

ADA New Dentist News

August 2016, Volume XX, Number III

Getting to Know You



Dr. Bari Levine, a pediatric dentistry resident at Temple University/Pediatric Dental Associates in Philadelphia, poses with a patient in Peru.

Why Dentistry?

My mother, father and brother are all dental specialists, so dentistry was a natural fit for me. I love interacting with patients and parents each day, promoting positive oral health behaviors from a young age and having children excited to come back to the dentist.

Why are you an ADA member?

I love the camaraderie and support associated with organized dentistry. I appreciate the ADA's mission to promote research, protect the profession of dentistry and improve oral health of underserved populations.

What has been the best time of your career so far?

As a student, I started an annual dental outreach program to an orphanage in Peru, thanks to the guidance of my mentors and parents. Traveling to Peru to provide care for the beautiful children there has been a humbling experience. I recently founded the Growing Smiles Foundation (growingmilesfoundation.org), which provides free, annual comprehensive dental care and oral health education to undeserved children outside of Lima, Peru.

When I'm not practicing, I'm:

Planning our next outreach trip to Peru, cooking, eating something delicious and spending time with friends and family.

One fun fact about me:

I am a huge Elvis Presley fan! For the past 7 years I have dressed up like Elvis for Halloween – with the wig, white jump suit, side burns and all!

Three new dentists, three different paths

The ADA New Dentist News spoke with three dentists to learn what led them to dentistry and how they chose their career path



Dr. Spatz

Public health

Dr. Mital Spatz spent four years at Purdue University to earn her doctorate in pharmacy and then another six years as a pharmacist and pharmaceutical rep before making a drastic career change.

She wanted to become a dentist.

"I chose to switch careers from pharmacy to dentistry because I wanted to have more direct patient contact and to someday have my own practice to allow me the flexibility of being a dentist and having a family," she said.

After graduating from the College of Dentistry at the University of Illinois in Chicago (the same institution where she earned her certificate of pediatric dentistry), Dr. Spatz spent nearly two years as the dental director in the Stephenson County Health Department in rural Freeport, Illinois. It was there where she developed a commitment to public health.

"I had an opportunity to be part of a dental clinic in rural Illinois that was losing its funding," Dr. Spatz said. "I appreciated the opportunity to help the community. The practice was inside a health department and the goal was to continue dental services and care for the people of that community. I thought it was a great way to maintain and grow a

practice while serving the community."

The Indiana native said that she had long-lasting



Dr. Warnken

Small group practice

Dr. Rebecca Warnken grew up around dentistry, but almost decided to pursue a different career.

"My grandfather was a dentist, as well as one of my uncles and mentors," the Denver native said. "My mom is an office manager in a dental practice. Throughout my childhood, I spent time in different dental offices surrounded by great examples of how wonderful this profession is. That being said, I went to college with a plan to go to medical school."

Then something changed.

"The closer I got to the application process, the more I realized I truly loved all that dentistry had to offer," she said. "I am able to provide my patients with necessary care that on many occasions changes their life, while also raising my family, running a business and leading a team. Leadership development is a huge personal interest for me and dentistry allows me to incorporate that interest each and every day."

After earning an undergraduate degree at Creighton University, she graduated from the Marquette University School of Dentistry in 2013, and then moved to Florida with her husband.

After two years at a dental practice in South Bradenton, Dr. Warnken moved to Apollo Beach Dental, a six-operator practice where she leads eight team members. She noted that her patients range in age from 1 to 103.

Dr. Warnken was drawn to a small group practice early on. "It allows me the balance I need and want at



Dr. Dean

Academics

Although he eventually rose to become the oral medicine graduate program director at the University of Washington School of Dentistry after only two years in academics, Dr. David Dean said he "never thought I would be a dentist."

His father was a dentist. "I think I viewed it as my dad's thing," Dr. Dean said. "He never pushed us one way or another. In college I kept taking prerequisites for medical school without any clear picture of what I actually wanted to do."

