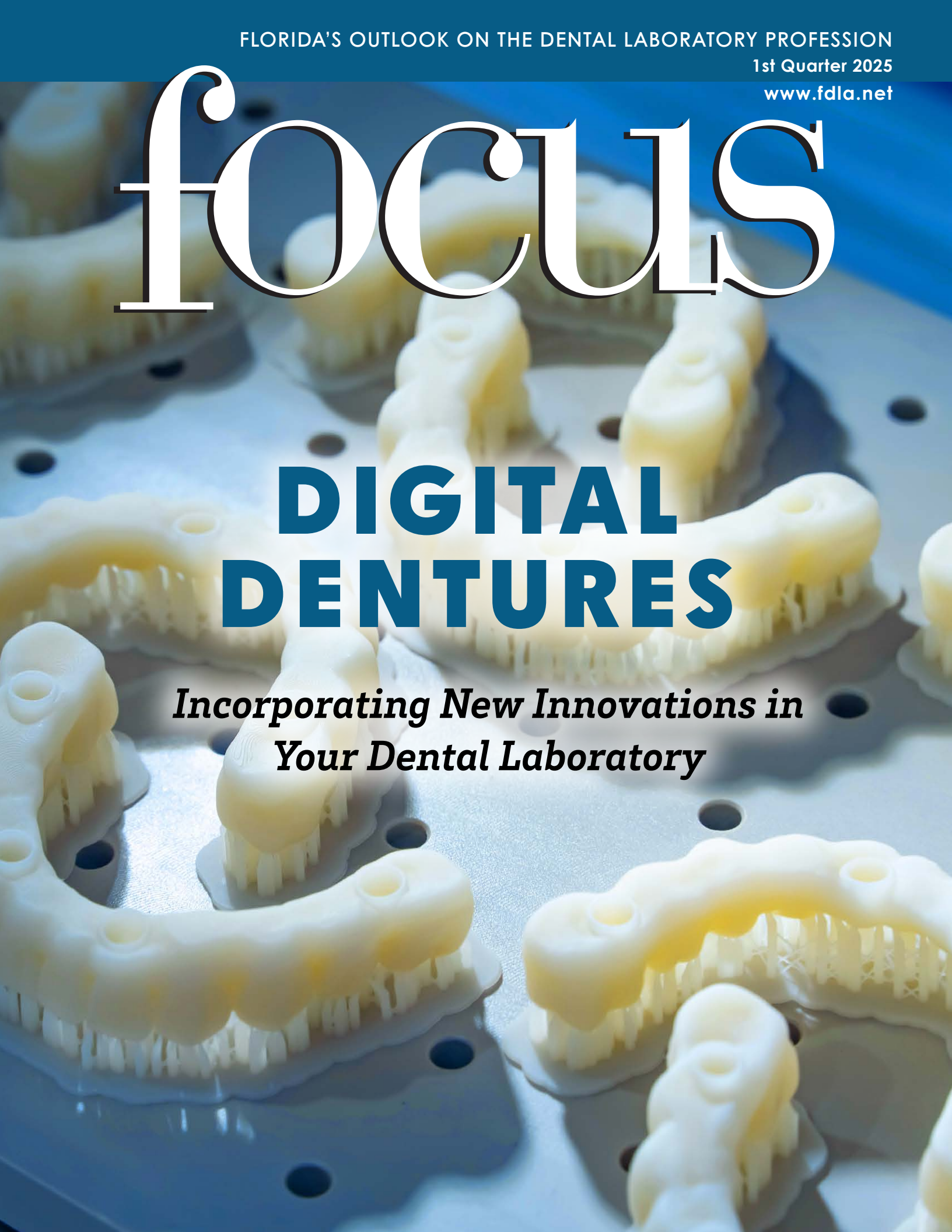


# focus

## DIGITAL DENTURES

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# Behind-the-Scenes Look

*Being on the board has introduced me to incredible people who taught me invaluable things.*

**By Kevin Krumm, CDT, TE**

*FDLA President*

It has been a busy time for the FDLA board. We have been working hard as a team to get feedback from FDLA members on what would be valuable to them as business owners and technicians, and we are striving to meet those needs. First, our primary goal is to continue to elevate the Southern States Symposium & Expo experience.

We are creating a space for attendees to catch up with old friends, make new connections, and learn new techniques that will help them grow as technicians. We are diligently seeking fresh and exciting lecturers to present at the show. We are researching innovative technology on the horizon to ensure our attendees have access to the latest trends. We are working on courses that address concerns from the management perspective. We may be excellent technicians, but many seek a deeper understanding of the nuances of running a business.

In addition to the Symposium, another goal we are currently working on is providing more chances to interact throughout the year, including regional workshops and a lunch and learn virtual meeting series focusing on human resource issues.

Serving on the board as president these last few months has really opened my eyes to all the behind-the-scenes work that goes into meeting the needs of our members and doing it in a financially responsible way. While we may work hard to make this happen, these opportunities will not be a success without the support of members.



Member participation and input are what make this organization and our events a success.

We appreciate your membership as well as attendance at the meetings. If you want to take it one step further and are interested in serving as an FDLA board member, please follow up with Christina Welty at [christina@fdla.net](mailto:christina@fdla.net) or call (850) 224-0711.

I run a one-man laboratory, and I can personally attest to how busy it keeps me. Yet, in deciding to give my personal time to these important efforts, I have improved as both technician and business owner. Being on the board has introduced me to incredible people who taught me invaluable things both personally and professionally. It's a big chaotic world out there, but opportunities to come together and create something important accentuates that it's a small world after all. 🌐



**FDLA Mission**

Advancing the individual and collective success of Florida's dental laboratory professionals to enhance oral health care.

