



Association of Army Dentistry (AAD)

AAD 2025 Spring Newsletter

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Greetings AAD Members and Friends of Army Dentistry

As we celebrate 114 years of Army Dentistry, let us recognize how resilient and flexible our Corps has been in responding to the many transitions within our health-care system over the last many years. The Army Dental Corps has always been innovative with our primary mission to conserve the fighting strength of our Soldiers with world-class care no matter the location - garrison or battlefield. It is truly impressive to see how talented our officers, non-commissioned officers, and enlisted Soldiers are and how well they carry on the legacy and continue to improve upon the care delivered.

The Association of Army Dentistry is also undergoing a gentle transition. In January, we bid adieu to MG (Ret) Ted Wong, who served as the president and chair of the board of directors for the last two years and was also among the earliest founders of our organization. Under his leadership, our organization accomplished several significant goals. The final installment of the Army Dentistry Monument, the Senior Leader Monolith, was installed in November, and our new website came to wonderful fruition! COLs (Ret) Art Scott, Larry Hanson, Bob Stieneker and John Storz have also resigned from the board of directors after years of incredible service to this organization. Mentors to me throughout my career, I am extremely honored to have served with them and very grateful for their leadership. They will be missed but remain available for support and, also, to engage those in Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA) courses. I would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest directors, COL (Ret) Craig Patterson and COL (Ret) Tom MacKenzie, and to our new Vice President, COL (Ret) George Hucal. Additionally, COL (Ret) Jay Etzenbach has offered to assist COL (Ret) Ron Lambert with the quarterly newsletter – much appreciated! We look forward to continuing the mission to honor the past, support the present and inspire the future of Army Dentistry.

If you are ever in San Antonio, it is truly worth visiting the AMEDD Museum once renovations are completed. Our Army Dentistry Monument and the associated monoliths were years in the making and are a wonderful tribute to all who serve and have served. The exhibits within the museum are also well worth the time investment.

Please go to the new website! Frank Nasser and Susan Allen have done and continue to do yeoman's work in refining a fantastically functional product! The history timeline is incredible, and we want to continue to add to it. The website offers incredible insights into our past and to all components -- Active, Reserve, Civilian and Spouses. Reading the earliest editions of the AAD Newsletter, the Army Dental Corps Newsletter and many of the contributions is a wonderful way to really appreciate who we are and how far we have come. The website is a repository for oral histories as well as written histories. One could get wonderfully engrossed for hours! I know from experience! Suggestions and contributions are always welcome!

[Association of Army Dentistry Website](#)

Over the next year, we look forward to growing our membership and continuing to interact with those in leadership courses. We will also work to further foster initiatives within each of our six strategic pillars – to promote esprit de corps, support recruitment and retention, provide continuing education, provide coaching and mentoring, honor service past and present, and to be a repository for our history.

This is YOUR organization. Let us honor who we are and continue to advocate for Army Dentistry. We are grateful for your support and invite all to become involved and to offer your contributions!

Happy Spring to all!

