

## **Aikaterini Papathanasiou, DDS, DMD**

### **AACD Member Since**

Initial membership in 1997 for several years and continuous membership since 2014

### **What position are you applying for?**

University Representative - Board of Directors

### **Are you an Accredited Member?**

No

### **Provide your condensed bio in one paragraph**

Dr. Aikaterini Papathanasiou is Professor and Interim Chair of the Comprehensive Care Department at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine (TUSDM). She is the immediate Past Graduate Program Director of the Advanced Education in Esthetic and Operative Dentistry program in the Department of Prosthodontics at TUSDM; she served in this position for 8 years. Dr. Papathanasiou graduated from University of Athens Dental School in Greece. She received her Postgraduate Certificate in Operative Dentistry, Endodontics and Cariology from Aarhus University Royal Dental College in Denmark and then continued her postgraduate training in Advanced Education in Esthetic Dentistry at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine (TUSDM), where she also received her DMD. Furthermore, she recently completed her Executive Master of Business Administration. Dr. Papathanasiou has been serving TUDM for more than 27 years, teaching pre-doctoral and post-doctoral students and conducting research. Since 2007 she has also served as a Visiting Lecturer for the Continuing Dental Education Programs at New York University College of Dentistry. She has conducted multiple research projects and has numerous publications in peer reviewed dental journals. She lectures and gives hands-on workshops nationally and internationally on topics related to esthetic and restorative dentistry. She is a Fellow of the International College of Dentists (ICD) and the International Academy for Dental and Facial Esthetics (IADFE). She served as the Editor in Chief of the Greek dental journal "Esthetic Dentistry and Implantology," and she is part of the Editorial Review Board of the Journal of Esthetic and Restorative Dentistry, the Editorial Team of REALITY ESTHETICS (REALITY Publishing Company) and the Editorial Review Board of Journal of Cosmetic Dentistry (jCD). Additionally, she serves on the Board of Directors of the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry as the University Member, and she is also the Chair of the University Relations Committee. Dr. Papathanasiou maintained, for years, a private practice limited to Esthetic and Restorative Dentistry in Athens, Greece and she currently practices part-time in Boston.

### **List current or previous volunteer leadership positions (committees/boards) you've held within the AACD**

2022-present American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (AACD) Board of Directors (BOD)  
2022-present American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (AACD) Ethics Committee Member  
2019-present American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (AACD) University Relations Committee (URC)-  
Committee Chair  
2017-present American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (AACD) University Relations Committee Member  
(URC)  
2014-present American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (AACD) University Educator Forum Member (UEF)  
1997-2001 American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry University Committee of Cosmetic Dentistry (UCCD)

### **Describe any leadership experience you've had within your community or other dental organizations**

Service to Tufts University School of Dental Medicine (TUSDM)

Sept. 2023- Present Interim Chair Comprehensive Care Department (Biggest Department at TUSDM)

- Oversee all clinical, educational, research, and community efforts for the Department and Divisions (six divisions)
- Manage faculty and staff
- Fiscal oversight of the department accounts and activities

2015-2023 Director, Post-Graduate Advanced Education in Esthetic and Operative Dentistry (AEEOD)

program, Department of Prosthodontics

- Responsible for all aspects and managing all daily activities of TUSDM AEEOD program
- Lead, oversee and supervise the AEEOD group: students, residents, faculty, and staff

Service to the Tufts University (University Level Service-representing the Dental School at the entire University Senate)

Sept. 2022-present Tufts University Faculty Senate-Education Affairs and Policy

Committee (Co-Chair October 2023-present) Sept. 2021-Aug.2022 Tufts University

Faculty Senate-Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice Committee

Jan. 2021-Aug.2021 Tufts University Faculty Senate-Education Affairs and Policy Committee

Dental Organizations outside Tufts University and AACD

2022-present Massachusetts Dental Society (MDS) Dental Education Committee Member

2022 Massachusetts Dental Society (MDS) Guest Board Task Force

2021-2022 Massachusetts Dental Society (MDS) Membership Committee Member

2019-present American Dental Education Association-Women Liaison Officers (TUSDM WLO)

2014-present International College of Dentists Fellow

### **Have you served on boards in the past? If so, what have you learned from this experience?**

Additionally, to serving the AACD BOD, URC and Ethics Committees, I have served on committees of the Massachusetts Dental Society, on the American Dental Education Association as the Woman Liaison Officer and on several committees at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine as well as on Tufts University Faculty Senate. Furthermore, I was the Editor in Chief of the Greek dental journal “Esthetic Dentistry and Implantology” for several years and I am currently a member of the Editorial Team of REALITY ESTHETICS (REALITY Publishing Company) and the Editorial Review Board of the Journal of Cosmetic Dentistry (jCD) and the Journal of Esthetic and Restorative Dentistry (JERD).

