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Federal Dental Service  
Membership Office

## American Dental Association

FDS Membership Office  
211 East Chicago Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60611

Phone: 800-232-2083 or 312-440-4646  
Fax: 312-440-2883  
[fdsmember@ada.org](mailto:fdsmember@ada.org)

## From The ADA Washington Office ★ ★ ★

Greetings from the ADA Washington office! Your ADA Washington lobbying staff continues to work hard to represent the interests of dentists in the federal services:

**VA**

At this writing it appears that Congress is poised to pass a provision in the VA Benefits Act (HR 2297) that would allow former American prisoners of war, who were interned for less than 90 days, to receive full dental benefits. This provision has won the wide support of Congress. Five bills were introduced this year that contain this provision (HR 348, HR 850, HR 1347, HR 3260 and S. 239).

The House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Health held a hearing on October 21 to examine the VA's proposed pay structure changes, which would benefit some VA dentists. With the Congress heading for recess, the proposal will probably be postponed until next year.

**Public Health Service**

In response to an ADA request, Congress adopted report language with the FY 2004 health appropriations bill that focuses on the decline in oral health leadership and personnel within the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). In January 2002, HRSA regional dental consultants submitted a report to the agency that stated the number of dental health professionals has declined from more than 100 to less than 20 and of those 33 percent reach the 30-year mandatory retirement level for commissioned corps officers in 2003. Congress has requested that HRSA report by February 2004 on what actions HRSA will take to address this situation, including its response to the consultants' report.

**Military**

Earlier this year, Rep. Rob Simmons (R-CT) introduced legislation (HR 2287) that would change current law to allow for the continuation of additional special pay for dental officers while in a training status. The bill is similar to legislation Rep. Simmons introduced in 2002. As of this writing, Congress has yet to take any action on HR 2287, however, ADA staff will be working to get a similar Senate bill introduced.

The ADA congratulates Rear Admiral (Select) Carol Turner who was installed as the new chief of the Navy Dental Corps. Adm. Turner, the first woman to hold the position, relieves Rear Admiral Dennis Woofter, who goes on to become the new chief staff officer for the Navy Surgeon General's office.

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## Grassroots Initiative Taking Hold in FDS

The ADA has initiated a grassroots member-to-member initiative within the federal dental services. The Federal Grassroots Membership Initiative (FGMI) will help the ADA grow their ranks among federal dentist members. Currently just over half of all dentists in the federal services are ADA members. We need to grow this number so that the ADA can continue to credibly claim before legislators that we speak for the dental profession . . . that means you!

The intent of the program is to encourage current ADA/FDS members to communicate the membership message to their colleagues in the federal services. The ADA makes this task easier by providing FGMI volunteers with the tools they'll need to spread the word. These include brochures, applications, presentation material and sample letters they can use to better communicate ADA/FDS membership benefits.

No good deed goes unrewarded! Dentists who participate in the program will be eligible to win the grand prize of an all-expense paid trip to the 2004 ADA Annual Session in Orlando, FL! The dentist from each branch who recruits the most new FDS members by July 1, 2004 will win the trip. But remember, in order to be eligible for these incentives, you must be a current ADA member. So this is just one of the many reasons to renew your ADA membership.

Details of the program will be mailed to all current ADA/FDS members. We encourage you to volunteer. If you are a member dentist and would like to sign up for the Initiative or just want more information, contact the FDS Membership Office at 1-800-232-2083/ 312-440-4646 or email [fdsmember@ada.org](mailto:fdsmember@ada.org).

## Dues Go Even Lower For New Grads

Many federal dentists know that the ADA offers a Reduced Dues Program to help new graduates ease into active member dues. The rates for dentists who graduated before January 1, 2003 are: 25% of full national dues/assessment the first full calendar year following dental school, 50% the second year, 75% the third year and 100% the fourth year and thereafter.

But starting January 1, that good deal gets even better! The ADA House of Delegates took a look at new dentists' financial issues and decided to expand the program beginning with the class of 2003: \$0 dues in your first year in practice. That means the progression is 0% - 25% - 50%- 75%-100% for national dues/assessment.

Many federal dentists, especially those in the military, complete a graduate program or residency as part of their service. The graduate student dues rate remains \$30. For dentists who go into a grad program following dental school graduation, the 0% - 25% - 50%- 75%-100% progression kicks in the membership year after you finish your program or residency.

The change makes it even easier for new graduates to maintain ADA membership. Because state and local dental society membership is not required, many new federal dentists can get their first year of ADA membership absolutely free!

Renewals for 2004 membership begin December 1, 2003. 2003 dental school graduates will pay \$0 dues in 2004. Also paying \$0 in 2004 are dentists who graduated before 2003 but maintained continuous graduate student membership since graduation and completed their graduate training in 2003.

For more details about the ADA Reduced Dues Program, see the Frequently Asked Questions on [ADA.org](http://ADA.org), or call the FDS membership office at 1-800-232-2083 / 312-440-4646 or email [fdsmember@ada.org](mailto:fdsmember@ada.org).

## From The ADA Washington Office

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### **Other Issues of Interest**

The ADA has taken the lead among health care organizations in working with a coalition of organizations to change current law regarding student loan consolidation during consideration of the Higher Education Act (HEA) reauthorization. Presently, individuals with student loans are limited in their ability to refinance their loans with the company of their choice. The ADA is working to change the law to allow these individuals to be able to refinance whenever and with whomever they choose. HR 942 would help make the necessary changes.

The HEA reauthorization also provides an opportunity to try to expand the student loan interest deduction. Presently, two bills have been introduced (HR 826 and S. 4) that would increase the deductible amount. We will try to incorporate these provisions in the HEA reauthorization bill.

### **ADA Washington Office Welcomes New Staff**

Frank Kyle, D.D.S. joined the staff of the ADA Washington Office as manager, legislative and regulatory policy. Dr. Kyle recently retired from the Air Force, where he served as associate director of dental services at Bolling AFB.













American Dental Association  
www.ada.org

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U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
CHICAGO, IL  
PERMIT NO. 3458

**Department of Membership**  
211 East Chicago Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60611-2678

## Dentists From Navy and VA Participate in the ADA Institute for Diversity in Leadership

Congratulations to Navy dentist Dr. Flauryse Baguidy and VA dentist Dr. John Jow for their selection as two of the eight participants in the inaugural class of the ADA Institute for Diversity in Leadership. The Board of Trustees chose Drs. Baguidy and Jow from a pool of 130 applicants. The Institute's first class of eight participants convened on September 4-5, 2003.

The ADA Institute for Diversity in Leadership is a three-part leadership training program for dentists from racial, ethnic, and/or gender backgrounds that have been traditionally under-represented in leadership roles. Institute classes are taught by faculty from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University in a small group setting. Due to the popularity of the



Photo courtesy ADA News, © 2003 American Dental Association

**Dr. Baguidy**



Photo courtesy ADA News, © 2003 American Dental Association

**Dr. Jow**

program, the 2004 Institute class has been expanded to include 12 participants. If you would like to receive information or an application, please call 312-440-4699 or email [starsiaks@ada.org](mailto:starsiaks@ada.org) to be put on the Institute mailing list. Information about the 2004 Institute will be available in January.