



**2026 GLAO Dr. David C. Hamilton
Distinguished Service Award Recipient:**

Dr. Valmy Pangrazio-Kulbersh

Dr. Valmy Pangrazio-Kulbersh is a graduate from the National university of Asuncion, Paraguay. She was awarded a scholarship from the Rotary International Foundation to pursue her specialization in orthodontics in the United States of America. She received her Orthodontic Certificate and Master of Science from the University of Detroit Mercy, Detroit, Michigan. Dr. Kulbersh said "Every long journey starts with an initial step. I arrived in the USA as a newly graduated dentist aspiring to become an orthodontist. Inspired and encouraged by my father, who was an oral surgeon, I decided to pursue my dream of studying abroad. I created for myself the vision of my future and here I was in an unknown world trying to reach my dream. I was faithful to my vision and I was determined to achieve my goals. I realized that the best way to predict my future was by making it myself. Strength and determination were the pillars of support that helped me along the way."

Dr. Kulbersh always believed that in order to be successful one has to make a difference. She strived during her career towards that goal. Shortly after graduation she was invited to become a full-time orthodontic academician at the University of Detroit Mercy, School of Dentistry, orthodontic department. She accepted the challenge and now she was on her way to make a difference. She has been teaching for 49 years, reaching the rank of full professor. When she started her orthodontic training, she found herself being the first female graduate orthodontic student at the University of Detroit Orthodontic department. Her classmates were much older than her and there were very few female instructors in the dental school. Suddenly, she had to deal with being a young female in a men's world! Quite a contrast from where I came from! Teaching and sharing her knowledge was and still is one of the most exciting aspects of her professional life which allowed her to share her passion for the profession. Orthodontics also allowed her to make a difference in her patient's life by restoring their smiles and increasing their quality of life. Dr. Kulbersh also left her prints in all the associations in which she was involved. Her leadership went beyond academics and clinical practice helping to advance orthodontics at the political level. Dr. Kulbersh left her mark in the

associations' board of directors of which she was part of their board. She was elected president of the Michigan Association of Orthodontics, Great Lake Association of Orthodontics where she also served as a delegate to the American Association of Orthodontics. She was a member of the executive committee of the World Federation of Orthodontics and president of its Society of Orthodontic Specialty Certifying Boards. Dr. Kulbersh was the first female president of the Angle Society and the American Board of Orthodontics. She is recognized nationally and internationally for her publications and lectures. Wherever she served, she fostered a shared culture, setting moral standards and promoted stewardship.