**Values Statement**

- INTEGRITY** - being honest and open in all that we do
- LEADERSHIP** - being the guiding light in a changing environment
- RECOGNITION** - honoring those committed to our industry

**SAFETY** - promoting safe and quality driven manufacturing practices

**INNOVATION THROUGH COLLABORATION** - fostering an environment where creative and inspiring ideas are encouraged to enhance patient care





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By Seay Management Consultants

WHAT DENTAL LAB EMPLOYERS  
NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE

## Pregnant Workers Fairness Act

AS ENFORCEMENT BEGINS



**P**regnant workers are vulnerable and have endured decades of discrimination in the workplace, often facing unfair treatment and lack of accommodations. In response, a new federal law, the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA), has been enacted to ensure pregnant employees in all industries receive the protections they deserve. This law requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations, safeguarding the rights and well-being of pregnant workers, and marking a significant step toward creating a more inclusive and supportive work environment.

### What Florida Employers Need to Know About the PWFA

All employers, including dental labs in Florida, must familiarize themselves with the PWFA and ensure compliance to avoid potential fines or lawsuits from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). The challenge many employers face is that the Act was passed quietly as part of a larger bill, leaving many unaware of its requirements. Failing to update policies for your dental lab and train managers on

the new accommodations for pregnant workers can lead to legal consequences and harm your reputation, regardless of whether you were aware of the law.

Many employers have yet to update their policies and employee handbooks to incorporate the new accommodation requirements outlined in the PWFA. It is crucial for all covered employers, including labs, to do so quickly, as the EEOC is beginning to receive complaints and actively pursue enforcement actions against non-compliant employers.



## What is the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act?

The PWFA, which went into effect on June 27, 2023, protects employees and applicants with physical or mental conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

The law mandates that covered employers provide “reasonable accommodations” to qualified employees or job applicants with known limitations due to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, unless doing so would cause the employer “undue hardship.” This exemption means that employers can deny accommodations to their pregnant employees if providing them would create a large burden or expense for the business.

The PWFA focuses solely on accommodations, while other laws enforced by the EEOC prohibit firing or discrimination against employees or applicants because of pregnancy or related conditions. Additionally, the PWFA does not override any federal, state, or local laws that offer greater protections for workers impacted by pregnancy or childbirth. Currently, over 30 states and cities have laws requiring accommodation for pregnant workers.

## Who are “Covered Employers” in the PWFA?

The PWFA applies to private employers, including dental labs, and public sector employers, including state and local governments, with 15 or more employees. It also covers Congress, federal agencies, employment agencies, and labor organizations.

## What are “Reasonable Accommodations” in the PWFA?

Under the PWFA, dental lab managers are required to offer reasonable accommodations by adjusting the workplace or modifications to usual work practices to assist lab employees with pregnancy-related limitations. Examples of reasonable accommodations include:

- Schedule changes such as later start or shorter shifts
- Additional, longer, or more flexible breaks
- Workstation changes such as providing a stool to sit on
- Changing a uniform or dress code or providing safety equipment that fits
- Allowing the pregnant worker to work remotely, if possible
- Temporarily transferring employees to different departments or roles, as needed

- Assigning tasks that are less physically demanding
- Providing reserved parking near the entrance
- Providing a private space to pump milk, regular breaks to pump, or modifications to equipment or uniforms
- Providing leave for healthcare appointments or to recover from childbirth

An employer cannot refuse an accommodation request without good reason or have an inflexible policy that doesn’t allow for exceptions.

## Enforcement Has Started

Starting June 27, 2023, the EEOC began accepting charges for PWFA violations. Workers affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related conditions may also be eligible for accommodations under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act or the ADA, so the EEOC will continue to handle accommodation claims under these laws alongside the PWFA.

In September 2024, the EEOC issued notice that it had sued two employers under the PWFA, alleging that a manufacturer and medical practice failed to accommodate employee pregnancies and disabilities as required under the PWFA.

The federal agency sued a light manufacturer after it refused to allow an employee to take time off, including doctor’s appointments, as recommended by her doctor due to severe morning sickness, and forced her to work mandatory overtime, even though her doctor had restricted her work schedule to no more than forty hours per week.

The federal agency also sued a specialty medical practice in Oklahoma, for allegedly failing to permit a medical assistant at its Tulsa facility to take a seat, to limit the number of hours she worked per day or week, or to work part-time, which her physician said was necessary to protect her health and safety during the third trimester of her high-risk pregnancy. Rather than adhering to reasonable accommodation of its employee’s final trimester, this employer ordered her to take unpaid leave and refused to guarantee it would provide breaks to express breastmilk while allowing her to work. When she would not return to work without guaranteed breaks to express breastmilk, the employer fired her.

The alleged conduct violated the PWFA, which requires employers to reasonably accommodate employees who are pregnant, who are on leave following childbirth or a medical condition related to pregnancy, or who have a medical condition related to pregnancy. This employer also allegedly violated the ADA by failing to reasonably accommodate an

employee with a disability. Following its attempt to use its administrative conciliation process before filing a lawsuit in each case, the EEOC filed lawsuits.

Earlier in the month, the agency released notice about a Florida pest control company that has agreed to enter into a conciliation agreement with the EEOC to pay damages and update its policy because it allegedly fired an employee after she requested a reasonable accommodation to attend monthly medical appointments for her pregnancy. The termination violated the PWFA. As part of the conciliation agreement, this company will provide \$47,480 in damages to the former employee. The company will also appoint an EEO coordinator, edit its employment policies to include making reasonable accommodations under the PWFA, provide training about the rules of the PWFA to both management and non-management employees, and provide quarterly reporting on requests for accommodations and complaints of discrimination.

### Physical Requirements and Accommodations for Dental Lab Employees

Dental lab employees are generally required to stand, sit, bend, and lift heavy items as part of their job duties, often working in regular shifts over a 40-hour work week. For a pregnant employee, these physical requirements and hours can become a lot more burdensome.

The PWFA allows for the possibility that a pregnant dental lab employee may need one or more workplace accommodations so as not to compromise their health and well-being or diminish their performance of the job, such as:

- Adjusting work hours so that the pregnant employee starts earlier or finishes their shift before dark
- Earmarking a parking spot close to the entrance so the pregnant employee doesn't have to walk too far
- Providing more scheduled breaks throughout the day
- Making changes to the employee's workstation to reduce their body's physical strain
- Limiting heavy lifting
- Providing seating to enable the employee to avoid standing throughout their shift

When employers follow all employment laws and expand their efforts to create a climate in which everyone feels included and supported during pregnancy, they are not just following the law. They are also building an environment where everyone is more likely to feel included and supported.

