



Give Veterans A Smile

Dental School Planning Guide

Honoring Our Veterans | Providing Dental Care



Be part of the **GVAS** movement!



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Give Veterans A Smile Overview

Be Part of the Movement



Background Information

Launched nationally by the American Dental Association Foundation (ADA Foundation) in 2024, Give Veterans A Smile® (GVAS), was created to help call national attention to the unmet oral health needs of Veterans by:

- ★ Encouraging dentists to provide pro bono oral health care services to underserved Veterans during the month of November via a one or multi-day screening process which would include examination, radiographs, prophylaxis, and development of a treatment plan, plus addressing any emergent care; assist them in finding a dental home or refer them to a dental facility (dental practice, residency, school, FQHC) or an organization that can assist in providing a dental home, and
- ★ Collecting data and sharing the dollar value of charitable oral health care provided nationally to help guide advocacy efforts aimed at increasing funding and access to care for underserved Veterans.

The ADA Foundation provides tools and resources for local GVAS program volunteers so they can focus on what they do best: providing much-needed oral health care to Veterans in underserved communities.

We invite your dental school to join us and *Be Part of the GVAS Movement* to help increase access to care to underserved Veterans in your community.

Purpose of the Guide

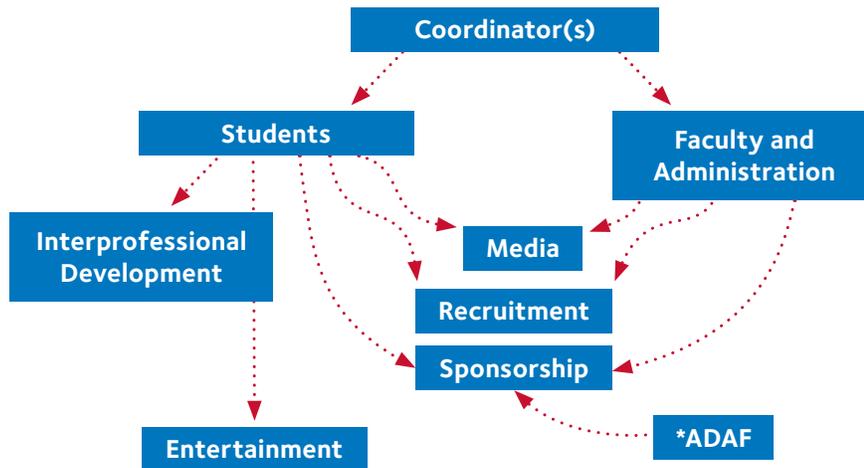
This document provides useful information and resources to assist dental school administrators, staff, and students on how they may participate in the ADA Foundation Give Veterans A Smile program.



GVAS Event Types

Education Only	Screening	Preventive/Restorative
The Education Only event includes oral health education, with NO other oral health services provided during the event. Education Only events generally take place in a community setting. Consider offering presentations to veteran groups (VFW, DAV, etc.) that discuss the importance of regular dental visits, the relationship between oral health and overall health, and oral issues commonly faced by veterans. These events should include referral resources for those veterans in need of oral health care services.	Screening events can take place in a variety of locations such as veterans' organizations, community health fairs, county fairs, or anywhere veterans may congregate. A visual oral screening can include a soft tissue exam, hard tissue visual exam, denture evaluation, and an oral cancer screening. These events should also include referral resources for those veterans in need of oral health care services.	The Preventive/Restorative event delivers oral health education, screening exam, radiographs, prophylaxis, fluoride treatment, fillings, restorations, extractions, root canals, impressions, etc. This type of event takes place in a clinical setting, such as a dental school, dental office or clinic.

