

Council on Advocacy 2023-24 Annual Report

Members

Chair Adam Yang, Harvard '25; Districts 1-3 Legislative Coordinator Parker Norman, Pennsylvania '25; Districts 4&5 Legislative Coordinator Jasmin Tarakmi, Nova Southeastern '24; Districts 6&7 Legislative Coordinator Tamara Kapetanovic, Louisville '24; Districts 8&9 Legislative Coordinator Maddie Diehl, Creighton '24; Districts 10&11 Legislative Coordinator Sally Zhou, San Francisco '25; District 9 Trustee Loren Matron, Texas-Houston '25; District 2 Trustee Shivam Jauhar, Buffalo '24; Vice President Judd Burns, Louisville '24; Staff Liaison Robin Pine.

Mission

The Council on Advocacy represents the interests of dental students on legislative and regulatory issues that impact the dental profession. The council launches grassroots initiatives to promote action-oriented advocacy in support of dental students and the patients they serve.

Council business

Grassroots Initiatives

- Connections with Legislative Liaisons
 - Throughout the year, council members were responsible for working with local legislative liaisons in their assigned grouping of districts. Council members held orientation calls, sent emails, and communicated with leaders to share information, answer questions, and serve as a resource.
 - ***New*** Based on feedback that webinars can sometimes be challenging to work into students' schedules, Legislative Coordinators were responsible for hosting and sharing webinar-type content with LL's throughout the year. Topics included ASDA 101 and ASDA Action 101.
 - ***New*** Based on feedback that advocacy leaders seek a platform to share ideas and connect, the council re-launched the Advocacy Leaders GroupMe. Every month, a different council member posed a question in the Group Me. This group served as a platform for advocacy leaders across the country to connect with each other, share event ideas, and ask questions.

National Initiatives

- Advocacy Month
 - Theme: "Your Future is Calling" focused on how advocacy work of today affects dental students in the future.
 - 45 ASDA chapters signed up to have the molar bear mailed to their chapter to celebrate Advocacy Month (3 more than last year).
 - Advocacy Month text challenges. Every week, we texted out different advocacy challenges for a chance to win a prize.
 - ***New*** The Council hosted a chapter advocacy haiku competition where chapters submitted a poem, and all ASDA members voted for their favorite. We received 14 chapter submissions and 379 total votes.
 - ***New*** The Council created an informational reel about the REDI Act that saw hundreds of likes, comments, and large reach across social media accounts.

- Webinar
 - ***New*** The council hosted a webinar discussing the ins and outs of licensure titled, “Your Future is Calling – and Future-You Needs a License” with two ASDA alumni, Drs. Justina Anigbo and Ryan Kaminsky.
- Advocacy Certificate Program
 - The Advocacy Certificate Program encourages and rewards members for getting involved with advocacy.
 - Participants who earn 8 or more points are emailed a PDF certificate and letter from the ASDA president.
 - Over 900 points have been submitted in this year’s program, almost double last year’s points.
 - ***New*** The Council implemented a new NLC-only weekend point to encourage attendees submit a point at the National Leadership Conference.

Legislative and Regulatory Issues

- The council determined ASDA’s support to sign onto 7 coalition letters on a variety of topics, including:
 - Thanking sponsors in the House and Senate for reintroducing the Resident Education Deferred Interest Act.
 - Endorsing the Oral Health Literacy and Awareness Act.
 - Thanking sponsors of the Strengthening Medicaid Incentives for Licensees Enrolled in Dental Act.
 - Thanking sponsors of the Dental and Optometric Care (DOC) Access Act.
 - Urging ranking members of the House to reauthorize the Action for Dental Health Act.
 - Encouraging the Health Insurance & Long-Term Care Issues Committee to adopt the medical loss ratio for dental health care service plans model act.
 - Sharing with Congress issues affecting the healthcare workforce shortage.
- In addition, the council determined ASDA’s support of the following bills to be displayed on ASDA Action:
 - H.R. 1125 / S. 469: STUDENT Act
 - H.R. 3380: HEADS UP Act
 - H.R. 1671: Increasing Access to Dental Insurance Act
 - S. 862: Restoring America’s Health Care Workforce and Readiness Act
 - H.R. 2410: VET CARE Act of 2023
 - H.R. 2559: Strengthening Community Care Act of 2023