

2010 William McKenna Volunteer Heroes



Each year, the Massachusetts Dental Society and the JOURNAL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS DENTAL SOCIETY join forces to honor those member dentists who have dedicated their energy, skills, and time to the profession of organized dentistry. They are the William McKenna Volunteer Heroes, in honor of Dr. William McKenna, who was a driving force behind the development of the Yankee Dental Congress and a model of volunteerism within the MDS. This year, we continue to celebrate those members who have gone above and beyond to help the MDS achieve its goals, inspire colleagues, and advance the profession of dentistry.

This annual recognition is the Society's way of saying thank-you to those deserving members who give so much of themselves to organized dentistry.

On the following pages, you will meet the 2010 Volunteer Heroes and learn about their thoughts

on the impact that volunteers have on the Society and the profession, what they have gained both professionally and personally from their volunteer experiences, and why they think getting involved is so important to the future of dentistry.

These Volunteer Heroes may have varied backgrounds in dentistry and different experiences in volunteering for organized dentistry, but the one thing they have in common is a fierce passion for their profession and for the importance of volunteering.

The MDS, the Yankee Dental Congress, and organized dentistry would not be what they are today if not for the enthusiastic dedication of dentists like the ones you will meet on the following pages. We encourage you to learn more about them and why they think it's important that members like you get more involved in the MDS and in organized dentistry.

Deborah A. Almeida, DMD

Residence: Westport

Office Location: Westport

Specialty: Periodontology

Dental Education: University of Pennsylvania (DMD); Boston University (CADS in Periodontics)

Number of Years in Practice: 23

Number of Years of MDS Membership: 25



When and why did you decide to join the MDS and be part of organized dentistry?

I decided to join as soon as I graduated from dental school. I always felt that it was important to be a part of organized dentistry because of the wealth of information and support that could be had by talking and interacting with colleagues.

Is involvement in organized dentistry important to you? If so, why?

I think it is very important. Organized dentistry is where you can find out answers to questions about dental legislation, state laws and mandates, and insurance. You can be part of a group that collectively can make an impact on how you practice and your ability to treat patients and make a fair living.

Please describe the extent of your volunteer experience in dentistry.

I have served twice as chair of the Southeastern District Dental Society of the MDS, with my most recent term ending last May. I have been a member of the MDS Council on Dental Care, and in 1995 served as chair. I have participated in missionary trips to Honduras (in 2004) and Tanzania (in 2008 and 2009).

Is there one volunteer experience that stands out in your memory? One day/event/person that made you know it was worth volunteering your time and expertise?

The two mission trips to Tanzania where I was able to take my teenage daughter with me were especially rewarding. I was able to make a direct impact on the lives of these villagers who lived in remote areas by getting them out of pain, basically by extractions. But I also felt that I was bringing some hope and understanding to my daughter by showing her that we are all people of the world, and we are all responsible for each other and instilling in her the need to help. She was able to see that we have a lot of similarities with folks who live very primitively halfway around the world who do not speak the same language and, in most instances, do not have electricity or running water.

How has your volunteering impacted you on a professional and personal level?

It brings it back to basics for me: What I do directly impacts the quality of someone's life.

Do you volunteer in community and philanthropic activities outside of dentistry? If so, what are they and what drew you to them?

As a single mother of a teenager, she keeps me pretty busy. I do fundraising for Missions for Humanity. I also try to support and help my daughter, who just won an Unsung Hero Award for her work over the last four years with the New Bedford Sunset Program, where she helped with feeding the elderly and disabled.

What do you feel are the most important issues facing organized dentistry today?

I would have to say that the impact of the economic recession—with people losing jobs, benefits, and the ability to keep up with their regular maintenance visits, as well as being able to treat dental disease—is one of the most important issues we face today.

In one sentence, what would you say to a recent dental school graduate to convince him/her to get more involved in organized dentistry?

