



Speaker and Moderator Biographies

State of the State of Oral Health in Kansas

- **Tanya Dorf Brunner** has been the Executive Director of Oral Health Kansas since 2009, where she leads efforts to advocate for Medicaid dental benefits, educate Kansans on the importance of oral health, and promote the benefits of community water fluoridation. She is a co-founder and past chair of the American Network of Oral Health Coalitions, a national organization that supports and elevates state oral health coalitions. Additionally, Tanya co-leads the Advocacy Committee for OPEN (Oral Health Progress and Equity Network). She serves on the Board of Directors for the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) and is a former Board member of the Kansas Dental Charitable Foundation. She holds a Bachelor's degree in political science and philosophy from Bethany College and a Master's degree management from Baker University
- Little Government Relations (LGR) is a government relations and advocacy firm established in 2001. **Dr. Stuart Little** leads LGR's client representation and lobbying. The firm works in the fields of healthcare, local government, public education, social services, and other areas. Before founding LGR, Stuart worked as a senior fiscal analyst for the Kansas Legislative Research Department. He graduated from Oklahoma State University, earning his Master's in U.S. History from the University of Kansas, followed by a Doctorate in History from Indiana University.
- A desire to help others improve their health and serve his community led **Dr. Allen Reavis** to dentistry. He has been enjoying that mission for 39 years in Atchison, Kansas. A graduate of UMKC School of Dentistry (1984), Dr. Reavis has been an active member in the profession, serving as a leader in the Kansas Dental Association, the American Dental Association and on the Kansas Dental Board.

In Atchison, Dr. Reavis has spearheaded the effort to build a Federally Qualified Health Center Dental Clinic and led the drive to raise funds to complete the clinic. These clinics are critical in providing dental care for Medicaid recipients and the underserved population.

Beyond his practice in Atchison, Dr. Reavis volunteers to provide free dental care by participating in Donated Dental, KMOM, charitable care which has recently included a mission trip to Kenya.

In his personal time, Dr. Reavis has continued to serve the community through civil leadership. He has been elected to the positions of city commissioner, county commissioner and mayor for which he held for five terms in Atchison. Dr. Reavis has had the pleasure of sitting on a number of local committees and boards including: St. Benedict's Catholic Church Parish Council, Boy Scouts, and the Community Foundation.

He and his wife, Sara, have two children Ben and Jenny. Ben is in the Air Force and Jenny is a nurse.

Accessible Oral Health: Building Confidence in Dental Teams to Serve People with Disabilities

- **Jacqueline Belden**, MLS, is the Program Manager for KUMC Project ECHO, a program of the KU Center for Telemedicine & Telehealth at the University of Kansas Medical Center in Kansas City, Kansas. Jacqueline provides strategic oversight and project management for the development and delivery of innovative, accessible healthcare learning built by and for health professionals across the state of Kansas. Leveraging the globally utilized Project ECHO model, Jacqueline collaborates with subject matter experts, funding partners, and ECHO program staff to create and implement impactful professional development solutions that support Kansas health professionals' work addressing the state's most challenging healthcare issues.

Fluoride in Kansas: Trends, Policies, and Public Health Impact

- **Melissa Burroughs** is the Senior Director of Public Policy at the CareQuest Institute for Oral Health. She has been working in oral health policy for over a decade, and her role includes leading the organization's policy, advocacy, and government affairs strategies. Melissa serves as the organization's key policy expert and spokesperson with a particular focus on oral health coverage issues. Melissa previously worked at the leading national health care consumer advocacy organization Families USA. She led the Families USA's Oral Health for All campaign, which secured numerous key advancements in oral health policy, and led other policy and coalition efforts related to Medicare, Medicaid, health equity, and health care pricing abuses.

KEYNOTE: Positive Exposure by Rick Guidotti

- **Rick Guidotti** is an award-winning photographer who worked in New York City, Milan, Paris and London for a variety of high profile clients including Yves St Laurent,

Revlon and L’Oreal. Rick founded Positive Exposure after a chance encounter in 1997 with a young lady living with albinism at a bus stop in New York City, was taken back by her beauty and asked if he could photograph her. We’re excited to have Rick share more about Positive Exposure and his experiences working to change the way disabilities are seen.

