

REPORT TO THE NEW YORK STATE DENTAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES 2026

American Dental Association Council on Membership

June 5, 2026

The Council on Membership met in person on March 20-21, 2026 at the ADA Headquarters in Chicago and will hold the next meeting virtually on June 25, 2026. Two additional meetings were held virtually on April 8, 2026 and April 22, 2026.

Trustee Liaison Remarks: Dr. Jonathan Knapp (First District) announced the appointment of Dr. Nader Nadershahi as the new ADA Executive Director and provided a financial update, noting an approximate \$4 million budget deficit being actively managed. He reported the Salesforce/Fonteva AMS transition is stabilizing and provided updates on the governance study and the early traction of the ADA Credit Union.

Executive Director Remarks: Dr. Nadershahi addressed the Council virtually, emphasizing clarity of roles, building trust across the tripartite, and his commitment to listening and accountability.

Affiliate Services & Membership Update: Ms. Michele Reeder outlined the team's strategic priorities: stabilizing membership and market share, strengthening tripartite operations, and improving data quality. She described ongoing efforts to align the faculty dues reduction pilot, the Membership Engagement Model, and the Resolution 215 and 225 work as complementary pillars within the broader membership strategy. The Faculty Pilot Program is in its second year. Full time faculty (16 hours) are eligible for 50% off their ADA dues. She also provided an update on the restructuring of the Membership Operations team to better support the tripartite.

Group Practice Membership Model: Staff presented a detailed 3-year pilot proposal to enroll large group practices, offering enterprise-level benefits, a dedicated ADA account executive, and continuity of individual tripartite membership. Following discussion at the Council meeting in March and the Executive Director Town Hall on April 8 2026, the Council voted to propose this Pilot program to the ADA Board of Trustees.

Early Career Membership Model (ADA HOD Resolution 215): Drs. Edmund March, along with staff, presented survey findings from nearly 1,800 early career dentists identifying job search, practice adjustment and finances as top challenges. The Subcommittee recommended returning to the previous graduated dues model. However, after the Town Hall and Council meeting on April 22, 2026, the Council discussed a new tiered model recommended by Illinois: 4-Year Flat 25% Rate + 3-Step Model in years 5, 6 and 7 followed by 100% dues in year 8 (25%-25%-25%-25%-50%-75%-100%). This tiered model was voted upon and was sent to the Board of Trustees for review as a Pilot program.

Leadership Development (ADA HOD Resolution 225): Dr Noha Nour (Vice Chair) presented the Subcommittee's recommended framework for a tiered leadership pathway to address Resolution 225. The proposed model features three tiers: a short immersive entry-level experience (Tier 1, potentially aligned with Elevate), a mid-level program, and an intensive Tier 3 cohort program with mentorship and alumni networking. Staff will develop cost models and a joint report with the New Dentist Committee.

State & Local Engagement- ARC Grants & Member Champions: Dr. Eric Childs reported 148 ARC Grant applications were received requesting over \$807,000 against the \$250,000 allotted budget. Approximately 80 dental societies were awarded funding, prioritizing early career dentists and faculty events at the local level. Member Champions is currently being re-evaluated for its role given the evolving leadership pathway work, with plans to reinvigorate the program going forward.

Dental School Institutional Membership Model: Dr. Craig McKenzie presented stakeholder research and the workgroup’s three-track approach: repackaging existing ADA resources, identifying a “golden handcuff” institutional benefit (such as a credentialing/licensure portal), and increasing faculty engagement. Summer stakeholder testing with deans is planned, with a Board submission target of Q1 2027 for implementation in the 2028 dues year. The offering is intentionally positioned as complementary to, not duplicative of ADEA.

Strategic Forecasting Goals: Proposed modifications to the existing SFC goals were discussed, including replacing the Gen Z-specific 70% market share target with a broader goal of reaching 55% overall market share by 2030 (from the current 51.7%) and refining tripartite goals to better reflect what the ADA can directly influence. Formal revisions will be developed in collaboration with the New Dentist Committee and Council on Communications for a future vote.

Collaborative Workgroup Updates:

- Dr. Mehrdad Safavian provided an update from the Member Value Marketing workgroup, a joint effort with the Council on Communications, highlighting the pre-launch of an “ADA Wins” communications initiative and a 2025-member value marketing calendar.
- Dr. Jillian Stacey reported on the Student-to-Dentist (S2D) Subcommittee’s work, including the “Level Up” campaign launching after 2026 National Signing Day, a content audit across national/state/local levels, and efforts to simplify and consolidate resources for early career dentist.
- Dr. Joy Nisnisan reported on the Elevate Task Force’s conclusion that a 2027 Elevate Leadership Conference is not feasible, with focus shifting to a 2028 reimagined event in coordination with resolution 225 work.

New Dentist Committee (NDC) Update: Dr. Joy Nisnisan reported on NDC activities including the 10 under 10 nomination cycle (nominations closed March 16) collaboration with Council on Membership on the Elevate/leadership pathway, and active involvement in the ADA Credit Union task force. NDC also supports ADA Fluoride Ambassadors, Lobby Day, and ASDA leadership events.

ASDA Consultant Report: Mr. Darius Warner reported ASDA membership of 23,729 across 76 chapters, with 53 chapters auto-enrolled. He highlighted the upcoming Legislative Action Week (April 13-17) focused on student debt, fluoride, and barriers to care, and the launch of ASDA’s inaugural Council on Wellness for the 2026-27 leadership year. Two new dental schools are set to open in 2026.

ADA Foundation Update: Dr Rita Cammarata presented a reimagining of the ADA Foundation, highlighting its suite of programs (Give Kids a Smile, Give Veterans a Smile, Tiny Smiles), a newly established Disaster Relief Fund, and a \$500,000 educational scholarship gift from Dr. Gary Oyster of North Carolina. The Foundation will award at least two \$5,000 scholarships to dental students in NC in 2026, with the full scholarship program opening to all dental students in 2027.

Respectfully submitted,
Claudia Mahon-Vazquez, DDS
Momdds4@aol.com
Member: ADA Council on Membership