The Profession of DENTISTRY

Dentistry is one of the major health sciences. It is a learned profession that is devoted to the health and care of the head, neck, and craniofacial region of the body. The modern practice of dentistry includes evaluation, diagnosis, and attention to the prevention of diseases, the treatment of diseases of this oral region and surrounding tissues, and the promotion of optimal function. Capable young men and women can enter the dental education program confident that there is a real need for their service, and that challenging and satisfying professional careers await them upon graduation.

A Career Profile

- According to the 2004 ADA Survey of Dental Practice, dentistry is one of the ten most trusted and ethical professions in America.
- There were more than 176,000 professionally active dentists in the US in 2005.
- About 75% of all professionally active dentists have a specialist's practice; the remainder practice a general specialty.
- The numbers of women and minority practitioners are growing. Approximately 44% of predoctoral students in dental specialty.
- About 79% of all professionally active dentists in 2005 practiced general dentistry; the remainder practiced a dental specialty.
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Dental Economics

- Dental offices were the third highest-ranking category of start-up businesses most likely to survive, according to the most recent survey of nearly 1.5 million companies reported in Inc. magazine.
- In 2004, the average earnings for a general practitioner who owns his or her practice was over $185,940; the average earnings for a dental specialist was over $312,700.
- The average income of a dentist is in the highest 5 percent of US family income.

Dental Practice

- Among dentists out of dental school less than four years, about 42 percent own their own practice; by six years after graduation, this figure increases to 51 percent.
- Dental career options include: private practice, academic dentistry, public health dentistry, private industry, federal services, research, international health care and hospital dentistry.
- The ADA recognizes nine dental specialties: Dental Public Health, Endodontics, Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology, Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics, Pediatric Dentistry, Periodontics and Prosthodontics. Definitions of these specialties can be found at http://www.ada.org/edu/specialty/index.htm.

Dentistry Tomorrow

Demand for dental care continues to grow due to the increasing number of older adults keeping their teeth longer, increased awareness of oral health care and the need for additional dental services. Advancements in technology like lasers and computer-assisted diagnosis allow dentists to provide more effective treatments. Demand for dentist new services, such as cosmetic dentistry, will also contribute to this growth. As the baby boomer generation ages, large numbers of dentists are expected to retire in the next 20 years, creating an even more need for new dentists.
Let's delve deeper, and explore the many different careers within the dental profession. Is dentistry sounding more and more like the career for you?

- Dentist: Average income $204,500; Years in School: 8 years*
  - Motivates and instructs patients on oral disease prevention and oral health maintenance
  - Works with the dentist or on their own in a dental office

- Hygienist: Average income $55,307; Years in School: 2-6 years*
  - Skilled in using small hand instruments, accuracy, artistic ability and attention to small detail
  - Makes dental prostheses (replacements of natural teeth to restore tooth function and appearance)

- Dental Assistant: Average income $27,248; Years in School: 1-2 years*
  - Assists in dental treatment procedures
  - Increases the efficiency of the dentist in delivering quality health care

Dentistry continues to grow.

For application and information, please visit: www.dent.umich.edu/mac/services

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**Dental College Admissions**

Homeschooled students must:
1. Submit completed online application to American Dental Association Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) or AGD-specific school(s) by November 1st of the senior year.
2. Complete all relevant coursework in high school before November 1st of the senior year.
3. Submit a complete application package by November 1st of the senior year.

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**DENTAL TRIVIA**

1. How many dental schools are there in the United States?
   a. 59
   b. 373
   c. 10
   d. 3,500

2. What materials were George Washington's dentures mainly constructed of?
   a. Lead and ivory
   b. Wood and human teeth
   c. Rubber and bone
   d. Silver and Gold

3. What is the official color of dentistry?
   a. Lilac
   b. Gold
   c. White
   d. Green