

# Bronx County Dental News

A PUBLICATION OF THE BRONX COUNTY DENTAL SOCIETY

## Our Homegrown President

An Interview with Adam Goodman

**WHEN DON SAFFERSTEIN, THE NEWLY INSTALLED** President of the Bronx County Dental Society, was 11 years old, he was playing ball between Mosholu Parkway East and West on one of the several interior grassy islands. Someone shanked a punt, or maybe overthrew a base, but while the details are unclear, what remains sharp in Don's memory was the resulting crack of the windshield of a passing car, followed by the emergence of an angry young driver. He must have read Don's guilty body language in picking him out of the motley crew, or perhaps he was revealed by Don's (usually loyal) friends. He proceeded to grab Don by the shirt collar and drag him to Don's father up the block on the Grand Concourse, where he received proper restitution for the damage. There is much to learn from this tale; what exactly pertains to the next twenty-two months of his Presidency is for the reader to decide.

I have known Don since 1993, and we have enjoyed an excellent personal and professional

relationship. Nevertheless, I followed the usual tradition of interviewing the incoming president, this time remotely as he sat in the backyard of his Westchester home while I zoomed from war-torn Manhattan. I knew Don was a Bronx boy, having grown up within walking distance of the previous BCDS office on the Concourse. He attended PS 8, JHS 80 middle school and then the prestigious Bronx High School of Science, known also as a farm team for future Bronx Dentists. Don's mom, at 96 years of age, still resides in the very same apartment in which Don grew up. Don visits her twice a week, often taking her to the Botanical Gardens or Liebman's Deli. (Don would not want me sharing this - he is so astoundingly humble about how dutiful a son he is; never a complaint as he shuttles after work and on days off, between his mom, office, and home in Chappaqua.)

As an undergrad at University of Rochester, he volunteered at the Strong Memorial Hospital



Post-Grad dental clinic, kindling a burgeoning interest in dentistry. He fulfilled that goal by attending dental school at SUNY Buffalo, where he also met Vicki, his lovely wife of 32 years. They have three daughters, Dayna, Julie, and Rachel, each the spitting image of a computer fusion-morph of Vicki with a long blonde-haired Don.

Don started his career, as many of us have, working in multiple offices. For Don, it was six different offices on six different days. Apparently, his dental school diploma came with a stipulation that he was not allowed to work in the same office too often because they didn't want to be associated with any "repeat offenders." In actuality, it was Don's mother who saw an ad looking for a dental associate in the office of Lee Kapilow at Fordham Hill Oval. Don was hired, worked, learned, and became close friends with Lee. They worked together for eight years before Lee passed away. Through Dr. Kapilow, Don met two Bronx County luminaries, Joel Friedman, and Gordon Gaynor. "I learned so much from Lee, Joel and Gordon about how to conduct myself as a professional," Don shared with me. Don has continued as a solo practitioner, now enjoying his 35th year in practice.

In 2004, Don agreed to serve as the BCDS representative on the Committee on Chemical Dependency. The role developed into something that Don is quite passionate about. "I have met dentists who are healthy and practicing dentistry today who might not be alive, were it not for the hard work of the dedicated professionals on this committee." Don is currently representing NYSDA in a National Institute on Drug Abuse study attempting to reduce opioid overdoses. Don has also become passionate about dentists using their skills to give back to society. He represents the

Bronx on the board of Donated Dental Services. He has also become involved with a dental clinic in rural Haiti. He added "Visiting Haiti was a life altering experience. The poverty and lack of access to the most basic needs of life was eye opening. It's hard to complain about the relatively minor inconveniences in our comfortable lives after spending time in Haiti. To be able to provide help in a small way is incredibly rewarding."

In his new role as President, Don maintains a singular focus on providing help and information for the members of the BCDS as we all adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic. He feels that the purpose of the ADA membership was never more vital than it is now. He added, "No place in the country was harder hit than the Bronx by COVID-19. I have spoken to many dentists who are upset that we were forced to close our offices for so long. That may be true, but were it not for the lobbying effort of the New York State Dental Association and the presence of our own, Dr. Amarilis Jacobo, on the Governor's Reopening Advisory Board, we would have been closed for far longer. Now that we are open, the ADA is the public face of our profession to a fearful public and our voice in the halls of congress. The lobbying power of the ADA, representing 163,000 dentists, will be critical to guide us through the coming years."

If you have made it through the article to this point, perhaps you might still be wondering about the young man who possessed the audacity to drag Don from the infield on Mosholu Parkway, up to the Grand Concourse until he was paid for his broken windshield. Our investigative team interviewed several of Don's friends and also looked back into the 1960's DMV logs and tracked the car to an 18 year-old named Chad Gehane. ■

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# Dr. Amarillis Jacobo Serves on Governor's Advisory Board

## WHEN GOVERNOR ANDREW CUOMO

announced on April 29th his nominations to the New York Forward Reopening Advisory Board, one name in particular stood out, at least to those involved in organized dentistry. Amarillis Jacobo, DDS, who in addition to serving as former president of the National Hispanic Dental Society, has long held many leadership positions within the Bronx County Dental Society and the New York State Dental Association. Dr. Jacobo, a graduate of the NYU College of Dentistry, was selected to provide her knowledge and expertise on what it would take to get dental practices - which had been closed due to Covid-19 - safely reopened.

