I'm proud to report that on June 21st I took part in the Illinois State Dental Society Foundation's (ISDSF) 3rd Mission of Mercy (MOM) event in Peoria, Illinois. This fantastic event is held every two years in a different Illinois location and is one of my favorite opportunities to volunteer my dental skills. I volunteered at the 2012 MOM held at the Lake County fairgrounds in Grayslake and I'm proud to say the 2014 MOM was bigger and better! With military precision that would make Hawkeye, Trapper John, and even the Colonel proud, the ISDSF crew executed a "M*A*S*H" style event that produced over ONE MILLION DOLLARS of dental services COMPLETELY FREE to those who attended. Prospective patients were sleeping under the stars a day before the event to make sure they had a place in line when the drills started whirring at 6:30 am on both Friday and Saturday.

The event is really just a humongous "pop-up" modern dental office! Each day, patients would start by filling out registration/medical history paperwork and then be transferred to different dental teams by a great group of volunteer "runners." Next stop after registration was Triage where patients received an exam, diagnosis, and their proposed treatment recommendations from the triage team of dentists. Quite a few dental services are offered at each MOM including hygiene, fillings, root canals, extractions (both regular and wisdom teeth), and even limited laboratory services such as denture repair and partial denture fabrication.

I am proud to actively participate in numerous volunteer events/organizations that assist those in need on a local, regional, and statewide level. The ISDSF MOM is certainly the grandest of them all. My hat goes off to all those involved with this great event: The ISDSF planning committee, the volunteers (dentists, hygienists, assistants, staff, and fantastic non-dental trained runners), and the corporate donators of TONS of cutting-edge dental materials and dental equipment, but most of all my hat goes off to the patients. Such a grateful group of people. Hugs, handshakes, and dozens of "God bless you doctor" from the thankful patients throughout the event. Frankly, it reminds me of the great group of patients that I am fortunate to serve right here in Downers Grove.

That is why I volunteer, that is why I support organized dental groups like the Illinois State Dental Society, and that is what makes me love this profession so much. Simply put, THAT is why I'm a dentist. My dental "soul" is certainly refueled beyond capacity at each MOM and I'm proud to have been a tiny part in this big event. If you are interested in learning more about the ISDSF MOM, or wish to volunteer, please visit their website at: www.isds.org/isdsfoundation/mom.asp.
I was recently asked by a dental student “what is the true calling of a dentist?” This caught me a little off-guard and I had to think for a minute. I recalled a promise I made to myself the day I graduated from dental school – to improve the oral health of my community. “In my mind a dentist’s true calling is to place service above self,” I answered the dental student. We may not mention it, but when we are called “doctor” we are filled with pride. When our patient says “Thank you, doctor, for stopping my pain” and “thank you for my smile,” we are filled with gratitude. As dentists, we feel compelled to give back to our communities and volunteering is a great way to do this.

Volunteerism is part of the humanistic spirit that my instructors in dental school inspired in me and it is a large part of who I am now. The Illinois State Dental Society Foundation encourages ISDS members to actively give back to our communities. Fortunately, there is no shortage of opportunities to volunteer throughout the State of Illinois, including pro bono work at your office, elementary school screening programs, Give Kids A Smile events and helping with the biennial Mission of Mercy event, just to name a few. Every two years, the Illinois State Dental Society and Foundation help coordinate over 1000 community dentists and individual volunteers to partner together to treat the unmet dental needs of thousands of citizens throughout Illinois and beyond. The Mission of Mercy volunteers include health care professionals, students, non-profit organizations and people that simply wish to help out.

What a difference volunteerism can make when endorsed by those who believe and have a passion for making a difference. The difference is that philanthropic movement finds a solution to the problem. Although small donations often go unnoticed, when accumulated, the results become meaningful. Philanthropic endeavors, large and small, - such as the Mission of Mercy - have the ability to reach and change the lives of millions.

The culture of philanthropy enables community leaders to discuss values, ideas and solutions in an environment free of harsh judgment or criticism. Philanthropy encourages free thinking and new ideas, but most importantly philanthropy is the single biggest catalyst for positive change. With education, we improve ourselves in achieving new levels of understanding and respect. With constant learning, we find solutions to our problems, feed the hungry, house the homeless and alleviate pain and suffering by pinpointing root causes of illness and disease.

Dental education is the foundation of our profession, and the foundation is threatened. If we do not have a strong foundation in education, our profession risks losing its integrity. Some even say that if nothing is done to repair the system, it will eventually turn the profession of dentistry into a trade. There are overwhelming challenges facing the entire educational system, not just dental education.

