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The ADA **25<sup>th</sup>**  
New Dentist  
Conference

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**June 16-18, 2011**

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# New dentist 'hot buttons' are meant for pushing



by *Dustin Burluson, DDS*

Of all the courses offered at the ADA New Dentist Conference in San Diego this June, the keynote speaker's theme could have easily set the tone for the entire meeting. Cynthia D'Amour, an advocate for developing leaders and building stronger associations, opened the annual meeting with a message that was clear and inspiring. Its implications in the individual stories of hundreds of new dentists at the conference, while simple, enhanced our assessment of why people join organizations: What is your "hot button" and has anyone pushed it lately?

Specifically, Cynthia observes three "hot buttons" or motivating factors for new members joining organized dentistry and choosing to volunteer. First, new members

want to learn something. Second, they want to help someone. Finally, they want to have fun. Are we listening when new members attend a society meeting or ask us about organized dentistry? If we can determine the motivating forces behind their decision to join, then we can plug new members into the appropriate areas of the organization so that we may maximize their contributions.

This idea was demonstrated as both new dentists and experienced leaders in the ADA practiced effective verbal skills in a lively session with Cynthia. Quick assessment of interest by a prospective member is easy. "What brought you to the meeting today?" Now comes the hard part: listening.

Your mother was right when she reminded you that you have two ears and one mouth for a reason. We should listen twice as much as we talk. When a new member or prospective new dentist tells us what their hot button is, we should push that button time and again. So, let's practice a sample conversation with a new dentist.

*Long-time Dentist:* "What brought you to the meeting today?"

*New Dentist:* "I really need more continuing education."

*Long-time Dentist:* "Great. In which area of continuing education are you most interested?"

*New Dentist:* "I'd love to learn more about implants."

*Long-time Dentist:* "Would you like to meet the dentists who plan our educational courses? They know several experts in the field of implantology that I think you might enjoy."

How likely is this new dentist to find value in associating with organized dentistry, with this conversation serving as a springboard? Otherwise, what are the chances of this new dentist finding the same value on his or her own without an experienced member asking what the new member wants out of the organization?

Unfortunately, we tend to lead conversations and welcome new members based on our own interests and reasons for joining. We can easily miss two out of every three prospective members if we fail to focus on their hot button and instead, talk about our own. They want to learn something, they want to help someone, or they want to have fun. Finding the hot button that will bring them back to the next meeting is the first step in building active members who will work hard to ensure the continued strength of our profession.



*Dr. Dustin Burluson serves on the MDA New Dentist Committee representing Greater Kansas City. He maintains a private orthodontics practice in Kansas City and is a 2004 graduate of the UMKC School of Dentistry and in 2006 completed his residency in Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics at UMKC. Contact him at 816-741-5311 or burlusondds@mac.com.*

## new members ✧

THE MDA WELCOMES THESE NEW MEMBERS SINCE JULY 12:

**GREATER ST. LOUIS** | *Christy Hager, St. Louis (UMKC 05); Evelyn Ofili, St. Louis (Univ of Pennsylvania 99); John Monaco, St. Louis (UMKC 84); Kirk Washington, St. Louis (Meharry Medical College 94); Michael Barbick, St. Louis (Univ of Florida 03); QuaNeedria Logan, St. Louis (UMKC 08)*

**GREATER KANSAS CITY** | *Emily Day, Olathe, Kan. (UMKC 02); Jared Gerhardt, Kansas City (UMKC 08); Pamela Yu, Kansas City (UMKC 09)*

**GREATER SPRINGFIELD** | *Melanie Albers, Springfield (Univ of Nebraska Medical Center 02)*

**CENTRAL** | *Samuel Barnhart, Westphalia (UMKC 09)*

## deceased members ✧

THE FOLLOWING IS A NECROLOGY OF MDA MEMBERS SINCE JULY 12:

**GREATER ST. LOUIS** | *Dr. Williams S. Carter, St. Louis (Washington Univ 45) passed June 14, 2010; Dr. Calvin H. Weiss (St. Louis Univ 46) passed June 30, 2010*

**CENTRAL** | *Dr. Erzell L. Miller, Columbia (University of Kansas City 46) passed June 14, 2010*

## membership stats ✧

AS OF JUNE 30, 2010 MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

- 2,143 TOTAL
- 1,589 ACTIVE
- 28 RETIRED
- 183 ACTIVE LIFE
- 343 RETIRED LIFE
- OF TOTAL, 39 WERE NEW MEMBERS

*This brings the MDA Membership Market Share to 73.4 percent of licensed dentists in Missouri.*

*Special thanks to components and individual members working hard to decrease non-renew numbers (for this time period, non-renews have been reduced by 22 and new members have increased by five). We hope to see many more new members in July as we have several applications pending as well as recruitment mailings recently sent out by GSLDS and MDA.*

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO INVITE A DENTIST TO MEMBERSHIP AND NEED ASSISTANCE OR SUPPORTING MATERIALS, PLEASE CONTACT MANDY AT THE MDA.