



California Dental Hygienists' Association
The Voice of Dental Hygiene

Historical Events and People*

*That Have Shaped the Evolution of the
California Dental Hygienists' Association*

1919-2025

1914	Dr. Fones' Bridgeport demonstration project graduates the first dental hygienists who work in the schools
1917	First dental hygiene license granted to Irene Newman of Connecticut
	Californians, Elma Platt (1917) and Charlotte Greenwood (1918), graduated from Forsyth Dental Infirmary for Children in Boston
	Platt and Greenwood return to California and lobby Dr. Guy S. Millberry, Dean of UCSF, to start a dental hygiene program
1918	First Dental Hygiene Program in California begins at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF)
1919	UCSF graduates first dental hygiene students Helen Prosser and Letitia Wright who were both former dental assistants
	California hygienists form <i>The State Association of Dental Hygienists</i> with Leticia Wright as the first President
1920	California hygienists start a discussion to advocate for a national association and Charlotte Greenwood is credited with being the driving force in the creation of both the State and National Associations
	California State Department of Health hires its first hygienist, Charlotte Greenwood, who graduates from UCSF School of Dentistry in 1929, begins practicing dentistry, and later becomes the first dental hygienist/dentist to become the UCSF Dental Hygiene Program Chair (1945)
1921	California gives the first licensing exam for dental hygienists and license #1 is held by Clara Sievert Monfort
1922	California hygienists Greenwood, Platt, and Junck draft a resolution to the American Dental Association (ADA) calling for the formation of an American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA)
1923	ADHA is formed and California's Elma Platt of San Francisco is elected first Secretary and becomes VP in 1926
1929	Cora Ueland, Director of Dental Hygiene at USC, becomes the first Californian to be President of ADHA
1940	The California State Association proposes ADHA apply to Congress to create a commissioned rank for dental hygienists in the US Army
	March Fong becomes first dental hygienist to be hired by the Oakland School District
1942	CDHA splits into Northern (NCSDDHA) and Southern (SCSDHA) Associations for many reasons, including the issues involved in administration due to the size of the state

1956	March Fong, UCSF dental hygiene graduate, becomes first Chinese American President of ADHA. Later March Fong Eu becomes California Secretary of State
1966	Wilma Motley, member of SCSDHA and University of Southern California (USC) graduate, begins the first of two terms as ADHA President
1971	The American Academy of Periodontology issues a statement giving specific recommendations for expanding the role of the dental hygienist in periodontics
	The 1970s find the federal government funding additional dental hygiene programs
	The Northern and Southern Associations, NCSDHA and SCSDHA, begin working together on Legislative issues through a Joint Government Relations Council (JGRC)
1972	Hygiene Association members Grace Anderson and Hermine Hayden from NCSDHA and Cathy Schwab and Rita Rossing from SCSDHA are included in the deliberations of the State Board of Dental Examiners (SBDE) on what becomes the Committee on Dental Auxiliaries (COMDA)
	NCSDHA and SCSDHA present a statement on expansion of duties to the California Dental Association as precursor to a Board of Dental Examiners presentation requesting changes to the Dental Practice Act
	California recognizes the TEAM (Training in Expanded Auxiliary Management) concept that replaces DAU (Dental Auxiliary Utilization) in dental education
	UOP, Loma Linda, and UCSF participate in TEAM with Federal funding programs (1972-78)
	Joint Government Relations Council participates in CDA Dental Education Council on expanded duties
	Assembly Bill 1953 (Duffy/Fong) establishes a study on the utilization and education of dental auxiliaries with two Association hygienist representatives, Wilma Motley and Jaime Reid appointed
1973	AB 1502 becomes law authorizing Health Manpower Pilot Projects (HMPP) in health care fields including dentistry
1974	California enacts anesthesia legislation, following the example in 1971 in Washington, Nevada, New Mexico, Missouri, and Oregon
	RDHEF category is established, later repealed, and finally established in 1992 after 18 years
1975	Northern California State Dental Hygienists' Association (NCSDHA) adopts Principles of Ethics
	NCSDHA states it is "to seek all avenues of employment which are now, or which will at some future time become available to dental hygienists both inside and outside of private practice"...and, further, "the solutions to the employment problems continue to be a major priority for NCSDHA"
1976	California Board of Dental Examiners adopts Expanded Duties for hygienists (anesthesia, nitrous oxide and soft tissue curettage)
	California hygienist, Linda Krol, becomes the first in the nation to own and manage a dental hygiene practice
1979	CDHA considers suing the Board of Dental Examiners prompting their actions on the RDHEF category which the legislature had created in 1974 (final regulations were not adopted until 1992)
1980	Fifteen California hygienists form the Dental Hygiene Associates, Inc. (DHAI)
1982	Aaron Read and Associates becomes the lobbying firm of the Southern California State Dental Hygienists' Association