Planning Structure



- ★ **Program Coordinators** – Select a small group of motivated, outgoing students and/or faculty to take the lead on planning your GVAS event.
- ★ **Dental Students** – Suggestions are provided below for how all levels of students may participate in your school event. Note that roles should be decided internally, and depend on the level of training achieved.
 - **D1** – Oral health education / Front help
 - **D2** – Preventive care / Cleaning / X-ray / Assisting
 - **D3** – Sterilization / Dispensing / Clinical work/ Assisting
 - **D4** – Clinic work
 - **Residents** – More complex clinical work/ Extractions / Root canals
 - **Faculty and Administration** – Provide approvals / Supervise flow of clinic / Triage / Liability and Risk Management
- ★ **Interprofessional Participation** – This applies only if school offers other interprofessional disciplines.
 - **Nutrition Students** – Talk to veterans about the importance of eating healthy foods.
 - **Medical Students** – Talk to veterans about the mouth body connection, overall health.
 - **Audiology Students** – Conduct hearing screenings, need for hearing aids, etc.
- ★ **Recruitment** – Veteran Organizations (e.g., VFW) / Churches / Community centers
- ★ **Media/Promotion** – Work with your school’s media team to develop a promotion plan — Press release / Promotional video / TV / Print / Flyers / Social media
- ★ **Sponsorship** – Product and supply donations / Food donations for veterans and volunteers
- ★ **ADAF GVAS** – Participation form / Website resources

GVAS National Resources



Event Participation Form for Those Hosting a GVAS Event

- ★ Even though the national GVAS kickoff day is recognized annually on November 11th (Veterans Day), you can have your event any convenient day during the year.
- ★ Please click on the link below to let us know the details regarding your participation.
- ★ Visit the GVAS website at ADAFoundation.org/GVAS for additional resources including a program planning guide and links to national organizations providing care to underserved veterans.
- ★ For questions about planning your event you may email our GVAS team at GVAS@ada.org.

Sign up to Participate

*Be Part of the
Movement*



GVAS Online Toolkit and Suggested Timeline



GVAS Online Toolkit

The ADA Foundation GVAS online toolkit provides information on how to plan and promote a GVAS event and risk management guidance.

ADAFoundation.org/GVAS

Suggested Timeline

Give Veterans A Smile events can take place during any month of the year. The timeline below provides a sample timeline for those who choose to hold an event in November when Veterans Day is honored and the national annual kickoff of GVAS will be celebrated.

Month	Objective
June/July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Complete participation form online at adafoundation.org/give-veterans-a-smile/register-to-volunteer.
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Plan and develop your GVAS event. ★ Obtain internal approvals. ★ Assemble an interprofessional student team. ★ Determine locations for recruitment (veteran organizations, churches, etc.). ★ Identify roles for students, faculty, and staff.
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Begin the process of recruiting veterans for your event. ★ Develop funding proposals.
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Submit requests for funding/sponsorship. ★ Confirm volunteers. ★ Expand the recruitment process if needed.
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Confirm patient roster. ★ Prepare event space and implement a GVAS program. ★ Share your event data at GVAS@ada.org.

Conclusion



Participating in Give Veterans A Smile offers dental schools an opportunity to improve the health of their community by reaching out and connecting underserved veterans with much needed oral health services and dental homes.

GVAS events bring together the entire dental school, creating community within and providing a setting for students to improve cultural awareness and work on adult patients — all while making a difference for those who have served our country.

We are very proud of what the Give Kids A Smile program has done to improve the health of millions of children over the years, through thousands of volunteers and sponsors, and trust the same measures can be taken to improve the health of millions of veterans. Few things in life are as rewarding as helping to restore someone’s smile. The reward is even greater when you catch a glimpse of the radiant smile of that veteran.

That is the essence of the ADA Foundation’s Give Veterans A Smile program — helping to ensure that every veteran has a healthy smile.

And now as we launch this exciting new program, we hope that your dental school will join us and Be Part of the Movement!

Questions? Contact the national ADA GVAS team at GVAS@ada.org.



“*Today, the power of our community — defined by caring, kindness, and a willingness to go the extra mile — is on full display as we gather to broaden our positive impact, work together on solutions and elevate our talents to improve the health and well-being of our nation’s veterans.*”

Cesar R. Sabates, D.D.S.
American Dental Association, past president