Award to help dental students offer dental care to troops

The ADA Foundation awarded its 2009 Bud Tarrson Dental School Student Community Leadership Award to the University of Nevada at Las Vegas (UNLV) School of Dental Medicine in recognition of an oral health treatment program for National Guard troops.

The UNLV School of Dental Medicine will receive $5,000 with the award to enhance student education and outreach to underserved populations.

“This selfless effort by these dental students exemplifies what the ADA Foundation and the Tarrson Access to Oral Health Care Award are all about,” said Dr. Arthur A. Dugoni, president of the ADA Foundation.

“We are improving the lives and dental health of others by connecting people and investing in the human potential of so many individuals.”

In 2008, UNLV dental students founded the Sergeant Clint Ferdin Memorial Clinic to help meet the oral health needs of National Guard troops deemed non-deployable because of dental problems. Some of these troops cannot access dental care because they are not on active duty, making them ineligible for military benefits.

The first clinic, held in July 2008 at the UNLV School of Dental Medicine, treated 19 patients. Since then, there have been six additional clinics, with approximately 50 patients receiving free treatment at each session, including more than 100 veterans. UNLV dental students, supervised by Nevada licensed dentists, provided treatment that included restorations, root canals, extractions, crowns and dentures.

The clinic honors the memory of a UNLV dental student’s brother killed in action in 2004, while serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Created in 2005 in memory of philanthropist Bud Tarrson, former CEO and owner of the John O. Butler Co., the Tarrson Award recognizes one exemplary volunteer community service project developed by dental students enrolled in a predoctoral dental education program. A Chicago native, Tarrson was a director of the former ADA Health Foundation (now ADA Foundation) from 1994 to 1999.

Between 2004 and 2008, the Tarrson Award honored outstanding community service on the part of a practicing dentist or lay person. In 2009, the ADA Foundation redefined the Tarrson Award program to highlight significant dental student outreach to vulnerable communities.

“The new approach to this annual award program supports the efforts and acknowledges the initiative and outreach of dental students across the country,” said Linda Tarrson, who initiated the award in honor of her late husband.

“Selecting this year’s recipient was difficult because there are so many outstanding student programs that are supporting the ideals of professional service and outreach to the community.”

She added, “I’m extremely proud of the UNLV program and its students for their desire to go beyond what is expected and to be of service to those in the community who are truly in need of oral health care.”

The ADA Foundation is a catalyst for uniting people and organizations to make a difference through better oral health. Since 1991, the ADA Foundation has disbursed nearly $31 million to support such charitable activities.

In addition to funding grants for dental research, education, scholarships and access to care, the foundation supports charitable assistance programs, such as relief grants to dentists and their dependents who are unable to support themselves due to injury, a medical or financial need or advanced age; and grants and loans to those who are victims of disasters.

(Source: ADA Foundation)

The ADA Foundation’s primary goal is to connect people and organizations in order to effect a positive difference via improved oral health.

For more information about grants awards through the ADA foundation, please visit www.adafoundation.org.

Tell us what you think!

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DENTAL TRIBUNE | APRIL 2010
News 3A

Meridian chart shows teeth and organ relationships

Many people are familiar with Chinese medicine or acupuncture and have heard about meridians, the channels through which energy flows in the body. Each organ, gland and body structure has an associated meridian, including the teeth.

What does all this mean to health and wellness? Well, if someone has a bad tooth, the energy flow through the meridian belonging to that tooth will be altered. This in turn can affect the health of all the other organs on that meridian.

For example, tooth #14, the upper left first molar tooth, is on the same meridian with the kidneys, liver, spleen, stomach and breast. So, if this tooth has a problem, it may affect energy flow through the meridian and the health of those organs may be affected as well.

Dr. Thomas L. Stone, MD, a pioneer in alternative medical diagnosis and treatment strategies, once attended a dental health seminar, and when he was asked why an MD would attend a dental conference, he said, “I know you dentists are killing my patients. I just want to find out how you are doing it.”