### Stay Compliant with Seay Management Consultants

It can be challenging to keep on top of evolving employer laws, let alone get them incorporated into company policies and the employee handbook in a timely manner. With the introduction of the PWFA, businesses must ensure their policies and handbooks reflect the latest accommodation requirements for pregnant employees. Seay Management Consultants offers a range of HR services designed to support organizations in this critical task. As a reminder, FDLA members can contact Seay Management Consultants complimentary HR hotline for a wide range of HR guidance.


### Policy Development and Review

Seay Management can assist your organization in developing comprehensive policies that align with the new accommodation requirements under the PWFA. Our HR experts are well-versed in reviewing existing policies and ensuring they meet current regulations. We can recommend necessary updates to your policies and employee handbook so that your policies are fully compliant.

### Training Programs

Providing effective training for employees and managers is essential when implementing new policies. SEAY Management offers customized on-site training programs that educate your workforce about laws such as the PWFA, including how to recognize accommodation needs and ensure fair treatment for pregnant workers.

### Regulatory Compliance Guidance

Staying compliant with federal and state regulations is crucial to protecting your organization. Seay Management's HR experts provide compliance guidance to help you navigate all relevant federal and state employer regulations for your business. This helps reduce non-compliance risk and ensures your policies meet the latest regulatory standards. 

If you are a dental lab owner, leader and/or HR administrator and are feeling overwhelmed with how to ensure compliance with the PWFA, contact Seay Management Consultants today.

Seay Management Consultants, Inc. is a full-service human resource management and labor relations consulting firm that has been operating in Florida since 1966. Our primary goals are to ensure your business complies with all local, state, and federal employment regulations, eliminating any financial exposure in these areas. As a member benefit, FDLA members can utilize the free human resources hotline at 888-245-6272 or [admin@seay.us](mailto:admin@seay.us) for support with any HR matters.







Enrico and Julian Steger, both MDT and Zirkonzahn's CEO

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# FDIA MEMBERSHIP

## JOIN A COMMUNITY OF INDUSTRY LEADERS



**BECOMING A MEMBER** of the Florida Dental Laboratory Association (FDLA) delivers a return on investment that far outweighs its cost. The association's proven programs provide members with the key resources needed to manage their businesses successfully.

### SELECT YOUR MEMBERSHIP LEVEL →

With our membership levels, you can **COVER ALL OF YOUR EMPLOYEES** as members of FDIA under your laboratory's membership.

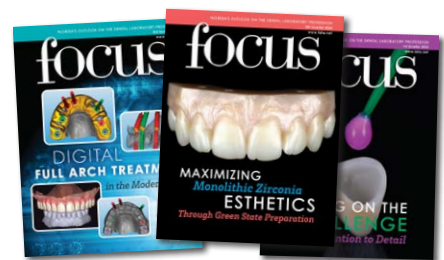
- 1-2 members = \$235
- 3-5 members = \$335
- 6-9 members = \$435
- 10-14 members = \$535
- 15+ members = \$750



Offer membership benefits to **ANY NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES** you wish to include.



Employees can **ATTEND OUR ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM** and **DISTRICT WORKSHOPS** for a reduced member rate.



Your laboratory will be eligible for all of the **MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS** with all members receiving focus magazine.



# FDIA MEMBERSHIP *BENEFITS*

## EDUCATION

As the leader of dental laboratory technology continuing education within the state of Florida, we are committed to helping laboratories formulate a business that will grow, meet the requirements mandated by Florida law and help Certified Dental Technicians (CDT) and Certified Dental Laboratories (CDL) maintain their certification. FDIA members are eligible to receive discounted rates on all continuing education.

### District Workshops

Rotating around the state of Florida, FDIA District Workshops offer laboratory owners and technicians/staff the opportunity to receive continuing education credits year-round on a variety of topics.

### Online Education

FDIA offers online education, including the mandatory "Florida Laws and Rules for Dental Laboratories" course, on our website at [www.fdia.net](http://www.fdia.net).

### Southern States Symposium & Expo presented by FDIA

As the largest nonprofit dental laboratory meeting in the country, attendees can connect with vendors offering dental laboratory products and services while exploring equipment, supplies, and techniques that can enhance their business. A variety of business management and technical presentations deliver the latest industry standards and continuing education.



## COMMUNICATION

### focus Magazine

FDIA's quarterly focus magazine is the most widely read state dental laboratory association publication. It provides updates on crucial industry information, new technology, laboratory management and other issues of vital concern. FDIA members receive a complimentary subscription as part of their membership.

### FDIA Website

The FDIA website, [www.fdia.net](http://www.fdia.net), provides comprehensive information on industry updates, educational opportunities, an online directory to locate FDIA member laboratories, and various other helpful resources.

**CONTINUED** →

# FDIA → MEMBERSHIP *BENEFITS, CONTINUED*

## BUSINESS SERVICES

### Health/Disability/Life Insurance

Get health insurance, disability insurance, and life insurance for owners, managers and employees. Decisely, Inc. provides affordable healthcare insurance solutions for you and your employees.

### Business Insurance

This program through Gallagher Affinity makes it easy to obtain coverage for property and casualty; general liability; workers compensation; cyber liability and more.

### Human Resource Hotline

Most dental laboratories lack the resources or workforce to hire a human resources manager. Even larger labs with an HR manager may occasionally need guidance on challenging situations. FDIA members can access human resources telephone consultation services at no cost!

