

**2025 University of Maryland  
School of Dentistry  
Alumni Awards Ceremony**  
**June 13, 2025**



UNIVERSITY *of* MARYLAND  
SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY



# Program of Events

## Welcome

Michael Buccino  
Assistant Dean, Development and Alumni Relations

## Dean's Remarks

Mark A. Reynolds, DDS '86, PhD, Dean

## 2025 Distinguished Public Service Alumni Award

**James W. Taneyhill, DDS '80**

*Introduction by Ed Morris, DDS '74, Ortho '76*

## 2025 Distinguished Achievement Alumni Award

**Harold "Hal" L. Crossley, III, DDS '80, PhD, MS**

*Introduction by Mitchell A. Lomke, DDS '79*

## 2025 Linda DeVore Dental Hygiene Alumni Award

**Dana Godbout Laake, RDH, BSDH '87, MS, LDN**

*Introduction by Noel Slotke Paschke, RDH, BSDH '77*

## 2025 Rising Dental Health Leader Alumni Award

**Stephanie Dennison, DDS '15**

*Introduction by Christina L. Platia, DDS '10, MS '25, FICD*

## Closing Remarks

Michael Buccino  
Assistant Dean, Development and Alumni Relations

## Reception to Follow



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## 2025 Distinguished Public Service Alumni Award

### James W. Taneyhill, DDS '80



To honor his decades-long commitment to service, clinical excellence, and leadership in military and civilian dentistry, James Taneyhill is the 2025 Distinguished Public Service Alumni Award winner.

This award recognizes a graduate for outstanding professional leadership and contributions to the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) and the community.

"I believe that all dentists, and me, have been blessed," Taneyhill said. "I can't think of a higher honor that I could have received in our profession."

His dedication to public service has spanned over four decades. After earning Bachelor of Science in English and Master of Education degrees from Loyola University Maryland, Taneyhill pursued his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree at UMSOD, graduating in 1980 through the school's Accelerated Professional Training Program. He then completed a general practice residency at the Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center in Baltimore.

His professional journey has combined private practice, public health, teaching, and military service. From 1981 to 2013, Taneyhill maintained a private general dentistry practice in Bel Air, Md., with a clinical focus on advanced restorative, implant, cosmetic dentistry, and non-surgical temporomandibular joint therapy. He also served as a lecturer and clinical consultant at the Baltimore VA Medical Center from 2001 to 2013, mentoring the next generation of dental professionals.

From 2012 to 2024, Taneyhill served as a contract dentist with the Maryland Army National Guard, bringing compassionate dental care to service members. His military involvement reflects a broader dedication to service — he retired as a colonel in Army Aviation and remains an active member of the National Guard Association of the United States.

In 2003, Taneyhill founded a dental clinic at the Bon Samaritan School in St. Marc, Haiti, providing much-needed oral health care to underserved communities. In 2011, he expanded his outreach by founding a second clinic at the Our Daily Bread Employment Center in Baltimore, where he has continued to serve with the same energy and compassion that have defined his career.

Throughout his professional life, Taneyhill has remained committed to learning and teaching and completed more than 500 hours of continuing education at esteemed institutions.

Taneyhill's professional affiliations include fellowships and leadership roles in the Academy of General Dentistry, the International College of Dentists (Deputy Regent, Maryland), and the Baltimore Association of Dental Surgeons, where he served as chair. He also is a past president of the Harford-Cecil County Dental Association and a retired member of the American Dental Association and Maryland State Dental Association.

Beyond dentistry, Taneyhill is a Knight of the Order of Malta and serves as treasurer for the group's Baltimore region. He also is a member of the Sailing Club of the Chesapeake and has a history of community engagement efforts that reflects a life lived in service to others.

Taneyhill's legacy is one of quiet leadership, steadfast service, and tireless commitment to improving lives — whether in the clinic, the classroom, or communities near and far.

