

**The Maimonides Dental Society** is a nonsectarian dental organization, which offers a new and unique program of renowned speakers each year for its members. The lecture series provides excellent continuing education in a professional and relaxed atmosphere that encourages questions and an exchange of ideas with the speaker.

Our Society has an excellent reputation both locally and nationally. We can certainly be proud and even boast that we are sixty years strong and still growing, thanks to our fine foundation and the continuing efforts of the officers, the executive committee, and the membership.

Now, let's look at our organization's history over the past sixty years, starting from the beginning....

### **THE MAIMONIDES DENTAL SOCIETY**

The year was 1945 and our country was very different from today, especially with respect to discrimination. Separation because of race, religion, and socio-economic status was widespread. Jews, "Negroes", women, immigrants, the poor, and the uneducated were openly discriminated against. The United States Military was segregated; public schools were mandated by the United States Supreme Court to be "separate but equal"; men and women rarely worked side by side and certainly not with equal pay; and, there were separate restrooms for "Negroes". Even the national dental community was not above reproach regarding equal rights for patients or for minority members of its own community. There were ethnic, racial, and religious quotas for dental school admissions, and protestations by minority members to the American Dental Association, regarding "quotas" for dental school admissions, would fall on deaf ears. Locally, Jewish dentists were denied total participation on committees and in the administrative affairs of the District of Columbia Dental Society.

In the midst of this environment, a small group of Jewish Dentists in the Metropolitan D.C. area decided to form a local dental society that would fully address their needs. The idea arose as a topic of conversation during a dinner party hosted by Dr. Bob and Mrs. Jean Cohen for their friends: Dr. Sonnie and Mrs. Mary Shulman, Dr. Irv and Mrs. Irene Lichtman, and Dr. Sid and Mrs. Ruthann Greenspan. Later that spring, the plans for the organization came to fruition during several meetings hosted by Dr. Sonnie Shulman. A constitution was written and subsequently approved by the fourteen charter members, who dedicated themselves to their society's objective: "the promotion of scientific and cultural interests, and friendship among its members". Then, the following officers and committee members were elected:

President	Dr. Israel "Sonnie" Shulman
Vice President	Dr. Irving Lichtman
Secretary	Dr. Albert Goldblatt
Executive Committee:	Dr. Charles Basseches
	Dr. Sidney Greenspan
	Dr. Morris Wolf

During the months that followed, committees were formed and meetings were held. Surprisingly, the new organization had no formal name for a while. Then, after much debate,

the group agreed that their organization would be known as "The Maimonides Society", after the renowned twelfth century Jewish scholar and physician, Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, better known as Maimonides. Later, the word "Dental" was added to the name to clarify the type of Society.

During the next decade, The Maimonides Dental Society membership steadily grew in size and diversity because of its excellent monthly scientific programs. Additionally, study club groups and table clinics were established which enabled members to have a more intimate relationship with specialists who were willing to share their knowledge. These seminars included subjects on endodontics, inlay techniques, occlusion, oral surgery, periodontics and practice management. Everyone benefited from these seminars, and they continued to be part of the academic program for almost twenty years.

Over time, the Maimonides Dental Society, although originally established as a Jewish organization, became nonsectarian. Although this occurred as a natural consequence, it was quite befitting for an organization named after Maimonides, who strongly believed in fairness, equality and religious tolerance.

### **MAIMONIDES SOCIETY AUXILIARY MAIMONIDES FREE STUDENT LOAN FUND**

The Maimonides Society Auxiliary was established in 1947 and The Maimonides Free Student Loan Fund was established in 1950. Each functioned as a philanthropic arm of the Maimonides Dental Society.

