

# WSDLA Board Strategic Planning Highlights



Washington State Dental Lab Association  
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 Graham WA 98338-0385  
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## WSDLA Calendar

- 2011**
- March 31—BOD Meeting 6:30 pm
  - April 1-2—NW Lab Forum Embassy Suites, Lynnwood WA
  - April 29-30—Western States Conference, Grand Sierra Resort, Reno
  - June 17—BOD Meeting, Pacific NW Dental Conference, Seattle 1:00-4:00 pm
  - June 30—Deadline for The Contact articles: publish July 30th
  - October 7-9—Lab Owners Roundtable Retreat—Tulalip Resort, Casino & Spa
  - October 7—Annual Meeting, 7:30 pm — Election of Officers, Tulalip
  - October 8—BOD Meeting, 9:00 am, Tulalip
  - December 8— BOD Conference Call 11:00 am

## 2012

- February—Strategic Planning, Channel Lodge, LaConner WA
- March 22-24—NW Lab Forum, Holiday Inn, Downtown Everett
- June 14-15—BOD Meeting, Pacific NW Dental Conference, Seattle



**SAVE THE DATE**  
 April 1 & 2 2011

Positioned for the Present  
 Forging into the Future

# 2011 NW LAB FORUM

Embassy Suites  
 Lynnwood WA

### Sponsored by:



- Friday**-Lab Owners Roundtable-CE credits (10 am-5 pm)  
 Awards Reception (CDT's)
- Saturday**-Six hours of Speakers and demos in both fixed and removables (6 CE possible in each area)  
 Compliance (Infection Control) – 1 CE credit  
 Vendors (10 am-2 pm)

## CDT Milestones

Congratulations to the following CDT's who are celebrating anniversaries this year.

### 40 Years

Maurice Gress CDT FNBC  
 Edgar Robinson CDT

### 35 Years

Mary Alvin CDT  
 Michael Hartness CDT  
 Mardell Little CDT  
 David Reimers CDT  
 David Roberts CDT  
 James Skidmore CDT  
 Byron Wade CDT  
 Russel Williams CDT

### 30 Years

Richard Brown CDT  
 Mark Elliott CDT  
 Hollis Elliott CDT  
 Bryan Feik CDT  
 Frank Lloyd CDT  
 Mark Stuen CDT  
 Philip Van Lanen CDT

### 25 Years

Danny Croft CDT  
 John Heitz CDT

# GRESS CDT, FNBC RECEIVES CHET CLAUS AWARD

By Thorn Ford CDT, Active Retired:  
Chet Claus Award  
Recipient 2010

The Chet Claus Award for above and beyond service to the dental laboratory industry and to the world at large is an humbling honor to receive. But one of my greatest joys in obtaining this award last year was the privilege of nominating Moe Gress to be this year's recipient. When I presented Moe to the Chet Claus Award Advisory Board as my nomination, the only comment from them was, "why look any further? He's the one!" (The Award Advisory Board is made up of previous recipients.)

You need to know some things about Maurice Gress. If you've spent any time at all with him you intuitively know he's an exceptional human being, so I decided we need to ask a person who is steeped in the qualities of this man. Here is what his wife says about him:

Maurice L. Gress, CDT, FNBC

"Maurice (Moe) Gress has been the owner of AU Dental Ceramic, Inc and Aesthetic Milling Systems in Spokane, Washington for 32 years. He and his laboratories are cutting-edge leaders within the dental industry with specialties in dental implants, precision attachments, cosmetics and CAD/CAM. He has served as officers of the IEDLA, WSDLA and ADA/NADL appointed positions within his 46 years as a dental technician. He

is a 39-year Certified Dental Technician, and is one of 12 persons who earned the credentials of **Fellow of the National Board of Certification** with his focus on Tissue Integrated Prostheses.

"Maurice is a co-author of Implant Prosthodontics: Clinical and Laboratory Procedures, which has been a text book in dental schools throughout the USA and Europe since its publication in 1994. In 1983, working along side of Drs. P.I. Branemark, Kenji Higuchi, and Ed Fredrickson, Moe was the technician team member to fabricate the first Branemark Hybred Dental Implant in the USA. He has presented clinics and workshops nationally and internationally on tissue integrated implants. The recognition and professionalism of the dental technician as a team member within the dental industry has been a passion and goal throughout his laboratory career. He willingly shares his technical knowledge without reservation whenever asked. He is highly respected for his integrity within the dental industry and his community.

