



**ALABAMA**  
ACADEMY of  
**GENERAL DENTISTRY**

**COMPOSITE**

Newsletter of the Alabama Academy of General Dentistry

*Editor: Bill Chesser, D.M.D., MAGD*

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## REMEMBERING TONY DOLLAR

*Bill Chesser, DMD, MAGD*

The UAB School of Dentistry Alumni Meeting in February will not be the same this year without Dr. Tony Dollar.

He was always in attendance, as he was at most other state dental organizational gatherings. Our friend Tony passed away November 20, 2018, after an extended illness.

This would have been the 50th year celebration of his graduation from the University of Alabama School of Dentistry, in 1969.



*Pictured: Dr. Tony Dollar*

After earning his D.M.D. degree, he served in the U.S. Navy, spending a year of his tour with the First Marine Aircraft Wing in Vietnam. This experience proved a great resource for his many stories about his military years. And, yes, he was the best story teller of all time!

He loved to hear others tell their stories, too. He'd listen intently, then holler, "You're lying!" with his signature cackle. Tony was a hoot!



*Pictured: Drs. Tony Dollar (2nd from right) and Howard Gamble (far right) stand amongst other former presidents of the Alabama AGD*

Tony and I became acquainted in 1971, when he opened his practice in General Dentistry down in Dothan, Alabama. Over the years, we grew to be close friends, sharing meals in each other's homes, meeting in restaurants, (one memorable evening involved belly dancing!), and visiting at meetings all over the country. We even combined our Office Staff Christmas parties several times.

Dr. Dollar distinguished himself in our profession in innumerable ways. He completed the first AGD Masters Program offered at UAB. He loved our profession, and held many positions of honor and service in state organizations.

He was Past President of ALAGD. It was his idea to offer the prestigious "Green Jacket" to each Past President of this organization. Each time we wear these emblems of service to ALAGD, we can be reminded of what this fine man meant to our profession.

Tony also served as President of the School of Dentistry Alumni Association. Most recently, he was a member of the Dean's Advisory Committee.

On a personal note, I will add that this fine man was kind enough to provide dental treatment for

me after hours when he had worked a full day in his office. Not only that, but I was treated to free storytelling, while picking up a few technique "pearls" which I could use in my own private practice.

Our heartfelt thoughts and prayers go out to his wife, Linda, and the entire Dollar family, including his son, Jeremy Dollar, and daughter, Dr. Brantley Dollar Gaitan, as well as their spouses, and several grandchildren. Dr. Tony Dollar's passing leaves a great vacuum in our collective hearts, and we will all miss him.



*Pictured (left to right): Drs. Lew Mitchell, Ray McLaughlin, Bob DeShazer, Gary Myers, & Bobby Babb at Tony's memorial service*

## ANOTHER YEAR OLDER...

*Closing remarks from outgoing president, Derrick Mendez, D.M.D.*

As 2018 has come and gone, 2019 brings a host of new beginnings. One of these is the start of my son's third year in this world. The last few days since his birthday, he has roamed around with pride, announcing with joy to anyone he sees, "I'm older now!" Fortunately, my birthday is two days before my son's. I'm thankful his birthday is so close to mine because it distracts from the dreaded realization that I am yet again one... year...older. When does this happen? At what age do we go from longing for that next special day to the point of dreading the adding of another number to our age each year? It's usually at this point that my wife has to snap me out of it and remind me what a true blessing each year is.



*Pictured: Dr. Derrick Mendez*

Naturally, my mind then drifts to all the life experiences over the past year that have helped to shape me both personally and professionally.

Of course, one experience from this past year that I will always cherish is having been afforded the opportunity to serve the Alabama AGD as president for 2018. I have been exposed to levels of organized dentistry that only a handful at my age have had the chance to take part in. I know for a fact that it has made me a better clinician and a more aware member of the dental community and will continue to do so in the years ahead. I thank all of you in the Alabama AGD who have mentored and supported me. I hope to do the same in the coming years for those who follow after me.

