



On behalf of the AAWD Board of Directors, the officers wish to thank our members for attending the Annual Membership Meeting held virtually on December 7, 2022. Despite a year of controversy, minimal volunteer participation, and unexpected resignations, the Board of Directors has nominated, and submitted for a membership vote, an excellent slate of officers uniquely qualified to lead AAWD out of conflict and into a stable, secure future.

The AAWD Board expresses appreciation to our 2023 officer candidates for their willingness to serve and their presentations at the 2022 Annual Membership Meeting. Following the Membership Meeting, several members expressed discontent over the election process, the nominations, and the meeting. In the spirit of transparency, trust, and stability, the following 2022 AAWD Election Frequently Asked Questions are presented to give context to the election and perspective to the state of the Association.

FAQs

What is the result of a "No" vote on the slate of candidates?

A "No" vote on the slate of candidates will have a disastrous effect on the immediate future of AAWD. The process to nominate a new slate of candidates will take months. Our well vetted candidates may withdraw. AAWD will be without a president or president-elect for months. News of continued conflict and leaderless elections will influence AAWD's position relative to industry leaders like ADA and sponsors like Bank of America.

What is the result of a "Yes" vote on the slate of candidates?

A "Yes" vote on the slate of candidates will lead AAWD into a new era. New leadership will take the helm and immediately start to move AAWD out of this dark period of stress and self-destruction. AAWD will grow under new leaders with new governance skills, deep business knowledge, wide-ranging experience, and international perspective.

What is the plan to grow membership and corporate sponsorship? Will you publish the candidate's answers to questions in the Chronicle?

There will be an article in the next Chronicle with the candidates' answers to key questions.



Rock the Vote!
VOTING OPENS TUESDAY, DECEMBER 27
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How were the candidates nominated and vetted?

All members can nominate candidates to serve on the Board of Directors. The call for nominations was sent to members. Several nominations were not considered because they did not meet basic eligibility requirements like current membership. The qualified candidates were evaluated based on the published requirements:

- Candidates must be willing to commit time, assume responsibility, and participate in meetings and AAWD activities.
- Bring a sense of entrepreneurial spirit and energy to the office.
- Demonstrate appropriate experience for the nomination such as previous AAWD leadership, industry or other non-profit board positions, or substantial charity or community service.
- For President and President-Elect, candidates are expected to have served on the AAWD Board of Directors or served in an equal capacity as an officer of another association or industry board, and have experience managing a profit and loss business, non-profit, or budgeted center.
- Candidates will provide a headshot picture, biographical information, a statement of purpose, and record a short promotional video on Zoom to be used as part of the ballot.
- The Board of Directors' service is a real opportunity for personal and professional growth. It allows the member to develop and shape the future of AAWD and to be the real voice of women dentists.

The Nominating Committee gave the highest importance to skills needed to mend the AAWD image in the eyes of the industry. Importance was placed on finding officers with a sincere interest in advancing and stabilizing AAWD above personal interests. The call for nominations asked for president and president-elect candidates who had served in "equal capacity as an officer of [AAWD or] another association or industry board, and have experience managing a profit and loss business, non-profit, or budgeted center." In the eyes of the Committee, AAWD needs new vision, proven executive leadership, and business acumen to recover from the conflict and resignations that plagued the Association last year.

Will you publish the CV's the candidates?

As part of the election process, there are no plans to publish the candidates' CV. However, individuals can make a request by sending an email to membership@aawd.org.

Do any of the candidates have a conflict of interest?

The Board of Directors is not aware of any conflict of interests. Business interest other than a dental practice or academia is not necessarily a conflict. Officers must sign a conflict-of-interest statement and abstain from voting on issues when there is an actual or perceived conflict.

Why wasn't the membership meeting open to nominations from the floor? Shouldn't nominations from the floor always be provided as a safeguard? Why wasn't there a question-and-answer period?

Open nominations from the floor at the membership meeting bypasses the safeguards of the Nominations Committee and opens the door to self-interest that can dominate the majority in a low turnout election. As stated in the meeting, questions were submitted via membership@aawd.org and answered for all members, not just the meeting participants.



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Was the election process fair? Were the Bylaws followed throughout the election process?

A fair election involves a fair process leading up to the vote and a fair count of eligible members who voted. Election rules are established by Associations to reflect the unique characteristics of the members. For some small associations, the board of directors appoint all candidates to new board positions, while larger organizations select multiple candidates to compete for positions by ballot vote.

AAWD allows for multiple nominations from all members to fill open positions. However, one candidate is presented to members for each open position. The Nomination Committee is responsible for vetting and selection of the final slate of candidates. The Board of Directors approves or rejects the slate of candidates selected by the nomination committee. Once the Board approves the candidates, the new slate is presented to members usually at the annual meeting. A notice of a vote must be given 20 days prior to the vote. Voting is electronic and staff checks the eligibility of each voter.

The 2022 candidate slate was selected from an open call for nominations held earlier this year. All members had the opportunity to nominate candidates to serve on the Board of Directors. Candidates who do not meet the eligibility requirements are not considered by the Nomination Committee. The Committee develops criteria for selection of the best candidates based on desired leadership qualities and the needs of the association as understood by the Board members. It should be emphasized that these are guidelines, not mandates, to assist the Nominating Committee, but not to usurp its ultimate responsibility to exercise its independent judgment and discretion in the selection of candidates. This type of closed election system is commonly used by small associations where there is danger of a few members dominating the majority in an open election. AAWD placed its trust in board members.

The election is conducted over the course of approximately two weeks each year. All members in good standing as of the day of election are eligible to vote in the election.

Once voting has closed, results are announced.

It is a fair election process. Moreover, it has decades of acceptance by our members.

I nominated Amrita Patel for President Elect. Why wasn't she included on the slate of potential officers?

Dr. Patel's membership was expired during the vetting process. She was not a member in good standing and could not be advanced. Several nominees could not advance for the same reason.

Is the Executive Director Donna Deans a voting member of the Board of Directors?

As the Executive Director, Donna Deans does not vote on any issue before the Board of Directors or the Executive Committee. If Secretary/ Treasurer powers were delegated to the Executive Director, the power would be to execute policy, not to make policy.