With organized dentistry, you have a stronger voice as part of a group to impact your chosen way to make a living, and also it gives you access to a wealth of information and practical experience.

What is your favorite . . .

Thing about the MDS? The people—the tireless work of people striving to make dentistry better by making the MDS such a viable organization

Word? Propeller

Vacation spot? Yet to be determined. I have traveled a lot and love it, but I am always looking for the next spot or adventure.

Part of your job? Helping people regain their smiles and confidence

Dental procedure to perform? I would say surgery to save someone's teeth so that they can chew and smile

Sport to watch? Patriots football

Way to unwind on the weekend? Enjoying family and friends, sailing, knitting, and helping my daughter, who is a high school senior, become the wonderful young woman that she is turning into.

Robert B. Amato, DMD

Residence: Bedford

Office Locations: Wellesley, Brookline, Lexington, Boston, and Medford

Specialty: Endodontics

Dental Education: Tufts University School of Dental Medicine (DMD and Endo); Rhode Island Hospital (GPR)

Number of Years in Practice: 30

Number of Years of MDS Membership: 29



When and why did you decide to join the MDS and be part of organized dentistry?

I joined the MDS as a student member when I started specialty training. I never assumed that a dental professional would not belong to his or her professional association on a local, state, and national level. Membership in these organizations is essential to the past, present, and future of our profession.

Is involvement in organized dentistry important to you? If so, why?

Involvement in organized dentistry is essential to my professional life. Helping our profession in any way possible is important to me. The full-time staff at the MDS and other professional organizations are committed to excellence in all that they do for dentistry, and the volunteer positions I have undertaken merely assist them in making our meetings, conferences, and profession better.

Please describe the extent of your volunteer experience in dentistry.

I have been active with the Metropolitan District Dental Society, serving as a committee member, assistant treasurer, and treasurer. I've also volunteered with the Yankee Dental Congress, serving as a member of the Scientific Committee, co-chair of General Arrangements, and co-chair of Allied Scientific, as well as chair of the Exhibits Committee three times.

I have also been active in the American Association of Endodontics: as a member and chair of the Clinical Practice Committee, member of the Continuing Education Committee, and member of the Board of Directors. I have also held a position on the American Dental Association CERP Committee. I am also involved with the Tufts University Dental Alumni Association and have served as president of its Board of Directors.

Is there one volunteer experience that stands out in your memory? One day/event/person that made you know it was worth volunteering your time and expertise?

I would have to say that my first time attending a YDC Exhibits Committee meeting stands out. Specifically, working with MDS staffer Shannon McCarthy and seeing how much she knew and how much enthusiasm she had for our organization. How can you not want to help out?

How has your volunteering impacted you on a professional and personal level?

It has made me more aware of group dynamics and the importance of running good meetings to advance the cause of an organization. Also, volunteering has allowed me to make new friendships, while maintaining old ones.

Do you volunteer in community and philanthropic activities outside of dentistry? If so, what are they and what drew you to them?

I coached Little League for more than nine years and had more fun doing that than with any other experience in my life. Beyond spending time with my son, coaching his friends and seeing these kids grow up was amazing.

What do you feel are the most important issues facing organized dentistry today?

One of the most important issues facing organized dentistry today is the continued imposition of insurance companies on how we treat patients. We must also be concerned about the potential shortage of dental educators that will seriously hurt our profession. Education is key to the future of our profession.

In one sentence, what would you say to a recent dental school graduate to convince him/her to get more involved in organized dentistry?

This is what you do, this is your profession; get involved and make things better.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE . . .

Thing about the MDS? The Yankee Dental Congress and the people

Vacation spot? Kiawah Island, South Carolina

Part of your job? Using the microscope to see root canal anatomy. It sounds lame, but it is cool.

