

CHAPTER 5

GETTING MORE INFORMATION

This book provides a foundation for anyone who is considering dentistry as a career and wants to know more about obtaining a dental education. Although the information included here is extensive, you probably will want additional details to answer questions that are specific to your situation. This chapter gives you lists of individuals, organizations, and references that can help answer those questions.

INDIVIDUALS WHO CAN HELP

One very effective way of getting more information is to talk to the individuals who are involved in dental education and are interested in encouraging others like you to consider dentistry as a career.

Practicing Dentists

Dentists are knowledgeable about the variety of careers in dentistry and about the education and skills needed. They can tell you what the day-to-day work is like, what kind of preparation is required, and the kinds of benefits they receive. In addition, to learn more about the profession and whether it feels right for you is to arrange for an internship or a “shadowing” opportunity in a dental office. To pursue such an opportunity, discuss the possibility with your own dentist or other practitioners in your area.

Prehealth Advisors

Prehealth advisors can assist in a broad range of issues about dental education and dental schools. They are especially important during the admissions process because they can inform you about the academic preparation necessary to be accepted into a dental school. In addition, these advisors are often involved in providing or coordinating letters of recommendation.

Science Professors

Science professors, especially those in the biological sciences, can be helpful in the same way as prehealth advisors in terms of academic preparation and letters of recommendation. They are particularly important to students at undergraduate schools that do not have an official prehealth advisor.

Dental School Admissions Officers

Admissions officers are especially knowledgeable about their own dental schools and the requirements to gain admission. They can provide you with catalogs and admission information. They can also describe the emphasis of the academic programs, provide information on support services to help students succeed, and other features of their schools.

Dental School Minority Affairs Officers

These officers play an important role in collecting and sharing information about what their dental schools are doing to increase minority enrollments and to make minority students who choose their schools feel welcome. They will also have information about the academic programs, support services, and other features of their schools.

Financial Aid Administrators

Financial aid administrators are very knowledgeable about how to pay the cost of attending dental school. They will be able to help you understand the financial aid application process and eligibility requirements for government, institutional, and private sources of financial aid. They can also assist in securing the funds for which you are eligible.

Dental Students

Dental students are usually forthright in sharing their perceptions of the education they are receiving at their schools. They also will tell you their views of the nonacademic aspects such as student support services and social atmosphere. Since these individuals' perspectives differ from each other, the information they share can be enormously helpful. You should not hesitate to approach them in order to benefit from their knowledge and points of view. There are also online discussion boards where future and current dental students talk about issues related to dental school. Keep in mind that all types of individual discussions are based on personal experience and do not reflect the whole perspective of a student body or school. It is always a good idea to base your decisions on information collected from a variety of sources.

ORGANIZATIONS THAT CAN HELP

A number of organizations offer information about careers in dentistry, preparing for admission, and financial aid for dental students.

EDUCATION

American Dental Education Association

1400 K Street, NW
Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202-289-7201
Fax: 202-289-7204
www.adea.org

The American Dental Education Association (ADEA) provides information about the application process for admission to dental school and postdoctoral programs. ADEA sponsors the ADEA Associated American Dental Schools Application Service (ADEA AADSAS) and the ADEA Postdoctoral Application Support Service (ADEA PASS). Visit the ADEA Department of Educational Pathways at www.adea.org to learn more about these services. In addition to the *ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools*, ADEA publishes the *Journal of Dental Education (JDE)*, the *Bulletin of Dental Education Online (BDE)*, and the *ADEA Opportunities for Minority Students in United States Dental Schools*. Ordering information is available on the ADEA website.

Membership in ADEA is free for all dental students and includes networking and advocacy opportunities, free access to the JDE and monthly delivery of the BDE. To become a member, visit www.adea.org and select "Join ADEA."

American Student Dental Association

211 East Chicago Avenue
Suite 700 Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 800-621-8099 x 2795, 312-440-2795
Fax: 312-440-2820
www.asdanet.org

The American Student Dental Association (ASDA) is a student-run organization that offers educational resources, discounts on professional services, networking opportunities, and representation on issues that include education financing, dental student rights and research, and advocacy. ASDA is a national organization but also represents the interests of dental students on the local and regional levels.

