

THE BRIDGE

News from Delta Dental of Tennessee

Gatlinburg Sky Bridge,
Gatlinburg, Tenn.

SUMMER 2022

Ensuring healthy smiles is a *team effort*

The road to a healthy smile starts even before a person is born. With that in mind, Delta Dental of Tennessee's charitable arm, the Smile180 Foundation, announced a more than \$1 million commitment to the Cleft and Craniofacial Program at Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt. The funds will be used to establish the Delta Dental of Tennessee's Smile180 Foundation Directorship for the Cleft and Craniofacial Program, and to provide critical support as the program seeks to expand its services to care for more young patients and their families.

The Andersons are one family already seeing direct benefits from the Cleft and Craniofacial Program. With their "Prenatal to Prom" approach, the team at MCJCH at Vanderbilt diagnosed Judah Anderson's cleft lip before he was born and has performed procedures to correct it as he continues to grow. The pictures to the right show some of Judah's progress as an infant.

The commitment expands on Delta Dental's longstanding support for Children's Hospital. Since 2001, Delta Dental and Smile180 have donated more than \$2.3 million to Children's Hospital and supported various fundraising

events and initiatives.

"We are thankful for Delta Dental of Tennessee and the Smile180 Foundation for their continued generosity and steadfast commitment to our programs for more than two decades," said Jeffrey Upperman, MD, FACS, surgeon-in-chief of Children's Hospital and chair of

the Department of Pediatric Surgery.

"Support from organizations like Delta Dental plays an important role in our mission to expand and enhance our quality, cutting-edge patient care and enables our teams to advance health care through translational research, all with the goal to meet the complex needs of children and families. We could not do the work we do every day without our community partners."

This program cares for patients with a wide range of facial differences and is led by Michael Golinko, MD, FACS, FAAP, medical director of the Cleft and Craniofacial Program and chief of Pediatric Plastic Surgery, along with

Jim Phillips, MD, BS, co-director of the Cleft Lip and Palate team. The complexity of this team's cases means that patients often stay with the program for multiple years and require care from an integrated team of specialists.



“Dr. Golinko and his team are doing truly amazing work to restore healthy smiles and brighter futures for thousands of kids from across the region,” said Phil Wenk, DDS, CEO of Delta Dental of Tennessee. “We are thrilled to support this vision and the continued growth and expansion of the Cleft and Craniofacial Program as

this program is truly a destination program for all of Tennessee.”

For more information about the Cleft and Craniofacial Program at Children’s Hospital, visit www.childrenshospitalvanderbilt.org/program/cleft-craniofacial. For more information about Delta Dental of Tennessee, visit DeltaDentalTN.com.



Scan the QR Code above to see more of Judah’s journey and the announcement of Delta Dental’s partnership.

Understanding the *patient experience*

Due to requests of many customer and consumer demand, Delta Dental of Tennessee is participating along with all Delta Dental plans in the national implementation of the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) Dental Plan Survey. The anonymous survey is designed to provide a view into patients’ overall experiences and satisfaction from every aspect of their dental care interactions including their dental plan, their dentist, and dental team members.

The CAHPS survey is a standardized national survey tool used in the health care industry to evaluate patient satisfaction. Patients will receive an email inviting them to take the survey following dental office visits, and they will only be surveyed once per year.

The results specific to experiences with your dental team and office staff will be shared once there are 30 or more responses from your patients, enough to provide a statistically valid assessment.

Patient information is confidential, so you will not know which patients have taken the Dental Plan Survey, or how individual patients responded. It will take some time to have 30 completed surveys for an individual dentist/office. Once that volume is reached, the Professional Relations Department will be reaching out to your office. In the meantime, for more information visit DeltaDentalTN.com/Dentists/Dental-Plan-Survey.

Survey topics include:

- Overall rating of the dental plan
- Dental plan information and services
- Overall rating of ease of finding a dentist
- Access to dental care
- Overall rating of dental care
- Care from dentists and staff



New Delta Dental Groups

Rock Creek Insurance	Chattanooga
Flying Media Group	Chattanooga
Remember Me Senior Care	Cleveland
IMC Companies, LLC	Collierville
Tennessee Plateau Oncology	Crossville
Henderson Farms	Evensville
SourceMark LLC	Franklin
McCulley Allergy Sinus & Asthma Center	Germantown
Blue River Propane, LLC	Greeneville
East Nashville Electric	Hendersonville
Johnson City Heating & Air	Johnson City
Red Arrow Industries LLC	Knoxville
RevitalizeMD, LLC	Knoxville
The Arc-Knox County	Knoxville
TechMah CMF LLC	Knoxville
Held Law Firm	Knoxville
Honey Creek Staffing, LLC	Knoxville
Volunteer Federal Savings Bank	Madisonville

Delta Dental of Tennessee welcomes the following new groups. You can check eligibility and coverage details in real time with Dental Office Toolkit (DOT), or call customer service at 800-223-3104. If you need to register for DOT, email ProfessionalRelations1@DeltaDentalTN.com.

