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How do you work with or lead a team?

In my MBA program, I was exposed to the magnet and hammer as twin pillars of effective leadership, which together have shaped my approach to leading. While hammers are leaders who rely on authority and directives to prompt immediate action, magnetic leaders employ trust to motivate others through notions of purpose and loyalty. Indeed the two are both important for a successful leader! While I understand certain circumstances and team members may respond best to a hammer, I ultimately see my leadership through the lens of the magnet.

To me, leadership is the greatest form of service to a team. As a magnet, I believe leadership is not connected to a given position, but rather how one uses the opportunities available to leave those around them better than they were found. Practically, this looks like calling out the greatest potential in everyone you work with, seeking to understand and collaborate. I believe in connection and shared common goals, a willingness to listen and field a diversity of perspectives, and the proactivity to take ownership of challenges and embrace conflict as growth opportunities.

I believe leaders must be courageous and bold enough to speak when needed, but gracious enough to recognize their voice ought not always be heard first or at all. I see myself as someone who must exist as both a challenger and comforter, and who must support and inspire my team in order for us all to thrive.

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

I am honored to have served as Student Body President at Baylor University, which has uniquely prepared me for the job of a District Trustee more than any other leadership position I have held. The responsibilities of a collegiate Student Body President are considerably demanding in that, through the one title, I both led Baylor's Student government and represented the voice of the students to Baylor's many constituencies.

At an organizational level, the office of Student Body President allowed me to practice how to spearhead a team while stewarding a \$500,000 budget. Through this, I grew in the ability to ask for help, foster clear communication with my cabinet members, and strengthen confidence despite the reality that a leader cannot always please everyone. One year later, my MBA program refined my understanding of leadership as being more than a manager of what stands before you. This degree transformed my perspective of leaders into visionaries who help reach and realize the best of the team before them.

From a larger perspective, being Student Body President afforded me a seat at the table with Baylor's President and Board of Regents, as well as other Big XII student leaders. It grew my

ability to think with longevity of institution in mind. I am confident that what I gained in these conversations will prove a valuable resource in my ability to support ASDA's direction and governance at a district and national level.

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

I am interested in District Trustee because I care about organized dentistry and believe I have the aptitudes to serve in this capacity well. I will never forget learning about ASDA for the first time ever, just hours into my first day of dental school orientation. I sat and heard from former District 9 Trustee, Loren Matrone, who shared about the family she found in ASDA which spanned across the country. She detailed stories of her impact and investment into the lives of dental students and the profession of dentistry at large, and these stories made my heart beat fast. In that moment I caught the ASDA Fever.

This role would provide me with more opportunity to represent and advocate for dental students, and to help make the benefits of organized dentistry more tangible at the student level. To serve as District Trustee would open the doors wider for me to experience the fullness of the ASDA family, growing my connection to other dentists who could serve as professional mentor figures and personal advisers.

One big desire I have for the Trustee is to continue paving the way for our new identity as District 10. I want to ensure all schools in the district feel their voice is equally heard, honored, and represented. To that end, I am eager to brainstorm how to increase membership engagement with the organization and benefits of ASDA, as well as how to help each of the auto-enroll schools seek more financial freedom and opportunity.

What are 2-3 issues important to dental students?

In today's post-pandemic world, fighting for holistic well-being while in dental school is still a top priority for ASDA. As the first doctoral student in my family, I have often had to navigate the demands of professional school without built-in guidance, especially when it comes to managing burnout, responding to unexpected academic setbacks, and setting realistic expectations in patient care. For similar students who must look beyond their immediate circles for support, creating intentional connections matters. I would like to leverage ASDA as a platform to facilitate this support by bridging students with ADA members, creating opportunities for meaningful connections that provide personal, professional, and organizational guidance while strengthening the professional networks of ASDA members.

Financial strain is certainly another significant issue important to dental students. For students carrying significant debt, which is the majority of our peers, ASDA events requiring additional travel or high registration costs often feel burdensome and inaccessible. I am grateful to have

helped vote last Annual Session to cap future ASDA registration fees and am committed to finding additional means of including more members by recognizing this financial demand. I worry that if students cannot justify the benefit of organized dentistry to themselves as a student, they will not pay dues or participate as a licensed practitioner in the future, which ultimately will dilute the success and impact of the ADA. Helping ASDA prioritize accessible conferences with several transparent scholarship opportunities and low-cost programming can help broaden participation, strengthening ASDA today and the ADA tomorrow.