



Health Resources in Action  
*Advancing Public Health and Medical Research*

# **Community Water Fluoridation Wins at the Ballot Box: Lessons Learned from November 4, 2014**

Webinar  
December 18, 2014

# Hosts

- DentaQuest Foundation
- Health Resources in Action
- Campaign for Dental Health
- Children's Dental Health Project
- Pew Children's Dental Campaign

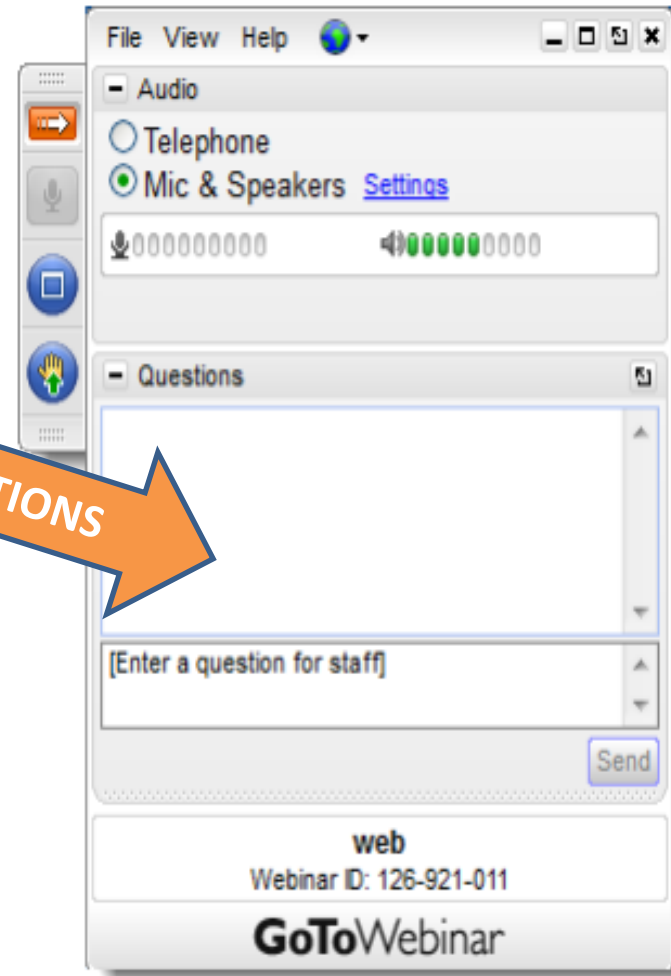
# Panelists

- **Marjorie Stocks**, Fluoridation Consultant and **Gayle Mathe**, Director of Community Programs and Public Policy, *CA Dental Association Foundation*
- **Megan Foreman**, Policy Director, *Oral Health KS*
- **Emily Firman**, Sr. Program Officer and **Valaree Squires**, Consultant, *WA Dental Service Foundation*

# GoToWebinar

All attendees will be muted during the webinar.

Use the **Question Box** to type in your questions.



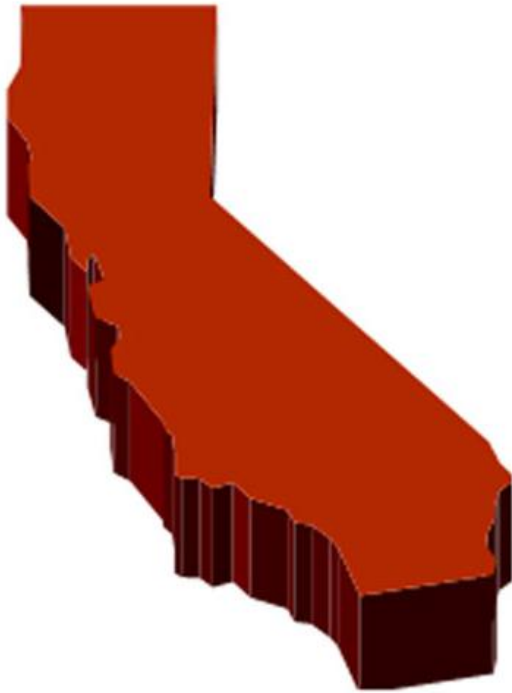
# Healdsburg California

**Marjorie Stocks**, MPH, Fluoridation Consultant,  
California Dental Association Foundation

**Gayle Mathe**, RDH, Public Policy  
California Dental Association Foundation



# Healdsburg:



- Fluoridated since the 50's
- Only fluoridated city in the County
- 11,000 residents, 6000 eligible voters
- 66% voted to keep fluoridation
- Located in Sonoma County (roughly 1 ½ hours north of San Francisco)
  - Wine Country
  - Russian River Watershed area
  - Fluoridation issue active in Sonoma County for 2-3 years

# Campaign Strategy

Worked with campaign manager and local residents to determine best signatories on ballot and frame campaign messaging.