Being part of different committees and having served in different boards and rigorous leadership positions, I have learned the importance of teamwork, brainstorming by thinking “outside the box” and being broad-minded, open to new ideas and concepts while respecting the rules and guidelines of the organization. It is rewarding to see all new ideas being transformed into new protocols and regulations and knowing that you were part of these initiatives which better serve the dental community. I learn through the years to stay data driven and set short-term and long-term goals, continuously assess progress and results, and reevaluate plans and strategies to succeed the target.

### **Why are you applying for this position?**

I have been serving as the URC Chair for several years and as the BOD University Member since 2022. I am reapplying for the same position as I remain deeply committed to the mission of the Academy. During the last few years, I have witnessed how AACD has transformed the professional careers of many AACD members and the lives of hundreds of patients through the ethical esthetics and clinical excellence that the Academy promotes. I am truly eager to continue collaborating with the top notch and dedicated professional leaders of the Academy to promote education and the Academy’s mission and credentialing process. Especially now that my current academic role as the Interim Chair of the Comprehensive Care Department at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine allows me to interact with more students and collaborate with more dental schools, I strongly believe that I can further help the Academy to expand nationally and internationally.

Having served in several leadership roles in dental organizations and institutions, I have a strong track record of leading with respect, empathy, perseverance, determination, and accountability and always be a team player focused on the shared goals. I would like to continue be part of the BOD to help attract, recruit more members, retain existing members, and give additional global exposure to the AACD.

### **What is your vision for the future of the AACD?**

My vision for the AACD is to further expand globally by recruiting more national and international like-minded members in all different categories (dentists, lab technicians, faculty members and students/residents/recent graduates). Member recruitment and retainment are key factors for the Academy's success and for becoming the largest and the most well-known and respected Academy in Cosmetic/Esthetic Dentistry worldwide.

Additionally, promotion of the Esthetic Skills Studio and AACD Dojo programs, reinforcement of the AACD Accreditation, and educational opportunities through straight forward pathways and new models could further strengthen the Academy.

Lastly, JCD achieving inclusion in PubMed will bring more authors and potential new members in the Academy, giving further global exposure and financial growth.

**We are interested in learning about your leadership skills and organization style. Tell us what we could expect and how you work with others. Be specific.**

My leadership philosophy can be summarized as "Lead by Example". Holding several leadership positions, I learned, and I lead through clear communication, transparency, being a team player, having excellent interpersonal skills focusing on positivity, being visionary, creative, and passionate while persistent in accomplishing goals. Concerning my organizational style, I am a very organized multitasker with good time management and ability to prioritize tasks and meet deadlines.

As a leader I focus on creating trust within the team, continuously motivate all team members, take initiatives, promote diversity, and work with the whole team to achieve more. Additionally, when working with others I promote clear communication, emphasize on respect and equality, listen more than I talk, and not afraid to assume account accountability

**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.**

Since my early years of my professional career, I have been always setting the bar high, aiming for perfection. Although people say it is difficult to graduate with a dental degree, I did not only receive my DDS in Greece, but I also received my US DMD degree from Tufts University School of Dental Medicine. I graduated from two post graduate programs in Europe and in the US and recently completed my Executive MBA. Having held dental license in four different countries (UK, Switzerland, Greece, USA), I have practiced both in Europe and US while maintaining an academic career for over 25 years.

Throughout my academic career, I have been actively involved in clinical and didactic teaching, research projects, mentoring of students, residents and junior faculty and conducting CE courses. Especially serving in leadership positions in the 2nd biggest US dental school for the last several years, has made me even more visionary and goal oriented. Leading with empathy and vision while being a good team player and a role model, has helped me succeed in all my goals. Through these administrative roles, I feel privileged to be able to recruit, inspire and help developing the new generation of academic leaders while promoting esthetic and restorative dentistry nationally and internationally. In my current position as the Interim Chair of the Comprehensive Care Department, one of my roles is overseeing all educational and clinical curricula and activities of over 100 faculty and staff members and over 400 third and fourth year DMD students.

My approach to fulfilling obligations can be summarized as establishing clear and open communication with all team members, managing my time efficiently as well as distributing responsibilities to team members by assigning them with specific tasks. I set up goals and work towards achieving them by always staying focused and assessing their progress continuously.

**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 about how you might balance those friendships when policy or ethical issues create such a conflict.**

I have never allowed in my life, personal relations to affect my professional judgement. Working in dental academia, holding leadership positions and serving in big organizations for many years, I have learned how

to deal with “difficult conversations” and make “difficult decisions”. Always living and leading by example and being sincere and respectful of others. Ultimately, that has made its impact and peers and colleagues around me understand of what is expected as professionals, sharing the same principles.

