APPALACHIAN HIGHLANDS
COMMUNITY DENTAL CHARITIES



You Were Part of Every Smile

Your generosity at work

2026 GRATITUDE REPORT

Every Smile Starts with Access to Care

Across Southwest Virginia, thousands of people struggle to get the dental care they need. Too few dentists, financial challenges, dental anxiety, and years without regular care leave many people living in pain with untreated dental problems. In the past, pop-up dental clinics helped meet urgent needs, but they can't provide the ongoing care patients need to stay healthy.

Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Charities helps change that. Through the generosity of donors, community partners, volunteers, and people like you, we support Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Center. The center provides a permanent dental home where uninsured and underinsured patients can receive affordable, comprehensive care. Together, we are helping people find relief from pain, restore their smiles, and build healthier futures.

Our Work

As the fundraising and philanthropic partner of Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Center, Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Charities serves secures necessary resources through community support, grant writing, charitable giving, and strategic partnerships to ensure that uninsured and underinsured individuals and families throughout Southwest Virginia have access to effective, affordable oral health care and the opportunity to achieve healthier lives through better oral health. By strengthening the dental center's capacity to provide compassionate, high-quality dental care, we help ensure that those who need it most can receive the care they deserve.

The Care You Make Possible

Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Center accepts Virginia Medicaid and offers a sliding fee scale for uninsured and underinsured individuals in its 13-county service area. Fees are based on household income and family size.

- Blood pressure screenings
- Bonding
- Crowns and bridgework
- Dental cleanings
- Dental implants
- Dentures
- Fillings
- Limited orthodontic services
- Oral cancer screenings
- Periodontal (gum) disease therapy
- Porcelain veneers
- Root canal treatment
- Sealants
- Teeth whitening
- Tooth extractions

Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Center Patients:

68% of people
are enrolled in Medicaid

32% of people
are uninsured and pay by sliding scale

4,426 people
served in the past year

14,045 visits
served in the 2025/2026 residency year

In Southwest Virginia:

25 dentists
per 100,000 residents

4,300+ people
on a waiting list for dental care

40% fewer
dentists per capita than the rest of VA

In Virginia overall:

62 dentists
per 100,000 residents

Source: the American Dental Association





Teddy Pillion has been an invaluable part of the success of Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Charities this year. As an intern supported by the Claude Moore Charitable Foundation and the Anne and Gene Worrell Foundation, Teddy played a key role in charitable fundraising, grant writing, and reporting, including leading the creation of our 2026 Impact Report.

As Teddy returns to the University of Virginia for his senior year, we want to thank him for his dedication, hard work, and heart for our mission. We wish him every success in the year ahead and look forward to seeing all he accomplishes.

We also hope you enjoy reading our 2026 Gratitude Report and seeing the incredible difference you made possible through your generosity and support.

Anne & Gene Worrell Foundation

Claude Moore CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

A Patient in Need, a Funder with Heart, and a Dentist Serving Southwest Virginia

Hi, I'm Dr. Elaina Fridley. I was born and raised just outside the small town of Covington, Virginia. I completed my undergraduate studies at Virginia Tech before earning my Doctor of Dental Medicine degree from the University of Louisville School of Dentistry.



The first time I spoke with a patient in dire need of my help, Eliza, was over the phone, and we immediately bonded over our shared love for our university. When I met her in person soon afterward, it was heartbreaking to see the pain she was experiencing. During that first appointment, she shared not only her concerns about her teeth but also how much she longed to smile with confidence again. She had previously received dental treatment in Tanzania and was unhappy with both the appearance and function of her teeth. While her hope was for a complete smile makeover, it became clear that significant oral health issues needed to be addressed before we could focus on aesthetics. Together, we developed a treatment plan that would restore both her oral health and, ultimately, her confidence.

The comprehensive care and extensive treatment plan Eliza needed would not have been possible without the extraordinary generosity of The Secular Society, which chose to fund her entire treatment. That gift removed a tremendous financial burden and allowed us to focus on providing the care she truly needed, not just what might have been affordable. Because of that generosity, we were able to address complex dental problems while creating the healthy, beautiful smile she had dreamed of.

Throughout her treatment, Eliza was incredibly resilient. She endured multiple appointments lasting four and even five hours, never losing sight of our goal of hope and confidence again. Over those many visits, we built a genuine relationship, sharing updates about our lives and celebrating each milestone along the way. Her trust and determination made every step worthwhile.

The day we delivered her final restorations is one I will always remember. Seeing her smile for the first time with confidence was an unforgettable moment. In the days that followed, she sent heartfelt messages expressing her gratitude and even shared her wedding photos, proudly showing the smile that your generosity helped make possible.

As her dentist, I had the privilege of providing quality care, but it was The Secular Society's compassion that made this transformation possible. Your gift restored more than teeth, it restored confidence, dignity, and the freedom to smile without hesitation.