The membership of the Maimonides Society Auxiliary was composed of society member spouses, and its first president was Adele Goldblatt. The Maimonides Auxiliary had its own constitution, an entire slate of elected officers, and an Executive Committee to help administer day to day activities. Monthly meetings were held between September and May. Activities during the monthly meetings included lectures by members of congress, ambassadors from the Washington diplomatic community, newspaper and television correspondents and other Washington luminaries discussing various relevant social and political issues of the day. However, the primary purpose of the Auxiliary was to promote and enhance the Maimonides Free Student Loan Fund. The Auxiliary was involved in numerous fund-raising activities throughout the year on behalf of the Free Student Loan Fund. For a time, the Auxiliary also raised funds for other Washington charities, including Children's Hospital.

Dr. Meyer B. Silverman, then president of the Maimonides Dental Society, conceived the idea for the Maimonides Free Student Loan Fund. The Fund was established to grant interest free loans to needy and deserving third and fourth year dental students in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. By early 1951, due to the intense efforts and tireless work of the Maimonides Auxiliary, interest free loans were made available to dental students regardless of race, religion, creed or national origin.

A noteworthy remark made by Dr. C.V. Rault, Dean of the Georgetown University School of Dentistry, regarding the first Maimonides loan:

"The recipient is a member of the Disciples of Christ Church, being

educated at Catholic University and enabled to complete his dental studies through the good graces of a group of Jewish dentists."

By the end of 1954, the Maimonides Auxiliary had made interest free loans of almost \$5000 to fourteen dental students. In subsequent years, some of these same recipients made contributions to the Maimonides Free Student Loan Fund so that other dental students could complete their dental education.

The Maimonides Society Auxiliary continued to function for over twenty-five years and provided a great contribution to the dental profession and to the individuals it served through the Free Student Loan Fund.

The legacy of the Maimonides Society Auxiliary continues today. The Free Student Loan Fund, now called the Maimonides Society Foundation, makes annual grants to deserving dental students and dental institutions.

### **ADOPT-A-PATIENT**

Maimonides Dental Society members initiated and participated in the Adopt-A Patient program, a public service to indigent children, by providing free dental care in the office of the participants.

### **ANNUAL BROTHERHOOD NIGHT**

During the 1950's, the National Conference of Christians and Jews established the observance of Brotherhood Week as an attempt to renew dialogue between all Americans and to sustain brotherhood throughout the year.

In February 1958, The Maimonides Dental Society and the Washington alumni Chapter of Alpha Omega Fraternity co-sponsored their First Annual Brotherhood Observance in order to promote brotherhood, cooperation and fellowship between dentists of all faiths.

Guests for the evening's event included the Executive Director of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the Presidents and Dental School Deans of Howard and Georgetown Universities, Presidents of the District of Columbia, Northern Virginia, Southern Maryland and The Freeman Dental Societies. A rabbi, a priest and a minister invoked prayers for brotherhood. The principal speaker was United States Senator, Wayne Morse.

Subsequent Brotherhood Observances were expanded to include members of other dental groups. Principal speakers for those meeting included Harry Golden (publisher of the Carolina Israelite) and Associate United States Supreme Court Justice, William O. Douglas.

### **THE ALBERT AND ADELE GOLDBLATT MEMORIAL FUND**



Dr. Albert and Adele Goldblatt

Lawrence Goldblatt, who is the Dean of Indiana University School of Dentistry.

Dr. Albert Goldblatt was a charter member of the Maimonides Dental Society, the first Secretary and its second President. His wife, Adele, also supported the Dental Society and distinguished herself as the first President of the Maimonides Ladies Auxiliary.

In their memory, The Albert and Adele Goldblatt Memorial Fund was established in 1975 by the Maimonides membership. For the past 30 years, this Fund has been sponsoring annual lectures on contemporary dental subjects for the Washington dental community. Since the early 90's, The Albert and Adele Goldblatt Memorial Fund has partnered with the Sherril Ann Siegel Scholarship Fund to sponsor a major annual lecture known to all as "The Sherril Ann Siegel and Goldblatt Memorial Lecture".

Dr. and Mrs. Goldblatt were the proud parents of two sons: Dr. Norman R. Goldblatt, who is a physicist in California and Dr.



Dr. and Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_, Dr. and Mrs. Shulman, and Dr. and Mrs. Goldblatt