

## **Mission**

The mission of the American College of Dentists is to advance excellence, ethics, professionalism, and leadership in dentistry.

## **Vision**

The vision of the American College of Dentists is to be the leader in the advancement of excellence, ethics, professionalism, and leadership in dentistry.

## **Principles and Objectives**

The American College of Dentists in order to promote the highest ideals, develop good human relations and understanding, and extend the benefits of good dental health to all, declares and adopts the following principles and objectives as ways and means for the attainment of these goals:

- a. To promote within the dental profession the highest ethical standards, stimulate interprofessional relationships, and urge upon the professional person recognition of his or her responsibility to participate in the affairs of society as a citizen of the community;
- b. To take an active role in the support of dental education and research;
- c. To encourage qualified persons to enter the profession of dentistry;
- d. To encourage graduate education and improve continuing educational efforts by dentists and auxiliaries;
- e. To encourage the free exchange of ideas and experiences in the interest of the patient;
- f. To foster the extension and improvement of measures for the prevention and control of oral disorders; and
- g. To confer Fellowship in the College on individuals in recognition of meritorious achievement and their potential for contributions in dental science, art, education, literature, human relations, and other areas that contribute to human welfare and to give encouragement to them to further the objectives of the College.

## **History**

The American College of Dentists is the oldest major honorary organization for dentists. It was founded August 20, 1920 at the Copley-Plaza Hotel, Boston, in response to serious problems facing the profession. The four organizers were the president, president-elect, and secretary of the American Dental Association (then the National Dental Association) and the president of the National Association of Dental Faculties. Their charge for the College was “to elevate the standards of dentistry, to encourage graduate study, and to grant Fellowship to those who have done meritorious work.” Throughout its history, the American College of Dentists has undertaken and supported numerous initiatives to improve the profession and oral health care. Projects have included efforts that reshaped dental education, research, and journalism, among other areas. Most notably, the American College of Dentists has come to epitomize ethics and professionalism in dentistry. The American College of Dentists is nonprofit and not a political organization, but it has long been regarded as the “conscience of dentistry.”

## **Membership**

The American College of Dentists is comprised of dentists who have exemplified excellence through their outstanding leadership and exceptional contributions to dentistry and society. Membership is by invitation only. About 3.5% of dentists are Fellows of the American College of Dentists.

## **Nomination for Fellowship**

Nominations are initiated by Fellows in good standing using printed or electronic forms available from the Executive Office. Membership in the American Dental Association or an equivalent foreign organization is required. Selection is accomplished using a confidential peer review process that evaluates each candidate for leadership and contributions to dentistry and society. New Fellows are inducted during a Convocation ceremony held each fall as part of the Annual Meeting.

## **Responsibilities of Fellowship**

Fellowship symbolizes leadership and meritorious achievement, but it also defines a standard for future endeavors. At a minimum, it is expected that a Fellow will:

- a. Uphold and promote the principles and objectives of the College;
- b. Strive for personal and professional improvement;
- c. Continue to contribute to organized dentistry and the community;
- d. Participate in College events at Section, Regency, and national levels; and
- e. Regularly nominate qualified dentists for Fellowship.

## **Organizational Structure**

Officers and Regents of the American College of Dentists provide the overall guidance for the organization. The College is divided geographically into eight Regencies, and each Regency is further divided into Sections. Elected Regents represent the eight Regencies; up to four At Large Regents have a more national focus. There are currently 51 Sections, including five in Canada, one in Europe, and one in Puerto Rico. Overall planning and management is under the Executive Director.

## **Annual Meeting and Convocation**

The Annual Meeting and Convocation of the College are held each fall. Sessions typically include “LeaderSkills” workshops, the Fellows Forum, Regency meetings, a Meet & Greet, the business meeting and featured symposium, luncheon with entertainment, the Convocation with keynote address, and the dinner dance.

## **Projects and Activities**

The American College of Dentists has a number of current and emerging national projects that support the mission of the College (see [www.acd.org](http://www.acd.org)). College Sections augment these efforts with a variety of local initiatives, often directed at dental schools.

## Publications

The American College of Dentists publishes quarterly the *Journal of the American College of Dentists*, a scholarly publication that addresses important issues affecting dentistry and oral health. *ACD News*, the College newsletter, is published triannually.

## The College Seal

According to the history of Herodotus, among the Egyptians of the Fifth Century, B.C., “some physicians are for the eyes, others for the head, *others for the teeth...*” This statement indicates that a group of priest-physicians actually *specialized* in dental matters. Because of this heritage, early Fellows of the College incorporated a number of Egyptian elements in the design of the seal:

- a. A scroll inscribed with a portion of Ebers Papyrus containing a dental prescription;
- b. An outer border taken from the ornament of an ancient tomb, Hepi in Sawijet el Meitn;
- c. Two Egyptian figures holding the scroll;
- d. A sacred scarab (winged) supporting the moon, a common Egyptian symbol;
- e. Two lotus flowers, typically Egyptian;
- f. Two crocodiles (the fat of which was used for the relief of odontalgia) supporting the sun, another common Egyptian symbol; and
- g. Red, blue, and gold coloring, also typically Egyptian.

## Certificate and Pin

Each Fellow receives a certificate of Fellowship and a gold Fellowship pin. As depicted on the certificate, the alphabet and ornaments between the words are reproduced from the classical Roman executed by Tino de Camaino on the Tomb of Emperor Henry VII in the Campo Santo Pisa. The Fellowship pin is a miniature representation of the College seal.

## Official Colors

The official colors of the American College of Dentists are lilac and American rose.

## American College of Dentists Foundation

The American College of Dentists Foundation was established in 1972 as a nonprofit, charitable 501(c)(3) organization supporting educational and programmatic efforts of the American College of Dentists and collaborating organizations. Foundation funds are derived, in large part, from tax-deductible gifts from Fellows, as well as support received from other foundations and corporations. The list of donors is published annually in *ACD News*.

The Foundation has helped sustain a variety of projects such as annual meeting symposia, “LeaderSkills” workshops, Ethics Summits, the Professional Ethics Initiative, Dental Leadership, Courses Online Dental Ethics (CODE), IDEA®, PEAD, Ethics Scholarship Program, *Ethics Handbook for Dentists*, ethics wallet cards, and more. There are a number of ways to contribute to the Foundation, including through the Gies Fellow program, Gies Benefactor program, and symbolic named funds.

## The Gallery

Membership gifts and merchandise are available from The Gallery. Please contact the Executive Office for a brochure and ordering information.

## Contact

American College of Dentists  
839J Quince Orchard Boulevard  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878-1614

Toll free: 888-ACD-1920  
Telephone: 301-977-3223  
Facsimile: 301-977-3330  
E-mail: [office@acd.org](mailto:office@acd.org)  
Web sites: [www.acd.org](http://www.acd.org)  
[www.dentalethics.org](http://www.dentalethics.org)  
[www.dentalhistory.org](http://www.dentalhistory.org)  
[www.dentalleadership.org](http://www.dentalleadership.org)

## INFORMATION

American College of Dentists  
Founded 1920