Obtained signatures from: Dentists, pediatricians, former elected officials, moms, school nurse, hygienists.

- Sensitive to ethnicity; Latino/Hispanic population.
- Ballot language was positive; consistent messaging.

# Community Organizing

## Listening

- Met with community leaders/activists who were longtime residents; described community:
  - Quintessential small town.
  - Families are important.
- Held initial organizing meeting at a Local hospital.
  - Obtained signatories for ballot arguments and photos.





# Advocacy



## Who communicated with whom?

- Some of our allies had relationships, or standing, that made them the ideal persons to talk to a key stakeholder.

# Local Champion

*Healdsburg dentist*

*Dr. Shawn Widick*



- Dr. Widick, along with Dr. Pollick, presented at a local election event. The opposition was present.
- Dr. Widick's communication with the media was focused, and consistent. Stayed on message!
- Dr. Widick contacted other dentists in town. Consultant visited all the dental offices twice to obtain endorsements and distribute literature and signs.

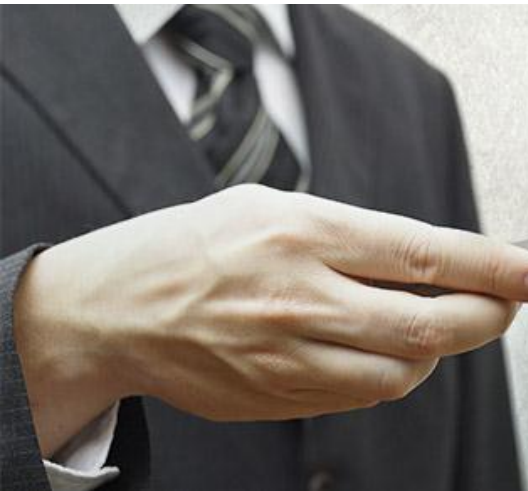
# Communication and Messaging

- Campaign created a website:
  - Ballot arguments; Q and A
  - List of supporters
  - Links to [ilikemyteeth.org](http://ilikemyteeth.org)
- Garnered endorsements from the local press: *Sonoma Press Democrat* and *Healdsburg Tribune*.
  - This was essential.
- Obtained photos and endorsements from long-time respected business leaders and individuals.
- Placed a photo ad in the *Healdsburg Tribune* with Healdsburg Dentists.



# What is Measure P?

[LEARN MORE](#)



Myth  
Fact  
Myth  
Myth

# Myths vs. Facts

[GET THE TRUTH](#)

# Campaign Elements

- County is mostly mail-in ballots.
  - Targeted mailings.
  - Mailers were consistent with messaging.
  - Featured faces and names of residents.
- Walked precincts.
- Some phoning.



## PROVEN • PREVENTION • PROTECTION

As you prepare to cast your vote on Measure P, get the facts about water fluoridation in our community:

- **Healdsburg's water has been fluoridated for generations.** Grandparents, parents, and children have benefited from stronger teeth and good dental health.
- **Fluoride is a mineral that occurs naturally in water** and when adjusted to the optimal level, it significantly reduces tooth decay.
- **Fluoridation protects everyone** – young and old alike, at all incomes levels. Evidence shows that people living in non-fluoridated communities experience more fillings, root canals and extractions than those living in fluoridated areas.
- **Nearly every health and scientific organization in the United States supports water fluoridation**, including the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Cancer Society, the World Health Organization, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Dental Association and the American Medical Association.
- **Fluoridation is the single most cost-effective preventive oral health program available.**



For more information about the benefits of water fluoridation, please visit [www.lilikemyteeth.org](http://www.lilikemyteeth.org).

