

District 7

Matthew Fazio, Ohio State 2026

How do you work with or lead a team?

Having a team that works well together is everything. During my time in ASDA, I have served as the President of the OSU Chapter, where I lead and worked with a leadership team of 28 student members. During this time, I discovered the most important attribute when it comes to working as a team is communication. It is impossible to get anything done well unless everyone is on the same page working together to achieve a common goal. I personally feel that I not only have excellent communication skills, but as equally important, are my listening skills. Being able to take the time to listen to my teammates for their individual goals has helped me be able to completely understand their vision, and in turn, allows me to give them the optimal support they need in order to achieve them.

I have been a member of ASDA for a number of years and had experiences in many different areas of the association. With all my prior experiences, I feel that I have the necessary foundation to really help uplift the District 7 team to reach our optimal potential. Teamwork really does make the dream work, and I know that I will work endlessly with our district team so we can continue to accomplish our new goals together.

What leadership experiences have equipped you for the District Trustee role?

I have personally served as President of the Ohio State ASDA Chapter for the last year. Before that, I served as President-Elect for a year where I organized and planned all our Lunch and Learns and Socials. As for District positions, while serving as President-Elect, I was also the ASDA District 6 Conference Chair where I was on the planning committee for our District Conference we had back in 2023. This past year while serving as President, I also served as the ASDA District 6 Associate Director of Events and Programming where I assisted in overseeing the planning of our annual District 6 Summer Leadership Team Retreat and again our District 6 Conference this past month in January 2025. As for national positions, I am a Representative on the National ASDA Conference Fees Task Force where we strategize ways to help reduce the financial barriers for students to attend national conferences such as NLC and ASDA Annual.

As you can see during my 2.5 years in ASDA, I have strived to get involved as much as I can. I say all this to show that I have numerous experiences within the chapter, district, and national levels of ASDA that have successfully equipped me for the role of District Trustee. I have learned so much over the years within these positions, and one of the most important things that I have learned is that I possess the immense passion and work ethic required for the role of District Trustee.

Why are you interested in the District Trustee role and what do you hope to accomplish in this position?

I have been interested in the District Trustee role ever since 2024 Annual Session. I remember our current District 6 Trustee going through the questions and answering them on the fly, and something about that inspired me. Along with working closely on the district cabinet for two years, I have been able to see the profound impact the Trustee has on the district.

With this cycle in particular, we are facing new challenges with redistricting. Although some districts may not have changed very much, like current District 6, other chapters are experiencing monumental changes, such as our Indiana Chapter. Although some would see this as an added challenge for the district this year, I see it as more of an opportunity. Part of the reason why I want to be Trustee is because I believe I have the skill set to take the best attributes of our two prior districts and combine them into one new powerhouse of a District 7. After speaking with representatives from both previous districts, it is clear there is a lot we can learn from each other- this is the opportunity I see.

If there is one thing you can count on me for is that I never give up. I really do put 100% into everything I accomplish, mainly because I care about everyone's experience. I have had such remarkable experiences during my ASDA years- I want to be District Trustee because I want to create and share similar amazing experiences with our members.

What are 2-3 issues important to dental students?

Of course, there are many issues that are important to dental students. One important issue that I feel is overlooked is wellness. It is easy to focus on the bread and butter of being a dental student; the lab work, the patients, the loans, the specific expectations, etc. But it is so easy to overlook yourself. This is where I believe ASDA comes in full force and helps out like no other attribute of dental school. ASDA offers a community of hundreds and thousands of like-minded students going through the exact same process that you are. We are in an incredibly niche profession and position. It is easy to feel overlooked or alone, but with ASDA, you are never truly alone. I have met some of my closest friends through this association, and that is something I want every dental student to have the opportunity to do.

The more traditional dental student issue I find important to students is residency and student loan reform. I know many students, including myself, who plan on attending a residency for additional training before going into the work force. However, I know many students choosing not to pursue a residency solely because of their loans. I first became aware of this issue when I attended ADA Student Lobby Day two years ago, and I have attended every year since because I believe this is a vital issue that needs addressing- everyone should have the opportunity to do a residency if they so desire.