	The Joint Government Relations Council (JGRC) began discussion on merging the two Associations
1984	Northern and Southern California State Dental Hygienists' Associations re-unite as CDHA and Aaron Read and Associates represents CDHA at the State Capitol
	Evelyn Pangborn becomes the first dental hygienist on the State Board of Dental Examiners (SBDE), now the Dental Board of California (DBC)
1985	First united California Dental Hygienists' Association House of Delegates
	AB 844/845 (Waters) allows hygienists to practice without supervision of a dentist in selected sites such as institutions
1986	Dental Hygiene Associates, Inc. (DHAI) is awarded Health Manpower Project #139 (HMPP #139) to validate the unsupervised practice
1987	California Dental Association (CDA) sues CDHA to stop the HMPP #139 (became #159), beginning a three-year legal battle
	Kathy Alvarez of San Pedro becomes first Filipina President of CDHA
1988	HMPP participants certified to enter independent practice
1990	CDA sues again to stop HMPP #159 project, a judge rules in favor of CDHA and the project continues
	CDA sues CDHA claiming the CDHA salary survey amounted to price fixing. CDHA counter sues resulting in the Appeals court dismissing the CDA suit and the matter was dropped
1991	AB 2353 (Areias) is the first legislation introduced to create increased access to dental hygiene care. CDA mounts successful state-wide effort to defeat the bill of "Unsupervised Dental Hygiene Practice"
1992	Genevieve Klugman follows Evelyn Pangborn as the dental hygienist on Board of Dental Examiners
1994	CDHA joins the California Fluoridation Taskforce
	Kathy Alvarez of San Pedro becomes first Filipina President of the American Dental Hygienists' Association
1996	Katie Dawson of Oakland becomes first Black President of CDHA
1997	AB 560 (Perata) is chaptered, creating the category of "Unsupervised Dental Hygienist", the Registered Dental Hygienist in Alternative Practice (RDHAP)
1998	Carol Lee of Sacramento becomes first Chinese American President of CDHA
1999	Katie Dawson is appointed to the Dental Board of California (DBC) to be followed by Tricia Osuna
2000	CDHA successfully lobbies to amend Section 1088 of the California Code of Regulations allowing hygienists to perform subgingival irrigation
2002	CDHA sponsors SB 2022 (Figueroa) and puts dental hygiene duties into statute (law)
	CDHA bill (SB 1589-Perata) describes limited settings for RDHAPs
2003	CDHA lobbies Regulation 1072 to remove restrictions on location of RDHAP programs. The first group of hygienists graduated from the West Los Angeles College RDHAP program
2004	CDHA calls for the first primarily "on-line" RDHAP Program, University of the Pacific responds
2005	Katie Dawson of California becomes second Black President of ADHA. First Black ADHA President was Konnetta Putnam-Sparks in 1973.
2006	Senate Bill 1472 (Figueroa) creates the Dental Hygiene Bureau in the Department of Consumer Affairs and the Dental Hygiene Committee of the Dental Board of California