Before Dr. Dean's senior year in college, his father invited him to spend the day with him at his dental office. "Honestly, I had no idea what went on in a day-to-day dental practice," he said. "I assumed that dentistry was monotonous and mechanical and was surprised to find something dynamic, exciting and deeply relational. I loved it."

Dr. Dean earned his undergraduate, dental, and masters of science in dentistry degrees at the University of Washington. He never considered teaching until a classmate told him that he had to "try teaching at some point."

"My love of teaching came about as a happy accident" he said. "I initially returned to academics due to a desire to practice clinical oral medicine. As I spent more time within dentistry, it became increasingly clear that my skills and interests were a bit outside of traditional dental practice. Taking a position in academics, particularly at UW, gave me the opportunity to pursue my clinical dream. Teaching is a large, important, and very rewarding part of my job, but my ability to be an effective educator is entirely dependent on my ability to be a successful clinician. While I aspire to be a great teacher and

See PATHWAYS, next page.

Want more new dentist resources?

For more information about other ADA resources especially for new practitioners visit ADA.org/newdentist or reach out to the ADA New Dentist Committee office at 800.621.8099 or by email at newdentist@ada.org

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PATHWAYS continued.

Dr. Spatz

insights from her time in Freeport. "I learned that working in public health was a fulfilling experience in providing dental care to patients that would otherwise not be able to receive care," she said. "It was rewarding to have many patients grateful and appreciative to have a clinic to receive care."

She also was exposed to a population that made her decide her future career in private practice: pediatric dentistry. "I especially learned that I enjoyed providing dental care to children and making them feel more comfortable with dental exams and treatments," the pediatric dentist said.

Dr. Spatz practices in Illinois as a pediatric dentist at Shriners Hospital for Children and Children's Dental World as well as at a dental office, Apple Dental Care, focused on public health.

"My mission is to always treat patients as I would treat my own children," she said.

In late 2016, Dr. Spatz will open her new practice, Tooth Buds Pediatric Dentistry, in Chicago. "I hope to be part of public health dentistry and provide dental care to patients," she said. "My goal is to continue to offer this care."

Dr. Warnken

this aspect in my career," she said. "I can learn from others; I can consult on cases; and I can have a day of the week to spend with my son. It's a great balance."

Her two years in South Bradenton were at a larger dental support organization. "I learned invaluable skills that I took into my current position," she said. "I had support when I had to let go of a staff member for the first time. I was able to develop leadership skills particular to leading a dental team. These are skills that are often overlooked in most dental school curriculums but are vital to practice success."

Dr. Warnken has no regrets about choosing her pathway to a small group practice. "My time working for a DSO taught me invaluable lessons and helped me develop skills in all facets of my practice," she said. "My move to a smaller practice closer to my home has allowed me to grow both professionally as well as outside of dentistry with involvement in my community and more time with my family."

"I truly enjoy my career and this profession and thus far I would not change it," she said.

Dr. Dean

a productive researcher, my driving motivation will always be to provide care for medically and diagnostically complex patients within dentistry.

"Teaching took me by surprise," Dr. Dean said. "At the end of my oral medicine program, I was fortunate to be offered a position, and through a variety of circumstances, took on a large teaching load right away. I have definitely had some missteps, but each has helped me refine my approach and I am really enjoying it."

Dr. Dean's clinical practice is split between the oral medicine clinics at UW and the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, and said he has learned a lot about teaching. "If you're interested in teaching, pay attention to the educators that you respond to," he said. "Try to emulate the things that resonate with you as you develop your own style. Every time you interact with students, clinically or in the classroom, try to leave them with one take-away point that they can put into practice right away."

He added more tips for aspiring teachers. "Find a mentor. Senior faculty can provide insight into things that you didn't even know to think about. You won't and can't know everything. Be confident in the knowledge that you have and work to gradually improve in areas where you still have a lot to learn."

Specialty pathway: endodontics

Q&A with specialist Dr. Marcus Johnson

For Dr. Marcus Johnson, the challenge of endodontics, and what he calls its basic principle — saving the natural dentition — is a genuinely intriguing pursuit.

