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Meet Your New MDA Editor

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By Michelle C. Dziurgot, DDS
Editor-in-Chief

Meet Your New MDA Editor

Let me properly introduce myself. I, Dr. Michelle C. Dziurgot of Shelby Twp, Michigan, am the new editor-in-chief of your *Journal of the Michigan Dental Association*. I graduated from the University of Detroit Mercy School of Dentistry in 1996. I am a proud U.S. Navy dentist, who obtained her Advanced Education in General Dentistry Program Certificate while stationed at the U.S. Naval Dental Center in Great Lakes, Ill.

I served the U.S. Marines in Twentynine Palms, Calif., but decided to return to civilian dentistry in 1999. I then came back to my home state of Michigan. I joined a three-owner group office in Warren, Redwood Dental. Redwood Dental had three locations at that time and provided mentoring along with a solid team to aid me. I learned how to teach patients to own their dental needs. I worked diligently on patient education, and was honored to open Redwood's new location in Troy.

These teaching moments, and my husband, Dan Palomba, eventually persuaded me to take the dive into solo office ownership. This led me to where I am today. I am gracious and giving, but not blind when something is out of line. I promote listening, but know when to speak up — I'm the 1989 Dale Carnegie Impromptu Speaking Champion for a reason! My writing career in dentistry began in 2011. I was the demanding editor of the *Macomb Dental Journal* for 10 years. I presented our *Macomb Journal* to the International College of Dentists USA Section and was honored with its 2013 Platinum Pencil award for an article on leadership, as well as with the ICD's 2015 Golden Pen award, and most recently a third ICD award for another leadership article.

But writing for me is not meant to obtain awards. It's personal, and draws out my heart's desire to promote dentistry. I am an artist, not of paint and music, but of words. I write what comes naturally — events in my life, current methods of best practice, and I seek to bring to light topics that those outside dentistry are trying to use to diminish our profession. I have big shoes to fill — from Dr. Christopher Smiley, who piqued my interest and

poured out his knowledge so I could continue his valiant endeavor of a well-read, peer-reviewed *Journal*. And to Dr. Michael Maihofer, who had faith in me and prompted me to submit my name for such an honored position. I thank the editors who came before me, and I will continue to build on their foundation.

A peer-reviewed journal is a feat, and it takes a well-oiled machine to produce. My role will be to put into print the needs and wants of our member dentists. While serving as the president of my local component, Macomb, we worked tirelessly on engaging new dentists and to increase member participation at our events. As editor, I will continue to promote these integral methods of increasing membership through the medium of the *Journal*.

In 2021, I was elected to a three-year term to the MDA Board of Trustees. I was presented to the membership online during the MDA House of Delegates due to the COVID-19 cancellation of the MDA Annual Session. After our return to in-person meetings, it was fulfilling to be able to interact face-to-face with both familiar and new member dentists. I will promote all members' ideals in advocacy for our profession as well as in legislation. Also, during my year in the MDA LEAD program, I collaborated with member dentists from all over the state. I discovered my leadership personality traits and how to work productively both with those who shared these traits, as well as those on the other side of the circle.

I love dentistry, and hope you will enjoy my point of view in these pages. I know not all will agree with what I present, but we are a family, and family stands by family. I'm an open door — let me know when I am getting it right as well as when I need a little reining in. I am here to serve you, the members of the best damn dental association in the USA. Hooyah! ●

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