



INDIANA  
UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF  
DENTISTRY

**First Friday**  
Dean's Update to the IUSD Community

## From Marginal to Mainstream: Dental Support Organizations

Rick Valachovic, ADEA CEO, asks in his October 2018 *Charting Progress* article: Are we doing enough to prepare students for the shifts occurring in the business of dentistry? Should we be doing more to help our students evaluate their opportunities both as employees and as entrepreneurs?

A lot has happened since he originally asked those questions in a 2014 column entitled "[From Bungalow to Big Box? How DSOs Could Change the Face of Dentistry.](#)" At the time, there was even some lingering disagreement about what term to use to describe dental support organizations (DSOs) – businesses that offer a range of nonclinical support services to affiliated dental practices.

Today, the term DSO is well-established, and these once marginal players have gained a strong foothold in the marketplace for dental services. In an age of increasing consolidation among health care delivery entities, this shouldn't be surprising. Nevertheless, the rise of DSOs represents a remarkable cultural shift.

For more information on the topic see: [October ADEA Charting Progress.](#)

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The annual fall Teaching Conference and Staff Conference headline the month of October. The faculty gathered at McCormick's Creek State Park to discuss "IUSD Moving Forward" in preparation for the recruitment of new leadership, who will begin in summer 2019. In addition, faculty from the IU Center for Survey Research and Duke University presented on improving one's teaching with more effective use of PowerPoint presentation strategies. Bravo to Dr. Ana Gossweiler and her Teaching Conference planning team for such a successful 2019 event.

IUSD staff members enjoyed a day of professional development at the Indianapolis Zoo, where they had a robust program, including an informative presentation by Dr. George Willis on zoo dentistry. Dr. Willis, retired associate dean of Clinical Affairs, has served the Indianapolis Zoo as a dentist for a number of years and has many interesting stories to tell. The time we take to devote to faculty and staff development enriches our program and continues our investment in making IUSD... *one of the best dental schools of the 21st century.*

### **IBJ: Dental Care Out of Reach for Many...the Dean Responds**

On Aug. 31, 2018, the *Indiana Business Journal* ran a story entitled "[Dental care out of the reach for many.](#)" which broached the subject of a complex issue. This is not a simple fix. We need a broad array of stakeholders and policymakers to come together to develop a contemporary Hoosier oral health plan for underserved populations. There were aspects of the story that needed more explanation and highlighting, including many activities already going on in the state to address this problem. I am pleased to share my letter to the IBJ editor, published Sept. 14, 2018, so that we all may be more informed on this complex issue.

*Dear Editor:*

*As dean of the only dental school in Indiana, I appreciated last week's IBJ article (Dental care out of reach for many) that shed light on the challenges low-income Hoosiers face in accessing dental care. This is a critical and complex issue that deserves real attention. If we are serious about improving the oral health status for all Hoosiers, stakeholders and policymakers must engage to create and fund contemporary solutions. Medicaid reform is one part of the solution to enable more private practice dentists to provide care to low-income patients; however, Hoosiers should know that low-cost or free services are already available.*

*I know of many Indiana dentists who donate free care on a regular basis as a sense of service to others. The Indiana Dental Association's (IDA) Mission of Mercy (MOM) events are large-scale dental clinics at the Indiana State Fairgrounds staffed by volunteer dental teams who give free oral health care to people of all ages. In May 2019, the MOM event will be held in Fort Wayne. The IDA's Donated Dental Services program coordinates free comprehensive dental treatment for people with limited access to care, such as the medically fragile, disabled, or the elderly. While these periodic events are helpful, they are not a long-term solution. We need to formulate a comprehensive Hoosier oral health plan. At the Indiana University School of Dentistry, where fees are about one-half of private practice for teaching cases accepted into our predoctoral program, we readily accept Medicaid and Medicare for patients who visit our dental clinics. Comprehensive care is provided for all ages and for all dental specialties.*

**FULLFILLING *the* PROMISE**

The dental school also provides limited free or reduced cost care for veterans and victims of domestic abuse. The dental school's Student Outreach Clinic, a free dental clinic for underserved adults, operates two Saturdays each month as part of the Neighborhood Fellowship Church on the near eastside of Indianapolis.

We also educate and encourage our dental students to practice in dental workforce shortage areas. With support from a recent \$1.6 million federal grant, our fourth-year dental students provide dental care under faculty supervision in two-week rotations at community clinics around the state.

While many Hoosiers are challenged to find low-cost dental care, the IU School of Dentistry and the IDA are working diligently to ensure access to care is within reach for all Hoosiers. However, serious solutions to dental care access require that we broaden the conversation to formulate a comprehensive Hoosier oral health plan. The IU School of Dentistry is ready to help.

- Dr. John N. Williams, Dean

### **United Way Kickoff Luncheon...IUSD Wins Again!**

For eight years in a row, IUSD has dominated the campus-wide United Way luncheon fundraiser kickoff. What a good cause and what a fantastic showing by our IUSD team. This year Drs. Harvey Weingarten, David Brown, and Waldemar Polido joined the esteemed serving team to provide "outstanding service," garnering the most tips of any group at more than \$1,600! Thanks to all participants.

### **Kudos to Dr. Jeff Rector – Improving Children's Oral Health**

Children's oral health is a passion of IUSD alum Dr. Jeff Rector (DDS'82), who continues to advocate for a more interdisciplinary approach to addressing the major childhood disease of dental caries. On Sept. 29, 2018, Dr. Rector brought together a stellar group of speakers from dentistry, medicine, and public health to share ideas and efforts taking place in other states to improve this situation.

### **ADEA CCI 2.0 - IUSD Focuses on Readiness to Change**

In June 2017, ADEA CCI (Commission on Change and Innovation) 2.0 was launched. Through this ADEA initiative, U.S. and Canadian dental institutions contribute to the development of resources that assist institutions in facing external forces while remaining focused on these three goals: 1) Person-centered health care, 2) Future-ready graduates and 3) Transformative learning environment. IUSD participated in the CCI Readiness for Change Survey. Results indicated that the IUSD community ranked the five domains in order of importance: 1. Education, 2. Technology, 3. Health Care, 4. Demographics, and 5. Environment. To see what other dental schools are doing, visit ADEA [here](#). Dr. Liz Ramos is leading the IUSD ADEA CCI 2.0 effort.

### **Blue & Co. Comes to IUSD**

In an ongoing effort to improve our financial processes and business practices, [Blue & Co.](#), regional accounting and business consultants, will be working with IUSD over the next several months to examine a variety of financial and business processes related to all of our clinical operations. This activity will help us manage our complex transactions in the ever-changing world of health care finance and alternative payment plans.

**Coffee and Donuts** – Join us next month – November 2, 7:30 to 9 am, for the monthly First Friday school gathering. Complimentary coffee, donuts, and fruit will be served in the student lounge.

#### **Upcoming IUSD Events**

- October 18-22, 2018: ADA Annual Session, Honolulu, Hawaii
- October 19, 2018: IUSD ADA Hawaii Alumni Reception, 6:00-7:30 pm Hilton Hawaiian Village
- October 29, 2018: IUSD Periodontic Alumni Reception, 6:30-8:00 pm Pan Pacific Hotel, Vancouver, BC
- November 15, 2018, IUSD Scholarship Dinner, 6:00 pm, Indianapolis



Thanks to each of you for your dedication to and support of the Vision and Mission of IUSD. I'll be back November with another edition of *First Friday...Dean's Update*.

- John

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[www.dentistry.iu.edu](http://www.dentistry.iu.edu)

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