Though we have many challenges ahead of us as an organization, I am encouraged by recognitions the Alabama AGD received at one of the last events of 2018. In November, five Alabama AGD members represented our constituent at the national House of Delegates governance meeting in Chicago, IL. It was there that the Alabama AGD was recognized in our size category (by number of members) as the winner of the Constituent of the Year (COTY) award, one of the highest honors a constituent can receive. In addition, we received the Academy Constituent Editor's Award, the Membership Award, and an honorable mention for the Continuing Education Award. The highlight of the honors was national AGD Immediate Past-President Manuel Cordero recognizing Dr. Gary Myers with a Presidential Citation for Visionary Leadership for his years of dedication and services to the Academy of General Dentistry. Please thank Alabama AGD Vice President Dr. Kim Stiegler for the hours of time and effort he put into preparing the reports that allowed our constituent to be recognized.



Please also thank Dr. Gary Myers for all the years of support to the national AGD as well as his continued efforts as our constituent executive director.

I invite you to join us at Alumni Weekend, which is hosted by the University of Alabama School of Dentistry Alumni Association. The event will be held February 7-10th at the Hyatt Regency Wynfrey Hotel in Birmingham, Alabama. On Sunday, February 10th, we will hold our first general assembly meeting of 2019 in conjunction with Alumni Weekend. Along with our other officer installations for 2019, Dr. Ross Isbell will be installed the next president of the Alabama AGD. I'm very excited to see what 2019 holds for the Alabama AGD!

Wishing you the best,  
Derrick Mendez, D.M.D.



*Pictured: Dr. Mendez and his son Ian; their birthdays fall only two days apart from one another*

## ALABAMA AGD RECOGNIZED AT THE 2018 HOUSE OF DELEGATES

ACE (COMMUNICATIONS)  
AWARD  
WINNER

CONSTITUENT  
OF THE YEAR (COY) AWARD  
WINNER

MEMBERSHIP  
AWARD  
HONORABLE MENTION

PRESIDENTIAL CITATION  
FOR VISIONARY LEADERSHIP  
DR. GARY MYERS

CONTINUING EDUCATION  
AWARD  
HONORABLE MENTION



# ALABAMA ACADEMY OF GENERAL DENTISTRY: 2018 REVIEW

*Bill Chesser, D.M.D., M.A.G.D.*

ALAGD'S 2018 activities have come to a close, and **Dr. Derrick Mendez** is to be congratulated on his busy year as president. He was installed in this office at the 2018 UAB SOD Alumni meeting last February, and was already in full swing!

At this same meeting, the **Howard Gamble Memorial Seminar** was presented by our friend **Dr. Nick Russo**, from Delaware. He instructed the dental school seniors about a General Practice Residency available in Wilmington, DE, at the Christiana Health System.

Our Student AGD Chapter is doing well. Members are busy with community health support activities, in addition to their pursuing continuing education.

Dr. Mendez represented Alabama at the **AGD "Hill Day" in Washington, DC**. Here, he had the opportunity to converse with several members of Congress. He was duly impressed with the AGD impact toward advocacy for our profession in our national government.

In June, AIAGD experienced a first—as far as I know. One of our officers, Dr. Ross Isbell, married while in office! The honeymooning couple spent their first week with Dad, Dr. Gordon Isbell, helping with the Gulf Coast Dental Conference (GCDC) in Orange Beach.



*Pictured: Editor Bill Chesser, D.M.D.*

President Mendez exercised full control over our **45th Annual Review of Dentistry**. This was our second year “back at the beach”, the San Destin Hilton facility. Although this move requires more expense, it seems to work much better for our group. Attendance was good, while the Exhibitors' support was considerably down from last year.

\*\*\*It is encouragement from our members that attracts our Exhibitors. If you enjoy this meeting, it is YOU who can keep our Exhibitors coming. (1) Mention this meeting to the Vendors who visit your practices in your home towns. (2) Tell them you will be looking for their displays at the Annual Review of Dentistry. (3) When possible, order your supplies from them.