"I love the fact that within one or two visits, most patients can get back to their normal lifestyle and routine — pain free," said the New York City-based dentist.

His passion for the specialty led Dr. Johnson to earn a certificate in endodontics from Case Western Reserve University and become a specialist after graduating from New York University Dental School.

The ADA New Dentist News asked Dr. Johnson about the details that went into his decision to pursue a specialty.

Here is a summary of the conversation:

Q: How and when did you choose to pursue endodontics?

My interest in endodontics came about during my second year in dental school; I was able to shadow a friend who was a first-year endodontic resident. I spent extra time in the graduate endodontic department developing relationships before getting accepted into the honors program and then completing a general practice residency, where I established myself as the "unofficial endodontist," treating as many endodontic cases as possible.

Q: How would you describe some of the benefits or challenges of pursuing a specialty?

I understood the advanced training for the specialty required more time and expense, and I felt building a practice would take longer since the growth is largely based on referrals. I also knew that relocation meant limited



Dr. Johnson

options. Growing a referral base in a city like New York, where the number of endodontic specialists is high, requires delivering reliable, reproducible results on a consistent basis. However, it is extremely rewarding. I like being able to provide high-quality care to patients with minimal visits and building and fostering great relationships with referring colleagues.

Q: What factors did you consider and what resources did you use to help you make this decision?

I considered the extent to which I had the ability to deliver treatment results in a timely fashion, the flexibility of schedule for family and travel and other lifestyle factors. I had many helpful resources to help me answer my questions, including stellar faculty members and resources from the American Association of Endodontists. My mentor, Dr. Albert Granger, helped me get my first job as an associate in his practice, where I honed my clinical skills and learned practice administration skills and how to effectively manage patients.

Q: What else should dentists know when considering pursuing a specialty?

Success in building my practice, City Endodontics, stemmed from networking and relationship building skills I developed in dental school, learning to be an effective communicator and maintaining a standard of clinical excellence. I found it's important to increase my practice value by staying abreast of treatment techniques, new trends and current literature. Also, as an endodontic attending instructing residents and providing continuing education credits through lectures for my referral base, I find that teaching is a great way to consistently realize this value and stay relevant.

The ins and outs of moving a dental career

Dr. Eric Childs was looking for a fresh start. Drs. Adriana and Emmanuel Zuniga were in search of better weather.

Dr. Lindsey Yates was seeking a better cost of living.

And Dr. Alexandra Barton just wanted to live in the same state as her husband-to-be.

Establishing a career isn't just about finding a job — it's also about finding a place to call home.

For more than five years, Dr. Eric Childs, a general dentist, lived and practiced in Battle Creek, Michigan. After two years of owning a solo practice, he found he didn't really enjoy the stresses of owning and running a business and decided to relocate for a fresh start.



Dr. Childs

"As I searched for new jobs, I found that there were different types of practices everywhere, and that I needed to find the model that fit me best," said Dr. Childs, a member of the New Dentist Committee. "I found that with my current practice."

Because Wisconsin and Michigan have licensure reciprocity, that part of the move was simplified since he already had the required five years of practice and current Michigan license. After paying his fees, the challenge was rounding up his North East Regional Board [now called the Commission on Dental Competency Assessments] and NBDE scores, a transcript from dental school and a letter from the State Board of Michigan acknowledging his dental license was in good standing.



Dr. Yates

"The last thing I had to do was take a jurisprudence exam in Wisconsin. It was offered online so I could complete it at my convenience," he said.

Dr. Adriana Zuniga and her husband, Dr. Emmanuel Zuniga, have a three-state story.



Dr. Barton

For 10 years, Emmanuel, an endodontist, owned a general dentistry practice in Chicago before enrolling in an endodontics residency at the University of Detroit Mercy. Adriana, a general dentist, attended Detroit Mercy for dental school and

later completed completed a general practice residency at Chicago's Loyola University Medical Center.