Regards,

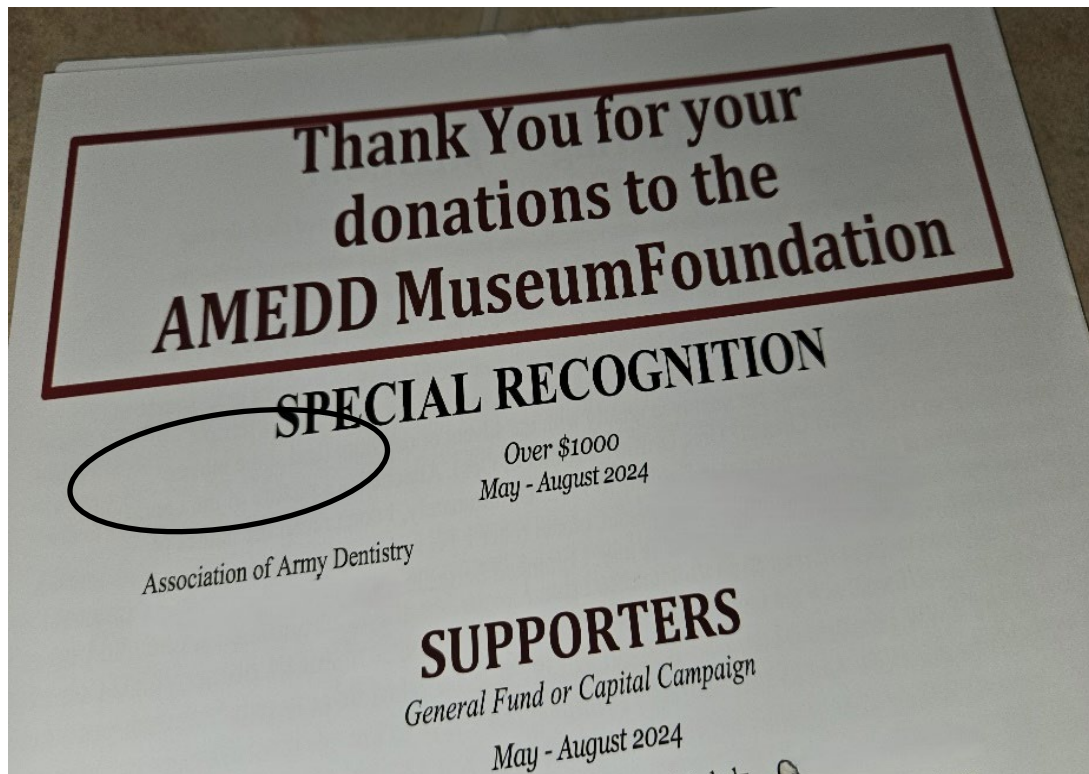
Karen M. Keith COL, USA (Ret)
President and Chair of the Board

Morale Support and Esprit de Corps

One of the Strategic Pillars of the Association of Army Dentistry is to Promote and Support Morale and Esprit de Corps in all areas connected to Army Dentistry. Your dues and donations directly contribute to numerous efforts directed at achieving the goals of this Strategic Pillar. *Your* organization is a steadfast supporter of the AMEDD Museum and annually one of the most significant donors to the museum foundation. In addition, the AAD awards

grants to Dental Activities sponsoring local morale activities such as the Dental Corps Birthday Ball. *Your* organization recently made generous grants to two Dental Activities directly supporting their anniversary celebrations. The list goes on. In all cases the objective is to stand with those connected with Army Dentistry. Whether it's the Corps Chief Awards or a Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC) social, *Your* organization frequently provides direct financial support in an effort to help build esprit de corps. In the case of those members who have gone before us, *your* organization honors them by dedicating a stone brick in their name at the AMEDD museum. Thanks to all our members and donors. With your support, the Association of Army Dentistry will continue to promote morale and esprit de corps.

assoc.army.dentistry@gmail.com



*To learn more about applying for a Dental Corps Anniversary grant from the AAD, please read the following article.

Morale Support Grants for Dental Corps Anniversary Events

The Association of Army Dentistry (AAD) Morale Support Activity (MSA) supports the Morale and Esprit de Corps pillar of the organization. The AAD

provides annual grants to large, medium, and small U.S. Army dental units in the amounts of \$1,000, \$750, and \$500, respectively. These grants are given to assist in executing events that honor and celebrate the U.S. Army Dental Corps Anniversary with the objectives of boosting unit morale and welfare, recognizing Army Dental Corps achievements and history and promoting Army dentistry to internal and external audiences.

Every year since 2014 money has been granted to select regions and dental activities to help defray incidental expenses for dental units when performing morale support activities that honor and celebrate the Army Dental Corps Anniversary. Applications are sent out in late December with a 15 January deadline to be reviewed by the Morale Support Activity Grant Committee. Recommendations are then made to the AAD Board with priorities based on projected impact, consistency with the AAD mission and need and previous receipt of an MSA grant.

In 2025 money was granted to Joint Base Fort Sam Houston Dental Activity and Joint Base Lewis-McChord Dental Activity to support their celebrations.

Dental units desiring to utilize MSA funds to support U.S. Army Dental Corps Anniversary activities agree that the grants are provided to assist dental units in executing events that honor and celebrate the U.S. Army Dental Corps Anniversary, with the objectives outlined in the application. The grants will partially fund events, with most funding generated by the unit. The grants will only be used for activities specified in the application. Celebratory activities and events will conform to Army regulations, policies, and ethical standards.