Dental procedure to perform? Endodontics (obviously)

Book? *Nine Bad Shots of Golf and What to Do About Them*

Sport to watch? Golf

Movie? *Caddyshack*

TV show? *Mad Men*

Way to unwind on the weekend? Walk the dog with my wife, and either golf or ski

Neela Gandhi, BDS, DMD

Residence: Chestnut Hill

Office Location: Brookline

Specialty: General Dentistry

Dental Education: University of Manchester School of Dental Medicine, UK (BDS); Tufts University School of Dental Medicine (DMD)

Number of Years in Practice: 16

Number of Years of MDS Membership: 4



When and why did you decide to join the MDS and be part of organized dentistry?

I joined the MDS right after graduation from the Dental International Program at the Tufts University School of Dental Medicine (TUSDM) in 2006. The MDS provides an excellent forum to help bring out the best in me professionally by enhancing my dental skills, enabling me to network with other dentists, and assisting the profession to deal with emerging issues.

Is involvement in organized dentistry important to you? If so, why?

Organized dentistry is a great platform for dentists to lobby for and promote common issues facing the profession in an ever-changing world. For example, the MDS was successful in lobbying for the bill that allows retired dentists who are willing to provide care at no cost in free-care clinics to qualify for a volunteer dental license. The MDS was also successful in getting a phase-out of Delta Dental's 5 percent discount over a period of three years.

Please describe the extent of your volunteer experience in dentistry.

I have been fortunate to have had extensive volunteer experience in organized dentistry. In 2007–2008, I was selected for the MDS Leadership Institute Program, which led to my role as a representative for the Council on Membership for the Metropolitan District Dental Society (MMDS). I have also assisted in the organization of the Charles River Study Club meetings for the MMDS and am currently vice president of the club. At the 2009 MDS House of Delegates, I was appointed by then MDS President Dr. David Samuels as a Member-at-Large on the District Reorganization Task Force, where I assisted in the development of a survey through the ADA that gave some idea of member satisfaction within districts in the Society. Also for the 2009–2010 year, I was a Guest Board Member of the MDS Board of Trustees, a program that provided me with a great opportunity to network with other Board members and learn about existing and emerging dental issues at the state level. I have volunteered at the Yankee Dental Congress as a room coordinator and presiding chair, and I am currently serving on the Scientific Committee for YDC 2013. I am also a member of the Inclusion Task Force, whose objectives are to get dentists from all diversities involved

with organized dentistry. Lastly, on several occasions, I volunteered on the MDS Foundation Mobile Access to Care (MAC) Van, which traveled throughout the state to provide oral care to underserved children.

Is there one volunteer experience that stands out in your memory? One day/event/person that made you know it was worth volunteering your time and expertise?

During my tenure as representative for the MDS Council on Membership for the Metropolitan District, I helped to reduce the nonrenewal memberships by 37 percent in 2009. This was a gratifying experience, given that our country was in the middle of the financial meltdown and several dentists were finding it difficult to sustain their MDS memberships.

How has your volunteering impacted you on a professional and personal level?

Professionally, organized dentistry has provided me with an opportunity to network with other seasoned dentists and enhance my knowledge base. Being involved in organized dentistry has given me an opportunity to feel more a part of the profession and to see what happens outside the walls of my dental office. Personally, volunteering in organized dentistry has enabled me to become a better citizen by giving back some of my time to society, thus improving access to oral care for the underserved members of our society.

Do you volunteer in community and philanthropic activities outside of dentistry? If so, what are they and what drew you to them?

I am a member of the Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce, where I help organize meetings for "Women in Networking" and "Small Business Seminar" series of events. I am also involved with the United India Association of New England, which organizes social and cultural events to bring the Indian diaspora together and promote diversity in the New England area.

What do you feel are the most important issues facing organized dentistry today?

As the dental profession continues to evolve, it is logical to assume that some of the threats facing organized dentistry include: inaccessibility to care for the underserved due to

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Deedee Gurin, DMD, MAGD

Residence: Boston

Office Location: Milton

Specialty: General Dentistry

Dental Education: Boston University
Henry M. Goldman School of Dental
Medicine (DMD), Forsyth (RDH)

Number of Years in Practice: 14

**Number of Years of
MDS Membership:** 14



When and why did you decide to join the MDS and be part of organized dentistry?

