

The CRDTS Report

Over 50 Years of Testing Excellence

Central Regional Dental Testing Service, Inc.

Fall 2024



Otto Dohm, DDS
President

FOOT ON THE GAS!

Happy Fall! Days are getting shorter and cooling off. Hope everyone enjoyed the Annual Meeting and got a chance to catch up with friends and take in some great continuing education. Thanks to everyone that made it possible.

The last few years have been challenging to say the least. Through the tremendous effort of our central office staff, professional staff and our countless volunteers, we have managed to position our organization very well for the uncertain future. We have industry leading hygiene examinations and continue to expand the schools where we test and the offerings we provide to these schools and to state boards. The dental examination continues to evolve in this age of simulated patient exams, and we are adding more and more exams to our schedule as word-of-mouth spreads about the benefits of the CRDTS examinations.

Through the foresight of some of the leaders of this organization we have developed the third point of a trident. The Special Programs Division of CRDTS is experiencing tremendous growth as we continue to develop and offer [CARE](#) (Calibration, Administration, Remediation and Re-education) to individuals and at the request of State Boards. To say the growth is exponential is to understate. We continue to develop new programming, i.e. [CAMP](#) (Calibration And Methodology Program), and exams for Dental Therapy, in response to requests from State Boards and schools we serve.

Sounds pretty good, right? It is, but challenges remain. We exist in an environment where professional licensure and examinations are chang-

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ing daily. There are statewide licensing compacts, states that no longer require testing if you graduate from a school within that state, and folks who do not understand the importance of clinical licensure examinations. These changes are being driven by factors that are often outside the input of the dental professional. We can only control what we do, but we can educate others for the good of our profession. Some things are going to change despite our efforts. We must continue to be innovative leaders in simulated examination development and constantly improve our offerings to State Boards. The development and expansion of our special programs will continue to be a priority so that we can meet the needs of our profession and State Boards.

CRDTS is known for absolute integrity and professionalism. We will not compromise our principles in the misguided hope that we can affect some of the things we see changing. That is not our way forward.

As President of CRDTS, I will continue to charge the leadership with holding our course steady and keeping our foot on the gas. Stay tuned for more exciting developments from CRDTS!

Otto Dohm, DDS
President



*Sheli Cobler,
Executive Director*

IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY HEARD, CRDTS IS DOING AMAZING THINGS!

The CRDTS Dental Hygiene Examination continues to add hygiene programs to the number of sites we administer the exam at. If you do not offer the CRDTS Dental Hygiene exami-

nation at your program, I encourage you to talk with peers at schools that do offer the CRDTS exam. What you will find is that CRDTS is second to none in the quality of our dental hygiene examination, our local anesthesia examination, the restorative auxiliary exam, and in the personal and professional manner in which we work with faculty members and students to help achieve the best outcome possible. Kelly Mandella, Director of Dental Hygiene Examinations, Trelawny Saldana, Assistant Director, or any of the professionals at Central Office would be happy to visit with you and provide more information. Give your students the best option in clinical licensure examinations!

Just as exciting is the number of dental exams being administered by CRDTS, which has grown significantly and continues to grow each year! If your school is not scheduled to host the CRDTS Dental Examination, you will want to contact us to learn more about the benefits to your school and your students. Among the things that set us apart is onsite grading – results are provided within hours of the examination-, next day retakes with the first part being complementary, and again, the professional, compassionate and personal touch that CRDTS is known for. We also have the unique ability to customize exam schedules to fit your school's needs. Feel free to reach out to Dr. Mark Edwards, Director of Dental Examinations or Central Office to schedule an exam or to learn more about the dental program.

