



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

American Dental Hygienists' Association Announces the Passing of ADHA® CEO, Ann Battrell

CHICAGO, June 8, 2023 – It is with profound sadness that the American Dental Hygienists' Association announces that ADHA CEO, Ann Battrell, M.S.D.H., passed away June 7, 2023. She had recently announced to ADHA leadership that she was extending her medical leave to focus on her health.

Ms. Battrell became the first registered dental hygienist and first former ADHA president to assume the position of CEO of the organization. She served as ADHA's President from 1996-1997. Battrell began her career with the ADHA in 2000 as manager of education and moved into the role of director of education four years later. In 2009, the Board of Directors selected her to fill the executive director opening and in 2016 she was named CEO. In her leadership role, she worked tirelessly to advance the dental hygiene profession, evolve the scope of practice, empower dental hygienists, eliminate inequities and improve access to care.

ADHA 2022-2023 President Dawn Ann Dean, R.D.H., M.S.D.H., describes Battrell as a strategist, innovator and collaborator who believed in the collective power of the profession, determined to ensure dental hygiene was represented and heard.

"Ann was a champion for the association and dental hygiene, always pushing to raise the important issues, promoting our accomplishments and bringing our profession's voice to the table," said President Dean. "Our lives and the dental hygiene community are better thanks to Ann – an extraordinary leader, inspiring mentor and friend. She will be greatly missed and remembered for her passion and dedication to public service."

Among many notable accomplishments during Battrell's tenure, ADHA launched a new online education platform, elevated the acknowledgement of oral-systemic health connections, worked to broaden the dental hygiene curriculum to address the oral health needs of diverse populations and improve access to care, and championed efforts to broaden the scope of practice for dental hygienists to practice to the fullest extent of their education. Battrell also became a regular voice for the profession throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Ann and the entire ADHA staff worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic, to ensure that the dental hygiene community had the relevant information, accessible resources and practical

guidance to find ways to deliver essential care across the country,” recalls President Dean. “Ann appeared wherever she could, on webcasts, podcasts, interviews and social media to ensure the research and the guidance specific to dental hygiene could reach as many as possible.”

Most recently, Battrell was recognized by the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research/NIH for her outstanding contributions to their 2021 publication “Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges.”

During Ms. Battrell’s leave, day-to-day operations of ADHA were designated to members of senior staff who now report directly to the ADHA President. These interim roles, held by ADHA Senior Director of Strategic Operations Jennifer Hill, and Governance Manager Kathy Pujol, will remain in place while the 2023-2024 Board of Directors oversees leadership continuity planning under incoming President, Becky Smith, C.R.D.H., Ed.D.

A tribute is planned July 7, 2023, during the Opening General Session of the ADHA 2023 Annual Conference at McCormick Place in Chicago, to celebrate Ann Battrell’s life, leadership and legacy in the dental hygiene profession and ADHA.

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About the American Dental Hygienists’ Association

The American Dental Hygienists’ Association (ADHA) is the only organization representing the professional interests of the more than 226,000 dental hygienists in the United States. Dental hygienists are preventive oral health professionals, licensed in dental hygiene, who provide educational, clinical and therapeutic services that support total health through the promotion of optimal oral health. The [Journal of Dental Hygiene \(JDH\)](#), published bi-monthly, is ADHA’s scientific journal and flagship publication. To learn more about the ADHA, dental hygiene or the link between oral health and general health, visit adha.org. To learn more about the upcoming ADHA Annual Conference, visit adha2023.org.

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