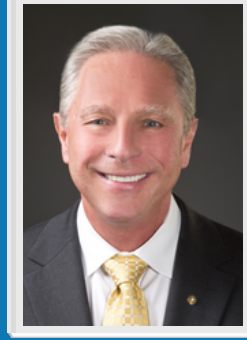


GUMLINE

THE WESTERN SOCIETY OF PERIODONTOLOGY



Thomas J. Kopic, DDS, MSD
WSP Gum Line Editor

In our Winter 2025 Gumline, we explored mentorship and career pathways as one of the Western Society of Periodontology's enduring strengths. That discussion highlighted how guidance, shared experience, and professional relationships quietly shape careers over time.

A natural extension of that conversation is leadership development—another important benefit of WSP membership that often unfolds through service and engagement.

Leadership within WSP does not begin with a title. It often starts with participation: attending meetings, volunteering on committees, contributing to educational programs, or assisting with regional events. Over time, these experiences provide members with a deeper understanding of how professional societies function—and how thoughtful leadership sustains them.

For many members, WSP offers an opportunity to develop leadership skills in a collegial and supportive environment. Committee work encourages collaboration and accountability. Educational planning fosters an appreciation for relevance, quality, and fiscal responsibility. Governance roles provide insight into stewardship—protecting the Society's mission, resources, and long-term vitality.

These experiences benefit not only individual members, but the specialty as a whole. When clinicians learn to listen, serve, and lead with intention, our organizations become stronger and more resilient.

As we continue our series on WSP membership benefits, leadership development stands out as a natural progression from mentorship. Together, they ensure continuity across generations and help prepare the Society for the challenges and opportunities ahead.

WSP's strength has always come from members willing to engage, contribute, and lead—not for recognition, but for the advancement of our specialty. That tradition remains one of the Society's greatest assets.

Thomas J. Kopic, DDS MSD
Editor, *The Gum Line*
Western Society of Periodontology



Welcome to the 74th Annual Meeting of the Western Society of Periodontology (WSP), and the 7th Annual Western Dental Hygiene Symposium (WDHS), to be held at the beautiful Talking Stick Resort in Scottsdale, Arizona on June 12-14, 2026. The theme of this year's meeting is 'Collaboration in Action - Creating Healthy, Beautiful Smiles.'

In modern dentistry, no clinician can stand alone. Long-term, esthetic, and functional success now depends on how well restorative dentists and periodontists plan and treat together along with insight and support from the entire interdisciplinary team of specialists and hygienists.

WSP's mission of bringing together periodontists, specialists, restorative dentists, and hygienists, for genuine collaboration will be showcased once again in our annual session. With this vision in mind, we invite you to an immersive interdisciplinary conference featuring a distinguished speakers of periodontists, prosthodontists, restorative dentists, orthodontists, endodontists, orofacial pain specialists, and hygienists.

Over the course of the meeting, you will see Collaboration in Action with shared clinical protocols,



refined techniques, and practical communication strategies aimed at creating healthy, beautiful smiles. Our program is built around real-world clinical challenges and the teambased solutions that address them. We have focused this year's meeting on concise lectures around key clinical thematic topics as well as cross-cutting interdisciplinary topics and have invited world-class speakers. This year's speakers include Robert Da Silva (Brazil), Marcelo Silva, Bobby Birdi, Clark Chen, Homa Zadeh, Vahid Khoshkam, John Kim, Dan Holtzclaw, Marianna Evans, Suman Batina, Irene Marrón-Tarrazzi, Satish Kumar, George Romanos, Lauralee Nygaard, Antonia Teruel, Kian Kar, and Harjit Sehgal from multiple specialties in the field of dentistry. This conference will feature surgical and regenerative sessions focused on building stable foundations for restorative excellence, covering periodontal and guided bone regeneration, biomaterials and biologics, soft tissue augmentation, microscopic periodontal plastic surgery, and the AAP-AO Perio Implantitis consensus. Implant and prosthetically driven workflows will be highlighted through All-on-X digital planning to final prosthesis, implant surface considerations, and complications from an interdisciplinary perspective. We will also explore key interdisciplinary intersections such as Perio-Endo synergy for preserving natural teeth, airway issues and craniofacial development, and TMD beyond clicking

and clenching, while addressing the systemic and inflammatory context of care, including metabolic dysfunction and periodontal disease and inflammation control.

We will also host the Western Dental Hygiene Symposium offering dental hygienists three days of unparalleled dental education. This year's presenters include some of the best dental hygiene has to offer: Dr. Giles Horrocks, Dr. Melissa Shotell, Tiffany Wuebben, Rafael Rondon, Kristen Ranaldo, Susan Wingrove, Lynn Atkinson, Lora Hooper, and Anne Rice. The topics of the speakers will showcase modern dental hygiene as a high-tech, prevention-driven, and medically integrated field within dentistry. They emphasize understanding the soft tissue seal around implants and the essentials of implant maintenance, home care, and disease treatment to protect long-term outcomes. In the hygiene chair, quick orthodontic evaluations and proper use of power instruments help support both periodontal and orthodontic health while avoiding unintended damage. New technologies such as dental endoscopy, desiccation therapy, lasers, and salivary diagnostics deepen our ability to see, treat, and monitor disease, reducing periodontal relapse and saving implants. At the same time, aligning care with AAP and ADA guidelines and carefully interpreting patients' health histories allows clinicians to recognize systemic risk early. These themes converge on one core idea: when technology, communication, and clinical insight work together, hygienists can deliver truly comprehensive, personalized care.