### Collection Agency

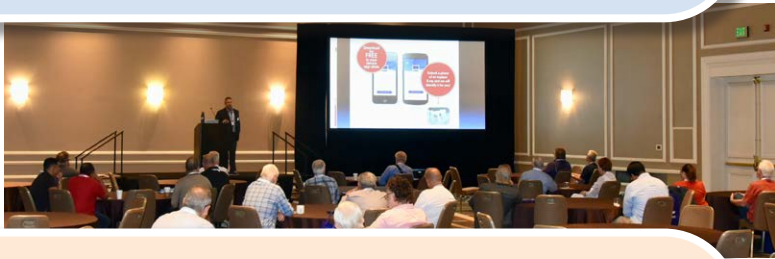
Get paid the money you already earned! Burt and Associates is a collection agency with an over 70% success rate. They are professional and assertive while doing everything they can to help you get paid the money you are owed.

### Shipping Discounts

As a component member of NADL, FDIA members can utilize and benefit from a special program through UPS for shipping services. FDIA members can sign up to participate in this discount program for UPS shipping online.

### Credit Card Payment Processing

FDIA member laboratories are eligible to receive discounted rates on credit and debit card processing. Our provider specializes in creating card acceptance programs specifically for the dental industry.



## LEGISLATIVE/GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

FDIA works with several agencies to modify and strengthen existing laws affecting dental laboratories and ensures that such regulations strike a balance between patient safety and ease of compliance. FDIA members are provided critical updates and reminders for important legislation, deadlines and regulatory alerts.

### Florida State Laws Affecting Dental Laboratories Manual

FDIA has developed a manual defining the state laws affecting dental laboratories. This manual explains in detail: continuing education, data required on prescriptions, materials disclosure and point of origin requirements necessary with all communication and case work executed between the dentist and laboratory.

### Continuing Education Requirement

The state of Florida mandates that each laboratory in Florida must receive 18 hours of Florida-approved continuing education credit every two years. FDIA offers a variety of courses, including the mandatory course on "Florida Laws and Rules for Dental Laboratories." FDIA is an approved provider through CE Broker as well as the National Board for Certification (NBC).







# Florida Dental Laboratory Association Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  CDT

Laboratory Name: \_\_\_\_\_  CDL

Laboratory Owner Name: \_\_\_\_\_  CDT

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Toll Free: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Florida Department of Health Laboratory License Number: (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

## Payment Information:

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- Check, payable to FDLA     Visa     MasterCard     AMEX

Card No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code\*: \_\_\_\_\_ Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

\*This is the three digit number found on the back of your card in the signature area. AMEX - This is the four digit number found on the front of your card.

Name as it appears on card: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Billing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN APPLICATION TO FDLA** at: 325 John Knox Road Ste L 103, Tallahassee, FL 32303 OR email with credit card payment to membership@fdla.net.

## Laboratory Membership: *Select Your Level Below*

Any commercial dental laboratory registered by the State of Florida Department of Health is eligible. Membership shall be in the name of the laboratory as registered by the State of Florida. The owner, partner or designated representative shall represent the laboratory in meetings and is eligible for elective office and voting privileges.

- 1-2 Members: \$235     3-5 Members: \$335     6-9 Members: \$435     10-14 Members: \$535     15+ Members: \$750

## Affiliate Membership: *Select Your Level Below*

Individuals who own or manage a dental office or out-of-state dental laboratories are eligible. Members are entitled to all services, social events and educational activities of the association.

- 1-2 Members: \$235     3-5 Members: \$335     6-9 Members: \$435     10-14 Members: \$535     15+ Members: \$750

**Laboratory and Affiliate Members:** List names and email address of your employees based on the membership level you chose. (Form may be copied for more space.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  CDT E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  CDT E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  CDT E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  CDT E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  CDT E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  CDT E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## Associate Membership: \$225.00

Any sales or technician representative of suppliers, manufacturers or vendors is eligible. Member is entitled to all benefits and privileges of the state association. \* **For increased company exposure and added marketing benefits, contact the FDLA office for information regarding the Business Partner Program. (\$750 Annually)**

## Student Membership: \$15.00

Open to any students at Florida schools offering a dental technology program. Member is entitled to all benefits and privileges of the state association. Member is not eligible for elective office or voting privileges.

## Retired Technician Membership: \$35.00

Open to dental technicians who have retired and are no longer working in the dental laboratory industry. Member is not eligible for elective office or voting privileges.

# *Thank you!*

FDLA is grateful for our successful partnerships with the following 2024 Focus magazine and Symposium advertisers.

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*We are excited for 2025 and all it will bring!*



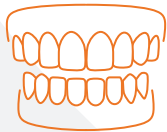
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# DIGITAL DENTURES

## *Incorporating New Innovations in Your Dental Laboratory*

**D**igital dentures have truly ushered in new and reinvigorated digital processes that benefit the dental laboratory space in manufacturing processes, consistency, repeatability, and so much more, elevating the standard of care and convenience for the laboratory's dentist clientele and their patients. These methods of fabricating digital dentures have been around for several years now, and although the software and hardware components had been at our disposal for some time, the materials have been lagging behind. A new cohort of materials, however, entered the market that has really excelled the adoption and throughput of digital dentures in 3D printing mainly due to their high impact polymer formulations and significant improvements in esthetics. The digital process further improved our ability to maintain data records and thereby produced eloquent options and opportunities to serve our dentists in less appointment time and overall benefits.