**What do you bring to this position that is unique or distinctive? How will you make a difference?**

Having practiced in both Europe and US, in combination with being involved for more than 25 years in dental academia and having established a strong national and international professional network, I surely have a global perspective of how to better promote AACD and Esthetic Dentistry. This combined with my BOD and URC established experience, strong leadership skills and passion and dedication to the Academy, I strongly believe that I can further spread the AACD mission of clinical excellence in comprehensive cosmetic dentistry as well as high ethical standards in patient care.

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

One of my interests and expertise is developing and implementing straight forward pathways to specific goals such as improve AACD's membership efforts. Through my current academic position as an Interim Department Chair and former Graduate Program Director, I have been involved for years in academic recruitment and retainment of faculty, residents and students and I have a strong record in improving diversity and attraction of international candidates in dental academia. The new generations of dentists who will become part of the AACD will be invaluable ambassadors of spreading and cultivating Academy's core values and principles upon returning to their countries; thus, passing the torch to other colleagues and nurturing the younger generation of the Academy. Additionally, having practiced in Europe and US and having been involved in more than 150 CE courses and poster presentations worldwide, I have a strong international network to support continuous education and lifelong learning efforts globally.

Secondly, AACD annual meeting, educational and outreach programs as well as the newly introduced Esthetic Skills Studio are some other areas where I strongly feel I could contribute. All these programs are educational opportunities which I would like to be able to help the Academy further expand and promote through my experience and network in dental academia.

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

Having the privilege to serve in a leadership position in one of the largest dental schools in the US, mentoring students and faculty, lecturing nationally and internationally, serving in other national membership committees of dental organizations as well as being the Chair of the URC, I believe I can form the bridge between the Board of Directors and the dental community.

Tufts University is consisted of a very diverse and dynamic group of people from different ethnicities. Having worked with such groups, enables me to act as liaison and a bridge between AACD and potential members from dental academia, who they will eventually be the next generation leaders. Furthermore, having practiced for more than 20 years and having been a practice owner for many years, I feel very familiar with the challenges that professionals face daily in their practices and the help and guidance they look for.

Combining my academic career experience and strong clinical background, I can help AACD BOD better understand what potential members look for when they are considering memberships and how AACD can be more attractive to new members. In addition, I can share my experiences and ideas on how to improve retainment of existing members which is as important as recruitment.

**What unique ideas do you have to build and grow our membership?**

I strongly believe that AACD can increase their membership numbers by being more welcoming and making potential and new members feel more valued, appreciated and more engaged from day one and throughout their membership.

The members need to experience the feeling of belonging in the AACD, understand the value of their membership, receive a “concierge” experience of an Elite Academy where they feel welcome,

constantly engaged, given opportunities for professional growth and networking. Members need to be constantly actively reminded through offered activities that AACD is not only about the Annual Meeting Scientific Sessions; but much more.

Creation of additional online educational offerings (webinars) which take place on a regular basis and expansion of Esthetic Skills Studio study clubs can further attract new members and create more appealing membership packages. New members need to have mentors and clear mentorship opportunities and pathways, which recently AACD started offering through Dojo.

Lastly, AACD can create stronger relations with dental institutions, faculty, and students within US and globally who will become tomorrow's AACD leaders. Members from dental institutions (faculty and students) often have wider networks and can further help promote and expand AACD.

**Please list any leadership courses or webinars taken. Leadership training is highly recommended.**

In 2015, I attended the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) Summer Program for Emerging Academic Leaders. Some of the topics that were covered during the course were: Multidirectional Leadership, Interpersonal Relations in your Professional Work environment, Self-Evaluation, Work Life Management, Leadership and Considerations for Thriving in Academia, Conflict Resolution and Difficult Conversations.

Additionally, from February 2018-December 2019, I attended Tufts University Academic Leadership Development Program (ALD). Some of the topics included: Coaching, Mentoring and Faculty Development, Leading and Navigating Change, Building a Diverse Community, Basics of Department Management, Leading a Diverse Unit, Building Inclusive Department Climates, Implicit Bias, Budget Management.

During December 2021, I participated in a leadership development program organized by the Academy for Advancing Leadership (AAL) for TUSDM Faculty members who hold leadership positions in the school.

Lastly, in May 2023 I completed my Executive Master's in Business Administration (EMBA) Degree with focus on Strategic Leadership, US Business Law and Strategic Thinking.

**What else should we know in order to consider you as an applicant for this position?**

Having been involved with the AACD initially as a resident, later as a faculty and a mentor of numerous students who have received several AACD awards, lately as the URC Chair and a member of the JCD Editorial Board and most recently as the BOD University Member, I truly look forward to continuing serving the Academy and being part of this prestigious group of leaders.