

8th District Bulletin

Volume 60 | Number 2 | Summer 2024

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8th District BULLETIN

Eighth District Dental Society of the State of New York

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The Dental Society is organized for the purpose of encouraging improvement of the health of the public, to promote the art and science of dentistry, and to represent the interests of the members of the profession and the public which it serves.

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FROM THE EDITOR

In 2003, Dr. Sherry Albert, then editor of the New York State Dental Journal, retired after a distinguished career as its editor. The New York State Dental Association advertised for a new editor to replace the retiring editor. Since I had been editor of our bulletin from 1989 to 2001, and an associate editor since 2002, I thought



it would be a great idea to apply. There were at least six other candidates, if I remember correctly, so the competition was stiff.

I traveled to Albany for an interview. It was a difficult interview and I thought I blew it. Several days later, I received a call from Albany with the news I had not been selected as the editor. However, I was the second choice and NYSDA decided to create an associate editor's position to work under the editor. The editor NYSDA chose was Dr. Elliott Moskowitz. Elliott would be the editor for five years, after which he would turn the reins of the editorship to me. This was also something new at NYSDA.

Continued on Page 3

FROM THE EDITOR

Continued from Page 2

Historically, the editor of the NYSDJ was not term limited. The editors served until they wanted to retire from this duty.

Over those five years, Elliott and I grew very close. He was my mentor at the Journal and taught me at so much about being an editor. I thought I knew a lot about being an editor, having been one for so many years previously. I found out I didn't know what I didn't know. And that was a lot. But Elliott was patient with me and guided me so I could take over when he retired from the position. Elliott served as the Journal's editor from January 2004 to December 2008 when he was term-limited out. I took over in January 2009.

I served as the Journal's editor until December 2016, when I handed the duties over the Dr. Chet Gary. It was a terrific eight years as editor. I enjoyed every minute of it. But I did realize what Elliott must have felt when I followed him as editor. It is a bittersweet moment. You look back at everything you were able to accomplish but think about all you didn't. I understand the need for term limits, but when they become personal, it's a little hard to take.

However, this did not end my friendship with Elliott. We were both members of the American Association of Dental Editors and Journalists, so we would get together every year at the ADA meeting when the AADEJ would holds its annual meeting as well. Elliott was always positive during these meetings and we would always go out to dinner together. Elliott always treated. I tried to pick up the check many times but he always said no. He was a very caring and generous person. His generosity was so great, the Orthodontic Clinic at NYU is named the Dr. Elliott M. Moskowitz Orthodontic Wing in recognition of the \$1.2 million donation he made to the Orthodontic Department at NYU College of Dentistry in 2012. This donation allowed the Department of Orthodontics to upgrade their clinic and bring it into the 21st century.

Elliott passed away on March 25 this year. His loss to the orthodontic profession is great. He was well respected in the orthodontic community, well published, and ended his career as editor of Seminars in Orthodontics, a quarterly orthodontic journal. My personal loss is great. I heard about Elliott's passing when Mary Stoll, the managing editor of the NYSDJ, emailed me with the sad news. Mary is another close friend I made when I was editor of the Journal, and she is the best. Just ask Dr. Gary.

Thank you, Elliott, for everything you did for me. Know you have touched many lives in a positive way. I will miss you very much. Safe travels and I will see you on the other side. But not for a long time, I hope!

NEW MEMBERS

Dr. Melissa Fallon	Dr. Gabrielle Leo
Dr. Ye Lin	Dr. Samargandi Azhar
Dr. Ariyan Ravangard	Dr. Melissa Balk-Elliott
Dr. Amanda Torsney	Dr. Andrew Hietanen
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Colleagues,

As the seasons change and spring emerges from winter, we look forward to nature's new beginning. Warmer temperatures have us all looking towards the future with hopefulness and anticipation.

Before we begin with what is new, I would like to thank Dr. Craig, Kari and Dana for all the hard work organizing the Presidents Reception which began our year. Along with our host Dr. Jim Hoddick and our generous sponsors they put together a wonderful evening.