The continued success of the Annual Review of Dentistry depends upon the support of our Exhibitors, as well as that of our attendees!

In October, your representatives to the AGD House of Delegates met with other Region 19 reps for the **Pre-Caucus session in Raleigh,**

NC. The same folks then journeyed up to **Chicago** several days later for the **AGD Annual Meeting**. Derrick Mendez, Ross Isbell, Gary Myers, Kim Stiegler, and Bill Chesser served as your Delegates.

At this meeting, **AIAGD** was honored with the **Award of Excellence for Membership**, the **Editor's Award** for "The Alabama Composite", and the coveted **Constituent of the Year Award**. **Dr. Gary Myers** also received a **Presidential Award**.

One important issue concerning some of you involves the Lifelong Learning and Service Recognition (LLSR) requirements. A resolution presented before the HOD wanted to change this to an "Award", like the Fellowship and Mastership programs, allowing members to obtain it only once. This Resolution was defeated; the LLSR requirements remain unchanged.

The Scientific Meeting for AGD was held in New Orleans, a great city for any gathering.

Unfortunately, it was held the SAME WEEK in June as our GCDC, in Orange Beach. Of course, many of our crew were committed to helping Dr. Gordon Isbell, AIDA President for 2018, with his meeting.

Important awards were presented to AIAGD members in New Orleans: Dr. Wendy Holder of Alexander City was presented her Mastership. Dr. Jack Smalley, Tuscaloosa, and Dr. Mark Kuglish, Homewood, were presented their Fellowships. Two members receiver their LLSR Awards: Dr. Harold Bullard, Montgomery, and Dr. David Skees, Snead. Congratulations to you all!

**2018** has been a banner year for AIAGD. We look forward to the leadership of **Dr. Ross Isbell** as he takes office as president of our organization soon. As always, we need the participation of each one of you. **Attend our meetings. Become involved in decision-making. Dare to speak out in support of our profession.**



*Pictured (left to right): Drs. Gary Myers, Derrick Mendez, Kim Stiegler, Ross Isbell, and Bill Chesser; Alabama AGD delegates represented at the Region 19 Precaucus in Raleigh, NC*

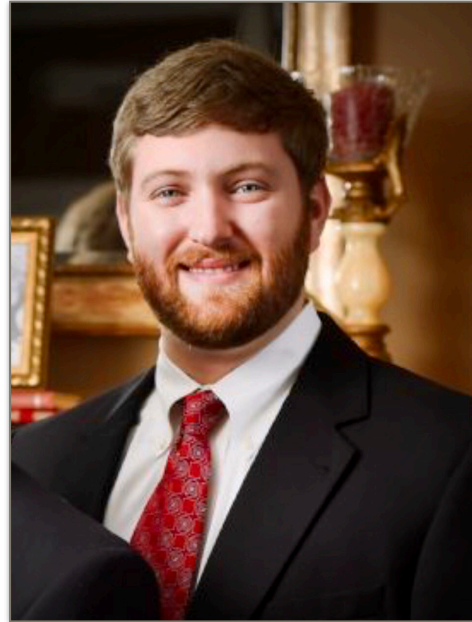
## MEET OUR PRESIDENT-ELECT

*Greetings from our next president,  
Ross Isbell, DMD, MBA*

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Alabama AGD.  
*“If I could offer you one tip for the future, using  
sunscreen would be it. The long-term benefits of  
sunscreen have been proved by scientists whereas the  
rest of my advice has no basis more reliable than my  
own meandering experience. I will dispense this  
advice now.”*

This is the start of a spoken word song that many people of my generation may find value in when it reached top 50 on the radio in the late 1990's. It speaks from an experienced and older person's standpoint looking back on things that would have been valuable to them in their youth. It includes suggestions such as “understand that friends come and go except the ones you should hold on to,” “do one thing every day that scares you,” and “floss.”

