

LSU Health

NEW ORLEANS

School of Dentistry

SEPTEMBER/ OCTOBER 2025

This newsletter is published by the LSU Health School of Dentistry's Office of Alumni Affairs. If you have an event or article you'd like published, please email ds-alumni@lsuhsc.edu for more information.

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LSU Health New Orleans Inaugural Employee Service Awards

On Wednesday, August 27, Chancellor Steve Nelson hosted the first-ever Employee Service Awards, celebrating LSU Health New Orleans faculty and staff with 30 or more years of service. Congratulations to our dedicated LSU School of Dentistry team members recognized at the ceremony—some of whom are pictured below!



Front Row (L-R): Dr. Brian Dyess, Martha Campbell, Jennifer Hew, Lynn Pittman, AJ DiVincenti, Leonard Aucoin, Dr. Laurie Moeller, Elizabeth Mayer, Delethia Scott, Dean John Gallo

Back Row (L-R): Dr. Stephen Brisco, Sedra Lyons, Dr. Sandra Andrieu, Dr. Gerald Evans, Derrick Salvant, Dr. William Yeadon, Michael Boutte

Escaping the Ordinary: Students Review with a Twist



Second-year DDS and DH students took their midterm prep to the next level in their local anesthesia course taught by Kellie Bourgeois, Clinical Assistant Professor of Comprehensive Dentistry. Instead of a traditional review, students teamed up for an “escape room” challenge—solving clues, communicating under pressure, and competing for a reward. The activity turned studying into an energetic, hands-on experience that kept everyone engaged and made the material stick.

Pictured are this year’s winners (L-R): Aubre Thibodeaux (DH2), Margaret Hovan (D2), Allison Meche (D2), Christina Vitale (D2)

LSUSD White Coat Ceremony 2025

On September 27, the LSU School of Dentistry proudly hosted its annual White Coat Ceremony, a time-honored tradition that marks a pivotal milestone for students entering the next phase of their professional education. The event celebrates the transition from the classroom to patient care, as students don their white coats, a symbol of professionalism, responsibility, and commitment to ethical practice.

Family, friends, and faculty gathered to share in this special moment, applauding the students' hard work and perseverance. The ceremony serves not only as a rite of passage but also as a reminder of the trust placed in dental professionals and the importance of ethical practice. The pride and excitement among attendees reflected the sense of community that defines the LSU School of Dentistry.

Dr. John Gallo, III, Professor and Dean of the School of Dentistry, opened the ceremony with welcoming remarks, congratulating students from the Dental Laboratory Technology, Dental Hygiene, and Doctor of Dental Surgery programs on their accomplishments and dedication to the profession.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Francis Martello, Clinical Associate Professor in the Department of Comprehensive Dentistry, who shared inspiring insights on the importance of integrity, compassion, and lifelong learning. Following the keynote, students were formally presented with their white coats and recited their Professional Oath for the first time, led by Dr. Thomas Giacona, Associate Professor and Interim Assistant Dean of Clinical Affairs.

The ceremony also featured the presentation of the student's Honor Code by Dr. Sandra Andrieu, Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Written by the classes receiving their white coats, the Honor Code serves as a foundation for students to reaffirm the values of altruism, equity, integrity, and empathy that guide the dental profession.

Dr. Andrieu concluded the event with closing remarks, encouraging students to wear their white coats with pride and to uphold the highest standards of ethical and compassionate care as they begin this next chapter in their educational journey.

LSUSD extends its sincere gratitude to the Pierre Fauchard Academy, the International College of Dentists, and the American College of Dentists for their generous support of the White Coat Ceremony. Their commitment to fostering excellence and professionalism in dental education helps make this meaningful tradition possible and reinforces the values that guide our future dental professionals.

We'd also like to extend our gratitude to those that made this ceremony happen, particularly Heather Allen, Associate Professor and Director of Student Affairs. Without their efforts, this event would not have been possible. Their dedication and behind-the-scenes work ensured a smooth and memorable ceremony for all.

LSUSD White Coat Ceremony 2025



**Doctor of Dental
Surgery
Class of 2028**

**Dental Hygiene
Class of 2026**



**Dental Laboratory Technology
Class of 2026**



**Internationally Educated Dentist Program
Doctor of Dental Surgery
Class of 2027**

Louisiana Dental Center Hosts the 14th Annual “Big Turnover”



For the 14th year, the Louisiana Dental Center brought excitement and community spirit to the dental school with its annual “Big Turnover” event. This much-anticipated tradition welcomes D4, DH2, and DLT2 students as they transition into their final year, celebrating their hard work and accomplishments.

This year’s event featured special guest, New Orleans Saints Defensive End, Chase Young, who stopped by to meet students and offer words of encouragement.