As a dental student in the early 1990s, I was automatically enrolled in the Massachusetts Dental Society, but it was my mentors, Dr. Bill Leavitt and Dr. Rich LoGuercio, who encouraged me and really inspired me to become active in the organization. I saw firsthand the personal and professional advantages of being involved in organized dentistry.

Is involvement in organized dentistry important to you? If so, why?

Being involved in organized dentistry is extremely important to me. Not only have I found my own participation to be very rewarding, but I have also made it something of a mission to persuade my friends, colleagues, and staff to become involved. The MDS provides extremely helpful information on a wide spectrum of issues that are of interest to me, including the status of legislation affecting me and my practice, and it also advocates for dentists on a wide range of issues.

Please describe the extent of your volunteer experience in dentistry.

I am fortunate to have had a wide variety of very rewarding volunteer experiences as a dentist. I have been involved in the Child Identification Program (CHIP), in promoting dental health with Head Start, and in providing mouthguards and dental exams for participants in the Special Olympics here in Massachusetts. I have also had the opportunity to mentor dental students from Boston University. I was an assistant clinical professor there for 13 years, and I continue to volunteer in the Applied Professional Experience (APEX) Program, providing hands-on clinical experience to dental students twice a year.

I have also been to Nicaragua a number of times, working in small villages to educate people and promote basic dental hygiene. It is heartbreaking to see the amount of tooth decay and the general poor dental health of many Nicaraguans. I have found my work there to be tremendously rewarding. I have set up simple Swish and Spit Programs in the schools, leaving behind a year's supply of fluoride with the teachers in an effort to help children avoid more serious dental problems in the future. It truly has been a privilege for me to work with Project Stretch in providing this help to a country in such need.

In all honesty, though, perhaps my biggest volunteer commitment over the years has been with the MDS. Every year, I have attended the Yankee Dental Congress and have had progressively more responsibility for its success. I started as a room coordinator, and then served as presiding chair and co-chair. I attend numerous meetings with the MDS. I have also been involved with the South Shore District Dental Society (SSDDS), serving as program co-chair and now chair-elect, soon to become only the second female chair in the SSDDS's history.

Is there one volunteer experience that stands out in your memory? One day/event/person that made you know it was worth volunteering your time and expertise?

I believe it was when I received a postcard from someone who I helped while in Nicaragua that I realized the impact I have had on that one person, her family, and her village. It was very powerful.

How has your volunteering impacted you on a professional and personal level?

Being active in the MDS has had a tremendous impact on me, both professionally and personally. Being the sole dentist in my practice, I do not have many opportunities to talk with other dentists day to day, so this professional organization has introduced me to other dentists, many of whom have become close friends over the years. We meet regularly, both professionally and socially, and it has become a very positive support network in my life. I also rely on the MDS to keep me informed about important legislative measures and insurance regulations that may have a significant impact on my practice.

Do you volunteer in community and philanthropic activities outside of dentistry? If so, what are they and what drew you to them?

I keep very busy between my successful practice and my many volunteer activities within the dental profession. I am always eager to philanthropically support the efforts of others, though, and give generously to a wide range of organizations, including the American Cancer Society and the Jimmy Fund, among others.

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Philip Howells, DDS

Residence: Northborough

Office Location: Northborough

Specialty: General Dentistry

Dental Education: University of Michigan

Number of Years in Practice: 26

**Number of years of
MDS Membership:** 26



When and why did you decide to join the MDS and be part of organized dentistry?

In 1985, I was a new associate in Worcester. I was new to the area and did not know a soul. In fact, I joined a bowling league and worked as a waiter in the evenings just so I could meet some people. Dr. Joe Oakley took me to a local district meeting so I could meet other young dentists. I enjoyed the meeting, and a year later I found myself on a committee. I was hooked and have been involved ever since.

