



**The purpose of this newsletter is to provide an informal brief summary of ASTDD activities to keep our members and partners aware of what we do on your behalf and to highlight resources. We also like to share more personal stories as ASTDD really is a family. This issue highlights ASTDD members' participation in meetings, committees and the National Oral Health Conference (NOHC).**

### **2023 Membership in ASTDD**

New state dental director members in 2023: Timothy Lopez, MBA, HCM (NM), Mike Tredway, MSPH (SC), Erin Rollins (MT), Rhonda Stephens, DDS, MPH (NC), Deborah Vishnevsky, MPH (DC), Maryam Mahmood, DMD, MPH (CO), Ann Buss (MT), Amy Sandoval, BCH (NM), Derek K. Smith, DDS, PHD., MPH (TN), Nicole Reynolds, DDS (OK), Tonette Hollingsworth, RDH, MS (MT), Ruma Simhan, DDS, MPH (NC), Lauren T. Weiland, MPH, RDH (TN). Since the last Annual Business meeting, we added one new Life Member, Diane Brunson, bringing the total number of Life Members to 27. In 2023 we added 176 new Associate Members bringing our total Associate Membership at the end of 2023 to 558. Welcome to everyone and thanks to all of you who continue to be members of our family!

### **March 8 Virtual Business Meeting**

This ZOOM meeting was attended by 30 state members and 19 life or associate members. Nominees voted in: President-elect: Robin Miller, RDH, MPH (VT), 2-year term that ends in 2026; Treasurer: Matt Horan, DMD, MPH (MA), 3-year term that ends in 2027; Secretary: Shelley Guinn, RDH, MPH (WA), 2-year term that ends in 2026; Director: Frances Wise, PhD (AK), 3-year term that ends in 2027; Associate Member Director: Tooka Zakaie, MPH, MAS, CPH, 3-year term that ends in 2027. They were inducted during the 2024 ASTDD induction ceremony on April 16, 2024 (see the NOHC section).

### **March 27 Bylaws and Quarterly Dental Directors Virtual Meeting**

Fory-nine states, DC and two territories are currently eligible to vote because they have paid their dues; 39 were present at this meeting to vote. Several changes to the Bylaws were presented and the changes were approved unanimously.

### **CDC Grantee Meeting March 19-21, 2024**

CDC convened a close out meeting of the DP 1810 state grantees, the two DP 1811 national grantees, and CDC staff and guests in Atlanta. Pictured from left to right: Astrid Palmer (CDC), Sandy Tesch and Judy Feinstein (ASTDD); Jay Kumar (CA) and Gina Thornton Evans (CDC); DeWitt Thornton and Marcia Parker (CDC); Maggie Pustinger (ASTDD); Kathy Phipps (ASTDD). Chris Wood and Kristin Giordano also attended.



Topics covered during the March 19-20 meeting for the 20 states and national partners included:

- Evaluating Deep Learning Algorithm Assessment of Digital Photographs for Dental Public Health Surveillance
- School-Based and Private Sector Initiatives to Increase Access to Oral Health in Underserved Communities (Populations of Focus)
- Health Equity: Choose a Paradigm and Follow the Yellow Brick Road
- Thinking Outside the Box - Building Partnerships to Achieve Success
- Oral Health Speed Networking Session
- How to Use Reflective Practice to Understand Performance Measures
- Estimating School Sealant Program Labor Usage and Cost Using Data from SEALS
- Lessons Learned from Oral Health Surveillance and Ideas for the Future
- CWF Challenges and Successes; Lessons Learned During the Project Period
- Navigating Success: Charting the Roadmap for School Sealant Program Advancement

Topics for March 21 for the Medical-Dental Integration (MDI) grantees included:

- Creating Diverse Partnerships to Promote Medical-Dental Integration: Success Stories from Five States
- An Overview of the 1810 Medical-Dental Integration Initiative
- The Road Ahead Using CDC's National Action Framework to Accelerate Whole-Person Integrated Care
- Let Your Voice Be Heard.