Thank you for investing in Eliza's future and for making a lasting difference in her life.

"AHCDC's mission is straightforward: it is to provide effective, affordable oral health care to underserved individuals and families across Southwest Virginia. But the work we do every day is about something bigger than dental appointments. It is about restoring dignity and relieving pain that has gone untreated for years. Marvin and I are pleased to support this worthy cause with our time and resources."

– Marcia Gilliam, AHCDC Funder and Board Member

"As someone who grew up in Virginia, being one of four girls with a mom who had to provide for the entire family, dental care was never part of our lives. I know the outcome of neglected dental care because we never had the financial ability. Because of my own experience, I know how important dental health is to your physical health and mental health."

– Debra K. Howe, AHCDC Funder



"Thanks to your generosity and the friendly dental team, I'm no longer in pain or worried about toothaches. And now I get compliments on my big, bright smile!"

–Eliza, AHCDC Patient

21 Reasons for Hope in Southwest Virginia

For thousands of people across Southwest Virginia, a toothache can mean months of pain, missed work, difficulty eating, or watching a small problem become a medical emergency because there is nowhere else to turn.

When Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Center's waiting list grew to more than 4,300 patients, it saw children, veterans, grandparents, and working families who deserved timely, quality dental care. The community responded. Generous donors invested $1.4 million to expand the center from 14 to 21 treatment spaces, creating seven new operatories and increasing the number of patients who can receive care before pain becomes a crisis.

Debra K. Howe Charitable Trust was one of the first funders to the project. The United Company Foundation funded three operatories and the new sterilization center, while The Secular Society's matching grant helped equip seven treatment rooms. Susan Shain, Enbridge Foundation, Janice Hurt, the Virginia Health Care Foundation, the Skewes Family Foundation, and the Claude Moore Charitable Foundation each played critical roles supporting construction, infrastructure, staffing, and patient care.

Additional equipment was funded by the Skewes Family Foundation, Marvin and Marcia Gilliam, Michael and Debbie Quillen, Richard and Leslie Gilliam Foundation, Appalachian Power Foundation, Eastman Credit Union, C.E. Richardson Benevolent Foundation, Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation, Moose Lodge 1966, Tom Hurt, Jun Hurt, The MARS Foundation, and the William J. Cammack Private Foundation.

Since early 2026, the center has received more than 3,000 new referrals. The need continues, but thanks to these generous supporters and people like you, so does the hope of healthier smiles, relief from pain, and renewed dignity for neighbors across Southwest Virginia.

Thank you to all our generous donors.
Gifts shown above reflect those received in 2025–2026. Scan the QR code for our most current donor recognition.

To report an error or omission, contact Rachel Helton at rhelton@appalachiandentalcharities.org.



Your Generosity Makes an Impact

Every gift to Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Charities opens a door of hope by expanding access to compassionate, quality oral healthcare for individuals and families who are uninsured or underinsured. Your generosity helps support patient care, equipment, facilities, and greater access to affordable dental care.

No matter how you give, your generosity helps people find relief from pain, restore their smiles, and build healthier futures.

Give Online

Scan the QR code to make a secure gift online. Or visit our website at appalachiandentalcharities.org/donate

Give by Mail

Make checks payable to Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Charities and mail your gift in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Give Stock

A gift of appreciated stock or other eligible securities can support our mission while potentially offering tax benefits. Please contact us before initiating a transfer so we can provide the appropriate instructions.

Questions about giving stock?
Call Rachel Helton at (276) 275-1063.

Give Through Your Donor-Advised Fund

Recommend a grant to:
Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Charities
EIN: 99-2564571

Give from Your IRA (Qualified Charitable Distribution)

If you are 70½ or older, you may be eligible to make a tax-advantaged Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). Please consult your financial or tax advisor prior to any transaction.

Direct your IRA distribution to:
Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Charities
EIN: 99-2564571
P.O. Box 246
Abingdon, VA 24212

Please let us know when your QCD has been initiated so that we can properly acknowledge your generosity.

Leave a Lasting Legacy

Consider including Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Charities in your will or estate plans. **To learn more, contact Rachel Helton at (276) 275-1063 or rhelton@appalachiandentalcharities.org.**

Give With Confidence

Appalachian Highlands Dental Charities has earned Candid's Platinum Seal of Transparency, reflecting our commitment to using your gifts wisely. **Scan the QR code to view our nonprofit profile and public filings on ProPublica Nonprofit Explorer.**

Platinum Transparency 2026
Candid.







"When I asked Chris what he was going to do first when he left the dental center, he told me he wanted to finally eat a sub sandwich. That was a beautiful moment. I am grateful for Janice Hurt's generosity. The Hurt Fund, established in 2020, funded his entire treatment."

– Rachel Helton, Executive Director

Hear Christopher's story and see what your generosity made possible.

P.O. Box 246
Abingdon, VA 24212

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appalachiandentalcharities.org

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