Is involvement in organized dentistry important to you? If so, why?

Through my early involvement in organized dentistry, I learned that the behind-the-scenes efforts of dentists at the district and state levels help enhance and protect our profession. In schools, volunteer clinics, church fairs, and other forums, there is so much that we, as dentists, have to offer to our communities.

Please describe the extent of your volunteer experience in dentistry.

I have gone into the Northborough schools to speak to the kids. I have also worked at the Child Identification Program (CHIP) clinics in our local mall and Northborough churches. I was one of many Worcester-area dentists who volunteered their services at the Quinsigamond Community College Dental Clinic. I was also fortunate to work on the MDS Foundation Mobile Access to Care (MAC) Van when it came to Worcester, and I have worked as a room coordinator and presiding chair at the Yankee Dental Congress.

Is there one volunteer experienced that stands out in your memory? One day/event/person that made you know it was worth volunteering your time and expertise?

One of my days volunteering on the MAC Van, I met a young 8-year-old boy with numerous decayed teeth. We had the time, so we restored seven teeth. He was an absolute joy to work with, and at the end of a long appointment and after multiple injections, he came up to me and gave me a big hug. I will never forget that day.

How has volunteering impacted you on a professional and personal level?

My experiences volunteering have been incredibly rewarding.

There [was] no better feeling than coming off a shift on the MAC Van and remembering all those smiling faces. As a result of these experiences, I believe I am a more compassionate dentist and a better parent. You can't help but feel better about yourself after a day of volunteering. These positive feelings are a great comfort to me at work and at home.

Do you volunteer in community and philanthropic activities outside of dentistry? If so, what are they and what drew you to them?

I am very active in the coaching community in our town. I have coached soccer, basketball, girls' softball, and baseball for the past 20 years. I love working with the kids, and I believe they learn a lot about life on the courts and ball fields. I really enjoy being a part of that. I am an avid sports fan and love being an active part of my kids' lives.

What do you feel are the most important issues facing organized dentistry today?

I am concerned that many of our younger dentists are not connecting with organized dentistry. There seems to be a certain apathy when it comes to getting involved. The face of dentistry is changing as more young people from different ethnic backgrounds join the profession, and we need to work hard to find a way to make organized dentistry meaningful to these young dentists so they can help shape the future.

In one sentence, what would you say to a recent dental school graduate to convince him/her to get more involved in dentistry?

The one person who can best improve and protect the future of dentistry is you.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE . . .

Thing about the MDS? The Yankee Dental Congress

Word? Crisp

Vacation spot? Yellowstone National Park

Part of your job? Conversing with patients

Dental procedure to perform? Repair of broken anterior tooth with composite

Book? *1776*

Sport to watch? College football—Go Blue!

Movie? *Field of Dreams*

TV show? *Modern Family*

Way to unwind on the weekend? Golfing, skiing

Pat Machalinski, DMD

Residence: Arlington

Office Location: Arlington

Specialty: Endodontics

Dental Education: Boston University
Henry M. Goldman School of Dental
Medicine (DMD, AEGD, Endo)

Number of Years in Practice: 16

**Number of Years of
MDS Membership:** 16



When and why did you decide to join the MDS and be part of organized dentistry?

I wish I had a more noble response—it was to attend the Yankee Dental Congress!

Is involvement in organized dentistry important to you? If so, why?

Involvement in organized dentistry is very important to me. I am responsible to give back to my profession. As well, I am responsible for the course that the future of dentistry will take.

Please describe the extent of your volunteer experience in dentistry.

I volunteered as a dental assistant when I was doing my prerequisites for dental school. When I was in dental school, I volunteered at Bridge Over Troubled Waters. Since I was in the endodontics program at Boston University, I volunteered as a CE instructor and now teach part-time in the endodontics department. I have volunteered at the Yankee Dental Congress in various capacities, and I volunteered on the MDS Foundation Mobile Access to Care (MAC) Van. I have also been on the MDS-PAC (Political Action Committee) Board for a number of years.