### **ASTDD Meetings at the National Oral Health Conference (NOHC)**

#### ***ASTDD Board of Directors (BOD) Meetings***

The BOD met on April 13 and 14 in St Louis with representatives from the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA), the Organization for Safety and Asepsis Prevention (OSAP), CDC's Division of Oral Health (DOH), the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD), the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the American Association for Public Health Dentistry (AAPHD) with some ASTDD leadership meeting with the American Dental Association (ADA) on the 15<sup>th</sup>. The BOD also reviewed and revised our [two-year Strategic Map](#) and discussed the various CDC Notices of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) available to the states and national partners. Previous to the BOD meeting, Bev and Chris submitted ASTDD's application for the CDC *Strengthening Public Health Systems and Services through National Partnerships* grant application. We applied for Category B. Sixteen organizations will be funded. We should find out if we are funded sometime in July. We are in the process of submitting

applications for the CDC DOH three-year NOFO, *Partner Promotion of Strategies to Advance Oral Health, Components 1 and 3*, while the states are busy writing applications for the CDC DOH three-year NOFO, *State Promotion of Strategies to Advance Oral Health*. Estimated award date for these NOFOs is July 31, 2024 with a start date of September 1, 2024.

### *ASTDD Awards Ceremony*

The Awards Ceremony featured the following awards on April 14.

ASTDD is honoring 79 years of community water fluoridation (CWF) in the U.S. On behalf of the Fluorides Committee, Judy Feinstein, the Committee Coordinator, presented these General Fluoridation Awards, in collaboration with our partners, the American Dental Association and the CDC’s Division of Oral Health. They work with ASTDD to identify eligible communities and water systems, and their representatives participate in the Committee’s work as well. ASTDD would also especially like to thank the ADA for its support this year.



- This year, we have 82 individual 50-year awards among 29 states. Illinois and Kentucky each have 10 communities, and Michigan and Ohio each have seven.
- In 2023, three more communities noted their 75th anniversaries, going back to 1948 – two in Rock Island County, Illinois, and Madison, Wisconsin.
- In 2023, eight communities defeated challenges to community water fluoridation in six states: Fitchburg and Somerset in Massachusetts; Lake Winnebago, Missouri; Gloversville and Massena in New York; Dallas, Texas; Enosberg Falls, Vermont; and Brigham City, Utah.
- Six states were recognized with the State Quality Award for consistent optimally fluoridated water in over 90% of the adjusted public water systems for nine or more months, or the adjusted public water systems serving 90% of the state population for nine or more months, as documented in CDC’s Water Fluoride Reporting System, WFRS. These states are Connecticut, Kentucky, Michigan, North Dakota, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

The 2024 Fluoridation Merit Awards, presented to an individual or organization for outstanding contributions towards the promotion of the science and progress of fluoridation, was awarded to two organizations:

- The California Oral Health Technical Assistance Center was nominated by Tooka Zokaie, Senior Health Policy Analyst, with the California Dental Association, who presented the award. It was accepted by Marjorie Stocks, Public Education Specialist with the University of California at San Francisco, which hosts the Oral Health Assistance Center.
- The second award recognized Washington State’s Arcora Foundation. It was presented by Ms. Stocks, on behalf of Dr. Howard Pollick who nominated the Foundation, and was accepted by Emily Firman, a fluoridation consultant with the Arcora, and Sunshine Monastrial, the Foundation’s Vice-President.



John Welby, Chair of the Communications Committee, and Matt Jacob, ASTDD consultant, presented the first Excellence in Communications Award to Prasida Khanal, state dental director in MN, for the One Smile at a Time project, part of the MN State Oral Health Program's Ready for School program (pictured below).

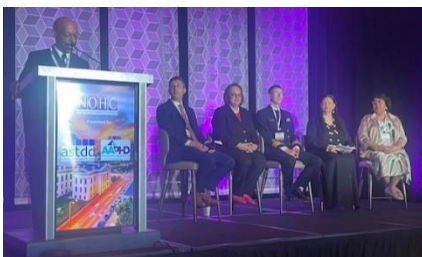
Julia Wacloff presented the following awards, pictured left to right starting with the second photo below.

- Outstanding Achievement Award to Jana Winfree from Oklahoma, which was accepted by Nicole Renolds.
- M. Dean Perkins Distinguished Service Award to Mike Helgeson and Deb Jacobi from Apple Tree Dental.
- Greg McClure Memorial President's Award to Beverly Isman, ASTDD consultant.