The AAD Board of Directors determines grants and grant amounts on an annual basis. Army Dental Units eligible to apply and receive grants include active duty (AD) TDA units — Dental Clinic Commands through Regional Dental Health Commands — AD TOE units, and U.S. Army Reserve and Army National Guard dental units. If plans change and the funds cannot be spent as indicated in this application, the unit will contact the committee chairperson for guidance. Grant recipients agree to allow recognition of AAD sponsorship by an AAD representative or designee at the event, and to provide a write-up of the event, complete with photos suitable for posting in newsletters, social media, and the AAD website.

The application must be signed by the U.S. Army dental unit commander/leader or designee and submitted by January 15th of the year in which the celebratory event will occur. Put it on your calendars to request an application in December and apply for an AAD grant to support your unit's celebration of the U.S. Army Dental Corps Anniversary.

The AAD is *Your* Organization.

Active Component News



Army Dental Corps Chief
COL Stephen J. Tanner

3 March 2025

Happy 114th Birthday U.S. Army Dental Corps!



29th Chief of the U.S. Army Dental Corps, COL Stephen Tanner, and COL Russell Methvin, Deputy DC Chief

The first link below, which was edited by COL John King, celebrates the 100th anniversary of the U.S. Army Dental Corps and captures the history of Army Dentistry until 2011. The second link, narrated by MG (Ret) Pat Sculley, was made in conjunction with the dedication of the Army Dentistry Monument in 2022. Please scroll to the bottom of the webpage for this video.

[History of the United States Army Dental Corps](#)

[History Army Dental Care \(June 2022\)](#)



*U.S. Army Dental Corps
Fort Sam Houston, TX 78234*

March 03, 2025

Dear Members of the U.S. Army Dental Corps,

Today marks the 114th anniversary of the Army Dental Corps' dedicated service to our nation. As we celebrate this milestone, I want to express my gratitude to each of you for your contributions to the Corps.

The unwavering dedication of the Army Dental Care Team has always been exemplary, delivering exceptional care to our soldiers and their families, thereby fortifying our dental force. As we navigate through changing times, let us take a moment to reflect on and honor the remarkable history of our Dental Corps. We have never remained stagnant; instead, we have consistently worked to enhance our clinical, academic, and operational capabilities.

We could not achieve any of this without your expertise and commitment. Thank you for being a part of our Army Dental Care System. "Combat Ready Care... This We'll Defend!"

Sincerely,

*Stephen J. Tanner
Colonel, U.S. Army
Chief, Army Dental Corps*

[Army Dental Corps Chief](#)

January 14, 2025

Last week, The Corps Chief's Office had an opportunity to meet with those currently attending the Captain's Career Course (CCC). Members from the [Association of Army Dentistry](#) elected to join and helped welcome these Officers to San Antonio. The AAD provides direct financial support for these events.



Reserve Component News

By COL Anna Lichelle Aldana

U.S. Army Reserve Dental Corps supports Joint Task Force-Bravo

By COL Anna Lichelle Aldana

MAJ Laura Tsu, SGT Paul Abrea and SPC Blanca Balbino recently completed a deployment in support of Joint Task Force-Bravo (JTF-B) at Soto Cano Air Base (SCAB), Honduras, as part of the dental team. The team provided dental care to service members to maintain dental readiness. Additionally, they delivered dental services to local schools, Honduran Ministry Health sites and remote villages to promote regional cooperation and partnership. The medical and dental teams were also involved in Global Health Engagement (GHE) exercises to enhance Soldier training. JTF-B conducts and supports joint operations and

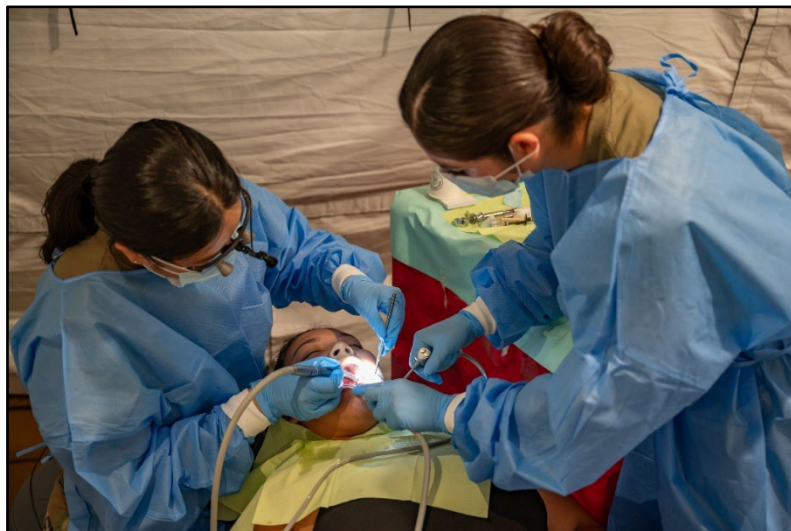
activities to enhance security and stability in the region, and to respond to crisis as directed by the U.S. Southern Command.