*Once the digital design has been completed and produced, you have most of the data necessary to serve that dentist client and patient for years to come.*

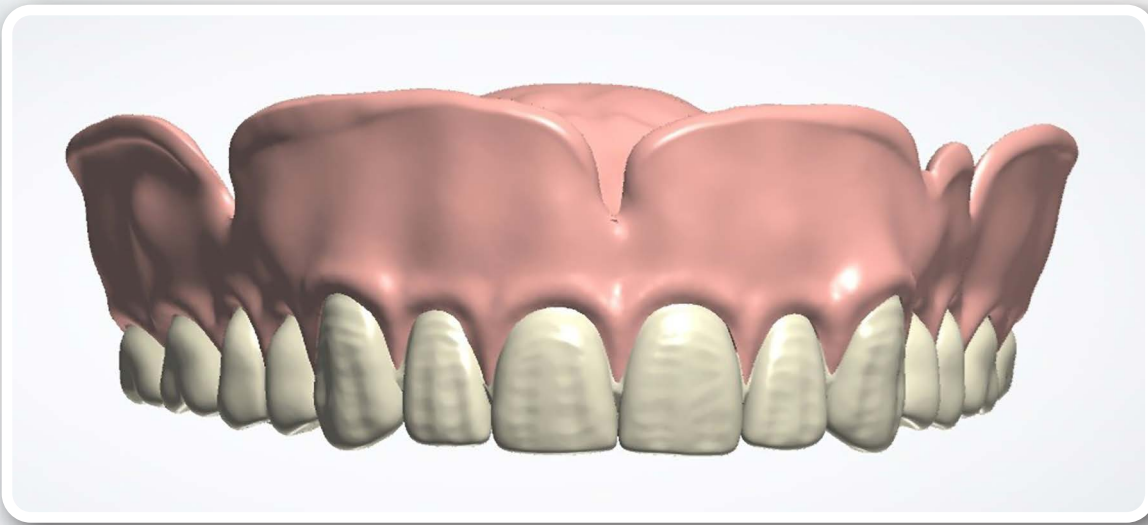
### **SHORTENED APPOINTMENT TIME**

The mere fact that digital dentures can reduce appointment times to deliver a functional high impact and esthetic denture has been a game changer, allowing more dentists to now offer

digital dentures as an option rather than deferring removable dentures as many have done, simply because it just wasn't economically feasible in their practices. Now that the appointment time to delivery has been reduced, however, that in itself provides a means for those dental patients who may not have previously acquired







*This significantly reduces the need for multiple appointments.*

dentures the ability and mechanism to do so. Furthermore, once the digital design has been completed and produced, you have most of the data necessary to serve that dentist client and patient for years to come as any type of adjustment or a new denture simply requires a scan of the current topography to be integrated into the original design. Now, you can output another denture, new and better fitting, which requires less than two appointments, one for the scan and another for delivery. Again, this significantly reduces the need for multiple appointments and offers a benefit to the dental practitioner and the convenience of less disruption to their patients' lives.

## DIGITAL DENTURE MATERIAL SCIENCES

Digital dentures are different from traditional dentures for multiple reasons. With regards to 3D printed dentures, the bonding of high impact resin – meaning 3D printed denture base and 3D printed denture teeth – has become more of a function of the chemistry since both components are printed of the same chemical resin formulations with different pigmentation to achieve the desired esthetics and then bonded yet again with the same resin. Once the two components – denture base and teeth -- are properly bonded according to the instruction for use, there is no longer the concern of any teeth coming off or debonding, as there is no attempt to bond dissimilar materials but rather identical chemistry which bonds incredibly well. When done properly, it becomes and behaves as one complete and whole entity.

Whether printed or milled, these new denture materials have produced a stronger, less absorbent, and better wearing functionality for a longer lasting removable prosthesis for the patient. Depending on the materials used, some make claims to exhibit enhanced hardness or higher impact properties when subjected to body temperature or moisture, all things common in the oral environment. Furthermore, the wear-

ability of the denture will improve using these new materials since they absorb less fluids that ultimately cause smells and stains; as well as wear slower than traditional dentures using plastic carded denture teeth. Lastly, the esthetic value of these newer generations of materials provides for a similar, if not better, esthetic value as traditional dentures.

When digital dentures first came on the scene, they had a less-than-optimal esthetic value, particularly in the denture base which appeared very neon pink, an unnatural effect. Now, however, the modern materials have become much better, showing characteristics more like their analog predecessors but with elevated attributes as discussed. 3D printed materials, however, have yet to incorporate veining effects available in their milling options for denture bases.

## MANUFACTURING PROCESSES

Understanding the manufacturing and their throughput will help you in selecting the best solutions available for your laboratory. In 3D printing, there are options to print in either DLP or PolyJet technology. When utilizing DLP technology, the print is of the same material since it is all from a single vat of resin, thereby offering a monochromatic color for teeth with limited translucency. Some solution providers have created libraries that are characterized to allow the material to reflect light in different geometries providing the visual effect of greater depth and translucency, and some laboratories choose to add stains to characterize the teeth further.

A recently emerged 3D printing technology in the digital denture arena is PolyJet technology, which allows for multiple resins and colors to print in sequence to achieve the desired shading results. As this technology develops and becomes more robust, it may become a solution some laboratories will gravitate toward. Costs of the technology, as well as limitations to the number of resins deployed for a singular print



*Digital dentures further provide the dental laboratory with the ability to offer multiple denture options to their dentist clients.*



and the post processing steps, are things to consider when exploring this method of fabricating digital dentures.

Milling digital dentures is still a viable option and some solution providers have harnessed the best in class for both materials and outputs. With regards to esthetics and alike, opinions vary, but many believe that milling, especially denture teeth, will yield better esthetic outcomes, since the laboratory can mill using multilayered PMMA to achieve a superior esthetic result. The challenge is the scalability of production with milling, since the limiting factor of manufacturing becomes the contact the tool has with the material, and some milled arches can take a couple of hours to mill the teeth and again the denture base, offering a production time of three or four hours per denture. 3D printing allows for a speedier production process and can theoretically produce 6-10 times or more the volume of dentures in the same production times.

Some laboratories have found that a “premium” digital denture solution is ideal when deploying both technologies, meaning 3D printing denture bases, while milling multilayered PMMA to achieve the best and most esthetic results. Again, reconciling your fees and aligning with the manufacturing costs to justify the costs of production comes down to numbers, fees, and margins, but the option nonetheless is available for even the most discerning patients and clinicians, which then opens the conversation as to which digital denture is best for your laboratory and its dentist clients.

## **BUSINESS CONSIDERATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

Digital dentures further provide the dental laboratory with the ability to offer multiple denture options to their dentist clients, including an economy denture, a standard denture, and a premium denture, simply by changing the materials we use to print or mill. We can now design a denture and according to what the clinician and patient require, we can quickly and easily pivot to accommodate their needs. This will allow us to serve a greater population of patients and satisfy, meet, and exceed their expectations.