In March we held our all-day continuing education program, but with a new twist. With the generous funding from the Metropolitan Study Club forwarded to us through the efforts of Dr. Marshall Fagin, we inaugurated the First Annual Marshall Fagin Lecture. We are very grateful to Dr. Fagin for his steadfast support.

With all that is new this spring, the City of Buffalo is getting a new water fluoridation system. The latest update from the Water Department states that the installation is proceeding on schedule and full implementation is expected at the end of summer. We have been fighting for this for a long time and are pleased that Buffalo will finally have the health benefits of Fluoridated water again.

Another new change this spring brings a change to the bylaws of the Eighth District Foundation Bylaws which adds the At-large councilors of the Eighth District Executive Council to the Foundation Council and allows for the meetings of the two groups to be combined into one meeting. These changes strengthen the Foundation Board and allow for more efficient use of meetings. Our May meeting will be the first with the combined agenda, hopefully with a smooth integration of the two groups.

Moving forward the members of the Executive Council are preparing for the NYSDA House of Delegates meeting in May at Turning Stone Casino. We will be forwarding a resolution asking the ADA to work at the national level to put together an informational video program to educate young people about the opportunities in the fields of Dental Hygiene, Dental Assisting and Dental Laboratory Technology. We hope that this effort will aid the profession with the shortage of qualified workforce shortages.

We also look forward to our annual Golf Tournament and CE program which will be held at Diamond Hawk Golf Course in June. Please come join us for a day of education and fun.

Yours in partnership,

Bob

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Dr. Shawn F. Jordan, DDS, MS; Dr. Mariel Webber, DDS and Dr. Cynthia Czaperacker, DDS, MS of Apex Endodontics in Tonawanda, NY

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTE

By John D. Craig, PhD

As we head into the summer, there are a host of things that are happening within our tripartite organization and local society. Here are the ones we need to keep an eye on, in my view:

ADA Membership Model – Starting in 2025, the ADA will partner with five pilot states to test case new membership ideas. In theory, it appears to be a more “menu driven” model with tiered levels of support and benefits depending on your level, experience or years as a member, so to speak. New Dentists, Life Member, and a mid-level designation theme will determine what base membership dues will look like, as well as a series of specific driven services targeting within those tiers. While tier level programs have been around for decades in dues-based member systems, how this one plays out will be critical for keeping and mentoring new dentists to join in and providing consistent & important values to all members.

Transition of New Digital Platforms – Our EDDS website is supported by an ADA platform called Sitefinity and is transitioning to a newer platform to support the upcoming Fontiva/Salesforce member database that is replacing Aptify. The change is necessary for a variety of reasons, but carries a shift in how work is done and membership outreach is supported. The digital shift is becoming more critical in supporting new models of communication and engagement. The ADA App, launched almost two-years ago, was the start of the trend to uptick our digital footprint for members.

New Dentist Engagement in Membership and Programming – Each state of the tripartite has or will experience the “cliff” in the membership cycle. Some states have already experienced that cliff and are attracting or hoping to attract new and younger members to join and stay active to keep their Society viable. New York State, and more importantly, our District will be approaching that cliff by 2028-29, when many of our life members will be retired and perhaps not as actively engaged in programming or services. The theme “celebrating our past, while embracing our future” is critical.

Social Events vs Continuing Education Workshops/Seminars – Since the pandemic, programs of outreach in terms of in-person CE or engagement events are significantly down in terms of participation levels. Prior to the pandemic, on average we would host 28-30 programs a year, and impact 700-825 members. Last year, even after the post-pandemic start-up was well underway, our annual impact is only 60-65% of those totals. This change in terms of support and non-dues revenue generation impacts our fiscal bottom line.

Endorsement Support and Sponsorship – Membership organizations have long been impacted by sponsorships and the endorsement of products and services. That funding can be the life blood in the ability to continue to support events and programming. While the number of local endorsed products is relatively down to one major entity in our Society, it remains our most profitable model for the last 20+ years. Fortress, through Walsh Duffield, has provided this District with the ability to keep membership costs unchanged for 15-20 years, while allowing to us expand and maintain services. If you are not using Fortress for malpractice insurance support, but can, I highly encourage you to consider a change. We realize not all practicing members can make this change because of your employer's malpractice coverage for operations. But, if you are able to, you should seriously consider it.

