Pictures of members or school events
- ASDA membership forms with PayPal link where members can join and pay online
- Archived newsletters
- FAQs
- Links to Blackboard, Google and e-mail
- Direct members to website to print off tickets for raffles or admission to events
- Leader contact information
- Reimbursement forms and other required forms
- Event registration using Excel spreadsheets that members type into
- Test files and deadlines for on-site school events
- Link to ASDA's national site – www.ASDAnet.org
- Chapter elections through online courses website so it keeps anonymity as well as accessibility
- Advertisements from vendors or recognition of sponsors

Every year, ASDA awards chapters for their websites. You may want to look at these award-winning sites for ideas by visiting ASDA's website at www.ASDAnet.org/chaptercommunications.aspx.

Other Communication Methods

Bulletin boards are great for publicizing events, member benefits and upcoming deadlines. Obtain bulletin board space in a high traffic area and change your display frequently. Flyers of interest include upcoming local and national ASDA events, happenings from your state or local dental society and deadlines for applying for local and national ASDA leadership positions.

Class announcements should be used for recruitment purposes, to communicate new benefit information and to publicize local activities. Be sure to include information communicated in the monthly ASDA Leader and Word of Mouth e-newsletters during announcements.

Monthly meetings are an effective way of establishing communication with members. Meetings should take place at the same time and place each month. Each meeting should include reports from each leader, upcoming activities and events, important national ASDA news, information on national ASDA leadership positions and solicitation of input for House of Delegates resolutions. Ask members for local activity ideas and for their feedback on whether or not the chapter is meeting their needs.

Membership satisfaction surveys ensure that members are receiving their publications and evaluate the activities calendar of past events. Ask for suggestions for future events. This projects the image of a concerned and proactive chapter, instead of one that merely reacts to problems after they occur. The students that respond to your survey may be students you can recruit as volunteers and future leaders for your chapter. Use free tools, such as Survey Monkey, to administer surveys to your members.

E-mail is an easy way to keep in touch with your members. A quick e-mail message is an excellent way to remind members of deadlines, upcoming events and projects.

Other easy and quick ways to keep ASDA and your chapter visible include:

- Calendar with updated ASDA events in a visible location or on Google calendars
- "Restroom" newsletter with advertising/updates (captive audience)
- Elevator lobby flyers
- Table triangles with updates (student lounge)
- Rotate flyers on school TV
- In between classes, utilize projectors to display information in classrooms
- Send letters introducing ASDA to incoming first years' home address
- Use Facebook and YouTube

Plan Exciting Meeting Topics

A monthly membership theme is one way to structure membership meetings. One half hour can be devoted to ASDA business and the other half hour can be spent on the meeting theme. A sample list of meeting themes follows.

- January** *What Organized Dentistry Means to Me*
(promote ASDA's Annual Session held in March)
Speakers: ADA, local or state dental society representative
Benefit of the month: discount on Kaplan's NBDE study materials
- February** *ASDA's Legislative Agenda*
(promote the National Dental Student Lobby Day event held in April)
Speakers: ADPAC member through the ADPAC Lunch and Learn program
Benefit of the month: The Legislative Ledger e-newsletter
- March** *Preparing for Board Exams*
Speakers: faculty members and students who have taken the exams
Benefit of the month: discounts on NBDE reprints available in online store
- April** *How to Start a Successful Practice*
Speaker: ADA Success program speaker
Benefit of the month: the intangible benefits of ASDA
- May** *How to Join the ADA after Graduation*
Speakers: ADA, local or state dental society representative
Benefit of the month: ADA benefits
- August** *Introduction to ASDA for New Members*
Speaker: ASDA delegates
Benefit of the month: free life and disability insurance
- September** *Making a Difference in the Community*
Speakers: Guest speaker
Benefit of the month: student health insurance
- October** *ASDA Leadership Opportunities*
Speaker: ASDA national leaders
Benefit of the month: ASDA publications
- November** *Influencing Policy: Writing Resolutions*
Speakers: delegates to provide information on House of Delegates
Benefit of the month: The Next DDS online clinical resources
- December** *Holiday Pizza Party*
Benefit of the month: debt management services

Public Relations for ASDA Chapters

Make sure that all students at your school, not just chapter leaders, are aware of all that your ASDA chapter has done and continues to do.

- Promote the accomplishments of chapter members via bulletin boards, class announcements, chapter or school newsletters, and the chapter or school website.
- Develop a fact sheet on your chapter and place it on your membership table at each meeting and event.
- Communicate regularly with your school administration. Enlist support in helping your chapter increase its visibility.
- Sell ASDA apparel to raise funds and increase your chapter's visibility.
- Send a press release to your school on community service events that your chapter is organizing. Keep the press release brief highlighting who you are, the what and when of your event, how it helps the community, and contact information.

If your chapter already employs the communication strategies listed above, you may be ready to concentrate on your chapter's profile within local, academic and organized dentistry. Your chapter can submit articles about chapter activities to your alumni publication, community newspaper, national ASDA publications, and state and local dental society publications. Article topics can range from community dental education to pre- and post- vendor fair publicity to ASDA charity functions. Regular communication with members of the dental community can help establish and strengthen the relationship ASDA has with other groups that promote organized dentistry.