MAJ Tsu, a native of California, attended the University of the Pacific Dugoni School of Dentistry. She joined the active-duty component in 2017 and served at Camp Humphreys, South Korea, and Fort Cavazos, TX. She is currently an Army Reserve dentist with the 7210th Medical Support Unit in San Antonio, Texas. In her civilian job, MAJ Tsu works in teleradiology as an oral and maxillofacial radiologist and works part-time in a private practice.

MAJ Tsu said, "Our dental and medical missions not only provide care for those in need and strengthen relationships in Honduras, but we are also able to train expeditionary readiness and the ability to work with our field equipment."

SGT Abrea, also from California, is a dental specialist (68E) with the 425th Medical Detachment. He has been in the Army for five years and this is his first deployment. SGT Abrea remarked that his favorite part of the deployment is taking part in GHE because "we are able to travel and explore other places and also help out the communities."

SPC Balbino served as the dental hygienist (68E X2) of the team. She is a native of Austin, Texas, and is a member of the 965th Dental Company in Seagoville, Texas. This is her seventh year in the Army and her first deployment. SPC Balbino is a dental assistant in her civilian job and aspires to complete a hygiene program to become a registered dental hygienist. SPC Balbino remarked that it was a humbling experience to go on the weekly missions, take part in GHE and sustain the needs of the Soldiers at SCAB. She added, "Being bilingual, I was also able to connect and understand the needs of the community and families."



MAJ Tsu and SPC Balbino (l-r) provide dental treatment during a GHE in Costa Rica.



SPC Balbino, SGT Abrea and MAJ Tsu (left-right) represented the dental team in Costa Rica.



MAJ Tsu (l) extracts a tooth while SPC Balbino assists during a visit at a Honduran Ministry Health site.



SGT Abrea spends time with the children at a Honduran school during one of the local dental missions.

Spouses Corner

Presented by The Spouses and Surviving Spouses Committee

Random Thoughts

By Susan Allen

As spring arrives, my brain typically reengages after a winter hibernation. This year, that reengagement includes thoughts about the Spouses and Surviving Spouses Committee (SSSC). When the AAD Board of Directors first considered a renewed effort to engage spouses and surviving spouses of individuals associated with Army Dentistry, the directors envisioned an active group of spouses that could support the organization's mission.

There are six pillars to the AAD's mission:

- Promoting morale and esprit de corps
- Supporting recruitment and retention
- Providing continuing education
- Providing coaching and mentoring
- Honoring the service of those – past and present – who serve the Nation via Army Dentistry
- Being a repository for the accomplishments and history of Army Dentistry

Spouses could, indeed, help support those pillars.

Since the initial decision to include the SSSC in the AAD organization, there has been moderate success. The biggest challenge: finding spouses!

Therefore, I am calling on every member to help spread the word that the Association of Army Dentistry is open to spouses – young and older, spouses of active-duty and retired Soldiers and officers, and those whose service member has passed. Membership has its benefits – establishing a network with other spouses, developing a support system with spouses who live nearby, actively supporting something that was or is an important part of your life, and helping acknowledge and celebrate the contributions Army Dentistry has made to our country and its service members since 1911.

Looking for Updates

The new AAD website (associationofarmydentistry.org) has a section dedicated to spouses and surviving spouses. This section is a repository of resources that offer valuable information and contacts that are pertinent to spouses of both active duty and retired service members, and to surviving spouses. Check it out, share it with fellow spouses and send us any suggestions you might have of additional online or print resources we could add.

Recognizing Volunteers and Spouses

Did you know that when designing the Army Dentistry Monument, the AAD dedicated one of the monoliths surrounding the monument to spouses and Red

Cross volunteers? The monument is at the AMEDD Museum at Fort Sam Houston, in San Antonio, Texas. Next time you are visiting San Antonio, check out the museum, visit the monument and look for your monolith. Or take an armchair visit by going to <https://associationofarmydentistry.org/u-s-army-dentistry-monument/>. There is a link to the video for “Red Cross volunteers and spouses of our officers, noncommissioned officers and enlisted personnel,” which is also accessible on our monolith via a QR code. By including spouses and volunteers as a component of the Army Dentistry Monument, the AAD and the U.S. Army Dental Corps have acknowledged the vital role spouses and volunteers play in supporting Army Dentistry.