How has your volunteering impacted you on a professional and personal level?

Dr. Arthur Eddy, chair of the MDS-PAC Board, has had a profound impact on me. Dr. Eddy is very skillful at making sure that everyone is heard as he herds us toward accomplishment. He's led me to feel confident in taking action for the MDS-PAC. From him, I have learned how to interact with people.

Do you volunteer in community and philanthropic activities outside of dentistry? If so, what are they and what drew you to them?

I volunteer my efforts at my church and my daughter's school. Again, I feel responsible to help out.

What do you feel are the most important issues facing organized dentistry today?

Being united—I know we need to stand together to keep dentistry the best that it can be.

In one sentence, what would you say to a recent dental school graduate to convince him/her to get more involved in organized dentistry?

We need you, with your talents and your aspirations for dentistry; you will get more out of volunteering than what you put in.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE . . .

Thing about the MDS? The members and the staff
Word? Cogent

Part of your job? Performing endodontic procedures

Dental procedure to perform? Endodontics on #19

Way to unwind on the weekend? Cook a big meal for friends and family

Viktoriya P. Talebian, DMD

Residence: Swampscott

Office Location: Salem

Specialty: Orthodontics

Dental Education: Boston University
Henry M. Goldman School of Dental
Medicine (DMD and CAGS in Orthodontics)

Number of Years in Practice: 11

Number of Years of MDS Membership: 11



When and why did you decide to join the MDS and be part of organized dentistry?

The wonderful part of being an American Dental Association member is that your membership to the MDS is linked. As a student, I was a member of the student branch of the ADA, and so upon graduation it seemed natural to continue my membership. Being a part of organized dentistry allows me to feel a part of a body that really makes a difference in our profession.

Is involvement in organized dentistry important to you? If so, why?

There are so many aspects to organized dentistry that are of importance, but I especially enjoy the educational aspects. I have enjoyed serving on the Council on Dental Education and fostering positive relationships with the area dental schools, organizing educational programs for our members both at the Yankee Dental Congress and with the year-round offerings at the MDS through the Yankee Institute.

Please describe the extent of your volunteer experience in dentistry.

One of the most rewarding volunteer efforts that I have experienced was teaching in the postgraduate department of orthodontics at Boston University. I have also enjoyed leadership opportunities as program co-chair for the Women's Conference at YDC. Currently, I am serving as chair for the Council on Dental Education.

Is there one volunteer experience that stands out in your memory? One day/event/person that made you know it was worth volunteering your time and expertise?

Sometimes, those around you see something or recognize something in you that you may not see yourself. I felt this way the first time I was asked to co-chair a program at Yankee. When first approached, I was not certain if I had what it took to put a daylong event together. But the terrific staff at the MDS, a strong co-chair, and just tons of overall support made the effort worthwhile. The most rewarding experience is when one of the attendees comes up afterwards and says he or she really learned something.

How has your volunteering impacted you on a professional and personal level?

Giving back is something that my parents instilled in us at an

early age. They taught by example, donating countless hours to a number of civic organizations. I am working with my children now on the importance of volunteerism. Last spring, we organized a Save the Crocs drive at their school. We donated 50-plus pairs of Croc shoes to area children who did not have safe summertime footwear. It was a win-win. My children were proud of themselves for a job well done, and they were happy for the kids they were helping. What a feeling!

Do you volunteer in community and philanthropic activities outside of dentistry? If so, what are they and what drew you to them?

The Rotary Club of Salem is an unbelievable organization. I have served in multiple leadership roles in the club, and last year was named Rotarian of the Year for service projects in literacy, leadership, and fundraising. I cannot begin to express the pride I feel in saying that I am a Salem Rotarian, for all that we do for this wonderful community.

In one sentence, what would you say to a recent dental school graduate to convince him/her to get more involved in organized dentistry?