Also, over the course of the past couple of years, CRDTS has developed several Special Programs to assist state dental boards with remediation needs, individual licensees with reeducation, and dental and dental hygiene schools with calibration and methodology. The Special Programs Division, led by Ms. Catrice Opichka, is growing rapidly and filling a void in dental education and remediation that is much needed through the [CRDTS CARE Program](#). State dental boards across the nation now have a viable option for licensees coming before them. Even those who come reluctantly report that the program has helped them in many ways. They are reporting that their experience has been valuable, even when they did not believe they needed it initially. Furthermore, individual licensees who need additional education or reeducation for various reasons, such

as an extended absence from their profession are finding the CARE Program to be very valuable. See the [website](#) for more information and testimony from attendees.

The Special Programs is more than CARE though. In the past couple of years, we have introduced the CAMP Program to schools to assist with Calibration And Methodology. If you do not know of this program, check it out on the [crdts.org](#) website under Special Programs. You will find the testimonies of those who have used the program to be positive and favorable. Ms. Opichka would be happy to hear from you if you have any questions or would like more information.

To say the past three years have flown by with excitement and progress is an understatement. There are still challenges and obstacles to face, but the CRDTS family is up for it. Standing strong together for what is right and just and doing it ethically is why we have seen so much success historically and in these recent few years.

That brings me to the exciting news that you may have already seen regarding the pending merger between CRDTS and SRTA! We are thrilled to be working toward becoming even **stronger together**. The CRDTS organization and the SRTA organization have each seen great success and have a rich history individually. Now we will bring the knowledge, education and experience from both groups together forming one agency. With like-minded philosophies, these two agencies will continue the excellence that state dental boards, schools and students have come to know. Watch the websites for more information about the merger as we work toward finalization.

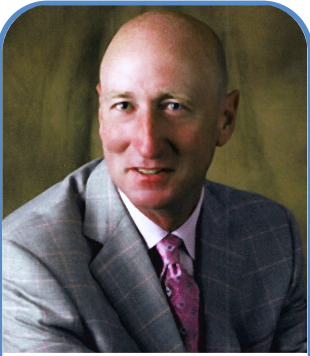
Finally, as you may know CRDTS has had to take a stand against the two dental and dental hygiene compacts recently introduced, for very good reason. CRDTS is not against the idea of a compact but cannot support either of the two recent compacts as neither is in the best interest of the dental profession. I truly hope you will get involved and educate yourselves as to why states should not be passing either compact into legislation. Yes, the CSG compact has already been enacted after being passed through legislation in ten states thus far, and the AADB compact has been introduced in two states and is set to be introduced in several more states in 2025. However, it is not too late to get involved in protecting your state and your profession. You can learn more about the issues with these compacts on our website at [crdts.org](#) under news. Feel free to contact me as well, if you'd like to discuss the matter.

As always, I am grateful for the support of CRDTS and proud to be part of such a great organization full of hard-working ethical folks.

Sheli Cobler
CRDTS Executive Director

DENTAL NEWS

SIMtoCARE



Mark Edwards, DDS,
Director of Dental Examinations

New and exciting programs are being developed through CRDTS association with virtual haptics and SIMtoCARE. Virtual haptics afford dental students more repetitions for procedures such as fixed prosthodontics, where limited patient numbers many times dictate minimal patient opportunities. When a patient cancellation occurs, a student can transition to a virtual haptic or manikin procedure, and potentially gain clinical credit for the lost clinical patient time. If the manikin preparation can be digitally scanned, or if it is performed on a virtual haptic machine, the work can be computer graded with results immediately available for the student and delivered to the faculty's computer desktop. SIMtoCARE has now begun to develop a virtual haptic desktop workstation that allows for unit portability and lowers cost, while giving students the benefit of a lifelike haptic feel.

