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*"Raising Specialty Issues  
Not Seen Elsewhere"*

The Newsletter for Specialists in Prosthodontics

## **25th Anniversary of the American College of Prosthodontists**

This month marks the 25th Anniversary of the American College of Prosthodontists. Its beginnings should be recounted. As I think about the eleven founders, it was not so much a vision that they had, but rather a definite need that they recognized. Give them great credit! They saw the problem but, more so, arrived at a sensible, well-founded, and well-planned solution that has now withstood many challenges.

In the "fifties" and "sixties," the specialty of prosthodontics began to grow because of increasing numbers of trained and boarded individuals. The organizations that existed at that time were based on the discipline of prosthodontics. The criteria for their membership were not clearly spelled out and the impression was it was whom you knew, not what you knew that counted. There were many newly trained specialists in prosthodontics who could not gain admittance into the premier organizations of the day.

Hence, the founding of the American College of Prosthodontists, an organization whose sole criterion for membership was educational credentials. Not by design, but by purpose "the College" could not avoid becoming the only specialty organization in prosthodontics. It could withstand all manner of political pressure because of that one fact. It could ask for and gain recognition as "the sponsor of the American Board of Prosthodontics and the representative of the specialty" because of that one fact.

The College today is different from the early College. Size, method of administrative support, a different governing body, and a lesser personal touch have changed it. But the one principle that continues, the one primary core value that cannot be eroded is the availability of membership based on proven educational achievement. When you are in the College, you are among peers. When you are in the College, you are a valid integral part of the specialty. That takes nothing away from our brothers who are interested in the discipline of prosthodontics. In fact, we can support them and nurture them in better ways because of our education, organization, and recognition.

The College today costs most money, it emphasizes national priorities, and has a different emphasis in its meetings—but remember, the College still is strong, effective, purposeful, and valuable to you the practitioner, the educator, and the provider of the most comprehensive treatment a dental patient can receive.

It is my great desire to see ProsStars people active in the College's committees, its officers, and its sections' delegate representation. Talk it up, promote it, support it and increase its value in every way possible. Be of other organizations as you wish. Be in the College as you must!

NDW