If you have question, concerns or issues to resolve, and we can help, we are here to assist you and your staff. Contact me at jcraig@8ddsny.org or call 716-995-6300.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Our thanks to Dr. Michael Ragan, as well as Fortress Insurance, for taking time to support our members and UB Dental students last month here in Buffalo!

We have had Dr. Ragan come in from Florida the last several years to present Patient Safety and Risk Management for the Dental Practice to our members and their staff. Those who complete the lecture are able to identify common dental malpractice risks, understand how to adapt office policies and procedures to mitigate exposure to identified risks in the practice, as well as implement strategies with professional teams and referral networks to encourage patient safety and reduce risk. Current Fortress policy holders will also earn a 10% premium credit for the next three policy periods.

Special thanks also goes out to Christine Garvelli at Walsh Duffield Insurance for her continued support of this program.



ADA SIGN-UP DAY & CLASS YEARBOOK HANDOUT

The Eighth District, along with the New York State Dental Association and the American Dental Association, made their way over to The Steer Restaurant in Buffalo to allow UB Dental School graduates a chance to collect their yearbooks and transfer their ASDA membership over to an ADA membership during "Sign-Up Day".

We want to ensure dental graduates have the vital resources available to them, and the ADA offers 18 months of membership at no cost! The remainder of 2024 and the entire calendar year for 2025 is complimentary to each of them while they are in a residency in NYS.





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Risk Management Insights

Cannabis Use in the Dental Setting

By: Julie Goldberg, DDS - Education Program Developer

The medical and recreational use of cannabis has been increasing in recent years, due in part to its potential benefits of pain and anxiety control and the changing legal landscape. Cannabis use, however, may introduce the potential for adverse physiologic effects, evidenced in the oral environment; but also on the neurological, respiratory, and cardiovascular systems. While this is an evolving topic, it's important that providers understand cannabis related risks that typically present in an outpatient setting, regardless of patient disclosure, and consider mitigation strategies to reduce these risks.

Patient Safety Risks of Cannabis Use

One of the primary risks associated with cannabis use is impaired cognition. Consider a scenario in which a patient presents for consultation and office staff note that the patient has disclosed recent marijuana use. If the doctor proceeds with assessment and an informed consent discussion, it could be alleged that the consent was invalid, given the patient's altered state of mind and inability to comprehend the information being delivered.

In this situation, the doctor might instead consider rescheduling the patient for a time at which they are no longer under the influence. Informing the patient of the intent of the informed consent discussion and reason for rescheduling will assist in educating the patient and may encourage them to be compliant with recommendations to abstain from cannabis use prior to the next appointment. These same recommendations apply to situations where patients may not disclose cannabis use, but it is suspected.

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Cannabis use may affect the cardiovascular system and result in tachycardia.^{iv} A patient who presents with an increased heart rate may make the use of epinephrine in local anesthetics potentially life threatening.^{iv} Educating a patient who uses cannabis about these potential life-threatening risks and how an anesthetic plan will be affected may encourage patients to comply with recommendations to avoid use prior to treatment.

There is conflicting evidence related to how cannabis may affect the body's immune system.^{iii, vi, vii}



Cannabis Use in the Dental Setting

While additional studies continue to be conducted, doctors will want to consider how a patient's cannabis use may affect postoperative healing. Patients who have recently used cannabis may require additional postoperative care to manage these risks, such as increased monitoring for signs of infection. A complete patient assessment ahead of treatment planning can assist in revealing cannabis use and frequency of use. If, after this assessment, the doctor has concerns that a patient's cannabis use may affect healing, conversations related to how cannabis use can affect outcomes may help to set patient expectations.

As it relates to postoperative pain management, there is emerging evidence that chronic cannabis use may be associated with increased opioid use.^{viii, ix} Providers will want to consider this information when planning for postoperative pain control and educate the chronic cannabis user about what can be safely prescribed.

Sedation Considerations

Potentially severe adverse events may occur when patients present for surgery under advanced anesthesia while under the influence of cannabis. Some patients may believe that marijuana will calm their nerves before surgery. Others may simply be hesitant to disclose cannabis use and may not understand that nondisclosure may increase risk during surgery.

