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## FOCUSED FOR THE NEW YEAR!

The Foundation Board of Directors met for their annual meeting on September 29th at the NMDA office in Albuquerque. Those who couldn't attend participated by conference call. Moving the Foundation forward in the areas of fundraising and the expansion of the DDS Program were discussed as primary focus points for 2007.

## FOUNDATION WELCOMES NEW EMPLOYEE

We are welcoming Susan Cho to the Foundation! A retired Social Worker, she moved back to New Mexico about a year ago and has agreed to come aboard six hours per week to help further grow the Donated Dental Services Program and assist with general Foundation administrative duties. Susan brings a wealth of experience and will be a real asset to the Foundation. She will be training in the national DDS office in Denver the second week of January and by January 15th will be working here in our Foundation office! She and Linda Paul will share DDS client coordination responsibilities. Susan's new phone number will be (505) 332-0544. Linda can continue to be reached at (505) 298-7206.

## PROSPERITY, HOPE AND VISION

### *A Note From Robert Lehm, Foundation Vice President*

As we begin to look forward to 2007, it is a great time to reflect on the past and to see just how blessed we all are to be in the dental business. 2006 was a year of record dental production for most and a year of vast leaps in dental opportunities and technologies. In a recent lecture Dr. Gordon Christensen stated, "Dentistry finds itself on the doorstep of the greatest period in the history of the profession. At no other point in history have we witnessed a greater potential for the business of and practice of dentistry."

The prosperity we are experiencing is attributable to several factors. In the year 2000 dentistry was a \$60 billion industry. In the year 2005 dentistry had grown to be an \$85 billion industry. Technologies becoming mainstream have certainly made a significant impact over that five year period. Dental implantology alone is an \$8 billion industry today. Dentistry is growing at more than two times the US economy.

When considering this dental prosperity equation we must also look at the dentist to population ratio trend. In 1987 the dentist to population ratio was 57.5 dentists per 100,000 in population. By 1999 the ratio had decreased to 53.3 dentists per 100,000 in population. It is projected that the US population will be over 300 million by the year 2010. It is also projected that by the year 2020 the ratio will decrease to somewhere between 39.5 and 43.5 dentists per 100,000 in population. This ratio is influenced by both population increases and decreasing numbers of dental providers. The decade of the 90's produced 10,000 fewer dentists than did the decade of the 80's. This is largely due

### 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 #1:

To develop and promote improved access to dental care through volunteer programs targeted at the indigent, medically compromised, aged or other similarly under-served population.

### PROSPERITY, HOPE AND VISION... cont'd

to decreased dental school enrollments. By the turn of the century the equivalent of nine dental schools had closed by either discontinuing dental programs completely or by downsizing allowable enrollments.

Although the future is certainly bright in the dental industry, it also brings with it concerns related to access to care. As fewer hands are available to produce dentistry we may begin to see certain populations finding it even more difficult to receive needed dental treatment. The desire for cosmetic dental procedures compounds this access to care issue as at no time in the past has clinical chairtime been consumed for elective treatment at the levels we are seeing today. Many could potentially be left behind in oral health access.

The largest current focus of the New Mexico Dental Foundation is to help create funding for and perpetuate the Donated Dental Service program. This program serves countless individuals who otherwise would have no access to dental care. This program would be nonexistent if it were not for the compassion demonstrated by this profession and the goodwill delivered everyday to a very dentally needy population. Over 140 local dentists and 60 dental laboratories are participating in the Donated Dental Service program currently. These providers have changed hundreds of lives and have given hope to many very distraught individuals. In several cases the Donated Dental Service program has saved lives based on providing dental care to individuals with grave medical problems who needed to have their dental health addressed before their medical needs could be treated.

It is the hope of the Foundation that the Donated Dental Services program can continue to provide care for this underserved population and that the program can continue to grow to meet the ever present demand. With every new Donated Dental Service provider comes the hope that yet more people will be served and afforded the opportunity for dental health. Many of the Foundation board members not only donate their time

to serve on the board but also participate in the Donated Dental Service program as volunteer providers as well. It is a blessing to work with such committed and dedicated individuals.

As we look back at a very prosperous year and look forward into the promise of what this industry can provide, please consider those who are less fortunate. If you already participate and serve in the Donated Dental Service program, God bless you. If you do not currently participate, please consider becoming a part of this great organization. We are extremely blessed by virtue of the economic dynamics taking place in our industry. That same dynamic has the capability of also leaving a dentally needy population behind. The time spent "giving back" is so very rewarding and the impact made on lives is immeasurable. Your service to the Donated Dental Service program will always be greatly appreciated on many levels. Please contact Linda Paul at (505) 298-7206 to volunteer your time.

### BOARD FAREWELL

A heartfelt thank you to Dr. Beverly Thurmond for her commitment to serving on the NMDF Board since its inception. Dr. Thurmond attended all the initial Board Meetings either by teleconference or traveling up to Albuquerque and offered invaluable assistance in her tenure on the Board representing the Southwest District. Beverly and her family have moved to North Carolina where her husband has accepted a new position. We thank her and wish her all the best.

Dr. Gail Willow has accepted the call to represent the Southwest District on the Foundation Board effective in June 2007 when her term on the NMDF Executive Board ends. Like Dr. Thurmond, Dr. Willow comes to the Foundation Board with a heart for serving New Mexicans and expanding dental treatment access opportunities within the state. She has graciously participated in the Donated Dental Services Program for the past 4 years. We thank you, Dr. Willow, for your commitment to serve in the future on the Foundation Board.



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