In addition to hosting the event, Louisiana Dental Center founder, Dr. Joey Lacoste, DDS ’80, presented a \$10,000 donation in support of the Student National Dental Association (SNDA) Summer Enrichment Program, an initiative that helps undergraduate students from underrepresented backgrounds prepare for dental school and future careers in dentistry.

Each year, Louisiana Dental Center’s generosity helps open doors for aspiring dental professionals. Their support expands opportunities and strengthens the oral health workforce serving communities across Louisiana.



(L-R): Everett Garrard, Devin Crockett, Sydney Causey, Chase Young, Tiyuana Myres (D3), Emma Cornejo (D2), Dr. Stephen Brisco, Yama Mistry (D3), Dr. Joseph Lacoste (DDS ’80)



(L-R): Trinity Foster (D4), Grace Kramer (D4), Chase Young, Jeremy Guidry (D4), Jacob Purifoy (D4), Phuong Duong (D4)

LSU ASDA Hosts the 16th Annual Loupes Fair

This year, LSU ASDA hosted the 16th Annual Loupes Fair, offering students, residents, and faculty an exciting opportunity to explore the latest innovations in dental loupes and accessories.

The event provided attendees with direct access to vendor representatives, allowing them to ask questions, compare products, and find the perfect pair of loupes tailored to their clinical needs and personal preferences.

With seven vendors showcasing a wide range of frames, lenses, and lighting options, participants were able to try on multiple styles, evaluate features side-by-side, and make informed decisions. From first-year students to seasoned residents, everyone benefited from the hands-on experience and expert guidance.

A special thank you to our participating vendors: Andau, Designs for Vision, Enova, LumaDent, Orascope, Q-Optics, and SurgiTel. Your presence and support made this event a success.

We also extend our appreciation to ASDA's Rivers Singley (D2) and Emily Eberts (D3) for their dedication and hard work in organizing this year's fair. Your efforts truly brought the event to life!



LSUSD Students Gain Career Insights at ASDA's Ask Me Anything Panel

On October 8, LSU ASDA welcomed five outstanding professionals for an "Ask Me Anything" Career Panel, giving students a chance to hear real-world advice and ask candid questions about life after dental school.

The panel, sponsored by the Louisiana Dental Association, was instrumental in creating a space where students could engage directly with experienced professionals and gain valuable insights into the dental field.

Panelists covered everything from the challenges of starting as a new dentist to managing multiple practices, dealing with insurance, and understanding contracts. Each speaker brought a unique perspective, sharing personal stories and practical tips helping students see the many paths a dental career can take.

We're grateful to everyone who joined us, and especially to our amazing panelists who made the event so informative and inspiring:

- Stormy Blair - Brown & Brown Insurance
- Dr. William Grand (DDS '98) - Grand Family Dentistry
- Dr. Lindi Perkins (DDS '17) - The Dental Suite
- Dr. Jill Donaldson (DDS '99, Peds '01) - Bippo's Place for Smiles
- Dr. Jorge Rodriguez (DLT '20, DDS '24) - Louisiana Dental Center



(L-R): Dr. Jill Donaldson, Dr. William Grand, Stormy Blair, Grace Boggs, Dr. Lindi Perkins, Dr. Jorge Rodriguez

Paws for a Cause 2025

On October 10, LSU's chapter of the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) hosted its annual Paws for a Cause in honor of World Mental Health Day. The event gave students, faculty, and staff a chance to step away from their busy schedules and focus on mental well-being. Attendees learned about mental health resources available through LSU Health's Campus Assistance Program and enjoyed some quality time with therapy dogs.

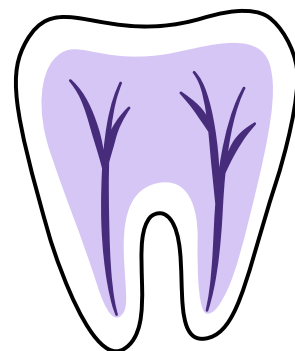
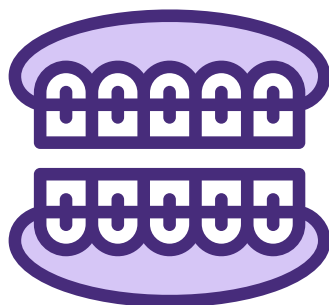


October is **National Dental Hygiene Month**, a month dedicated to honoring the incredible work of our dental hygiene alumni. In practices, classrooms, and communities, they educate patients, promote preventive care, and help build healthier smiles across Louisiana and beyond. Their dedication reflected the heart of LSUSD's mission through service, excellence, and compassion.