"Moe has been active in humanitarian projects through International Assistance Program (IAP) in Romania, Ethiopia, and presently in Ghana.

In Romania, shortly after the Communist regime fell (1996-99), he annually presented evening clinics for dentists and dental technicians on new porcelain techniques, crown & bridge restorations, as well as dental implants.



Moe Gress CDT FNBC receiving the Chet Claus Award presented by Past Recipient Peg Greiwe and President Steve Gerhauser

In Ethiopia (2001) he worked with a micro-loan project that granted \$120 loans (\$147 was average annual income for the region) to women to start businesses in their villages and communities. This project has been ongoing and now has over 500 ladies who are recipients of micro-loans in the Gedeo region of Ethiopia.

The Ghana project began in 2007 with the establishment of a children's home in a poverty, desolate area of northern Ghana. Sawla Children's Home houses 38 children from ages 5-16 who have been abandoned or orphaned. Moe, his wife, Sandi and other supporters of the project, visit the home twice a year. The goal of the project is to educate and prepare these children to be healthy, productive young adults in their communities."

# Lab Owners Roundtable Retreat 2010

By Leon Hermanides CDT  
President Elect WSDLA



President Steve Gerhauser presenting Leon Hermanides CDT thanks for chairing the Lab Owners Roundtable Retreat 2010

The 2010 October Roundtable Retreat was a resounding success thanks to all the efforts of the board of directors of the Washington State Dental Lab Assn and its Executive Peg Greiwe. It was the goal of this meeting to bring actionable items and stimulating debate to the attendees and, according to the responses in your evaluations, we achieved this goal.

The Roundtable Retreat has grown rapidly over the past three years, and continues to demonstrate the commitment of your association to providing valuable business education and information for business owners and senior

managers. The speakers provided a feast of real world information and insights that we are certain will be addressed for years to come.

Thank you to our sponsors of the meeting for their generous support of the Washington State Dental Laboratory industry.

**Gold Sponsors:** Dental Tech Milling and Straumann Digital Solutions

**Silver Sponsors:** Biomet 3i, Nobel Biocare, and Zahn Dental

**Bronze Sponsors:** Astra Tech and GC America

# WSDLA 2010 and 2011 Goals

Sandy Stuart  
Vice President WSDLA

Schools for dental technicians are closing down at an alarming rate, both nationally and internationally, and technicians are being lost to this industry in disturbing numbers (19,000 technicians in only four years). Coupled with the daunting challenges of the economy, doctors and technicians are concerned with these troubling issues.

Yet, in the face of these ongoing trends, the Washington State Dental Laboratory Association (WSDLA) is emerging strong. According to the

2) maintain collaboration with the Washington State Dental Association regarding legislative or regulatory issues and 3) develop an orientation system and refine the board's agenda to achieve a more fluid governing body. The board felt that these three goals would strongly position the WSDLA, laboratories and technicians for the future.

We met those goals. The March Forum and October Roundtable were even bigger successes than anticipated. Attendance

and course through the goals for 2011. Meeting our goals for 2010 was notable. We felt that there was more to be gained by advancing those goals into 2011, but with the addition of a fourth. We believe if this association is going to empower the industry to successfully press forward and shape the future, we must commit to fully lend our support to those technicians following in our footsteps.

Washington State has one of the two remaining educational facilities for technicians left on the West Coast; Bates Technical College in Tacoma. Along with the ongoing endeavors of the goals from 2010, our commitment for this year is to assertively support that institute by providing guest speakers, equipment, internships, and in general meet whatever needs might arise.

Yes, as an industry, the challenges for our future are many. We are gearing up the campaign to meet those challenges and forge ahead effectively. Each of you is a flash-point, a partner in reaching those goals. We encourage you to become involved; join the association if you haven't, volunteer to assist at a conference, write an article for the newsletter (The Contact), attend a task force meeting, or work to support Bates Technical College. This industry, this association is your future. And, it's the future of the next generation of technicians. Working together we can sustain and preserve that future.



Left to Right: Wes Brandon CDT, Kleve Hanson CDT, Tina Janni (Facilitator), Peg Greiwe (Executive Director), Sean Thorp CDT, Steve Gerhauser (Past President), Kris Merriman CDT, Loren Ford CDT (President), Bob Lathrop CDT, Andy Johnson CDT, Sandy Stuart (Vice President), Jim Haxton CDT (Secretary/Treasurer) Robert Jones, Leon Hermanides CDT (President Elect)

National Dental Laboratory Association, Washington has one of the strongest and most active associations. And, in spite of the tremendous challenges facing the industry, we continue to grow in strength.