# PROTECTING SMILES IN HEALDSBURG SINCE THE 1950S



# Organized Opposition

- Opposition leader from another city in the County; had been active throughout the County.
- They were well organized and got their message out early.
- The number of active opposition supporters far out-numbered the pro-fluoridation group.
- They walked precincts twice.
- Placed many yard signs.
- Were effective in getting radio talk show time.



# What worked?

## Anecdotal:

- Healdsburg had been fluoridated for generations with good results.
- Newspaper, healthcare and local leadership endorsements were strong.
- Residents did not believe the health claims of the opposition.
- Dr. Widick and others spoke from their own experience as practicing dentists.
- No additional cost was involved; good benefit for the money.
- Social equity issue.

## Victory in Salina, KS



**Megan Foreman, Policy Director  
Oral Health Kansas**

# Fluoride in Kansas

## Public Vote

Salina	approved (2014)
Wichita	defeated (2012)
Humboldt	defeated (2009)
Hutchinson	defeated (2004)
McPherson	defeated (2001)
Leavenworth	approved (2001)

## Board Action

Pottawatomie Rural Water District #2	approved (2000)
Woodson County Rural Water Dist. #1	approved (1999)

## City Council Vote

Garden City	approved (2006)
Maize	approved (2003)
Wamego	approved (2001)
Winfield	defeated (2000)
Hiawatha	approved (2000)
Newton	approved (1999)
Hesston	approved (1999)
Kanopolis	approved (1999)
Stockton	approved (1999)
Harper	defeated (1999)

## State Legislation

HB 2372	defeated (2014)
---------	-----------------

# City of Salina



- Kansas' 10<sup>th</sup> largest city
- About 50,000 residents; **18,000 registered voters within the city limits**
- Named Kansas' Retirement Hub (*Wichita Business Journal* 2012) and Best Place to Raise Kids (*Business Week* 2009)
- See themselves as family-friendly, neighborly and pragmatic; population well-educated, well-traveled
- Cosmopolitan small town
- Fluoridated since 1968

# Why Did We Win?

- Raised \$50,000 in one week
  - Kansas health foundations (UMHMF), KS Dental Assn., Oral Health Kansas, area dental societies
- Ran a political campaign; employed a professional campaign manager
  - The work was about **getting votes**, public health education a distant second for 13 weeks
- The campaign messaging was clear, simple and consistent throughout.
  - Positive, happy message, fit the community of Salina
- We papered the town, ALL materials branded.
  - 1500 yard signs

# The Reason We Really Won



# Local Champions

Robert Freelove, MD	Juliana Coletto, DDS	Cindy Reed, DDS	
David Battin, MD, FACC	John Miller, DDS	Alan Reed, DDS	
Alisa Bridge, MD	John Marietta, DDS	Ashley Young, DDS	Gladis Martinez
Ryan Payne, MD	Jack Gillam, DDS	Jerry Lundgrin, DDS	Sherilyn Adams
Mike Matteucci, MD	Tom Wilson, DDS	Michael Lundgrin, DDS	Heidi Mickey
Sarah Johnston, MD	Vermelle Ghoston-Brown, DDS	John Adams, DDS	Leah Lopez
Abbey Rupe, MD	David George, DDS	Carmen San Martin, JD	Cindy Burroughs
Chris Rupe, MD	Thomas Jett, DDS	Kristin VanCourt, RN	Shanelle Marshall
Erica Red Corn, MD	Jeff Koksall, DDS	Lisa Keller, RN	Hillary DeBold
John Riekhof, MD	Brian Schaulis, DDS	Janet Hansen, RN	Greg Knight
Matt Cobb, MD	Chuck Abbick, DDS	Terri Magee, RN	Dawn Koenig
Carmen San Martin, JD	Guy Gross, DDS	Sarah Meador, RNC	Tricia Cobb
Scott Owings, MD	Kate Gross, DDS	Marsha Klingzell, RDH	Caren Bachman
Robert Kraft, MD	Michelle Nunes, DDS	Rhonda Scott, RDH	Tammy Gordon
Chuck Allred, MD	Lynn Wuthnow, DDS	Jennifer Briley, RDH	Leslie Mack
Curtis Kaur, MD	Robert Moeller, DDS	Megan Richardson, RDH	Chanda Mason
William Cathcart-Rake MD	Shachi Khatri, DDS	Melissa Reinwald, RDH	Paul A. Mason
Dirk Hutchinson, MD	Earl O'Hara, DDS	Breanne McClintock RDH	David Norlin
Christopher Graber, MD	Brent Mayginnes, DDS	Alyse Lambert, RDH	Kalicia Wilson
Molly Carroll, MD	Gary O'Hara, DDS	Kenzi Andrews, RDH	Jennifer Helsel
Jeremiah Ostmeyer, MD	Alison Riekhoff, DDS	Elsie Potter, RDH	Kelli Compagnone
Jeff Geitz, MD	Jason Wells, DDS	Wendy Jost, RDH	Tiffany Smith
Brian Harvey, DO	Bart Bycroft, DDS	Lisa Douglas, RDH	Chelsie O'Connor
Keir Swisher, DO	Jason Barth, DDS	Stephanie Showalter, RDH	Chris Timson
Rod Smith, RPh	Kerry Carlson, DDS	Shaleigh Smith, RDH	Marla Moss
Lisa Metzen DDS	CA Ritter, DDS	Shelly Bushnell, RDH	Torie Stout
Ashley Swisher, DDS	Eric MacAnally, DDS	Mayor Aaron Householter	Mary Haase
Tom Saffell, DDS	Bruce Johnson, DDS	Sarah Payne	