Following Emmanuel's residency completion, the couple realized they wanted to live in a city with more opportunities and better weather. They found that in Denver, where they moved in 2013. The couple, who have a 4-year-old daughter and 2-year-old son, were also looking for work-life balance. He is now the owner of the Art of Endodontics and she is the general dentist for the Denver Indian Health and Family

Services, an urban clinic that serves Native Americans.

"The process is extended in finding the time to get paperwork notarized, board scores mailed to the dental board and then there is a wait to have the application process," explained Adriana.

Dr. Lindsey Yates spent eight years practicing public health dentistry in Chicago before she and her husband decided to move to Denver.

"We knew that Colorado offered a lower cost of living as well as an improved work-life balance that we couldn't find in Chicago," said Dr. Yates, also a member of the ADA New Dentist Committee.

She found the re-licensing part to be the most trying part of the process.

"The most difficult part is identifying which states will accept your board exam and/or credentials," Dr. Yates said.

Patience is key, said Dr. Yates, who tipped her hat to the ADA CareerCenter, which helped her during her job search.

Dr. Alexandra Barton moved from Denver earlier this year after her fiancé took a job in Dallas in 2015. The 2013 Virginia Commonwealth graduate and general dentist is now an associate at a pediatric specialty group practice in Ft. Worth, Texas.

"I wanted to get my license going and a job secured as quickly as I could as well," said Dr. Barton, who continued living and working in Colorado until getting her sedation, insurance and Medicaid credentials in place.

One thing Dr. Barton said that made her transition easier was that Texas accepted her regional licensure exam, receiving her Texas dental license about five weeks after submitting her application. She also reached out to staff at the local, state and national levels.

"The staff at the Colorado Dental Association and Texas Dental Association were both incredibly helpful with getting my membership transitioned quickly so that as soon as we moved here I was given a big Texas welcome into the TDA and Fort Worth District Dental Society," Dr. Barton said.

Like many, Dr. Yates said she dreams of the day when universal licensure is a reality for dentists everywhere.

"One day, I hope these costly and onerous obstacles to true portability will be removed and a U.S. dentist's license will be recognized regardless in which of the 50 states he/she decides to practice," said Dr. Yates, who suggested fellow dentists consider volunteering with their state boards.

Dr. Childs agreed, "It can be daunting to relocate. But it happens commonly in today's world. Embrace the change and don't be afraid to make that change."

Visit the ADA CareerCenter at careercenter.ADA.org.



Drs. Adriana and Emmanuel Zuniga

Tips for relocating

- **Visit the ADA CareerCenter** at careercenter.ADA.org and check out the local or state association's classifieds section from the state where you want to move.
- **Reference the ADA's** new Licensure State Tables and ASDA's Licensure Spotlight. Visit ADA.org and search "licensure" or asdanet.org and search "licensure map."
- **Network.** Talk to dental school alumni, local association staff and dental reps to see if anyone knows of a job opening in your new state.
- **Make sure you know** if you would be happier in a private practice setting or a nonprofit setting. It's also important to research the common mode of practicing

dentistry in the new state, said Dr. Adriana Zuniga.

- **Be patient.** Get involved with your state board of dentistry or your state dental society.
- **Save.** Plan on having a few months salary saved just in case the transition process isn't as smooth as you imagined.
- **Scout out** the area to which you plan to relocate well ahead of your anticipated move. Try renting a room in the neighborhood that most appeals to you before making the full commitment to live there. Dr. Childs says understanding state and local taxes, insurance costs, property taxes and property costs can also help.

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ADA Success program helps dental students navigate professional world

Dental students can learn about managing debt and wealth, practice management, employment agreements and more through the ADA Success program.

ADA Success offers a free series of live, in-person programs presented by ADA member dentists or other subject matter experts. The goal is to help dental students prepare for life as a dentist and boost student engagement within the ADA.

State and local dental societies, residency programs and chapters of the American Student Dental Association may work with the ADA to schedule programs for the 2016-17 school year. Visit ADA.org/successprograms, email studentaffairs@ada.org or call 1.312.440.7470 for more information.