Look at yourself and say, "How can my unique talents and skills be best used to strengthen my chosen profession in dentistry?" Once they are identified, use involvement in organized dentistry to let those talents shine.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE . . .

Thing about the MDS? The staff. Wow, they do a fantastic job of keeping us informed and prepared. They make us look good. We could not ask for more.

Word? I have two: balance and gratitude

Vacation spot? My in-laws' place on the beach in Jupiter, Florida. Since having the kids, it is impossible to get there anymore, but once upon a time, it was the ultimate getaway. Panoramic vistas of palm trees, ocean, sand, and, unlike Swampscott, always warm.

Part of your job? It may sound quite basic, but I get excited when I see teeth move! Developing a plan and watching it take shape and come to life is like a little present every day. It's really fun.

Dental procedure to perform? Orthodontic deband. The day you take the braces off is the ultimate in satisfaction. The smiles and hugs are infectious.

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Dr. Neela Gandhi, continued from page 13

government cuts in dental benefits for adults, such as the MassHealth Program; the transfer of the dental experience from the baby boomers to the young dentists entering the profession; and compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and standards codes of practice in dentistry.

In one sentence, what would you say to a recent dental school graduate to convince him/her to get more involved in organized dentistry?

There is strength in numbers; organized dentistry provides recent dental school graduates with a forum for advancing their professional development through initiatives in education, advocacy, and promotion of the highest professional standards.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE . . .

Thing about the MDS? Professional development

Word? Networking

Vacation spot? Kenya

Part of your job? Resolving my patients' dental needs

Dental procedure to perform? Smile makeovers

Book? *Secrets*

Sport to watch? Tennis and football

Movie? *Avatar*

TV show? CNN programming

Way to unwind on the weekend? Swimming

Dr. Deedee Gurin, continued from page 14

What do you feel are the most important issues facing organized dentistry today?

I would have to say that dentistry has been impacted just as much by the recent economic downturn as any other profession or industry in this country. I am seeing it at every level, from businesses that are reducing dental coverage and increasing co-pays in order to cut costs, to patients who are deferring dental procedures because of financial difficulty. As an organization, the MDS has rightly kept its eye on the insurance industry and regulations, because that has an enormous impact on our business and our ability to provide the best possible dental care to our patients.

In one sentence, what would you say to a recent dental school graduate to convince him/her to get more involved in organized dentistry?

Quite simply, you must give to get back; everything I have put into volunteering in organized dentistry, I have gotten back a hundredfold.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE . . .

Thing about the MDS? Collaboration

Word? It's not a word, but a quote by Walt Disney: "Around here, however, we don't look backwards for very long. We keep moving forward, opening up new doors and doing new things . . . and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths."

Vacation spot? Florida

Part of your job? Patient satisfaction!

Dental procedure to perform? Extractions

Book? *Nonviolent Communication*

Sport to watch? Football. Go Pats!

Movie? *The Princess Bride*

TV show? *Modern Family*

Way to unwind on the weekend? Long runs

Welcome all for a...

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Dr. Viktoria Talebian, continued from page 17

Book? *The Bi-Dimensional Technique* by Dr. Tony Gianelly

Sport to watch? Basketball. My fondest memories of adolescence are sharing chicken wings and laughs with my dad while watching the Syracuse Orangemen play on a weekend afternoon.

Movie? *Coming to America*—the oh-so-silly adventure of an African prince who comes to America to find his bride. If you are going to spend two hours sitting, the movie has got to make you laugh!

TV show? Who has time for TV? Seriously, other than the occasional episode of *Iron Chef* on the Food Network, I have not watched TV in more than three years.

Way to unwind on the weekend? As the mother of three children, the weekends are all about the kids. Depending on the season, you will find me on the soccer, football, or baseball field; on the slopes or at the beach; or at a dance, piano, or Girl Scouts activity. This past fall, we enjoyed many family hikes.