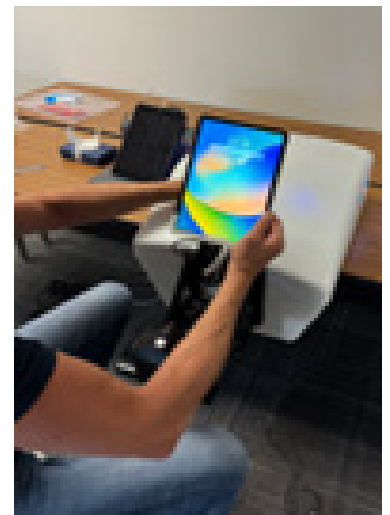
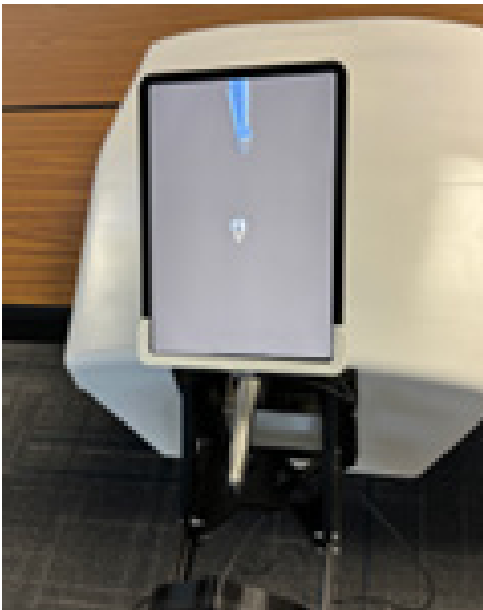
Stay tuned for new and improved simulation programs for use in dental and dental hygiene education and as an option in specific parts of dental licensure examination. Please don't hesitate to reach out if further information is desired.



Rod Hill, DDS,
ERC Committee Chair

Mark Edwards, DDS
Director of Dental Examinations

Rod Hill, DDS
ERC Committee Chair





Lisa Kucera
DHERC Committee Chair

NEW DENTAL HYGIENE EXAM REVIEW COMMITTEE CHAIR

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Dental Hygiene Exam Review

Committee Chair! I am very excited to start this new role and look forward to the challenges and opportunities it may bring.

One of the best decisions I have ever made was to become a dental hygienist. When I look back at my career, I can't believe how it has changed. The opportunities and doors my education has opened for me have been amazing. I've had the privilege to work in private practice, sales, education, and serving on the NE Board of Dentistry. One of my best opportunities was to become a CRDTS Examiner! I believe in CRDTS, we are ethical, honest, and well calibrated professionals. CRDTS operates like a well-oiled machine and I look forward to continuing this by adhering to the

processes and products we have in place. I also want to help CRDTS grow and maintain its reputation. CRDTS started changing with the pandemic because we had to and now, we can't stop creating and improving our offerings through Testing, the CARE Program and CAMP. The organization is adding such positive forward-thinking enhancements and programs, that you will want to stay tuned into CRDTS (crdts.org) as we move forward.

My experience as the Secretary/Treasurer for CRDTS was invaluable. I believe it has helped prepare me for my new role as the Chair of DHERC. I realize what it takes to keep us all doing what we are here to do. Each of us are committed to the effort that goes into each Exam, CARE Program and CAMP as well as building new programs. Gaining a better understanding of the contribution everyone makes will be helpful as I assume my new role. I am thankful to the Central Office team who work so hard every day with only rare occasions of downtime.

Please don't ever hesitate to reach out to me with ideas and concerns for CRDTS generally or for the Dental Hygiene program specifically. Your input is appreciated.

Lisa Kucera
DHERC Committee Chair



Deena Kuempel, DDS
President Elect

HELLO FROM IOWA....

Thank you all for your attendance and feedback concerning our annual meeting. The consensus was it was a great success. We did read and accumulate all suggestions for this year's meeting (GOOD, BAD or MEH) and will take that information going forward in

planning next year's meeting. Andrew and Renee deserve great thanks for the effort they put into this event to try to meet everyone's needs. We hope that it was a great time to network, and that the continuing education provided will be of value for each of you in practice. As always it cannot be a success without you. We will continue to welcome your comments and input to make next year even better.