ExploreHealthCareers.org

American Dental Education Association
 1400 K Street, NW, Suite 1100
 Washington, DC 20005
 Phone: 202-289-7201, 347-365-9253
www.explorehealthcareers.org

ExploreHealthCareers.org (EHC) is a multidisciplinary, free website that allows the user to explore more than 100 health careers, including all pertaining to dentistry and allied dentistry. EHC's database of 500 plus resources includes information about dental scholarships and pre dental enrichment programs.

International Federation of Dental Educators and Associations

1400 K Street, NW
 Suite 1100
 Washington, DC 20005
 Phone: 202-289-7201
 Fax: 202-289-7204
www.ifdea.org

The International Federation of Dental Educators and Associations (IFDEA) is a global community of dental educators who have joined together to improve oral health worldwide by sharing knowledge and raising standards. IFDEA contributes to improving global health by improving oral health. IFDEA serves as an axis of information, best practices, exchange programs, news, and professional development for the many regional dental education associations, academic dental institutions, and individual dental educators worldwide.

SPECIALITY**Academy of General Dentistry**

211 East Chicago Avenue
 Suite 900
 Chicago, IL 60611
 Phone: 888-AGD-DENT / 888-243-3368
 Fax: 312-440-0559
www.agd.org

The Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) is the only organization dedicated exclusively to serving the community of general dentists. The AGD provides resources, continuing education programs, advocacy, professional and career services, and networking opportunities. The academy also promotes the oral health of the public and offers a 24-hour, online message board for consumers to post dental-related questions and a dentist referral service.

American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology

214 North Hale Street
 Wheaton, IL 60187
 Phone: 888-552-2667
 Fax: 630-510-4501
www.aaomp.org

Representing the specialty of dentistry and pathology that deals with the nature, identification, and management of diseases affecting the oral and maxillofacial regions, the American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology (AAOMP) promotes the profession and provides educational and scholarly resources. In conjunction with the North American Society of Head and Neck Pathology (NASHNP), AAOMP edits the Head and Neck Pathology Journal.

American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology

P.O. Box 1010
Evans, GA 30809
Phone: 706-721-2607
Fax: 706-721-4937
www.aaomr.org

The American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology (AAOMR) promotes the art and science of radiology in dentistry through scholarly and educational resources, and advocacy. AAOMR provides resources for educators and additional information on advanced education programs in oral and maxillofacial radiology.

American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry

211 East Chicago Avenue
Suite 1700
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 312-337-2169
Fax: 312-337-6329
www.aapd.org

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) represents the specialty of pediatric dentistry. Its members serve as primary care providers for millions of children from infancy through adolescence and provide advanced, specialty care for patients of all ages with special health care needs. The AAPD advocates policies, guidelines, and programs that promote optimal oral health and oral health care for children. AAPD also serves and represents its membership in the areas of professional development and governmental and legislative activities.

American Academy of Periodontology

737 North Michigan Avenue
Suite 800
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 312-787-5518
Fax: 312-787-3670
www.perio.org

The American Academy of Periodontology (AAP) specializes in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases affecting the gums and supporting structures of the teeth and in the placement and maintenance of dental implants. AAP works to advance the periodontal and general health of the public and promote excellence in the practice of periodontics through a variety of services and resources for its community and information for the public.

American Association of Endodontists

211 East Chicago Avenue
Suite 1100
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 800-872-3636 (North America), 312-266-7255 (International)
Fax: 866-451-9020 (North America), 312-266-9867 (International)
www.aae.org

The American Association of Endodontists (AAE) is the professional association representing endodontists, the dental specialists who save teeth through root canal treatment. The AAE provides a forum for the exchange of ideas in the field of endodontics and stimulates research studies among its members through publications, professional development and continuing education opportunities, and meetings and events.

American Association of Hospital Dentists

401 North Michigan Avenue
 Suite 2200
 Chicago, IL 60611
 Phone: 312-527-6764
 Fax: 312-673-6663
www.scdonline.org

The American Association of Hospital Dentists (AAHD) operates under the auspices of Special Care Dentistry Association (SCDA). The AAHD helps hospital dentists develop the skills, knowledge, creativity, and leadership they need to advance their practices and the profession. As part of SCDA, the association also helps shape national health policy on hospital dentistry by providing advocacy at the federal and state levels.

