

1 **Resolution Number:** 401-2025

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3 **Title:** Creating a Certification Program Focusing on Council on Professional Issues Initiatives

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5 **Reference Committee Assignment:** Professional Issues and Governance

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7 **Sponsor(s):** Alexandra Wyluda, ASDA Chapter President, Midwestern-Arizona '26

8 Miriam Villa, District 10 Chief of Staff, Midwestern-Arizona '27

9 Bree Zhang, Council on Advocacy Chair, Columbia '27

10 Payal Patel, District 10 Trustee, ASDOH '26

11 Emily Tarr, Alternate Delegate, Midwestern-Arizona '26

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13 **Financial Impact:** None

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15 **Board of Trustees Comments:** The Board recommends a yes vote.

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17 **Reference Committee Comments:**

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19 **Background:** Vulnerable populations are groups and communities at risk for poor physical,
20 psychological, or social health outcomes. Due to social, economic, political, and environmental
21 elements, this population faces various accessibility barriers. The American Student Dental
22 Association's (ASDA) **Statement of Position of Policy H-13** acknowledges vulnerable
23 populations and supports initiatives and legislation relating to improving oral care approaches
24 for this population. However, ASDA currently does not have an initiative to address this Policy.

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26 Vulnerable populations experience disproportionate oral health challenges; the Center for
27 Disease Control and Prevention states poor oral health among some groups of people is partly
28 due to health disparities. Health disparities are defined as preventable differences in disease
29 impact or opportunities in a population due to a type of disadvantage, such as physical or
30 intellectual disabilities, limited access to services where one lives, or ability to afford health
31 care services. These disparities show a direct correlation with poor oral healthcare by having
32 limited access to healthcare, financial support, and resources.

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34 This resolution aims to address the gap between ASDA's policy stance and actionable efforts by
35 proposing the creation of a COPI Certification Program Focusing on Vulnerable Populations and
36 Social Determinants of Health. This certificate creation will be building off of an existing
37 certification program, and will enhance educating dental students to become competent
38 healthcare professionals when treating members in vulnerable populations and addressing
39 social determinants of health in healthcare; therefore, be it

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RESOLUTION

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43 **Resolved,** that the 2025-26 Council on Professional Issues (COPI) investigate the feasibility of
44 establishing a community service certificate program, modeled after the ASDA Advocacy
45 Certificate Program; and be it further

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47 **Resolved,** that the COPI present an annual report at the 2026 ASDA Annual Session to ensure
48 accountability and transparency.

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50 **Action:**