Expanding Impact: How dental hygienists can lead community outreach

- **Kylie J. Austin**, RDH MS ECP-III currently serves as the Educational Program Manager at the School of Dentistry, in which she oversees Faculty Development and various educational projects and programming. She obtained a BS in Nutritional Science from Kansas State University, a BS in Dental Hygiene from the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Dentistry, and a MS in Dental Hygiene Education from the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) School of Dentistry. Throughout her 20+ year career in dental education, she has served as a Didactic and Clinic Instructor, Online Instructor, Course Director, Curriculum Director, Research Assistant, and Educational Consultant. She has a special interest in public health dentistry and holds an Extended Care Permit III, providing the opportunity to practice in non-traditional and outreach dental settings in efforts to improve access to dental care for vulnerable populations in the state of Kansas. In addition to her role as Educational Program Manager, she currently serves as the ECP-III Certification Course Director, the STAHR Dentistry Curriculum Coordinator, and has worked collaboratively with other UMKC faculty members to publish research in the areas of school-based dental hygiene, portfolio assessment, and boards review courses. Kylie is a member of the American Dental Hygienists’ Association, the Kansas Dental Hygienists’ Association, the American Dental Education Association, and Sigma Phi Alpha Dental Hygiene Honor Society.
- **Tammi Engel** brings over 23 years of experience as a dedicated dental hygienist, with more than 16 of those years spent serving the community through the Northwest Smile Center, also known as the Rawlins County Dental Clinic. She currently holds multiple leadership roles including Clinical Director, Outreach Coordinator, Lead Hygienist, and even Maintenance Manager—demonstrating her commitment and versatility in public health dentistry.

Her excellence has been recognized with prestigious honors, including the 2012 Oral Health Kansas Outstanding Dental Hygienist Award and the 2024 America’s Tooth Fairy Outstanding Hygienist Award. She is also a proud member of Dental Champions Class VI.

Tammi’s passion for helping others led her into dentistry, and she has found her true calling in public health, where she continues to make a meaningful impact on underserved populations. Outside of her professional life, Tammi enjoys spending time

with her husband Jim, their two grown sons, and three grandchildren. Her hobbies include reading, gardening, traveling, camping, and enjoying the outdoors.

- With more than 45 years of experience as a registered dental hygienist, **Kathy Hunt** has dedicated her career to improving access to oral health care for underserved populations. She designed Kansas' first system for providing preventive dental care in schools, Head Start programs, and local health departments, and was instrumental in developing, implementing, and directing a community dental clinic in her hometown of Wamego.

Kathy has served as the lead for both state and national oral health projects for Head Start and has authored several oral health resource materials for families with young children. She continues to be a tireless advocate for the oral health needs of pregnant women, young children, and people with disabilities.

Dental Care for Individuals with Disabilities: Behavioral Strategies to Improve Patient Experience and Cooperation

- **Dr. MaryAnne Lynch Small** is a recent graduate from the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University with a background in clinical dentistry and health advocacy. Upon graduating with a Bachelor of Dental Surgery degree (BDS) from Dundee University in her home country of Scotland, MaryAnne practiced as a primary care dentist for a period of over five years. Her time in clinical practice cemented her desire to expand her knowledge and skills in public health to drive for oral health equity among marginalized populations — an inequity highly evident in MaryAnne's place of work in Glasgow, Scotland.
- **Christie Stiehl** is a master's-level Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) and Licensed Behavior Analyst (LBA) in Kansas. Since 2008, Christie has provided applied behavior analysis (ABA) therapy to autistic individuals and their families. They have published in peer-reviewed journals, presented at national and international conferences as an invited speaker, and served on various community leadership boards. Currently, Christie provides remote services to Kansans through their private practice, Stiehl Behavioral Consulting, and supports Californians through Valley Mountain Regional Center. One of Christie's favorite treatment areas focuses on teaching autistic individuals to tolerate necessary dental and medical procedures. Seeing the impact behavioral strategies can have on an individual's access to healthcare keeps Christie motivated to spread the word to families and professionals.