Whether you are an advanced anesthetic provider or refer to a specialist who provides advanced anesthesia, developing a preoperative drug use policy and patient education protocol can help patients better understand how cannabis may affect these anesthetic agents. It may also set expectations that changes to the anesthesia plan may be necessary, given patient disclosure or suspected use of cannabis. While limited research is currently available to support when patients might be directed to refrain from cannabis use prior to a procedure, educating patients about the effects and risks may help them understand the importance of complying with preoperative drug use policies.

The following are some topics you may wish to discuss with patients:

- Marijuana may potentiate the CNS depressant effects of other anesthetic agents.^x
- Atypical reactions to medications may occur as a result of residual marijuana related intoxication.^{xi}
- A more reactive airway can be expected in a regular user of inhaled marijuana.^{xii}
- Drugs which cause an increased heart rate, some of which may be utilized during treatment, will be potentiated by marijuana.^{iv}

If, after your preoperative education, a patient reports or is suspected to be under the influence of cannabis, consider alternatives or deferring treatment until the patient is able to comply with policies related to preoperative drug use. Remember that any change to the planned treatment or anesthesia may require a change to the informed consent, and reconsenting this patient while under the influence may lead to allegations of improper informed consent.



Cannabis Use in the Dental Setting

Risk Management Strategies

Research related to cannabis use and its associated physiological effects is evolving. Acknowledging the possibility that more patients will use cannabis before appointments and procedures can help you implement risk-reduction strategies in your practice. These strategies include:

- Keeping up to date with evolving research
- Carefully assessing patients for signs of intoxication through visual or olfactory observations as well as utilization of a thorough health history form that includes specific questions related to cannabis, marijuana or vaping use. You can download a comprehensive Health History form at dds4dds.com
- Developing an preoperative drug use policy
- Educating patients about the potential effects on treatment, anesthesia, and their safety
- Delaying informed consent discussions to a time at which the patient can reliably consent to treatment
- Rescheduling treatment when indicated
- Considering alternatives to advanced anesthesia for those patients under the influence of cannabis (Remember that any change to the planned treatment or anesthesia may require an updated informed consent)
- Documenting all patient conversations related to cannabis use to support your defense in the event of a claim or lawsuit

i <https://www.ada.org/resources/research/science-and-research-institute/oral-health-topics/cannabis-oral-health-effects>

ii Flisberg et al. Eur J Anaesth.2009;26:192

iii Clarke et al. Reg Anesth Pain Med. 2020; 45(7): 524

iv Echeverria-Villalobos et al. J Clin Anesth. 2019;57:41

v Keboa MT, Enriquez N, Martel M, Nicolau B, Macdonald ME. Oral Health Implications of Cannabis Smoking: A Rapid Evidence Review. JGIM. 2020;35(6):e22.

vi Cabral G.A., Rogers T.J., Lichtman A.H. Turning over a New Leaf: Cannabinoid and Endocannabinoid Modulation of Immune Function. J. Neuroimmune Pharmacol. 2015;10:193–203. doi: 10.1007/s11481-015-9615-z.

vii Maggiorini SB, Khalsa JH. The Link between Cannabis Use, Immune System, and Viral Infections. Viruses. 2021 Jun 9;13(6):1099. doi: 10.3390/v13061099. PMID: 34207524; PMCID: PMC8229290.

viii Ebbert JO, Scharf EL, Hurt RT. Medical Cannabis. Mayo Clin Proc. Dec 2018;93(12):1842-1847.

ix Horvath et al. AANA J. 2019;87(6): 451

x Alexander JC, Joshi GP. A review of the anesthetic implications of marijuana use. Proc (Bayl Univ Med Cent). 2019 May 21;32(3):364-371. doi: 10.1080/08998280.2019.1603034. PMID: 31384188; PMCID: PMC6650211.

xi <https://www.aaoms.org/practice-resources/aaoms-advocacy-and-position-statements/clinical-resources>

xii Imasogie et al. PLoS ONE.2021;16(3):e0248062.