	CDHA bill AB 1334 (Salinas) clarifies RDHAP duties and allows hiring of a dental assistant for limited procedures
2008	SB 853 (Perata) abolishes Committee on Dental Auxiliaries and establishes the Dental Hygiene Committee of California (DHCC) starting July 2009
2009	DHCC members appointed by Governor Schwarzenegger. The first dental hygienist professional members of the DHCC were: Miriam DeLaRoi, RDHAP; Cathy DiFrancesco, RDH; Rona Lee, RDHEF; Michelle Hurlbutt, RDH Educator
2010	Hygienists participate in Health Workforce Pilot Project #172 (HWPP #172) to validate hygienist's ability to determine and take X-rays to facilitate a dental diagnosis and to place Interim Therapeutic Restorations
2012	SB 1202 (Leno) authorizes the Dental Hygiene Committee approval of dental hygiene programs
2014	Based on the results of HWPP #172, the legislation authorizes hygienists with special training to make decisions about taking radiographs without prior authorization by a dentist and to place Interim Therapeutic Restorations (ITR) under certain conditions
	CDHA supports SB 850 (Block) creating a statewide Baccalaureate Degree Pilot Program for 15 community college districts
	Foothill and West Los Angeles Colleges secure the first dental hygiene degree programs in competition with other disciplines
2016	CDHA Sponsors AB 502 (Chau) allowing RDHAPs to incorporate
	CDHA House of Delegates does not approve signing the proposed re-charter agreement with ADHA thus CDHA becomes a separate entity
2018	SB 1482 renames the DHCC to be called the Dental Hygiene Board of California effective 2019
	CDHA and Assemblyman Nguyen create Periodontal Disease Awareness Month
2021	AB 733 (Chiu), co-sponsored with CDA, attempts to authorize RDHAP practice in a medical facilities but was abandoned by CDHA during the legislative session due restrictive amendments and the loss of the author
	CDHA supports AB 927 (Medina) which makes permanent the Statewide Baccalaureate Degree opportunities for additional community colleges
	Joanne Pacheco, RDH, MAOB, is the first dental hygienist to serve as President of the Dental Board of California
2022	CDHA sponsors AB 2145 (Davies) clarifying that RDHAPs can provide in-service training in Skilled Nursing Facilities
2023	CDHA successfully lobbied to stop a bill (AB 481) that would allow unlicensed dental assistants to place sealants
2024	CDHA supports AB 2630 (Bonta) including transitional kindergarten in the Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment mandate
	CDHA removes barriers to practice in Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas and further solidifies DHBC's independence from DBC by passing SB 1451 (Roth) – marking long sought wins for dental hygiene profession
	CDHA opposes ADA resolutions to allow dental assistants to scale supra gingival and allow foreign trained dentists to work as hygienists
2025	CDHA joined the coalition to oppose the elimination of the Prop. 56 Medi-Cal Dental enhancements
	CDHA strengthened its relationship with the Department of Health Care Services, which administers the MediCal Dental program, to the benefit of hygienists and their

	patients. CDHA worked with DHCS, and continues to work with them, to resolve portal issues APs have experienced with the transition from Delta Dental to Gainwell
	CDHA had discussions with Dental Therapy proponents regarding the regulation of dental hygiene practice and education programs in California
	CDHA successfully opposed AB 873, an attempt to reduce infection control protections for dental assistants, which would impact the dental team. The bill was held in committee
	CDHA successfully supported SB 386, a bill sponsored by the CA Dental Association, to stop predatory dental insurance plan billing practices. The bill was signed into law

- The people who have helped guide the evolution of CDHA are numerous. From 1919 to 2025 there have been 132 serving as President and likely over a thousand serving as Executive Board Members and Trustees, as well as members of Councils, Task Forces, and Work Groups. We thank all those who have contributed to the evolution of CDHA and the profession and those who are leading us into the future.

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