

## CHAPTER 5

# GETTING MORE INFORMATION

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**T**his 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 will 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, the kinds of benefits they receive, and how they deal with any shortcomings. In addition, an excellent way of learning 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 in the admission 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, 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 program, 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 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.

## **ORGANIZATIONS THAT CAN HELP**

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

### **American Dental Education Association**

1400 K Street, NW, Suite 1100  
Washington, DC 20005  
Phone: 202-289-7201  
Fax: 202-289-7204  
[www.adea.org](http://www.adea.org)

ADEA can provide you with information about the application process for admission to dental school and the application process for postdoctoral programs. ADEA sponsors the ADEA Application Service (AADSAS, see chapter 2) and the Postdoctoral Application Support Service (PASS, see chapter 1). In addition to the *ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools*, ADEA publishes the *Journal of Dental Education* (a monthly scholarly journal), the *Bulletin of Dental Education Online* (a monthly newsletter), and *Opportunities for Minority Students in Dentistry* (an every-other-year guide). Ordering information is available on the ADEA website. Dental student may belong to ADEA at no charge by going to [www.adea.org](http://www.adea.org) and selecting "Join ADEA."

### **Academy of General Dentistry**

211 East Chicago Avenue, Suite 900  
Chicago, IL 60611-1999  
Phone: 888-243-3368  
Fax: 312-440-0559  
[www.agd.org](http://www.agd.org)

Founded in 1952, the AGD serves the needs and represents the interests of general dentists, promotes the oral health of the public, and fosters the continued proficiency of general dentists through quality continuing dental education to help them better serve the public. The AGD also sponsors a 24-hour, online message board where consumers can post questions answered by a dentist and a dentist referral service.

### **American Academy of Oral & Maxillofacial Pathology**

214 North Hale Street  
Wheaton, IL 60187  
Phone: 888-552-2667  
Fax: 630-510-4501  
[www.aaomp.org](http://www.aaomp.org)

The AAOMP promotes all activities involving the practice of oral and maxillofacial pathology, the specialty of dentistry and pathology that deals with the nature, identification, and management of diseases affecting the oral and maxillofacial regions.

#### **American Academy of Oral & Maxillofacial Radiology**

P.O. Box 1010  
Evans, GA 30809-1010  
Phone: 706-721-2607  
Fax: 706-721-4937  
[www.aaomr.org](http://www.aaomr.org)

The AAOMR promotes and advances the art and science of radiology in dentistry and provides a forum for communication among and professional advancement of its members.

#### **American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons**

9700 West Bryn Mawr Avenue  
Rosemont, IL 60018-5701  
Phone: 800-822-6637, 847-678-6200  
Fax: 847-678-6286  
[www.aaoms.org](http://www.aaoms.org)

Founded (under a different name) in 1918, AAOMS provides a means of self-government relating to professional standards, ethical behavior, and responsibilities of its fellows and members; contributes to the public welfare; advances the specialty; and supports its fellows and members through education, research, and advocacy.

#### **American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry**

211 East Chicago Avenue, Suite 1700  
Chicago, IL 60611-2663  
Phone: 312-337-2169  
Fax: 312-337-6329  
[www.aapd.org](http://www.aapd.org)

The 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.

#### **American Academy of Periodontology**

737 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 800  
Chicago, IL 60611-6660  
Phone: 312-787-5518  
Fax: 312-787-3670  
[www.perio.org](http://www.perio.org)

The AAP advocates, educates, and sets standards for advancing the periodontal and general health of the public and promoting excellence in the practice of periodontics, one of the ten dental specialties.

#### **American Dental Association**

211 East Chicago Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60611-2678  
Phone: 312-440-2500  
Fax: 312-440-2800  
[www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org)

The 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).

**American Association for Dental Research**

1619 Duke Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314-3406  
Phone: 703-548-0066  
Fax: 703-548-1883  
[www.iadr.com](http://www.iadr.com)

The AADR advances research and increases knowledge for the improvement of oral health. The AADR also sponsors student research fellowships to encourage dental students to conduct research.

**American Association of Endodontists**

211 East Chicago Avenue, Suite 1100  
Chicago, IL 60611-2691  
Phone: 800-872-3636, 312-266-7255  
Fax: 866-451-9020, 312-266-9867  
[www.aae.org](http://www.aae.org)

The AAE promotes the exchange of ideas on the scope of the specialty of endodontics, stimulates endodontic research studies among its members, and encourages the highest standard of care in the practice of endodontics.

**American Association of Hospital Dentists**

211 East Chicago Avenue, Suite 740  
Chicago, IL 60611-2616  
Phone: 800-852-7921, 312-440-2660  
Fax: 312-440-2824  
[www.scdonline.org/displayconnon.cfm?an=9](http://www.scdonline.org/displayconnon.cfm?an=9)

The AAHD, founded in 1937, helps hospital dentists develop the skills, knowledge, creativity, and leadership they need to make their practices thrive and advance in their profession. This association also helps shape national health policy on hospital dentistry by providing advocacy at the federal and state levels.

