



Looking Towards Celebrating the 100th and Beyond!

Recently I spent time at ADHA central office with our staff editor, Josh Snyder, thumbing through issues of the *Journal of Dental Hygiene*. The reason is that we are preparing for a special edition of the *Journal* to celebrate the 100th anniversary of our wonderful profession that will be distributed at the ADHA CLL/Annual Session in Boston this June. It was an educational experience for me because I was unaware of much of our rich history. In the coming months, *Access Magazine* and the *Journal* will highlight our history and show how far we have come in many areas and also what is yet to be achieved.

As I read many of the articles and editorials that have been published, reviewed the meetings and minutes of constituent and national meetings, I was so impressed by all of the hard work and dedication that has gone into making our profession what it is today. One of the pictures that was displayed in one of the journals from the 70s/80s contained a picture of one of my dental hygiene mentors, Mrs. Margaret Cain, who held a leadership position in the ADHA. It brought back so many memories of the mentoring she provided to me. Not only was she a stickler for perfection in the clinical setting, she was the epitome of a dedicated professional. She was soft spoken and kind, she held the highest of standards and expected each student to be a professional at all times. She is most likely the reason that I pursued a higher degree in dental hygiene.

There were many other dental hygienists displayed in those journals who dedicated a good part of their lives to the association and the *Journal of Dental Hygiene*. They were goal oriented, intelligent, assertive women who were not afraid to advance the profession. Was it always easy... absolutely not! But they persevered and we all need to thank them!

We have seen many changes over the course of 100 years, from the way dental hygienists dress, to the equipment we use, to the research evidence we have available to us to make the best decisions about care for our patients, to the products available to us to promote the best oral health care. As we move towards the next 100 years, one thing will be certain – change will occur in our profession. More Americans will receive oral health care than ever before. Dental hygienists will have a prominent role in the delivery of oral care and to the overall care that patients receive. We will work more closely with our medical, nursing and allied health colleagues to assess, diagnose and refer patients to the appropriate providers. The science base in dental hygiene will expand as we further build our unique body of knowledge. And we will be valued as an essential part of the health care team for patients.

What role will you have in the dental hygiene profession as we work towards the next 100 years? Let me provide some ideas for you: set short and long term goals for your professional growth, adopt a mentor, be a mentor, run for a component or constituent office, take public speaking classes so you are more confident in front of an audience, obtain a higher degree, collaborate and educate your medical colleagues about the importance of oral health. Do something to make your profession all it can be! Call on the ADHA to help you!

See you in Boston!

Sincerely,

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