## 2025 Distinguished Achievement Alumni Award

### Harold “Hal” L. Crossley, III, DDS ’80, PhD, MS



In recognition of his international reputation and public service as an expert on street drugs, chemical dependency, and clinical pharmacology, as well as his commitment to teaching and mentoring the next generation of oral health and law enforcement leaders, Hal Crossley is the 2025 Distinguished Achievement Alumni Award honoree.

This award honors a University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) graduate for significant professional accomplishments in science, dentistry, or education.

Crossley graduated from the University of Rhode Island in 1964 and then earned a master's degree and a PhD in pharmacology. After joining UMSOD, he completed a doctoral degree in dentistry. In his career, Crossley has excelled as a pharmacist, pharmacologist, educator, author, dental practitioner, and accomplished speaker who has instructed dental students and other dental clinicians and law enforcement officers in the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia, the Caribbean, and Central America.

He attributes his wide-ranging professional path to keeping his mind open to changes. “Don’t get so mired down in what you’re doing that you don’t seize an opportunity, because it could change the whole direction of your life,” he said in 2004.

Often referred to as “Your pal, Hal,” Crossley often was requested by dental students to serve at their graduation ceremonies and was voted Teacher of the Year several times. He is a popular draw at UMSOD’s Continuing Education classes, and his topics have included the effects of physician-prescribed medications on dental treatment, recommendations on antibiotic prophylaxis, and the signs and symptoms of substance abuse among patients and dental professionals alike.

“I don’t teach just because it’s a job. I try to instill in students a sense of excitement and enthusiasm,” he said.

Crossley, now a Professor Emeritus, helped to write the first edition of the “Drug Information Handbook for Dentistry” with Richard L. Wynn, PhD, Professor Emeritus, Department of Neural and Pain Sciences, and Timothy F. Meiller, DDS, PhD, professor, Department of Oncology and Diagnostic Sciences, both of UMSOD. Now in its 30th edition, it is the most recognized chairside dental drug reference book.

After a chance encounter with members of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Crossley was asked to speak to law enforcement officers. Soon after, he was speaking at countless law enforcement agencies throughout the country, leading courses on the pharmacology of street drugs including heroin and cocaine.

For almost 40 years, Crossley served on the Maryland State Dental Association’s Well-Being Committee. He is a member of Phi Kappa Phi, Omicron Kappa Upsilon National Dental Honor Society, the American College of Dentists, and the International College of Dentists. He served as a consultant for the DEA and other law enforcement agencies and, in 2008, received the Gordon J. Christensen Lecturer Recognition Award from the Chicago Dental Society. Crossley is one of 12 dentists (in 113 years) to be honored as a member of the Thomas P. Hinman Dental Society.

Upon his retirement from UMSOD in 2004, he said, “I’ve just had a wonderful experience. I’ve been blessed with good health, a wonderful family, and friends. I feel very fortunate.”

## **2024 Linda DeVore Dental Hygiene Alumni Award**

### **Dana Godbout Laake, RDH, BSDH '87, MS, LDN**



For her transformative work on behalf of her profession and for creating innovative solutions for those living with complex health conditions, Dana Godbout Laake is the 2025 Linda DeVore Dental Hygiene Alumni Award honoree.

The annual award recognizes a dental hygiene graduate of the University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) who represents the integrity, intellectual curiosity, community-mindedness, and leadership epitomized by the late DeVore. A committed educator, DeVore was active in dental hygiene education, scholarship, and public service, serving as chair of UMSOD's Department of Dental Hygiene from 1993 to 2003 and president of the American Dental Education Association in 1994.

Laake earned a Bachelor of Science degree from UMSOD; Master of Science in nutrition from the University of Maryland, College Park; and a Registered Dental Hygienist (RDH) certificate from Temple University. Although she worked as a clinical hygienist for 23 years, her accomplishments span the medical and dental professions. A licensed dietitian nutritionist, she also focused on patient care at Dana Laake Nutrition, a medical nutrition practice that has been located in Maryland since 1997.