One holistic dentist was so inspired by Stone’s statement that he wrote a book titled “Rescued By My Dentist,” which is an account of his patients with health problems related to their mercury amalgam fillings.

Experienced biological dentists who have an understanding of the teeth and body connection are able to consider the oral cavity for the possible cause of symptoms in patients who have been unable to secure a diagnosis through regular allopathic medicine channels.

McConnell said his favorite brands are CloSYS and Breath Rx, because they are alcohol-free and have antibacterial properties. Both companies also make toothpastes that complement the rinses. McConnell recommends patients use the rinse at least two to three times a day and the toothpaste on an extra soft brush after every meal.

McConnell also recommends a remineralizing paste specifically designed to strengthen the tooth surface and make it less susceptible to decay. A secondary benefit of the paste is that it helps to balance the pH of the mouth and support dental health.

The paste is applied to the teeth once a day after brushing. Patients may find these products online or in stores, if they are not available from their dentists.

Other products, such as Bioline, help promote saliva flow, and different toothpastes have shown the ability to remineralize weak tooth surfaces, McConnell said. He said the CloSYS, Breath Rx and remineralization pastes like MI Paste are easiest to use and most effective.

The key, he said, is for patients to avoid any products that promote dryness and to incorporate products that are antibacterial, help mineralize the teeth and help balance the health of the mouth.

Sadly, even after cancer treatments are completed, many of these painful and destructive consequences can continue, McConnell said. Mouth sores tend to disappear, but the dryness and gum recession often persist and the teeth that are weakened by the treatments become much more susceptible to decay.

When treatments are completed, and after being released for dental treatment by the oncologist, it is then imperative for patients to return to regular dental care. The first concern for the dentist, he said, is to assess any changes in dental health.

A complete set of dental radiographs is imperative to look for any change to the supporting bone and any evidence of decay or infection.

McConnell said he recommends patients who have had chemotherapy receive digital radiographs, as they show 90 percent less radiation exposure. Often there are areas of decay that should be treated as soon as possible, he said. A thorough gum evaluation is recommended, as are any treatments to detect any early signs of gum disease.

The link between oral health and overall health is now well documented, McConnell said, and establishing optimum oral health is important for everyone at any age. But after cancer treatment, he said, it is imperative.

The front teeth are connected to the kidneys. The stomach is connected to the premolars. This is something that practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine have known for thousands of years. Now, TALKInternational.com has developed an Interactive Meridian Tooth Chart to show the dentist and patient to learn about the relationship between the teeth and the body as an aid for overall health and wellness issues.

(Source: PRWeb)

Continued, ‘ADA pilot …’

Kootenai College in Montana, whose graduates will work in Native American areas.

The recent kickoff event provided current students from the University of Oklahoma and UCLA, who began their training a year ago, an opportunity to share their experiences as they prepare for their six-month internship.

The initial student class from the program’s most recent site addition, Temple University, met enrollees affiliated with the two other schools at the event. They received laptop computers, an orientation to their online instructional training and a program overview.

“We look forward to seeing these individuals return to their communities as trained community health workers and members of the dental team, playing an important role in resolving barriers to help improve residents’ dental care,” said Raymond F. Gist, DDS, ADA president-elect.

“That’s what the Community Dental Health Coordinators program is all about.”

Although the CDHC is a new position, it is modeled on the community health worker, a demonstrated member of the public health team who focuses on health education, prevention, disease management and increasing access. Because the CDHC will function much like community health workers, the ADA believes that they, too, will have a positive impact on the oral health of their communities through education and outreach.

(Source: PRWeb)

(Source: ADA)
Considering the anatomy of a professional-looking Web site

By Marc Kay Miller

Your Web site is where your business resides online and the hub of your Internet marketing campaign. It is the virtual representation of who you are and what you are all about. Always incorporate good design principles to ensure your Web site reaches out to the maximum number of new patients and engages as many people as possible.

When you are promoting your treatment and services online, people cannot see you physically like they would if they met you in your office. People do judge you by your cover. This is where a good Web site design comes in.

In any professional practice, dentists and doctors spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on office design, decorating, marketing materials and customer service. Convenient locations should be chosen and appropriate signs displayed so patients have little if any difficulty finding your office.