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DR. MARSHALL FAGIN SPRING LECTURE

The first Dr. Marshall Fagin Spring Lecture took place in March at Salvatore's. More than 45 in attendance listened to Dr. Tim Bizga present "Diamonds & Pearls Are A Practice's Best Friend" in the morning, and "Embrace The Change" in the afternoon.

As always, we want to thank our vendors who make these all-day seminars possible:

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ADVOCACY DAY

On March 19-20, Dr. Ray Miller and Dr. Brendan Dowd traveled to Albany to participate in NYSDA Advocacy Day as representatives of the EDDS. They were joined by sponsors Matthew Feldman, Esq. and Al Anthony Mercado, Esq., partners at Feldman Kieffer, LLP, longtime supporters of the Eighth District and NYSDA.

Dr. Dowd and Dr. Miller spoke to legislators about key topics impacting district members including Medicaid reimbursement rates, non-covered services, and medical loss ratio. NYSDA Advocacy Day provides key opportunities to advance dentistry in New York State through education, advocacy, and meetings with legislators and other stakeholders.





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A LETTER FROM THE ADA TRUSTEE TO NYSDA COMPONENTS

It's hard to believe we are in the spring season of the 2024 year already. Besides a couple of interesting snow episodes around the country, it ended up being a mild winter. I hope everyone made it through relatively unscathed as we approach the warmer weather. My best to all of you and your families.

The ADA is hard at work as we speak. The year 2024 has been termed the "implementation" year due to all the changes that are being incorporated. Year 2025 has been labeled the "growth" year because of the anticipation of seeing the benefits from the previous three years of agreed upon changes at the American Dental Association.



The new operational platform, Sales Force/Fonteva, will go live July 7th, 2024. There has been an extensive amount of testing over the past year by the ADA IT team to prepare the organization for the new system and its applications. Specific training has begun in April and will continue as the system is implemented. As you know, this will replace our current association management system, Aptify, and will be used in support of the entire tripartite. The Customer Relations portion of the system will help us improve specialized communication with each of our members. Instead of generalized, mass emails to all members at periodic, pre-ordained intervals, this system will target each member with specific interests to that member. In other words, help our members succeed, instead of annoying them. I am very excited we are replacing the outdated Aptify system with Salesforce/Fonteva. All our members will start seeing the benefits of this exceptional operational platform by the end of the summer.

The new Membership Pilot Program had the finishing touches put on it at the end of March. Currently, there are five states participating in the pilot beginning in January 2025. The program is looking toward potentially incentivizing and customizing membership to facilitate joining and keeping monthly payments to continue ongoing membership. Times have changed in membership financial protocols and the ADA needs to change with them. Discussions will take place at the ADA House of Delegate meeting in October of 2025 after information and data has been collected from the pilot program.

ADA Dentist and Student Lobby Day took place in Washington, DC from April 7th through April 9th. A new attendance record, which included approximately 335 dentists and over 700 students, gathered at the Capitol to explain the positions the dental profession feel is critical to take care of our patients the best way possible. Issues including the Dental and Optometric Care Access Act, specific student debt issues and particular workforce items, including reauthorizing the Action for Dental Health Act of 2023, were discussed in congressional offices to stress the oral health and overall health of the citizens of America. Thank you to all the dentists and students who attended this very important event. Please make sure you share this information with our fellow colleagues and students who were unable to participate. The more information that is transferred, the more knowledgeable all of us are on the critical issues dentistry faces today.

I am thrilled to announce the ADA will be expanding its footprint in the financial ancillary services area. It has

Continued on Page 17

been decided to take part in the credit union arena. The ADA already participates in other financial services for members, including different forms of disability and life insurance plans, but this will be our first venture with a credit union. This will give our members a chance to borrow funds from a pooled source of deposits at a lower interest rate. The goal is to offer a package by the middle of 2025. Stay tuned for further details. This is a great example of your ADA hard at work and thinking outside the box to offer tangible benefits for our members.

As many of you know, there has been several different states around the country working on Medical Loss Ratio legislation, specifically tied to dental insurance. Because of laws implemented through the Affordable Care Act, all medical insurance companies are required to spend a certain percentage of their premiums on patient care and quality measures. This is not true with dental insurances for dental services. Massachusetts set the bar at the end of 2022 with establishing a Dental Loss Ratio of 83% through a state ballot initiative. Since then, state societies have been working to achieve similar results.

