

New Mexico Dental Foundation Newsletter

This is the inaugural issue of the Foundation's newsletter. At this point, the publication frequency is planned to be quarterly, inserted into the NMDA Journal as this one is.

We appreciate your comments and ideas – please contact us.

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Your Foundation Awarded 501(c)3 Status!

The New Mexico Dental Association has formed a charitable foundation called the New Mexico Foundation for Dental Health, Research and Education, A Public Charity (dba NM Dental Foundation or NMDF). It was created as an umbrella organization for benevolent dental outreach and treatment programs. The Foundation is also committed to creating research and educational opportunities for the achievement of clinical excellence resulting in an increased access to dental health care for the population of New Mexico.

So far, the New Mexico Donated Dental Services (DDS) program is the only active program under the Foundation. However, the Board of Directors is working toward funding education scholarships for dental students who will commit to returning to New Mexico and setting up a practice. In addition, the Board is looking to be able to fund research projects, particularly as they relate to the state of New Mexico.

In December, the Foundation was awarded tax-exempt status by the IRS. This means the Foundation will be able to seek grant money to fund additional programs, and your financial donations made to the Foundation are tax deductible.

The application for 501(c)3 status was a long and time-consuming process. For two-thirds of the applications it receives, the IRS asks for additional information or clarification and can take three to six months to approve. However, the application for your Foundation was approved in only one month's time and without any follow-up questions!

Donated Dental Services Volunteer Recognition Event

Your Foundation staff is planning a recognition reception for the dentists and labs who donate their time and services to the New Mexico Donated Dental Services program throughout the year. This will be a sponsored event, so no Foundation or program funds will be spent on thanking you for your tremendous generosity.

The reception will be held in the early evening on Thursday, June 8, 2006, during the NMDA Annual Session. If you are a participating NMDDS dentist or lab, look for your invitation to arrive in the spring. Save the date and please plan to attend!

How You Can Help

This organization is really in its infancy. If you would like to see it grow bigger and stronger, there are several ways you can help.

Make a financial donation – The financial support you give is tax deductible. Contact one of our staff for more information on giving and your tax preparer for more information on deductibility.

Volunteer your services – The DDS program is always looking for volunteer dentists all over the state to treat an underserved population. This program is the only one in the state that connects dentists with people who really need help because they are low-income and elderly or permanently disabled. In some areas of the state, there is a two-year waiting list of patients. If every NMDA member dentist volunteered one case a year, that waiting list would disappear in no time!

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Mission Statement

The mission of the New Mexico Foundation for Dental Health, Research and Education, A Public Charity, is to provide opportunities for the advancement of benevolent dental outreach and treatment programs by creating alternative funding resources. The Foundation is also committed to the advancement of dental health in New Mexico by creating research and educational opportunities for the achievement of clinical excellence resulting in an increased access to dental health care for the population of New Mexico.

Foundation Purpose #7:

To foster and encourage educational and scientific studies with and reports to the practicing members of the dental profession in this or in any state concerning new developments in the field of dentistry.

Volunteer your time – Start by coming to the annual board meeting held in September. See what the Foundation is doing and how you can be a part of it. We appreciate your input and ideas.

Board of Directors

According to the Foundation bylaws, the board of directors consists of eleven directors – eight dentists, two non-dentists, and the executive director. Two of the dentists are the NMDA President-elect and Secretary-Treasurer. The other six represent each of the NMDA component societies without being current members of the NMDA board of trustees. Although it is not a requirement, all of the dentists serving on the board are also current DDS volunteers.

A resounding “thank you” goes out to each of the following board members and the experience, energy and input they bring to the table!

Foundation President Ron Johnson (NWDDS) is a past president of the New Mexico Dental Association.

Robert Lehm is Branch Manager for Patterson Dental Supply. He is serving your Foundation as its Vice President.

Steve Wagner (ADDs) is the Secretary-Treasurer for the Foundation. He treated eight DDS patients in 2005!

Kent Cravens is the Executive Director of both the Foundation and the NMDA.

Robert Gherardi (NMDA Secretary-Treasurer) has served DDS patients since 1998.

David Moore (NMDA President-Elect) has served on the NMDA Executive Council since 2002.

Steve Moran (EDDS) is the current president of Eastern District.

Beverly Thurmond (SWDDS) is chairperson of the NMDA Mentoring/New Dentist Committee.

Melanie Upshaw is the Program Director for the Albuquerque-TVI Dental Assisting Program.

Troy Wilson is New Mexico’s longest DDS Program volunteer, beginning in

1991 – that’s ten years before DDS officially came to the state!

The volunteer director position representing the West Central District is open. If you are in that district and are interested in being in on the ground floor of this very exciting new venture, please contact one of our staff.

Feel free to contact your Foundation board members with any ideas or comments you have regarding the Foundation.

From Executive Director, Kent Cravens

Just this past week we received notice from the IRS that our application for 501(c)3 status was granted, this just one month after submission. If you have ever been through the process before, you will know what an accomplishment this really is. We owe this success to Linda Paul and Susan Pate who toiled for hours and made sure that the application was perfect before submission. Their hard work paid off as only 30% of these applications are granted without questions and re-submission.

It is a very exciting time for the NMDA to have the opportunity to build a Foundation that has the potential to serve so many people in truly diverse ways, from our Donated Dental Services program already underway, to the various educational outreach programs that may be envisioned by our members and the NMDF board. Imagine the NMDF having the resources to fund dental school education for deserving New Mexico students.

As we start the New Year, I would like to ask all of you to consider a gift to the Foundation. Your donation is tax deductible and will help as we chart the course for the future with real solutions for New Mexico and the issues that face our dental community.