

Meet New KDA President, Dr. Craig Herre



We recently sat down with newly elected Kansas Dental Association President Dr. Craig Herre and spoke with him about his family, his career in dentistry and his plans and ambitions as KDA President.

Life and Family

Dr. Craig Herre was born and raised not far from where he now practices dentistry in Leawood, Kansas. He attended Shawnee Mission High School and studied fine arts at the University of Kansas before attending UMKC School of Dentistry. It

was there that he met his wife, Joanne, while playing baseball.

"She came to one of my games with a friend and she fell head over heels in love with me right there," Craig joked. "We've been married now for almost thirty-four years."

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Craig's brother Scott joined the practice in 1988 and his son Tim joined the practice in 2008.

"Tim decided against going to medical school and instead went into dentistry, surprising his mother and me.



Craig and his son Tim are photographed during the unveiling of the 140 Years, 140 Stories project during the KDA Annual Meeting in Wichita in June. They will be featured in the book.

He graduated in 2008 and has been practicing here for almost four years."

Craig and Joanne have three children, Tim, the oldest; Bill, who along with his wife, is a physician and is fulfilling his residency in Milwaukee, WI; and Megan, who is working in Kansas City and engaged to be married this fall.

History of His Career

"I was fortunate to grow up in a household where my father was a practicing dentist," he said. "I originally went to school as an art major and was more interested in playing sports, and I played football and baseball in college. At some point I decided I really wanted to go into dental school."

"Like most dentists, I started off by doing as many procedures as I possibly could and tried to do root canals, dentures and limited oral surgery. As time has gone on, I found that I developed a real love and passion for helping people with temporomandibular joint disorder, bite issues and problems with their occlusion. These people generally have pain or some sort of chewing problems. Over the last ten years I've done a lot of training and have enjoyed practicing to a limited extent, with an emphasis on TMJ in dentistry."

Craig currently is a faculty member of the Orogathic

Bioesthetic International (OBI). He attended the Pankey Institute and has had training from the Schuster Center for professional development in business management.

Involvement in Organized Dentistry

"When I was a much younger dentist, I got involved in the Fifth District Dental Society and was a delegate to the Executive Council, as the Board of Delegates was called back then. In 1986, I was asked to get involved in the leadership of the Fifth District and went through the offices and became president in 1990."

Following his service to the Fifth District, Craig became less involved in organized dentistry while his kids grew up and went through high school. About five years ago, he became actively involved in organized dentistry again.

"I really wanted to give back to the profession that has been so good to me," he said. "I think those of us who care about the profession and want to see it carry on and see what organized dentistry can do for people are willing to help out and give our time."



Dr. Hal Hale passes the gavel and KDA presidency to Dr. Craig Herre during the 141st Annual Meeting of the KDA.

Issues Facing the KDA



Dr. Craig Herre looks on as Kevin Robertson outlines KDA initiatives during a press conference at the State Capitol.

"I think this year we were very successful with our bill that promotes what we as dentists feel is best for dentistry and for the patients that we serve," he said. "We know that our counterparts are going to continue to work toward a non-dentist provider and that they will probably go back to the legislature again this year. So we need to be on our toes and put up a good fight like we have over the last two years."

Craig said that the opposition by the dental association is not about protecting dentist's turf as some have suggested, but rather about the health and safety of the patients.

"We feel like the training that we get as dentists is the bare minimum to be able to go out and practice what we do in dentistry. When you allow someone to have the opportunity to go out and do some of the invasive

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things that we do, with a much more limited education, it could be dangerous and certainly not in the best interest of the public."

He also feels that membership continues to be very important issue to the Kansas Dental Association. "All organizations seem to be having trouble retaining their membership and recruiting new members and the Kansas Dental Association is a microcosm of what is going on at the ADA where the market share is decreasing even while the number of members is increasing. We need to work hard to keep those members we have and then help the young dentists understand the value and the relevance of being a member of the Kansas Dental Association."

Other Activities

Craig and his wife enjoy gardening together and he is a self-described fitness nut. He regularly bikes and does fitness training. Craig is a longtime Kansas City Royals and a University of Kansas fan.

"I have a group of dental school classmates that I've played golf with since we graduated," he said. "We play once every three or four weeks during the season and have been doing that for the last thirty years."

To watch the entire interview, visit the KDA website and select KDA.connect from the Member Center.



Left to Right - Kevin Robertson, Dr. Craig Herre, Dr. Kevin Cassidy, Greg Hill and Dr. Julie Swift enjoy the KDA Sunflower Showdown Tailgate in Lawrence last fall