

2026 NORTH CAROLINA DENTAL SOCIETY AWARDS

Recognizing individuals most
deserving in all phases of dentistry,
community service and leadership



NORTH CAROLINA
DENTAL SOCIETY®

2026

AGENDA

Welcome

Dr. Shelley Olson
President, NC Dental Society

Thank You, Sponsors

Towne Bank, Ms. Kati Sessoms &
Ms. Sinderpal Bajwa
NCDS 401K PEP, Mr. Richard Hill

Special Recognitions

Dr. Roslyn Crisp
Immediate Past President, NC Dental Society

2025 Annual Session Committee

Dr. Tiarra Rorie, Dr. Brad Adams,
Dr. L'Tanya Bailey, Dr. Karen Barwick,
Dr. Scott Cashion, Dr. Dan Cheek,
Dr. Mikie Farmer, Dr. Janet Guthmiller,
Dr. Shelley Olson, Dr. Ali Shazib,
Dr. Margaret Wilson

Presentation of Awards

Dr. Stan Hardesty
Chair, Awards Committee

Student Leaders in Organized Dentistry
Award

Special Recognition Award

Citizenship Award

Outstanding Early Career Dentist Award

Mid-Career Dentist Award

Meritorious Achievement Award

Distinguished Service Scroll

Closing

Dr. Stan Hardesty

Student Leader in Organized Dentistry

Each of the state's dental schools selects a deserving fourth-year student who has shown exceptional leadership and interest in organized dentistry. Often, they have been involved with the NC Dental Society or other professional dental organizations while in dental school and display outstanding potential for future leadership in organized dentistry.



DR. LINDSEY CLEVINGER (ECU)

Dr. Lindsey Clevenger (Greenville) is a rising dental professional recognized for her academic excellence, leadership, and dedication

to service. A first-generation college student from rural North Carolina, she earned her Bachelor of Science in Biology with a concentration in Cell and Molecular Biology from East Carolina University, graduating magna cum laude with Biology Honors and a minor in Business Administration.

During her dental education, Dr. Clevenger has demonstrated strong leadership and engagement in organized dentistry. She has held multiple roles within the American Student Dental Association, including District 4 Secretary Chair, Pre-Dental Committee Chair, and ECU ASDA First Delegate, representing her institution at the national level. She also served as a Student Trustee for the North Carolina Dental Society, contributing to organizational leadership and communication.

An accomplished scholar, she has published research in peer-reviewed journals and presented on scientific argumentation in undergraduate education. She has received numerous scholarships and honors, including the District 4 ASDA Outstanding Leader Award, and remains dedicated to community service through Missions of Mercy clinics and other outreach initiatives across North Carolina. Following graduation, she will continue her training as an Advanced Education in General Dentistry resident at Augusta University Dental College of Georgia.



DR. ELMIRA HEZARKHANI (UNC)

Dr. Elmira Hezarkhani (Chapel Hill) is an emerging leader in dentistry whose academic excellence, leadership, and commitment to patient-centered care distinguish

her as a rising talent in the profession. Born in Toronto, Canada, and raised in the suburbs of Chicago, she pursued her undergraduate studies at Duke University, where she majored in neuroscience and music, reflecting both scientific rigor and creative discipline.

2026 WINNERS

Her interest in dentistry was inspired by her sister's journey through dental school, fostering an early appreciation for prevention and the importance of compassionate patient care. At the University of North Carolina Adams School of Dentistry, Dr. Hezarkhani distinguished herself through her dedication to leadership, education, and mentorship. She served in leadership roles within the American Student Dental Association, contributed as a teaching assistant in multiple pre-clinical courses, and co-chaired the Orthodontics Interest Group, supporting the development and engagement of her peers.

Known for her curiosity, collaborative spirit, and enthusiasm for learning, Dr. Hezarkhani also contributes to outreach and community engagement efforts, emphasizing the value of dental education and service. Her passion for orthodontics and lifelong learning will guide her next chapter as she continues her training at the University of Illinois, Chicago.

Special Recognition

Honorees in this category deserve recognition for a specific achievement or extraordinary deed, which may or may not be related to dentistry. This category provides for special circumstances that do not conform to other awards, and the nominee need not be a dentist.



