



## Forty Years Later: Welcome Home

*Home is where one starts from.*

– T. S. Eliot

The American College of Prosthodontists is 40 years young. Over these 40 years, we have created a home for Prosthodontics and Prothodontists. The home offers security, comfort, and collegiality (family) to the ACP membership. Perhaps, the small group of Prosthodontists gathered in 1969 to consider the possibility of a “college” of like-minded specialists in which membership was based upon educational criteria knew they were setting the cornerstone for a home others would craft for themselves and future Prosthodontists. On this 40-year anniversary, we should celebrate the success represented by creation of our Prosthodontists’ home.

Homes possess doors that welcome the community. The ACP welcomes members, guests, and visitors through a new Web Site ([www.prosthodontics.org](http://www.prosthodontics.org)), through its weekly e-mail messages, and importantly through the new system of governance based upon local engagement at our many section meetings. With our welcome mat on display, the ACP is recognizable to, approachable by, and engaged with the community.

The kitchen is often considered the heart of any home, and our ACP has developed a remarkable central office. Since establishing the ACP headquarters in Chicago’s ADA building (1994), the central office has grown in capacity, importance, and capability. The central office has been “remodeled” with an effective Executive Director, brilliant staff, and state-of-the-art practices offering expertise in all facets of organizational activity and “serving” the members as they call with needs and requests. Without this central resource, our home would fail in its ability to professionally shelter, nourish, and inspire its members.

A home also provides a roof to shield the family from the elements. The ACP offers its members the protection of specialty recognition. The College’s significant role in promoting the specialty was reasserted in 1994 when the ADA recognized the ACP as the new sponsor of the American Board of Prosthodontics. The ACP collaborates with the American Board of Prosthodontics to validate the process of Prosthodontic specialty board certification. Together, with the added responsibility of defining the specialty through educational standards, the ACP assures the integrity of all educationally qualified prosthodontists. This roof is extended over every private Prosthodontist’s office, and it casts long overhangs of inclusion and collegiality exceeding the architectural plans of years ago. Our inclusive leadership is reflected by the Prosthodontic Forum, which serves to enhance informational exchange among Prosthodontic organizations. Today, the Prosthodontic Forum represents more than 35,000 dentists.

Over 40 years, the ACP has crafted windows that offer a clear view out of and a favorable look into our home.

Prominent views of our specialty are exemplified by our own *Journal of Prosthodontics* (1991) and the continuous publication of “The Messenger.” We have provided comprehensive surveys of the specialty, offered our Parameters of Care, and the Prosthodontic Diagnostic Indices. We have captured landscapes through meetings of pre-and post-doctoral educators, through the Denver Summit in 2001 and the Reframing the Future of Prosthodontics Summit in 2006, and by convening research- (2007) and technology-dedicated (2008) symposia. Views of other organizations are many, and are illustrated by such continual interaction with the ADA at multiple levels including CODA, CDEL, and DSG, and we have peered more globally through interaction with FDI (2008).

Our home is now much larger, and our view of the world is better illuminated, in part due to the focused efforts of the ACP leadership. In 1985, the ACPEF was established. The 2001 Denver Summit reiterated our values and established concrete goals for the membership. These goals have been enabled by the highly successful New Vision Capital Campaign and the recent Brilliant Futures 2012 Capital Campaign. These funds are part of the foundation that supports our expanding home. Notable expansions have come recently, and include the ACP Dental Technician Alliance (2000) and the Center for Prosthodontic Education (2001). We have succeeded in expanding our specialty by increasing the number of talented applicants and participants in Advanced Prosthodontic Education Programs throughout the nation. Since 2006, student members have attended the Annual Session as guests of the ACP and ACPEF.

Home is a gathering place, and the ACP Annual Session is the place to gather, collaborate, socialize, and celebrate our successes. The first annual session, held in Washington, DC (1970), was a modest gathering. In 2010, the 40th Annual Session in Orlando is anticipated to include 2000 participants and engage a wide range of Prosthodontic topics that reflect the contemporary practice of Prosthodontics. Today our “homecomings” have more members attending, greater participation by valued corporate partners, increased interest by other dentists, and the inclusion of our valued dental laboratory alliance members.

The ACP, founded in 1970 and embellished throughout several decades, has become a modest but inviting, sustaining, and inspiring home for Prosthodontists. It is comforting to know that continued growth and change will be supported by the solid foundation that began with the careful setting of a cornerstone 40 years ago.

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