Anyone who has had the pleasure of meeting and/or working with Dr. Jacobo can attest to the fact that beyond intelligence, she exudes an infectious enthusiasm to connect with people, be it to advocate for under-served communities, her concern for her patients, or her natural penchant for educating policymakers about oral health care. When New York dentists were forced to close their doors, Amarillis reached out to NYS Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie to explain the importance of dentistry to the health of our community. Mr. Heastie recommended that Amarillis become a member of what was stacking up to be a truly blue-ribbon advisory panel of experts representing industry, non-profits, entertainment, and athletics, among others.

The efforts of Amarillis were instrumental to the reopening of all NYS dental practices on June 1. Amarillis explained that she had personal discussions with Board co-chair Steve Cohen. She detailed how the dental profession was preparing to reopen, presented the ADA reopen toolkit, and explained the consequences of people going without dental treatment for so long. Amarillis is grateful to have had the opportunity to represent dentistry, and we at the Bronx County Dental Society are exceedingly proud of her. ■



## BCDS has joined the world of social media

To join our Facebook group, open the following link in your browser and request to join:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/641732116419734>

You can also locate the group by typing "Bronx County Dental Society" into the Facebook search bar and requesting to join the group.

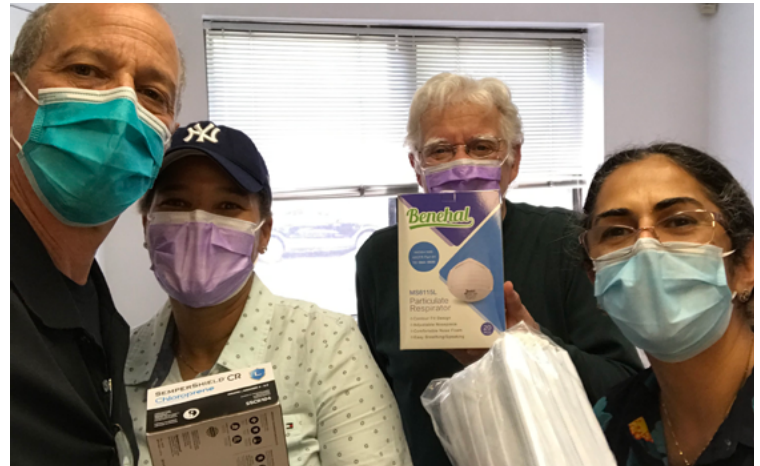
Once you are accepted feel free to post!

# PPE Giveaway

**WHEN DENTAL PRACTICES WERE GIVEN THE GO AHEAD TO OPEN ON JUNE 1, MANY OF US** were faced with a daunting problem. How can we open without proper N95 masks? Bronx County Dental Society to the rescue!

Through the efforts of Executive Director Steve Harrison, we were able to procure a large supply of N95 masks and other PPEs. Special thanks to Amarilis Jacobo, Kirti Tewari, Peter Gross and Don Safferstein for distributing the supplies. Over 75 Bronx County members picked up PPEs at our drive by giveaway.

For those that would still like to receive these valuable supplies, contact Joy Patane at 718-733-2031.



## New Officer Installation

The Bronx County Dental society installed their new officers in a Zoom meeting on July 15.

### CONGRATULATIONS TO

- Don Safferstein - President
- Kirti Tewari - President Elect
- Anthony Danilow - Treasurer
- Keith Margulis - Secretary

## Thank you to Dr Jacqueline Samuels

For her outstanding service as President of the Bronx County Dental Society from 2018-2020



# Classifieds

For Boiano Dental Group [admin@boianodental.com](mailto:admin@boianodental.com)

## PERIODONTIST POSITION AVAILABLE: BRONX AND EASTCHESTER

Our growing private practice is looking for a motivated periodontist. We are a high producing, full service office that is built on quality dentistry and a life-long commitment to our patients. We're looking for a Part Time Periodontist to join our Bronx and Eastchester NY practice. Our office is a high tech paperless practice that utilizes state of the art technology, providing our staff and patients with an extremely high level of care. We have CBCT, Laser, Digital X-Rays and Dentrix practice management software.

The position is part time with competitive compensation. New graduates are welcome to apply. Please email us your resume. We look forward to hearing from you!

## GENERAL DENTIST POSITION AVAILABLE: EAST TREMONT AVE - BRONX LOCATION

Immediate opportunity for associate dentist 2-3 days per week (Tuesday, Wednesday and possibly Friday.) Awesome patients and experienced team in place. Our office is a high tech paperless practice that utilizes state of the art technology, providing our staff and patients with an extremely high level of care. Lots of production potential. Lab on

premises, CBCT, digital panorex and x-rays.

The position is part time with competitive compensation. New graduates are welcome to apply. Please email us your resume. We look forward to hearing from you!

**Will you see one?**

*“My broken, decaying teeth are fixed and I can eat again.”*

**YOU CAN CHANGE A LIFE**

[WillYouSeeONE.org](http://WillYouSeeONE.org)

From clearing up painful dental infections and being able to eat again to rejoining the workforce - volunteering with Dental Lifeline Network's Donated Dental Services (DDS) program will make a life changing difference for the people we serve.

**Dental Lifeline Network**

*“Fellow dentists—will you join me in seeing **ONE** patient?”*  
-Gordon J. Christensen, DDS, MSD, PhD



## Let Us Hear From You

Contribute to BCDS news · Write an article for the newsletter  
Have something you want to present? · Ideas for community outreach?

Email [GoodmanY2K@yahoo.com](mailto:GoodmanY2K@yahoo.com)