Tasked with the guardianship of this State's dental technology industry, WSDLA's board of trustees felt compelled to face down these issues with a productive and proactive approach. The goals we consigned ourselves in 2010 were tri fold; 1) WSDLA will offer relevant continuing education to its membership and the industry,

was high. Technician, sponsor and vendor feed-back was very positive.

Emerging from Goal #2, a state-wide task force was formed, comprised of doctors and technicians commissioned specifically to address issues affecting this health care industry. A number of concerns have now been identified through an emerging plan.

A mentoring program for new board members along with a succession plan for retiring board members grew out of the final goal. We continue to work toward refining our governing body.

Recently, the board attended a two day retreat designed to identify, quantify



Tina Janni our facilitator for the retreat Business and Management Training Center, Bates Technical College

# Do you have old equipment in good working condition?

Consider donating it to the Bates Technical College Dental Lab Technology Program. The competency-based program is the only fully American Dental Association accredited program of its kind in Washington State. The program is currently in need of the following items:

- Electric waxers
- Electric handpieces
- Surveyors
- Dipping pots
- Microscopes
- Dental lathe

#### To donate an item, contact:

Kris Merriman CDT, instructor  
253.680.7312 or kmerriman@bates.ctc.edu

John Howard CDT, instructor  
253.680.7313 or jhoward@bates.ctc.edu

The Bates Technical College Foundation is a 501c3 non profit (Tax ID: 94-3165935) and your donations may be tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law. Your donations will directly benefit the dental lab technology program.

#### Dental Lab Technology Program

1101 South Yakima Ave, Tacoma, WA 98405  
[www.bates.ctc.edu](http://www.bates.ctc.edu)

Bates Technical College is an equal opportunity and non-discriminatory employer and educational institution.



Loren M. Ford CDT

Greetings, Washington State Dental Laboratory Association members and friends!

I look forward to serving as president of this vital association through 2011 and I wish to share with you some thoughts on the direction this organization might take and to challenge you as a member to participate.

A few years ago Ricki Braswell CAE, co-executive director of the NADL shared a story about a board meeting in which members were sharing what brought them into the dental lab business. One of the lab owners shared that he would never want his children to end up in the lab. As he was explaining, without any forethought Ricki pointed her finger and interrupted with "shame on you" and a passionate rant on why he was wrong to feel that way. That story stuck with me, as I had encouraged my daughter to leave the lab and pursue other interests.

Do you have vision for the long term direction of the dental lab industry? My daughter returned more than a year ago, and her husband has joined the company as well. Having the younger generation relying on continuation of the business (and not just those related to you) means you must consider more than just your personal financial plan when making long term business decisions.

Back to that thought later. Now is the time of year when we are looking at statistics and patterns generated from a variety of reports in order to project observed patterns into a plan. In that vein, I've been seeing thirds in a lot of interesting statistics in general. For example, one third of the world's population is currently infected with the TB bacillus. Or, the world's oil reserves have been exaggerated by up to a third. About one-third of the people living in the national's capital are functionally illiterate. One third of U.S. 11-year-olds have cellphones. One third of teens use cellphones to cheat in school. One in three

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Loren Ford CDT, President WSDLA

toys tested contain medium or high levels of toxic chemicals. Almost one third of US homeowners who bought in the last five years now are underwater on their mortgages. Here's some more. There is now one third of the accredited dental technology programs in the US as there were 25 years ago. In 2010 the percentage of crowns made offshore is a third greater than in 2007. These thirds represent either dangers (risk) or missed opportunities.



Back: Dr. Rod Wentworth (WSDA President-elect). Middle row: Steve Hardymon (Executive Director WSDA) Loren Ford CDT (President WSDLA), Leon Hermanides CDT (President-elect WSDLA), Dr. Ron Pratten, Dr. Michael Johnson. Front Peg Greive (Executive Director WSDLA) Sandy Stuart (Vice President WSDLA) Dr. Gary Heyamoto, Dr. Bryan Edgar (WSDA Secretary-Treasurer)

In 2008 there were 499 dental labs in Washington, and in 2010 there are 399. How does that affect you? The WSDLA exists to seek out and identify risks and opportunities. This organization is dedicated to preserve an industry that you would encourage your children to enter. What would that take?