AAD Vision and Strategic Pillars

COL (Ret) Ron Lambert

Honoring Service is the Strategic Pillar which honors service, either in or out of uniform. The AAD Spring Newsletter honors the humanitarian service of Robert D. Meyer, DMD, COL, U.S. Army Retired, and his wife, Diane K. Meyer, EdD. Bob is the executive director for the Christian Dental Society, a position he has held since 2015. Over the last 30 years, Drs. Bob and Diane Meyer have led 75 short-term, portable dental missions in 45 developing countries, working with many organizations. They are passionate about providing dental care, education and encouragement for under-resourced people. Moreover, they have published numerous articles and written five books on missions.

Bob graduated from West Point and commanded an artillery unit prior to going to dental school at Oregon Health Sciences University. During his distinguished career in the U.S. Army Dental Corps, he assumed multiple leadership positions, including command of the 257th Medical Company (Dental Area Support) at Fort Bragg, N.C., and director of the Advanced Education in General Dentistry – 1 Year Program at Fort Carson, Colo. After retirement from the Army, Bob spent 16 years in private practice before his redirection to full-time humanitarian work.

Diane received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Master of Science in Teaching, and Doctor of Education in Christian Leadership and Education at Liberty University, where her doctoral research focused on the holistic benefits of dental missions. Her book, *Encouraging Missions: Transforming Lives, Especially Yours*, is available through Amazon and other book outlets.

When I spoke to Bob earlier this month about honoring their humanitarian service, the Meyers were just returning from a dental mission trip to El Salvador. A few months earlier, they completed a dental mission to the eastern front in Ukraine. If anyone would like to go on a mission trip, please contact Bob at rdmeyer7@gmail.com or go to the Christian Dental Society website.

[Christian Dental Society](#)

In 2023, the Meyers received the International College of Dentists Distinguished Humanitarian Award. That article appears below.

Distinguished Humanitarians (2022) Colonel (Retired) Robert D. Meyer, DMD and Diane K. Meyer, EdD



Colonel Robert D. Meyer, DMD, and Diane K Meyer, EdD, Colorado Springs, Colorado

Colonel (Retired) Robert D. Meyer, DMD, MAGD, ABGD, FADI, FJCD, is the Executive Director for the Christian Dental Society and is a full-time dental volunteer.

Dr. Robert Meyer earned his undergraduate degree from the U.S. Army Military Academy, West Point, in 1974 and his dental degree from Oregon Health Sciences University, Portland in 1983. Colonel Meyer started a 32-year Army career at West Point, was chosen to command a Field Artillery Battery and, also, commanded the only airborne dental unit in existence, deploying dentists around the world. He received specialty dental training in the two-year Advanced Educational Program in General Dentistry and, for the last six years of his Army career, directed the Army's Advanced General Dental Educational Program at Fort Carson.

Dr. Meyer is a diplomate of the Federal Services Board of General Dentistry and was Board Certified by the American Board of General Dentistry. His many military awards include the Legion of Merit, two Meritorious Service Medals, two Army Commendation Medals, six Army Achievement Medals, two National Defense Service Ribbons and the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Award. He has been awarded the Medical Order of Military Merit and the Surgeon General's "A" Proficiency Designator. Dr. Meyer is a Master in the Academy of General Dentistry, a Fellow in the International College of Dentists, a Fellow in the Academy of Dentistry International. He has authored scientific articles in numerous dental journals, and along with his wife, Dr. Diane Meyer, has published five books on portable mission dentistry.

From 1999-2015, Dr. Meyer provided comprehensive dental care in private practice until an eye injury redirected his life to full-time missionary dental service. Both Meyers have

provided dentistry to the less fortunate through the Kids in Need of Dentistry Clinic, the Mission Medical Clinic, a Remote Area Medical Clinic, and Colorado Mission of Mercy Clinics within Colorado. Over the last 30 years, Drs. Bob and Diane have led 75 short-term, portable, dental missions in 45 underserved, developing countries while working with many organizations.

The couple has been blessed with three married children and eight grandchildren. They have found their joy and significance in serving God and others.