We are coming into the testing season, and we will all begin to be very busy with that. I am always proud to talk about CRDTS testing and the reliability and validity that we hang our hat on. The occupational analysis surveys are in and we look forward to the final data and what that may mean in changes to our examination. Without the commitment and dedication of all of our examiners we would not be continuing to mount a comeback in the dental testing arena. One BIG ask we have of our member representatives is to PLEASE continue to talk to your own State Boards and State

Legislators about the Compacts. The most important thing they need to hear from you is that Compacts may be the future, and we have no problem with the concept, but that at the very least if they are truly about portability ALL testing agencies should be allowed to administer that regional test required by the compact. In most cases monopolies are not looked upon favorably, this seems to be the anomaly to that opinion. Your voice is our strongest ally and we would be grateful if you would continue to educate all parties on what portability really means to our new graduates and also continue to set the record straight on how many states already accept CRDTS. I think there is some 'fake news' out there about the real numbers.

I feel all of us were excited to continue to learn more about our additional CRDTS programs and appreciate all the work that Catrice and Dr. Edwards along with their support staff are putting in to continue to find ways to separate CRDTS from any of the other examination agencies. This also will continue to provide an income stream to be reinvested in our future.

Again, thank you all for a great annual meeting. We look forward to the great things ahead for this agency, thanks to all the commitment and effort you put in.

Sincerely,

Deena Kuempel, DDS
President Elect

DENTAL HYGIENE UPDATES

Greetings colleagues!

The CRDTS dental hygiene department has had a great year-to-date experience with our exams. We administered over 1800 hygiene exams in addition to 277 restorative auxiliary exams and over 550 local anesthesia clinical and written exams. In addition, we also administered EFDA exams in Nebraska. We are happy to add new programs for the 2025 testing season and look forward to including more and developing new connections and relationships.

CRDTS is known for our personal touch and we have shown this by hosting over eighty Q&A sessions for schools and their students. If you would like a Q&A, please



*Kelly Mandella, RDH
Director of Dental Hygiene Examinations*



*Trelawny Saldana, RDH
Assistant Director of Dental Hygiene Examinations*

contact us and we will make it happen.

We are pleased to announce that Arkansas has been added as a full member state. Welcome! We look forward to the Arkansas State Dental Board's participation in the development and enhancement of our examinations. Additionally, we continue to pursue the few remaining states that do not currently accept the CRDTS examinations so that candi-

dates will have the best options in testing available to them as a pathway toward initial licensure.

Speaking of change, change is a constant and, on that note, you have probably heard about our pending merger with SRTA. This is an exciting union and we are confident that this partnership is advantageous to candidates, schools and state boards.

To ensure that our exams remain valid and reliable, we have contracted with Data Recognition Corporation to complete an Occupational Analysis. You likely have received this survey and hopefully completed it! There will be more information about the results once completed and compiled.

The Dental Hygiene Department attended many Dental Hygiene Seminar review courses, the ADHA Annual Meeting and RDH Under One Roof this year. We love getting out and saying hello to our fellow colleagues, prospective schools, educators and those involved in the dental field.

CAMP (Calibration And Methodology Program) continues to grow and we have had such excellent and positive feedback from faculty. Be sure and visit our website at www.crdts.org and look at our Special Programs to learn more.

We continue to look for new and innovative ways to assess competency through virtual haptic technology and simulated patients. Stay tuned!

Please accept our gratitude and appreciation. We would not be where we are without you. Your loyalty and dedication is appreciated.

Wishing you a beautiful Fall and successful upcoming term.

