

Council on Professional Issues 2025-26 Annual Report

Members

Dominique Vickers, Tufts '26, Chair
Benjamin Hung, Maryland '26, Associate,
Jalen Rusen, Arizona '27, Associate
Dr. Samarth Setru, Pennsylvania '25, Immediate Past President
Colby Dean, Tufts '26, Board Liaison
Miguel Ortiz Gonzalez, Meharry '26, Board Liaison
Sarah Murphy, ASDA Director of Membership, Staff Liaison

Mission

The Council on Professional Issues serves the association as a resource on community engagement, dental outreach. Additionally, the council is committed to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives among dental students.

Council business

- **Connecting with Chapter Leaders**
 - The council focused on connecting regularly with chapter and district community service leaders via a GroupMe group chat.
- **Community Builder of the Year Award**
 - The council reviewed nominations and selected a recipient for the National Community Builder of the Year Award. This award recognizes an outstanding ASDA leader dedicated to dental outreach and community service.
- **Dentistry in the Community Grant**
 - The council reviewed applications for the Dentistry in the Community Grant and selected five chapters to receive the \$500 grant. This chapter grant is intended to support ASDA chapters in coordinating a program or event that focuses on prevention of dental disease and/or promotion of oral health for any underserved population within the community.
- **Community Service Certificate Program**
 - Based on a resolution passed at the 2025 House of Delegates, the council investigated the feasibility of establishing a community service certificate program modeled after the ASDA Advocacy Certificate Program.
 - The council surveyed members to better understand the feasibility of the program as well as what members would look for in the program.
 - Based on the results of the survey, the council submitted a project proposal to the Board in January.
- **AOD Week**
 - This year, the council launched AOD (Access, Opportunity, and Diversity in Dentistry) Week in October.
 - This week included an Instagram Live session, a webinar, a video challenge highlighting Disability Awareness Month and an ASDA Action campaign for the Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act.

- **Service Month**

- The council held ASDA's third annual Service Month in January.
- The theme was Service Starts Here, and the month was supported by PDS Health.
- The council hosted a webinar on how members can make a difference in their chapters and communities during Service Month.
- Service Month offered three different levels of challenges:
 - Incisor-Level Individual Challenge: Individuals who signed up to receive information from a national or local volunteer organization were entered into a prize drawing.
 - Canine-Level Chapter Challenge: The chapter that collected the most toothbrushes won a prize donated by PDS Health.
 - Molar-Level Chapter Challenge: Chapters were encouraged to hold community service events and post about the event on Instagram to be entered in a prize drawing.