DR. PAUL LINDAUER

Dr. Paul Lindauer (Greenville) is a respected educator, mentor, and leader in dentistry, whose career has spanned both military service and academic excellence. He earned his DDS from Loyola University of Chicago and dedicated 33 years to the U.S. Navy Dental Corps, where he served with distinction, providing care to service members and honing his expertise in clinical dentistry.

Following his military career, Dr. Lindauer joined the faculty of the East Carolina School of Dental Medicine in 2014, serving in the Endodontics Division until his retirement on August 1, 2025. During his tenure, he became widely recognized for his encouragement, guidance, and passion for teaching. He played an instrumental role in the school's National Student Signing Day efforts, helping ensure that for seven consecutive years, 100% of graduating students joined the North Carolina Dental Society and the American Dental Association.

A devoted advocate for organized dentistry, Dr. Lindauer has actively served in both the North Carolina Dental Society and American Dental Association House of Delegates. His commitment to fostering professional growth and engagement has left a lasting impact on both colleagues and students. Through his teaching, mentorship, and leadership, Dr. Lindauer has helped shape a generation of dentists while advancing the values of service, professionalism, and lifelong learning.

Citizenship

This award recognizes dentists who render outstanding service to their fellow man or woman, either related to a specific event or over a period of years. Areas of achievement may include civic affairs, community or public service, or cultural, humanitarian, and religious activities.



DR. SCOTT DAVENPORT

Dr. C. Scott Davenport (Charlotte) is a distinguished dentist whose career reflects decades of dedication to his profession and community. A native of Charlotte, he earned a B.S. in Biology from UNC Charlotte before completing his D.D.S. at UNC School of Dentistry. He established a private practice in his hometown, where he combines exceptional clinical care with a steadfast commitment to mentoring, professional service, and community engagement.

Dr. Davenport has played a pivotal role in organized dentistry, serving as Past President of the Second District Dental Society, the North Carolina Dental Society, the Charlotte Dental Society, the UNC Dental Alumni Association, and the NC Dental Society Foundation. He has also contributed nationally as an American Dental Association council member, shaping policy and advancing the profession across North Carolina and beyond.

Deeply devoted to community service, Dr. Davenport has volunteered as an Explorer Scout Dental Post Leader, a dentist for the U.S. Olympic Committee, a Donated Dental Service provider, President of the Charlotte Regional Dental Health Foundation and has been a tireless leader with the NC Dental Society Foundation Missions of Mercy. Currently serving as Program Chair, he provides strategic guidance and hands-on leadership, helping expand access to care for underserved populations statewide.

Through his unwavering dedication to professional excellence and service, Dr. Davenport has left a lasting impact on both the dental profession and the communities he serves.



Deferred from 2025

DR. EVE BROWN

Dr. Eve Brown (Raleigh) is a distinguished leader in dentistry, recognized for her decades of service and commitment to organized dentistry. She earned her undergraduate degree from Meredith College and her D.D.S. from the University of North Carolina in 2000.

Throughout her career, Dr. Brown has held multiple leadership roles in organized dentistry, including President of the NC Dental Society's Fourth District, President of Raleigh Wake County Dental Society, and Treasurer for the North Carolina Dental Political Action Committee. Additionally, she has served as Fellow and Treasurer for the International College of Dentists – North Carolina Section.

An active member of the American Dental Association, the North Carolina Dental Society, the Raleigh Wake County Dental Society, and the International College of Dentists, Dr. Brown demonstrates a steadfast commitment to advancing dentistry and supporting her peers.

Now retired, she continues to dedicate her time to volunteer efforts, reflecting a lifelong commitment to service and community engagement. Through her leadership, mentorship, and ongoing involvement, Dr. Brown has left a lasting impact on the profession and the dental community she serves.

Outstanding Early Career Dentist

Nominees in this category have been out of dental school for 10 years or less. They should demonstrate outstanding leadership qualities, involvement, and service to the NC Dental Society.



DR. VICTORIA MCGOWEN

Dr. Victoria McGowen (New Bern) is a dedicated leader in dentistry with a strong commitment to education, mentorship, and community service. A native of Rocky Mount, she earned her bachelor's, master's and Doctor of Dental Medicine degrees from East Carolina University. During her time at ECU, Dr. McGowen actively participated in stu-

dent organizations and club sports while volunteering at numerous Missions of Mercy clinics.