*Kelly Mandella, RDH
Director of Dental Hygiene Examinations*

*Trelawny Saldana, RDH
Assistant Director of Dental Hygiene Examinations*

(a/k/a Kellany)

SAVE THE DATE AUGUST 22-23, 2025!
ANNUAL MEETING IN OMAHA, NE





*Catrice Opichka, RDH
Director of
Special Programs*

WELCOME TO THE NEW SPECIAL PROGRAMS WEB- SITE – CARE AND MUCH MORE

It was less than two years ago when CRDTS Leadership identified a need to create programs that would provide state dental boards a resource for dental remediation and reeducation. Since

then, we have worked with many state dental boards to help provide education for their licensees, as well as helping self-referred individuals reinstate their lapsed professional license. Although many of you have already heard of CRDTS CARE, you may not realize that this is just one of many programs we are currently providing to dental professionals. For example, our CAMP (Calibration And Methodology Program) is going on its second official year, following a two-year pilot program. This program provides valuable education for dental hygiene faculty to help teams calibrate in areas like calculus detection and patient classification as well as providing education in adult teaching methodology. We are also helping dental schools reduce the burden of education as we work with SIMtoCARE to create educational modules through our EduCARE Program. This program provides structured curriculum that can be used with virtual haptic technology to provide repetitive practice in disciplines such as operative dentistry, local anesthesia, calculus removal, prosthodontic procedures, and many more.

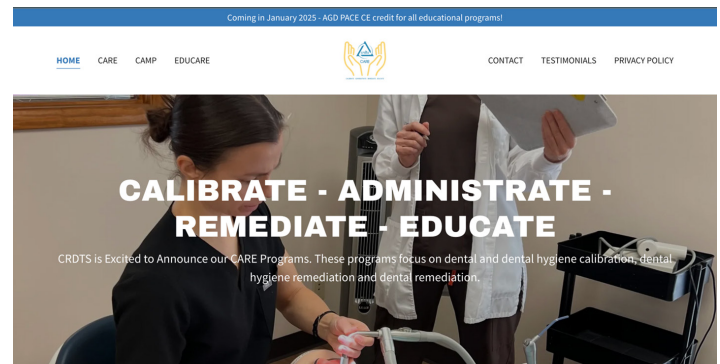
Because the CRDTS CARE program is so much more than one program, we are now referring to this area of CRDTS as “Special Programs”. In fact, not only will you find “Special Programs” listed on the CRDTS website (www.crdts.org), but you can also find detailed information on all CRDTS current programs on our new Special Programs website (www.crdtscore.com).

We invite you to explore both the CRDTS websites to learn more about all the exciting things we are doing to expand our reach in helping dental professionals.

Check out CRDTS website for the link to our “Special Programs”. www.crdts.org



Find out when CRDTS launches new programs and expands existing programming by visiting the new CRDTS CARE website. www.crdtscore.com



*Catrice Opichka, RDH
Director of Special Programs*



VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's an exciting time to be a part of the CRDTS organization as we continue to grow and expand our services for dental and dental hygiene programs. If you attended the Annual Meeting you will have heard that we are in the strongest financial position, with the most exam sites since the pandemic. You will

also have heard the exciting news about a pending merger. I will let others address that awesome news, but needless to say we continue to get bigger and better each year and have a roadmap to continue on this path.

I was just at an exam this past month and we had a chance to chat about how unique we are as an organization. We firmly believe in being objective and fair in our exams, which has led us to utilizing technology that is unmatched. The fact that we can continue to invest in these sometimes

expensive options and still have the lowest cost exams for candidates is a testament to the leadership we have had over these years and the priorities they have had.

The last thing I wanted to mention is a heartfelt thank you for those who attended the annual meeting with an extension for those who completed the feedback survey. These are probably the best comments we have received in years because they were constructive and honest. This is crucial as it allows us to better understand your needs and wants for the meeting. During our wrap-up call, we reviewed every single comment that was left and promise to utilize them as we build out 2025's meeting. Beyond that, we are very pleased that you all find such value in the recent additions and also the changes to the schedule. If you were not able to complete the survey, please be sure to shoot me a message so that your input will be considered. It's an absolute honor serving in this position, and I am looking forward to this next year.

Andrew Johnston
Vice President

ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

