



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT





## Letter from the Executive Director

Dental Connections is proud of its 100+ year history of providing critical oral healthcare services to residents of the Des Moines area. This past year, we have asked ourselves how to best position the organization to fulfill that mission for decades to come. With that mindset, we have taken strategic steps to grow and strengthen the organization.

These exciting steps have included equipment upgrades, new partnerships, a capital campaign to purchase a new mobile dental unit, growing our workforce, and engaging in strategic planning with our Board of Directors and Leadership Team.

As Executive Director, I'm extremely excited about where Dental Connections is currently and where we are going in the years to come. Dental Connections is a hidden gem in our community. As an independent non-profit, we are one of few organizations of our kind in the country. But our mission of providing equitable access to oral healthcare for ALL is needed more than ever.

While we continue to look toward the future with bright eyes, please join me in celebrating our accomplishments of the past year.



*Carly Ross*

**CARLY ROSS**

Executive Director

# SERVING DES MOINES FOR OVER 100 YEARS



# BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF SMILES



## Letter from the Dental Director

Our staff of dentists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, patient access representatives and managers are energetic, driven, knowledgeable, and team-oriented. There is a general and nearly permanent vibration in the clinic of high-spirited community service. My goals for the team and the direction of Dental Connections simply revolve around fanning this fire so that it is both stronger day by day and inextinguishable in the long term.

I've been asking our team at every opportunity, "How do we get to 'yes'?" When a patient walks in without an appointment, or in pain, or drove from two hours away... how do we move beyond the natural challenges and obstacles that result in a "no," and skip right to "yes?" The team at Dental Connections surprises me time after time with the amazing fluidity and positive attitudes required to say "yes, we can" at every turn. This is the vision for the clinic, this is how we serve, this is the direction in which we will continue to accelerate.

I'm humbled to serve in a clinic that has been a touchstone in Des Moines for nearly a century longer than I've been alive. I'm humbled to work with a tiny fraction of professionals willing to treat the population with the greatest needs. The mission is incredibly important, and the team is beyond capable and prepared to achieve it.



**DR. JIM CHOLEWA**  
Dental Director

# FISCAL YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

It's been an exciting year for Dental Connections as we continue to increase our patient base to pre-COVID levels. Because of the pandemic, patients have not had regular dental visits and their oral health needs are greater than ever. To accommodate the increased need, the clinic implemented new policies and procedures to enable more efficient management of patient scheduling while maintaining high quality care.

Dental Connections fills a vital need in the community for children and families that face challenges in receiving oral health care. The vast majority of our patients rely on state insurance (Medicaid) to pay their health expenses; however, very few dental practices accept Medicaid. Dental Connections becomes one of few sources for quality dental care.



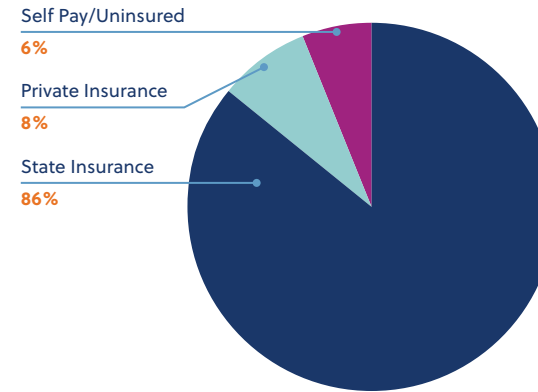
## OUR IMPACT

**14,096**  
appointments completed  
by **6,520** unique patients

**66,975**  
procedures were  
provided

**\$253,000**  
care was donated via  
the Smile Squad

## INSURANCE STATUS



**86%**  
of our patients have  
state insurance

### Clinical Highlights



Upgrade of radiographs to digital x-rays available chairside and a new panoramic x-ray machine for the Main Clinic.



New sterilization labeling system to ensure compliance with sterilization protocols.



Hiring a Dental Director to oversee clinic operations.



Launched Iowa Smiles, an oral health access program for new refugees.

### Other Highlights



Completed our first community outreach awareness event and toothbrush drive at Peace Tree Brewing.



Launched fundraising campaign to purchase a new mobile dental unit to replace an aging unit.