While there are definitely many leaders and friends that have come and gone at the Alabama AGD, we are blessed to have a strong group of team members “holding on” to us and keeping our organization relevant and vibrant. As we move into the future, I hope that you feel the same excitement that I do about the years to come in the dental



*Pictured: Dr. Ross Isbell*

profession and organized dentistry. There is so much new knowledge, technology, and communication available that whatever your age or involvement, you should be getting energized! If you are not already involved in our leadership, we hope that you will consider working more closely with us and helping ALAGD and its Annual Review of Dentistry meeting to grow. I promise that the experience will not be the “one thing” that scares you and you will emerge on the other side with valuable experiences and new friends.

As the youngest ever President of ALAGD (stealing the title from Dr. Derrick Mendez) and as someone who grew up as part of the ALAGD by attending meetings as a dentist's child, I have a deep love for our group and am

### SONG REFERENCE

Baz Luhrmann - Everybody's Free (To Wear Sunscreen)

link to the lyrics and song: <http://www.lyricsdepot.com/various-artists/everyones-free-to-wear-sunscreen.html>





*Pictured: Dr. Ross Isbell and his wife Stephanie at their wedding reception*

truly thankful for the opportunity to serve. My dental career began at UAB School of Dentistry and I completed my DMD degree there in 2014 as well as completing a 5th year at the UAB Hospital Dentistry GPR in 2015 and achieving an MBA degree in 2016. During my time in dental school, I served in

various ASDA positions including locally as UAB Chapter President and nationally as the representative to the ADPAC political action committee board. I am currently serving as the New Dentist Chair for ALDA as well as several other committees. I have been working with my father Gordon in Gadsden, AL where we maintain two practice locations since I completed my GPR. In 2018, I reached my greatest milestone in life when my wife Stephanie and I were married in June.

With the support of my wife and you, my family in the ALAGD, I know that we can accomplish great things together. Please make sure to save the date for September 5-7, 2019 and accept our invitation to attend this year's Annual Review of Dentistry meeting in Sandestin with your families and colleagues. It will be an exciting and engaging time of learning at the beach "and trust me on the sunscreen."

Sincerely,

Ross Isbell, DMD, MBA  
[ross@isbelldental.com](mailto:ross@isbelldental.com)  
 (256) 441-0081

## IMPORTANT DATES IN 2019

### July 18-20

National AGD Scientific Meeting  
 Mohegan Sun, CT

### September 5-7

46th Annual Review of Dentistry  
 Hilton Sandestin – Destin, FL

# PHOTOS FROM THE END OF 2018

## Three Green Jackets



*Pictured (left to right): Drs. Derrick Mendez, Nick Russo, & Gary Myers; Gary presents Nick with the green jacket of the late Dr. Howard Gamble*

## House of Delegates



*Pictured (left to right): Drs. Gary Myers, Derrick Mendez, Ross Isbell; Alabama delegates sitting on the House floor*





*Pictured: Dr. Bill Chesser (left); The AGD Singers opens the annual meeting with the Canadian and American national anthems*



*Pictured: Dr. Nick Russo (center) poses with Drs. Gary Myers (left) and Derrick Mendez (right) at the Region 19 caucus in Chicago*





*Pictured: Alabama delegate Dr. Ross Isbell (far left) served as a member of the AGD Reference Committee on Advocacy & Other Priorities at the House of Delegates meeting*



*Pictured: Alabama delegate Dr. Kim Stiegler (far left) testifies at the Reference Committee on Advocacy & Other Priorities at the House of Delegates meeting*



*Pictured (left to right): Drs. Derrick Mendez, Bill Chesser, Kim Stiegler, Gary Myers, & Ross Isbell; annual meeting delegates proudly displaying Award Of Excellence in categories of Membership, Constituent of the Year, and Editor's Award. Dr. Stiegler (holding the certificates) was responsible for compiling the universal award application.*

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