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*Candidate for President/VP*

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**How do you work with or lead a team?**

Throughout my leadership journey, I have embraced accountability, collaboration, and innovation. Starting as the chapter's D1 Intern, I have grown into roles such as being my local chapter's Co-President and District 10 Trustee. These experiences have allowed me to make a meaningful impact while empowering those around me. Whether addressing member engagement, advocating for DEI, or facilitating cross-district collaboration, I have prioritized creating spaces for others to lead and succeed. My leadership style has always been to empower others through delegating meaningful tasks with clear expectations, while providing the resources and flexibility needed to thrive in any given scenario. I adapt my approach to the unique needs of each team member and situation, fostering open communication and collaboration. This has helped me create a level of trust amongst my team members to ensure that they feel encouraged to share ideas, voice concerns, and take initiative. By cultivating this atmosphere of understanding and motivation, I ultimately aim to foster a culture of growth, innovation, and shared success. In the end my journey through dental school has shaped me into a leader rooted in adaptability, resilience, and integrity—focused on not only helping to build successful teams but resilient, confident, and capable leaders.

**What leadership experiences have equipped you for the role of President/Vice President?**

This year, I had the unique opportunity to engage with every level of ASDA's tripartite system, which I believe has helped equip me for the role of National President/Vice President. As Co-President of my chapter, I collaborated with the executive committee and the general board to lead initiatives focused on professional development, membership engagement, and wellness. These efforts engaged members and created growth opportunities, encouraging participation despite academic and clinical challenges by tailoring initiatives to meet diverse needs. Furthermore, in my role as District 10 Trustee, I worked with leaders from seven chapters and a district cabinet full of diverse students to help promote collaboration and facilitate cross-district exchanges in DEI, community service, and pre-dental. This experience taught me the importance of active listening and creating platforms for open communication to address the unique perspectives of each chapter and dental school within district 10. Additionally, at the national level, I served as a Board Liaison to the Council on Membership, participated in initiatives like the Multi-District Advocacy Event Task Force, and represented dental students as a delegate at the ADA House of Delegates. These roles have sharpened my ability to navigate

critical decisions with collaborative problem-solving as well as enhancing my advocacy skills and understanding of key issues affecting dental students. These experiences have shaped me into a leader who is committed to advancing ASDA's mission and vision; and I hope to bring these skills to the role of National President/Vice President.

**What are 2-3 issues important to dental students and/or the position of president?**

There are three key issues that affect dental students: wellness, student loans, and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The average student graduates with around \$300K in student debt, while those students at private universities are looking at closer to \$500K in debt. This large financial burden has a substantial effect on financial stability and career choices. It often leads dental students to prioritize repayment over personal and professional aspirations such as starting a practice or pursuing an advanced education. For some, the cost creates a barrier to entering or remaining in the profession, further increasing disparities in access and representation. This ties into our second issue of DEI. Fostering DEI is essential to help establish that every dental student feels valued and supported. The lack of representation, equitable opportunities, and inclusive environments interferes with students' sense of belonging, which can impact their academic and professional development. Lastly, wellness is equally critical for dental students. From demanding curriculum and clinical responsibilities, it can be hard for students to find a balance. This can lead to stress, burnout, and isolation which can diminish both the students' well-being and their ability to deliver quality care. Furthermore, a part of wellness that is often overlooked is nutrition and food insecurity. With limited financial resources and time constraints due to a rigorous course-load it can make it difficult for students to access nutritious meals, further increasing stress and reducing energy levels which negatively affects their academic success and patient care.