

**WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY
STUDENT GOVERNMENT**

S.R. 13

A Resolution to Co-Sponsor the PDSA Dental Drive Program

Spring 2021

March 30, 2021	Introduced by Judiciary Co-Chair Ethan Wearer & Campus Life Co-Chair Dave Myatt
March 31, 2021	Passed by the Campus Life Committee
April 1, 2021	Submitted to the Speaker of the House
April 4, 2021	Messaged to the Senate
April 6, 2021	Resolution passed by the Senate

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS: Article III, Section 2, Subsection 2 of the Student Government Constitution states that the role of the Senate is to “promote the funding and operations of beneficial programs for the student body,” and;

WHEREAS: The mission of the Wake Forest University Pre-Dental Student Association (PDSA) is to serve pre-dental students on their journey to dental school with the goal of exposing members to different aspects of dentistry and providing a variety of opportunities for members to give back to their community. Through mentorship, philanthropy events, guest speakers, and other events, the organization strives to give pre-dental students the confidence to build a strong undergraduate portfolio in preparation for dental school applications, and;¹

WHEREAS: The Second Harvest Food Bank is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that works to combat food insecurity and poverty by providing food assistance through a network of partners and allies across the state. The Second Harvest Food Bank also works to educate and engage communities in North Carolina while providing opportunities to improve the lives, health, and vibrancy of families in those communities, and;²

WHEREAS: In partnership with the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina, the Pre-Dental Student Association seeks to collect dental supplies and improve oral health

¹ *The Link*, wfu.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/pdsa

² “Second Harvest Food Bank NWNC: Winston-Salem, NC: Feeding Community.” *Second Harvest NWNC*, www.secondharvestnwncc.org/.

literacy as a part of its annual Dental Drive program. The Dental Drive program is scheduled to last through April 30th, 2021, and;

WHEREAS: In the last 40 years, the number of practicing dentists in North Carolina doubled, but the increase has not kept pace with the state’s rapidly growing population growth. Projected growth in the supply of dentists for 2025 and beyond will be smaller than that of demand, leading to a significant unmet demand across the state and country.³ Moreover, it is reported that residents in 98 of the state’s 100 counties live in a region designated by the federal government as a Dental Health Professional Shortage Area, or HPSA for short.⁴ So called ‘dental deserts’ exist across the state, causing some of North Carolina’s most vulnerable populations to live in areas where access to care is minimal at best. Given these inequities, minor tooth decay can turn into a life threatening emergency. In areas without adequate dental care (particularly in areas without single specialty ambulatory surgery centers), though, patients are often forced to wait anywhere from six to eight months to see a pediatric dentist for what would otherwise be a simple operating procedure. Racial and ethnic disparities along with low rates of dental insurance across the state compound these pre-existing supply issues and exacerbate gaps in access to dental care. COVID-19 has only worsened these issues and teledentistry is unable to solve statewide access to clinics and treatment centers, and;⁵

WHEREAS: Katie Eyes, vice president for program and strategy at the Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation of North Carolina states that “sustainable improvement in oral health will ultimately depend on changes at the policy and systems level that support more widespread impact,” and that “when health care providers, government, philanthropy, schools, consumers and others work together, we can better prevent oral disease and ensure more access to much needed oral health care,” and;

WHEREAS: The aims of the Dental Drive program align with the mission of Student Government to fund programs beneficial to the study body. Moreover, as community leaders, we share in the responsibility of advocating for those who remain underrepresented in the Winston-Salem community.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- 1) Student Government will co-sponsor the PDSA Dental Drive program.
- 2) The Public Relations Committee will create and distribute promotional materials on our social media pages to increase awareness of the Dental Drive program on campus.

³ The Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research. “North Carolina Health Professional Supply Data.” *NC Health Workforce - North Carolina Health Professional Supply Data*, 2019, nhealthworkforce.unc.edu/interactive/supply/.

⁴ Green, Christian, and North Carolina Health News October 24 Carolina Public Press. “Few Providers Means Dental Deserts across NC - NC Health News.” *North Carolina Health News*, 24 Oct. 2020, www.northcarolinahealthnews.org/2020/10/24/dental-deserts-inadequate-oral-health-care-nc/.

⁵ “Oral Health Section.” *N.C. Public Health, Health and Human Services*, publichealth.nc.gov/oralhealth/.

- 3) The Judiciary Committee will allocate up to \$350 to assist in purchasing dental supplies as requested by the Pre-Dental Student Association. Moreover, Student Government will allocate up to \$50 to erect Dental Drive drop off stations around campus. The Physical Planning Committee shall work with the PDSA to construct, secure, and set up these drop off stations in a coordinated and timely manner. Where applicable, the Judiciary Committee shall ensure that the aforementioned processes conform to the norms, rules and regulations of the Senate and university guidelines.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ethan Wearner

Co-Chair, Judiciary Committee

Dave Myatt

Co-Chair, Campus Life Committee