

ADHA and Research: Coming together with the World

By Rebecca S. Wilder, RDH, BS, MS

I recently attended two amazing conferences in Washington, D.C. The first was the North American Dental Hygiene Research Conference and the other was the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) Annual Session/Center for Lifelong Learning. Even in these economic times, both meetings were jam packed. One might ask why this is, when so many people are out of work and depressed about the economy. Well, I did not see depressed people at these conferences – both meetings were full of energetic, dynamic, courageous and ambitious individuals who are trying to make a difference for their profession, their patients and for the people of the world.

The North American Dental Hygiene Research Conference was planned and implemented through the leadership of Dr. Jane Forrest and Dr. Ann Eshenaur Spolarich, along with a steering committee of seven members from the United States and Canada. The conference sold out weeks before it started. Many countries were represented at the 3-day conference. On the first day, the meetings were held at the National Institutes of Health with the Director of the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial research (NIDCR) providing welcoming comments. We learned about the NIDCR's strategic plan for the coming years and heard from other leaders in Canada and the U.S. that recognize the important



role dental hygienists currently have, and should have, in the promotion of oral and overall health for all people. Other topics at the conference dealt with emerging technologies, cultural considerations for practice, linking dental hygiene and systemic health, the changing climate of research, preparing competitive grants, and assessing the efficacy of alternative dental hygiene models of care delivery in meeting community needs. In addition, over 30 poster presentations occurred at the conference as well as 20 Lunch and Learn sessions on everything from "How to Write and Publish" to "Dental Stem Cell Research." Even though the conference was packed with fabulous information and ideas, the most exciting

part was the enthusiasm and sense of connection that came from dental hygienists from Canada, the US, Sweden, England, Scotland, Italy and other corners of the world. We all have a common goal - to promote the very best oral health across the globe.

The ADHA Annual Session/Center for Lifelong Learning was also a first in many aspects. I would like to commend DENTSPLY Professional for recognizing the value of dental hygiene research produced through the graduate dental hygiene programs in the United States. This year, DENTSPLY and ADHA announced the DENTSPLY/ADHA Graduate Dental Hygiene Research Program. Through a partnership between the ADHA and DENTSPLY, each graduate dental hygiene program was invited to nominate one outstanding graduate student project, based on criteria determined by the program, to represent them at the ADHA CLL at Annual Session. Qualifying research could include clinical or basic science research, which supports the research priorities identified in the National Dental Hygiene Research Agenda and contributes to the dental hygiene knowledge base.

There were 15 outstanding entries in the competition. The winning projects are listed below, although I think all 15 are winners. These students

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DENTSPLY/ADHA Graduate Dental Hygiene Research Award Winners

1st Place

Jane C. Cotter, RDH, BS
Baylor College of Dentistry

Factors Affecting the Performance of Oral Cancer Screenings by Texas Dental Hygienists

2nd Place

Cherri L. Kading, RDH, BS, MS
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Factors Affecting North Carolina Dental Hygienists' Confidence in Providing Obesity Education and Counseling

3rd Place

Amy E. Coplen, BSDH
University of Michigan

Current Status of Dental Hygiene Faculty and Perceptions' of Important Qualifications In Future Faculty

are our future and we must keep the scholarly activity moving forward. Congratulations to the three dental hygienists listed below who won the Inaugural DENTSPLY/ADHA Graduate Dental Hygiene Research Award.

Be on the lookout for the next issue of the Journal of Dental Hygiene. The entire issue will be the publication of the Proceedings of the North American Dental Hygiene Research Conference held in June, 2009. You will not want to miss it.

Have a great summer!

Sincerely,

Rebecca Wilder, RDH, BS, MS
Editor in Chief: Journal of Dental Hygiene