October is also **National Orthodontic Health Month**, which recognizes the skilled hands of our orthodontic faculty, residents, and alumni. Orthodontics goes beyond straight teeth - it improves function, boosts confidence, and supports lifelong oral health.

We joined the global dental community on October 16th in recognizing **World Endodontic Day**. Endodontists play a vital role in saving natural teeth and relieving pain, and our faculty, residents, and alumni lead the way through expert care, research, and education. Their contributions keep smiles healthy from the inside out.

To our alumni in these fields, thank you. Your passion, precision, and commitment inspired us and elevated the future of dentistry.



Moved recently? Got a new email or phone number? We'd love to stay in touch! Send your updated info to Sarah at spett3@lsuhsc.edu.

LSUSD Alumni Day 2025



Pictured: Dr. Carolyn Harris (DDS '86, center) with the Developmental Groove

The LSU School of Dentistry welcomed alumni, faculty, students, and friends back to campus on September 26 for Alumni Day, a celebration of learning, connection, and community.

The day began with a dynamic continuing education course presented by Dr. Troy Schmedding, a nationally recognized expert in restorative and aesthetic dentistry. His presentation, Responsible Dentistry: Advanced Materials and Techniques for the Modern Dental Team, gave attendees fresh insights into emerging materials and techniques, along with the opportunity to earn up to five hours of CE credit.

Alumni Day was also a time to honor two outstanding members of the LSUSD dental family. The late Dr. Henry Gremillion was posthumously awarded the 2025 Distinguished Alumnus Award, and Dr. Toby Cheramie was named the 2025 Alumnus of the Year. Both honorees have left a lasting mark on the profession and reflect the School's core values of service, scholarship, and leadership.

Dean John Gallo welcomed guests with heartfelt remarks, reminding everyone that Alumni Day is more than professional development. It's about reconnecting with the people and the place that helped shape their journey. "Today is about connection," he said. "Connection to this school, to one another, and to the profession we all serve."

The celebration wrapped up with a lively reception featuring music from the Developmental Groove, LSUSD's very own student and faculty band. Alumni caught up with old friends, shared stories, and made new memories, bringing the day to a close on a high note.

From the engaging CE sessions to the joyful evening reception, Alumni Day captured what makes the LSU School of Dentistry so special: a deep sense of pride, purpose, and family. Thank you to everyone who joined us and helped make this year's event such a success.



Sip & C.E. in Napa Valley Was a Great Success; Moving to Sonoma for 2026

LDA Last Chance Seminar to be Held December 12, 2025



Annette Drodgy
Executive Director
Louisiana Dental Association

LDA's first-ever Sip & C.E. in Napa Valley was September 17-19, 2025, at the Napa Valley Marriott Hotel & Spa. Sixty-five dental professionals registered for the C.E., which took place from 8 to 11 a.m. each morning, leaving the afternoons for exploring the valley, the vineyards, the wineries and the restaurants of the area. Several attendees even took a hot air balloon tour!

Being a successful event, LDA will host another Sip & C.E. in 2026 but we will move to the Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa in Sonoma, CA, September 16-18, 2026. Mark your calendars now! Our room block will open soon but until then, you can view pricing and information at

<https://www.ladental.org/sonoma>.



Drs. Danny and Stephanie Weaver enjoying a winery tour during the LDA's Sip & C.E. in Napa.



Dr. Nathaniel Lawson

If you weren't able to make it to Napa but still need C.E., the LDA's Last Chance Seminar is scheduled for Friday, December 12, 2025. It will be held at the Baton Rouge Marriott, right off the Interstate in Baton Rouge at the College Drive exit. For more information or to register, visit www.ladental.org/lastchance.

Attendees, including LDA member and non-member dentists, dental hygienists, and other staff can get up to 7 in-person, clinical hours just in time for the end of year license renewals.

Our speaker will be Nathaniel Lawson, D.M.D., Ph.D., who is the director of the Division of Biomaterials at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Dentistry and the program director of the Biomaterials residency program. His research interests are the mechanical, optical, and biologic properties of dental materials and clinical evaluation of new dental materials. The morning course will be "Materials and Techniques to Improve Your Conservative, Adhesive Dentistry." The afternoon course is "Advanced Topics in Prevention."

Upcoming LDA/ADA Events

Last Chance Seminar (Baton Rouge) | *December 12, 2025*

Winter C.E. in Big Sky, MT | *February 15-17, 2026*

NODC/LDAAS (New Orleans) | *April 9-11, 2026*

Summer Education Conference (Pensacola) | *June 17-20, 2026*

Winter C.E. at Walt Disney World | *February 7-9, 2027*

NODC/LDAAS (New Orleans) | *April 8-10, 2027*

Winter C.E. at Walt Disney World | *February 27-29, 2028*

For more information or to register, please visit ladental.org/events