### NOHC Sessions

We are climbing back to our regular attendance numbers post-COVID: 740 people attended the conference this year. On the weekend, besides the ASTDD BOD meeting, AAPHD held their Board meeting and the American Network of Oral Health Coalitions (ANOHC) held their Annual Meeting. The DPH Residency Directors also met and DPH Board candidates took exams. Speakers from the Federal Dental Services provided overviews of their services in a separate session. Eight interactive workshops were held. There was a welcome



plenary session on Monday, *Advancing Oral Health Equity: Perspectives from the Federal Front*, a Tuesday plenary, *American Board of Dental Public Health (ABDPH) Symposium: The Role of Dental Public Health in Food Policy*, and a Wednesday plenary, *Unconventional Career Journeys in Oral Health: Diverse Pathways to Impact*. In addition, 33 concurrent sessions were held Monday-Wednesday, 48 roundtables on Tuesday, 31 exhibitors throughout

the meeting, and 78 posters between two sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday. Conference participants could earn up to 18.75 continuing education hours during the conference (Mon - Wed) and an additional 15 hours with optional weekend workshops on Saturday and Sunday for a total of a possible 33.75 hours. ASTDD and AAPHD held a joint reception on Saturday night for their board members, consultants, and committee chairs, and the Opening Reception for NOHC attendees was held on Sunday night followed by receptions with exhibitors on Monday and Tuesday. Our chosen community service project was Gateway 180 Homeless Services where NOHC attendees packaged oral health kits during specific breaks; we gave them 500 filled dental kits and an additional 500 dental item for them to use as needed. Thanks again to the meeting planners for such a stellar time!



## Peer and Member Support Program (PSP)



SDDs/program managers are participating in the PSP: Nicole Reynolds (OK) and Charles “Fritz” Craft (NE), Elizabeth Lewis (GA) and Robin Miller (VT). There were 34 new associate members in March and April. Clifford Lisman (NJ) completed his orientation. The NOHC provided an excellent venue for networking.

## Fluorides Committee (FC)

The committee met in March and April. They provided input for a spreadsheet to better track and quantify fluoridation activity. This would not replace the Alerts, which is more of a narrative, but would use the same information along with other variables. This new spreadsheet can more easily provide a summary report on outcomes of known CWF rollback and initiation activities. The Fluorides Committee provided feedback on the list of questions, issues, and potential areas for ASTDD support issues and questions raised at the 2024 CDC Grantee meeting in Atlanta in a networking session.

Judy participated in the final meeting of several states working on identifying issues related to implementation of the New Wave [tablet feeder] system. A central issue is that the composition of the tablets appears to inhibit their ability to completely erode (dissolve), a problem that is exacerbated by water temperature. As a result, there is unacceptable residue, and levels are inconsistent. This meeting included the manufacturer, who said that he could not proceed further with the system without financial support.

Judy prepared and submitted ASTDD’s report to ADA’s National Fluoridation Advisory Committee (NFAC) covering the period from March 2023 through March 2024. NFAC met in St. Louis immediately following the NOHC where she presented the report via Zoom on April 18.

One Fluoridation Alert was sent in March, with emails to contacts in WI, NY, MI and IN. Although no Fluoridation Alerts were sent in April, emails were sent to contacts in NY and Kansas. Notice was sent to the State Dental Directors, ASTDD fluoride-related listservs, ANOHC and the AAP Fluoride Responders, calling attention to an article published in USA Today, contributed by the Kaiser Family Foundation, titled “As Bans Spread, Fluoride in Drinking Water Divides Communities Across the US” which was then picked up by other media outlets, and an announcement from the American Fluoridation Society about the launch of its own YouTube channel.

The list of water systems and states to be recognized at the 2024 NOHC for CWF achievements in 2023 was addressed in a previous section. For the NOHC and states, Judy:

- Prepared a PPT presentation for the Awards Ceremony on April 14th along with the virtual awards brochure
- Formatted lists of CDC system level quality awards for 2021 and 2022 for ASTDD’s database
- Updated the Fluoridation Awards Toolkit and certificate templates for 2023 and emailed it to all state dental program leads

- Served as presenter for the 2023 Fluoridation Awards and moderator for the CDC Fluoridation Update
- Presented a roundtable, *Changing the Conversation: Positive Messaging about Community Water Fluoridation, Any Day, Anywhere*
- Attended a session on a CWF promotional effort in North Dakota.



### Communications Committee (CC)

CC members Matt Jacob and Heather Beavers continue to provide TA to three states to show that social media is not intimidating to use. Missouri and Minnesota TA are now complete. Arkansas is on hold until this Fall. TA sessions have been a great success! ASTDD will start using Instagram so Heather will set up a Meta business account that will combine Facebook and Instagram. As noted previously, Minnesota received the first Excellence in Communications award. The ASTDD Booth at the NOHC was staffed by members of the Communications Committee and also members and associate members of ASTDD. More than 200 people stopped by the booth; there were many compliments and questions. Booth materials included a poster of the ASTDD committees along with business cards. Grace Linn, Creative Media Solutions, helped to create the products.



