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Submitted By:	Dr. Prabha Krishnan, President			
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Report of the President

Good afternoon, colleagues, members of the House of Delegates, friends, and family. A warm welcome to our annual meeting.

As I stand before you today to deliver my final report as President, I do so with deep gratitude and pride. Serving in this role has been one of the greatest honors of my professional life, and I am incredibly thankful for the trust and support you have given me throughout this journey.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the members of our Board for their dedication, guidance, and collaboration over the past year. Your wisdom and commitment to the advancement of our profession have been a steady compass as we've navigated both opportunities and challenges. I also wish to express my sincere appreciation to our Executive Director, Mr. Michael Herrmann, and the exceptional NYSDA staff, whose tireless work behind the scenes makes everything we do possible. Your professionalism and passion never go unnoticed.

Wow — it has been a whole year. It seems like it was just yesterday when I gave my acceptance speech and stated my goals of collaboration, advocacy, leadership development, and wellness. As I reflect on those priorities now, I am proud of the progress we've made and the foundation we've built for the future.

Since last fall's ADA House of Delegates meeting, NYSDA leadership has remained engaged in key conversations affecting our profession. Notably, we met on two occasions with the Association representing New York State's dental schools to discuss recent ADA policy resolutions that would permit dental students and foreign-trained dentists to obtain dental hygiene licenses as a measure to alleviate the ongoing shortage of dental hygienists. We informed them that, while these resolutions are now ADA policy, NYSDA leadership has not yet taken an official position. This matter is slated for consideration in 2025. We also met with the New York State Dental Hygiene Association to listen to their viewpoints.

In tandem, we have initiated important discussions with the New York State Education Department on topics related to dental training and licensure. These discussions, which included our spring leadership meetings, represent a growing dialogue with the Department, and we look forward to continuing this collaboration under the guidance of their new Executive Secretary to the State Board of Dentistry.

In 2025, we modified our advocacy strategy by moving from one large-scale event to a series of smaller, more focused legislative engagements. I had the opportunity to attend all three of our in-person lobby days, which allowed for meaningful conversations with legislators on a range of issues affecting dentistry,

including workforce shortages and insurance reform, to name a few. Additionally, our Government Affairs Director is convening a summit on expediting licensure for foreign-trained dentists with NYSDA leaders, key state legislators, Education Department officials, and other stakeholders committed to improving access to licensure pathways. This year, in March, NYSDA leadership also participated in the ADA advocacy efforts which were focused on the Dental & Optometric Care Access Act and the REDI Act to help medical and dental residents qualify for an interest-free deferment on their federal student loans until after their residency is completed.

Understanding the growing influence of Dental Support Organizations (DSOs), we reached out to several of them earlier this year. Several smaller DSOs accepted our invitation and met with the Board. These meetings opened a constructive dialogue about how the tripartite dental associations can better serve dentists affiliated with DSOs.

On a national level, the ADA recently launched its new Leadership Academy, which included subscriptions to the Dale Carnegie Leadership Program. NYSDA was able to enroll approximately a dozen of our emerging leaders into this online program. We believe this investment in leadership development will yield long-term benefits for our organization.

This year also marked the launch of NYSDA's Member EAP Wellness Program. I cannot stress enough the importance of self-care to be able to provide quality care for our patients. While awareness of this resource is still growing, we have promoted it through multiple email campaigns and online posts. I encourage all leaders here today to explore the wellness services available—both for yourselves and for your families.

The topic of Public Water Fluoridation has been in the spotlight recently, especially in light of the change in the federal administration. While two states have taken action to ban fluoride in public water systems, we have seen no such movement in New York. NYSDA remains in contact with the New York State Department of Health, and we stand ready to assist any of our component societies should fluoridation become a local issue in their communities.

As you know, last fall, NYSDA formed its own Political Action Committee to help support legislators who are interested in advancing dental issues in New York State. The NYSDA Board of Trustees serve as the initial board members of this new PAC, but moving forward, Trustees may nominate other leaders from their component to serve in their place. In that way, we can utilize leaders with past governmental affairs experience within the NYSDA umbrella.

This PAC is bipartisan. It is not about left or right, it is about right and wrong for dentistry, for public health, and for the patients who depend on us every single day. We are here to inform, to influence, and to invest in candidates and policies that understand our work and value what we bring to the health care table.

Your contributions, your commitment, and your belief in our mission will determine how far we go. NYSDAPAC made its first tranche of donations earlier this spring and we have additional funds to allocate to fundraisers throughout the rest of the year. Every dollar you give is a statement: "I believe in the power of dentistry. I believe in protecting my profession. I believe in shaping the future."

Finally, I must address ADA's rollout of its new Association Management System—Salesforce/Fonteva, which has unfortunately been fraught with challenges. This system failure has significantly disrupted NYSDA operations, particularly in the area of dues processing, and we are not alone—membership

engagement and renewals have lagged across the tripartite. We appreciate the steps being taken by ADA leadership to stabilize the system and remain hopeful that it will become a functional and reliable tool for our Association in the near future.

Throughout the year, I made it a priority to remain fully engaged across all levels of our organization. I attended NYSDA Board and Council meetings, participated in Diversity and Inclusion events, and actively collaborated with members at various component installation ceremonies. These moments were not only opportunities to represent NYSDA but also to listen, learn, and strengthen relationships within our vibrant dental community.

In addition, I worked to strengthen ties with leaders from neighboring State Dental Associations, including New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut, by attending their annual meetings. These connections help foster a stronger, more unified voice for dentistry in the Northeast and create valuable opportunities for shared advocacy and innovation.

I am truly humbled to have been given this opportunity—to represent our Association, to engage with colleagues across the state and beyond, and to contribute in a meaningful way to the future of our profession.

I want to take a moment to thank my component, the Queens County Dental Society, for nominating me for this position and for their unwavering support and friendship. Your encouragement has meant so much to me.

A special thank-you goes to Dr. Rekha Gehani for her outstanding work as this year's House of Delegates Program Chairwoman. Her leadership and commitment helped make this meeting a success.

I would also like to recognize and honor all the past NYSDA Presidents, whose dedication and vision have paved the way for us. Their legacy has shaped our organization and continues to guide us forward.

To the House of Delegates, I am deeply grateful for the opportunity you gave me to serve as your President—it has been both an honor and a privilege. Your confidence in me has meant everything, and I hope I've served in a way that reflects the strength and values of this great organization. To my family—my mom and my sons, Arjun and Arvind—thank you for your endless encouragement, patience, and unwavering love and support. Your belief in me has always been my foundation. As we gather to reflect, learn, and look ahead, I encourage each of you to continue driving positive changes, knowing the future of our profession is bright because of your commitment. Congratulations and best wishes to our incoming officers, Board, and all of you.

I look forward to continuing to help this exceptional organization reach into the future and become an even stronger representative of our profession.

Let me close with a quote that reflects the power of action and leadership: "The future depends on what we do in the present." — Mahatma Gandhi

Let's continue to act with vision, compassion, and courage—as we shape the future of dentistry together. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for your trust, your friendship, and for letting me be part of something so impactful. It has truly been the honor of a lifetime to lead alongside you.