Co-author of "The Kid-Friendly ADHD and Autism Cookbook" and "The ADHD and Autism Nutritional Supplement Handbook," Laake is a popular contributor to journals, newsletters, and blogs. For decades, she hosted the "Health, Lifestyle & Nutrition for the 21st Century" radio show on WTOP-1500 AM in Washington D.C. She has been a sought-after guest speaker on National Public Radio and cable TV shows and has presented more than 500 courses and workshops to the health communities.

The first registered licensed hygienist in the country to receive a gubernatorial appointment to a state board of dental examiners, Laake served two terms on the Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners. She also served for decades on the Northeast Regional Board of Dental Examiners and was the first dental hygienist to serve on its Dental Examination Committee. A longtime advocate, she worked as a Maryland House of Delegates legislative assistant on health issues and received two gubernatorial appointments to the Maryland Department of Health's State Board of Dietetic Practice.

"When I was first appointed to the Maryland Board of Dental Examiners, I was advised by the American Dental Hygienists' Association that my goal was to stay on the board," she said. "Although the change that occurred in Maryland was extremely controversial — it was the 1970s — and a serious concern among the dental boards, the Maryland board recommended enthusiastically that the inclusion of dental hygienists on the boards would be beneficial. This support ultimately resonated throughout the country, resulting in positive changes. I have always been appreciative of the Maryland board for its support and integrity."

Laake's transformative efforts on behalf of those with autism or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) have been recognized with many honors, including being named a 50th Anniversary Outstanding Alumnus by Temple University in 1977.

## 2025 Rising Dental Health Leader Alumni Award

### Stephanie Dennison, DDS '15



For her dedication to advancing oral health equity and leadership in dental education and interprofessional collaboration, Stephanie Dennison is the 2025 Rising Dental Health Leader Award honoree.

This award recognizes a University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) graduate from the past decade whose achievements have positively impacted the perception of the dental profession and who has shown outstanding service to the community.

"It is truly incredible to watch the transformation that takes place in a student as they progress through their clinical training," said Dennison, a clinical assistant professor and general practice director in the Department of Comprehensive Dentistry at UMSOD. In that role, she teaches and mentors predoctoral dental students. She also provides comprehensive, state-of-the-art general dentistry to patients at U.M. FDSP Associates, a nonprofit affiliate of UMSOD.

After graduating from Penn State University's Schreyer Honors College in 2010 with a Bachelor of Science degree in biology, Dennison earned a Doctor of Dental Surgery degree in 2015 from UMSOD, where she was awarded the Quintessence Award for Academic Excellence and the Dean's Outstanding Community Service Award. She completed an Advanced Education in General Dentistry (AEGD) residency at NYU Lutheran Medical Center in 2016.

Dennison's passion for health care and service was inspired early on by her father, a dedicated primary care physician. "My father was my initial inspiration to pursue a career in health care," she said. "He worked tirelessly for his patients. Growing up, I was able to see how his efforts translated to patient health and well-being."

As a recipient of the National Health Service Corps four-year scholarship, Dennison committed herself to serving underserved communities. From 2016 to 2018, she worked as a lead general dentist at Choptank Community Health System in Cambridge, Md., where she played a pivotal role in establishing a prenatal dental referral program, extended treatment hours for patients, and provided dental care for migrant patient populations.

She also served as clinical faculty for the NYU Lutheran AEGD program and supervised dental student externs from UMSOD and the Arizona School of Dentistry and Oral Health. She continued her mission-driven work at Chase Brexton Health Care from 2018 to 2022.

Dennison joined UMSOD as a full-time faculty member in April 2022. Her responsibilities include mentoring third- and fourth-year dental students, directing the course Diagnostic Competency for Class II and Class III Caries, and engaging in research. She received a 2022-23 University of Maryland, Baltimore Center for Interprofessional Education seed grant for a project integrating dental providers into sleep medicine teams to address obstructive sleep apnea.

She is a fellow of the Academy of General Dentistry and a certified dentist with the American Academy of Dental Sleep Medicine (AADSM) and diplomate candidate with the American Board of Dental Sleep Medicine. She also is an active member of professional organizations including the American Dental Education Association, Maryland Sleep Society, American Association of Women Dentists, and AADSM.



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