Dr. Scott Howell presented a Spotlight on April 3, *Provider & Patient Experience with Teledentistry*. This Spotlight was attended by almost 100 people with many great comments and engagement. If you missed any previous Spotlights, you can access the links for the 2023 and 2024 Spotlights on the [ASTDD Home page](#), or the Archived Webcasts and Audioconferences in Members Only for previous Spotlights, or by contacting Kimberlie Payne at [kyinemanbhs@gmail.com](mailto:kyinemanbhs@gmail.com).

### Dental Public Health Policy Committee (DPHPC), Best Practices Committee (BPC), and Healthy Aging Committee (HAC)

Judy Feinstein continued revising the draft of an updated policy statement on tobacco use, completing a draft for the Committee's May meeting and commenting on drafts of several other documents including the update to the *Improving Oral Health Access and Services for Older Adults* policy statement. The HAC met at the NOHC on Tuesday morning for breakfast to discuss various projects. The annual BPC face-to-face meeting was held on Monday evening at the NOHC. Lori Cofano was the session moderator for the session, *If I Had Known I Was Going to Live This Long, I'd Have Taken Better Care of Myself!*

### School and Adolescent Oral Health Committee (SAOHC) and Dental Sealant Subject Matter Expert

Individual TA calls were held on March 13 and 14 with Idaho, Iowa, and Pennsylvania receiving help with their social media messaging around school-based sealant programs. Matt Jacob reviewed the documents submitted by each state and explained suggested revisions. He also shared a template for each state to develop an elevator speech for presentation during the Sealant CoP in June.

Dr. Shillpa Naavaal an associate professor and dental public health researcher at the School of Dentistry at Virginia Commonwealth University presented to the SAOHC on 3/28/24. She has funding for a project titled, “Reducing dental caries and oral health disparities among adolescents: The impact of increasing 2<sup>nd</sup> molar sealants through school-based programs.” The survey for this project is requesting information from those who work in sealant programs.

Sandy Tesch continued to coordinate the Dental Sealant Community of Practice (CoP) and provide TA to states. In March, she overviewed the newly revised Seal America manual and School-based Dental Sealant Training with sealant coordinators. Both resources are available [online](#). The Oral Health Research Center (OHRC) will assist any state with a sealant training requirement for providers to develop a state-specific webpage for certification. Sandy continues to provide Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC) resources to states through the dental sealant group listserv. Sandy monitors the funded states dental sealant group listserv and posted information on upcoming sealant and IPC-related events. Posts on the listserv included the upcoming 2024 OSAP Conference registration link, two Requests for Proposals through CareQuest Institute for Oral Health, OSAP Boot Camp registration for On-Demand conference, free National Network for Oral Health Access (NNOHA) webinar series in May 2024, upcoming SAOH committee meeting in June.

### Evaluation Activities

The ASTDD evaluation consultants, Kristin Giordano, Maggie Pustinger and Mary Davis continued to provide general assistance to CDC-funded states through listserv posts and emails and held office hours for progress updates. They met with CDC staff to discuss plans for the rest of the year, end of cycle evaluation reports, and the office hours with grantees. Listserv postings included: Series on alternative forms of reporting evaluation results that was the second part on different methods of reporting; Preparation of frequently asked questions document for final reporting based on questions received at the grantee closeout meeting. During the NOHC they presented a roundtable, *Evaluation as a Team Sport* and a workshop, *Making the Most of your Evaluation Plan*. Kristin, Maggie, and Brooke Mehner (data consultant) attended the NOHC.



From Feb-Mar 2024, the consultants conducted interviews with five partner organizations and seven SOHPs. States were selected by ASTDD to include a mix of both states funded through CDC and those who aren't currently receiving funding. The purpose of the interviews was to understand how partnerships with a variety of organizations have worked to achieve common goals shared by ASTDD and partners, understand what resources provided by ASTDD and partners have been most useful to state oral health programs, and explore how partnerships have leveraged efforts. Key findings included:

- ASTDD has facilitated connections among oral health professionals and organizations, fostering collaboration and information exchange
- ASTDD engaged in responsive actions, including fighting challenges to community water fluoridation, providing COVID response resources, supporting funding initiatives, and demonstrating their commitment to the oral health ecosystem

- Resources provided comprehensive data for legislative initiatives and program assessment, fostering evidence-based policymaking and facilitating comparisons and justifications. Centralized platforms streamline data access, saving time and resources, while collected data supports advocacy efforts and tangible public health improvements
- Resources aid in program coordination and standardization, established best practices, and ensure consistency. They provide access to valuable information, expert connections, and training opportunities, fostering collaboration, informing policy development, and supporting staff acclimation and program development within SOHPs