A Tech Expo will provide opportunities for attendees to get hands-on experiences of various equipment and armamentariums.

The WSP Hands-On workshop sessions we have scheduled will give those interested a chance to further refine their skills in full-arch rehabilitation and bone augmentation. We are inviting advanced specialty residents from postgraduate programs in periodontology to showcase their education and skills through case presentations.

Together, the speakers will share practical, real-world strategies to help you plan and deliver comprehensive care with greater confidence and collaboration. Throughout the conference, you can expect clinically grounded lectures, case-based discussions, and honest conversations about complications and decision-making. You will leave with:

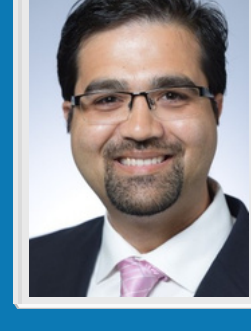
- Clearer frameworks for treatment planning.
- Updated, evidence-based perspectives.
- Practical protocols your whole team, including hygienists, can implement on Monday.
- Stronger pathways for communication between referring and treating clinicians.

This is more than a meeting. It is an opportunity to rethink how we work together so our patients benefit from the best each discipline has to offer.

We hope you will join us for 'Collaboration in Action - Creating Healthy, Beautiful Smiles' and help shape the future of integrated, team-based care.

We look forward to welcoming you to the beautiful Scottsdale! Scottsdale offers a sunny blend of luxury and desert adventure—think world-class golf, spas, art galleries, and award-winning restaurants framed by stunning Sonoran Desert scenery. Stroll Old Town's shops and nightlife, then catch a blazing sunset over Camelback or the McDowell Mountains to end the day in true Arizona style!

Satish Kumar, DMD, MDSc, MS
WSP Annual Session Chair



Satish Kumar, DMD, MDSc, MS
WSP Annual Session Chair

2026

Western Society of Periodontology 74th Annual Scientific Session
and 2026 Western Dental Hygiene Symposium

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FROM BLADE TO BIOLOGY

How I Stopped Cutting and Starting Growing

In the mid 80's, I completed my periodontal residency at Loma Linda University and joined Dr. Bob Hirst in Mission Viejo, California. I walked in thinking I knew everything and I walked out after the first month realizing I only learned how to hurt people, creating sensitive roots, recessed gum tissue, patients who winced when they spoke, and who kept their hands over their mouths like it was a crime to show their teeth. I was good at treating periodontal disease, good at slicing, trimming, and suturing. I wasn't good at living with what came after.

Then Dr. Jack Taylor sent *her* in. Carol had severe recession, hypersensitivity so bad she sipped liquids through a straw, and a smile so hated that she avoided mirrors. "I want to look and feel normal", she said. I had no textbook answer. I had a common 15C scalpel which limited my surgical capabilities. Necessity dictated that change was needed. I worked with a materials engineer to create the Nordland N6900 scalpel. Its bendability and size was a game changer. Loma Linda research showed that new attachment of periodontal ligament fibers could actually re-attach to root surfaces that were previously diseased. At the time, micro surgery was not around. I used a Global microscope at the Newport Coast Oral Facial Institute. The root wasn't dead, it was waiting. I realized blood supply was everything cells needed to drink, so I wrapped the graft like a blanket around a baby. I grafted, I sutured, I prayed. Three weeks later, Carol returned; no straw, lips parted. "I smiled yesterday", she said, "on purpose". New attachment wasn't just visible under the scope, it was visible when she grinned. That was the hinge. I stopped resecting and started regenerating.

I began teaching hands-on courses at the Newport Coast Oral Facial Institute. I realized I had to show them more than incisions, how to suture without snagging, and how to handle gingiva like delicate 1-ply tissue paper. Dr. Don Dornan attended my course and recommended I teach my techniques to fellow surgeons. "That is not dentistry, that's pioneering innovation. You need to get this message out", he said. I published Carol's result in the Journal of the California Dental Association and they put it on the cover. Years later, one of my students poked a hole through gum tissue, called it new, and advertised "his" pinhole technique on TV. I let him, the connective tissue graft procedure was mine, the smile was Carol's, and the root was still drinking. I coined it *Oral Plastic Surgery* and collaborated with Dr's P.D. Miller and Pat Allen and we formed a study group that evolved into the International Society of Periodontal Plastic Surgeons.

That was the birth of periodontal plastic surgery.

Peter Nordland, DMD, MS
WSP President



Peter Nordland, DMD, MS
WSP President



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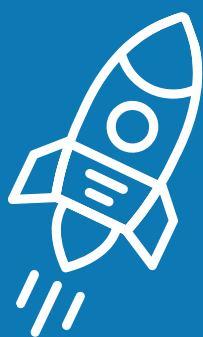


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