There are patients who have economic challenges, and many times go without a denture due to time and/or money constraints. By offering an economy denture, the laboratory and their dentist clients will have an option for those who cannot afford and have simply gone without. Similarly, on the opposite side of the spectrum, there are those discerning dentists and patients who rightfully demand the greatest of function and esthetics, and now we have an easy manufacturing process to accommodate everyone's needs, while growing our dental laboratories revenue and bottom line. The process remains the same, as the greatest value is the data set stemming from the design. Once the CAD is completed, the manufacturing output is where we can offer the different denture options to our clients, as those costs align with our manufacturing costs and margins.

## CONCLUSION

Digital dentures are a market segment of our profession that will surely continue to grow, and as technology becomes further adopted, the market size and opportunity will grow as well. One thing to be mindful of, however, is that technology — meaning CAD/CAM — is a mere tool to create consistent, scalable, and repeatable results. The quality, which is the competitive differentiator for your laboratory, should never change and in fact gets better when utilizing technology. Your dentist clients have become your laboratory's clients because you meet their expectations, and using a new tool should never diminish the level of quality they have grown to expect from your dental laboratory. [i](#)



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Daniel Alter's experience and repertoire is comprised of more than 25 years in the dental profession with more than ten years of owning and operating a successful mid-sized dental laboratory, coupled with a Master's degree in Business Management and Organizational Leadership, and a respected stellar educating record as a Professor of Restorative Dentistry at the City University of New York. The NADL board recognized him with the Educator of the Year Award in 2016. Alter is a recognized published author, presenter, and consultant on various relevant subjects, and is continually active in learning and sharing his knowledge with like-minded professionals. He continuously serves the profession as the Executive Editor of Inside Dental Technology (IDT). Alter holds the designation of a Master Dental Technologist (MDT), as well as a Certified Dental Technician (CDT) in two disciplines (CE & CB). His expertise involves tooth morphology and gnathology, CAD/CAM, implants, and ceramics while his continued research emphasizes CAD/CAM, implantology and all its modalities, including innovative advancements for the dental laboratory technology profession. Alter provides comprehensive knowledge and expertise for any business and organization. He has been providing valuable consultation services for businesses large and small, ranging from start-ups to global multi-national enterprises.

He is a true problem solver, with critical thinking skills and a keen eye to the industry's emerging trends and needs and his constant pursuit and commitment to education keeps him at the forefront of dental technology innovations and advances.



By Martin Mendelson, DDS, CPC, FIADFE

# REDUCING **Overwhelm**

*A Strategic Approach to Managing Responsibilities and Time*

In today's fast-paced professional environment, it's easy to feel overwhelmed when the demands of your life seem greater than you can comfortably manage. I've been there too, facing a mountain of responsibilities, emails, tasks, and projects that left me feeling perpetually stressed and overburdened. This constant state of overwhelm inspired me to take action. Years ago, I decided to find ways to reduce my stress rather than continue to accept my reality as it was. This journey led me to dedicate my life to helping other professionals and executives navigate their responsibilities more effectively.

*Your feeling of overwhelm comes from not having a clear picture of everything on your plate.*

By better understanding your responsibilities and available time, you can significantly reduce stress and overwhelm. So here is a question: Have you ever taken a step back to inventory everything on your plate and evaluate how you're spending your time?

One effective way to achieve this is to take this inventory of everything you have on your plate and then utilize the Eisenhower Matrix to prioritize your tasks.

## **Understanding the Eisenhower Matrix**

The concept behind what would later be called the Eisenhower Matrix was developed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. He used this simple yet powerful time management tool to prioritize and tackle the many high-stakes issues he faced throughout his career, first as a U.S. Army general, then as Supreme Allied Commander of NATO Forces, and eventually as President of the United States.



It helps you balance tasks based on their importance and urgency by categorizing them into four quadrants:

1. **DO IT TODAY:** Tasks that are both important and urgent.
2. **SCHEDULE IT:** Tasks that are important but not urgent.
3. **DELEGATE IT:** Tasks that are urgent but not important.
4. **ELIMINATE IT:** Tasks that are neither important nor urgent.

This clear strategy can transform how you manage your tasks and significantly reduce your stress levels.

## Steps to Evaluate Your Time and Responsibilities

**TAKE AN INVENTORY:** List all your duties and responsibilities. Examples might include meetings, projects, answering emails, creative or productive time, etc.

**EVALUATE YOUR CALENDAR:** Review your daily and weekly calendars. Note how much time you spend on each activity. Include time spent on social media and time with friends and family. These are important and need to be included in your evaluation process.

**CATEGORIZE YOUR TASKS:** Using the Eisenhower Matrix, place each task into one of the four quadrants. This will help you see what needs immediate attention, what can be scheduled, what can be delegated, and what can be eliminated.

## Examples of Categories

**MEETINGS:** Are all the meetings you attend necessary? Could some be shortened or delegated?

**PROJECTS:** Which projects are critical and require your direct involvement?

**EMAILS:** Are you spending too much time on emails? Can you batch-process them at specific times during the day?

**CREATIVE/PRODUCTIVE TIME:** Do you have enough time for focused, uninterrupted work?

**PERSONAL/SOCIAL TIME:** Time with family, friends, and time to accomplish the tasks of life...like calling a plumber to fix a leaky toilet.

## Conclusion

Your feeling of overwhelm comes from not having a clear picture of everything on your plate. By taking the time to inventory your professional and personal responsibilities and categorize them effectively, you can gain control over your schedule and plan your life more effectively. You can only manage and (hope to) get everything done with a true understanding of your tasks versus time available.

I am excited to offer a video series to help you gain control of your mindset, overwhelm, strengths, responsibilities, delegation, and communication with the world around you.

This five-part series provides practical tips and strategies to help you stay on top of your professional (and personal) game. Feel free to message me for more details. Part one contains a course overview, discusses my TEAM Framework, and is a gift to my colleagues.