### Data and Oral Health Surveillance Technical Assistance (TA) and Training

Kathy Phipps, Mike Manz, and Brooke Mehner, ASTDD data and surveillance SMEs, provided TA to 10 states for Basic

Screening Services (BSS) or other surveillance assistance in 14 states these two months. Brooke provided TA for the 2024 State Synopses questionnaire to states and entered Word forms into SurveyMonkey, attended CareQuest Institute meetings, attended the CDC Grantee Closeout meeting in Atlanta, GA and the CDC Quarterly Data meeting. Mike and Brooke attended and met with ASTDD consultants, state attendees and ASTDD leadership at the NOHC.

### National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety (NCHBHS)

In addition to the critical but routine work of administration and provision of technical assistance to Dental Hygienist Liaisons (DHLs) and regional DHL coordinators (RDHLCs), Kathy Hunt (lead) and Gina Sharps (co-lead) also oversaw the following activities:

- Hosted Q3 DHL webinar: The webinar, *Minimally Invasive Dentistry for the Pediatric Population*, was held on April 25, 2024 and was presented by Hayley Buckner, RDH, BS, FADHA, Professional Relations Manager for Elevate Oral Care.
- Hosted quarterly RDHL call: The Year 3, Quarter 4 call was held on April 23, 2024 and was attended by eight RDHCLs, Kathy Hunt, and Gina Sharps.

The National Oral Health Conference was a beehive of activity for the DHL Project. Kathy and Gina hosted a reception for state DHLs in attendance and they were joined by Katrina Holt in a meeting with ADHA leadership, Joanne Gurenlian, to discuss strategies to enhance future collaboration. The DHL Project and DHL hygienists were well represented at NOHC educational offerings:

- *Giving Children a Head Start: How You Can Help Improve Oral Health for Head Start Participants* led by Kathy Hunt and Gina Sharps.
- *The Impact of COVID-19 on Young Children's Oral Health* moderated by Beth Lowe, DHL Project management team.
- *Maximizing Prevention: Expanding the Dental Hygienist Role Beyond the Operatory* co-led by Mary Kelly, Iowa DHL.
- *100 Million Mouths Campaign: Updates, Lessons Learned, and Champion Stories* Kathy Hunt



- *Planning and Launching a Health Promotion Campaign* moderated by Gina Sharps
- *Storming the Dental Delivery Model- Redesigning Systems of Care* moderated by Linda Mann, Region X DHL Coordinator
- *Teaming up to Engage Water Operators: Building Relationships That Advance Community Water Fluoridation* moderated by Vanessa Bopp, North Dakota DHL
- *Enhancing Access for Patients with Diabetes Through Integration of Diabetes and Oral Health Care (IDOH)* moderated by Katy Battani, Region III DHL Coordinator
- *Bridging the Medical Dental Divide* presented by Jenna Linden, Wisconsin DHL and Region V DHL Coordinator.



### Consortium for Oral Health Systems Integration and Improvement (COHSII)

The NOHC in St. Louis, Missouri was Opportunity Central for COHSII. COHSII staff enjoyed networking with colleagues throughout the conference and appreciated the opportunity to share information during three presentations:

- *Enhancing Access for Patients with Diabetes Through Integration of Diabetes and Oral Health Care (IDOH)* panel presentation, Katy Battani (moderator) and Irene Hilton and Candace Hsu Owen (speakers)
- *From Tragedy to Success: Integrating Preventive Oral Health Care into Primary Care in Guam* roundtable presentation, Reg Louie and Ohnmar Tut (speakers)
- *The Impact of COVID-19 on Young Children’s Oral Health* panel presentation, Beth Lowe (moderator) and Harry Goodman, Tim Ricks, and Sarah Wovcha (speakers)



Some of our Pacific guests at the NOHC who traveled for hours to attend



Ohnmar Tut, ASTDD consultant to the U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands



Right to left is Drs. Flora Nathan (Majuro, RMI), Marlynn Essng (Palau), Tesie Brand (RMI) and Beverly Taima (Palau)



Partners from Hawaii: Linda Austin (HI state DHL), Andrew Tseu (HI DHS), Patrick Donnely and Kathy Gikbay (HI OH Coalition)

***Send any questions, comments, or articles to Bev Isman at [bev.isman@comcast.net](mailto:bev.isman@comcast.net)***