

Executive Director's Update



We're Calling a Family Meeting

Richard A. Whitehouse, Executive Director

I've often thought that there's not much you can't resolve if you can get everyone concerned around a table. My parents and I rarely sat in the living room to have conversations. We talked at the table when there was something really important to talk about and we didn't want to be distracted by what else was going on in the world. Those conversations always seemed to reinforce and maintain better understanding and stronger relationships in the family.

The truth was sometimes tough around that table. But, I learned that your worst problems are rarely as bad as you think they are. And, there are always opportunities to handle your challenges together, once everyone at the table can identify the real problem and establish a clearer vision of the road ahead.

So, KDA is calling a family meeting. The KDA Executive Board is conducting a retreat on April 17-19. We need to take a time out from the office and other distractions and bring members together to examine where we've been, where we are and where we are headed as an organization.

Typically, organizations will periodically review their plans and update them every 3-5 years. Some suggest this practice due to the fast-paced environment of today's society. Plans should be reviewed and renewed more often to remain relevant and nimble. Our latest strategic plan was established five years ago and was the result of another retreat where we engaged members, stakeholders and others in a two-day discussion led by a professional facilitator in strategic planning. The result was a cogent statement of our mission, vision and goals upon which we have based our activity for the last five years.

Our strategic plan defines our mission as helping member dentists succeed and serve. The vision expressed in that plan promotes advancing the profession of dentistry while improving oral health. We established goals toward that end including being an advocate for dentistry in the Commonwealth, serving and supporting the needs and success of members, promoting oral health through community service and public relations, and leading the profession through the ADA tri-partite structure.

KDA leaders have determined that it is time to revisit that plan in order to establish new objectives and new means to measure success. But, the substance of the plan itself remains a solid foundation upon which to build as we reassess our priorities, given the changing landscape, as well as review our accomplishments and challenges over the last five years. So, our charge is to initiate a strategic *refresh* rather than a *reboot*.

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Our meeting begins at 10 a.m. on Saturday, with welcome remarks and introduction of staff and officers. After that, we will consider what has been accomplished, where we find our organization today and where we might go from here. Attendees will divide into teams and then be challenged to take part in a hackathon activity to come up with ideas on increasing membership. We will also play KDA Jeopardy. This presentation was designed for dental students and is all about questions to answers about your KDA. We'll then hear from two speaker panels.

One on advocacy and the other dealing with member recruitment and retention, after which we will have a clinic on how to recruit for members.

On Sunday, April 19, we will hold a member and stakeholder town hall. Members are always welcome to attend KDA meetings. But, this is their time to participate and speak directly to KDA Leadership. After that, we will judge the results of our membership challenge hackathon before engaging in a strategic refresh intended to build on the foundation we have laid, while surveying our current environment and identifying future objectives. Finally, we plan to adjourn our meeting, hopefully having moved toward that better understanding and stronger relationship we must build upon to be successful in facing challenges tomorrow on so many fronts.

gain, this is a family meeting. It is an opportunity for KDA and component leadership from around the Commonwealth to come together and discuss issues related to the future of organized dentistry. All KDA members are welcome to attend. But, member participation is not simply limited to the town hall session. It is our hope that current or even potential members will come to this event. It's an opportunity to learn what's on the mind of KDA leaders as well as to share your concerns, hopes, and plans for the future of your profession. So, we hope you will attend this important event. It's also a great opportunity to introduce a colleague to KDA.

If you plan to attend, please contact me at **whitehouse@kyda.org** by April 1st. You may learn things you didn't know. There will be members who disagree with each other or have different ideas on priorities or how to do things. Like in any family, the goal is to talk to one another and walk away from the table with a clearer vision and the assurance that you are part of something larger than yourself.

Make your voice heard! Come to our family meeting and tell us how KDA can work for you to help you succeed in your practice and serve both, your patients and the citizens of Kentucky. ●