Let's tackle overwhelm together and bring clarity and productivity back into your professional life. [📌](#)

## About the Author

Dr. Martin Mendelson, Founder of Metamorphosis Coaching and former Resident Faculty at Spear Education, has nearly 20 years of experience and certifications in Executive Coaching, Team Coaching/Facilitation, Emotional Intelligence, and Happiness Studies. Dr. Mendelson has empowered leaders and teams across North America to excel and thrive. As a captivating speaker, astute coach, and masterful team facilitator, he unleashes the power of his innovative T.E.A.M. approach, guiding clients to shed the burdens of traditional leadership and embrace cohesion for unparalleled business growth and personal fulfillment.

<https://martinmendelson.com/>

*This clear strategy can transform how you manage your tasks and significantly reduce your stress levels.*



# DOES YOUR LAB HAVE A Pink Perspective?

By Enja Dorjchuluun, MBA

**P**eter Pizzi, MDT, has been a staple lecturer here at Florida dental laboratory meetings. Whoever has had the pleasure to hear him speak is left inspired with many great concepts to ponder. We thank Peter and mentors like him for all they do to help us get to our next levels. One of his many popular esthetics lectures entitled, "Pink, White and the Face," brings attention to restoring teeth beyond just filling a space with the color of the teeth. In many cases, simulating natural tooth structures, like root surfaces and soft tissue, is crucial to attain pleasing results. In my opinion, management of root contours and pink tissue (**Fig. 1**) can help differentiate a lab and the services they and their clients provide. In this article, I would like to discuss a few cases when shaping teeth and coloring gums for implant crowns or standard bridgework were key for patient satisfaction.



Step one in evaluating smile design cases is getting aligned with our accounts on the need for photography and gathering analog and/or digital records (i.e. mounted model, bites, diagnostics and temporaries). We have materials today that help us achieve root and tissue colors predictably (Fresco, Zirkozahn, e.max Ivoclar, Ivoclar), yet without proper re-

ords, a hard task becomes nearly impossible making an un-aesthetic situation actually look worse.

## Case 1

The patient shown was involved in a traumatic accident resulting in a bone defect and a much higher lip position on his left side. The patient's facial anatomy and lip position was altered making more of the cemento-enamel junction (CEJ) and gum structure visible (**Fig. 2**). During the smile evaluation, it was clear that there was a need for simulated pink ceramics. The first lab that worked on this restoration did not have access to the pictures or the patient's condition, nor asked for this information. The doctor came to us to see if we could evaluate the existing restorations and make adjustments. At Sakr Dental Arts, we have specific pink tabs







(Fig. 3) that help capture and communicate the nuances of pink patterns and shades. Although tabs and color swatches are helpful, high-quality photography was taken so the nuances of colors, translucencies and patterns could be interpreted. There is a debate between the effectiveness of SLR cameras and smart phones for shade and smile design evaluations. In our experience, both are effective tools. With that said, an SLR camera and a good dental photography class are highly worth the investment for labs and doctors who are looking to make restorations with this level of detail (Fig. 4).

The records and proper handling of pink ceramic materials helped to achieve a result that restored the patient's confident smile (Fig. 5).

## Case 2

After periodontal treatment or recession, often crown and bridge restorations need root and tissue simulation. In the case shown in Figure 6, this approach was highly necessary. Under thoughtful doctor instructions, and 10 years of judicious home care, the patient maintained stable bone and soft tissue health post-periodontal treatment. The periodontist and restorative dentist were now able to prescribe a three-unit fixed zirconia bridge after a planned extraction of the second premolar and proper healing (Fig. 7). Having a wonderful wide and expressive smile, this area made the pa-



tient very self-conscious due to the visible dark triangles and unesthetic root and gum display in her smile. The doctor took note of the patients' concerns. After experiencing other cases when pink ceramics were successfully utilized, the patient and doctor visited Sakr Dental Arts for a discussion of the esthetic challenges and a custom color evaluation. Photography and other appropriate records were taken. With the help of a good game plan aligning the doctor, patient, and lab expectations, together with records that included SLR photography, the results achieved exceeded the doctor and patient expectations.

## Conclusion

There are many techniques to differentiate one lab from another. Learning techniques to manage tooth shaping and pink ceramics to manage restorative space discrepancies is one of them. Alignment with clients on the appropriate records necessary to achieve desired outcomes is imperative. There are many materials that can help labs predictably achieve the results shown in this article. Even though we all love making beautiful white and bright restorations that have natural translucencies, there is something special about cases where proper management of root shaping and pink tissue restore the patient's ability to smile confidently. 📌

*A special thanks goes to contributors Dr. Michael Koyfman, Dr. Ana Gonzalez, Dany Sakr, CDT, Ramzi Matar, CDT, Jennifer Luna - ceramist, Nick Azzara, and the Sakr ceramic team.*

## About the Author

Enja Dorj is the Business Operations Manager at Sakr Dental Arts. Sakr Dental Arts focuses on simplifying, streamlining, and improving dental technology through better tools, better workflows, and better communication. Like many, she started her career on the bench doing model work. She has grown and learned all aspects of the laboratory business for 18+ years. For the last eight years she has delved deeper into implant dentistry, hybrid restorations, and improving communication and workflow with doctors and staff. Enja earned her Master of Business Administration from University of Central Florida in 2012 majoring in business and accounting. She likes to develop systems and workflow processes that improve the lab and aspires to take Sakr Dental Arts to a national level.



## FDLA Board Nominations – Now Open!

FDLA is looking for volunteers to give back to the industry and is currently seeking the following professionals and industry partners to serve in leadership positions:

### 1) Director

Must be an active member of the association. Each term on the board is a one-year term, and a board member can serve up to three years consecutively in a director position. Officers are one-year terms.

### 2) Supplier Representative (Two-year term)\*

\*Must be an active Associate or Business Partner member

### FDLA Time Requirements

Service on the FDLA board requires attendance at approximately four board meetings a year. February, June (in-person during the Symposium & Expo), September and December.

