

Keerti Sahasrabudhe, DDS, AAACD

a) Why are you applying for this position?

Becoming a part of the AACD family has been a bit like coming home for me. I just wish I had found my way home sooner.

You see, my journey started in 2017 when I attended my first AACD meeting. I was quite surprised by how approachable everyone was. Through my accreditation journey, and beyond, in my role serving on the member relations committee or the awards committee; as I got to know more and more of the leadership, it was clear to me that this is an organization of people that hold themselves to the highest standard and are generous with their time and mentorship.

This is a group, I would be proud to be a part of and join in working towards our common goal of increasing membership, bringing more value to the members and enhancing the image of the academy through continued excellence.

Being a part of AACD has enriched my life. If I could do it differently, I would join the academy sooner, and start my accreditation journey sooner. This is one of my greatest motivators for applying for this position. I would like to work towards more exposure for the AACD in various educational institutes, other dental organizations and dental schools. So that others, like me, would get inspired earlier in their careers to pursue this goal that invariably makes us a better clinician. And in the process, let them experience the camaraderie and a sense of belonging to this family.

If I have to summarize, I will say that I came for the novelty of it, I got hooked on to the journey and while I thought, in my naiveté, that the end goal was the pride of achieving AAACD, in fact, it turns out, I'm staying because it feels like home. And I want to be a part of its continued growth and glory.

b) What is your vision for the future of AACD?

My vision for AACD is to uphold the highest standards in dentistry. Credentialed members are held in high esteem by their peers today. My vision is that we never lose sight of that. Being a credentialed AACD member should automatically identify the dentist or technician as not just an amazing clinician with great hand skills but also a leader of high ethics and integrity. I would like to make education through AACD more accessible and fun for younger dentists while giving them goals to aspire to.

c) Have you served on the boards in the past? If so, what have you learned from the experience?

Yes, I have been on the awards committee and the new member relations committee. I experienced first hand that dentists that serve on these committees are truly passionate

individuals who want to uphold the standards of AACD. Being on these committees let me familiarize myself with the academy structure and the academy code of conduct.

- d) We are interested in learning about your leadership skills and organizational style. Tell us what we could expect and how you work with others. Be as specific as possible.

Luckily, dentistry provides you many opportunities to grow and develop your own leadership style and skills. Over the years, I have learned to channel my passion and enthusiasm as a leader in such a way that brings people together and encourages them to work together towards a common goal. One recent example is in my community of Greater Seattle Area. I created a WhatsApp group to bring all the local dentists together during Covid where we were able to exchange PPEs, keep everyone abreast of the latest news and support each other.

- e) Serving the AACD requires people to take on projects and see them to completion, often working with others to accomplish specific goals. Tell us about your accomplishments and approach to fulfilling obligations.

I have been a Spear Visiting Faculty and a Mentor since 2014. This requires time commitment as far as physically going to Spear to mentor workshops. I love to stay in touch with any of the attendees who wish to stay in touch and get opinion and help on their cases. Spear visiting faculty position is by invitation only based on your commitment to mentorship. I also lead a Spear Study Club that requires continuous commitment.

- f) The AACD offers our members a superb opportunity to form friendships which could be brought into conflict when policy decisions or approaches must be addressed. Tell us how you might balance those friendships when policy or ethical issues create such a conflict

Raised in a military family, I have a very strong sense of right vs wrong. I don't think I will have a problem knowing right from wrong. If a situation arises where I must recuse myself, I will do so without any hesitation. Friendships are important but nothing is more important than personal integrity. I would never put at risk what I have worked so hard to achieve in my life. I would also never compromise the standard of ethics of the academy.

- g) What do you bring to the position that is unique or distinctive? How will you make a difference?

I can't say this is unique to me since I have met some exceptional people at the AACD. But I am a creative and a critical thinker. I believe that dentistry is a spiritual journey of personal growth. I bring that perspective to decision making.

- h) Please give us an idea of where you see your interests and expertise supporting the advancement of the AACD Strategy plan and reflecting an alignment with the Academy's core purpose.

My biggest interest is in communicating AACD's value of responsible, ethical and exceptional esthetics so dentists and lab techs will want to be members. I want to do this by focusing on education through AACD.

- i) Ultimately, the purpose of serving the AACD is to support our membership. Tell us how you see you relating yourself to membership and forming a bridge between the board and our members.

I think social media is a big platform to reach the next generation of dentists. I have been mentoring a lot of younger dentists through this platform already. There are numerous ways including AACD online study clubs that we can create using this platform.

- j) What unique ideas do you have to build and grow our membership in today's climate?

Continuing from my last answer, the younger generation of dentists is very active on social media. We could create AACD study clubs on social media platforms such as Instagram or Facebook. This could be a membership perk. One other thing we could do is to create Instagram page for credentialed members where we could have case discussions where other dentists could also participate.

- k) Please list any leadership courses or webinars taken. Leadership training is highly recommended.

Being a visiting faculty at Spear Education, I have had leadership workshops/courses through Spear Education. I have also taken Dr Homoly's communication workshop. Other than that, I enjoy reading a lot of books on leadership and getting people to work together.

- l) What else should we know in order to consider you as an applicant for the position?

I am a thoughtful, level-headed person who takes pride in bringing people together. I love to read a lot of books and love to write.

- m) Has any dental licensing board taken adverse action against your license or is an action pending? If yes, please explain.

a. No

- n) Have you ever been convicted of any felony or are there any charges pending or any investigations? If yes, please explain.

a. No.