Successfully completed the first annual Celebration of Smiles fundraising event honoring Mike DeAnda, long time Executive Director of Dental Connections, and Des Moines Public Schools, the largest collaborative partner with the Smile Squad.

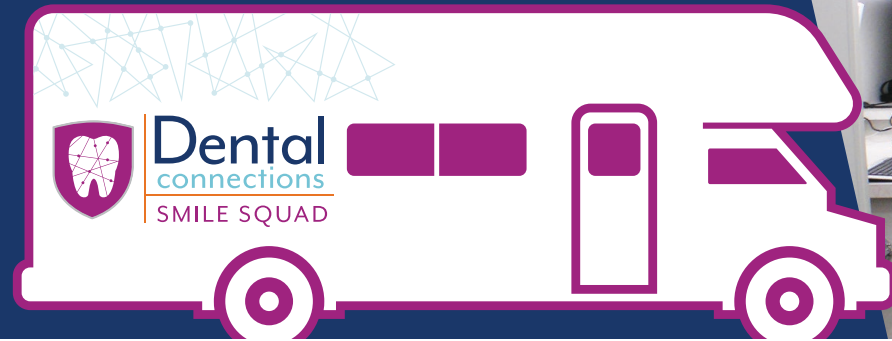


# SMILE SQUAD MOBILE DENTAL CLINIC

The Smile Squad mobile dentistry program plays an important role in serving students in the Greater Des Moines area. The Smile Squad visits 58 schools in 8 districts, providing vital oral health care to underserved children who might not otherwise see a dentist on a regular basis. In collaboration with school nurses who identify students in need of services, the Smile Squad eliminates barriers in accessing care. In addition to comprehensive care on the mobile dental units, the Smile Squad also provides screenings and fluoride treatments to preschoolers, third and eighth grade students.

**During the summer months, the mobile dental clinics don't sit idly! Through community partnerships we provide critical outreach and care to the following organizations:**

- Iowa Homeless Youth Shelter
- House of Mercy
- Prairie Meadows Racetrack seasonal workers through the Iowa Horseman's Benevolent & Protective Association



## "I DON'T KNOW WHAT CRESTVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WOULD DO WITHOUT THE SMILE SQUAD."

"We have so many children that do not have dental insurance and parents can't afford the dentist. Some parents aren't able to take off work to bring them to the dentist or don't have cars to drive to dental appointments.

Many of our students have horrible dental problems. They come to my office complaining of teeth hurting. Yes, teeth: it is never just one tooth. I look in their mouths and see parts of teeth missing or blackened teeth from decay. When they are in so much pain they are unable to focus on school work. They miss days of school because their teeth hurt. Some students have never been to a dentist.

The Smile Squad helps our students feel better and look better. Without them, this would not be possible."

*– Jen, Crestview Elementary School Nurse*





# MOBILE DENTAL CLINIC CAMPAIGN

In January 2023, Dental Connections started a campaign to replace one of our aging mobile dental units, which are 15 and 20 years old. Six months into the campaign, over half of the funds have been raised and we have been able to order the unit. Having a new mobile dental unit will allow us to retire one of the original units and allow us to expand our outreach to additional schools and human services organizations in the Des Moines area and beyond.

# FINANCIALS FISCAL YEAR 2023

FINANCIAL DATA		
	FY 2023	FY 2022
<b>REVENUE</b>	\$2,870,642	\$3,868,536*
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Program Services	\$2,873,845	\$2,371,233
Management & General	\$286,042	\$237,531
Fundraising	\$100,340	\$94,757
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$3,260,227</b>	<b>\$2,703,521</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Change in Net Assets	(\$389,585)	\$1,165,015
Beginning Net Assets	\$3,852,986	\$2,687,971
<b>Ending Net Assets</b>	<b>\$3,463,401</b>	<b>\$3,852,986*</b>

\*2022 revenue and net assets include federal COVID relief funds

# STAFF & LEADERSHIP

An organization can't succeed without a dedicated staff and a supportive Board of Directors. Dental Connections is fortunate to have a team who truly embodies the mission of the organization.