Our dental education is what has made each of us into the person we are today. It has molded us into dental professionals, enabled us to provide care for those who need it, and provided us with respect and dignity. If it were not for the strong dental education that we received, the dental profession would cease to exist as we know it, with detrimental effects not only to dentists but to the health of the public.

I encourage each of you, our entire dental society, to further support dental education throughout the coming years by participating in the ISDS Foundation campaign, “A Case Today for Dental Education.” The issue of dental education is a diverse one with many opinions as to possible solutions. It is clear that members of the dental community must work together to find solutions to these challenges and to find funding for those solutions. It will require many volunteers, support and a willingness by the dental profession and the dental education community to embrace needed change in addition to financial commitment.

Developing a culture of philanthropy and volunteerism among our peers, our colleagues, our friends and ourselves is essential. With our excitement, we can seize the future of our profession. Charitable giving – both monetary and service – should inflame a passion for the profession of dentistry.Acts of giving allow for the development of extraordinary and innovative projects, such as Mission of Mercy, as well as those that expand and enhance learning opportunities, such as “A Case Today for Dental Education,” for every former, current and future dental student.

**President’s Message: What Is The True Calling of a Dentist?**

Keith W. Dickey, BS, DDS, MBA, President, ISDS Foundation

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Congratulations to the Award Winners: ISDSF Table Clinic

Special thanks to our dedicated Table Clinic Judges!
We rely on volunteers to serve as our judges, please join our “judge team” and earn CE credit too!

UIC College of Dentistry Judges
Dr. Keith Dickey
Dr. Timm Schwartz
Dr. Susan Bishop
Dr. Michael Santucci

SIU School of Dental Medicine Judges
Dr. Howard Waldrop
Dr. Susan Bishop
Dr. Gary Fischer
Dr. Krista Weimerskirch
Dr. Bradley Seyer
Dr. Jillian Rigert
Dr. Daniel Welch

Midwestern College of Dentistry Judges
Dr. Edward Segal
Dr. David Kumamoto
Dr. Susan Bishop

WINNERS!

SIU School of Dental Medicine Award Recipients
Nicholas Varney, Basic Science
Adam Fitzgerald, Clinical Science
Jasmine Abdullh and Salomon Nair shared the Literature Review/Dental Education Award

Midwestern College of Dentistry Award Recipients
Susan Singer and Bryan Habet shared the Literature Review/Dental Education Award
Kan Tsunoda, Basic Science
Timothy J. Kamp, Clinical Research

UIC College of Dentistry Award Recipients
Stuart Schelkopf, Clinical Science
Amatul Salma, Basic Science

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Simulation Laboratory Dedicated at SIU School of Dental Medicine

The $9.5 million John and Anna Markarian Multidisciplinary Simulation Laboratory was formally dedicated on the School of Dental Medicine campus in December of 2013.

The lab will be a primary site of instruction for Year I and Year II pre-doctoral students. It contains 60 simulation units. The 18,000-square-foot addition also includes a ceramic reconstruction room, x-ray room, casting and dispensing areas.

The SIU School of Dental Medicine students manage approximately 35,000 patient visits each year at its patient clinics in Alton and East St. Louis. In addition, students offer oral health treatment, screenings and education to more than 10,000 people annually through a wide variety of off-campus community outreach events. These training opportunities are critical to the dental school which is the only one within 200 miles of the St. Louis metropolitan area.

An instructional lab that will help train future dentists from across the country opened in Alton in December of 2013 on the campus of SIU School of Dental Medicine.

John and the late Anna Markarian are the parents of three successful school alumni – Doctors John, Ronald and Randall Markarian.

www.isds.org/isdsfoundation
2014 Mission of Mercy Feedback

The most pleasant dental experience of my life.
Angela – Peoria

An answer to my prayers.
Joann – Peoria

Thank you very much!
ISDSF = CLASS= 1st CLASS!
John – Rock Island

Thank you for offering your services and time. Without this clinic I would have had to do an at-home extraction with a pair of pliers.
Amanda – Dwight

You guys and gals are awesome! Thank you!
Kendra – Peoria Heights

I haven’t seen a dentist in 20 years because I cannot afford to. Thank you SO much for all of your hard work so that I can have the opportunity to have pain free days for the first time in 5 years.
Rachelle – Secor

Win a 2 year lease or $14,000
Buy your ticket:
www.isds.org/ISDSFoundation/carraffle.asp