Paid for by Keep Fluoride Salina  
Allison Lesko, Treasurer  
1920 S. Ohio St  
Salina, KS 67401  
785-825-7197  
[info@keepfluoride.com](mailto:info@keepfluoride.com)

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
THE RECORD  
MAILING

# Salina Dentist acted as local Campaign Coordinator





# Remember: Relationships

- Undergirding all of this were *previously established* solid working relationships
  - Trust already established, allowed us to work quickly
  - National--state--local
  - No one vying for power/control, just want to be effective
- We made a great TEAM
  - Weekly campaign calls; small group of 3 people main drivers of action, final sign-off on materials/activities
  - Divided tasks based on skill, resources
  - National—helped with cost analysis, media/debate training
  - State—campaign budget, relationships with funders, connections (national and local), produced many campaign materials, “bombs of awesome”
  - Local—lifeblood of campaign. Lived this for 13 weeks. Tirelessly campaigned for votes!

**We Kept  
Fluoride**





# Hey Mom! Hey Dad!

Cavities are creepy.

Paying dental bills is spooky.

Having a toothache is no holiday.

Tonight, brush those ghosts' and goblins' teeth well and swish with Salina's fluoridated water. It's been protecting Salina's teeth since 1968!



Keep Fluoride  
**VOTE NO**

Salina's doctors and dentists support water fluoridation because it is **safe and effective.**

**Keep Fluoride for the Kids!**  
**Vote NO on November 4th!**



Visit [www.keepfluoride.com](http://www.keepfluoride.com)

# Daily Facebook Posts



Keep Fluoride  
September 19

Argh, Matey's! We're all for fun on Talk Like a Pirate Day, but we don't want your teeth to look like a pirate's! Fluoride is effective in keeping your teeth cavity free. Three cheers for fluoride, aye aye!  
#keepfluoride



Get on  
board  
with  
fluoride!



Like · Comment · Share

12 5



Keep Fluoride  
October 31

"I support fluoride in our community drinking water because it is scientifically proven to reduce the incidence of tooth decay. It is the single most successful public health initiative of all time.....AND it has reduced the cost of dental care for the people of Salina more than any other single factor. If you are a tax-paying citizen of Kansas the last thing you need is to have more taxes going to fund the dental medicaid program due to an increased incidence of decay amongst our children. If fluoride is removed, this WILL happen. It's not a matter of IF, but WHEN decay increases and children suffer if our community allows this to pass." Guy Gross, DDS, FAGD



