



For many, board certification represents a culmination of professional and personal achievement, the reward of personal sacrifice, and a commitment to excellence and the highest quality of care to our patients. For Dawn Yuen Harvey, the road to board certification came with twists and turns.

Dr. Harvey shows us that it is never too late to pursue board certification. Furthermore, her return to studies to prepare for board certification did not end with becoming a

Diplomate; it fueled a passion in continuous learning and a fresh look at her career. Here is Dr. Harvey's story—in her own words. I hope you feel as inspired as I do—whether to seek board certification or renewal of certification, or become a mentor to a friend or colleague in practice or preparing to become a Diplomate!

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Becoming a Diplomate—My Journey

I am very proud to say that I am a Board Certified Pediatric Dentist. I am also proud to say that my journey to becoming a Diplomate was more of a arduous marathon than a sprint. During my pediatric dental residency at Children's Memorial Hospital/Northwestern University Dental School in Chicago, one focus of our training was to prepare us to take the examinations of our state specialty boards and the American Board of Pediatric Dentistry (ABPD). Reading the pediatric dental journal articles and organizing clinical cases provided the foundation of our education and was invaluable to our learning. I was fortunate to be a part of a close-knit group of three strong women co-residents. Shortly after graduation, I passed the dental specialty board examination of Illinois and became a certified pediatric dentist by the Illinois Dental State Board.

My husband and I soon welcomed twins and the following hectic year consisted of trying to balance studying for the ABPD written examination, caring for two infants and relocating to Michigan. Unfortunately, I was unsuccessful in challenging the written board exam. During that time, I opened a private practice in Grosse Pointe, Michigan and had a third child. For the next twenty years, I focused on growing my practice while being a single mother to three children. My academic interests were on hold.

When my children graduated high school, I decided to take the American Dental Association Kellogg School of Business management course. This renewed interest in learning along with encouragement from my co-residents spurred me to start over with the board certifi-



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cation process. I studied nightly and attended the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) comprehensive review course in New Orleans. Relearning the basic sciences was brutal 25 years later! There were many days that I wanted to give up, but I persevered. In 2012, I passed the Qualifying Examination!

The next step was to prepare for the Oral Clinical Examination. So much had changed since I had completed residency training. Halothane gas was no longer used in the operating room, and many clinical protocols had been updated. I shadowed my former co-residents and colleagues to observe their clinical practice. I spent many hours studying at my local Starbucks where all the baristas knew me by name. I carried the AAPD Reference Manual with me everywhere. In 2014, I passed the Oral Clinical Examinations and in 2015, I proudly received my Diplomate pin in Seattle at the 75th anniversary of the ABPD.

Preparing for board certification led me to become interested in teaching. I accepted a part-time faculty position at the Children's Hospital of Michigan pediatric dental residency

program, where I was honored to receive the Teacher of the Year award in my first year. After seeing firsthand the great need for comprehensive dental care for the children of Detroit, I came to believe my role was to become an effective educator to help prepare residents to have the knowledge and skills to care for children with dental needs. I submitted an application to the AAPD Master Clinician program. In 2014, I received acceptance to the program and headed to the Academy for Academic Leadership's Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL) in Atlanta, Georgia. Participating in the Master Clinician program definitely provided me with better tools with which to educate the residents.

My journey to becoming a Diplomate was difficult, yet very rewarding. Studying basic sciences and dental materials was an arduous effort for me in my 50's. Along the way, I met and studied with many bright and capable young colleagues whom I consider my good friends today. Through this process, I have grown professionally and personally. For my first 20 years, I worked in a solo practice where I treated suburban children with low caries rates. I now practice with four bright young professionals with whom I mentor, share, and learn to become better individuals and a better team. And together, we make it our daily mission to give back to our community of Detroit. More than twenty years later, I finished the marathon race of becoming a Diplomate of the ABPD. The journey was both more difficult than I could have imagined, but simultaneously the most rewarding choice I could have ever made. ♦