

Faculty Bio



Hazel J. Harper, DDS, MPH, FACD
Founding Director, NDA-HEALTH NOW
Past President, National Dental Association

Dr. Hazel Harper is a graduate of Howard University College of Dentistry and the Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health. She maintains a part-time private practice in general dentistry in Washington, DC. She is President and CEO of Hazel J. Harper & Associates, LLC, management consultants and President and Founder of Hear to HEAL, Inc., a non-profit to support interprofessional education, community groups, and student leadership.

She has served her profession in many leadership roles including: a member of President Bill Clinton's Health Reform Task Force; National Spokesperson for the American Dental Association; Transition Teams of District of Columbia mayors Sharon Pratt Kelly and Marion Barry; and reviewer of the first ever Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health in America, under the direction of US Surgeon General Dr. Davidatcher (2000). She has served on the Board of Directors of Oral Health America, the American Association of Women Dentists, the Ed Shils Entrepreneurial Fund, and the planning committees of the ADEA International Women's Leadership Summits. She was on the Clinical Advisory Boards of Dentsply International, GlaxoSmithKline, Adec and Discus Dental, and the Editorial Board of the Woman Dentist Journal as well as the Editorial Advisory Board of Heart and Soul Magazine.

Dr. Harper is a woman of many firsts – the first woman President of the National Dental Association (1997), Chairman of the NDA Board of Trustees, and President of the Howard University College of Dentistry Alumni Association. She was one of the founders of the Student National Dental Association, longtime editor of National Dental Association (NDA) Journal and created many NDA programs including: The Women's Health Symposium, NDA-Corporate Roundtable, and the Eddie G. Smith Leadership Institute. She co-founded and directed the Deamonte Driver Dental Project (DDDP), a school-based, mobile dental project in Prince George's County, MD, named in memory of the 12-year-old boy who died in 2007 from untreated tooth decay. She is currently the Founding Director of the award-winning NDA-HEALTH NOW® Project and architect of the Inter-Professional Student Leaders Colloquium and Summit. Since Deamonte's death, Dr. Harper has devoted her energies and creative talents to developing, implementing, and supporting interprofessional health education programs and community outreach events in cities across America and the world.

Her reputation for innovation and success has merited awards from several foundations including the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Coca-Cola Foundation, Henry Schein Cares Foundation, Aetna Foundation, GE's African American Forum, the Pew Charitable Trusts, the DentaQuest Foundation, and many others. She received an Honorary Doctorate from Medgar Evans College in Brooklyn, NY. Dr. Harper lectures and writes extensively on eliminating health disparities, and in 2019, she was lead author of book chapters in Oral Health in America: Removing the Stain of Disparities, published by the American Public Health Association. She is a contributing author for the 2020 Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health.

She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and the Links, Incorporated, and enjoys traveling with her husband, Robert S. Johns.