A large percentage of states do not offer ballot initiatives, and legislation is the only pathway. Concurrently, ballot efforts are extremely expensive. In November of 2023, the ADA agreed to a National Coalition of Insurance Legislators (NCOIL) initiative with the National Association of Dental Providers (NADP). The model included public transparency of dental insurance company financials, setting of a specific DLR being placed on dental plans that are repeatedly below one standard deviation below the average of all the plans in the state, and a rebate to patients when the dental insurers have DLRs below what has been set for them.

That percentage will be calculated from existing DLRs of current dental insurance companies in each state. This model can be used as a starting point for negotiations within each state. The New York State Dental Association is currently supporting sponsored legislation in the state legislature promoting all the aforementioned initiatives with a DLR of 82%. Both of our sponsors, Senator Neil Breslin and Assemblyman David Weprin, are chairs of their perspective NYS insurance committees and members of the executive committee of NCOIL.

I wish all of you a pleasant summer season and I will be in touch with another installment of the Trustees' Corner at the end of September.

Sincerely, Brendan

Brendan Dowd DDS
ADA Trustee, Second District



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE 2024

Monday, June 17
Golf Outing & CE
8am, Diamond Hawk GC

Wednesday, June 19
Juneteenth Holiday
Office Closed

Saturday, June 22
Shred Day
10am, Eighth District Office

JULY 2024

Thursday, July 4
Independence Day
Office Closed

June 14 - 16
ADA Summer Conference
Chicago

AUGUST 2024

Monday, August 5
Basic Life Support
5pm. Eighth District Office

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Alyssa Tzelzo, DDS '20, MPH '21
Alumni Speaker Series



David R. Rice, DDS '94
Alumni Speaker Series



Juan F. Yepes, DDS, MD, MPH, MS, DrPH



Julie Varney, CDA, RDA, CDIPC



Bruce McFarlane, DMD, BScD, MCID, FRCD(C), DipABO



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EDDS PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION

The Buffalo Club was the setting for the annual President's Reception held on Saturday, January 27, 2024. The installment of our leadership group for the coming year were sworn in. Society President for 2024, Dr. Robert A. Bochiechio took the oath of office, along with his fellow officers, Dr. Joseph Rumfola, President-Elect, Dr. Michael Ehlers, Vice-President, Dr. Jennifer Frustino, Secretary, and Dr. Joseph Modica, Treasurer.

Dr. Bochiechio gave a short address on his points of focus for the coming year by sharing with each participant a small bag of M&M chocolates. The letters M&M signified his work this year would center on Membership and Mentorship.

He discussed the importance of maintaining both a consistent and committed membership coupled with the need to attract younger dental professionals into the membership fold. While the District retention and renewal rates are in the 90th percentile, he knows that our membership consists of many members who are transitioning into Life status each year. We need to create synergy between senior members and new dentists.

Dr. James Hoddick presided as Master of Ceremonies, and Lifetime Achievement awards were presented to Dr. Frank Barnashuk and Dr. Robert Herzog for their respective work in the tripartite and member wellbeing.

In addition, 21 members reached Life Member status and awards were presented to those in attendance to include our new President.





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Dr. John Vona

March 2024

Nominations Notice – For All Members

The Eighth District Dental Society Executive Council and Nominations Committee are reporting the following nominations for these positions for 2024 & 2025 program year:

- Chair, CDEL Committee: Term starts in June 2024 – Dr. Nicole Hinchy
- ADA representative: Dr. Joseph Craddock, Dr. Michael Ehlers, and Dr. Nicole Hinchy
- At-Large: Dr. Jacob Graca, Dr. Erica Hartman, Dr. Jenna McCune and Dr. Onalee Sortino

If there are any objections or other nominations for consideration, please contact Dr. Joshua Hutter, Chair – Nominations Committee at jhutter@thechautauquacenter.org. If there are no additional submissions, these names and candidates will be brought forward at the next Business meeting being held on Monday, June 17th and the annual golf outing for adoption and passage.

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