Below: FDLA Board of Directors installation ceremony in 2024.



New board members would be elected on Friday, June 13, 2025, and would serve at least a one-year term on the FDLA state board. (Supplier Representatives serve one (1) two-year term.)

SPECIAL NOTE: Outside of the board meeting held in conjunction with the Southern States Symposium & Expo, all other meetings are held virtually.

To be considered, please complete the survey below on or before Monday, April 21.

<https://s.surveymonkey.com/k47r21pm>



### FDLA District Workshop a Success

On November 16, FDLA was excited to offer a workshop taught in Spanish. Fernando de Leon, past president and current board member, led the course, “Zirconia from A to Z.” The workshop was a fantastic learning experience and FDLA looks forward to offering more opportunities in the future. We would like to thank our sponsor, Aidite and Peterson Dental Laboratory in Delray Beach, Florida for hosting.



### Florida Donated Dental Services (DDS) in Action

The Florida DDS program helps individuals with disabilities or who are elderly or medically fragile and cannot afford or otherwise access treatment for severe dental conditions. From July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, DDS program participants served 100 patients and generated \$472,700 in donated treatment (including \$36,602 in laboratory fabrications). Each patient who completed treatment received an average of \$7,358 worth of dental treatment; comprehensive care that illustrates the generosity of the **460 volunteer dentists** and **201 dental laboratories**.



# Origin Nano Zirconia

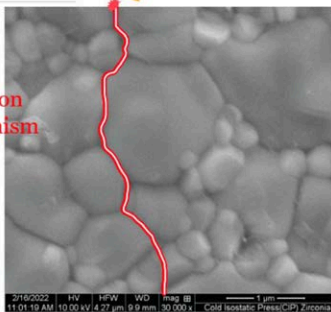
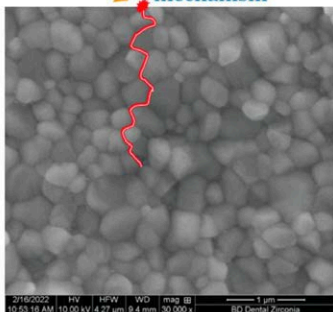
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## FDLA Calendar

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### June 13-14, 2025

#### FDLA Southern States Symposium & Expo

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For more information, see page 29 and visit:

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# Creating Value

**Alexander and Danielle Wuensche** are the proud husband and wife owners of Zahn-technique, CDL, based in Miami. Both have also served as president of the FDLA. They have been active FDLA members for many years and wanted to share their 'why.'

## Why did you originally decide to join the FDLA?

Alex: I had an emotional relationship with the FDLA because it was the first dental meeting I attended in the States a year before I emigrated from Germany. I met a few people who helped me get my feet on the ground in the U.S. and serving as president was connected to that. Also, I've always focused on providing clinical education and being a part of FDLA was a way for me to help educate at a higher level.

Danielle: I saw Alex's contributions and how important FDLA is to our industry, especially with the decline of labs and teaching institutions, and I felt it was my duty to volunteer and ensure we have the strongest state association supporting the dental lab industry in Florida.

## What value do you receive out of being a member?

Alex: FDLA members have access to information. We played a role in changing the law to have more legal protection for when we go chairside; this is a great service. FDLA also provides education and support when you need it.

Danielle: I wear a lot of hats in the lab, and one of the most difficult is human resources. Unexpected things happen and I want to do the best for our team members as well as our business, and whenever I call Seay Management, they do a great job of walking me through the matter and helping me understand the best decision to make.

## In what ways is the Symposium worth the investment of time and money?

Alex: I've been to many dental meetings and ours is one of the leading in the States. The value of education delivered is incomparable from didactic to high-end workshops. Vendors feel the same and decide to support our meeting. That speaks for itself.

Danielle: We treat the Symposium as a team-building activity for our lab. Everyone is invited to attend, including the front office. We want them to interact and meet people from outside of the lab. This strengthens our relationships and communication. We also go out as a team one night for a fun activ-



ity. This year it was axe throwing and the previous year was indoor sky diving. From an educational standpoint, Alex sits with each technician before the meeting, and they review the sessions and create their personal plan for development. Everyone looks forward to it.

## As many state associations are dissolving, how do you see the FDLA evolving to meet the needs of Floridian dental laboratories?

Alex: One way to evolve is to extend beyond Florida. One of the focus points I would like to see is the push for neighboring states to attend the meeting as well as be active in the association. Especially as other state associations are dying out, this is our chance to grow.

Danielle: I believe we can stay relevant through education. There are so many changes in the industry with work going offshore and consolidation of both labs and practices. Yet there is still a need for core knowledge of dental technology. There are people who say they can do it, and AI will help them, but at the end of the day we must understand the foundational basics to be a valuable team member for clients. That's what we strive to be - valuable. Understanding how to maintain and create value for clients is important for all labs, and that is how FDLA helps. 📍



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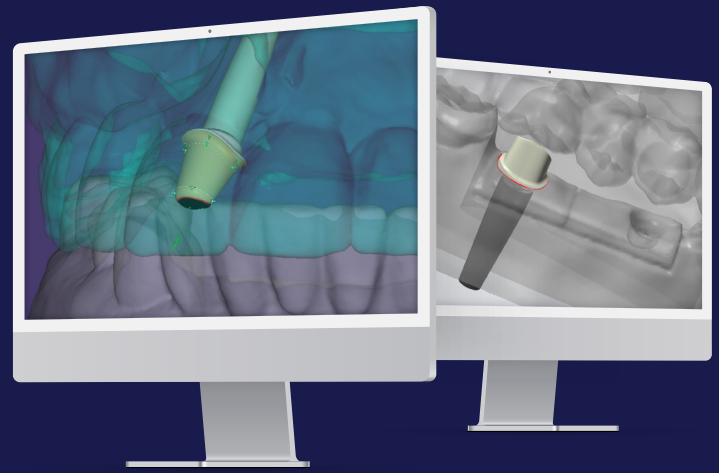
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