American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons

9700 West Bryn Mawr Avenue
 Rosemont, IL 60018
 Phone: 847-678-6200, 800-822-6637
 Fax: 847-678-6286
www.aaoms.org

The American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (AAOMS) represents the surgeons who provide a broad range of diagnostic services and treatments for diseases, injuries, and defects of the neck, head, jaw, and associated structures that include problem wisdom teeth, facial pain, oral cancer, and facial cosmetic surgery. The mission of the AAOMS is to promote, protect and advance oral and maxillofacial surgery to assure excellence for surgeons and their patients.

American Association of Orthodontists

401 North Lindbergh Boulevard
 St. Louis, MO 63141
 Phone: 314-993-1700 / 800-424-2841
 Fax: 314-997-1745
www.aaortho.org

The American Association of Orthodontists (AAO) is the organization for specialists who diagnose, prevent, and treat dental and facial irregularities. The AAO provides information to the public on the need and benefits of orthodontic treatment and supports research and education leading to quality patient care.

American Association of Public Health Dentistry

3085 Stevenson Drive
 Suite 200
 Springfield, IL 62703
 Phone: 217-529-6941
 Fax: 217-529-9120
www.aaphd.org

The American Association of Public Health Dentistry (AAPHD) provides a focus for meeting the challenge to improve the oral health of the public. Its broad base of membership provides a fertile environment and numerous opportunities for the exchange of ideas and experiences.

American College of Prosthodontists

211 East Chicago Avenue
Suite 1000
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 312-573-1260
Fax: 312-573-1257
www.prosthodontics.org

The American College of Prosthodontists (ACP) is the professional association of dentists with advanced specialty training in creating optimal oral health, both in function and appearance including dental implants, dentures, veneers, crowns, and teeth whitening. The ACP represents the needs and interests of prosthodontists within organized dentistry and to the public by providing a means for stimulating awareness and interest in the field.

Special Care Dentistry Association

401 North Michigan Avenue
Suite 2200
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 312-527-6764
Fax: 312-673-6663
www.scdonline.org

The Special Care Dentistry Association (SCDA) brings together three organizations with mutual interests: the American Association of Hospital Dentists (AAHD), the Academy of Dentistry for Persons with Disabilities (ADPD), and the American Society for Geriatric Dentistry (ASGD). SCDA works with oral health professionals and other organizations to promote the oral health of individuals with special needs. SCDA provides a variety of resources and opportunities for individuals interested in advancing the oral health of special needs patients.

RESEARCH

American Association for Dental Research

1619 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: 703-548-0066
Fax: 703-548-1883
www.aadronline.org

The American Association for Dental Research (AADR) advances research and increases knowledge for the improvement of oral health. The association also sponsors student research fellowships to encourage dental students to conduct research.

National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research

National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, MD 20892
Phone: 301-496-4261
Fax: 301-480-4098
www.nidcr.nih.gov

The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) provides grants for research training for high school, college, dental, and postgraduate dental students. It is the major source of research funding to dental schools and offers both intramural and extramural research grants and training opportunities.

PROFESSIONAL**American Association of Women Dentists**

216 West Jackson Boulevard
 Suite 625
 Chicago, IL 60606
 Phone: 800-920-2293
 Fax: 312-750-1203
www.aawd.org

The American Association of Women Dentists (AAWD) celebrates the rich history of women dentists. AAWD represents women dentists across the United States, internationally, and in the uniformed forces. The organization provides support and education to women in the dental industry and is constantly striving toward “becoming the recognized resource for connecting and enriching the lives of women dentists.”

American College of Dentists

839J Quince Orchard Boulevard
 Gaithersburg, MD 20878
 Phone: 301-977-3223
 Fax: 301-977-3330
www.acd.org

The American College of Dentists (ACD) is the oldest national honorary organization for dentists. Its mission is to promote excellence, ethics, professionalism, and leadership in dentistry. ACD’s activities include conferences, programs, and online resources. Membership is by invitation only.

American Dental Association

211 East Chicago Avenue
 Chicago, IL 60611
 Phone: 312-440-2500
 Fax: 312-440-7494
www.ada.org

The American Dental Association (ADA) is the professional association of dentists committed to the public’s oral health, ethics, science, and professional advancement. The ADA has information about dental licensure and postdoctoral study. In addition, the ADA sponsors the Dental Admission Test (DAT), which every applicant to a U.S. dental school must take (see Chapter 2).