Like · Comment · Share

45 2 Shares

# Campaign Around Town



# Keeping Kalama Water Fluoridated

Emily Firman, MPH, MSW

Valaree Squires, MA

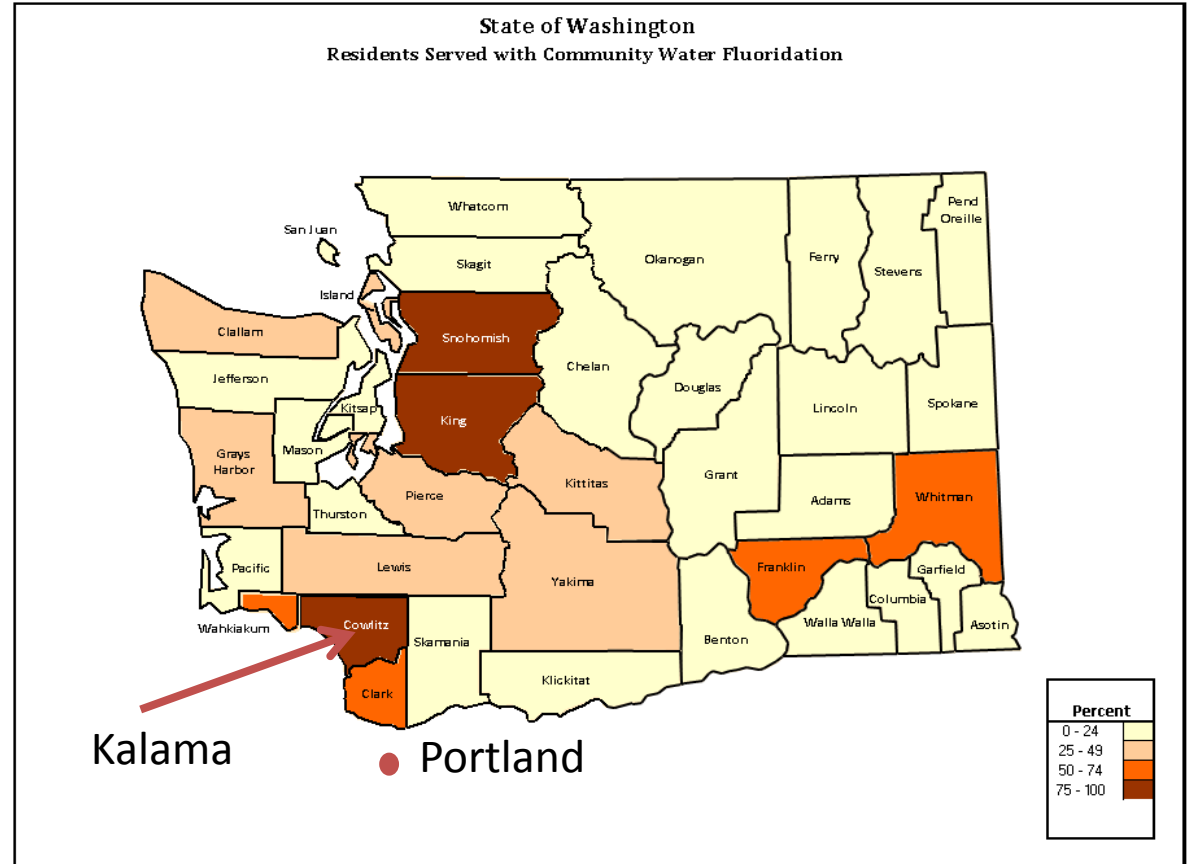
**Washington Dental Service  
Foundation**

*Community Advocates for Oral Health*

# Kalama – Context

Washington State – Population: 6,971,000

- Fluoridation decided locally
- 65% of Washington residents have access
- Rollback discussions increased post Portland vote



# Kalama - Context

- Fluoridation began in 1962
- Council decides fluoridation / no option for a binding ballot initiative
- Population 2,344 (2010)
  - Over 90% white
  - Median age - 41
  - Median voter age - 60
- Unions and retirees important
- Party affiliation is nearly evenly split between Republicans and Democrats





# Kalama – Path to the ballot

April of 2014 - Mayor asks for a vote to remove fluoridation

- Councilwoman Mary Putka calls for a hearing instead
- We gain two weeks to organize
- Advocacy includes:

<b>Network Mobilization</b>
Letters to council
2-inch binder to each council member
Testimony at Council
Local advocates meet
Local 1 on 1 conversations with councilmembers
Attendance at all subsequent meetings

# Kalama

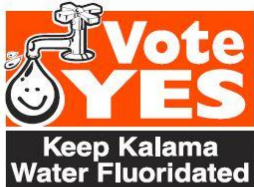
July 2014 Kalama City Council votes to place fluoridation on a non-binding advisory ballot

