

An Interview with Dr. David Levy

2018 Award of Merit Recipient

High School:	Boston Latin School - 1964
College:	Boston University - 1968
Dental School:	University of Pennsylvania - 1972
Pediatric Dental Residency:	Eastman Institute for Oral Health - 1977
Master of Science:	University of Rochester - 1981
Areas of interest:	Pediatric Dentistry; Clinical and Didactic Instruction; Administration
Mentors:	Dennis Leverett; Stanley Handelman

Why did you choose dentistry?

From 8 years of age, I would say whenever asked that I wanted to be a dentist. My family praised my choice and I was encouraged to become a dentist. I never wavered from that desire or goal. A little child, even a college age individual does not fully appreciate what it is like to be a dentist. I would say typical responses: "I want to help people; I like working with my hands; I liked my dentist and want to be like him (her), etc., etc." Now, after almost 50 years since I started dental school, I have discovered how lucky I was to have chosen dentistry. Dentistry has been a truly rewarding career.

Professional Experience

Tell us a little about the history of your practice

I joined a group practice started in the 1950s by Dr. Stan Handelman, at the former traffic circle at the east end of Veteran's Memorial Bridge. The practice moved across the street from Rochester General Hospital on Portland Avenue until 1998 when a new building was constructed on Hudson Avenue in Irondequoit. For most of the time, there has been a combination of pediatric dentists, including Jack Howitt, Chuck Brenner, Ritu Shah and myself and general dentists, including Stan Handelman, Malcolm Musiker, Howard Weiner, and Mike Medler.

What is your practice style or personal philosophy?

I have been interested in utilizing my education and experience in all aspects of dentistry, including service to those individuals with difficulties in accessing care. I have practiced in many varied situations. I was dental director of a pediatric dental clinic in an underserved area of rural Maine. I was dental director of 3 urban dental clinics in Rochester. I had the opportunity to provide dental care to the children of migrant workers on a mobile van. I maintained a private practice for over 30 years. I have been able to blend my excitement of practice with clinical and academic education for over 45 years in pediatric and community dentistry. I do not believe that there ever needs to be a separation between the practitioner and the academic. Finally, I now have the opportunity to utilize my education, training, and experience in senior administrative responsibilities.

Professional organizations of which you are a member

ADA, NYSDA, 7th District, and Monroe County
American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
American Board of Pediatric Dentistry - Diplomat

Professional awards, honors, and honorary organizations

Fellowship, Kellogg Foundation, American Fund for Dental Health - 1980

I have been fortunate enough to have been recognized at the Eastman Institute for Oral Health on 3 occasions:

- Part-time Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching – 1989
- Part-time Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching – 2003
- Bejan Iranpour Award for Excellence in Clinical Education in 2007

Tell us a little about your family

I was born in 1947 and brought up in Boston, where I attended public schools. I have one sister, Harriet, who is almost 9 years older. She relocated to and remained in the Philadelphia area since I was almost 12 years old. Growing up in Boston, visiting my sister for these many years, attending dental school in Philadelphia, and now having lived here in the Rochester area since 1975, I always say that I have 3 homes: Boston (including Maine), Philadelphia, and, of course, Rochester.

I have been married for almost 49 years to my wonderful wife Jane. Our son, Ben, is married to Rosie and they have 2 children, Abram and Robert. Our daughter, Ruth, is married to Craig and they have 2 children, Eliza and Ivan. Jane and I truly are fortunate that our children all live in the Rochester area.

My wife and I are avid bird watchers (birders). Our hobby has led us to pursue an interest in ecotourism. Years ago, we camped across the United States for almost 2 months seeking out avian specialties in faraway places. The Rochester region is very interesting for birders due to the varied habitats and various migratory pathways. I am a music lover, but cannot play a note, enjoying many concerts and performances throughout the year. I am 'all in' with the Rochester International Jazz Festival, taking off from work for the 8 days of the festival and attending every day.

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