Honorary Fellow Diane K. Meyer, EdD



Dr. Diane K. Meyer Colorado Springs, Colorado

Dr. Diane Meyer has been an active supporter of dentistry as a humanitarian volunteer for over 40 years. Diane's most recent book, "Encouraging Missions; Transforming Lives, Especially Yours," is co-authored by Dr. Robert Meyer. The book comes from 25 years of personal, dental, and mission experience helping lead 50 mission trips overseas to over 40 developing countries, helping direct the restorative section of the Colorado Mission of Mercy clinic for 15 years, working at Kids in Need of Dentistry and the Mission of Mercy clinics in Colorado Springs, as well as encouraging, teaching, and helping others towards dental volunteerism at 42 major dental exhibit booths across the country.

Diane's never-before-done doctoral research dissertation at Liberty University quantitatively and qualitatively documents the holistic benefits and detractors of dental, short-term volunteerism. This study was published in "The Journal of the American Dental Association" (December 2020) and abstracted in the Pierre Fauchard Academy official publication, "Dental Abstracts," (July/ August 2021). Her study formed the basis of the book *Encouraging Missions: Transforming Lives, Especially Yours*, which captures the zeal for altruistic endeavors through lively, inspiring, true accounts and sound bites from over 60 highly experienced, short-term trip volunteers.

Diane has also written four other books and numerous articles on dental volunteerism and spoken widely about charitable service. She is active with the Christian Dental Society as a board member and board secretary who helps write, edit, and publish Christian Dental Society news-briefs, and informational booklets which can be viewed on the CDS website <https://christiandental.org> under "About Us."

Diane is her husband's inspiration and constant helper as they share the passion they have for dental charitable volunteerism. They both feel they could not have accomplished alone even a fraction of what they have been able to do together.

In Memoriam

Withrow, Gene, COL, USA (Ret)

04-07-1943 – 01-27-2025

COL Gene Withrow graduated from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and the University of Alabama at Birmingham Dental School. After serving more than 30 years in the Army in multiple leadership and clinical assignments, Gene worked in private practice, the Veterans Administration and as a professor. He was instrumental in creating the Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC) dental residency program in Asheville, N.C.

[COL Withrow Obituary](#)

If there are obituaries of colleagues or friends that you wish to share with our members, please forward that information to the AAD so we can make them available in our newsletters and on the website.

[Association of Army Dentistry In Memoriam](#)

Social Media

LTC Mike Hoffman, the AAD's Facebook page administrator, keeps the Army dental community informed of current news throughout the Army Dental Care System. Visit the AAD on Facebook or Instagram for the latest information.

[AAD Facebook Page](#)

[AAD Instagram Page](#)

Conclusion:

If any of our members would like to share articles and/or vignettes about their life of service, either before or after retirement, please forward them to the email address below. More information about the AAD Personal History Project is available on the AAD webpage.

AAD Personal History Project

assoc.army.dentistry@gmail.com

AAD Board member, COL (Ret) Jay Etzenbach, has volunteered to serve as an Editor of the newsletter – thanks Jay!

Please keep our young men and women serving around the globe in your thoughts and prayers throughout the year.

Editors — Ron Lambert, COL, USA (Ret), Jay Etzenbach, COL, USA (Ret) and Susan Allen.

AAD Officers

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Francis E. Nasser, Jr., COL, USA (Ret) – Executive Director

David Ferguson, COL, USA, (Ret) – Secretary

Ms. Wanda Kavanaugh, USA Civilian, (Ret) – Treasurer

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The AAD is your organization!

The Association of Army Dentistry is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. We are a philanthropic organization dedicated to honoring the past, supporting the present, and inspiring the future of Army Dentistry.



The Association of Army Dentistry

VISION

"The Association of Army Dentistry honors our past, supports the present, and inspires the future of Army Dentistry."

MISSION

"The mission of the Association of Army Dentistry is to advance Army Dentistry by promoting morale, esprit de corps; supporting activities focused on recruitment and retention; providing dental education, and coaching/mentoring; recognizing those who serve and have served the Nation via Army Dentistry; and fostering an appreciation of the history and accomplishments of Army Dentistry."

STRATEGIC PILLARS

1. Morale and Esprit de Corps.
2. Recruitment and Retention.
3. Dental Education.
4. Coaching and Mentoring.
5. Honoring Service.
6. Army Dentistry History.