To address this question the WSDLA and Washington State Dental Association have joined in a task force to create plans and policies that will protect the local dental lab economy. With the WSDA's support and significant resources we have an opportunity to partner with the local dental community to improve both our own business climate and insure consistently good patient care when restoration is needed. We have agreed to propose to our respective memberships the following initiatives:

We will support the Dental Technology Program at Bates Technical College in as many ways as possible. It is one of only 20 left in the US, and every one of its students are spoken for before graduation. We received donations for working waxers and handpieces for ev-

ery student to use from Wes Brandon CDT, Mike Dominguez CDT, Leon Hermanides CDT, Sandy Stuart, Dave Nakanishi CDT, Jim Haxton CDT, and Peg Greive. We are planning ways for the students to gain real world clinical experience and educational opportunities alongside the UW undergraduates.

We would support new provisions in the Washington State Dental Practice Act that require disclosure of point of origin for dental prostheses, and separately we would support a requirement that laboratories doing business in Washington must identify patient contact materials to the dentist client.

Lastly, we will promote to the local dentist community the CDT as the only existing credential for technicians, and a reliable proof of competency. Many dentists are shocked there are no CE requirements for technicians.

What constitutes longevity for local businesses? The average age of a Washington company is 12.5 years. There was an article in the Seattle Times in December comparing 100 year old companies in Washington. There are about 100, but most are unions, associations or churches, just a handful are businesses. The common traits of those were that they were privately or family owned, owned the facility they operated from, have stable management and long term employees. "Companies that endure are more than purely economic machines. What matters are people more than financial assets".

This is true for your business and your association. You are encouraged to come to the Roundtable session on Friday April 1st. In addition to a full day of relevant information there will be time for a thoughtful discussion of these issues and any other that you feel should be part of the WSDLA's active goals. You also may send an e-mail to Peg any time about anything and she will respond or pass it on to someone who can. Together we have power to energize

Warm Regards, Loren M. Ford CDT  
President, WSDLA

## Board Welcomes Andy Johnston CDT

*Andy Johnston CDT of Miller Dental Lab in Spokane is our latest addition to the WSDLA Board.*

Hello! My name is Andy Johnston, I am fortunate enough to be employed by my father in-law, Ron Miller CDT owner of Miller Dental Lab where I have been employed for the last 14 years. I have been attending the annual spring meeting for almost 11 years now and the Lab Owner's Roundtable Retreat for the last two. Until just recently I have managed to stay under the radar and virtually undetected to the powers that be. Though with age not only comes those dreaded grey hairs, but also a sense of increasing confidence, as we become more secure with ourselves and who we are. Or bet-

ter yet, maybe more the attitude of, "What the heck" or "Why not". Either way I have felt a draw over the last year or so to become more than a wallflower in regards to where our industry is going.

I have been fortunate to learn the trade from some very successful and respected technicians in the industry, and I can only hope to continue and grow in the manner they have set forth. My goals are simple yet will hopefully be greatly beneficial to not only the board, but to all of you as well. First, I would like to be a voice and an advocate for the removable technicians in our association. Second, is to be reliable; that goes a long way in today's world. Finally to enthusiastically bring new ideas to the



table as often as possible yet be supportive of the others' ideas as well. On a side note I will listen carefully and be respectful of my elders.....that was a joke, as I am the youngest member on the board. All kidding aside, I would like to thank those involved for giving me the opportunity to join this group of individuals to whom I have watched and respected for many years.

Thank You,  
Andy Johnston CDT

## WSDLA 2011 OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

President	Loren Ford, CDT	425-486-2732
President Elect	Leon Hermanides CDT	425-497-9428
Vice President	Sandy Stuart	360-336-9502
Secretary/Treasurer	Jim Haxton CDT	509-624-9316
Past President	Steve Gerhauser	509-965-0238
Dist 1, North of King County	Sandy Stuart	360-336-9502
Dist 2, Spokane	Sean Thorp CDT	208-777-9817
Dist 3, Yakima/Central	Andy Johnston CDT	509-328-7319
Dist 4, Tacoma & Kitsap County	Matt Chapman	253-565-1432
Dist 5, South of Tacoma	available	
Dist 6, Seattle	Mike Dominguez CDT BS	206-683-9484
Dist 7, King County	Kleve Hansen CDT	425-743-2210
Dist 10, Associates Technicians	Bob Lathrop CDT MBA	425-454-3123
Manufacturers Rep	Robert Jones, GC America	206-406-3099
Education	Kris Merriman CDT	253-680-7312
Website	Robert Coghill	206-550-4668
Technology Committee	Bob Lathrop CDT MBA	425-454-3123
Member Benefits	Dale Kelley CIC	888-291-9426
Executive Director	Peg Greiwe	800-652-2212

## Vendor Profile – Robert Jones, GC America

Hi, my name is Robert Jones and I'm a District Manager for GC America, responsible for the Northwest Region. I'm also a member of the WSDLA as well as being the Manufacturer's Representative on the Board of Directors. A new addition to our semi-annual newsletter is a featured supplier profile. Graciously, I have been invited to write the first article.

