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How do you work with or lead a team?

My approach to leading a team focuses on helping people become confident and self-dependent instead of relying on me for every small decision. I believe there are many ways to be an effective leader, and my style is a bit unconventional because I put so much emphasis on building others up first. I like to start by meeting individually with every team member and getting to know who they are beyond just their title. I look at their strengths, weaknesses, comfort level in their position, and what support they need from me to be successful.

Creating this foundation allows for a stable and organized system where people feel comfortable asking questions while still having independence to explore their abilities. I want them to feel trusted, not micromanaged. Through this style of leadership, I have seen teams become stronger, more confident, and more productive. Our chapter has flourished because executive team and general members feel ownership over their roles rather than simply fulfilling tasks.

Another important part of leadership for me is building genuine relationships. I value when a team becomes a group of friends who support each other, not just people sitting in positions side by side. To me, a good leader is someone who can recognize that every member is a unique puzzle piece and place those pieces in a way that allows everyone to thrive together.

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

Throughout my life I have taken on many leadership roles that have helped shape me into the leader I am today and prepared me to serve as District Trustee. In high school I served as captain of my basketball team, which taught me commitment, communication, and accountability to the people depending on me. From there I continued taking on leadership roles in different clubs throughout high school, college, and now dental school.

In dental school I have held two presidential positions in addition to serving as ASDA President this year. Each of these roles has taught me a different lesson. I have learned when it is important to push a team forward and when it is better to pause and listen. I have learned when delegation is necessary and when a leader should personally step in and handle something themselves. I have also learned how to handle conflict, motivate volunteers, and keep people engaged even during stressful academic times.

These experiences have allowed me to grow through trial and error and become more adaptable. I continually work to improve myself rather than thinking I already have everything figured out. I believe the combination of these roles has refined my leadership skills,

strengthened my ability to support others, and prepared me to confidently and responsibly serve 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 the District Trustee role because I truly feel it is the natural next step for me in my ASDA journey. I have gone from a general member, to vice president, to president, and through each of these experiences my passion for ASDA has only grown stronger. Many people at my school jokingly refer to me as “Mr. ASDA,” not just because of the positions I hold, but because of how much energy and excitement I bring to the organization. That passion started at my first NLC in my D1 year when I really understood what ASDA stood for.

I want to expand my involvement to the national level and represent the voices of students across my entire district. As District Trustee I hope to organize a strong and engaging district conference, help chapters feel more connected, and support schools that may feel less involved or represented. I want every member to feel valued, not just those already in leadership roles.

Most importantly, I hope to serve as a bridge between national ASDA and local chapters. I want to clearly communicate national goals while also making sure district needs and concerns are heard. My goal is to help elevate our district as a whole and leave it stronger than when I started.

What are 2-3 issues important to dental students?

Two of the biggest issues that I believe are important to dental students are mental health and the financial burden of dental school. Dental school is rewarding, but it can be overwhelming. Students balance long clinic hours, exams, practicals, leadership roles, and personal lives all at once. This can easily lead to burnout, stress, and feeling isolated. Many students struggle silently because they feel like they must “push through” or always appear strong. I think having open conversations, support systems, and resources that normalize asking for help is extremely important for dental students today.

Another major issue is the financial pressure of tuition and student debt. Many students including myself worry about how they will pay back loans before they even start practicing. This stress can influence career choices, pushing students away from underserved care or specialties they are passionate about simply because of finances. I myself debate between a GPR and going straight into work strictly because of the pay difference. Helping students better understand loan repayment options, financial planning, and resources available to them can make a huge difference.

A third important issue is feeling represented and supported within organized dentistry. Students want to know their voices matter and that they have a seat at the table in discussions that shape their future profession. They care about advocacy, licensure reform, and the direction dentistry is moving. Having opportunities to be involved in ASDA and organized dentistry helps students feel empowered rather than just being passengers in the process.