- **Dr. Melanie Simmer-Beck** is the Dental Public Health and Behavioral Science Department Chair and the Oral and Craniofacial Science Interim Department Chair at the UMKC School of Dentistry. She holds joint appointments in both departments. She has been teaching dental and dental hygiene students continuously since 2004. Her research focuses on access to oral health care, oral health workforce models and policy, implementation science, and program evaluation. She has been an Oral Health Kansas Board member since 2018 and serves as the Missouri State Champion for the "One Hundred Million Mouths Project."

Integrating Dental Care into Medical Care

- **Celeste Carpenter** was born and raised in Kansas City. She went to UMKC for dental hygiene school and graduated with a bachelor's degree in 2012. She has worked in private practice and public health settings. She volunteered abroad in Kenya helping spread the importance of oral health education. There they also treat up to 500 patients in the communities and tribes that are visited. She currently works on a mobile dental unit that services Kansas and Missouri public school students. Celeste has 3 dogs, 2 frogs and loves to BBQ!
- With over 15 years of experience in public health, **Shawn Oprisiu**, RDH, ECP III MPH, has dedicated her career to expanding access to dental care for children across the United States. Having practiced in five states, Shawn combines her passion for oral health with innovative approaches to care delivery, particularly through the use of mobile dental units and tele dentistry solutions.

Her commitment to improving community health and advancing the dental hygiene profession has earned her national recognition, including the **2025 Denobi Award**, the **2024 Outstanding Dental Hygienist Award**, and the **2024 Tellie – Tele dentistry Innovator Award**.

Driven by the belief that every child deserves a healthy smile, Shawn continues to champion programs that remove barriers to care and bring quality oral health services directly to those who need them most.

- **Abby Richwine** has been in the dental field for over ten years. Before accepting the Education Coordinator position at Oral Health Kansas, Abby was a Registered Dental Hygienist. She graduated from Concorde Career College in 2014 with an Associate in Dental Hygiene. After working clinically for a few years, she decided teaching was her passion and that furthering her education would be necessary. She returned to school and obtained a Bachelor of Science from Minnesota State University-Mankato. Shortly after graduation, she accepted a job teaching clinical hygiene at Concorde Career College. This sparked her interest in reaching out to her community, which led her to find her home at Oral Health Kansas.

- With over 35 years of experience as a Registered Dental Hygienist, **Julie Theisen** has dedicated her career to promoting oral health and wellness in both private practice and public health settings. Her extensive experience has given her a deep understanding of patient care, prevention, and education across diverse communities.

Passionate about outreach, Julie finds her greatest fulfillment working with children—helping them build lifelong healthy habits and positive experiences in the dental chair. She believes that early education and compassionate care are the keys to brighter smiles and healthier futures.

Julie's career reflects her commitment to service, education, and the belief that everyone deserves access to quality oral health care.

Providing Thoughtful Care for People Who've Experienced Trauma

- **Trina Morgan** is Director of Program Development and Training at Kansas Children's Service League (KCSL). KCSL's mission is to protect and promote the well-being of children. Trina has spent over 30 years working in Early Childhood Education. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for Oral Health Kansas and the Kansas Association for Infant Mental Health.

Trina is mom to two adult sons who both have disabilities. Trina loves advocating for them and working to improve systems for adults with disabilities.

- **Deb Pochop** is the CEO of Northwest Smile Center, formerly known as Rawlins County Dental Clinic, a non-profit, safety-net dental clinic located in the far northwest corner of Kansas. The clinic serves over 15 counties across Kansas, as well as parts of Nebraska and Colorado, and its outreach program spans 56 locations in 13 counties—a land mass comparable to the size of Massachusetts and Delaware combined—providing preventive oral healthcare. Rawlins County itself is a frontier community with a population of just 2,561. With more than 40 years of experience in healthcare and 8 years as CEO, Deb is dedicated to connecting people with essential resources and advocating for underserved populations in rural Kansas. She has also been a member of the Oral Health Kansas Board for nearly a year.