- “Keep Kalama Water Fluoridated” forms & provides ballot argument for cWF
- WDSF hires community coordinator to lead political campaign

**Campaign: July – October/November 2014**

<b>Grassroots/Advocacy</b>	<b>Earned/Paid Communications</b>
Yard Signs	The Daily News Op-eds
Visibility Events	Letters to the Editor
Facebook Page	Print Ads
Endorsements	Mailers
Election Forums	The Daily News Editorial
Community Meetings	

# Kalama



Paid for by  
Keep Kalama Water Fluoridated  
PO Box 305  
Kalama, WA 98625

Washington Dental Service Foundation, top donor

PRSR STD  
ECRWSS  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
EDDM RETAIL

The citizens of Kalama have benefited from community-fluoridated water for **more than 50 years.**





Joanna Boatman, a registered nurse and mayor of Kalama, initiated water fluoridation in our community in 1962. Now, 52 years later, Kalama can vote to continue enjoying the benefits of strong, healthy teeth. Ms. Boatman remembers classmates in pre-fluoride Kalama who had false teeth before high school graduation.

**Let's not set our community back.  
Vote YES to keep Kalama Water Fluoridated.**



# Kalama Outcome: Nov. 4, 2014

Measure	Vote	Vote %
Yes 	613	67.96%
No 	289	32.04%
<b>Total Votes</b>	<b>902</b>	<b>100%</b>

- A survey to water customers outside city limits, initiated by the mayor, and paid for by the city, had similar results.
- On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 councilmember Mary Putka presided over a vote at council to keep fluoridation in Kalama

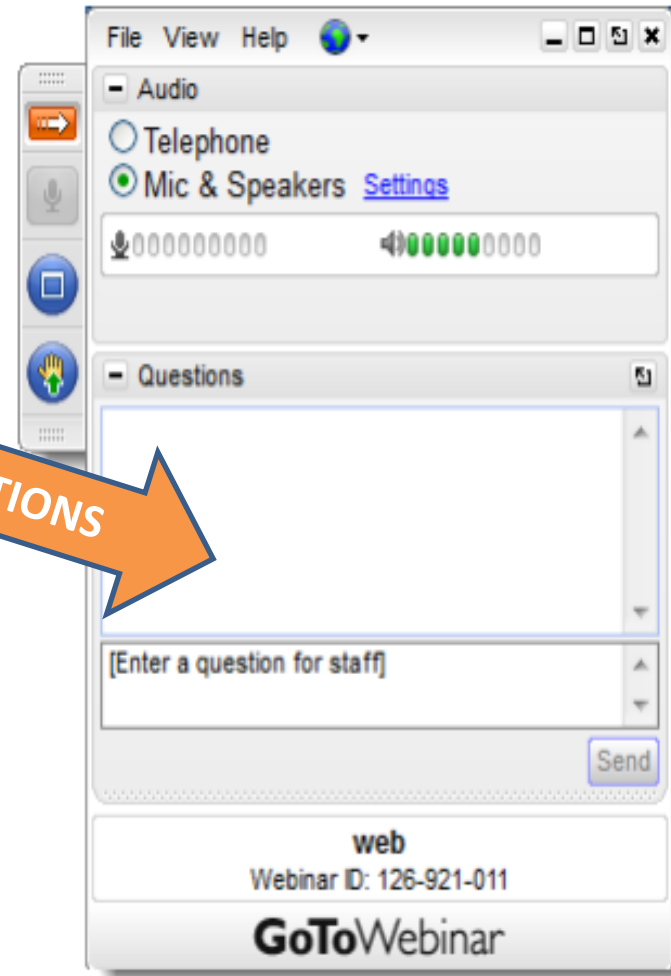
**Thank you!**

**Continue to submit your questions**

# GoToWebinar

All attendees will be muted during the webinar.

Use the **Question Box** to type in your questions.



# Contact:

- *CA Dental Association Foundation:* Gayle Mathe, [Gayle.Mathe@cda.org](mailto:Gayle.Mathe@cda.org)
- *Oral Health KS:* Megan Foreman, [mforeman@oralhealthkansas.org](mailto:mforeman@oralhealthkansas.org)
- *WA Dental Service Foundation:* Emily Firman, [efirman@deltadentalwa.com](mailto:efirman@deltadentalwa.com)