Association of Schools of Public Health

1101 15th Street, NW
 Suite 910
 Washington, DC 20005
 Phone: 202-296-1099
 Fax: 202-296-1252
www.asph.org

The Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH) represents the deans, faculty, and students of the accredited member schools of public health and other programs seeking accreditation as schools of public health. The ASPH collects information on careers in public health, which is useful to individuals interested in pursuing careers in dental public health.

Hispanic Dental Association

3085 Stevenson Drive
Suite 200
Springfield, IL 62703
Phone: 217-529-6517
Fax: 217-529-9120
www.hdassoc.org

The Hispanic Dental Association (HDA) provides a voice for the Hispanic oral health professional, promotes the oral health of the Hispanic community, fosters research and knowledge concerning Hispanic oral health problems, and encourages the entry of Hispanics into the oral health profession. The HDA offers scholarships for predoctoral and postdoctoral students and provides a membership category for students.

National Dental Association

3517 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20010
Phone: 202-588-1697
Fax: 202-588-1244
www.ndaonline.org

The National Dental Association (NDA), which is made up of African American dentists, sponsors minority student scholarships for both undergraduate and postgraduate dental students, a student organization (SNDA), and distributes career development tools that are available for use by schools, dentists, and other groups. The NDA's mission is to represent the concerns of ethnic minorities in dentistry, to elevate the global oral health concerns of underserved communities, to enhance educational and financial opportunities, and public policy awareness, for its members, and to recruit underrepresented minorities into the profession through advocacy and mentorship.

Society of American Indian Dentists

P.O. Box 606
Venice, CA 90294
Phone: 301-392-4103
www.societyofamericanindiandentists.org

The Society of American Indian Dentists (SAID) promotes dental health in the American Indian community, encourages American Indian youth to pursue a career in dentistry, promotes American Indian heritage and traditional values, and promotes and supports the unique concerns of American Indian dentists. Resources are also available for high school students and undergraduate students. Dental students are eligible for membership.

ORAL HEALTH CARE ADVOCACY

Oral Health America

410 North Michigan Avenue
Suite 352
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 312-836-9900
Fax: 312-836-9986
www.oralhealthamerica.org

Oral Health America (OHA) is a fully-independent nonprofit organization supported through contributions from individuals who believe that oral health should be recognized as one of the lifetime factors critical to overall health. OHA develops, implements, and facilitates educational and service programs designed to improve the oral health of all Americans.

OTHER RESOURCES

College, university, and public libraries generally have a range of publications about careers, undergraduate and graduate education, and financial aid. As a result, it is worthwhile to visit a library to gather information about careers in dentistry, dental educational programs, and sources of student assistance. Some of the publications you may find there include the following information. If you prefer to acquire copies yourself, contact the organizations as noted.

■ **Dental Admission Testing Program Application and Preparation Materials**

In addition to the application form that students must complete to take the DAT, this publication contains information that will help students prepare for the test.

Available from:

ADA Department of Testing Services
211 East Chicago Avenue
Suite 600, Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 800-232-2162
www.ada.org/prof/ed/testing/dat/index.asp

■ **Getting Through Dental School: American Student Dental Association's (ASDA) Guide for Dental Students**

This biennial reference volume includes information on scholarships and loans, grants, public health and international opportunities, as well as ASDA membership benefits and leadership opportunities.

■ **Getting into Dental School: American Student Dental Association's (ASDA) Guide for Predental Students**

This resource guide specifically targets the needs of predental students and those considering careers in dentistry. It is a reference volume of facts on applying to dental school, financial aid, ASDA membership benefits, debt management, and more. The handbook also includes career options in the dental field and a survival guide for passing the DAT.

■ **American Student Dental Association's (ASDA) Guides to Postdoctoral Programs, Vol. 1-3**

This set of publications offers information about general practice residencies, advanced education in general dentistry, and other postdoctoral training programs.

The ASDA publications are available from:

American Student Dental Association
211 East Chicago Avenue
Suite 700
Chicago, IL 60611
312-440-2795 / 800-621-8099 x2795
www.asdanet.org

ON TO PART II

The five chapters in Part I have helped you learn the basics about careers in dentistry, meeting criteria for acceptance into dental school, paying for the costs of a dental education, deciding to which dental schools to apply, and finding additional information to answer the particular questions you have. Part II, Learning about Dental Schools, will give you an opportunity to put this general information to use by introducing you to every dental school in the United States and Canada.