Pathways to Oral Health: A Collaborative Approach to Improving Access to Medicaid Dental Care

- **Tami Allen** is the Co-Executive Director for Families Together Inc., the Kansas Parent Training and Information Center and Project Director for the Family-to-Family Health Center. She has had over 35 years of experience working with Families Together as a voice for children and youth with special health care needs.

Tami and her husband Terry have a combined family of 8 children. Their son Skylar is 41 and is young adult with special health care needs including cerebral palsy. Tami has been instrumental in the development of his health care plan and independent living services to better support his endeavor in self-directing his life and needed services as well as living and working independently. Among Tami's areas of expertise is transition from school to adult services, employment and Independent Living, advocacy and policy making, and parent and family engagement within the community as well as Supported Decision Making and Family Centered Health Care. She is also a LifeCourse Ambassador and Coach.

Tami has served on a number of advisory boards including: The State Independent Living Council of Kansas, Kansas Assistive Technology Advisory Board, Living Independently in Northwest Kansas Board, Oral Health Kansas, Kansas Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Board, National Collaborative for Supporting Families. and KanCare Meaningful Measures Collaborative.

- When it comes to marketing, **Tim Kolling** doesn't mess around. (Unless, of course, it involves a good dad joke or a harmless prank — in that case, mischief is guaranteed.)

As Co-Founder and Chief Media Buyer at Compass Marketing & Advertising Partners, Tim brings over 30 years of award-winning experience in broadcast and digital advertising. Before launching Compass in 2023 with his longtime colleague Tara Dimick, he spent 29 years in the broadcast and digital advertising arena helping businesses amplify their message through smart strategy and creative execution.

Along the way, Tim picked up a shelf full of honors — including the prestigious Mike Oatman Award for marketing mentorship (Kansas Association of Broadcasters, 2017), the National Radio Wayne Award for Marketing Consultant/Streetfighter (Radio Ink, 2022), Who's Who in American Business, and more than 25 KAB and ADDY Awards for everything from creative writing to digital campaigns. He even nabbed back-to-back National Radio Mercury Awards in 2020 and 2021, and was a finalist in 2022.

A proud Wildcat, Tim earned his bachelor's in advertising from Kansas State University, and a digital advertising certification from K-State Olathe. After two years playing football in junior college Tim traded the gridiron for courtside — spending three years on the women's basketball team staff at Kansas State. (He was taller than at least one person on the team, for the record.)

Tim's passion for marketing is rivaled only by his enthusiasm for SCUBA diving, sharks, Jeeps, reggae playlists, Disney parks, the elusive Sasquatch and strategically timed dad

jokes. He's inspired by Walt Disney's creativity and can spot an Imagineer's hidden Easter egg a mile away. Outside of work, you'll find him landscaping, in the gym, hiking, at his backyard Tiki Bar, or soaking up Shark Week & Expedition Unknown.

Married to his wife Amy, Tim is a proud Dad to Brett and Payton — and a patient roommate to a boxer who never left the puppy stage, a beagle-chihuahua rescue, and a couple cats who tolerate no one but Tim.

Deeply rooted in the Topeka community, Tim is a graduate of Leadership Greater Topeka's "Best Class Ever" of 2011, an active Greater Topeka Partnership Ambassador, past president and current board member of the Topeka Independent Business Association, past president of the Topeka Area Catbackers, and a founding father of the Delta Chi chapter at K-State. He's been honored as one of Topeka's Top 20 Rising Stars and received the Ron Stryker Key Member Award from the Topeka Independent Business Association.

- **Monica Turner** is the Project Coordinator for the Pathways to Oral Health project. Prior to joining the OHK team, she worked in the dental field as a Practice Manager of an Endodontic office for over twenty years. She has a Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy and has worked in a variety of healthcare settings. She completed her Master of Health Administration at Wichita State University in December of 2024 and was inspired to work toward improving access to care for underrepresented populations. Monica lives in Wichita with her husband and has three adult children. She enjoys the outdoors, reading, and working out.