Your office should be clean and tidy and your staff members should emit a professional air with every contact. The entire presentation is a marketing strategy to show patients you care about quality and are someone they can trust to provide expert treatment and care.

First impressions matter

The same is true with your Web site. If your Web site is old and outdated and is difficult to navigate, looks as if you hired your next door neighbor to set it up or, worse yet, you don’t have one at all, you are literally shouting to online visitors looking for you that you are not professional and you don’t provide quality care.

If you have a professional-looking Web site layout, branded with your message, you are giving visitors a positive perception. They will see that you have paid meticulous attention to every detail of your business and you care about professionalism. They will also perceive that you are organized and focused on patients.

As you grow your practice in today’s tech-savvy society, your Web site, along with your business cards, letterheads and promotional materials, become the face of your business. Every marketing tool, both online and offline, has its place and matters.

Attention should be paid to every aspect of your Web site. Make sure it performs optimally to serve its purpose by attracting and engaging patients to contact your office for a new patient exam.

In today’s ADHD society, do not give visitors a reason to click on the “back” button. Time is precious to visitors, so get to the point quickly and without fluff. Statistics show:

• You have less than 8 seconds to engage a visitor once he or she clicks on your site.
• On average, a visitor reads only 2.5 pages on your site.
• If a page has more than 500 words and is not neatly organized, most of the content will go unread.
• If your site is difficult to navigate, visitors will click away from it immediately.

Here are ten important rules of thumb to make sure your Web site performs well.

No. 1: Do not use ‘splash’ or ‘flash only’ intro pages

Splash pages are the first pages you see when you arrive at a Web site. They normally have beautiful imagery with words like “Welcome!” or “Click here to enter.” They are pictures with no real purpose other than to entertain. Visitors are not on your site to be entertained; they are there for content rich information. If they want entertainment, they will go to YouTube.

No. 2: Have simple and clear navigation

Provide a simple and straightforward navigational menu that even a young child will know how to use. Stay away from complicated flash-based menus or multi-tiered dropdown menus.

If your visitors cannot figure out how to navigate your site, they will leave it. Design your site for an Internet-challenged newbie. Keep it easy and simple.

No. 5: Allow users to always know where they are on your site

When visitors are deeply engrossed in exploring your site, they must know they know which part of the site they are in at that moment.

This way, they will be able to browse relevant information or navigate to any section of the site easily.

Don’t confuse your visitors because confusion means “abandon ship!”

No. 7: Keep your text paragraphs an appropriate length

Online reading of text is different than reading the printed word. The brain processes the information differently when read off a computer. If a paragraph is too long, break it into smaller separate paragraphs or bullet point the content for easy reading.

A block of text that is too large will deter visitors from reading your content. They will either move on or click away.

No. 8: Make sure your Web site complies with Web standards

Go to www.w3.org and make sure your Web site is cross-browser compatible. If your Web site looks great in Internet Explorer but doesn’t work properly in Firefox and Opera browsers, you will lose potential new patients. With all the problems with Microsoft, Firefox and Opera browsers are becoming more populous every day.

No. 9: Extra large/small text size

There is more to Web design than graphics. User accessibility and comfort is a big part of it also. Design the text to be legible and correctly sized. This enables your visitors to read it without straining their eyes.

No matter how good the content of your Web site or your sales copy is, if it’s difficult to read, you won’t be receiving new patient calls. A size 11 or 12 font in Arial, Verdana or Trebuchet MS works best.

No. 10: Text and background page color

On a computer, some colors are more difficult to read than others. Studies report black text on a white background is the easiest to read.

White text on a black background, although it looks nice, causes eye-strain and is difficult to read. A light background with dark colored text is always your best option.

As a business owner, it is your job to make sure your Web site does what it’s meant to do effectively.

Even though you are not a Web designer, it is your marketing responsibility to ensure your Web site does what it is supposed to: to engage and direct new patients to contact your office for a new patient exam. Don’t let minor mistakes in design stop your site from perform-