Dr. McGowen began her professional career with a focus on service and lifelong learning. She completed a Forensic Odontology Fellowship at Lincoln Memorial University College of Dental Medicine, expanding her expertise in an emerging area of dentistry. She established her practice in New Bern, where she continues to provide comprehensive care to her community.

Dr. McGowen remains actively involved in organized dentistry and professional development. She participates in multiple journal clubs and serves on the East Carolina University Advancement Council, the ECU Economics Alumni Council, and the Wayne Community College Dental Advisory Board. She is also an active member of the North Carolina Dental Society, serving as Chair of the New Dentist Committee, a former member of the Committee on Belonging and Engagement, President of the Fifth District Dental Society and the New Dentist Delegate for the ADA House of Delegates.

Passionate about mentorship, Dr. McGowen welcomes students into her practice to shadow and provides guidance on academic and professional growth. She also promotes awareness of forensic dentistry through education, lectures and ongoing research, reflecting her commitment to advancing the profession and serving her community.



Deferred from 2025
DR. CREDLE HARRIS

Dr. Credle Harris (Chapel Hill) is a respected leader in organized dentistry and a dedicated advocate for community service. A native of Bath, North Carolina, he graduated in 2015 as a member of the inaugural class of the East Carolina University School of Dental Medicine. During his time at ECU, Dr. Harris served as the student representative to the North Carolina Dental Society Board of Trustees, reflecting his early commitment to leadership within the profession.

Dr. Harris practices at Chapel Hill Dental Group, a longstanding family practice that has served the community since 1967. He remains actively engaged in organized dentistry, contributing to North Carolina Dental Society committees and serving as an alternate delegate to the American Dental Association

House of Delegates. He also completed two terms as President of the Durham-Orange Dental Society, further demonstrating his leadership at the local level.

Committed to service, Dr. Harris volunteers with the Baptists on Mission dental bus and the Dental Lifeline Network, helping expand access to care for underserved populations. He earned his Fellowship in the Academy of General Dentistry, reflecting his dedication to continuing education and clinical excellence.

Outside of dentistry, Dr. Harris remains active in his community as a member of Chatham Community Church, where he serves as a Cub Scout den leader and assistant baseball coach, supporting youth development and community engagement.

Mid-Career Dentist

This award recognizes mid-career dentists who show promise, initiative, and commitment to the missions of the NCDS, ADA, or other dental organizations.



DR. VERONICA LANDERS

Dr. Veronica Landers (Charlotte) is a recognized leader in cosmetic dentistry, known for her innovative approach to patient-centered care. A native of Mississippi, she earned her Doctor of Dental Medicine from the University of Mississippi and has practiced in Charlotte since 2009.

Dr. Landers is the founder of VLUXE Signature Spa, where she introduced a distinctive model that integrates aesthetic dentistry with a focus on patient comfort and overall well-being. Her work reflects a forward-thinking approach to care, enhancing patient experience while contributing to the evolution of modern dental practice.

An award-winning cosmetic dentist, Dr. Landers remains actively engaged in professional development and organized dentistry. She maintains membership in the American Med Spa Association, the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry, the American Dental Association, and the North Carolina Dental Society, and has completed advanced training in Invisalign, laser dentistry, and cosmetic procedures.

Dr. Landers also supports numerous community organizations, including the March of Dimes, Boys & Girls Clubs, and Habitat for Humanity. Through her leadership, innova-

tion, and dedication to her profession, she continues to shape the future of cosmetic dentistry and elevate the standard of care within the communities she serves.



DR. JENNA STOVER

Dr. Jenna Stover (Gastonia) is a distinguished leader in dentistry, proudly carrying forward her family's five-generation legacy of clinical excellence and service. As owner and operator of Stover Family Dentistry, founded by her parents in 1986, she has cultivated a practice renowned for exceptional patient care, mentorship of future dentists, and enduring community engagement.

A native of Gaston County, Dr. Stover earned her Bachelor of Science in Biology from North Carolina State University before completing her dental degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Dentistry in 2015. She has held pivotal leadership roles in organized dentistry, including six years as Treasurer of the First District Dental Society, while actively participating in the Gaston County Dental Society, the North Carolina Dental Society, the American Dental Association, and the Piedmont Comprehensive Dental Seminars - a Seattle Study Club affiliate.