HuntVault LLC	Mc Ewen
Barnhart Crane & Rigging Co.	Memphis
Southard Financial, LLC	Memphis
Bite Ninja Inc	Memphis
Regency Title & Escrow, LLC	Memphis
ALPS Adult Day Services	Morristown
BOK Network Infrastructure Services LLC	Nashville
The 615 Group, LLC	Nashville
Legacy Real Estate Group, LLC	Nashville
Town of Nolensville	Nolensville
Swain Station Inc.	Powell
E&E Fiber, LLC	Rock Island
Sauter Timber, LLC	Rockwood
Claiborne County Emergency Communication District	Tazewell
Northridge Church	White House

New Delta Dental Providers

Delta Dental of Tennessee welcomes our new and returning contracted providers. You can check eligibility and coverage details in real time with Dental Office Toolkit (DOT), or call customer service at 800-223-3104. If you need to register for DOT, email ProfessionalRelations1@DeltaDentalTN.com.

Cody Cook	Alcoa
Kesha Burns	Antioch
Rajani Sharma Pandit	Antioch
Brent Church	Arlington
Hayden Huett	Arlington
John Goetemiller	Athens
Aisha Henry	Bartlett
Herschel Gaddy	Bells
Eric Brockman	Brentwood
Estella Irelan	Brentwood
Christine Breindel	Chattanooga
Anna Harvey	Chattanooga
Benjamin Hunt	Chattanooga
Roger Miller	Chattanooga
Bryson Popp	Chattanooga
Eric Ricks	Chattanooga
Emily Allen	Clarksville

Stacy Caldwell	Clarksville
Storm Kimbrow	Clarksville
Olawale Osinusi	Clarksville
Phillip Ray	Clarksville
Vincent Chiappone	Cleveland
Preston Parrish	Collierville
Sydney Olson	Cordova
Olivia Gannon	Crossville
Jarrold Lee	Crossville
Kyle DiLuzio	Dickson
Lakyn Bell	Dyersburg
Jenni O'Malley	Elizabethton
Eric Rustemier	Elizabethton
Courtney Garland	Erwin
Sara O'Daniel	Erwin
Brandon Jewell	Franklin
Alicia Johnson	Franklin

Providers Continued

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Horton Li	Franklin	Brett Dagen	Memphis
Tala Melhem	Franklin	John Ford	Memphis
Kaylee Smith	Franklin	Bard Levey	Memphis
Rachel Strait	Franklin	Paul Luepke	Memphis
Anthony Lotesto	Franklin	Bryce McPherson	Memphis
Satoko Hasegawa	Gallatin	Nhu Phan	Memphis
Ian Stewart	Gallatin	Lydia Watson	Memphis
Thomas Darlington	Germantown	Adam Lloyd	Millington
Satar Moshref	Germantown	Neil Patel	Mount Juliet
Hunter Brooks	Goodlettsville	Ronald Blockley	Murfreesboro
Thanh Nguyen	Goodlettsville	Larry Eddy	Murfreesboro
Joe Mason	Gray	Amber Sifuentes	Murfreesboro
Kelsey Korb	Hendersonville	Tyson Steere	Murfreesboro
Elliott Deweese	Hermitage	Brian West	Murfreesboro
David Hartman	Hermitage	Bryron Bush	Nashville
Rony Jfouf Ibrahim	Hermitage	Timothy Call	Nashville
Abigail Yazbak	Hermitage	Yasmil Descalzo-Alfonso	Nashville
Brittany Patmon	Hixson	Matthew Doan	Nashville
Katelyn Robertson	Huntingdon	Robert Hardell	Nashville
Olivia Gaddy	Jackson	Gillian Jessee	Nashville
Andrew Tanyous	Jackson	Janeth Meyer	Nashville
Mary Edwards	Johnson City	John Perry	Nashville
Bogdan Paunovic	Johnson City	Ragab Rafa	Nashville
David Poe	Johnson City	Kristin Schmitter Webster	Nashville
Richard Lauderback	Jonesborough	Ryan Shinska	Nashville
Taylor Brauchla	Kingsport	Meredith Sico	Nashville
Blake Chandler	Kingsport	Matthew Ticich	Nashville
Claudia Chandler	Kingsport	Jackson Murphy	Oak Ridge
Jonas Funderburk	Kingsport	Denisse Breton Guerrero	Ooltewah
Kevin Bell	Knoxville	Rian Cho	Powell
Claire Leiser	Knoxville	Nadareh Naseri	Powell
Nicholas Pettit	Knoxville	Bryan Shannon	Pulaski
Spenser Ryan	Knoxville	Cara Kennedy	Rocky Top
Taylor Walker-Smith	Knoxville	Hassan Iqbal	Sevierville
Stanley Armbruster	Lenoir City	Jacob Wolkow	Sevierville
Hunter Morrow	Lewisburg	Corey Hill	Seymour
Erfren Ormaza	Madison	Haley Julian-Hill	Seymour
Spencer Warren	Madison	Ruth Bol	Smyrna
Austin Johnson	Madisonville	Michael Dietz	Smyrna
Whitney Johnson	Madisonville	Madison Duvall	Spring Hill
Robert Parrish	Madisonville	Dominick Massa	Spring Hill
Robert Pruitt	Martin	Bonnie Boudreaux	Sweetwater
Baxter Jones	Maryville	Gracia Amaya Garica	Tullahoma
Nechama Citrin	Memphis	Christopher Phillips	Woodbury