Most people reading this probably already know me. I have been in most of your labs over the past 10 years and have been treated quite well. I came to the Dental Lab business rather late in my career and somewhat by accident, after spending almost 20 years in the Employee Benefits business. When I moved to Washington in 1997 and was unable to find work in my chosen field, I looked elsewhere. I accepted a position as a manufacturer's rep with Pentron Corp. selling porcelain, composites and some equipment. I went through a fast week of training and hit the streets. That was my entry into the business and I have never regretted it. I learned very quickly that I had a lot to learn very quickly. I never would have made it through the first year if it had not been for the incredible support I received from the lab customers I called on. They taught me everything I needed to know. I really cannot express how grateful I am to all those owners and technicians who went out of their way to help me learn this business. I'm sure some of it was self-defense, (I knew next to nothing and fouled up a lot of orders in the early days), but most of it was just people wanting to teach me what they knew and help me get better.

I stayed with Pentron Corp. for several years and moved to Zahn Dental when they acquired Pentron. I enjoyed working at both companies, learned a lot at both and made a lot of good friends. I left Zahn after a few years and accepted a position with one of my customers, developing a sales team and marketing plan for their lab. In 2008 I was offered the position with GC America and was happy to accept. I had sold the GC line during my years with Zahn and knew the company was progressive, had a

good line of products and backed them well with customer service. The company has launched several innovative products in recent years that have been very well received. Most of you are already familiar with GC's IQ Lustre Paste, a revolutionary ceramic paste stain that can be used to create lifelike three dimensional effects on almost any ceramic material or substructure. From PFM's that need a little enhancement, to full contour lithium disilicate or zirconium, IQ Lustre Paste can be used to save time and create esthetics that any lab will be proud of. Recently GC introduced IO 1 Body Layering Over Metal, our next step in the evolution of ceramics. With just four bottles of porcelain, (A,B,C,and D), and Lustre Paste, a technician can create a crown that will rival a traditional "stacked" PFM. With the lab business becoming more and more competitive all the time, the ability to create a beautiful crown in less time, with less labor, is surely a benefit. I'm probably starting to bore you so let's move on. If you have questions about any of the GC America product line, please call me any time and I'll be happy to stop in to your lab and enlighten you. We even offer free in-lab training to our customers. Oh yeah, we were moving on, weren't we?

I'd like to say a little bit about the Washington State Dental Lab Assn. I have been a member of the board of directors for about two years now and it has been a great experience. When I was asked to join the board I jumped at the chance because I believed that association members, and especially those serving on the board, were the people who were taking the most interest in our industry and doing their best to try and create positive change. As an individual lab owner, you have one voice that may not always be heard. When lab owners all over the state join forces in the WSDLA, that voice is much louder, and much harder to ignore. We are here to represent you. There are many issues facing our industry today. From new technologies, to outsourcing, to new business models, lab owners today are faced with

many challenges. Working individually, these challenges may seem overwhelming, but working together they become more manageable. The WSDLA listens to its members and works hard to address the issues our members tell us are important to them. In addition we provide educational opportunities for our members at the NW Lab Forum, and the chance to get together and share ideas with other owners at our annual Lab Owners Roundtable Retreat. This event has become increasingly popular as our industry has become more complicated. Subjects as diverse as business practices, legal matters, labor issues, and emerging technologies have all been addressed at past owners roundtable meetings. We have a lot of gifted people in our business. When you get them all together in one room the results can be amazing. I encourage every lab owner and technician to join WSDLA and have your voice heard.

Well I guess that's about it. I do want to say thanks for all the support and business I have received from the labs in the past ten years. I really do appreciate it. I hope to see you all soon at the NW Lab Forum or in your lab when I stop in to tell you about all the great GC products.....sorry, it must be the salesman in me. Thanks again.

Robert Jones  
Director WSDLA

