

Dylan Holder, San Francisco '27**How do you work with or lead a team?**

When I approach leading a team, I draw heavily from the many diverse groups I've worked with, ranging from small committees to large student organizations. Serving as president of multiple clubs at UCSF, along with several other prior leadership roles, has given me the chance to collaborate with teammates who have various personalities, backgrounds, and leadership styles. Observing what worked well in these settings and what could be improved helped me refine my own leadership approach by integrating the most effective elements I saw in others.

I strongly believe that being a great leader means showing up for your team because it is important to prioritize being present and available for others. Additionally, it is essential to create a space where everyone feels supported, heard, and valued. I encourage open communication with anyone I work with, set clear expectations for the team, and do what I can to navigate any possible limitations or barriers so people can do their best work. I also make it a point to check in individually with my team members and see what I can do to help foster their personal or professional growth within their roles.

Most importantly, I believe leadership is about modeling the behavior you hope to inspire in others. I try my best to lead by example, whether that means taking initiative, offering to help on various tasks, or owning mistakes. Through this approach, I strive to build teams that feel supported, motivated, and confident working toward a shared goal.

What leadership experiences have equipped you for the District Trustee role?

Over the past three years, I've developed a strong foundation in ASDA that I believe has uniquely prepared me for the District Trustee role. I first became involved as a D1 on two committees, later serving as Membership Chair during my D2 year. My time as Membership Chair instilled in me a deep understanding of membership perks, engagement strategies, and the broader impact ASDA has on students. That role sparked my passion for organized dentistry and inspired me to continue growing as a leader within ASDA.

This year, I have the privilege of serving as UCSF's Chapter President. In this role, I've gained insight into district- and national-level initiatives, while leading a board of 28 members and 24 committee members. Managing such a large and diverse leadership team has strengthened my communication, delegation, and team-building skills, ultimately giving me a comprehensive understanding of how each role contributes to ASDA's mission.

Additionally, I have served as District 12's Advocacy Director this year, providing me an invaluable exposure to district operations. Sitting in every director meeting helped me understand the responsibilities of each position and observe firsthand how trustees guide and

support their boards. Through this role, I have also strengthened my relationships with many ASDA members at other District 12 schools.

Beyond ASDA, my numerous leadership roles throughout undergrad and dental school have helped me become a confident, collaborative, and adaptable leader. Altogether, these experiences have equipped me with the knowledge, perspective, and commitment necessary to serve effectively as District Trustee.

Why are you interested in the District Trustee role and what do you hope to accomplish in this position?

I am interested in serving as District Trustee because the role would allow me to continue being involved in many aspects of ASDA that I am passionate about: facilitating collaboration between students at different schools, mentoring student leaders, and contributing to organized dentistry in a meaningful way. This position would allow me to help shape the growth and culture of District 12, which is especially exciting as this is our first year as a district and there is tremendous potential to continue building a strong, lasting foundation for years to come.

Over the past three years, my involvement in ASDA, as UCSF Chapter President, District 12 Advocacy Director, and former UCSF Membership Chair, has provided me with meaningful insight into chapter, district, and national operations. These experiences have given me the opportunity to engage with students across the district and inspired me to continue fostering collaboration on a larger scale. Collectively, these roles have deepened my appreciation for leadership within ASDA and have grown my interest in serving as District Trustee.

If elected District Trustee, I hope to continue building District 12's foundation, expand collaboration between schools, and increase engagement in advocacy, leadership, and community service. I also aim to mentor future ASDA leaders in district and national positions, helping them navigate the many avenues of ASDA involvements. Ultimately, I want to ensure District 12 becomes a model of collaboration, engagement, and leadership for students across the country.

What are 2-3 issues important to dental students?

One issue that is increasingly important to dental students is advocacy within organized dentistry. Many students and new graduates overlook involvement in dental societies and miss out on the tremendous support and resources these organizations provide to practicing dentists. I am passionate about encouraging greater involvement, ensuring that students recognize the value of engaging with local and national societies early in their careers.

Participation in organized dentistry allows students to stay informed about policy changes, legislative priorities, and professional standards that will affect their future career. By actively engaging students in advocacy, we can empower them to contribute to the profession and

address any foreseeable challenges, which will support their success both during dental school and in their future careers.

Another critical issue is the recent changes to federal student loans. These changes have created significant financial barriers for current students and threaten to limit access to dental education for future students. It is vital that we advocate for tuition affordability, support loan reform initiatives, and explore innovative solutions to reduce financial stress for students. It is imperative that we do what we can to ensure dentistry remains accessible to all students, regardless of financial status.