Visit ADA CareerCenter

Peruse dental-related job opportunities across the country on the ADA CareerCenter website.

The ADA CareerCenter is the official online job board of the ADA and job seekers and employers can search or post job opportunities for general dentists, specialists and other qualified professionals.

Sign-up at careercenter.ADA.org for those looking to upload their resume, receive new jobs via email, save and track jobs and apply online.

Streamline credentialing process through new member benefit

Input, store and update your professional credentials in one centralized location through the ADA Credentialing Service.

Dentists nationwide can enter their credentials in the ADA Credentialing Service for free using their ADA User ID and password at ADA.org/credentialing.

This service helps eliminate repetitive paperwork for the dentist and his or her office staff and reminds dentists when their licenses or certifications are due to expire.

This service helps eliminate repetitive paperwork for you and your office staff, requiring you to input your credentials only one time.

'We can help each other'

New Dentist Conference in Denver offers networking opportunities, education, fun

Denver — From student debt to the ever-changing job market, the start of a career can be an uphill climb for new dentists.

"The pressures facing a new graduate in today's economy can create an environment where work-life balance really is a struggle," said Dr. Justin Pearson, a 2008 graduate of University of Michigan School of Dentistry.

The opportunities to address these struggles with peers who are out of dental school less than 10 years, he said, is a major reason to attend the New Dentist Conference.

"The opportunity to network with peers and attention paid to both clinical and business continuing education is paramount to a new clinician's success as they enter the workforce," said Dr. Pearson, chair of the New Dentist Committee in Colorado.

This year's New Dentist Conference will be held Oct. 20-22 in Denver, in conjunction with ADA 2016 – America's Dental Meeting. At the conference, new dentists can learn more about student loan debt management, maintaining a comfortable work-life balance and stay updated on the future of health care. It also offers continuing education courses tailored to address the pressing issues new dentists face today and how to solve them.

It also doesn't hurt that the New Dentist Conference can be a lot of fun.

"Denver is a great city with so much fun to be had in and around town. This year should be a lot of fun," Dr. Pearson said. "The guide we're putting together for our visitors with places to eat, local watering holes, coffee shops and



Dr. Pearson

things to see for attendees we hope will help add a nice touch." There will be a social event on Oct. 20 hosted by the Colorado New Dentist Committee to get the week started, he added. The New

Dentist Reception is set for Oct. 21 at Wynkoop Brewing Company.

For Dr. Colleen Greene, a pediatric dentist in Milwaukee, enjoying the city and conference is exactly what she plans to do.



Dr. Greene

"My husband and I are making a vacation out of it," she said, adding that a group of friends are also visiting the city during the event.

But in between relishing what Denver has to offer, Dr.

Greene is also excited to explore both the New Dentist Conference and ADA 2016.

"The [ADA 2016] keynote speaker, Malala Yousafzai, was a huge draw for me," she said. "In the past, we've had former presidents. But this was really an unexpected and exciting choice."

At the NDC, Dr. Greene is looking forward to attending CE courses on working with patients with special needs and networking with other new dentists.

"As a specialist, I want to pick up more ideas and understand what's on the leading edge of other specialties and fields," she said. "Realizing how much we can help each other in this state of the game is a great benefit."

To register or learn more about the New Dentist Conference, visit ADA.org/ndc.

International thought leader named keynote speaker

Peter Sheahan, founder and group CEO of Karrikins Group, was announced as the New Dentist Conference keynote speaker. He is known internationally for his innovative business thinking and thought leadership, and has advised leaders from companies as diverse as Apple, Goldman Sachs, Microsoft, Hyundai, IBM, Pfizer, Wells Fargo and Cardinal Health. With staff in more than 23 cities across seven countries, he knows firsthand the challenges of growing a business in these rapidly changing times. He has been named one of the 25 Most Influential Speakers in the World by the National Speakers Association, and is the youngest person ever to be inducted into their industry Hall of Fame.

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2846-0116-ADA-NDN-May-2016