Dr. Stover is deeply invested in advancing oral health and professional growth within her community. She volunteers with NC Missions of Mercy and Give Kids A Smile and serves on the Board and Grants Committee for the Next Generation Giving Circle in Gastonia, supporting programs that enhance access to care and educational opportunities. Her leadership and professional contributions were recognized with the Aurora Leadership Award in December 2024, honoring her enduring impact on both the dental profession and the communities she serves.

Meritorious Achievement Award

These honorees demonstrate significant contributions to dentistry, including lifetime achievements in leadership, academics, research, health care delivery, professionalism, or service to organized dentistry.



DR. FORD GRANT

Dr. Ford T. Grant (Ahoskie) is a leader in advancing rural oral health care and dental education in North Carolina. He serves as Clinical Associate Professor and

Assistant Director of General Dentistry at the East Carolina University School of Dental Medicine, where he has played a foundational role in expanding access to care in underserved communities. As the inaugural Director of the Ahooskie Community Service Learning Center, Dr. Grant helped establish a nationally recognized model for delivering comprehensive dental care while training future dentists.

Dr. Grant earned his dental degree from the University of Louisville School of Dentistry. He has dedicated his career to improving access to care for geriatric and special needs populations. He founded Carolinas Mobile Dentistry at Carolinas Medical Center, expanding dental services to nursing home residents across North Carolina.

A Diplomate and former President of the American Board of Special Care Dentistry, Dr. Grant has demonstrated strong leadership in organized dentistry. He has also served as President of the American Society for Geriatric Dentistry and the North Carolina Dental Society's Second District. His contributions have earned numerous honors, including the Special Care Dentistry Association President's Award, the Four Corners Study Club Faculty Leadership Award and the ADA Geriatric Oral Health Care Award.



DR. VALERIE MURRAH

Dr. Valerie Murrah (Chapel Hill) is a distinguished leader in oral and maxillofacial pathology, with a career spanning more than four decades in academic dentistry and clinical care. She has held faculty appointments at the University of Minnesota, the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, Emory Uni-

versity School of Medicine, and the University of North Carolina, where she currently serves as the Dr. Claude A. Adams, Jr. & Grace Phillips Adams Distinguished Term Professor and Chair of the Department of Diagnostic Sciences, as well as Chief of Oral & Maxillofacial Pathology. She also holds joint appointments at the UNC School of Medicine.

A trailblazer in her field, Dr. Murrah became the first woman to serve as President of both the American Board of Oral & Maxillofacial Pathology and the American Academy of Oral & Maxillofacial Pathology. She is also the first female recipient of the Dr. Richard F. Hunt, Jr. Excellence in Teaching Award at the UNC Adams School of Dentistry, with additional teaching honors across her career.

Dr. Murrah has played a critical role in advancing infection control in dentistry, leading efforts during both the AIDS and COVID-19 pandemics and establishing practices that continue to enhance patient and provider safety. She often reflects that her most meaningful moments come from patients and former students whose lives have been impacted through early detection and education—an enduring testament to her influence on both the profession and patient care.

Distinguished Service Scroll

This is the NC Dental Society's most prestigious award. Nominees may be dentists, auxiliary or lay people and need not be a resident of our state. They should be nearing or have completed careers during which they demonstrated outstanding service, leadership, and dedication to the profession of dentistry and/or the improvement of health for the people of North Carolina.



DR. JOSEPH R. HENDRICK, JR.

Dr. Joseph R. Hendrick, Jr. (Shelby) is a distinguished dentist whose career reflects decades of dedication to patient care, professional leadership, and community service. A native of Atlanta, he returned to Shelby, North Carolina, where he completed his early education. He earned a B.S. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Kenan-Flagler School of Business while completing his pre-dental studies. He received his D.D.S. from the UNC School of Dentistry in 1985. As a student, he was honored with the Grover Hunter Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Periodontics.

Dr. Hendrick established his private practice in his hometown, where he has provided compassionate care with a focus on children, underserved populations, and medically compromised patients. Inspired by his father's service as a World War II veteran, he developed a strong commitment to serving veterans and now provides care as a VACCN provider. He works alongside his wife, Lori G. Hendrick, PhD, RDH, whose contributions support the practice's operations and outreach efforts.

An active leader in organized dentistry, Dr. Hendrick has served at the local, district, and state levels, including as President of the North Carolina Dental Society in 2023. During his tenure, he helped advance anesthetic administration by dental hygienists. Through his service, leadership, and dedication to education and patient care, Dr. Hendrick has made a profound impact on his profession and community.



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