Oral cancer support begins with preventive care

Delta Dental of Tennessee is a constant advocate for the importance of oral and overall health. More than 90 percent of all systemic disease, including diabetes, leukemia, and heart disease, has oral characteristics that can be detected during a routine oral exam. That was the reality for Natalie Hennes. She was a 37-year-old mom of two, and she was the picture of health. Until she noticed a sore in her mouth that led her to her dentist and to a diagnosis of squamous cell carcinoma of the oral cavity.



Within a few weeks, Natalie underwent a 9-hour cancer removal and reconstructive surgery. Followed by several shorter reconstructive procedures. Scan the QR code to the left to see more of Natalie's journey.

"In those early days the nurses were feeding me through a feeding tube, I was on a machine that was breathing for me, I couldn't talk," Natalie said. "I mean pretty much anything that you think of as a human was taken away."

Every hour, 24-hours-a-day, 365-days-a-year, someone dies of oral or oropharyngeal cancer, which is cancer of the back of the oral cavity and upper throat. Yet when oral cancer is detected and treated early, treatment-related health problems are reduced, and survival rates may increase greatly.

When it comes to increasing quality of life for those fighting any type of cancer, Gilda's Club of Middle Tennessee is there to help.

An affiliate of the Cancer Support Community, Gilda's Club serves as a gathering place where

people with cancer, and their friends and families, can find some answers throughout the daunting journey.

A friend of Natalie's told her about Gilda's Club, a place full of resources, from books and pamphlets spelling out the intricacies of all different kinds of cancer to port pillows and recipe books made specifically for the struggles patients must now accept as daily life.

But, more importantly, they find hope in the people who have been in their shoes and survived.

"To be able to talk to somebody who truly understands from that experience on that side of the experience as the patient can help mostly with the emotional and psychological trauma and damage you go through when you're diagnosed with cancer," Natalie said.

Gilda's Club offers specialized support groups for different types of cancer as well as support groups for families and friends of cancer patients. Delta Dental of Tennessee sponsors the Middle Tennessee Gilda's club's head and neck cancer support group.

Natalie is cancer free now, but she keeps coming back to Gilda's Club to help the next person who is diagnosed.

"There's things that we still all go through whether it's physical or psychological remembering things, but it's just that support system that is so desperately needed," Natalie said.

The Cancer Support Community has 175 locations worldwide consisting of 52 licensed affiliates and health care partnerships, including locations in Oak Ridge and Knoxville, Tennessee. For more information about Gilda's Club, visit their website at GildasClubMiddleTN.org.



Mental health in the dental profession



The percent of dentists diagnosed with anxiety more than tripled in 2021 compared to 2003, according to the American Dental Association's newly released 2021 Dentist Health and Well-Being Survey Report. In many ways, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the issue, causing staffing shortage to plague the profession, and adding more burdens to dentists and existing staff members.

But this state of affairs isn't new. While stigma surrounding mental health makes it difficult to say for sure, a U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Occupational Mortality Surveillance report for 1999-2010 showed that dentists were 2.5 times more likely to die by suicide than members of the general population. A 1996 study reported that being a dentist increased one's risk of suicide by a whopping 564%.

The statistics only get more staggering by the year, and they show the importance of caring for your own overall health as you care for your patients'. Fortunately, you don't have to do it on your own.

Resources

The ADA has resources to help, including The New Dentist Committee. In collaboration with other divisions in the ADA, it is working with Chicago-based nonprofit Hope for the Day to add to the resources the ADA has to let dentists know that help is out there. There is also the ADA's Dentist Health and Wellness Program, composed of dentists and dental team members who are concerned about the health and well-being of their peers. The ADA website itself houses many resources on mental health at [ADA.org/Wellness](https://ada.org/Wellness).

The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN) TSPN works across the state to eliminate the stigma of suicide and educate communities about the warning signs of suicide, with the ultimate intention of reducing suicide rates in the state of Tennessee. The organization provides a crisis call line, 1-855-CRISIS-1 (855-274-7471), as well as many resources online at tspn.org.