Foundation Spotlight

Foundation Presents 12 Scholarships to OU College of Dentistry Students

The Delta Dental of Oklahoma Oral Health Foundation announced the recipients of its 2015-2016 Delta Dental Scholarship Fund at the University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry, recognizing students who have demonstrated academic excellence as well as a commitment to their communities. The following individuals each received $5,000:

Katherine Dillard, DS IV, Rochester, MN
Brent Haynes, DS IV, Midwest City, OK
Shelby Olson, DS IV, Norman, OK
Alicia Nicely, DS, IV, Luoyang, China
Todd Robinson, DS IV, Jacksonville, FL
Raegan Vaughan, DS IV, Altus, OK
Courtney Young, DS IV, Oklahoma City, OK
Sydney Rogers, DS III, Enid, OK
Sarah Gregg, DS II, Duncan, OK
Cody Mumma, DS II, Tulsa, OK
Lauren Nichols, DS II, Broken Arrow, OK
James Tristan Hudson, DS II, Jay, OK

Since the Foundation began its scholarship program in 2001, more than $600,000 has been awarded to 124 OU College of Dentistry students who plan to practice within the state after graduation.

“Scholarship support to this degree helps ensure that the college is able to recruit and retain the best dental school candidates from around the world,” said Raymond Cohlmia, D.D.S., and dean of the OU College of Dentistry. “With Oklahoma at risk of having a shortage of dentists in the future, it is increasingly important to secure top talent for the residents of our state with a firm understanding of our professional responsibility to our communities. The Delta Dental of Oklahoma Oral Health Foundation continues to make our students and Oklahomans a priority through its investment in dental education.”

Oklahoma Mission of Mercy Returns to Tulsa

In 2016, OkMOM will return to Oklahoma City on February 5 and 6. Volunteer registration opened on October 15, 2015, at www.okmom.org. There is a limited number of rooms available at a special OkMOM rate at The Courtyard by Marriot in Oklahoma City, so reserve your hotel room as soon as possible. More information can be found at www.okmom.org.
School-based dental sealant delivery programs are an evidence-based public health strategy for preventing tooth decay among school-aged children, particularly those at highest risk.

This month, the Delta Dental of Oklahoma Oral Health Foundation launched a school-based sealant pilot program with the purpose of developing a scalable, sustainable model that could be replicated throughout the state. The goal of the program is two-pronged: To seal the teeth of at-risk second and sixth graders and to help connect them to nearby dental homes.

The 8-month pilot will serve about 1,000 students attending Oklahoma City Public Schools with 80 percent or higher rates of participation in the Federal Free and Reduced Meals Program, which indicates the children are statistically at higher risk for dental decay.

Even when cost is not an issue, such as with Soonercare recipients, there are many barriers to dental sealants for children in lower income homes. Many parents do not know the importance of preventive dental care. Others cannot afford to take off work for a routine dental visit.

“The unfortunate fact is, many of the children we will serve at these schools are not going to be taken to a dentist until they are in pain, unless we intercede,” said John Gladden, president and CEO of Delta Dental of Oklahoma and chairman of its Oral Health Foundation. “Besides sealing teeth at this critical time in the children’s development, we are also committed to helping bridge the gap between them and a nearby dental home for ongoing dental care.”

A packet of information is sent home to the parents of each child which includes an assessment, a treatment report, and a list of dental offices within a five mile radius of the school. “Through our take-home materials, parents are strongly advised to take their children to a dentist for an exam and regular checkups,” said Terrisa Singleton, director of the Delta Dental of Oklahoma Oral Health Foundation. “We also have a process in place to help ensure children with urgent dental issues receive the follow-up treatment they need.”

The Delta Dental Cavity Prevention Clinics are conducted under the authorization of Erin Sexson, DDS, by Ren Reyes, the Foundation’s Community Outreach Dental Hygienist. The pilot program is fully funded by Delta Dental of Oklahoma and no insurance or Soonercare reimbursement is being claimed.