## Leadership

**Carly Ross**  
Executive Director

**Rae Davis**  
Director of Patient Access

**Kathy Salisbury**  
Director of Marketing and Development

**James Cholewa, DDS**  
Dental Director

**Courtney Wolterman**  
Director of Community Outreach

## Dentists

**Riti Agarwal, DDS**

**Anantha Raghumudri, DDS**

**Courtney Bohn, DDS**

**Ryan Riley, DDS**

**Riley Cholewa, DDS**

**Hope Ritter, DDS**

## Board of Directors

**Kourtney Kirkpatrick**  
Board Chair

**Bridget Drendel**  
Secretary

**Emily Dobbins**  
Board Member

**Jim Hoyt**  
Vice Chair

**Maggie Ramold**  
Board Member

**Jake Oeth**  
Board Member

**Michael Broderick**  
Treasurer

**Ali Pourian, DDS**  
Board Member

**Amra Beganovic**  
Board Member

## FY 2022-2023 Donors

Dental Connections cannot fulfill its mission without the support of our generous donors. Thank you for helping us build a community of smiles!

### \$100,000 and Up

United Way of Central Iowa

Professional Solutions  
Insurance Company  
Scheels  
West Bank

Holly Kluever  
Jean & Paul Groban  
Jerry & Kay Peckham  
Jo Richards

### \$25,000 to \$100,000

Carequest Institute for Oral Health  
Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation  
Immanuel Vision Foundation  
Polk County Early  
Childhood Development  
Prairie Meadows Racetrack & Casino

### Up to \$1,000

Adam Brewer  
Allison Johnson  
Amy Wright  
Bethany Kohoutek  
Bev Ross  
Bad T. Hagarty, DDS  
Bridget Drendel  
Brooke Wehrman  
Brown Winick Law Firm  
Carl Wong  
Carla Hetlet  
Clarence Richardson  
Connectify HR  
Dana Hanson  
David Lively  
Deborah Dietrich, DDS  
Deborah Jean Roberts  
Emily Ann Mendez  
Emily Westergaard  
Eric Fleharty  
Hayley Rauzi  
Heather Streeter

Kourtney Kirkpatrick  
Linda Gobberdiel  
Lisa Holst, DDS  
Maggie Mae Ramold  
Mari Carmen Caballero Beganovic  
Marie Bork  
Marsha Mills  
Megan Maher  
Michael Broderick  
Michael Farrell  
Mildred Smith  
Patterson Dental  
Paula K. Motz-Lucas  
Premier Midwest  
QuikTrip Corporation  
Red Boot Beverage  
Ryan Riley, DDS  
Sara Doruska  
Stephany Hanes  
Tabitha Meyers  
Tana Michelle Darling  
The New Northwestern  
William Grask, DDS

### \$5,000 to \$25,000

American Academy of Pediatric  
Dentistry  
Foundation  
Birdies for Charity  
Lincoln Savings Bank  
Ralph & Sylvia G. Green Foundation

### \$1,000 to \$5,000

Alex Romp  
Bruce D. Thorsen  
Cornerstone Dental of Polk City  
Courtney & Craig Wolterman  
Holmes Murphy Foundation  
Michael Hipp, DDS  
Nataliya Boychenko-Stone  
Polk County Board of Supervisors



*"I am proud to be part of an organization that is dedicated to making a positive impact on the oral health and well-being of our community. Dental Connections plays a crucial role in providing access to quality dental care for underserved populations. A healthy smile can have a profound impact on how a person perceives themselves and how others perceive them."*

– Kourtney Kirkpatrick



## WHAT'S AHEAD

As Dental Connections continues its 100 year plus mission to provide equitable access to quality oral health care for all, plans are being laid for upgrades to our clinics, additional staffing, and other measures to fulfill our mission and provide state-of-the-art care to our patients.

### Initiatives we are planning for FY 2024 include:

- Replacing our dental delivery units. New units will increase provider efficiency while making dental care more comfortable for our patients.
- Transitioning to a new patient management system to increase information capabilities and streamline processes in the clinic.
- Taking possession of a new mobile dental unit and increasing the reach of the Smile Squad.
- Launching a new, enhanced website.
- Make necessary renovations to the Main Clinic.

THANK  
YOU  
FOR  
SUPPORTING  
DENTAL  
CONNECTIONS!





*Building a community of smiles.*

1111 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 190 | Des Moines, IA 50314 | 515.244.9136 | [DentalConnections.org](http://DentalConnections.org)

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