**American Association of Orthodontists**

401 North Lindbergh Boulevard  
St. Louis, MO 63141-7816  
Phone: 314-993-1700  
Fax: 314-997-1745  
[www.aaortho.org](http://www.aaortho.org)

The AAO supports research and education leading to quality patient care and promotes increased public awareness of the need for and benefits of orthodontic treatment.

**American Association of Public Health Dentistry**

National Office  
P.O. Box 7536  
Springfield, IL 62791-7536  
Phone: 217-391-0218  
Fax: 217-793-0041  
[www.aaphd.org](http://www.aaphd.org)

Founded in 1937, the 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 Association of Women Dentists**

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

Formed in 1921, the AAWD celebrates the rich history of women dentists and represents women dentists across the United States, internationally, and in the uniformed forces.

**American College of Dentists**

839J Quince Orchard Boulevard  
 Gaithersburg, MD 20878-1614  
 Phone: 301-977-3223  
 Fax: 301-977-3330  
[www.acd.org](http://www.acd.org)

Founded in 1920, the ACD is the oldest national honorary organization for dentists. The ACD promotes excellence, ethics, professionalism, and leadership in dentistry.

**American College of Prosthodontists**

211 East Chicago Avenue, Suite 1000  
 Chicago, IL 60611-2637  
 Phone: 312-573-1260  
 Fax: 312-573-1257  
[www.prosthodontics.org](http://www.prosthodontics.org)

Founded in 1970, 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 of prosthodontics.

**American Student Dental Association**

211 East Chicago Avenue, Suite 1160  
 Chicago, IL 60611-2687  
 Phone: 800-621-8099 x 2795, 312-440-2795  
 Fax: 312-440-2820  
[www.asdanet.org](http://www.asdanet.org)

The ASDA is a student-run organization that protects and advances the rights, interests and welfare of students pursuing careers in dentistry. It provides services, information, education, representation, and advocacy.

**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](http://www.asph.org)

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. ASPH collects information on careers in public health, which is useful to individuals interested in pursuing careers in dental public health.

### **Hispanic Dental Association**

1224 Centre West, Suite 400B  
 Springfield, IL 62704  
 Toll free: 800-852-7921  
 Phone: 217-793-0035  
 Fax: 217-793-0041  
[www.hdassoc.org](http://www.hdassoc.org)

Established in 1990, the HAD 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.

### **National Dental Association**

3517 16th Street, NW  
 Washington, DC 20010  
 Phone: 202-588-1697  
 Fax: 202-588-1244  
[www.ndaonline.org](http://www.ndaonline.org)

The NDA, which is made up of African American dentists, sponsors minority student scholarships for both undergraduate and postgraduate dental students. The NDA also sponsors a student organization, the SNDA, and distributes a career development tape that is available for use by schools, dentists, and other groups.

### **National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research**

National Institutes of Health  
 Bethesda, MD 20892-2190  
 Phone: 301-496-4261  
 Fax: 301-496-9988  
[www.nidcr.nih.gov](http://www.nidcr.nih.gov)

The 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.

### **Oral Health America**

410 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 352  
 Chicago, IL 60611  
 Phone: 312-836-9900  
 Fax: 312-836-9986  
[www.oralhealthamerica.org](http://www.oralhealthamerica.org)

Oral Health America develops, implements, and facilitates educational and service programs designed to improve the oral health of all Americans.

### **Society of American Indian Dentists**

P.O. Box 15107  
 Phoenix, AZ 85060  
 Phone: 602-954-5160  
[www.aaip.org/about/said.html](http://www.aaip.org/about/said.html)

Founded in April 1990 by six American Indian dentists, SAID has grown to approximately 65 members representing 41 different tribes. The society 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.

**Special Care Dentistry Association**

401 North Michigan Avenue

Chicago, IL 60611

Phone: 312-527-6764

Fax: 312-673-6663

[www.SCDAonline.org](http://www.SCDAonline.org)

SCDA is the only national organization where oral health and other professionals meet, communicate, exchange ideas, and work together to improve oral health for people with special needs. SCDA had its origin in a federation of three long-standing independent organizations: the American Association of Hospital Dentists, the Academy of Dentistry for Persons with Disabilities, and the American Society for Geriatric Dentistry. These founding organizations remain as components of SCDA, pooling resources to attain overlapping goals.

**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. 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: Dental Admission Testing Program, 211 East Chicago Avenue, Suite 1846, Chicago, IL 60611; 312-440-2689; 800-232-2162; or online at [www.ada.org/prof/ed/testing/index.asp](http://www.ada.org/prof/ed/testing/index.asp).*

**Getting Through Dental School: ASDA's 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: ASDA's 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.

**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.

*These two publications are available from American Student Dental Association, 211 East Chicago Avenue, Suite 1160, Chicago, IL 60611; 312-440-2795; or online at [www.asdanet.org/store](http://www.asdanet.org/store).*

**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.